



THE LATTER
SPLENDOR

ICE-BREAKERS

- 1 When have you worked hard on something that didn't turn out the way you hoped?
- 2 What helps you stay motivated when you can't yet see the results of your effort?
- 3 Where do you most sense God's presence - in grand, beautiful places or in simple, ordinary moments?
- 4 What does the phrase '*the latter splendor will be greater than the former*' mean to you personally or for the church today?

SERMON BASED

- 1 Why do you think the people of **Haggai's** day found it so difficult to see God's presence in the new temple?
- 2 How does the phrase "*My Spirit abides among you; do not fear*" challenge the people's focus on outward appearance and visible success?

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HAGGAI

2:1-9

sermon-based continued

- 3 What is the difference between 'restoration' and 'renewal'? Why might God prefer renewal over restoration?
- 4 In what ways does the story of the small-town congregation mirror the struggle and hope of the people rebuilding the temple in Haggai's time?
- 5 How does God's promise that "the latter splendor will be greater than the former" reshape our understanding of loss, change, and the future of the church?

BEYOND THE TEXT

- 1 Where in your own life do you feel like you're "standing among the ashes," and how might God be inviting you to see His presence in that place?
- 2 What does it look like for you to "build with hope" in your family, workplace, or community - trusting that God's Spirit is already at work?
- 3 How can we, as a church community, avoid being more attached to our structures and traditions than to God who dwells within them?

FIRST united
methodist CHURCH

113 West Central Avenue | Van Wert, Ohio 45891 | 419-238-0631 | vanwertfirst.net

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 9, 2025

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sermon-based continued

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