

| FINDING NEW RHYTHMS OF LIFE |

A NEW

NORMAL

Then Haggai, the messenger of the Lord, spoke to the people with the Lord's message, saying, I am with you, says the Lord. Haggai 1:13

Announcement

Aug 9 (Sun) HOME Worship Service

Aug 12 (Wed) Reopening Meeting

UG: 07:00 pm @ UG Fellowship Hall

WG: 05:00 pm @ Willow Grove Lake
(2626 West Weymouth Rd, Newfield, NJ 08344)

Aug 16 (Sun) Food Collection for *Mission Teens*

Drop-off Location/Hour: Union Grove UMC / 9am-4pm, Aug 15 (Sat)

Aug 9 (Sun) Jean Claypool's Birthday | Noah Gaburo's Birthday

Aug 12 (Wed) Rachel Kwon's Birthday

Aug 14 (Fri) Matthew Davis' Birthday

Opening Hymn (UMH 400)

Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing (<https://youtu.be/la54zXaYqco>)

Call to Worship

Over the turbulent waves in our lives, Jesus calls us.
We get so busy watching the waves, we block out Jesus' call.

Look again. Jesus is calling to you.

Lord, help us hear your voice.

Come, place your trust in Jesus.

Lord, forgive our doubts, receive our lives. AMEN.

Hymn of Praise (UMH 140)

Great Is Thy Faithfulness (<https://youtu.be/ErwiBz1QA4o>)

Morning Prayer

Life seems to get crazy sometimes. We love the smooth times when all is well, but, O Lord, we have serious problems with wind and waves. Be with us, loving God. Remind us to place our focus on Jesus, who calls us to trust in his mercy and care. Keep the needs of others in our hearts and minds; needs for healing, for comfort, for friendship. Help us to reach out to them and offer our gifts and service in your name. As you have loved and healed us, so we ask your healing mercies on these whom we have named. We also ask your guidance and patience with us as we march through the last weeks of summer. Confident in Jesus' love for us, we pray. AMEN.

Psalter Reading

Psalm 62 _ UMH 787

Scripture Reading

Zechariah 8:4-13

Message

A NEW NORMAL _ "Finding New Hope of Life"

Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/thegroveschurches/>)

Website (<https://groveschurches.org/>)

Affirmation of Faith

The Apostles' Creed _ UMH 881

Offering

*Offering (CHECK) by mail to:

UGUMC _ Krissi Reed (50 Burt St, Bridgeton NJ 08302)

WGUMC _ Cheryl Fox (1940 Coles Mill Rd, Franklinville NJ 08322)

**Offering by ONLINE:

<http://www.gnjumc.org/onlinegiving> Or <http://groveschurches.org>

UGUMC Church number: 9068 (Norma)

WGUMC Church number: 9071 (Pittsgrove)

Closing Song

Shout to the Lord (https://youtu.be/gn5CMSSAx_c)

Benediction

[PRAYER REQUEST] _ Let us pray together.

1. For all the congregation of Groves Ministries.

Lord, surround us with Your divine hedge of protection. Encompass us round about with Your strength and Your might. May You shelter us, that those who love Your name may exult in You.

2. For our nation and the world.

Lord, we pray for our nation and the whole world during the pandemic. Grant Your peace, Your comfort, and Your healing. Be with us, Lord. Amen.

| FINDING NEW HOPE OF LIFE |

So I will save you and you shall be a blessing. Do not be afraid, but let your hands be strong. Zechariah 8:13

Groves
Ministries

A NEW NORMA

Zechariah's name means "one whom [Yahweh] remembers." He is both priest and prophet and encourages the people by painting a detailed picture of their hopeful future by comparing with the current destruction of the temple.

Zechariah was "a contemporary of Haggai the prophet, Zerubbabel, and Joshua, the high priest." The book is in the genre known as apocalyptic. This kind of literature "was meant to offer hope to a down cast people through describing the ultimate defeat of evil and victory of God for His people. In some ways apocalyptic literature is like parables in that it is meant to reveal and hide truth. Ezekiel calls his apocalyptic material parables".

When we see change, something unfamiliar, or destruction, it's hard to believe that God can redeem the situation and create beauty. God spoke to his people and encouraged them that there would be life again. He said that people would grow to be old again (v. 4) and the streets would be safe for children to play in again (v. 5). God reminds the listeners that he will be faithful and just, and that he calls the people his own (v. 8). Our minds and hearts sometimes struggle to see past what our eyes see. Frequent reminders that God is still on the throne and has our best interest in mind are helpful.

Giving ourselves time to adjust to our new normal is hard, but growth and production take time. Zechariah 8:12 mentions seeds growing well, vines yielding fruit, crop production, and rainy seasons—all of which take time. Sometimes we need to simply wait and allow ourselves to adjust.

God identifies us as "the remnant," an unfamiliar term to many. One lexicon defines it as "remaining part, survivors, especially after a slaughter". The concept of remnant can also be found in the Greek New Testament in Romans 11:5 [**So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace.**].

"Within a shrouded New Zealand forest, a tree stump keeps itself alive by holding onto the roots of its neighboring trees, exchanging water and resources through the grafted root system." Though the remnant stump appears dead, a grafting of roots underground connect the part that looks dead to the healthy trees. During times of significant change or stress, we can find solace and sustenance by remaining connected to the body of Christ. Just as Zechariah's name means "one whom [Yahweh] remembers," so we are known by God and supported through his people. It's wise to develop these roots (or maintain them) or connections to other people before times of stress occur.

[Some questions to think about:]

*What is one thing that stood out to you from this week's message?

*Consider how an apple tree farmer grafts his young trees to an established tree.
How has God grafted us into his family?

*What are you hopeful for in your future or your family's future?