

A Word on Wednesday from Pastor Tonia

"Unplanned Blessings" 5/1/24

As for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring it about so many people should be kept alive, as they are today. So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus God reassured them and comforted them. (Gen 50:20-21)

Often in life things just don't go according to our plan. We are shocked at the turn of events. Unprepared for what we did not anticipate. Surprised at where we find ourselves.

Joseph woke up on top of the world. Good dream and a great coat, then finds himself sold as a slave, by his brothers, and on his way to Egypt. Scripture is full of stories of everyday people finding themselves in new places, with a new calling, facing an unexpected future. So why should we be surprised when things don't go according to our preconceived proposals.

"People plan, God laughs," is an old Yiddish adage. Quite profound.

I have to admit, I'm more surprised if things do go according to plan. I make a list for the day or week or season, and then find myself looking out on an unrecognizable situation. What to do? Hide. Quit. Checkout. Go back to bed – and refuse to get up again?

I've often wanted to escape my new normal, but figured if I did, I'd miss what God had in store for me. And it had to be good. Like the little kid on their birthday, I figured there had to be a pony in here somewhere.

No matter how carefully we draw up the plan for our lives, how detailed our to-do list is, life is unpredictable. But if we get angry and close our eyes when faced with a detour on our road, we could miss some surprisingly beautiful scenery.

It's easy to get sidetracked and not realize, "Just because things hadn't gone the way we'd planned, didn't necessarily mean they had gone wrong." as author Ann Patchett put it. We forget God is still in control and He knows everything. And He has prepared us for this side trip, this unexpected destination. There is a reason for the detour, learn from it, make the most of it; prepare yourself for a blessing, hidden behind an apparent roadblock.

So as our journey continues, and for as long as it continues, may we trust in the Lord, look for the humor and the beauty, learn the truth, accept the lesson, and be willing to find the blessing just around the corner.

"Our steps are ordered by God." (Ps 37:23)

Please pray with me:

Loving Lord, thank You for reassuring us and comforting us. You do know where we are going and how we are to travel. You direct our paths; our way is laid out by You. You turn the bad which happens into good for us. Help us to learn the lessons You've planned, finding them with joy in the same way as a child unwraps a birthday present.

Amen.