



# Weekly Booster

## CHURCH STAFF

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### Pianist

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## Bells & Choir Directors

Dan & Linnea Shook

## Multimedia & Website

Jeff Hiser

## Sunday Media Booth

Alan Hutchison

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## Sunday Facebook Host

Craig Harris,

## Facebook Contributors

Pastor David B. Clark,

Barb Cunningham,

Craig Harris, Jeff Hiser

## Sunday Praise Team

Terry Stafford, Linda Haldane,

Margaret Brady, Deb Finlay,

Jeff Hiser, Drew Morelock,

Pastor David



## Habakkuk: A Man of Incredible Faith

The prophet Habakkuk lived at a time and in a world with many similarities to our own. There were frightening international tensions, the decline of one superpower and the rise of another, attendant anxiety and fear among smaller nations that tended to get trampled in the conflicts, and the confusion of political alignments and alliances. And, at the same time, the fracturing of moral and religious bonds and traditions was plaguing Judah's society with social dissolution and degradation.

It was a bad time. It was a baffling time. It was a world that was hard to understand. What did Habakkuk have to say about this situation? More importantly, what did God have to say about it?

## **Habakkuk's Unsettling World**

"Confusing" is a mild word for the state of the world during Habakkuk's life. It was a time filled with international, political, religious, and moral chaos and rampant unchecked evil.

**Internationally.** For several decades, the whole world of the ancient Near East had been in turmoil, with one empire collapsing and another rising to take its place. All of this was generating great fear and uncertainty, especially among the smaller nations who, like Judah, had gotten caught up in the rivalry of the great powers of Egypt and Mesopotamia. *Continued page 2.*

*“There is no better compass  
than compassion.”*  
Amanda Gorman

*“Stand before the people you  
feel and speak your mind—  
even if your voice shakes.”*  
Maggie Kuhn

### Reminders

#### January 5<sup>th</sup>

PK-6 S.S.— After Children’s Message  
Jr/Sr High S.S. – 10:30 a.m.  
Confirmation Class – 10:30 a.m.  
Communion Sunday

#### January 7<sup>th</sup>

Mat Making (Loom Room) 1:00 p.m.

#### January 8<sup>th</sup>

No Bible Study – 11:00 a.m.  
Praise Team – 5:00 p.m.  
Choir Practice – 5:30 p.m.  
Bell Choir Practice – 6:30 p.m.

#### January 9<sup>th</sup>

T.O.P.S.

Meals-On-Wheels Deliveries

\*\*Worship Assistants are needed  
for January & February 2025

\*\* Fellowship Volunteers needed  
sign-up in Fellowship Hall

### Habakkuk - Continued from page 1.

Habakkuk turns to God in the midst of that world—a world he could not understand—with those fears and questions tormenting his mind.

**Nationally.** Although King Josiah had made valiant efforts to bring about reformation in Judah, the country was still suffering the long-term legacy of the evil reign of King Manasseh (reigned 687–640 BC). During that long reign, the people had slid into increasing idolatry and evil practices of all kinds. Even though Josiah had achieved some major reforms and purged the nation of the outward trappings of other gods, he was soon followed by his son Jehoiakim, who tragically reversed Josiah’s policies and behaved in arrogant, ostentatious, and oppressive ways. It was probably during the reign of Jehoiakim when Habakkuk asked his questions.

**Socially and economically.** There was increasing poverty, social inequality, sexual dysfunction, arrogant exploitation by the “elite,” dispossession, and all the suffering that went with the loss of land and security (cf. Jeremiah 7 and 22). The country of Judah was descending into a spiral of increasing degradation and wickedness, while the perpetrators of these ills were boldly getting away with it. That was the trigger for Habakkuk’s opening complaint to God.

**Religiously.** There was a mixture of syncretistic worship of other gods (Jeremiah 2) and concurrently a paradoxically dangerous complacency in the assurance that Yahweh, the God of Israel, would always defend his city. God’s people thought they would be safe as long as they carried on their worship in the Lord’s temple, for God would never allow his temple to be destroyed. How wrong they were (Jeremiah 7)!

**Politically.** Because the international scene was so turbulent, the political alignment of Judah oscillated back and forth. There was constant conflict between the anti-Babylonian and pro-Babylonian parties in Jerusalem. The prophet Jeremiah suffered badly at the hands of the former party for going around saying that God had raised Nebuchadnezzar (as God had told Habakkuk) and that the best thing to do for the moment was to submit to that king. This was subversive speech and it made Jeremiah very unpopular, to say the least. Jeremiah narrowly escaped lynching and murder more than once. Other prophets were not so fortunate—check out Uriah (Jeremiah 26:20–23). Speaking truth to power was dangerous!

*Continued page 6.*



## Volunteers Needed



**LAST PERSON LEAVING**  
PLEASE TURN OUT LIGHTS  
AND LOCK DOORS

First United Methodist Church  
**Please wear your  
name tag on  
Sunday mornings**



### Church Ad Board Members

- Michelle Morelock - Chair*
- Mary Peterson - Secretary*
- Margaret Brady - Vice Chair & Trustee*
- Gary Milstead - Trustee*
- Roger Jones - SPRC*
- Open - Finance*
- Dave Lashier - Treasurer*
- Craig Harris - Lay Member to Annual Conference*
- Connie Anderson - Memorials*
- Linda Haldane - Membership*
- David Clark - Pastor*

## Church Office Hours

**\*\* Children & Jr.-Sr. High  
Sunday School –  
PK-6 during service,  
Jr/Sr High 10:30 a.m.**

**Wednesday**  
**\*\*Choir –5:30 pm**  
**\*\*Bell Choir –6:30 pm**

The front door to the church will be unlocked during office hours and closed only for errands and lunch.

**Monday**  
9:00-11:00  
12:00-3:00  
**Tuesday**  
9:00-11:00  
12:00-3:00  
**Wednesday**  
**CLOSED**  
**Thursday**  
9:00-11:00  
12:00-3:00  
**Friday**  
9:00-11:00  
12:00-3:00

Please continue to call in advance if you need in the church to make sure someone is in the office. If you reach the answering machine please leave your name, number, and a brief message and your call will be returned. Calls after 2:00 p.m. may be returned the next business day.



What was the position of Nehemiah in King Artaxerxes' Garden?

- a) Cupbearer
- b) Eunuch
- c) Baker
- d) Governor

From whom did Abraham ask his servant to find a wife for Isaac?

- a) Canaanite women
- b) Amorites
- c) Edomites
- d) His household

Who was the father of Jeremiah the prophet?

- a) Amoz
- b) Baruch
- c) Amon
- d) Hilkiyah

**Check page 4 for answers from the previous week.**



- 6<sup>th</sup> – Jessica Bell
- 7<sup>th</sup> – Judy Ogden
- 11<sup>th</sup> – Logan Wiebold

**\*\*See a wrong birthday or anniversary, or need one added, please call the office, or send an email to [office@shen.church](mailto:office@shen.church)**

**Shenandoah First United  
Methodist Church**

200 Church St.  
Shenandoah, IA 51601

Phone 712-246-2081

Church E-mail  
[office@shen.church](mailto:office@shen.church)

Same address – a new look at  
<https://shen.church>



<https://shenchurch.onechurchsoftware.com/>



United Methodist Church,  
Shenandoah, IA

<https://www.facebook.com/methodist.church.shenandoah>



Services are now on our YouTube  
channel only.

<https://www.youtube.com/@shen.church8192/streams>

**\*Prelude/Postlude/Accompanist: Terry Stafford**

**Call to Worship**

**Leader: Arise, shine; for your light has come,  
People: and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.  
L: Come, see, and be radiant.  
P: Come, thrill and rejoice.  
L: Lift up your eyes and look around.  
P: All are coming to the brightness of God's dawn.**

**"Arise and Shine!"**

**Scripture Reading: Isaiah 60:1-6**

**Songs**

**We Three Kings v 1-3,5 #254  
Shout to the North #3042  
Shine, Jesus, Shine" #2173**

**Last Week's Attendance**

**In-Person Worship – 57  
On-Line Worship – 14**

**Our Mission:**

**"Know & Serve God by Sharing Christ's Love."**

**Our Vision:**

**"We will grow in holiness, our community will thrive, & we will make a  
difference in our world."**

**Answers for December 29<sup>th</sup> are a) James b) Red c) Jacob & Ishmael  
Quiz hints – Q1) Nehemiah Q2) Genesis Q3) Jeremiah**



## Food Pantry Monthly Needs

## January 2025

Pancake Mix & Syrup, Cake, Brownie, and Cookie Mixes, Peanut Butter & Jelly, Pasta (any variety), Spaghetti Sauce, Microwave Popcorn, hot Chocolate Mix, Crackers (sods, graham, snack), Macaroni & Cheese, Potato Flakes & Boxed Potatoes, Toilet Paper, Bar Soap

There are times when people who use the Food Pantry come to the pantry on foot. They are then forced to walk home carrying, pushing, or pulling several pounds of food. Southwest Iowa Transit, for a very reasonable fee of \$5.00, will take individuals with their food items home. If you are interested in helping pay for these fees, simply seal your cash (whatever you would like to give) in a plain envelope and add it to your donated food items.

Thank you to everyone who continues to support the Community Food Pantry. We exist totally on donations - we couldn't assist those in need without your help!

If you or know of anyone who would be interested in volunteering at the Food Pantry, please have them contact Jeannine K. Liljedahl, at 712-215-2488.



This coming Sunday, January 5, 2025, after service, all the Christmas decorations need to be taken down and put away. If you could stay and help it should not take long. Your help would be appreciated.



**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

**Two Volunteers Needed each Thursday  
to Deliver Meals**

**Sign-Up Sheet is on the  
Welcome Center Counter**

Habakkuk-Continued from page 2.

## Habakkuk Sought God in His Confusion

What are the things that God *ought* to be doing something about, but isn't – Habakkuk has a list!

*Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrongdoing? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds. (1:3)*

Habakkuk reels off six different words for social evils of all sorts—injustice, wrongdoing, destruction, violence, strife, conflict. These are the social outworkings of sin. The kind of things that embed themselves in the structures and practices of fallen human societies.

The word “violence” (*hamas*) is a keyword in this book. It occurs six times, including in the list in Habakkuk 1:3. In 1:2, it is a kind of yell—a cry for help.

*How long, Lord, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, “Violence!” but you do not save? (Habakkuk 1:2)*

It's like the shout of somebody witnessing a brutal attack on some innocent victim nearby and shouting out, hoping that others, or the police, will come to intervene.

## Habakkuk's Dilemma

The God Habakkuk knows worships and trusts is Yahweh. Yahweh is the just and compassionate God who characteristically listens and saves. Yahweh is the God who hears the cry of the victims of violence and saves them. All the old stories of Israel's history illustrate this truth. Many psalms celebrate it.

Right now, God does not seem to be listening or saving. These are the two things that God has done in the past, that God can do at any time, that God should do . . . but is not doing now. God is neither listening to Habakkuk nor saving the victims of violence.

Here, then, is the challenge of verse 2. It seems there is a contradiction between what Habakkuk knows and believes about God from the stories, the Scriptures, and the worship songs of his people on the one hand and the present reality that surrounds him on the other. There is a clash between what he believes and what he sees. And God has been silent and inactive for so long. How much longer do Habakkuk (and others) have to cry out before God hears and saves them?

## God's Response

The answer that God gives to Habakkuk's opening question is rather anticlimactic, it would seem. In essence, God says, “Wait for it. Be patient . . .” –

*For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it lingers, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay. (Habakkuk 2:3)*

What God is about to reveal may take a long time before it all takes place, but “it will certainly come.” God’s sovereign purpose in history will be accomplished. That’s because God does not tell lies, and his word will always accomplish what God sends it to do (Isaiah 55:10–11).

### **Taking the Long View**

Habakkuk rehearses in vivid poetry some of the great episodes of the story of his people Israel—those mighty saving acts of God in their past. We should draw hope from not only knowing the story so far (from the Bible) but also from knowing where the story leads and how it ends.

Like Habakkuk, we need the courage of discernment—to know and trust that God remains sovereign in the world of history and nature. We need to listen to the news with this perspective in mind. “Look at the nations and watch . . .” (1:5). Watch out for God at work. Discern the mustard seeds of the kingdom of God. Join Joseph in recognizing—sometimes with the hindsight which then strengthens our confidence in the unknown future—that even things that are intrinsically evil (and were intended by their perpetrators to be so) can be the means by which the overruling sovereign God can bring about that which is good (Genesis 50:20).

We may not know how or when, but the Judge of all the earth will ultimately do what is right—either within history in his acts of judgment and redemption or ultimately in the great rectification of the final judgment. God will deal with all wrongs and put all things right before he makes all things new in the new creation.

Trust me, says God. Go on living by faith—faith in the sovereign justice of God as well as in the sovereign grace of God. Are we allowing the big picture, the whole-Bible story to strengthen our faith and generate our joy, even in the midst of a threatening world around us?

### **Habakkuk’s Direct, Honest Prayer**

Habakkuk stands among the many in the Bible, including many in the book of Psalms, who cry out to God in lament and protest at the evil they see all around them. But do we? Or do we just complain and protest to one another?

We can and should pray for our rulers to come to repentance and salvation and to do justice. And we can follow the example of the psalmists who appealed to God against wickedness in high places on behalf of those who suffer the consequences.

## Looking Forward with Hope, Joy, and Strength

Habakkuk's mission was to expose and oppose all the idolatry that produces injustice, violence, and suffering and to call people to repentance. At the end of the book, we find Habakkuk still shaking with fear, because God has shown him what lies ahead in the immediate future. However, we also find Habakkuk strengthened in faith. He is determined to be among the righteous who will put their trust in God and go on living by faith (2:4)—no matter what.

In these famous closing words, Habakkuk makes three amazingly strong resolutions: I will wait. . . . I will rejoice. . . . I will run. He plans to get on with his mission, with energy and determination, in the strength of his Sovereign Lord:

*Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails, and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior. The Sovereign Lord is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer; he enables me to tread on the heights.) (Habakkuk 3:17-19)*

May we live in the example of Habakkuk with the obedience of faith, knowing the Sovereign Lord is the source of our hope, joy, and strength.

Adapted from [Hearing the Message of Habakkuk](#), by Christopher J. H. Wright. NIV Weekly Blog, All Rights Reserved 501 Nelson Place, Nashville, TN 37214, USA, December 30, 2024.



### New Year's Resolutions

Yes, it's that time again. It is the time of year when we usually commit ourselves to several worthy goals. We do this because we want to make our lives and faith better. We want to improve and that is a worthy goal. I have noticed that most of our resolutions revolve around money, health, and family.

While these are worthy goals, what would it look like if you could set the resolutions for the church or your family? I would venture to say that we would set a much more rounded, holistic set of resolutions. As I reflected on this question, I came up with a list that I think is a good start. It is not perfect by any means but these are the things I would like to see myself and others focus on.



- Pray more – 1 Thessalonians 5:17.
- Invest in your God-given talents – 1 Timothy 4:14-15; Matthew 25:14-30.
- Get more intentional about evangelism – 1 Corinthians 9:19-23.
- Care for yourself spiritually – Philippians 3:12-16; Mark 6:31; Exodus 20:8-11.
- Be willing to make the tough decisions – Acts 20:22-24.
- Confront the sin in your life – Heb. 12:1-2.
- Be forgiving of others and myself – Matthew 6:14-15.
- Love people without boundaries – 1 Corinthians 13:1-3.
- Quit comparing myself to others – John 21:20-23; 2 Corinthians 10:12.
- Read more – 2 Timothy 4:9,13.
- Make family a priority – Colossians 3:18-21.
- Stay focused on the Lord and his church – Acts 2:42-47.
- Continue to grow – Ephesians 4:15-16; 2 Peter 3:17-17
- Treat others like I would like to be treated – Matthew 7:12; Isaiah 1:16-17.
- Seek heavenly things above all else – Colossians 3:1-2.

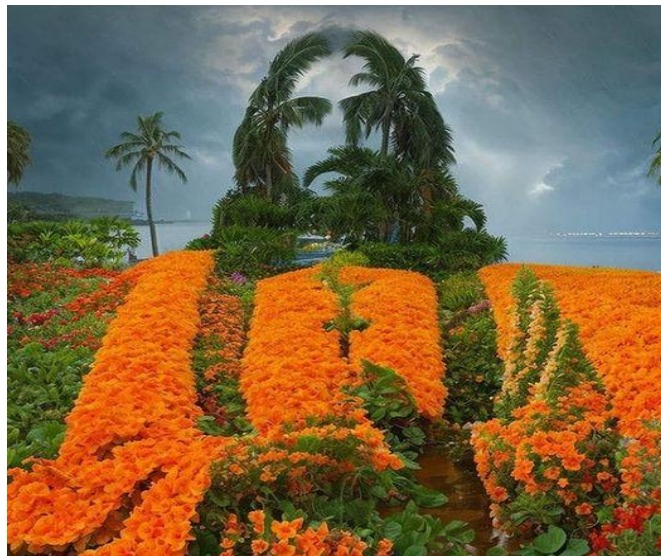
This is a difficult list that could take a lifetime to master, and yet we are called to be Christ-like in every aspect of our lives. Let's use our resolutions to ensure that we become the best Christians possible.

*Story adapted from Jeff Arnette, Clyde, NC, Do You Believe? January 2018, Vol. 37, No. 1, Bulletin Digest.*

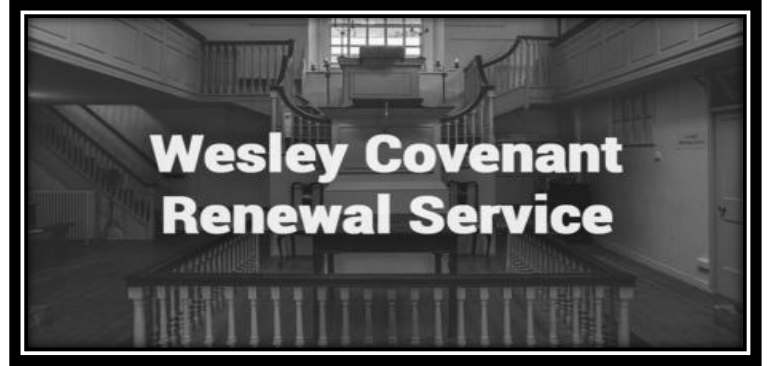
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This week is photo number 24 in a series of unique pictures from all over the world. For some pictures, **you may need to squint** and then you will see what the picture represents, others you will see it right away. I have found these amazing and wanted to share them.

**#24**



One of John Wesley's favorite services that he conducted during his ministry was called a Covenant Renewal Service, typically held at the New Year. This service was an opportunity to prayerfully make a fresh start each year in our spiritual walk. This may be something for you to consider in your own life. Reflect on 2024 and recall the ways in which failure was your companion. How has the grace of God transformed that failure through healing, forgiveness, or growth? Do you still need transformation? What are ways that you might intentionally grow in your spiritual life, connect with others in our congregation and in the community, and serve others in love, compassion, and humility?



In some ways, January 1 is an arbitrary date that only humans recognize. Plants, trees, and birds do not care if it is January 1 or December 15. But we mark these trips around the sun to remember that there are cycles and seasons throughout our lives. The new year is an opportunity to remember that it is ok to let some things go that served their purpose in a particular season of life. And it is also a time to remember that each new season and cycle of life is an opportunity to try new things and to grow. Our discipleship in the way of Jesus should not be stagnate. God is always wanting to transform and perfect you through each season of life.

I invite you to make this prayer from the Covenant Renewal Service that John Wesley often prayed your own:

I am no longer my own, but thine.  
Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt.  
Put me to doing, put me to suffering.  
Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee,  
exalted for thee or brought low for thee.  
Let me be full, let me be empty.  
Let me have all things, let me have nothing.  
I freely and heartily yield all things  
to thy pleasure and disposal.  
And now, O glorious and blessed God,  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it.  
And the covenant which I have made on earth,  
let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.

Grace and peace,  
Pastor David Clark  
308-258-7749 (cell)