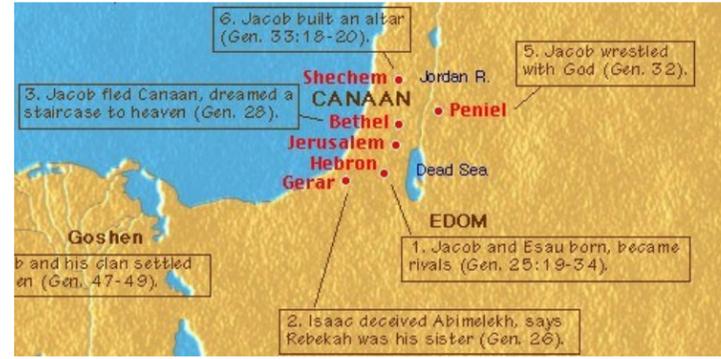


July 23, 2017

“We may be tempted to imagine that this is a ‘primitive’ religious report that has not pertinence to modern reality, for we have ‘outgrown’ such matters. Or on the other hand, we may wish to explain it psychologically and deny its objective reality. But neither of these will do. The narrative shatters our presuppositions. It insists the world is a place of such meetings. We must take care not to explain or explain away.”

Walter Brueggemann, [Genesis](#)



From [chronologicalbibleblog.com](#). Haran, where Jacob is traveling to search for his wife, would be off the upper right corner of the map.

Gloria patri

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost.
As it was in the beginning, is now,
and ever shall be
— world without end.
Amen, amen.

Apostles Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth and in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again from the dead, he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

Doxology

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost! Amen!

Many thanks to all who made Summer Art Camp possible!

Session:

Class of 2017
Barbara Matlack
Randy Niederer

Class of 2018
Patti Manz
Tim Shaub

Class of 2019
Mark Niederer
Kristine Schmidt, Clerk

Deacons:

Class of 2017
Judy Niederer, Secretary

Class of 2018
Gail Butterfoss
Lettie Ritner, Vice-Moderator

Class of 2019
Chris Manz, Moderator

Ministers: All members of Titusville Church
Pastor: Rev. Kenneth Good
Worship Assistant: Kristine Schmidt
Music Directors: Jon and Helen Eastburn

The Rev. Dr. R. William Shaub, *Pastor Emeritus*
Barbara Matlack, *Office Administrator*



Let us worship God! Today is the 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time. In today's stories, both Jacob and Peter come to see the presence of the Lord in a special way. We can identify with Jacob's response: "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I was not aware of it" (29:16). Gathering together allows us to reflect upon the ways

we experienced the Lord this past week. We also join as a congregation to support one another in prayer. Having worshipped and prayed, we are freed to see God's amazing presence at work.



Call to Worship (Psalm 139:7-12)

Where can I go from your Spirit?
Where can I flee from your presence?
If I go up to the heavens, you are there;
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.
If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,
even there your hand will guide me,
your right hand will hold me fast.
If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,"
even the darkness will not be dark to you;
the night will shine like the day,
for darkness is as light to you.

Prayer of Confession

Reassure us all today,
That the same God who opened heaven
To a rascal like Jacob
Leans in to hear our whispered prayers.
Thank you God, for loving us in spite of who we have been and who we are
Thank you for seeing in us the people that we could become
Thank you for unrelenting love
That pursues us
Apprehends us
And,
If we let it,
Transforms us.
We are awed when we consider...the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob

Let us pause for a silent time of personal confession...

Today's prayer is written by Safiyah Fosua and was found at [umcdiscipleship.org](#)



Order of Liturgy

- Prelude
- *[Call to Worship](#) (below)
- *[Opening Hymn](#) (below)/ Prayer
- [Confession](#) (below)
 - call, prayer, assurance
- *Gloria patri (back page)
- [Scripture](#) (below)
- Message
- *[Hymn of Response](#) (below)
- *Apostles Creed (back page)
- *New City Catechism (inside, bottom left-hand)
- Announcements
- Prayers of the People
- Offering
- Offertory: "Jacob's Ladder"
- *Doxology (back page)
- *[Sending Hymn](#) (below)
- Benediction
- Choral Benediction: "Blessed Assurance"

*Please stand if able

Scripture

Psalm 135 (page 443)
Genesis 28:10-22 (page 20)
Acts 12 (page 780)

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Songs for Today

- Opening Hymn
- Insert "Praise My Soul the King of Heaven"
- Hymn of Response
- Insert "We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight"
- Sending Hymn
- #572 "Blessed Assurance"

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Notes on Morning Scripture

Genesis

28:10 The geography of Jacob's travel in today's passage was identified earlier in chapter 28.

28:12 Jesus proclaims himself as the staircase in Jacob's dream, see John 1:42-51

28:19 Bethel means "the House of God"

Psalms 135

Today's Psalm ties in well with the two other readings as both Jacob (vs 4) and the Passover (vs 8, and Acts 12) are mentioned.

Acts

12:1 King Herod (Agrippa) was the grandson of Herod the Great (ruler during the birth of Christ), and ruled Judea from 41-44AD

12:2 James is the first Apostle to be martyred. He and his brother John are first mentioned in Matthew 4:21 as being called from their fishing. He is also mentioned as eye witnessing the Transfiguration, and requesting that Jesus allow him and John to sit at his side in heaven (Mark 10)

12:3-4 The Feast of Unleavened Bread is a 7 day festival (found in Exodus 12) that begins the day after Passover

12:13 The only mention in Scripture of Rhoda See <https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/all-women-bible/Rhoda> for a sermon about her role in this story

Web Link

<https://eclecticlight.co/2016/12/05/tygers-eye-the-paintings-of-william-blake-9-jacobs-ladder-and-the-stairway-to-heaven/> blog entry that ties Blake's famous painting of Jacob's Ladder to other paintings of the story throughout art history

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SYah9Q2wumc> Michael Card's lullaby using Jacob's dream

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=968 well-written commentary on Genesis 28:10-22

<https://obscurecharacters.com/2015/02/23/rhoda-an-excitable-servant/> wonderful analysis of Rhoda

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/biblestudies/articles/spiritualformation/five-ways-god-answers-prayer.html>

http://www.jesuswalk.com/jacob/2_ladder.htm In the middle of this commentary on Jacob is a nice chart identifying the promise of descendants, land and blessing we've encountered throughout the Genesis story.

New City Catechism

A 52 question catechism developed by Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York. For an introduction to this catechism, visit: <http://www.newcitycatechism.com/intro.php>

Part 2: Christ, Redemption, Grace

Question 30 What is faith in Jesus Christ?

Answer: **Faith in Jesus Christ is acknowledging the truth of everything that God has revealed in his Word, trusting in him, and also receiving and resting on him alone for salvation as he is offered to us in the gospel.**

To learn more about Question 30, including Scripture background, prayer, commentary and video from scholars, visit <http://newcitycatechism.com/new-city-catechism/#30>

Editorial: Aware of God's Presence

In Christ, we are invited to understand the presence of God as relationship with God. We are children of the Living God, brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, stewards within the realm of the King. In relationship, we can talk with God and listen. We can trust, experience growth and when needed, repent. We can be stretched and challenged and confronted, all within a certain knowledge that it is for our own good, and that without it, we will never be our true selves. We enter a day by day journey, with Scripture's promise of everlasting life at journey's end. Even in the difficult times, we find our strength in this presence, that though we do not see, we know through faith.

Comfort. Joy. Strength. Goodness. Blessing. Purpose. Life. These are just some of the words that speak to relationship with Jesus.

We belong—body, soul and spirit--to God, and we come to experience fullness of life because of this relationship. We rightly use good and delightful words to describe our relationship with God. Yet when God, and his bidding angels, make appearances to humans in Scripture, there is an appropriate fear (some use the word reverence). People are afraid, even terrified. The messengers then respond, "do not be afraid". Why the angst? Without the righteousness of Christ, we cannot look upon the light of God. We cannot view holy things without a deep awareness of our natural lack of holiness. We are broken, and cannot hold pure beauty. We are fallen, and as a result that which is awesome cannot be fully comprehended. People, when seeing the awesome, become aware of their disconnect.

Jacob, awakening from his dream in which he sees God, declares "Surely the LORD was in this place and I was not aware of it." He was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place". I know that I have felt Jacob's reaction before. It is encountering something completely different than what you assume or know, and its difference (holiness) astounds the soul. You are immediately brought to a new awareness that life is bigger than you, and the timeless God who was there before you will be there after you are gone. God's presence is holy.

The truth is that in Christ, healthy fear is accompanied by other friends: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness self-control. These spiritual gifts do not discard or deny healthy fear. Healthy fear leads the trusting soul to the gifts of God. They work together in souls like Jacob and Peter, even in you and me. Reverence for God reveals the beauty of God: "In your light, we see light" (psalm 36:9). When we encounter the holy, the people are blessed.

"Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for 'our God is a consuming fire'" Hebrews 12:28-29

Prayers to the Lord and Author of Life (offered in 7/23 worship by the congregation)

Dear Tabby, Raising Life (issues) Acts 9:36

Dear Tabby,

God hasn't answered my prayers. What did I do wrong?

Yearning in Yardley

Dear Yearning,

God might not have. What did you pray for?

Sometimes prayer is a pouring out of the soul. Sometimes it is a wrestling match with self, as you work through what it is that you really are asking for. Sometimes prayer is complete silence, as we wait upon God. Sometimes, prayer is spoken together, and there are many words, and many voices speaking to a similar issue.

There is an article on 5 answers to prayer which is included in the weblinks section. The five are thoughtful, and examples are provided. This is a helpful read for your concern.

The truth of the matter is that God will sometimes say 'no' to our requests. With what we know of his character, we can trust that 'no' is for our good. As a parent, most of the time when I decline my children's request it is for their safety, their blessing, or because a bigger family purpose needs attention. I think that God uses these ideas, and more, when answering our requests.

When praying, there are times of silence, times for many words, and there are times to know God as King, (and we as servants in his realm). Imagine the most important person you know. You probably speak your request to them differently than you might speak to your neighbor, relative or friend. How much more with God?

Here is a verse from each Testament.

"Hear my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray. In the morning, LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait expectantly." (Psalm 5:2-3)

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." (Philippians 4:5-6)

There is much health in understanding prayer to a Holy God remembering his holy presence and his loving care:

We make our request.

We wait for God's answer.

Regardless of the answer, we trust that it will be for our good and holiness.

As we wait, we serve God and neighbor to the best of our ability.