With God there is always hope

But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. (Lamentations 3:21-23, NRSV).

We live in troubled times. All around us we see the impact of sin on our world; massacres, drug overdoses, war, refugees, tragic accidents, severe weather events, and the list goes on. In our times of trouble and despair it can seem that all hope is lost. But for those that have faith in God, hope is never far away. As the prophet Jeremiah wrote, we see God’s faithfulness every morning. We have a god of hope.

I spent the long weekend with my family at our favourite seaside holiday spot. It was the weekend after the severe storms that had lashed the coast. Arriving after dark on Friday meant I couldn’t see the impact of the storm until the morning, but it was immediately apparent as I went for a walk. The grass from our caravan site down to the beach was covered in shells, pebbles and sand. The park managers told me that the waves came up across where our caravan now was - this was at least three metres above the normal high tide! The force was so strong it carried a block of stone into the park that took two men to lift! Walking around the point which was now rock where it had been sand I looked down the beach and could immediately see the impact of the waves. Sand dunes had disappeared. There was a pile of seaweed about two metres high and three across that stretched for 100 metres or more. The beach was littered with plastic, cans and clothing that had been lost last summer. Even an earthmover tyre had found its way up on to the sand. It was a mess.

But looking beyond the mess at the high tide mark was a different sight. The sand was flat and clean, the water pristine. Small waves rolled in. The sea was like glass, flattened out by a gentle south-west wind. It was then that I was reminded of God’s steadfast love. He had made it all new again. He had restored balance to this part of his creation. I could see that not everything would be the same again - it would take a big effort to clean up the mess and the sand dunes could take years to reform, but I was comforted knowing that there were many aspects that were just as they should be. There was hope that everything would return to normal.

We all have storms in our life - those events that shake us, those changes that we are fearful of. But as followers of God we are people of hope - for we know that whatever might change, God’s love is with us always. His mercies never end. They are new every morning.