

Summer Preaching Series
Preparing to Build: A Look at Ezra Nehemiah

Unusual Times: God's people had been away from their routine and away from their place of worship for a long time--70 years! We can honestly imagine how they may have felt, because our routines have been different and we have been away from worshipping together in our sanctuary since March and it feels like such a long time. We are grateful that our worship isn't limited to a place, but we all long to regather. We have questions about how things will go and what we might expect in the coming months. We believe God is inviting us to learn from the stories recorded in Ezra and Nehemiah to prepare us as a church for the days ahead.

God's Ways: We have to admit, it seemed a bit odd to us to begin to preach a series about building and growing the church in this season of shelter in place. However, the more we have studied and prayed, the more excited we are to engage this study as a church family. There are lessons about returning to an area, about the importance of God's presence and worship, about God and His faithfulness, about cooperating and working together toward common goals, and about how to resist opposition and press on despite difficulties. There are lessons about our need for godly leaders, for discipleship and pursuing holiness. And we will be reminded of the gift of salvation, how to pray when we meet opposition, and the great joy of significant mission accomplishment that results when everyone does their part and God brings the victory!

Careful Attention: We preached from Haggai earlier this year, a prophet who shows up in Ezra. Haggai repeatedly urged God's people to give careful consideration to their ways as they heeded God's call to get busy and work! We are excited to dig into the books of Ezra and Nehemiah with you this summer. We believe God is calling us at Gold Avenue Church to give careful consideration to how we build so that as we move forward in unity, the gospel of Jesus Christ will transform our hearts, our neighborhood and the world.

Preparing for Revival: Yes, with the covid virus, it seems daunting to think about trying to advance God's kingdom. Yet, the exiles must have felt similarly as they considered going back to rebuild the temple and walls of Jerusalem. We believe God will again revive his people and add to our number as He has done in the past. This 16 sermon series will include a scripture reading plan to help you prepare. **Will you commit to listen faithfully to and apply prayerfully these summer messages as Gold Avenue Church finds herself Preparing to Build?**