

FORMED FOR HIS GLORY

Sunday January 10th, 2026

Series: Reset

Isaiah 43:19-21 (NKJV) “Do not remember the former things, nor consider the things of old. ¹⁹ Behold, I will do a new thing, now it shall spring forth; Shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. ²⁰ The beast of the field will honor Me, the jackals and the ostriches, Because I give waters in the wilderness and rivers in the desert, to give drink to My people, My chosen. ²¹ This people I have formed for Myself; They shall declare My praise.

Introduction: As we begin this new year together, we’re also celebrating something significant; 50 years of God’s faithfulness to this church. This milestone invites us not only to celebrate, but also to reset our focus and remember what has sustained us all these years.

Nine days of 2026 have already passed, time moves quickly, and life goes by fast. We can and should celebrate and learn from the past, however, we cannot live there. A reset calls us to live intentionally in the present, with our eyes fixed on God.

It’s easy to get distracted, to slip into nostalgia, and to begin longing for what once was instead of leaning into what God is doing now. When that happens, we can lose sight of why we exist and miss the purpose God is still calling us to walk in today.

This is why God tells the people of Israel, *“Do not remember the former things, nor consider the things of old.”*

His instruction not to remember the past was not because the past was meaningless. In fact, He established festivals to help them remember what He had done. Rather, He was warning them not to cling to the past in a way that kept them from seeing what He was about to do.

What once served as a testimony had become a limitation, keeping them from trusting God in the present. He was calling them to reset, to trust Him again and to recognize that He works in new ways. He is calling them from nostalgia to expectation.

That same call to reset is why seasons of corporate prayer and fasting are important. They help us reset spiritually and create a new sense of expectation.

They also remind us of something foundational: the church isn't built by human effort or sustained by our plans; it is formed by God. Fasting and prayer bring us back to that truth and anchor us in dependence on Him.

And as a local church, if we're going to understand who we are and where God is leading us, we must start by remembering where we came from. Before there was a name, a building, or a strategy, there was God at work.

So today, let's take a moment to look back, not to live there, but to see how God formed us as a local church, so that we can reset our hearts and move forward into what He is doing now.

1. GOD FORMED US — OUR STORY IS HIS WORK (Past)

No one can tell the story of the genesis of HOP, like the late Pastor Iris. I heard her tell the stories so many times and always with same energy, excitement and passion, as if she is telling a story that happened that day.

She knew that this work wasn't the work of man but the work of God. The events that led to her and her husband's conversion were divinely orchestrated.

God, who is the divine orchestrator of events that leads to our salvation, used the book "Catholic Pentecostals" written in 1969 by Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan to capture their hearts and lead them into a life-changing encounter with Christ and the Holy Spirit.

The Charismatic Renewal was a time in which God was moving around the world in mainline churches. People were being saved, experiencing healing and deliverance and baptized with Holy Spirit, speaking in the tongues and prophesying.

And those same things began happening right here in our prayer meetings in Lorain. Friends and family members were coming to Christ, many were being healed and delivered, and countless lives were being transformed as people were baptized in the Holy Spirit.

The story of the start of our church always stirs my heart. I haven't just heard the stories; I've had the privilege of living through much of it.

My parents were saved during the charismatic renewal and were some of the early converts. This is where I too, at the age of 14, gave my life to the Lord.

My parents served as part of the forming leadership team for the adults, and I was invited into a small group of young leaders to serve the teens of the movement.

So, our family didn't just watch things happen, we were right there, witnessing and participating in many of the decisions and moments that shaped what we now know and love as House of Praise Church. And for the past 35 years, my wife and I have had the honor of serving as the lead pastors.

When we look back at our story, one thing is clear, God didn't just form us *then*; He has been forming us all along. And if God formed us and called us, then there is a reason for that call and a purpose we are meant to live out.

2. GOD FORMED US FOR PRAISE — THIS IS WHO WE ARE (Present)

Isaiah 43:21 (NKJV) "This people I have formed for Myself; They shall declare My praise."

50 years ago, after much prayer and seeking God's direction on what this new church was to be called, our founding leaders landed on this scripture. In the moment they knew that it pointed not only to a name but a purpose.

House of Praise would not simply identify what our church would be called; it would define why God brought the church together. We were formed to be a people who declare His praise, His life, love and power.

In its original context this scripture was written to the people of Israel who are facing Babylonian exile. God is reminding them that no matter of where they landed in the world, they had been created and redeemed for one purpose, to reflect God's greatness and declare His praise.

Although it is written to Israel by extension it is the purpose of all believers. We are called to declare His praise.

1 Peter 2:9-10 (NKJV) But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰ who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

In 1976, God formed this church. Remember, the church is not a building of brick and mortar but people God is forming. We build buildings, but God builds people. He gathers hearts and stirs faith.

We celebrate what God has done and is doing:

- Lives changed
- Families restored
- People disciplined
- Christ glorified

We give thanks for leaders, servants, intercessors, and faithful saints, who continue to work in the field not just here but in many churches and communities locally and abroad.

We are a people who belong to God and we exist to praise Him.

Knowing who we are today is important, but it doesn't stop there. God never forms a people just to maintain the past. If He formed us, and if we exist for His praise, then we must ask the question: What does that mean for where we're going next?

3. GOD IS NOT DONE — WE MOVE FORWARD IN PURPOSE (Future)

50 years is not the finish line. It is a launching pad.

If God formed us, then God still has plans for us.

According to Leviticus 25, the Year of Jubilee happened every 50th year in Israel and was a year of:

- **Restoration** — land returned to original families
- **Freedom** — slaves were set free
- **Rest** — fields rested; no planting or harvesting
- **Reset** — debts were canceled

It was God's way of saying: I am the God of new beginnings, restoration, and fresh starts. Although this may not be a Jubilee year on the church calendar, let's live with faith and expectation that 2026 will be a Jubilee year for us a year of:

- **Restoration** and Spiritual Renewal.
- **Release** - Freedom and deliverance from that which holds us captive.

- **Rest** and refreshing from the presence of the Lord.
- **Reset** and realignment to the will of God.

Isaiah 43:19 (NKJV) Behold, I will do a new thing, now it shall spring forth; Shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

God is certainly in the business of doing new things, but He also calls us to respond to Him. So here is my call to action for us today:

- **Release the past.** Whatever you're holding onto, disappointment, regret, or even former success, stop living in nostalgia, wishing things were like they used to be or believing things will never change. Offer it to the Lord now.

Even if things aren't as you hoped or as they once were, trust God to create something new and better for His glory.

Remorse looks to the past; repentance walks toward God.

Let go of the past and embrace the present with faith in God for your future.

- **Reaffirm your dependence on God.** This season of prayer and fasting is a way of saying, *"God, we trust you more than our plans, strengths or experience."*
- **Return to Praise.** Ask the Lord to reset your heart as someone formed to declare His praise not only in a song but in a life of total surrender to worship and daily obedience.
- **Realign your purpose.** Invite God to show you where your life needs to be realigned to His will, your time, priorities, relationships, or service.

Let this fasting season be a reset, not just a routine.