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The biblical image that resonates with me at this moment in the life of the church comes from the 18th chapter of the prophet Jeremiah. It's the image of the potter and the clay. We see this image also in Isaiah 45, and in the ninth chapter of Romans, but I liked the way Jeremiah presents it. Jeremiah, the prophet who God shows the reality of how lamentations and life abundant lives side by side. Jeremiah hears an invitation from God to go down to the potter's house to get a word for God's people.

So, he gets there, and he sees the potter at the wheel working the clay. He watches the potter remake the clay. The clay is being reworked because the Bible says it was marred, that is the clay had some hindrances. It needed some refinement to please the potter, and that is true of the church right now.

We are unfinished. We have some hindrances, but the potter doesn't condemn or discard the clay. The potter keeps working with the clay. The clay stays in the potter's, limitations at all. The potter doesn't withdraw. We should remember that. We are forever in God's able hands. The potter isn't done with the clay and the potter isn't done with the church.

God is a patient and skilled potter. Most profoundly, the potter is reworking the clay as seems good to the potter. That is the centerpiece of our hope and our faith. And at this critical inflection point in the life of the church, I think we need the presiding bishop in partnership with a whole host of others to remind us of at least three things.

First, we're the clay and not the potter. Secondly, that God hasn't forsaken us, and the church isn't really dying. The church is being refashioned into forms that please God and do the word God wants us to do. And thirdly, God is right now extending an invitation for us to be remade as individuals and as a church, into malleable clay, which is more

than historic bricks could ever be. Remade by God on the wheel of time with the example of Jesus and through the power of the Holy Spirit. Our part of this difficult, even painful, refashioning is to offer ourselves our systems of souls and bodies to a trustworthy God who is reworking Christ Church into more than we can ask or imagine according to the faith at work in us.