

Watch this week's service on YouTube by clicking: [April 11 Worship Service Video](#)

- Join the **HeBrews eCafé on Zoom** for a farewell to student minister Laura Rousseau this Sunday at 10am.
<https://zoom.us/j/98193600858?pwd=K0IIOWM0ZWdsRmhUTkNWcmFvbkm5Zz09>
Meeting ID: 981 9360 0858
Passcode: 438120
Phone: 204 272 7920
- Our Cool School Children's Easter Video is available here: https://youtu.be/INyeKgeA_44
- **Offering for the ministry of Charleswood United Church:** www.charleswoodunited.org/donate Thank you for your generous support.

Dear Friends

Welcome to worship for Sunday, April 11, 2021.

There is a wonderful passage in the Old Testament book of Jeremiah.

Jeremiah lived in a time of great disruption in the life of Israel. In 597 BCE the great power of the age, Babylon, occupied Jerusalem and began to deport a large number of residents back to Babylon to live in servitude as the spoils of war. It was a devastating experience for the so called exiles. Jeremiah lived in Jerusalem at the time but was not among those who were deported. Those who remained (sometimes referred to in literature as the faithful remnant) were equally devastated, their city was in ruin and their neighbours were gone. It is in this context that Jeremiah writes in fear for the survival of Israel.

In chapter 29 we read that Jeremiah actually wrote a letter of encouragement to his Jewish brothers and sisters who had been exiled to Babylon. The contents of the letter can be found in verses 4-23. And the prophet's advice to those who live in disruption, whose routines have been interrupted, who are uncertain what the future will bring? Simply be.

What he literally says is, "Build houses and live in them. Plant gardens and eat the produce. Marry and rear families. Seek the welfare of the city." Jeremiah says the best way we can approach life in difficult times is to attend to the simple things that matter most. Perhaps this is a 2500 year old version of 'Keep Calm and Carry On'.

I thought about this passage and Jeremiah's advice as we prepared to celebrate baptism in the worship service this week. I am so grateful for the Patel family and their willingness to share their joy and thanksgiving with all of us. We need to be reminded that there is more to life than the pandemic. We continue to care for our homes, connect to our loved ones, raise our children, and dream of what will be. We need to sing hymns, break bread, pour the water.

We are experiencing an early spring and so it will come early to us to work in gardens and clean gutters and plant tomatoes. We can already hear geese overhead and we will soon see robins' nests in trees. As Laura prays in this week's service, the ordinary miracle of vibrant green is about to present itself to us. We have much for which to be thankful.

It's alright to be discouraged, despairing, despondent. Hope is not a way of living in denial that life can be hard sometimes. Rather, hope is the promise found in Jeremiah's ancient wisdom, that in the midst of darkness, faith shines a light that illumines our path and shows us a way.

Grace and peace

Michael

- Please enjoy our online worship and feel free to share with others. The link for sharing is: <https://youtu.be/d686K428EuQ>
- For news and events please have a look at **Life & Work**: <https://charleswoodunited.org/media/life-work/>
- Read the scripture lesson for today by clicking here: [John 20:19-29](#)