

Building The House

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[0 : 0 0] Well, if we could with the Lord's help and the Lord's enabling this morning, if we could turn back to that portion of scripture that we read in the book of the prophet Haggai and chapter one.

Haggai chapter one, and if we read again at verse seven, Haggai chapter one at verse seven, thus says the Lord of hosts, consider your ways, go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house that I may take pleasure in it and that I may be glorified, says the Lord.

But particularly the words, build the house that I may take pleasure in it and that I may be glorified, says the Lord.

Build the house. You know, the last time Barbra's free church was closed for a lengthy period of time was during the 1930s.

But back then the church wasn't closed because of a pandemic. It was closed due to extensive renovation work being carried out in the building. And during the early 1930s, the roof of the church was raised and the balcony that some of you are sitting in this morning, it was put in with the staircases going up on either side and then the roof was reslated and some of the interior of the church was refurbished.

[1 : 2 4] And whilst these renovation works were being carried out in the church, the congregation all had to vacate and they went across the road to this makeshift building. It was a corrugated iron building just across the road.

You'll see it when you go outside. And its foundation is still there to this day. And you know, I actually always thought that that foundation of the zinc church as it was called, I always thought the foundation was actually a fank until I read the history of it in that Pranikin booklet.

But you know, in 1933, when the renovation work was complete, the church was officially reopened and on the occasion of reopening, the address that was given was taken from this text, Haggai 1, verses seven and eight.

Thus says the Lord of hosts, consider your ways. Go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house that I may take pleasure in it and that I may be glorified, says the Lord.

You know, the reason I want us to consider this text this morning is not out of any sentimental reason, but I want us to be reminded as the congregation in 1933 were reminded that they were sitting in the same pews that you're sitting in this morning.

[2 : 3 7] But I want us to be reminded that the call and the command of the Lord is still the same. As you know, God's word, it's a living word. And the God of that word, he's still speaking to us.

He's still speaking to us in the same way that he spoke to those in a previous generation, because the Lord spoke to these words. He spoke these words, first of all, to the congregation of Israel in their day and generation.

The Lord spoke to the congregation of Barvis Free Church in 1933, to their day and generation. And today, the Lord is speaking to us as a congregation of Barvis Free Church and the Lord is bringing before us the same call and the same command in our day and generation.

Build the house that I may take pleasure in it, that my name may be glorified. But you know, the question I want us to think about this morning as we reopen the church and resume public worship after nine months, the question I want us to think about is, what is the Lord calling us to build?

What is the Lord calling us to build? And I want to suggest this morning that the Lord is calling us to build a structural house, a spiritual house, and a special house.

[3 : 55] The Lord is calling us to build a structural house, a spiritual house, and a special house. So there are three headings this morning.

So first of all, a structural house. A structural house, thus says the Lord of hosts, consider your ways. Go up to the hills and bring wood and build a house that I may take pleasure in it and that I may be glorified, says the Lord.

Now, the period in Israel's history in which this short book finds itself, it comes after the Israelites had returned to the promised land of Israel after being in exile in Babylon.

So remember that the Israelites, they were in Babylon for 70 years because of the Lord's chastening. The Lord had sent them into exile because of their disobedience, because in these years preceding the exile into Babylon, the Lord had sent prophet after prophet after prophet.

He had sent them to speak to the nation and call the Israelites to repentance, but they didn't listen. Despite the frequent warnings, the Israelites, they repeatedly failed to turn away from the right on the tree.

[5 : 06] And the Lord promised that judgment would come if they didn't repent and turn back to the Lord. But still the nation didn't listen. And so in 586 BC, the nation of Israel and in particular the city of Jerusalem, it was invaded by the Babylonian King, Nebuchadnezzar.

And the Israelites, they were taken captive and they were taken into exile in Babylon. Within Babylon, the Israelites, they were made to be there and they were made to live in a foreign land.

They were made to be under the rule of a foreign king and even worship foreign gods. And I was there in Babylon that the Israelites were reminded that our chief end is not to glorify and enjoy self.

They were reminded that our chief end is to glorify and enjoy God. And it was after 70 years of exile in Babylon that God in His mercy, He allowed a Persian king by the name of Cyrus to overthrow the powers of Babylon.

And then Cyrus, he issued a decree authorizing the Israelites to return to Jerusalem, to restore their city and to rebuild the temple. And as you'd expect on the return, when all these Israelites began returning to their homeland, as you'd expect on the return to rebuild and to restore what had been torn down during a previous generation, the Israelites, they returned home with this hope of a new beginning.

[6 : 36] They returned with this excitement and enthusiasm and eagerness and this energy to get to work and see the city rebuilt and the temple restored.

And on the return, everything looked so positive. Everything was so promising because the Israelites, they began to clear the site. They began to get rid of all the old debris and then start laying the new foundations.

But as we see here in this book, it wasn't long until they ran into problems. And that's what we're told in verse one. In the second year of Darius, the king in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came by the hand of Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel, the son of Sheltiel, the governor of Judah, and to Joshua, the son of Jehoshetak, the high priest.

The prophet Haggai, he opens his book giving to us the exact date when the Lord spoke to him, which was actually 15 years after the Israelites had returned from Babylon.

So they had been in Jerusalem for 15 years. It had been 15 years since the Israelites had returned home to rebuild and to restore the temple.

[7 : 50] But what we see here is that 15 years on, the work of rebuilding the city and the work of restoring the temple, it was all at a standstill. And you know, we might question, well, what was the problem?

What was holding the work back? It's been 15 years. Why was the temple not rebuilt by now? Because the first temple had only took seven years to build. And then in verse two, we're given our answer.

Thus says the Lord of hosts, these people say the time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the Lord. The reason the temple was still in ruins was because the people claimed that the time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the Lord.

They said the time has not yet come. But the truth is the time had come. The time had come. That was the very reason the Israelites had returned to Jerusalem in the first place because the time had come to rebuild the temple.

In fact, when the Israelites returned from exile in Babylon, they believed that they had learned from the past. They believed that they wanted a fresh start. They wanted a new beginning.

[8 : 59] And when they returned, as we said, they came back with so much excitement and enthusiasm and eagerness and they had all this energy and they wanted to love the Lord more deeply and walk with the Lord more closely and serve the Lord more faithfully.

They had this desire to get to work and to dedicate their lives to the worship of God and to the glory of his name. My friend, when the Israelites returned, they had every good intention of rebuilding and restoring the temple.

But what we see is that sadly, all their passion, all their plans, all their purposes, it quickly petered out and the Lord revealed to Haggai what the problem was.

It is in verse three. Then the word of the Lord came by the hand of Haggai the prophet. Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses while this house lies in ruins?

Do you know, my friend, the heart of the problem is always the problem of the heart because, you know, on their return, instead of rebuilding the city, restoring the temple, rededicating their lives to the Lord, the Israelites, what they did on their return was that they rebuilt their houses.

[10 : 14] They restored their homes. They rededicated their lives to themselves while the Lord's house lay in ruins. In fact, the Israelites, they tried to make their own houses so grand and so glorious to look like Solomon's palace.

That's what they modeled it on, Solomon's palace before it was destroyed. You know, the only other house in the Bible, which as it says there in verse four, had paneled houses and was finally decorated.

The only other house in the Bible was Solomon's palace. My friend, the reason the Lord's house was still in ruins after 15 years because it was because the priority of the people had changed.

The priority of the people had changed. They were no longer focused and fixated with the Lord's house. Rather they had become content, comfortable and complacent.

The Israelites, they weren't committed to the Lord or to his house. They were no longer seeking first the kingdom of God, which left the temple lying in ruins.

[11 : 20] And so throughout the prophet, throughout this book of the prophet Haggai, the Lord spoke to his people and he challenged them. He challenged their complacency.

He confronted their commitment. We're told in verse five, the Lord says, now therefore thus says the Lord of hosts, consider your ways.

You have so much and harvested little. You eat, but you never have enough. You drink, but you never have your fill. You cloth yourselves, but no one is warm. And he who earns wages does so to put them into a bag with holes.

Thus says the Lord, consider your ways. And you'll notice that the Lord called and commanded the congregation to consider their ways twice, not once, but twice, emphasizing this need to examine themselves.

They were to undergo self examination. Thus says the Lord, consider your ways. And you know, my friend, the congregation, they were to examine their head, their heart and their hand.

[12 : 26] They were to examine their mindset, their mission and their motive. They were to examine their contentment, their complacency and their commitment. In other words, they were to examine what they were before the Lord.

They were to consider what their relationship was like before the Lord, because the congregation, they were seeking satisfaction, security and salvation in all the wrong places.

The congregation were seeking satisfaction, security and salvation in all the wrong places. And the Lord says to them, consider your ways. And you know, my friend, these words might be over two and a half thousand years old, but they're still as relevant for us in our day and generation.

Because like it was for the congregation of Israel, the command and the call is still the same. The command and the call for this congregation is still the same.

We need to consider our ways. We should examine. I should examine my head, heart and hand. We should all examine our mindset, our mission and our motives.

[13 : 34] We should all examine our contentment, our complacency and our commitment to the Lord. We should examine ourselves because it's good for us to examine ourselves.

In fact, Paul reminded the church that self-examination is a necessity. Therefore we should, as the Lord says, consider our ways.

We should consider our ways and maybe ask ourselves that whilst we've been living in exile, you could say, whilst we've been away from the Lord's house, have we been influenced and intoxicated by the world?

Have we become cold and casual and complacent in our commitment to the Lord? Have we been seeking satisfaction and security and safety and salvation in other places?

The Lord is saying to us, to us, consider your ways. Consider your ways. And you know, if we were to have seen the temple, if we were to have seen it all deserted and dead, like lying in ruins, we may have been tempted to think that there were structural problems with it.

[14 : 47] But as you know, the problems weren't structural. The problems were all spiritual because the Lord was not only calling and commanding the congregation to build a structural house.

He was calling and commanding the congregation to build a spiritual house, which brings us to consider secondly, a spiritual house.

A structural house and a spiritual house. What is it that the Lord is calling us to build? He's calling us to build secondly, a spiritual house. Thus says the Lord of hosts, consider your ways.

Go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house that I may take pleasure in it and that I may be glorified, says the Lord.

Now as you know, these verses, verses seven and eight in Haggai chapter one, they're particularly precious to me because they were the verses which the Lord used to confirm my call to come to be the minister in Barvis.

[15 : 49] I'm sure that many of you have mentioned this to you before already. And you know that whenever I go through what I'll say that most ministers go through, whenever I question my call, whenever I'm struggling with doubts and that does happen, whenever I have struggles of discouragement and leaving the devil on my back, whenever I think that I should never have become a minister and I want to give up all together.

And there were times over the past few months that that was the case even the past week. And yet, you know, I'm always brought back to my call and this command in God's word, build the house that I may take pleasure in it, that my name may be glorified.

I told you before that when I was a student for the ministry, I did a placement here in Barvis. I was back in 2013. And one evening I preached on these verses and after the service, it was highlighted to me by the session clerk that this was the opening address, as we mentioned earlier, this was the opening address in 1933.

And with that I asked the Lord that if the Lord was going to call me to Barvis that He would use these verses. And it was, I thought about it, prayed about it and left it with the Lord.

And then I went back to college for the final semester and well every day after college we would have worship after lunch. And we started reading through the book of Exodus.

[17 : 19] And so on Tuesday we read Exodus 1, on Wednesday we read Exodus 2, on Thursday we read Exodus 3. And on Friday you would expect the professor who always took worship on a Friday, you would expect him to read Exodus 4.

But instead he stood up, John McIntosh, Professor John McIntosh, he stood up and he announced that we're going to read from Haggai chapter 1. And in the professor's reading of the passage, as he was reading through it, he stopped at verses 7 and 8 and he stressed to the college, a college of ministry students, he stressed to them that these words are relevant for us as a church today.

That preachers of God's word, as preachers of God's word he said, we're to urge the people of God in a day and generation where God's word is not central.

He says we're to work with them and we're to build the house that God's name may be glorified. And that people would take pleasure in the name of God.

And you know from that moment I knew that the Lord was calling me here. And to this day that text is precious to me. And it should be precious to you as well. And you know until that text is taken from me and the Lord calls me somewhere else, I will remain here.

[18 : 35] But you know the Lord is calling and commanding us to build a spiritual house. Yes, a structural house of God is important. But as we've been reminded over the past few months, the church is not a building of bricks and mortar.

The church is the people of God. And as the people of God, whether we're here or at home, we gather around the word of God to worship the name of God.

Therefore, our satisfaction, our security and our salvation is not to be found in a structural house. It's to be found in a spiritual house. You know that's why Peter said to the first century church, he encouraged them and he exhorted them to remember that they are living stones and which are to be built up into a spiritual house, which is to offer spiritual sacrifices that are holy and acceptable unto God through Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my friend, as we return to church, do you know where to return with? Excitement and enthusiasm and eagerness and energy so that we will endeavor to be built up as a spiritual house.

Because you know, sadly, what happened to the congregation in Israel that can happen to any congregation, the congregation in Israel, when they had the call and the command to to construct the temple, it was only met with apathy and arrogance.

[20 : 08] The Lord had called and commanded the congregation to consider their ways to build the house, but they didn't because they were content. They were comfortable. They were complacent. They were lacking commitment.

And from the outside, the temple ruins may have looked like a structural problem, but it was all a spiritual problem. It was a problem of the heart because the congregation of Israel, they were reluctant.

They were refusing to rebuild the house. They claimed it's not time to rebuild the house of the Lord. But you know, the reason they claim that it's not time to rebuild and restore and reopen the house of the Lord was because they were too focused upon the past rather than the present and the future.

And that's actually picked up in chapter two. You can read it for yourself when you go home. In chapter two, Haggai asks the older generation in the congregation, he asks them, who is left among you who saw this house in its former glory?

And how do you see it now? Is it not as nothing in your eyes? Who is left among you who saw this house in its former glory? And how do you see it now?

[21 : 23] You know, my friend, the work of building a structural and spiritual house, it stopped because the older generation said it's never going to be like it was before.

And as the congregation of Israel stood around the ruins of the temple, the older generation wept while the younger generation wanted to get to work.

The older generation wept while the younger generation wanted to get to work. The older generation who had returned from exile, they were now in their 70s. They were in their 80s.

Some of them maybe even in their 90s. And they all remembered going to the temple as a child. They all remembered what it was like to go in the throng of people up to the temple for all these festivals where they all gathered together for worship and sang the Lord's songs together.

They saw the temple in its former glory. But now all they could see in the present was ruin and rubble. And the older generation, they wept understandably.

[22 : 28] But they wept while the younger generation wanted to get to work. Because the younger generation who had been born during the exile in Babylon, well, they never saw the temple in its former glory.

They would have certainly heard about the history. They would have heard about it from the older generation. They would have heard about the good old days and what had happened and what they did.

But my friend, the reason the work of building a structural and spiritual house stopped was because the congregation of Israel, the congregation of Israel, the older generation wept while the younger generation wanted to work.

And you know, it should be a warning to us. The book of Haggai is a warning to us as a congregation that even though the church as we know it was like nine months ago, even though it'll be different now, even though we're not able to sing at present, even though we're all masked up, even though church is not what it was nine months ago.

And we may never go back to the way it was, despite all that. But you know, the book of Haggai is reminding us is that both the older and the younger generation, we need to work together.

[23 : 45] We need to work together to do what the Lord is commanding us and calling us to do. The house that I may take pleasure in it, that my name may be glorified.

And you know, I know that as an older generation, it can be so easy to look back at the past. It can be easy to remember the former glory.

It can be easy to think about the bygone era that was so good back then. And yes, it was good. Nobody's denying that. And yes, it's good to look back at the past.

It's good to think of former glory. It's good to know our history as a church. It's good to learn about the Reformation and the disruption and the great awakening and the revival that was in this community.

It's good to know all these things. But you know, these things should only cause us to learn from the past. Never to live in the past.

[24 : 41] Because we need to learn from the past. That's what the book of Haggai is telling us. We need to learn from the past, live in the present and look to the future. As a congregation, we need to make sure we don't make the same mistakes as the congregation of Israel.

A congregation that didn't follow the Lord's call and didn't follow the Lord's command to build the house. Because the older generation wept while the younger generation wanted to work.

That's why as a congregation, we always need to be examining. Self-examination, examining our head, our heart, our hand. We need to be examining our mindset, our mission and our motives.

We need to be examining our contentment, our complacency and our commitment to the Lord. You know my friend, we always need to be scrutinizing where it is we are seeking satisfaction and security and salvation.

So that both the younger and the older generations will seek to build a structural and spiritual house for God's glory. And you know in many ways, that was one of the reasons the church session was keen to reopen and resume public worship.

[25 : 57] Not least because we had carried out a risk assessment and thought it was safe to do so. But you know also because we were conscious that there's already a lost generation in our community that doesn't want to come to church.

And the longer we remained closed, there was always that niggling concern that we would lose the next generation too. Therefore as a congregation, we want to build a structural house.

We want to build a spiritual house for God's glory. One that will seek and strive to bring the gospel to this generation and the next generation and the next generation after that.

Because we need to have a care and a compassion and a concern for those who are coming behind us. We need to have a burden for lost souls.

We need to learn from the past, live in the present and look to the future. And you know that was actually the vision that Spurgeon had when he was a minister in the metropolitan Tabernacle in London during the 19th century.

[27 : 05] Spurgeon taught his congregation the same thing. I mean to learn from the past, live in the present and look to the future. Spurgeon achieved that by publishing a Christian magazine in 1865 called The Sword and the Troll.

The Sword and the Troll. And to this day, The Sword and the Troll, it continues to be published on a quarterly basis. You can sign up to it if you wish. You can get all the magazines.

But you know it's the title of the magazine that's so interesting. The Sword and the Troll. Of course, Spurgeon, he gave it that title in order to remind the Christian that their role is twofold.

Because as a Christian, you're not only to be a soldier in a battlefield. You're also to be a builder on a work site. Because the tools of our trade, the tools of our trade are the sword and the Troll.

You know, it's based upon the words of Nehemiah chapter 4. The same period that Haggai was ministering in, that whilst the people were rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, in a sense they had a Troll and a sword.

[28 : 17] They had the sword and the Troll as they built the house and as they built the walls together. And my friend, we've not only been called and commanded to fight the good fight with the sword, which is the word of God, but we've also been called and commanded to build the house.

We're to build the house, says the Lord, build the house that I may take pleasure in it, that my name may be glorified. And what that means is that as Christians, we're to be committed Christians.

We're to be dedicated disciples. We're to be earnest evangelists. Because with the sword and the Troll, the Lord is calling us and commanding us to build a structural house, a spiritual house.

And lastly, we see a special house, a special house. Let's read again in verse 7.

Thus says the Lord, consider your ways, go up to the hills and bring the wood and build the house and take pleasure in it, that my name may be glorified, says the Lord.

[29 : 25] Do you know, we often say that Jesus is on every page of the Bible. He's concealed in the Old Testament, but revealed in the New Testament.

And that's certainly true when it comes to the book of Haggai. Because the book of Haggai, it concludes with this promise of a special house, where the Lord promises and he proclaims through his prophet that the glory of the latter house will be greater than the glory of the former house.

The glory of the latter house will be greater than the glory of the former house. And as you know, the glory of the former house, it was concealed in the Old Testament in the form of the temple.

But the glory of the latter house was revealed in the New Testament in the Person of Jesus Christ. Because Jesus, as the Bible explains, Jesus was the special house.

He was the special house who was promised. In fact, Jesus was the special house, which the Lord had promised to King David long before the exile had even taken place.

[30 : 34] Because we're told in 2 Samuel 7, the Lord said to David way back in 2 Samuel 7, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body and I will establish his kingdom.

He shall build a house for my name and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be to him a father and he shall be to me a son.

So the Lord promised his people a special house, a special house that we would be revealed so that the glory of that special house would be made known to lost sinners.

And you know, that's what John tells us in his gospel. That's what we were studying over the past number of weeks, that when Jesus arrived, the word who was in the beginning with God and was God, that same word became flesh and dwelt among us and we have seen what his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

My friend, the Lord promised and proclaimed that a special house would be revealed in the portion of Jesus Christ. But what's interesting is that our special house, which is Jesus, he calls us to build our house on solid rock.

[31 : 51] You remember Jesus's words in the Sermon on the Mount. Everyone who hears my words and does them is like a wise man who built his house on rock.

When the rain falls and the floods come and the winds blow and beat on the house, it will not fall, he says, because it has been founded on the rock. And Jesus calls us to build our house upon the rock, upon the rock of his special house.

And upon that rock, Jesus says, we have to lay up for ourselves, treasures not here, but in heaven. Do not lay up for yourselves, treasures on earth, says Jesus, where moth and rust destroy, where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves, treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, where thieves cannot break in and steal, for Jesus says, where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

You're my friend, Jesus calls and commands us to build our house upon the rock of his special house, because he's building a special house.

That's what we need to be reminded this morning. He is building a special house. And that's what he affirmed when he said to his disciples in John 14. He said, let not your heart be troubled.

[33 : 08] You believe in God, believe also in me, in my father's house, or many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you, I go to prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am there, you may be also.

And you know, and with this I'll close, you know what I love about those words in John 14. Is that they're the words that describe what a groom would say to his bride before he married her.

You know, the couple are in love, the groom proposes, then they get engaged. And when they get engaged, the groom, he would return home.

He would return home to his father's house and build a house for his bride to live with him when they're married. The groom, he wouldn't build a new house or buy a new house like most newly married couples do.

[34 : 11] The house would actually be an extension onto the father's house. And that's what Jesus was alluding to in John 14 when he said, in my father's house are many mansions.

Jesus is saying, I'm preparing a place for you. I'm building a special house for those who are part of the household of faith. I'm building a place for you so that when I come, I will receive you unto myself that where I am there, you may be also.

And you know, this morning, my friend, the Lord is calling and commanding us. He's calling and commanding us to build on solid rock. We're to build a structural house.

We're to build a spiritual house and we're to build a special house that's fashioned and founded upon the rock which cannot move. The Lord Jesus Christ, who better to build upon than this Jesus?

And so, my friend, as a congregation, let us take heed to this call.

[35 : 18] Let us take heed to this command to build the house. That's what the Lord is saying. Thus says the Lord.

Consider your ways. Build the house that I may take pleasure in it. That my name may be glorified. So let's build the house as a congregation to gather.

Well, may the Lord bless these thoughts to us. Let us pray. O Lord, our gracious God, enable us as those who are weak and frail and often fainting.

Help us to pick up the trowel and to build this house that thy name may be glorified. O Lord, we pray that as we go forth from here that we would seek to do everything to thy glory, that we would build firmly upon that solid rock which cannot move, that we would not be like the foolish man who built his house upon the sand, but that we would be wise.

That we would listen to what Jesus is saying, that we would obey his call and follow his command and build the house. That the name of God would be lifted on high and that as Jesus is lifted up, he will draw sinners to himself.

[36 : 41] O Lord, bless us then we pray. Guide us we ask as a congregation. Lead us day by day by thy spirit that everything that we do and everything we say would ultimately be to thy glory and the furtherance of thy kingdom.

Go before us then we pray and do us good for Jesus' sake. Amen. Well, we're going to bring our service to a conclusion this morning by considering the words of Psalm 2027.

Psalm 27 is in the sing Psalms version on page 32, Psalm 27 from verse 4 down to the verse Mark 6.

And in the Psalm David is confessing that the Lord is his light and his salvation. And as he comes to verse 4, his longing is that he'll dwell in the house of God forever and that it's there that he'll gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and find shelter in his temple.

Psalm 27 from verse 4, one thing I'll plead before the Lord and this I'll seek always that I may come within God's house and dwell there all my days that on the beauty of the Lord I constantly make gaze and in his house may seek to know direction in his ways.

[38 : 08] So we'll consider the words of Psalm 27 from verse 4 down to the verse Mark 6 to God's praise. Psalm 27 from verse 4, one thing I'll plead before the Lord and this I'll seek always that I may come within God's house and dwell there all my days that on the beauty of the Lord I constantly make gaze and in his house may seek to know direction in his ways.

So then this welling he will be, he save his brother, this within his debt he'll shelter in his house and dwell there all my days that on the beauty of the Lord I constantly make gaze and in his name the sun will rise which shines all joy and grace.

We'll conclude with a benediction. Let's stand. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forevermore.

Amen.