Pastor’s Column September 17, 2018

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When I heard the news that the owner of the Linn Palmer Record and The Washington County News, Dan Thalmann was moving on to a new chapter in his life with a new job I was a bit surprised. For as long as I’ve lived in Washington County and served at St. John in Palmer Dan has always been the newspaper man. It was a good bet that if something was going on in this area I could ask Dan about it because he would be covering it or had taken pictures of it.

But things change. We all have to face uncertain futures when it comes to our family, our health, our wealth, our county, our country, and a whole host of other topics that impact our lives. This may mean a change of occupation or settling into a new normal in our lives. When facing the future it’s easy to find comfort in the words of Jeremiah 29:11, “For I know the plans I have for you” declares the Lord, “plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.”

It’s easy to take these words completely and totally out of context, and sadly many times that’s exactly what happens. God doesn’t just promise us a wonderful and prosperous future in everything that we do. God knows the plans he has for us, and ultimately that plan will lead to salvation for those who have faith and receive the gifts of forgiveness and everlasting life. These specific words were shared to people in Jeremiah who had rebelled and needed more years of correction before the plans of welfare were realized. In the same way the future for all of us may be one of repentance and contrition.

A future like that doesn’t sound so great, but the reality is that when we repent of our sins God gives forgiveness as a free gift. God loves us and our future will always be one of prosperity in terms of salvation because we have the joy of heaven to look forward to in our future. No one can take that away from us, no matter what our future on earth holds.

God’s blessings to you as you go forward in the assurance of everlasting life won by Jesus Christ on the cross, and on a personal note to Dan, thanks for your hard work, thanks for your diligence and for giving us pastors an opportunity to share God’s Word in this column, and ultimately, thanks for the memories.