

**“The Best Laid Plans”**  
**January 10, 2016**  
**Lynn Haven United Methodist Church**

**Introduction**

Have you ever made a plan that did not go at all like you had imagined? Making a plan for your life is not wrong. In fact, the adage “failing to plan is planning to fail” is usually true. But we must be prepared for the times when our grand designs in life don’t turn out like we plan. That’s why we need to turn to God’s Word for guidance when making plans:

<sup>11</sup> I know the plans I have in mind for you, declares the LORD; they are plans for good, not disaster, to give you a future filled with hope. <sup>12</sup> When you call me and come and pray to me, I will listen to you. <sup>13</sup> When you search for me, yes, search for me with all your heart, you will find me. <sup>14</sup> I will be present for you, declares the Lord, and I will end your captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have scattered you, and I will bring you home after your long exile, declares the Lord. (Jeremiah 29:11-14 CEB)

This passage teaches us three important ideas about planning from God’s perspective.

**Discussion Questions**

1. Read Jeremiah 29:11a; Proverbs 16:1 and Proverbs 16:9. The best-laid plans are GOD-given. What do these verses teach us about the importance of seeking God first when making plans?
2. Discuss the difference between planning future events by asking for the Lord’s input first as compared to relying on our opinions. Think about decisions you have made in the past (marriage, school, career, parenthood). Which of these decisions did you plan on your own, and what was the outcome?
3. Because God can see the big picture, His plans are always FUTURE-oriented. God’s plans are HOPE-filled because He has the knowledge, the foresight and the power to make them realities. Once we understand the nature of God, how does this affect our approach to the plans He lays before us? Has God ever shown you a plan that seemed impossible but ended up being the best one for you?
4. Read Proverbs 16:24. Describe a time when your plan seemed to be perfect, but ended up leading to destruction?
5. Even the best laid plans are useless until we carry them out. We will never reach the future God has in store for us until we choose to proceed with His grand plan. Read Proverbs 16:3. What are some things that keep us from turning our plans completely over to God?

**Conclusion**

As we make plans for 2016 and for the rest of our lives, we should let God help us make them. More than anything else, we need to say, “God, I don’t know what the future holds, but I do know who holds the future. So I’m going to hold on to You no matter what.” What will you do to start relying on God more?