



new life fellowship

Sermon Title: A Season of Rebuilding
Speaker: Richard Villodas, Lead Pastor
Scripture: Nehemiah 1:1-3

The words of Nehemiah son of Hakaliah:

In the month of Kislev [that is December] in the twentieth year [i.e., of Artaxerxes], while I was in the citadel of Susa [the winter capital of Persia], ² Hanani, one of my brothers, came from Judah with some other men, and I questioned them about the Jewish remnant that had survived the exile, and also about Jerusalem.

³ They said to me, "Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire."

(NIV)

Sermon Outline:

Today is Vision Sunday where we hear about the identity and vision of New Life as a community. We are in a season of rebuilding, in our own lives and in the life of our church community.

The book of Nehemiah is about rebuilding and finding a framework for rebuilding and restoring.

We are in a moment in our life and world where God is letting us know that we need to focus on the disrepair of the life of our church. How can we be a church that pleases God and is working towards rebuilding and restoration?

Five words to help with rebuilding:

- Lament. Any type of rebuilding takes time to lament. We live in a society that does not allow time for us to lament.
- Burden: God invites us to create something new that doesn't exist in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Community: Anything worth doing is going to require a community to come together and work together.
- Resistance: We should expect resistance when we are trying to rebuild in the name of Jesus.
- Resilience: God wants to instill resilience in us so that we can keep going in the face of resistance.

Values and areas of focus that will lead the New Life community to rebuilding: our 5Ms:

- Monastic: You were made for communion with God.
- Multiracial: Your love for neighbors, especially the neighbor who is very different from you, is proof of your love for God.
- Marriage to Christ: Your sexuality is to be connect not separated from your spiritual life.
- Missional: You have a mission to bring healing to the world on the name of Jesus.
- eMotional Health: Jesus want to transform every aspect of our lives, especially our inner life.

The goal of our church is love, not diversity. There are many places that are diverse but do not have love.

We are called to be the people who Jesus has called us to be in this part of the world, to the glory of his name.

Sermon Summary:

This Sunday, Richard Villodas, Lead Pastor, leads us in Vision Sunday which is one day a year that we take to focus on our identity and mission as a church family.

Sermon Questions:

1. Do you feel an invitation from Christ in today's scripture passage? Do any of the words resonate with you? If so, why?
2. What are the things in your life that are broken down and need rebuilding? Where are there areas of your life that need to be repaired? Cry out to God, with your needs and requests so that God can transform those areas of your life.
3. God wants us to bring our lament to him. Where are you lamenting or where do you need to lament? Can you offer your grief and sadness to God in a way that you open yourself to God in a fresh way?
4. When God puts a burden in our life, it could be that He is pointing you in a certain way, down a certain path. Do you feel as though God has given you a burden right now and is leading you down a certain path?
5. Do you feel God is calling you to be part of the New Life Fellowship community? Maybe you feel led to volunteer with one of our ministries, are you interested in leading a small group, or do you want to get involved with the Community Development Corporation?
6. Are you presently practicing any of our monastic values? Do you have a regular rhythm of silence and solitude with God? Or maybe you are observing a Sabbath day? If you are not already practicing any of these values, make time to start this week.
7. Are you able to love your neighbor who looks and sounds different from you? If you are not able to do this, be honest about the reason you are not. Where and how can you start working towards loving your neighbor this week?