

Good morning it's always so great to be here. We The Second Mile Center are from the east side of Detroit, east side of Michigan. We have traveled from the east to the West in the name of the Lord. Amen. We come here because some Arise...shined inviting us to worship with all of you today.

The people who invited us to be here today had no idea what verses of the Bible God would lead me to preach on today. I do not believe in coincidences. My heart was lead weeks ago to preach on these Words spoken by the major prophet, Isaiah...Arise...Shine.

Isaiah wrote these words 700 years before Jesus Christ was born and after a period of great darkness for the people of Israel. This was not just any type of darkness but it is stated it was a sick and desperate darkness.

Why were the Israelites in darkness? They were in exile for they were disobedient and rejected the Lord. In exile the Israelites lost everything dear to them...their city...Jerusalem, their land, their homes, their temples, and their freedom and even felt that they lost their God.

But God heard their cries and brings them back home to their beloved city, Jerusalem. Upon their return they found their homes, businesses, temples torn down or ravaged. The Israelites were depressed...living in a dark storm when God sent his prophet, Isaiah to say, these words. Let us hear the Holy Words, Isaiah Chapter 60:1-3 that so many of us need to hear today.

***“Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD rises upon you.***

***² See, darkness covers the earth
and thick darkness is over the peoples,
but the LORD rises upon you
and his glory appears over you.***

***³ Nations will come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.***

The Word of the Lord.

(Thanks be to God)

Let us pray:

Holy Spirit of God open our minds to hear your words. In the name of Jesus Christ we proclaim every wandering spirit be silenced so that every person can hear what you have to say to us today. In Jesus name Amen.

What, encouraging and beautiful word spoken to the Israelites and us today your light has come and the glory of the Lord rises upon you. Arise... shine.

Have you ever meet someone that you think oh there light shines so brightly for Jesus I have to meet them. I have to learn how to get what they have. Amen. I have to encourage them. I have to speak with them. I have had a few in my lifetime the last one in 2021 with a man who I

describe as carrying the light of Jesus so brightly that my Spirit was rejoicing. I was sitting at a conference it was a packed sanctuary when a man walked in and he was lit up by the light of Jesus. At that moment I knew I had to go meet this man and pray with him to speak over his life. When he left the sanctuary so did I following. Being obedient to God to speak over him. I waited outdoors for him to get off the phone and when he did my Spirit started speaking to him.

He might have thought I was crazy...I am not sure but he was gracious and as I spoke his light shined even brighter. I had told him that his light shine beyond all the others and he would do mighty works if he continued to be faithful, obedient on the journey that God anointed and appointed for his life. This was an affirmation to him he knew exactly what my Spirit was revealing. I asked him if I could pray for his calling and protection for him for the devil is a liar and deceiver. Amen.

This gentleman allowed me to pray with him, and when I left him I had said our paths would meet again not sure when or where but that I was going to try to follow him on YouTube and I would keep praying for him. I told him, I couldn't wait to see what God would do with his life if he was willing to stay obedient and faithful to God. The next day I had the privilege to hear him preach the Words God wanted him to speak to Preachers. I learned he was willing to arise...shine regardless of the cost to him.

Essential part of Christianity is Christ in you...the hope of glory. As believers we are called to be the hands and feet of Jesus arising...shining the light to the world. We don't just come to church on Sunday mornings to serve. We don't just come and serve people once a year but daily. Amen.

The Israelites were called by God to return home to their place and to take their place as Gods people and to reflect God's glory to the world. It was a time of rejoicing even though their city was annihilated. Our faithful God brings

light into the darkness. Verse 2 tells us that thick darkness is over the people and even though they might have felt the darkness...the glory of the Lord rises upon them.

The Israelites would've understood that as Gods people they must reflect God's glory to the world no matter their circumstances. We like them do not get to just shine his light when the going is good. It is to be at all times no matter our circumstances. We receive the Lord's light. In return we reflect his light. It is not for our benefit. It is for God's glory.

Reading about the darkness over the people of Israel reminds me of the world today. It reminded me that we as the children of God which I believe are the majority have become the minority because we have failed to Arise/shine in the world of darkness. Sometimes we do not Arise because we are just are not interested. We often do not

arise because of fear of bullies and intimidation but I say to you it is our time to Arise/Shine. If not us, who?

The last few years many cities have been destroyed by fire and widespread vandalism. I can't even imagine being a resident or a business owner in those cities witnessing such devastation. Seeing what one worked for be taken away in a moment. For those people it had to be life changing events. Depressing...hopeless and like those Israelites listening to the words of Isaiah would be tough.

And yet we are told Arise/Shine for your light has come even in difficult times. Heating prices are soaring high, food costs are accelerating faster than our income, many essential products are unavailable. Covid variances are always around the corner. Senseless shootings. Death seems everywhere. These are dark times and many people live in fear. We could be depressed all day long not wanting to even get out of bed but I say to you...as God's children get

out of that slumber. Remember the Glory of the Lord rises upon you your light has come...Arise/shine.

We are not to look like the world because we are not of this world. We live in the light not in the darkness. This is not an earthly light but a light coming from the Lord.

Lift up your eyes... Look up child. God is in control...always has been and always will be.

In the midst of all this darkness there's a glorious redeemer who redeems and restores his people. God gave Isaiah these words so long ago to his chosen people to hear...then, today and tomorrow.

Children of God we need these words desperately today to encourage ourselves and others to arise/shine. The son with capital S is shining on you....Capital S...O...N. Darkness may be lurking but as children of God we are lit up by the light of

Jesus. God calls us to serve as a light to the nations. So the children of God ought to shine in the world.

Arise is an action that we take. It's not something we feel. It is a step we take for God has called us into action. God is a promise keeper and gives redemption to his people. We respond. Not by just sitting in the pew next to you, not by being one of the frozen chosen but by being the ones who Arise/shine in the dark places.

It may be dark; things might be uncertain in paying bills, health deteriorating, relationship problems but our joy remains...which surpasses all understanding. As believers we live in the light of Jesus Christ instead of living in the darkness.

Our light has an effect upon people for they are attracted to the light and want to join and align themselves to the people with light. Jesus spoke about it on the Sermon on the Mount

saying, “You are the light of the world. Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your father in heaven.” Jesus is speaking to us be the light. If we are all depressed and worried who would be following us anywhere...let alone to the church. People are attracted to the light so let your light shine. Let people come to you saying what is it that you have? Why are you so positive in the storms? Why do you shine so much? The simple answer...God has given me the glory of the Lord.

Doors will open for you because the light attracts. You will be able to share Jesus and people will hear even those who have power and influence will be added as Christ followers.

We cannot just speak about our light shining but our lives must exhibit our light shining with the Spirit of Excellence.

Amen.

What is our Spirit of Excellence? It is that what we do well. We shine so brightly that people are curious about us and our relationship with God. Our Spirit of Excellence allows our light to shine in our attitude, job, life, service and it allows us to Arise/shine.

The Second Mile Center of Detroit opened its door by a Word from God to me “follow”. It was God who decided to open up the center. I followed with the grace of God to choose the calling that was already ordained, appointed and anointed by God for my life. Amen.

Lead by God where is it we can Arise so that light shines in the dark places?

- **The SMCD arises by sharing the gospel to others no matter who they are what they look like or smell.**
- **We arise by teaching the Words of the Bible to children in the after school program and the adults who come.**

- **We arise showing the love of Christ by feeding the hungry.**
- **We arise when we decided to prepare the after school meals ourselves so the children would receive a hot meal instead of a cold meal.**
- **We arise and shine in the community with our biweekly barbecues in the summer inviting all to the table.**
- **We shine when we make our food deliveries to the 92 year old man or the families who cannot get to us.**
- **We arise and shine when we have pop up communion's or a fun day.**
- **We arise by clothing all ages.**
- **We shine by handing that homeless man an underwear, socks, jeans, a t-shirt, a hoody and a bag with something sweet week after week without questioning, without judging but loving him as Jesus taught us to love one another.**
- **We arise by speaking healing to those sick or who are heartbroken.**

- **We arise when you give us hygiene kits and we shine when we distribute them monthly.**
- **The SMCD arises to educate every child as we encourage them to get their diploma. Let's keep on going to school regardless of the darkness around you. Let's go and become educated for you can be the change if only you believe it, you can see it then it will be yours. We shine when we walk with them every step of the way.**
- **We arise against bullies and gun violence.**
- **We arise to be the voice for the voiceless.**
- **We shine when we share the love of Jesus.**
- **We arise despite the barriers that are put up by others trying to block us because we do not look like the person they feel needs to be at the ministry. The SMCD is in a prominent black community and many in our denomination fought against a Middle Eastern Women opening the center. But it is not there decision. It is**

Gods and Gods alone to decide who is called and where they will go. Amen.

So Arise and Shine. Not in anger, not in violence, but in love. It only is of God when it comes from love. The light takes over the darkness as John 1:5 states, “darkness cannot overcome the light.” So let us the majority no longer be the minority. Each of us are uniquely made and called with a purpose on our life. We are called to stand up for Jesus Christ and to share him with the world. In order for us to do that we must arise. We as Gods children imagine a better world and believe it’s possible. Lead by God where is it we can Arise so that light shines in the dark places?

Let us not be afraid, let us not hide but be bold. Arise is something we do and people can see it. Shining is standing in the Spirit. Every believer in Christ is an ever increasing source of light.

Some of us may think, I am too old, how long do you expect me to Arise/shine? The answer is how far can you go? Arise/shine until the day you die. The only time we fail is when we fail to try.

Philippians, Chapter 4 states, “Let us arise in excellence with gentleness not anxiety but by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, and the peace of God will transcend all understanding.”

If you do not know where God wants you to arise then pray and let God do what you cannot do for yourself. God will put you in places where people will inspire, expand and lift your sights.

I found out last Sunday where this gentleman is that I spoke about earlier who had such light. He is here with us today. God has leaded him and he said yes to teach and lead this congregation, Rev. Lorenzo Small. No coincidences but

God's affirmation that Rev. Small be here at such a time. I am blessed to have spoken over him a few years ago and cannot wait to see his light shine in this community of faithful believer's.

Right now, is our time...Arise...Shine for our light has come to shine in all the dark corners. To God is the glory. Amen