



▶ DAILY DEVOTIONAL.

Saturday/Sunday

6/30/18-7/1/18 “The Story of a Nation”

Psalm 33

*Sing joyfully to the Lord, you righteous;
it is fitting for the upright to praise him.
Praise the Lord with the harp;
make music to him on the ten-stringed lyre.
Sing to him a new song;
play skillfully, and shout for joy.*

*For the word of the Lord is right and true;
he is faithful in all he does.
The Lord loves righteousness and justice;
the earth is full of his unfailing love.*

*By the word of the Lord the heavens were made,
their starry host by the breath of his mouth.
He gathers the waters of the sea into jars;
he puts the deep into storehouses.
Let all the earth fear the Lord;
let all the people of the world revere him.
For he spoke, and it came to be;
he commanded, and it stood firm.*

*The Lord foils the plans of the nations;
he thwarts the purposes of the peoples.
But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever,
the purposes of his heart through all generations.*

*Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord,
the people he chose for his inheritance.
From heaven the Lord looks down
and sees all mankind;
from his dwelling place he watches
all who live on earth —
he who forms the hearts of all,
who considers everything they do.*

*No king is saved by the size of his army;
no warrior escapes by his great strength.
A horse is a vain hope for deliverance;
despite all its great strength it cannot save.
But the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him,
on those whose hope is in his unfailing love,
to deliver them from death
and keep them alive in famine.*

*We wait in hope for the Lord;
he is our help and our shield.
In him our hearts rejoice,
for we trust in his holy name.
May your unfailing love be with us, Lord,
even as we put our hope in you.*

Family Activity: Stories are an important part of family time. Schedule a family meal this week to share stories. What are the stories that everyone in your family can retell? What are the faith stories or God moments that your family can tell? Where have you experienced God this week?

Monday, 7/2/18

“Wrestling”

Genesis 32:22-30

So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob’s hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. Then the man said, “Let me go, for it is daybreak.”

But Jacob replied, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.”

The man asked him, “What is your name?”

“Jacob,” he answered.

Then the man said, “Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome.”

Jacob said, “Please tell me your name.”

But he replied, “Why do you ask my name?” Then he blessed him there.

So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, “It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared.”

- The nation of Israel in the Bible was not a geographical location, but a group of people. As we read in our scripture from Genesis it started with Jacob, wrestling with God. How have you wrestled with God lately?
- We read that Jacob was given a new name, Israel, and blessed after wrestling with God. How have you been blessed by God through a struggle in your life?

Prayer: Dear God, we thank you for meeting us where we are today. Help us to feel your presence even when we are engulfed in wrestling. Give us wisdom to see the struggles in our story as new beginnings instead of endings. We ask for your blessing on us today. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Tuesday, 7/3/18

“Act, Love, Walk”

Luke 12:48b, Micah 6:8

From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.

He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.

And what does the Lord require of you?

To act justly and to love mercy

and to walk humbly with your God.

- As the nation, the people of God, we have been blessed and given much. Luke reminds us that to whom much is given, much is required. As a people of God, what blessings can you name?
- The prophet Micah gives us instruction on what God requires of us. Where is God calling you to act justly, love mercy or walk humbly today?

Prayer: God and gracious God, we thank you for your blessings. Reveal to us what you have called us to do with the gifts you have entrusted to us. Help us to act justly, to love mercy and to always walk humbly with you, God. Amen.

Wednesday, 7/4/18

“Rejected”

1 Samuel 8:1-9

When Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons as Israel's leaders. The name of his firstborn was Joel and the name of his second was Abijah, and they served at Beersheba. But his sons did not follow his ways. They turned aside after dishonest gain and accepted bribes and perverted justice.

So all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah. They said to him, “You are old, and your sons do not follow your ways; now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have.”

But when they said, “Give us a king to lead us,” this displeased Samuel; so he prayed to the Lord. And the Lord told him: “Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king. As they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt until this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are doing to you. Now listen to them; but warn them solemnly and let them know what the king who will reign over them will claim as his rights.”

- When I was a teenager all of my friends had curfews except for me. My parents tried to convince me that it was actually better for me to not have a specific time I had to be home, because then it could change based on the events I was attending. No matter how much they tried to convince me otherwise, I still wanted what everyone else had. Even though the Nation of Israel had God to directly lead them, this passage from 1 Samuel shows us that there was still a desire to have what everyone else had -- a king. In the end, God allowed them to have what they wanted, even though it didn't turn out to be the better option. From personal experience, how can you relate to the struggle of wanting something that didn't end up being what was best for you?
- As this scripture shows, even God's people are not exempt from corruption, dishonesty or even rejecting God. How have you seen this to be true? How have you been able to overcome this?

Prayer: Dear God, we confess that we have not always accepted your leadership and guidance. We ask for your forgiveness and your direction so that we may truly repent and return to you. We thank you for the assurance that even in the times we have turned away, your love will never fail us. We ask you now to be our one and only guide. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Thursday, 7/5/18

"Inheritance"

I Peter 1:3-9

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith — of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire — may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

- As the people of God, part of our story is our inheritance, which is salvation and eternal life. How does this inheritance change how you live your everyday life?
- The message series this month is "The Story of the People." How does this inheritance change how you tell your story? How does it influence our collective story?

Prayer: Holy God, we praise you and your great mercy. Thank you for your gift of salvation and eternal life. We are in awe of the inheritance that you have secured for us. Help us to keep that inheritance always in our minds so that we may have your glorious joy now and always. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit we pray, Amen.

Friday, 7/6/18

“Impress”

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

- The story of Christianity is known because we tell the stories. What stories do you have to “impress upon” others? How will you continue to share those stories?
- In the Jewish culture, the instruction to write scripture on the doorframes was followed literally. Each household would have a Mezuzah, which was a small container with scripture inside, affixed to the doorpost. If you were to follow this passage from Deuteronomy symbolically or literally today, how would that impact you?

Prayer: Dear God, we thank you for our story that started so many years ago, even before we were born. Give us the words to share the stories of your faithfulness and the actions to prove they are true. We ask for your goodness to be impressed upon us so that we may, in turn, be able to impress your goodness upon everyone in our path. In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen.

***This week’s devotions were written by
Pastor Jessica Richard (jrichard@plattewoodschurch.org).***