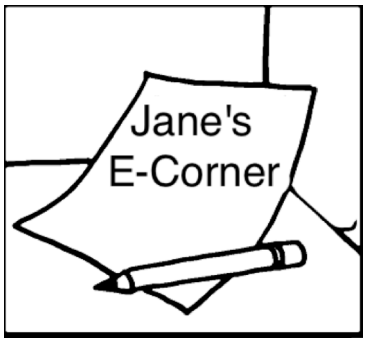
Dear Friends,



Today I am reading Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7

This is the text of the letter which the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the priests, the prophets, the rest of the elders of the exile community, and to all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had exiled from Jerusalem to Babylon. Thus said the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, to the whole community which I exiled from Jerusalem to Babylon. Build houses and live in them, plant gardens and eat their fruit. Take wives and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters. Multiply there, do not decrease. And seek the welfare to the city to which I have exiled you and pray to the Lord in its behalf; for in its prosperity you shall prosper.

Devotion:

I have a long prayer list. And it gets longer and longer. There is so much going on within our lives, in our community and in the world. We have MUCH to pray about. And we pray for those who are serving our country--I pray that they come home whole. And I pray for peace. And it is difficult, but I even pray for our enemies, and my enemies. I have noticed that when I pray for those who have wanted to or who HAVE done me harm, that I change. God changes my heart through prayer. And sometimes--well often--I need God to change my heart. And then there is the whole struggle of those people I love and when someone hurts them--Vengeance is heavy on my heart. I hurt when those I love hurt. I tell God about wanting to put sugar in people's gas tanks (I have heard that works but have never tried it), let the air out of their tires, and even put Jello in their Jacuzzi (that sounds like so much fun) but when I tell God about all this, he reminds me about Jesus. And Love. And turning the other cheek.

Jeremiah wrote this letter to the leaders of the nation of Judea and Israel who had been exiled to Babylon. And I can only imagine their reaction to the letter-- "Jeremiah has LOST HIS MIND. Their people have conquered us, killed our people, enslaved our promised land. Who does he think he is to tell us to be nice, to support, to seek the welfare of these ENEMIES?" If they had not been so far away they probably would have plotted tire slashing, etc.

I think we all have to be reminded from time to time that the love of God is not about the world being perfect. The love of God is about the hard and painful realities of

life. It is not about living totally apart from the world; it is about living IN the world, accepting the gift of life and its opportunities. When we are angry about everything, we cut off our opportunities. We waste our energy and our time. And we let the past and all its pain control our present and even our future. Fortunately, after they got over their anger, Jeremiah's words sunk in. The people flourished.
I woke up this morning singing (badly as you well know) the song by Allison Krauss *I Know Who Holds Tomorrow*. It's my prayer for today. The youtube link is below if you want to listen to it.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2n3iLXHzX9k

Please pray:

- Athena Peebles, at JCMC following knee replacement. Athena will most likely go home tomorrow.
- Sandy Nichols, Scott Huff's aunt
- Janet Pickel, recently diagnosed with Parkinson's
- Tim Tennant-Jayne, Perry Bailey's brother in law, stage IV colon cancer
- Tony Woodall
- our country

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Sunday October 13 Choir Luncheon
- Monday October 21 5 pm SPR Committee
- Thursday October 24 Budget requests due to Rhonda Simmons, Treasurer.
- Sunday October 27, Bread for the World Sunday
- Wednesday October 30, Trunk or Treat Wed nite
- November 1-3 Youth Fall Retreat
- November 2, Poverty Simulation at Munsey Memorial UMC.
- November 3, All Saints Sunday service, 3 pm A Place at the Table movie, Munsey Memorial UMC
- Sunday November 17, 12 pm Charge Conference

"Preach the gospel at all times and when necessary use words." St Francis of Assisi

Blessings,
Jane Taylor
First United Methodist Church
Johnson City TN