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Hope Not Fear

Our children and young people face a very uncertain future. Surrounded by daily media reports of global terrorism, they are learning to live in fear. A trusted and respected MP has been murdered in the heart of her constituency in the middle of the day. We have just made a referendum decision that they were too young to be part of, but the consequences of which will define their lives for decades to come. Many experience broken family relationships and broken homes that leave them living with the chronic anxiety that pain and instability engender. They are under constant pressure to pass tests, meet targets and achieve goals in order to get into the best universities and secure lucrative careers. Others, in a fragile, recovering economy, see no prospect of stable, meaningful employment. So, where is there hope for this next generation?

The ancient prophet Jeremiah had a message about hope. The brightest and best of the Israelite people had been captured and taken into exile. A puppet King had been left to rule over the remainder of the nation and their wealth had been ransacked. But Jeremiah gave his people a message from God. "'For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future"' (Jeremiah chapter 29 verse 11, NIV).

God invited the people of Israel to put their trust in Him and to worship Him as their God. And the same invitation extends to us today. If we trust God, we don't need to fear, because we can be secure in the knowledge that God has promised us hope and a future. And that promise is for all of us, young and old alike.