

“Dream ON!!”

May 9, 2010

Dream On! You know I think that’s what we’re supposed to be doing. This morning we’re talking about why it’s so important to follow our dreams as we go through life. To begin with, I believe that God has given us gifts and talents and abilities that are unique to each one of us. And in addition to that, God has also given each of us a dream. A dream that utilizes those gifts and talents to the fullest and in fact brings us closer to God as we go through life.

The scripture for today comes from the 29th chapter of Jeremiah. In the 11th verse it tells us,

For I know the plans I have for you, declares God. Plans to prosper you and not to harm you.

Plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come to pray to me.

And I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.”

In this scripture, God tells us that there are plans for us. And for us to be living our dream is part of that plan. The bible also tells us that God will always be there for us. Particularly when it starts getting tough or when we get frustrated or discouraged or lose that vision of our dream.

Today as we celebrate Mother’s Day, I believe that mothers have a dream in their heart for their children. And as that infant grows, in addition to nurturing her child, a mother may create an environment and provide encouragement to help that child see and realize that dream. God does the same thing. By providing excitement in our hearts as we glimpse the possibilities of achieving our dreams. It’s still always up to us, on how actively we pursue our dreams, or whether we even acknowledge them at all. But God’s love is always there and God’s love is constant.

Does everyone have a dream? Absolutely. How large a dream does it have to be? Any size. Walt Disney had a dream for an amusement park. And his dream was that Walt Disney World would never be finished and today it continues to expand. Dr. Martin Luther King, he had a dream, and his dream

was that one day people would not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character. And as this relates to our relationships with people that are different than us this dream continues to inspire and challenge all of us.

What are our dreams right now? Are we following them? As I was working on this message, I asked a lot of people that very question. It’s been very interesting asking people, if they have a dream and how are they following it. That is after we get past the Are you crazy part? To see someone stop and really think about it and then to see in their eyes the gleam of recognition, is exciting. It’s even greater when they say, “yeah, I’m living the dream!” And then when I earnestly look at them and say, “Are you? Tell me about it.” The enthusiasm is contagious when they are truly doing what they love doing and couldn’t be happier.

Some of the other responses that I’ve heard are, “No, I don’t have a dream. I never had a dream.” or “I used to have one, but not since I’ve grown up.” Some have told me, “Yeah I still have a dream, but I just don’t have time with all the other things going on in my life.” But the worst has been, “Not now, it’s too late. I’m too old.” We need to know that our dream came from God, and that with God’s help we can revive that vision and achieve the dream.

Over these past few weeks Sandi and I were on a trip to the Holy land with a fantastic group of people from St. Luke’s. And yes I do have some pictures to show you thank you for asking. Our trip was not totally a tourist visit where you hop off the bus take a photo get back on the bus and go shop. As a matter of fact there was almost no time to shop and there were a few grumbling comments, but, by not just the men. In addition to the Holy sites described in the Bible and the ancient ruins some of the other places we spent time at included a Jewish settlement, a Christian college and a Palestinian refugee camp. All of these places and the people we met made an impression that will last forever. At the refugee camp the young children running in the streets to greet us just blew me away with their innocence and hope.

Sandi seemed to be a kid magnet as the little ones tugged at her dress for attention and the young girls we talked with were very open with her. Now the language was a bit of a

challenge, but when she asked these woman about their dreams they shared right away. One wanted to be a doctor another a teacher and another a bartender. Or at least it sounded like bartender. Maybe it was a barterer or business person, but she was definitely enthusiastic. To see these oppressed woman living with a 30' wall around them and armed guards close by, and then to have dreams that were so alive still moves my heart.

OK audience participation time. Right now take just a moment to think back to when you were little and didn't have all the distractions of life and just plain didn't know any better. What was your dream? What did you want to do? What did you think you could do better than anyone else in the world? Often times when we're young, the dreams that God gave us are right at the surface before we have a time to squash them down.

I remember a time when I was in 2nd grade and the teacher asked each of us to write a paragraph about what we wanted to do when we grew up – what was our dream. On the top of the paper we had a blank space to illustrate that dream. She told us that she was going to post them on the bulletin board because that evening there was an Open House for the parents. There were some pretty cool things that the kids came up with: like being a teacher, a physician, an astronomer or an artist (that kid had a pretty good picture on the top of their paper). There was a wide variety of incredible aspirations of these grade school kids. I can only imagine what my Dad thought when he saw mine up there.

The next morning at breakfast he said to me, "I never knew you wanted to be a steam roller operator." I said, "Well, I know your dad was an engineer, and you're an engineer. I want to be an engineer, too. But I didn't know what to draw for that. But the teacher had this really cool compass for drawing circles that she kept in her desk. I thought if I could that if I came up with something that had really big round wheels, she would let me use that compass. Thus a steam roller driver. The scary part is that, construction is a big part of my life. Even in that innocent, naïve, immature mind, that just wanted to use a cool compass, was a dream and a desire that was already there.

As we now face our excuses of either not having a dream or thinking that we've grown

out of that dream, realize that it is still there. It may have changed some, but the essence of what we felt as a child, is still part of us.

In preparing this message I tried to refresh my dream and bring it back to the surface. And as I reflected back, I realized a lot of the things that I would dream about doing, were things that would help other people and affect their lives in one way or another. It's only now that I can better understand what my real dream is: To reach out to others, to be there for them with love and help to bring them closer to God. And an essential part of my dream has been having a family, that's close and caring for one another and realizing that God is an integral part of all of it.

How do we keep our dreams alive when we get caught up with life? Talk about your dream. Tell others about your dream. And maybe get ready to hear someone say, "Dream on." But that's exactly what you're going to do. Because sometimes we will meet resistance and discouraging words and even failure. But remember our dream is important to God, it's important to the people around us, it's important to the future of the world, it's important to each one of us.

Earlier we talked about mothers having a dream for us. Today as we recognize all that Mothers have done for us: the sacrifices, the sharing, the moral and spiritual guidance, realize that the dreams they had for us remain alive in their hearts, too. A lot of you know that my mom died when I was little; I was six years old. And she never got to see that picture of me sitting atop that steam roller I drew or listen to me babble on about the dreams I had. As I accomplished some of those things, I miss not be able to share them with her and seeing that look in her eye when she knew full well that she had prepared the path for me to follow long before.

And I believe that God is doing the same thing for us right now by providing opportunities and developing our skills and nurturing the enthusiasm in our hearts as we strive and work towards our dreams. And as we pursue those dreams, I'm sure God is saying, "Good job! I know you can do it."

This morning as we realize the significance of our dreams, we as a congregation will have a unique opportunity this summer. As many of you know, the whole idea for this type of

service that we have here at the Garden actually is a dream of Rev. Linda McCoy. She chose to pursue that dream and that is why we are here today. And now she is on a renewal leave to revitalize and expand that dream. During the time that she's gone, we as a group will have a chance to meet together in June to further define our dream for The Garden. We will each get a chance to help direct where the Garden is going in the coming years. It's a time that we can share our dreams and actually make them a part of the future of the Garden. So please plan on being a part of these gatherings.

Doug Kniptash shared with me something he saw that said:

"To accomplish great things, we must not only act, but also dream, not only plan, but also believe."

And I believe that with God's inspiration and involvement there is no limit to what we can accomplish. So Dream On.