



## AMAZING GRACE

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound  
that saved a wretch like me. I once was  
lost, but now I'm found. Was blind, but  
now I see!

### SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY - 9 am.

We are at present studying the four  
Gospels. Johan is facilitating the class.  
Please join us during this time of learning  
God's Word.

For this Sunday, please read into your  
Gospel choice, or all 4 for the brave!  
Make a list of what Jesus taught about self  
and what He taught others to do or not do!

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## SUNDAY TIMES:

**BIBLE STUDIES: 09H00**

**WORSHIP: 10H00 TO 11H00**

**21 DECEMBER 2025**

**Preacher:** Mike Baisley

**Sermon Topic:** "God wants us to be  
Encouragers"

**Scripture reading:** Hebrews 10: 23 - 25

**Song Leader:** Braam Le Roux **Scripture Reading:** Thando Ntozakhe

**Opening Prayer:** Ray Calder

**Lord's Table:** Jan Roberts

**Closing Prayer:** Carry Hagemann

**Attendance last Sunday:** 40

**Servers:** Carry, Thando, Ray & Jan

## The Prophet Habakkuk, which means "To Embrace"

Habakkuk was a prophet in ancient Judah, active around the late 7th century BC, known for his unique prophetic book where he questions God about injustice in Judah and God's use of the wicked Babylonians to judge them, ultimately learning that "the righteous will live by his faith" (Habakkuk 2: 4). He's seen as a precursor to Jesus and Paul, emphasizing enduring faith in difficult times, and is revered in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

### **Key Facts About Habakkuk:**

- **Time Period:** Lived in the final decades of Judah, witnessing the rise of the Neo-Babylonian Empire, likely during the reign of King Jehoiakim (around 609 - 598 BC).
- **His Name:** The name "Habakkuk" is believed to mean "to embrace" or "wrestler." This fits his role as someone who wrestled with deep questions about God's justice, yet embraced God's will.
- **His Role:** Identified himself as a prophet, possibly a temple prophet or Levitical musician, given the liturgical style of his book (e.g., "For the choir director, on my stringed instruments").
- **His Book's Theme:** Unlike other prophets, Habakkuk's book is a dialogue where he raises two main questions:
  1. Why does God allow injustice and violence in Judah?
  2. How can a just God use the even more wicked Babylonians to punish Judah?
- **God's Answer:** God reveals He is using Babylon as His instrument of judgment, but promises that Babylon's pride will lead to its downfall, and the righteous will live by their steadfast faith in God.
- **Key Phrase:** His declaration, "the just shall live by his faith" (Habakkuk 2: 4), became foundational for later Jewish and Christian theology, cited by Paul in the New Testament.
- **Spiritual Significance:** Habakkuk's struggle with doubt and God's ultimate faithfulness offers encouragement for enduring adversity through trust, even when God seems silent.
- **Veneration:** He is venerated as a prophet in Judaism, Christianity (with feast days in some traditions) and Islam, with shrines in places like Israel and Iran.

## PRAYER REQUESTS

Please pray for the members in our congregation who are in need of God's grace, healing and strength through difficult times. Please pray for Taida Marembo (Geraldine's mother), Petro, Chester, Ian, Kate and Landon, as they are going through a very difficult time. Also pray for Kayla Gunn, Rebecca's sister-in-law, who is recovering from her injuries sustained in a car accident.

We also need to thank God for prayers answered.

## BIRTHDAYS

Margie Hagemann – 24 December  
May God bless you as you celebrate this joyous day! Wishing you only the best for this coming year.

## WELCOME

We welcome all visitors this morning. We believe that you will be blessed as we worship God. Please feel free to ask any questions regarding our worship or about God's Word.

## VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Habakkuk 2: 4, "Look at the proud! They trust in themselves, and their lives are crooked. But the righteous will live by their faithfulness to God" (NIV). This highlights salvation by faith, a central gospel theme.

Habakkuk moves from complaining to a powerful declaration of trust, offering hope in dark times by showing that the path to righteousness is through faith in God's sovereign plan, even when it's hard to understand.

## CHRISTIAN ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE NEW YEAR

As we start preparing for the new year, we should note that Christian New Year encouragement focuses on God's faithfulness, new beginnings, hope and guidance, urging believers to trust His plans (Jeremiah 29: 11), rely on His strength (Philippians 4: 13) and embrace spiritual growth through His promises (2 Corinthians 5: 17). We will find peace and purpose in His presence as we step into the unknown. Key themes are renewing faith, seeking divine wisdom and letting His love fill our homes and lives for the year ahead.

### Key Themes & Encouragement:

- God's Faithfulness: The New Year is a reminder of God's unfailing love and His ability to make all things new, transforming barren situations into flourishing ones.
- New Chapters: It's a fresh page to write a story with God, leaving the past behind and embracing His plans for prosperity and hope (Jeremiah 29: 11).
- Guidance & Wisdom: Seek God's direction (Psalm 25: 4 - 5) and trust His light to illuminate your path, ensuring your choices align with His will.
- Strength in Him: Find courage to face challenges, knowing the Spirit gives power, love and self-discipline (2 Timothy 1: 7; Philippians 4: 13).
- Spiritual Renewal: A time to renew minds, hearts and spirits, growing closer to Jesus and deepening faith.

### Popular Bible Verses for the New Year:

- 2 Corinthians 5: 17, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"
- Jeremiah 29: 11, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."
- Proverbs 3: 5 - 6, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."
- Philippians 4: 13, "I can do all this through him who gives me strength."
- Psalm 100: 4, "Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise; give thanks to Him and praise His name."

## BENEVOLENCE

*A heartfelt thanks to everybody who was involved in contributing food and other items for the benevolence to the needy this past year, as this is truly a worthy cause. Your thoughtful donation has made a significant and immediate impact.*

*Thanks to your kindness, we were able to distributed 10 boxes of food to the needy every month. This month, the boxes were packed to the brim! There were also extra food parcels for the children.*

*It is the support from members like you that makes our Benevolence mission possible. You're not just providing food; you're offering hope and showing our neighbours that we care.*

*We are truly inspired by your generosity and commitment to helping those in need. We couldn't do this vital work without you!*

*Thank you once again for your immense support.*