

Preparation:

The readings set for this Sunday include:

- **Genesis 28:10-19a**
- **Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24**
- **Romans 8:12-25**
- **Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43**

1. You may want to read some or all of these readings before starting your worship – or include them after the first prayer.
2. When preparing for this worship, find a place and time where you can be quiet and comfortable for half an hour. If you want a short YouTube introduction then go to <https://youtu.be/kwFXPjoRm0>
3. Put something that speaks to you of God's faithful love in a place where you can focus on it.
4. You can sing the hymns if you are able, or you can read the words out loud – or silently if that seems better. Alternatively you may find them on the internet.
5. When you are ready, light a candle/tea light if it helps you to focus. This can mean many things to you. Perhaps you could use the words of Psalm 139: 11-12
If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me become night", even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day, for darkness is as light to you.
6. Now, sit down and relax...
7. Welcome to worship!

Order for worship on Sunday 19th July 2020



"Surely the LORD is in this place--and I did not know it!" **Genesis 28:16**

Worship for Sunday 19th July – at Central Hall

Notes for worship preparation are on the other side of this sheet.

Call to worship: Jacob said, said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." **Genesis 28:17**

Hymn 30: Jesus stand among us at the meeting of our lives

Prayer: God of our families and our church family, we adore you! You open our eyes to a vision of your kingdom where we are changed forever by your presence. Keep our eyes upon your heavenly love. Let us see you in the sunrise and the sunset. Give us courage in times of fear and doubt. And forgive us, Lord, the times when through fear, selfishness or doubt, we have failed you, or our neighbour. Grant us the gift of your love's transformation once more. **Amen.**

Reading: God said to Jacob, "the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go." *Gen 28:14b-15*

Reflection

Ministry is something we all share in, and it is fundamental to following Christ. God needs each of us to take part in the ministry of the church because we are all part of one family. This is the family Paul talks of when he writes, "you have received a spirit of adoption" and "we are children of God" (Rom 8:15 & 16).

There was no doubt that, as a young child, I was part of our family – I didn't go out to work or cook the meals, but I was still asked to do some of the things that kept the family going – mashing potatoes, cleaning my room, getting Grandma's slippers. When I grew up, I married and we started our own family. There was more to do and we did it for each other. Families, however, are not always such a wonderful things. The family is not only where we learn to cooperate but, as we see from the

story of Abraham, Sarah and their descendants, it is also where arguments, favouritism and resentment can grow. Yet, for all its faults, Abraham and Sarah's family continues to be open to God through Isaac and Rebekah, through Jacob and the twelve tribes of Israel.

In Romans, Paul says we are adopted into a family. Jesus opens a new way for us to be a family open to God. It's true the Christian family is a family with challenges, but we also have direction, hope and vision. By God's grace, we are adopted into a family where God calls us children and heirs. In our family at Central Hall we need to remember this: God is father and mother to us, Jesus is our brother and the Holy Spirit is our sister. When it comes to faith, Abraham's family had dreams and visions and encounters with the living God. They struggled with God, and welcoming God into their family, was not always easy. God, however, gave them the vision of a better future. The family continued to be open to God - aware of God's wonderful steadfast love. Theirs was a family which began to flourish. That is also the promise for our church family at Central Hall: a family open to God and aware of God's wonderful, steadfast love. A family which flourishes because we are adopted into Christ's family. Thanks be to God!

Hymn 72: Father God I wonder

Prayers: Brother Christ, Sister Spirit, draw us closer to you in your family, the church as we pray for members of our congregation and name those who come to mind in this moment. God, father and mother to us, bless our church family, renew us and help us to flourish. We bring to you those in the family who are suffering, grieving or sick, in body, mind or spirit. Further afield we pray for people in far off places that are familiar to us, in other cities and other countries, especially we remember those who are part of our wider church family. Bless protect and guide them. Amen

Say the Lord's Prayer in the version you are most familiar with.

Hymn 410: Lord thy church on earth is seeking

Blessing: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, evermore. **Amen**