

A Note from Pastor Nathan

*“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past.
See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland.
Isaiah 43:18-19 (NIV ‘84)*

This morning I was once again walking a familiar gravel road in Greene County, somewhere between a train bridge and an eagle’s nest. Winter, by all appearances, had arrived. All of the leaves were down. Rain had just stopped falling. Clouds filled the sky. A blustery wind chilled the air. It was cold, bleak, lonely, and barren. Hopeless, you might say.

And then I just started smiling. And laughing.

I know what comes next!

Having walked that path many times in all seasons, I know that spring is coming. It won’t be long before buds adorn the hillsides and blossoms fill the valley. The whole place will be teeming with life.

In fact, there is plenty of life in the present barrenness, if you are willing to look for it. Small flocks of blue jays, cardinals, bluebirds, and juncos were huddled here and there. Deer darted up the hill for fear, apparently, of me. An eagle scolded a red-shouldered hawk for flying too close to its preferred perch. And cattle were groaning in the distance.

I share all of this with you as we wind down the clock on what has been, by many accounts, a difficult year. Obviously you are aware of the global and national challenges, which in some sense have impacted us all. But there are other things that we as a congregation have endured: cancer; grief; surgeries; treatments; Parkinson’s; anxiety; depression; miscarriage; not being able to be with loved ones during hospitalizations, holidays, worship services, or dying moments; sudden changes in life circumstances; moving to new homes and missing old ones; loss; pain; family strife; loneliness.

If we have the capacity for feeling discouraged, 2020 has exposed it, even in the most optimistic of us.

The good news is we know what comes next. After death comes resurrection. After pruning comes new shoots. After winter comes spring. This is how God operates.

In the passage above Isaiah is offering a forecast. Actually, he had been offering a forecast, of exile to Babylon. The people will be ripped from their homeland and hauled far away. It will last a long time. Things will seem hopeless. But in the extended forecast, God will not be stopping there. He will make a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland. God is bringing new life and hope!

I don’t intend to glibly gloss over your real pain from 2020. I know this year has been hard. Some among us have been so wounded by this year that the sting and sorrow may reverberate for quite some time to come. I neither minimize that nor dismiss that. Healthy grieving processes ebb and flow and persist. I do not suggest that we simply try to block out the hurt of 2020. Rather, I recommend that we name that pain honestly, and then name it for the framework within which it rests: the unfailing love of our mighty God. In His hands, nothing is truly hopeless.

In the spirit of Isaiah 43:19, let’s pray for eyes to see the “new things” that God is doing. Let’s pray for eyes of faith, which can see before the new things are even visible. Let’s pray for the courage to keep on walking, come what may, because of the One who is with us always.

After all, we know how the story ends. “Behold, I am making all things new! Write it down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

Grace and peace,

Nathan

Bloomfield First Baptist Church 500 Lincoln Drive Bloomfield, IN 47424			December 2020		Pastor's Cell: 812-381-8459 Church Office: 812-384-8459 Bright Beginnings Daycare: 812-384-0400 Bright Beginnings Preschool: 812-384-2647	
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 6:30 Trustees	2 9:00 Bible Study	3 6:30 Deacons	4	5
6 Communion 2 nd Sunday of Advent - Peace	7	8	9 9:00 Bible Study	10 6:30 Ch Council	11	12 9-11am White Christmas Distribution
13 3 rd Sunday of Advent -Joy	14	18	16 9:00 Bible Study	17	18	19
20 4 th Sunday of Advent - Love	21	22	23 9:00 Bible Study	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day!	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Sound System

Prayers

Nursery Care

Children's Worship
(2nd & 4th Sundays only)

Reoccurring Weekly Activities @ FBC

Mondays:

Tuesdays:

Thursdays:

Deacon of the Month
Brad Ellis

Trustee of the Month
Eric Moody

Usher of the Month

Greeters of the Month