

Lutheran Church of the Master
580 Kuhn Road, Carol Stream, Illinois 60188
Curt Gerald, Interim Pastor
September 13, 2009
40th Anniversary of the Dedication of our Church Building & Rally Day
“What’s So Special About 40?”

Isaiah 51

¹ "Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness
and who seek the LORD :
Look to the rock from which you were cut
and to the quarry from which you were hewn;

² look to Abraham, your father,
and to Sarah, who gave you birth.
When I called him he was but one,
and I blessed him and made him many.

³ The LORD will surely comfort Zion
and will look with compassion on all her ruins;
he will make her deserts like Eden,
her wastelands like the garden of the LORD.
Joy and gladness will be found in her,
thanksgiving and the sound of singing.

⁴ "Listen to me, my people;
hear me, my nation:
The law will go out from me;
my justice will become a light to the nations.

⁵ My righteousness draws near speedily,
my salvation is on the way,
and my arm will bring justice to the nations.
The islands will look to me
and wait in hope for my arm.

⁶ Lift up your eyes to the heavens,
look at the earth beneath;
the heavens will vanish like smoke,
the earth will wear out like a garment
and its inhabitants die like flies.
But my salvation will last forever

Romans 12

Living Sacrifices

¹Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual^[a] act of worship. ²Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

³For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. ⁴Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. ⁶We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his^[b] faith. ⁷If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; ⁸if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

Matthew 16:13-18

(The Gospel read on the Sunday of Dedication)

¹³When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"

¹⁴They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

¹⁵"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

¹⁶Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ,^[a] the Son of the living God."

¹⁷Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. ¹⁸And I tell you that you are Peter,^[b] and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades^[c] will not overcome it.^[d]

New International Version (NIV)

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Biblically speaking, there is something special about “40.”
(Several passages were referred to that talk about “40”)

Biblically speaking, there are mixed signals about the temple.
(See the references attached below).

Historically speaking, 40 years is pretty average for suburban churches ... in the 1960's and 1970's, as the suburbs grew following World War II, denominations like us actively planted new congregations all over suburban area. At the same time we realize today that in terms of North America, the oldest church might be @500 years. North America's oldest church may lie beneath a small town in Newfoundland, according to information cobbled together from the research of a historian who recently died before publishing her seminal work.

An Italian friar and sailing companion of explorer John Cabot erected the church during his second trip to the continent in 1498, according to the late Alwyn Ruddock, said Evan Jones, a University of Bristol researcher who investigated and pieced together Ruddock's notes.

"To describe Alwyn Ruddock's claims as revolutionary would not be an exaggeration," Jones said. "If Ruddock is right, it means that the remains of the only [medieval](#) church in North America may still lie buried under the modern town of Carbonear."

(Background information from the internet: not mentioned in the meditation.) Ruddock, a [historian](#) with the University of London, was one of the world's foremost experts on Cabot's voyages until her death in late 2005. In keeping with her will, all of her research was destroyed when she passed away, including 40 years' worth of work for a book about the many mysteries surrounding Cabot's maligned 1498 expedition. However, a book proposal Ruddock gave to her publisher and some e-mail correspondences survived, allowing Jones to explore her theories in a recent article published in the journal *Historical Research*.

Ruddock's most exciting claims concern an Italian [friar](#) named Fra Giovanni Antonio Carbonaro, who sailed aboard one of the five vessels that left with Cabot from Bristol, England, in 1498 and landed in Newfoundland.

From a news release 06/11/2008, it appears that the world's oldest church could date back to AD 33-70. Archaeologists have discovered an underground church in Jordan that could date back to A.D. 33 – 70, which would make it the oldest and first church in the world – logically one that was built shortly after Christ's time.

The Sydney Morning Herald in Sydney, Australia, reported that scientists discovered the [underground church](#) last week beneath St. Georgeous Church in Rihab, Jordan – a church that, itself, dates back to A.D. 230.

“We have evidence to believe this church sheltered the early Christians – the 70 disciples of Jesus Christ,” said Abdul Qader al-Husan, the head of the Rihab Centre for

Archaeological Studies, to reporters. The most notable evidence is a mosaic found in the church, which describes the worshippers as “the 70 beloved by God and Divine.”

(Additional information from the internet. Not referred to in the message.) Husan theorizes that these early Christians fled persecution in Jerusalem and founded churches in northern Jordan. Other evidence indicates that the church members lived, at least partly, in the underground structure. Archaeologists found items included pottery from as early as the third century and stone seats for the clergy, as well as a rounded portion of the room that resembles a Cathedral-esque apse.

Many Christians worshipped underground until the Roman Empire embraced Christianity as its official religion in the fourth century. Currently, no church lays claim to being “the oldest church in the world.”

Rihab is located in northern Jordan, near the Syrian border.

So today we celebrate the dedication of this worship space ... our celebration could fit right into Biblical chapters and verses with its reference to “40” ...

like the mixed messages of the Common Scriptures and New Testament, we too are aware that we often get confused by thinking that God is “just in here” and not “out there” ... and that the reason we gather “in here” is to be strengthened by word and sacrament for our life as Servants of the Living Jesus “out there” ...

and we realize that globally and locally, for a congregation to be 40 years old is comparable to being “merely an infant” compared to churches that may be 500 or almost 2,000 years ... **but it is a start** ... and that is what informs our celebration today.

After 40 years in this space we can say: **“we’re off to a good start.”**

And today, we say thanks especially to the Charter Members who dreamed this ministry into reality. We remember that like all learning, this church started in a school until it could get land, bricks and mortar, dial telephones and hand-cranked mimeograph machines, green carpets and orange chairs ... (71 roses were in a bouquet by the baptismal font to represent the charter members. White roses in a small vase honored those who had died. The charter members present at this service placed pink roses in a second vase. The remaining charter members were represented by red roses in a large container ... representing those who were not present at this service ... for many of whom we have no current address.)

We remember that no ministry would have been done in this space if it weren’t for architects who can dream a building ... plan from the footings to the steeple ... for the give and take of information between people, often contentiously, which results in hallways and bathrooms, naves and closets, kitchens and offices, plumbing and electrical wiring, vents for skunks and sound systems and outdoor signs and lawn mowing and parking lot designs ... and the lists go on which help us understand how important it is to identify and use the spiritual gifts that God has wired into each one of

us.

We give thanks today for the Lutheran Church in America ... for without it, this congregation would not have been birthed. We are who we are because the LCA saw a mission field here ... and invested a minister and ministry into it.

We give thanks today for pastors and presidents, council members and choir members and musicians and ushers and acolytes and altar guilds ...

We give thanks today:

for babies baptized who now have children of their own ...

for confirmands and confirmation mentors ...

for today's youth who are not "the church of tomorrow" but just as much "the church of today" as I am ...

for property committees and church janitors ... for those who climb up high and for those who stoop down low ...

for the ministries to whom space is provided basically free of charge: food pantries, preschools, community organizations, neighboring College of DuPage ...

we are grateful for devoted and gifted staff members, for every congregational "member" regularly in worship or occasionally present, for guests and visitors who enter our doorways, for those for whom today is a first time here and for those for who today might be the "first time back;"

like every other organization in these difficult financial times, and in the time remaining between now and the arrival of a new pastor, I could wish that our mortgage of \$1.2 million could be halved and that our commitments would be doubled;

I could wish that we would tithe to the Synod and ELCA just like we encourage folks to tithe to us ...

And above all, because God IS above all, we are grateful to and for God the Father who created us; God the Son who has redeemed us; and to God the Holy Spirit **who, as Martin Luther says, is the one responsible for our being here at all and for our being here together. Remember how Luther worded it in the Third Article:**

I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

What does this mean?--Answer.

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith; even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith; in which Christian Church He forgives daily and richly all sins to me and all believers, and at the last day will raise up me and all the dead, and will give to me and to all believers in Christ everlasting life. This is most certainly true.

So, it has been a good start ... and "assuming that the Lord tarries and he does not return first," I wonder what folks will be saying at the 100th Anniversary, 500th Anniversary, or 1,000th Anniversary?

You and I might not be thinking about the 1,000th Anniversary ... but perhaps we should? What will we do now (today ... this year) to insure that the Gospel of Jesus Christ will be proclaimed in this community for the next 1,000 years (or until the Lord returns, if that should come first)?

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(Some of the following passages' references to the TEMPLE and its construction or reconstruction were referred to in the meditation.)

1 Chronicles 17 (New International Version)

God's Promise to David

¹ After David was settled in his palace, he said to Nathan the prophet, "Here I am, living in a palace of cedar, while the ark of the covenant of the LORD is under a tent."

² Nathan replied to David, "Whatever you have in mind, do it, for God is with you."

³ That night the word of God came to Nathan, saying:

⁴ ***"Go and tell my servant David, 'This is what the LORD says: You are not the one to build me a house to dwell in. ⁵ I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought Israel up out of Egypt to this day. I have moved from one tent site to another, from one dwelling place to another. ⁶ Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their leaders ^[a] whom I commanded to shepherd my people, 'Why have you not built me a house of cedar?'"***

⁷ ***"Now then, tell my servant David, 'This is what the LORD Almighty says: I took you from the pasture and from following the flock, to be ruler over my people Israel. ⁸ I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name like the names of the greatest men of the earth. ⁹ And I will provide a place***

for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning¹⁰ and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel. I will also subdue all your enemies.

" 'I declare to you that the LORD will build a house for you: '¹¹ When your days are over and you go to be with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, one of your own sons, and I will establish his kingdom. '¹² He is the one who will build a house for me, and I will establish his throne forever. '¹³ I will be his father, and he will be my son. I will never take my love away from him, as I took it away from your predecessor. '¹⁴ I will set him over my house and my kingdom forever; his throne will be established forever.' "

¹⁵ Nathan reported to David all the words of this entire revelation.

1 Kings 8 (New International Version)

The Ark Brought to the Temple

¹ Then King Solomon summoned into his presence at Jerusalem the elders of Israel, all the heads of the tribes and the chiefs of the Israelite families, to bring up the ark of the LORD's covenant from Zion, the City of David. ² All the men of Israel came together to King Solomon at the time of the festival in the month of Ethanim, the seventh month.

³ When all the elders of Israel had arrived, the priests took up the ark, ⁴ and they brought up the ark of the LORD and the Tent of Meeting and all the sacred furnishings in it. The priests and Levites carried them up, ⁵ and King Solomon and the entire assembly of Israel that had gathered about him were before the ark, sacrificing so many sheep and cattle that they could not be recorded or counted.

⁶ The priests then brought the ark of the LORD's covenant to its place in the inner sanctuary of the temple, the Most Holy Place, and put it beneath the wings of the cherubim. ⁷ The cherubim spread their wings over the place of the ark and overshadowed the ark and its carrying poles. ⁸ These poles were so long that their ends could be seen from the Holy Place in front of the inner sanctuary, but not from outside the Holy Place; and they are still there today. ⁹ There was nothing in the ark except the two stone tablets that Moses had placed in it at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the Israelites after they came out of Egypt.

¹⁰ When the priests withdrew from the Holy Place, the cloud filled the temple of the LORD. ¹¹ And the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled his temple.

¹² Then Solomon said, "The LORD has said that he would dwell in a dark cloud; ¹³ I have indeed built a magnificent temple for you, a place for you to dwell forever."

¹⁴ While the whole assembly of Israel was standing there, the king turned around and blessed them. ¹⁵ Then he said:

"Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel, who with his own hand has fulfilled what he promised with his own mouth to my father David. For he said, ¹⁶ 'Since the day I brought my people Israel out of Egypt, I have not chosen a city in any tribe of Israel to have a temple built

for my Name to be there, but I have chosen David to rule my people Israel.'

¹⁷ "My father David had it in his heart to build a temple for the Name of the LORD, the God of Israel. ¹⁸ But the LORD said to my father David, 'Because it was in your heart to build a temple for my Name, you did well to have this in your heart. ¹⁹ Nevertheless, you are not the one to build the temple, but your son, who is your own flesh and blood—he is the one who will build the temple for my Name.'

²⁰ "The LORD has kept the promise he made: I have succeeded David my father and now I sit on the throne of Israel, just as the LORD promised, and I have built the temple for the Name of the LORD, the God of Israel. ²¹ I have provided a place there for the ark, in which is the covenant of the LORD that he made with our fathers when he brought them out of Egypt."

Solomon's Prayer of Dedication

²² Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in front of the whole assembly of Israel, spread out his hands toward heaven ²³ and said:

"O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth below—you who keep your covenant of love with your servants who continue wholeheartedly in your way. ²⁴ You have kept your promise to your servant David my father; with your mouth you have promised and with your hand you have fulfilled it—as it is today.

²⁵ "Now LORD, God of Israel, keep for your servant David my father the promises you made to him when you said, 'You shall never fail to have a man to sit before me on the throne of Israel, if only your sons are careful in all they do to walk before me as you have done.' ²⁶ And now, O God of Israel, let your word that you promised your servant David my father come true.

²⁷ "But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built! ²⁸ Yet give attention to your servant's prayer and his plea for mercy, O LORD my God. Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is praying in your presence this day. ²⁹ May your eyes be open toward this temple night and day, this place of which you said, 'My Name shall be there,' so that you will hear the prayer your servant prays toward this place. ³⁰ Hear the supplication of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place. Hear from heaven, your dwelling place, and when you hear, forgive.

³¹ "When a man wrongs his neighbor and is required to take an oath and he comes and swears the oath before your altar in this temple, ³² then hear from heaven and act. Judge between your servants, condemning the guilty and bringing down on his own head what he has done. Declare the innocent not guilty, and so establish his innocence.

³³ "When your people Israel have been defeated by an enemy because they have sinned against you, and when they turn back to you and confess your name, praying and making supplication to you in this temple, ³⁴ then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of your people Israel and bring them back to the land you gave to their fathers.

³⁵ "When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because your people have sinned against you, and when they pray toward this place and confess your name and turn from their sin because you have afflicted them, ³⁶ then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of your servants, your people Israel. Teach them the right way to live, and send rain on the land you gave your people for an inheritance.

³⁷ "When famine or plague comes to the land, or blight or mildew, locusts or grasshoppers, or when an enemy besieges them in any of their cities, whatever disaster or disease may come, ³⁸ and when a prayer or plea is made by any of your people Israel—each one aware of the afflictions of his own heart, and spreading out his hands toward

this temple-³⁹ then hear from heaven, your dwelling place. Forgive and act; deal with each man according to all he does, since you know his heart (for you alone know the hearts of all men),⁴⁰ so that they will fear you all the time they live in the land you gave our fathers.

⁴¹ "As for the foreigner who does not belong to your people Israel but has come from a distant land because of your name-⁴² for men will hear of your great name and your mighty hand and your outstretched arm—when he comes and prays toward this temple,⁴³ then hear from heaven, your dwelling place, and do whatever the foreigner asks of you, so that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your own people Israel, and may know that this house I have built bears your Name.

⁴⁴ "When your people go to war against their enemies, wherever you send them, and when they pray to the LORD toward the city you have chosen and the temple I have built for your Name,⁴⁵ then hear from heaven their prayer and their plea, and uphold their cause.

⁴⁶ "When they sin against you—for there is no one who does not sin—and you become angry with them and give them over to the enemy, who takes them captive to his own land, far away or near;⁴⁷ and if they have a change of heart in the land where they are held captive, and repent and plead with you in the land of their conquerors and say, 'We have sinned, we have done wrong, we have acted wickedly';⁴⁸ and if they turn back to you with all their heart and soul in the land of their enemies who took them captive, and pray to you toward the land you gave their fathers, toward the city you have chosen and the temple I have built for your Name;⁴⁹ then from heaven, your dwelling place, hear their prayer and their plea, and uphold their cause.⁵⁰ And forgive your people, who have sinned against you; forgive all the offenses they have committed against you, and cause their conquerors to show them mercy;⁵¹ for they are your people and your inheritance, whom you brought out of Egypt, out of that iron-smelting furnace.

⁵² "May your eyes be open to your servant's plea and to the plea of your people Israel, and may you listen to them whenever they cry out to you.⁵³ For you singled them out from all the nations of the world to be your own inheritance, just as you declared through your servant Moses when you, O Sovereign LORD, brought our fathers out of Egypt."

⁵⁴ When Solomon had finished all these prayers and supplications to the LORD, he rose from before the altar of the LORD, where he had been kneeling with his hands spread out toward heaven.⁵⁵ He stood and blessed the whole assembly of Israel in a loud voice, saying:

⁵⁶ "Praise be to the LORD, who has given rest to his people Israel just as he promised. Not one word has failed of all the good promises he gave through his servant Moses.⁵⁷ May the LORD our God be with us as he was with our fathers; may he never leave us nor forsake us.⁵⁸ May he turn our hearts to him, to walk in all his ways and to keep the commands, decrees and regulations he gave our fathers.⁵⁹ And may these words of mine, which I have prayed before the LORD, be near to the LORD our God day and night, that he may uphold the cause of his servant and the cause of his people Israel according to each day's need,⁶⁰ so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD is God and that there is no other.⁶¹ But your hearts must be fully committed to the LORD our God, to live by his decrees and obey his commands, as at this time."

The Dedication of the Temple

⁶² Then the king and all Israel with him offered sacrifices before the LORD.⁶³ Solomon offered a sacrifice of fellowship offerings ^[a] to the LORD : twenty-two thousand cattle and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep and goats. So the king and all the Israelites dedicated the temple of the LORD.

⁶⁴ On that same day the king consecrated the middle part of the courtyard in front of the temple of the LORD, and there he offered burnt offerings, grain offerings and the fat of the fellowship offerings, because the bronze altar before the LORD was too small to hold the burnt offerings, the grain offerings and the fat of the fellowship

offerings.

⁶⁵ So Solomon observed the festival at that time, and all Israel with him—a vast assembly, people from Lebo ^[b] Hamath to the Wadi of Egypt. They celebrated it before the LORD our God for seven days and seven days more, fourteen days in all. ⁶⁶ On the following day he sent the people away. They blessed the king and then went home, joyful and glad in heart for all the good things the LORD had done for his servant David and his people Israel.

Isaiah 64 (New International Version)

- ¹ Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down,
that the mountains would tremble before you!
- ² As when fire sets twigs ablaze
and causes water to boil,
come down to make your name known to your enemies
and cause the nations to quake before you!
- ³ For when you did awesome things that we did not expect,
you came down, and the mountains trembled before you.
- ⁴ Since ancient times no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who acts on behalf of those who wait for him.
- ⁵ You come to the help of those who gladly do right,
who remember your ways.
But when we continued to sin against them,
you were angry.
How then can we be saved?
- ⁶ All of us have become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags;
we all shrivel up like a leaf,
and like the wind our sins sweep us away.
- ⁷ No one calls on your name
or strives to lay hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us
and made us waste away because of our sins.
- ⁸ Yet, O LORD, you are our Father.
We are the clay, you are the potter;
we are all the work of your hand.
- ⁹ Do not be angry beyond measure, O LORD;
do not remember our sins forever.
Oh, look upon us, we pray,
for we are all your people.
- ¹⁰ Your sacred cities have become a desert;

even Zion is a desert, Jerusalem a desolation.

¹¹ Our holy and glorious temple, where our fathers praised you, has been burned with fire, and all that we treasured lies in ruins.

¹² After all this, O LORD, will you hold yourself back?
Will you keep silent and punish us beyond measure?

Haggai 1 (New International Version)

A Call to Build the House of the LORD

¹ In the second year of King Darius, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua ^[a] son of Jehozadak, the high priest:

² This is what the LORD Almighty says: "These people say, 'The time has not yet come for the LORD's house to be built.'"

³ Then the word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai: ⁴ "Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?"

⁵ Now this is what the LORD Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways. ⁶ You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but 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."

⁷ This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways. ⁸ Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build the house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored," says the LORD. ⁹ "You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little. What you brought home, I blew away. Why?" declares the LORD Almighty. "Because of my house, which remains a ruin, while each of you is busy with his own house. ¹⁰ Therefore, because of you the heavens have withheld their dew and the earth its crops. ¹¹ I called for a drought on the fields and the mountains, on the grain, the new wine, the oil and whatever the ground produces, on men and cattle, and on the labor of your hands."

¹² Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the whole remnant of the people obeyed the voice of the LORD their God and the message of the prophet Haggai, because the LORD their God had sent him. And the people feared the LORD.

¹³ Then Haggai, the LORD's messenger, gave this message of the LORD to the people: "I am with you," declares the LORD. ¹⁴ So the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of the whole remnant of the people. They came and began to work on the house of the LORD Almighty, their God, ¹⁵ on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month in the second year of King Darius.

Ezra 3 (New International Version)

Rebuilding the Altar

¹ When the seventh month came and the Israelites had settled in their towns, the people assembled as one man in Jerusalem. ² Then Jeshua son of Jozadak and his fellow priests and Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and his associates began to build the altar of the God of Israel to sacrifice burnt offerings on it, in accordance with what is written in the Law of Moses the man of God. ³ Despite their fear of the peoples around them, they built the altar on its foundation and sacrificed burnt offerings on it to the LORD, both the morning and evening sacrifices. ⁴ Then in accordance with what is written, they celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles with the required number of burnt offerings prescribed for each day. ⁵ After that, they presented the regular burnt offerings, the New Moon sacrifices and the sacrifices for all the appointed sacred feasts of the LORD, as well as those brought as freewill offerings to the LORD. ⁶ On the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the LORD, though the foundation of the LORD's temple had not yet been laid.

Rebuilding the Temple

⁷ *Then they gave money to the masons and carpenters, and gave food and drink and oil to the people of Sidon and Tyre, so that they would bring cedar logs by sea from Lebanon to Joppa, as authorized by Cyrus king of Persia.*

⁸ *In the second month of the second year after their arrival at the house of God in Jerusalem, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Jeshua son of Jozadak and the rest of their brothers (the priests and the Levites and all who had returned from the captivity to Jerusalem) began the work, appointing Levites twenty years of age and older to supervise the building of the house of the LORD. ⁹ Jeshua and his sons and brothers and Kadmiel and his sons (descendants of Hodaviah ^[a]) and the sons of Henadad and their sons and brothers—all Levites—joined together in supervising those working on the house of God.*

¹⁰ *When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, the priests in their vestments and with trumpets, and the Levites (the sons of Asaph) with cymbals, took their places to praise the LORD, as prescribed by David king of Israel. ¹¹ With praise and thanksgiving they sang to the LORD :*

*"He is good;
his love to Israel endures forever."*

And all the people gave a great shout of praise to the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. ¹² But many of the older priests and Levites and family heads, who had seen the former temple, wept aloud when they saw the foundation of this temple being laid, while many others shouted for joy. ¹³ No one could distinguish the sound of the shouts of joy from the sound of weeping, because the people made so much noise. And the sound was heard far away.