

LISBON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

July 19, 2020 Kingdomtide
"At Home Worship"

Prelude

Greeting

Opening Hymn: Surely the Presence of the Lord UMH#328

Call to Worship

The Lord was present when Jacob had a dream.
Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.
The Lord was present when David sang psalms.
Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.
The Lord was present when Paul traveled sharing the gospel.
Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.
The Lord was with the disciples as they learned from Jesus' parables.
Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.

Jacob's Dream: Genesis 28:10-19

Jacob was traveling to visit his uncle Laban. As it grew dark, he decided to lay down and rest. He placed a stone under his head for a pillow. When Jacob fell asleep he had a wonderful dream. There was a stairway reaching from heaven to earth and angels of God were ascending and descending on it. God stood at the top of the stair and said, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham and Isaac. I will give you descendents on this land. They will be like dust, spread out in all directions. All people will be blessed through you and your offspring. I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I promised you." Jacob woke up and said, "surely the Lord is in this place! I didn't realize. This place is awesome! It is none other than a temple of God. It is the gate of heaven." In the morning Jacob took his stone pillow, set it on a pillar, poured oil on it, and named the place Bethel (the house of God).

How often are we like Jacob, not understanding that the Lord is with us. The Lord was in Jacob's place, and the Lord is in our place. For Jacob, it took a big dream, a theophany-a vision of God's presence-to realize that we can worship God wherever we are. We can create a sacred space in our lives to let God in.

Let us pray:

Lord, forgive us for forgetting that you are always with us. Help us to be like Jacob, celebrating your presence in our lives. Help us to remember that our Biblical ancestors had the same doubts and fears that we are experiencing. Be our comforter as we face our spiritual lives in a new way. Amen.

Hymn: We are Climbing Jacob's Ladder UMH#854

Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24

David wrote this psalm with the understanding that God knows everything about us. God is aware of all our activities and thoughts. As David did, we can celebrate that God knows and understands our very being. God knows what we are thinking and feeling before we do. God is in all time and space. Even death and darkness cannot resist God. Let us join David, celebrating the divine presence in our lives.

Hymn: His Name is Wonderful UMH#174

Romans 8:12-25

Here is a reading from the Teen Study Bible. I think it sums up what Paul is saying very well, and provides words of assurance that are needed in our lives.

“Because of Jesus you're not condemned to keep on sinning. Jesus died so that you would be able to live a good life—the life the law describes but can't help anyone achieve. What's the secret? The Holy Spirit. Through the Holy Spirit Jesus himself lives in you. The spirit's power is here, right now, to help you do what's right in spite of the pull of sin. How do you do it? You don't. You just fix your thoughts on what the spirit desires, choose to respond, and let God's spirit give you the strength to obey.”

Let us pray:

Lord, we thank you for the gifts of the spirit. We know that the spirit empowers us to act justly, obeying your law. We thank you for adopting us as your children. We know that you love us unconditionally. We celebrate your promised glory for all your creation. We thank you for the hope you provide through the Holy Spirit. We pray for all our community; friends, family, church, nation, and world. Be with them and help us share your hope with them.

A few moments of silent prayer

The Lord's prayer

Prayer Response: Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying TFWS#2193

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

With this parable we are back in the fields, sowing wheat. Jesus spoke in parables so that people could understand him. Still, the disciples asked for explanations. I can

imagine myself, if I was there, saying, "Is that what you meant? Burning the weeds seems a little harsh." Jesus was trying to get through to people that the kingdom of God is already present. People may have still been wishing for a military coup, getting rid of the Romans and putting Jesus in charge. As we know, that wasn't what was planned at all. It's understandable that a repressed people would wish for a change in government. History has taught us that government isn't always the answer. The answer is in the love of God. I think that Jesus was also saying that God's kingdom is for all people. Sometimes we may see ourselves as the good seed, and sometimes as the weeds. God loves all people, even when they seem like enemies. In the parable, the sower and the servants play the "blame game". Whose fault is it when things aren't going as planned? Jesus told them to follow the common practice of letting the weeds and the wheat grow together, then separate them at harvest time. In our lives, we grow together, just like the wheat and weeds. We all have a purpose in this world. Perhaps Jesus would say, "Don't be so quick to judge. That is up to God, not you. The Son of Man will send angels to reveal the good news." We can be those angels, spreading God's love to all, wheat and weeds alike.

Hymn: On Eagles Wings UMH#143

Benediction

Go in peace, with the comfort of the Holy Spirit in your lives. May God's love fill you with joy and love so that you may share with others. Amen.