

Thursday, December 17, 2015

*“For I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.” **Jeremiah 29:11***

University towns harbor hoards of unemployed teachers, but when we moved to Stillwater, OK, I wasn't looking for a job. I had a full-time one being the mother of two small boys, the younger having been diagnosed just the week before with cystic fibrosis. Being identified as a CF patient at six weeks of age did not bode well, but we fought valiantly to keep him well and provided him with the best medical attention we could find. Most hospitalizations were in Tulsa, which meant the family was separated; I showered and slept in our RV in the St. Francis' parking lot, spending my waking hours in the hospital with Kevin, except for those times when he was in Pediatric Intensive Care. At home, our day-to-day existence was a challenge. Watching Kevin closely for any change in his health, providing him with physical therapy several times a day to keep mucus from building up in his lungs, and keeping my preschooler well so that he didn't expose his younger brother to any germs, led to extreme physical and mental exhaustion. And then, one April day at the age of nineteen months, he was gone. No longer on the treadmill of frenzied activity, I didn't know how to deal with my profoundly silent life. I was filled with bitterness, anger, disillusionment, and despair. In late August, out of the blue, I received a call from a stranger. Nancy explained that she taught remedial reading at a local elementary school and was looking for another reading specialist to share her job by teaching her afternoon classes. I accepted, the school district approved me for the job, and over the years I have been so appreciative for that moment of Divine Intervention when God, in His glory, saw that although He couldn't remove my hurt, He could refocus my life and give me a reason for being.

*Dear Lord, Thank You for giving us the ability to recognize when You have entered our lives and make us mindful of our need to express our thanksgiving to You for these times. Thank You for watching over us. Amen.*

**Jo Tanner**