



Dear families and friends of Lodi UMC,

In January, the weekly Children's Time has been, as always :), fun and meaningful. Particularly, this first month of the new year, I wanted to plant seeds of beautiful words of life in their lives of 2020 and beyond. These words are from the Bible, as

some are a believer's confession of faith and some are God's promise to us given through prophets. It is with the same hope and prayer as I had for children of our church that I wish you a blessed new year and that these words stay alive in your lives.

*Lord, you have seen what is in my heart. You know all about me. You are all around me, behind me and in front of me. You put your hand on me. I'm amazed at how well you know me. It's more than I can understand. See if there's anything in my life you don't like. Help me live in the way that is always right. (Psalm 139:1, 5-6, 24. NIRV)*

*I know the plans I have in mind for you, declares the Lord; they are plans for peace, not disaster, to give you a future filled with hope. (Jeremiah 29:11. CEB)*

*But now, says the Lord—the one who created you, the one who formed you: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine. (Isaiah 43:1. CEB)*

*God can do anything, you know—far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in your wildest dreams! He does it not by pushing us around but by working within us, his Spirit deeply and gently within us. (Ephesians 3:20. MSG)*

These words of hope and assurance came to my heart as I held you, the people of my beloved church, in my prayer this new year season. I am truly blessed to be here with you to move forward - yes sometimes pause and always attend to the downhearted, yet continue to walk together as God leads us.

**Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Peace**

*p.s. As an invitation to our new sermon series, I Love Sundays, let me share one humorous answer to why people skip church: "My wife cooked bacon for breakfast, and our entire family smelled like bacon." Does it work, or not? I have more that I can't wait to share in worship! Come as you are! All are welcome here as Christ welcomes everyone to his side.*