

Redeeming the Time in Tallinn

I am here this morning to remind any of you that might need reminding, that — It REALLY is never too late, we REALLY are never too old, and God REALLY DOES have a future and a hope for us! Not just in eternity — but here, and NOW!

I am so very honored to be here this morning! Thank you so much for having me - and for loving my children and grandchildren!

I was saved, filled with the Holy Spirit, and called by God into full-time ministry in a tiny Foursquare church in Las Animas, Colorado.

I grew up believing that I would most likely be a single woman missionary in some far away land. I loved languages and considered Wycliffe Bible Translators. I went to Bible College in Canada, married a pastor - not a missionary, but we did serve for 10 1/2 years in Alaska, and lived in some relatively far away lands!

I served for 25 years as a licensed minister, teacher and pastor's wife in Alaska, Oregon, Northern California and Washington. Then, several years ago now, I found myself alone - and then just a few months later - the primary care giver for my aging mother with dementia. My brother, my only sibling, was killed in an accident 6 days after I moved my Mom in with me.

Because of all of the circumstances and relationships involved, I spent considerable time grieving, trying to discover my "new normal", and rediscovering my "place" - where I was supposed to fit now - in God's plan and kingdom. It has been a journey of healing and restoration.

Healing can be hard work! Have any of you had to be on special regimens, diets or physical therapy - and even counseling in order to promote and maintain the physical healing process? Sometimes it takes years to recover or restore some of the abilities, muscles or broken bones. There were many times during MY healing process that I thought it might be easier to give up. To live my spiritual dreams vicariously through my children. I was okay with that, if that's what God had for me. I did not blame God for any of my circumstances, and knew that my eternity was secure but I kind of felt like I was in survival mode until then.

But I kept being reminded and prodded and encouraged - by my amazing children - to pursue MY GOD DREAMS - the ministry dreams God had placed deep in my heart as a child!

After my Mom's death 3 years ago I was able to become more involved in ministries in my home church, as well as a county-wide singles ministry and a DivorceCare support ministry. I was blessed and found at least some fulfillment and satisfaction in all of them. All of us who call ourselves Christian, are in the ministry of serving and declaring Jesus to the world around us. Never forget that!

Colossians 3:23-24:

23 Work from the heart for your real Master, for God, 24 confident that you'll get paid in full when you come into your inheritance. Keep in mind always that the ultimate Master you're serving is Christ.

Ephesians 6:7:

7 And work with a smile on your face, always keeping in mind that no matter who happens to be giving the orders, you're really serving God.

Ephesians 4:11-13 in the NIV says:

11 So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, (to do all the work of the ministry??) **NO — 12** to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up **13** until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

I understood that I was “in ministry”, but did not experience the kind of purpose and confirmation that the call – the dream – that God had given me from childhood was being fulfilled. I was experiencing a kind of “Dis-satisfied satisfaction”, if you know what I mean!

God used my District Superintendent to ask me the right questions at the right time - and to give me direction and encouragement to pursue my life-long missionary dreams through the Missionary Associate program.

God’s plan for us is one of redemption and healing, but also one of restoration and of hope. God has redeemed and restored my heart, and is now redeeming and restoring my hope. God is making this grandmother’s 50 year old missions dream come true – and I AM EXCITED!!

God has opened a door of ministry for me with Assemblies of God World Missions in the country of Estonia. My initial commitment is for 2 years as a Missionary Associate working with missionaries Nick and Olivia Puccini, developing and implementing an internship/apprenticeship program for Focus Church in the city of Tallinn. I am believing that God WILL redeem the time that I have left to give Him.

Believe with me!

Estonia is a small country in Northern Europe, west of Russia, south of Finland and north of Latvia. In 1991, Estonia gained independence from the Soviet Union after thousands of years of occupation and rule by the Danes, Swedes, Germans, Finns, Imperial Russia, Nazi’s and the Soviets. The Soviets are apparently pretty good at wiping God from the culture, memory and history after 50 years of occupation.

Highlights from the video:

- **58% of children are born to a single mother – approximately 40% currently in the US**
- **There are 57.4 abortions for every 100 live births – more than twice the United State’s 27.6.**
- **Estonia is a world leader in suicides and depression**

With all their technology and economic growth — Something is still missing. We know what that is, don't we?!

Ephesians 2:12 (NIV)

12 remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.

Like the Gentiles that Paul is speaking of in this verse – the Estonian people are “foreigners to the covenants of the promise, (as we once were) without hope and without God in the world”.

My vision for the time I am in Tallinn is to make an impact by who I am, and whose I am – sharing the reality of God's plan for a future and a hope.

As the household of faith, the community of believers, we are NOT foreigners to the promises of God – we are NOT without hope! We have an opportunity to let God use us to bring hope to the hopeless; to share God's love and His plan for their lives - no matter where we find ourselves!!

I want to challenge you to partner with me in prayer. Remember this grandmother and the dream God has given her. Pray for me and the people of Tallinn that God will redeem the time!

I want to challenge you to partner with me financially. It's not too late for you to be a partner in God's plan for a future and a hope for the people of Tallinn. I ask you to prayerfully consider supporting me on a monthly basis. I cannot leave for the field until 100% of my budget is raised.

Lastly, I want to challenge you to prayerfully consider God's call on YOUR life! It's never too late – You're never too old – and the circumstances in your life are NEVER too much for God! He has a future and a hope for you. If He has called you – He Will Do It! He is faithful – He Can Be Trusted.

I would love to talk with you more – to answer any questions you might have, or provide more information. I will be at the table at the back following the service. Please come and say hello - fill out a connect card to pray with me and receive my newsletter - and find out about ways to give and go!

I have alluded several times to the verse in Jeremiah 29:11 and I want to read it to you in closing. I am reading it out of the Message -

“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.”

AND - the next 3 verses that we seldom go on to read:

“When you call me and come and pray to me, I will listen to you. When you search for me, yes, search for me with all your heart, you will find me. I will be present for you, declares the LORD, and I will end your captivity.”

The end of your captivity is in sight. God has a future – and a hope for you! He has a plan!