

## Monday Musings from Pastor Brooke, June 1, 2020

*For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. ~ Jeremiah 29:11-12*

Happy Monday, Church!

Hope is a funny thing! Hope too often is thought of as something that “good” Christians have and those with no faith lack. However, hope is not the same as faith. I can have faith and still be unable to find hope in the moment, or I can have hope, but have no faith. If you are like me, hope is fleeting these days.

I *hope* we can gather to worship again in person — in some way — this summer. I have *faith* that no matter where we are, we can worship God. I *hope* that a vaccine for this virus happens sooner than later. I have *faith* that the scientists are working hard to create that vaccine. I *hope* that people will be respectful enough of each other to wear masks when they are in the presence of others. I have *faith* that each of you will do that because you see others as beloved children of God. I *hope* that those who rioted and looted our downtown will have consequences for their behavior. I have *faith* that protestors who are angry don’t need me to give them permission to be angry.

Hope is something that, if not followed by action, remains something “out there” — like a dream. Faith is putting action to that hope. Faith is speaking up when we hear falsehoods about the safety of large gatherings. Faith is speaking up when we hear someone say that all protestors are bad. Faith is looking at the facts and making decisions based upon facts — not a version of the facts.

The writer of Jeremiah was talking to the Israelites who were in exile — most certainly a crisis. He reminds the Israelites that their prayers are heard. I am a firm believer in prayer, but prayer without action is empty. I continue to pray for the more than 2,100 families who have experienced a death due to COVID-19, but we also have a public witness with the flags in our front yard. I continue to pray for criminal justice reform, but I will also vote to make sure people who are also interested in that get elected. It is not hope **or** faith; it is not pray **or** act. It is both/and. We are people of faith who live that; we live with the faith that we will enter the reign of God one day **and** we work to bring that reign of God to the earth here.

So hold onto the hope while you can, but be certain your actions reflect your faith.

Blessings,

*Pastor Brooke*

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OF CHRIST

