

February, 2022

Dear Eden Members, Attendees, and Friends:

As I sit here typing this note to you, it comes to mind that this annual letter could be letter # 34 although it might be #33 as we didn't have an annual meeting in 2021 thanks to Covid. With that being said, with poor memory, I look to Mary's report as clerk to refresh you and me of what has happened in the 2021. I'm not going to attempt to refresh our memories with this writing but will say, in praise to the Lord, how impressed I am with the family of Eden Baptist Church. I want "family" to include those who join us for worship when, as visitors, they are in the area (summer attendees) and, of course, those who join in worship using Face Book Live, and those who love the Lord, but have yet to express an interest in being official members of this fellowship. God will certainly bless you as you offer yourself to serve Him as he calls you.

As we enter 2022 we have no idea what the future holds for our little fellowship in Salisbury Cove, Maine. But when pondering about the future I am reminded of the words of the prophet Jeremiah. If you recall the history of the Israelites, you remember that they had a history of being faithful to God and times of wondering, turning their backs on God. Each time they turned away difficulties swamped them.

The main theme of Jeremiah is judgment which he preached over a period of nearly 40 years painting the picture of Israel's sin, the invader God would send, the difficulties of the coming siege, and the pending destruction of a nation that would not repent from their wicked ways and return to God.

Jeremiah's second theme is one of God's willingness to spare and bless the nation if the people would truly repent. We can see that in the picture painted by God's word to Jeremiah in chapter 18:1-11. God sends Jeremiah to the potter's shed and arrives as the potter begins to mold a vessel. The potter sees a blemish in the clay and reshapes the vessel again.

As we move further into 2022 I wonder if we are willing to see ourselves as "Clay in the Potter's hands" to be willing to allow a "do over" and to remold us more into the image of Christ?

I'm sure we all are in need of re-shaping of one kind or another. Perhaps our attendance isn't what it ought to be, perhaps our Bible reading isn't what it ought to be, perhaps our prayer life isn't what it ought to be, perhaps our tithing isn't what it ought to be, perhaps sharing our faith walk isn't what it ought to be, perhaps our reaching out to others isn't what it ought to be. Perhaps there are more we might list here but **this is enough to give us pause to examine our walk with the Lord.**

God, as he was speaking to Jeremiah, offered these words of hope and promise to the captive nation of Israel.

**Jer 29:11 ESV 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.**

We may not know what God has in store for us in the coming year but let's take hold of Jeremiah 29:11 knowing full well that God has a plan for each one of us connected to Eden Baptist Church.

Perhaps we will be willing to be the clay vessel in the Potter's hand and take to heart to words of the hymn writer Adelaide Pollard, "Have Thine Own Way Lord."

With an open heart and a willing spirit, what a year it will be!

Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your fellowship and serve the Lord as your pastor.

