

NATIONAL COMMUNITY CHURCH

May 02, 2021

Stirred: Stirred, Not Shaken

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“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and void, darkness was over the surface of the deep and the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God was hovering.”

Welcome to National Community Church. This weekend we kick off a five week series called ‘Stirred’ and I've got to say I love that trailer, it gave me goosebumps. Wow and debuts on National Dance day. That's what I'm talking about. There's a word in the Greek language, perichoresis, and it's used to describe the Trinity. Scholars liken it to a choreographed dance. It's unity in diversity. It's beloved community that we know as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. What I want to do this weekend is high dive into the deep end with a little crash course in pneumatology. Ready or not? Here we go.

In the beginning, the Spirit of God is hovering like a hummingbird. Now, the Hebrew word is *paniyim*. It can be translated faith or favor countenance or presence it's two dimensional. In regard to time *paniyim* refers to the split second before and the split second after. It's almost like the time stone in Guardians of the Galaxy *krono kinesis*. The Holy Spirit forms a parentheses in time. He is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end and ever present help in time of need. In regard to space, *paniyim* refers to the place right in front and right in back. The psalmist said he hems me in behind and before. The psalmist said he is singing songs of deliverance all around us all the time. The Holy Spirit forms a parentheses in space. He is Jehovah Nissi, God our banner, the God who goes before. He is counselor and paraclete. It refers to a military formation where soldiers would stand back to back. The Holy Spirit has your back. He is your rear guard - the God who comes behind.

W. Tozer said it this way, “God is above, but He’s not pushed up. He’s beneath, but He’s not pressed down. He’s outside, but He’s not excluded. He’s inside, but He’s not confined. God is above all things presiding, beneath all things sustaining, outside of all things embracing and inside of all things filling” He is God most high. He is God most high. He is bigger than big and he is closer than close.

And I've got some really good news. The Holy Spirit is still hovering over the darkness, over the emptiness, over the chaos in your life. He hovers in our hopes, in our hurts, in our hearts. The Holy Spirit, he hovers in the 40 nanometer gap between the 125 trillion synapses that crisscross the cerebral cortex. And that’s just pneumatology 101. We're two verses into Genesis and the Holy Spirit is hovering. Now, in Genesis two the same Spirit who hovers over the water animates the dust of the earth gets down and dirty. Genesis 2:7 *“Then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the earth and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.”* Hebrew word is *ruwach*, it translates spirit or breath. Before the day is done, you will inhale and exhale 23,000 times. Five quarts of blood will circulate through 100,000 miles of veins and arteries and capillaries. There are 37 sextillion chemical reactions happening in your body right now. We are fearfully and wonderfully made. In Him, we live and move and have our

being. If God were to withdraw his breath, the book of Job said we would return to dust. The Spirit of God is the breath of life. That's pneumatology 201.

Now we're two chapters into Genesis. The Holy Spirit is hovering and animating. We get to Exodus 31 and the same Spirit who hovers over the chaos who animates the dust is now anointing, a man named Bezaleel with creative imagination and artistic giftings. The anointing is the difference between the best you can do and the best God can do. No matter who you are, no matter what you do you're a teacher, a writer, an entrepreneur, you are an athlete, an artist, an architect. Please hear me, the Holy Spirit wants to help you do what you do better than you're able to do it, beyond your ability, past your pay grade.

Now I want to plant a seed of faith this weekend. I believe that we are coming into a season when the Spirit of God is going to activate those gifts of the Spirit in an unprecedented way. Why? Because we need it. We need a supernatural demonstration of his love and power. We need a fresh anointing, a new anointing I pray it on your life, right here, right now.

We're two books in the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit is hovering, animating, anointing and we aren't even to the New Testament yet. Holy Spirit hasn't even gotten his game on yet. You get to the New Testament, I'm gonna go really fast. Read the Gospels, read the epistles, read the book of Acts, and the Holy Spirit is healing and sealing and revealing. The Holy Spirit is counseling and convicting and comforting. The Holy Spirit is fruiting and gifting and guiding. I'm gonna add one more to the mix. Holy Spirit wears so many hats, does so many things, play so many parts but over the next five weeks we're going to focus on one thing - the Holy Spirit is stirring. The goal of this series is pretty simple that we would be a people who are stirred not shaken.

If you have a Bible you can meet me, the Minor Prophets, Haggi, one of those hard to find books. I'll give you a minute to find it, right there the end of the Old Testament. The Jewish prophets predict an exile in Babylon, but they also prophesied the restoration of the nation of Israel. Now Haggi comes on the scene about 520 BC and he's a straight shooter. He accuses the Jewish people of misplaced priorities; they're apathetic when it comes to injustice. He calls them to repent, and to prove that repentance by rebuilding the temple that was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BC and that's where we pick up the story. We'll start in Haggi two, verse six, and then we're going to reverse engineer this revival.

“This is what the Lord Almighty says: “In a little while, I will once more shake the heavens and the earth...” Now if that sounds familiar it's probably because I think I've quoted that verse more than any other verse over the past year since this COVID crisis began. I am not suggesting that God caused a COVID crisis that is correlation without causation. But I have no doubt that God is stirring something up. I believe that God is shaking false securities and false identities. God is shaking false assumptions and false narratives. God is shaking false idols and false ideologies. Lots of people have had their confidence shaken, in lots of different ways, but we are stirred, not shaken. Why? Because we don't trust in horses and chariots. We put our trust in the name of the Lord our God. We don't take our cues from

cultural talking points. We don't put our trust in these temporal things we trust in the name of the Lord our God, and at that name, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess to the glory of God the Father himself. We're grounded in God's word. We're standing on God's promises and we are led by His Spirit. That is why we are stirred, not shaken.

Stirred, is rising above the rhetoric and living according to Biblical convictions. Stirred is taking our cues from scripture. Stirred is giving God veto power. Stirred is operating in the power of the Holy Spirit while obeying the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

Let me back up the bus. Haggi chapter one, verse one, and we'll go verse by verse. "In the second year of King Darius, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggi to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest..." Now, there are decades when nothing happens, and there are days when decades happen. This is the day when decades happen for Zerubbabel. The Bible is a book about real people in real places in real time. If you cross check the Hebrew calendar with the Persian calendar, it's August 29, 520 BC on the Gregorian calendar.

Verse two, "*This is what the Lord of Heaven's Armies, says: "The people are saying, (the people are saying,) 'The time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the Lord.'*" I want you to notice two narratives. There's always two narratives. Why? Because there are two realms, there are two kingdoms. You've got what God is saying, right? This is what the Lord of Heaven's armies says. And then you've got this trending hashtag, this cultural talking point that is being propagated by the people, "*The time hasn't come to rebuild the house of the Lord.*" Really? Really? Cuz I have three kids who were really good at delay tactics. I think this sounds like that. And I think delayed obedience is disobedience.

And so, let me ask a couple of questions at this juncture. What percentage of your thoughts, words and actions are a regurgitation of the news you're watching and the social media that you're following? And what percentage of your words, thoughts and actions are a revelation that you are getting from God's word? Are you being conformed to the world around you? Or are you being transformed by the in working of the Holy Spirit? Are you being named and tamed by culture? Or are you being named and untamed by the wild goose? Are you being fed and led by talking heads? Or are you being fed and led by the word of God and by the Spirit of God?

Finally, who is the loudest voice in your life? Is it the loudest voice? Or is it the still small voice of the Holy Spirit? If you are Spirit filled and Spirit lead, I'm not worried about you. Why? Cuz you're gonna get where God wants you to go. You're gonna do things that are past your paygrade and God is going to fill fulfill his plans and purposes in your life. Which narrative are we listening to?

Verse three, *“Then the word of the Lord came to the prophet Haggi: “Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house speaking of the temple remains in ruins?”* In other words, come on, quit raising your standard of living and start raising your standard of giving.

Verse five, *“Now, this is what the Lord Almighty says, “Give careful thought to your ways. You have planted much but harvested little. You eat, but you never have enough. You drink, but you never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages only to put them in a purse with holes in it.”* Haggai is telling them to take a long, hard look in the mirror. How's that working for you? Right? We need someone to occasionally ask us that question. Your system, I love you, your system is perfectly designed for the results you're getting. And I mean that across... Insanity is doing the same thing and expecting different results. If you want God to do something new, you can't keep doing the same old thing.

Now drop down to verse 13. *“Then Haggai, the Lord's messenger, gave this message of the Lord to the people: “I am with you,” declares the Lord.”* Oh, come on, someone needed to hear that right now. Someone needs to know that. If God is for me, and if God is with me, mmm, I'm good to go. Listen, one and God make a majority, Frederick Douglass,

Verse 14, and this is where I want to park the food truck. *“So the Lord stirred the spirit of the spirit of Zerubbabel, (There it is) the Lord stirred the spirit of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua, son of Jozadak, the high priest, (And then get this. It's contagious. It's contagious. When God starts stirring people with his spirit, it gets contagious) and the spirit of the whole remnant of the people. They came and began to work on the house of the LORD of hosts...”* Now, there are a few ways to translate this Hebrew verb, and you'll see them on the screen.

Stirred (verb): 1. It means excite the courage 2. animate the zeal 3. awaken from sleep 4. arise to action. But however, you slice or dice it, it is an action verb.

Let me share a story and then we're going to talk about five ways that God stirs us up. A few weeks ago got a letter from Christie Luther. Christie has what I would call a Zerubbabel anointing. And I want to describe what that is. When the Jewish remnant returned to Jerusalem it's in ruins, it's in ruins. Like they're staring at ruins. Most people come on, see what is. Some people remember what was. Oh, but then there are Zerubbabels who see what can be. They don't just see the ruins, they see a second temple, where the glory of God is going to be even greater. Zerubbabel anointing is seeing what can be and doing something about it. May God give us a Zerubbabel anointing.

Now, few years ago, Christie Luther got a vision to start the very first cosmetology school in an Oklahoma prison. She was writing to request some copies of the Circle Maker. And so I signed them, we sent them and Christie wrote a little letter and I want you to hear what she said. The Lord is stirring things up. The Lord is stirring things up. Each morning as I sit in my car in the prison parking lot, I look

at razor wire and I pray revival over that person. See, a lot of people would look at those inmates, and they would see what is and they would see what was, they would see the ruins? No, no, no. When you look with the eyes of faith, you see what can be, you see second chances, you see the Spirit of God, you see a temple that is indwelt by the spirit of Almighty God. So Christie took some hula hoops into the prison and turned them into prayer circles. And she said, some of the women got inside those circles and they just curled up and cried. Other women got in those circles and she said they lifted their hands and in her words, prayed fiercely and intently. I'm going to show you a few pictures that Christie sent.

I'm gonna share one last thing that Christie said. There is a shift, a change and it smells like revival. He turns ashes into beautiful things, doesn't he? Aren't you grateful for a God of second chances?

Here's the big idea. Here's the bottom line. And this is what we're going to keep coming back to over the next five weeks. It always starts with a stirring. It always starts with a stirring. Every move of God starts with a stirring. Every revival starts with a stirring. Every vision starts with a stirring. And so let's get really practical, really quick five ways that biblically and experientially I think God stirs us up. And so if you're taking notes, you can jot these down.

1. The Holy Spirit stirs us with sanctified emotions. Now, when I was in grad school, I had a professor that asked this question, what makes you cry, and pound your fist on the table? In other words, what makes you sad? And what makes you mad? Cuz you might want to pay attention to those things, because maybe God is stirring something up. Now, I would add glad to the mix. What puts a smile on your face? Here's what happens, your heart begins to break for the things that break the heart of God and it moves you. And then I'll flip that and say, "*Delight yourself in the Lord,*" Psalm 37:4 "*and He will give you the desires of your heart.*" In other words, he'll begin to conceive within you these desires and these sanctified emotions and sometimes this mad, sad, glad, but it's always serving God's purpose.
2. The Holy Spirit stirs us with God ideas. Now, I'd rather have one God idea than 1000 good ideas, right? Good ideas are good, God ideas change the course of history. But let's be honest, it's not always easy discerning between a good idea and a God idea. And if we're being really honest, not always easily discerning between a good idea and a bad idea. Okay. But I do know this a God idea. It's going to be beyond your ability beyond your resources, beyond your education. beyond your experience. Zerubbabel is in over his head. But that is when and where and how God shows up and shows off. I really believe that there are moments when you just have to go bigger, go home. Show me the size of your dream and I'll show you the size of your God. That's not just some catchy saying; your vision is a reflection of your theology.

On that note – two NCC updates last week, because we got to praise God when stuff like this happens. Last week we received a half a million dollar gift from someone who doesn't attend this church for the vision that we cast for phase two. Can we praise God? I think that's okay. Wow.

Wow, that gets us awfully close to doing phase two debt free just a few \$100,000 away. And if you want to make a pledge or fulfill a pledge NCC.re/vision. When God gives a vision he makes provision. But here's the catch. You need vision beyond your resources.

Two - we're awfully close to signing a letter of intent on a piece of property for our combined campus in Northern Virginia. I can't tell you where yet. And I'm so sorry. But it's got incredible accessibility and visibility and whooo it's go bigger go home. It's almost 60,000 square feet. Okay, that's larger than phase one and phase two at our Capitol Hill campus. And I cannot wait to sign on the dotted line so we can share the details. So, stay tuned.

3. The Holy Spirit stirs us with prophetic words. Now, I'm gonna have to go really quick right here. We aren't just the priesthood of believers, we are the company of prophets in Judaism. The prophetic gift was not reserved for a select few, it was the fruit of spiritual maturity. Moses himself said I wish it all the Lord's people were prophets. Now that doesn't mean that we all go around predicting the future, okay, because sometimes that's what comes to mind. It's about speaking words of comfort, words of encouragement, 1 Corinthians 14, but here's the key, as prompted by the Holy Spirit. Have you ever had someone say to you the right words at the right time? Man, it can change the trajectory of your life. That's what I'm talking about. You know, sometimes it's listening prayer for someone you love. Sometimes it's a word of knowledge or a word of wisdom. One way or the other Hebrews 12:24 says, *“Let us consider how we may stir, how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds.”* Oh, may we be a beloved community that stir one another, that spur one another on? And you know what? We don't just prophesy to people. Can I just throw this in? We prophesy to crack houses that become coffee houses. We prophesy to abandoned apartment buildings that become DC Dream Centers. We prophesy to 130 Year Old Navy Yard car barns where Hey, they used to fix street cars, we're gonna dance. I literally am watching that video and I'm thinking what would those mechanics have thought 100 years ago? How awesome to just, ahh, yeah, all right, I gotta keep going
4. The Holy Spirit stirs us with holy discontent. Okay, this one gets tough. At some point, the pain of staying the same is greater than the pain of change. That is when we go see a counselor. That's when we check into rehab. That's when we go to the altar. Unfortunately, often not a second sooner. Now, Deuteronomy 32 says that God is like the eagle that stirs the nest. And I'll come back to this at some point but a mother Eagle would stir the nest by removing feathers and removing down. Why? To make the baby birds uncomfortable. Well, that doesn't sound very motherly. Well listen, if you have grown kids, you know that there comes a moment when those baby birds got to get out of the nest, right? Right around 18, okay. The big bird's got to get out of the nest. Okay, I'm having a little bit of fun. There comes a moment where the mom removes layers of comfort and removes layers of security. Why? So the sticks start poking those eaglets. Why? Poke the bear poke the bird same difference. If you don't get out of the boat, you will never walk on water. If you don't get out of the nest, you will never fly. God loves you too much

to leave you in a place of comfort. That's never where we grow. So many moments in our history as a church God stirred the nest. We're meeting at Giddings School and it closes because of fire code. But it was so scary, but God was stirring the nest. We end up in the movie theaters at Union Station. 13 years later, those movie theaters closed and I'm wondering are our best days behind us. No, God was stirring the nest. We end up buying a piece of property on Virginia Avenue. Oh, then CSS decides we're going to build a train tunnel and derail your plans for about five years. And I'm thinking like what??? And then oh no, but then we find the miracle theater. Oh, and then we get the property across the street, the Navy Yard. Thank God for those inconveniences. Thank God for the discomfort. Thank God for the things that were so scary when they happened. Listen, that's how you learn to fly. Okay!

5. Holy Spirit stirs us with Scripture. Okay, Psalm 119, longest chapter in the Bible by a longshot. It's a poem consists of 22 stanzas. Each stanza begins with one of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. 11 times that the Psalmist uses the word quicken. It's a Hebrew word *chayah* - sounds like a karate chop. The Psalmist says quickened me, according to Thy word. It's synonymous with this idea of stirring. It means to restore, to refresh, to revive, to resurrect it means to conceive to *chayah*. You don't just read the Bible, the Bible reads you. Why? It's living and active. It's Mentos and Diet Coke. When you get into God's word, when God's word gets into you, it begins to stir us into action.

I love what Pastor Rob said, on upper zoom this week. He said, "Revelation doesn't happen without application." Oh, wait but we want more revelation. No, God wants more application. You have to be obedient to the level of revelation that you have. Let's be honest, most of us are educated way beyond the level of our obedience already. We don't need to know more; we need to do more with what we know. And that's what Zerubbabel does, it says he began the work - that's all. You don't have to finish it. You don't have to do..., but you have to start it.

I'm going to close with this... Let me invite the worship team to come. In August of 1996 reading the book of Joshua, get to verse three of chapter one I will give you everywhere you set your foot just as I promised Moses. You've heard me tell this story many times. I feel this stirring in my spirit to pray a perimeter around Capitol Hill. I think the week before we had about 13 people that was our attendance. And so I wasn't praying for property, I was praying for people because we needed people. A couple of decades later, we own half a dozen properties on that prayer circle. Please hear me. Ebenezer's Coffee House was once a stir stick. The Miracle Theater was once a stirring. Capitol Hill campus was once God stirring. It always starts with a stirring.

Here's how I want to end. I am believing God for a fresh infilling as his Spirit - Ephesians 5:18 "*Be filled with the Spirit.*" Present imperative verb means keep on being filled with the Spirit. "*The same Spirit who raised Christ from the dead dwells in us.*" But we leak. Or is that just me? And so we need to be Spirit filled and Spirit lead every single day. And so as we go into a time of worship in the house,

online, wherever you are right now, would you invite the Holy Spirit to fill your mind and your heart and your soul? Here's what I know for sure - Holy Spirit is present. All that's absent is our awareness. He is perichoresis. Not only is he dancing all around us, he is singing songs of deliverance. And so the Spirit of God is still hovering and animating and anointing and healing and sealing and revealing and counseling and convicting and comforting and fruiting and gifting and guiding and stirring and may He do it again in your life in Jesus name. Amen