

WEEKDAY WORSHIP

July 31-August 6, 2017

Worship as encounter with the living God cannot be limited to one hour per week. "Weekday Worship" invites you to extend your worship beyond the sanctuary, to hear the story of the Bible as your story, lived out each day of each week. Feedback is appreciated and should be directed to Rita Boyer.

BIBLE READING

This week's reading is: Genesis 32:22–31 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=366349818>).

Other readings are: Psalm 17:1–7, 15, Romans 9:1–5, Matthew 14:13–21

The theme is: Struggle.

Last week we left Jacob on his way to Haran, fleeing the expected and well-deserved retaliation of the brother he wronged, Esau. We learn, however, that Jacob was not able to outrun his past. Fast-forward many years to Jacob's departure from Haran to return home, something God has directed Jacob to do. Despite the passage of time, Jacob is still afraid to face Esau, the brother he tricked out of his birthright. The night before this dreaded reunion is to take place, a tormented, fearful Jacob wrestles with "a man" so fiercely that his hip is pulled out of joint! Even so, Jacob prevails, demands and receives a blessing, and is given the new name of "Israel", meaning "one who strives with God." His sparring partner was no mere mortal, but God in human form. Jacob has seen God's face and lived, something not thought possible. At a time of great personal turmoil, God continues to fulfill the promise to form a people - a nation - out of Abraham's descendants. Perhaps this wrestling match with God helped to prepare Jacob for what was ahead. Perhaps it also foreshadows the kind of relationship this nation would have with God across the course of history.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

"Questions to Consider" enable you to connect your story to the biblical story. Rather than easy questions to be answered at first glance, these questions or reflections can be returned to and meditated upon throughout the week.

How you ever struggled with God or wrestled with your faith?

Do you see a blessing that came as a result?

Continue to reflect upon the worship theme of July 30:

Encourage someone who persists in the face of difficulty.

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