

Welcome

Announcements: Giving Options. Special Offering is Meals on Wheels for the month of July. There is no men's coffee for the month of July.

Fellowship of Love

Song

Call to Worship

L: All are welcome here. Whether you are heavy-hearted,
wondering if there is power to make you well, or feel weighed
down by many demands,

P: The kingdom of God has come near.

L: Whether you are burdened by rules others have imposed or
you are a keeper and maker of rules,

P: The kingdom of God has come near.

L: Whether you feel at home in this place or you long to be
accepted,

P: The kingdom of God has come near.

L: Come and worship God, the One who writes our names in the
book of life and dares us to become new creations in Jesus.

P: The kingdom of God has come near.

Unison Prayer

**Challenging God, you send us out like lambs among wolves,
then ask us to be peaceful and gentle.**

Message for Sunday, July 6, 2025

Communion Service

Louise Cordova-Guest Speaker

Help us hear and obey your call to follow Jesus, even if we must surrender our reputations and rules that we hold dear.

May we learn and live the path of the cross, restoring one another and bearing one another's burdens,

**as we discover your gift of becoming new creations in Christ.
Amen.**

Offering/Song

Scripture

¹⁰ When Jacob saw Rachel daughter of his uncle Laban, and Laban's sheep, he went over and rolled the stone away from the mouth of the well and watered his uncle's sheep.

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¹¹ Then Jacob kissed Rachel and began to weep aloud.

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¹² He had told Rachel that he was a relative of her father and a son of Rebekah. So she ran and told her father.

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¹³ As soon as Laban heard the news about Jacob, his sister's son, he hurried to meet him. He embraced him and kissed him and brought him to his home, and there Jacob told him all these things.

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¹⁴ Then Laban said to him, "You are my own flesh and blood." After Jacob had stayed with him for a whole month,

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¹⁵ Laban said to him, "Just because you are a relative of mine, should you work for me for nothing? Tell me what your wages should be."

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¹⁶ Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel.

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¹⁷ Leah had weak eyes, but Rachel had a lovely figure and was beautiful.

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¹⁸ Jacob was in love with Rachel and said, "I'll work for you seven years in return for your younger daughter Rachel."

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¹⁹ Laban said, "It's better that I give her to you than to some other man. Stay here with me."

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²⁰ So Jacob served seven years to get Rachel, but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her.

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²¹ Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife. My time is completed, and I want to make love to her."

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²² So Laban brought together all the people of the place and gave a feast.

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²³ But when evening came, he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob, and Jacob made love to her.

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²⁴ And Laban gave his servant Zilpah to his daughter as her attendant.

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²⁵ When morning came, there was Leah! So Jacob said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? I served you for Rachel, didn't I? Why have you deceived me?"

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²⁶ Laban replied, "It is not our custom here to give the younger daughter in marriage before the older one."

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²⁷ Finish this daughter's bridal week; then we will give you the younger one also, in return for another seven years of work."

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²⁸ And Jacob did so. He finished the week with Leah, and then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife.

L: The word of God for the people of God.

P: Thanks Be to God.

Message-Guest Speaker Louise Cordova

LOVE & DECEIT

Genesis 29:10-28

July 6

We find before us a very worldly story of love and deceit on the part of two very worldly men. All through the stories of Jacob and Laban we find two scoundrels who seem bent on trying to outdo the other in trickery. Far from dealing with some ethereal, spiritual realm, the Bible throughout deals with the grubbiness of human life as it is lived. And it is in the middle of that sordidness, with its power-plays and pettiness, that the scriptures find God at work.

Jacob left for his uncle Laban's house in Mesopotamia to escape the wrath of his brother Esau, whom Jacob cheated out of his birthright and blessing as the firstborn of Isaac. As Jacob nears Haran, he meets a group of shepherds keeping their sheep, who point out Rachel, Laban's daughter to him. It apparently is love at first sight. Rachel is "beautiful and lovely," and Jacob knows he must make her his wife.

Because Jacob is going to stay with Laban for a while and work for him, Laban asks what wages Jacob requires. Jacob, in an extravaganza of love, says that he will work for Laban for seven years if Laban **will consent for Rachel to marry him as in (vs. 18) of our scripture today.**

Now there is a clinker to this story. Laban has TWO daughters. Leah, which means “cow” and who has ‘weak’ eyes---that is, her eyes, are not dark and lustrous but pale and shading toward blue. She is not very attractive; however she is the eldest of the two sisters. Rachel, which means “ewe” on the other hand is lovely and because Jacob loves her so much, the seven years he works to obtain her seem like a few days to him. His is a relationship with the deepest love with Rachel. It is not proper for the youngest daughter to marry prior to the eldest, so when the wedding night comes, Laban substitutes a heavily veiled Leah for Rachel in the wedding tent. Imagine Jacob’s shock when it is Leah who tells him “Good Morning,” Jacob was very angry. He asked Laban why have you deceived me? His reply was you may have Rachel as a wife also at the end of the festivities, but you must continue to work for seven more years to pay the bridal price for her.

It is not a happy arrangement. Jacob does not like Leah but loves Rachel. Leah becomes the mother of four of the tribes of Israel-----Rueben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah. With the birth of each son, poor Leah hopes, in vain, that the child will make Jacob love her more. We never hear that such love is given however, and the love and attention are focused on the sons who are born.

*Why is such a secular story in the Bible at all? Other than revealing to us the mercy of God toward one despised, does it say anything to us about the working of the Lord? Yes it does, because from Leah, the ugly and hated wife, later comes forth David from the tribe of Judah, and Moses from the tribe of Levi. God has used as he often does, a distasteful situation to further his purpose for his people, Israel. God takes the most unlikely situation and turns it into a cause for blessing. He uses Laban’s deceit, Jacob’s love, and Leah’s pitiful longing to set the stage for the future delivery of his people from slavery under Moses and **for coming rule over his people from their greatest king***

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David. Only a God whose purpose spans all time can do such deeds.

Maybe that is a revelation to us of the fact that even what seems to us at the time to be the most dreadful situation may be an integral part of the; ongoing purpose of God that he is working out through our lives. While we know only the moment, God knows the outcome, and he uses even our most desperate moments to work out his loving purpose. Amen!

Communion

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Communion Liturgy

UMH pp. 13-16

L: The Lord be with you.

P: And also with you.

L: Lift up your hearts.

P: We lift them up to the Lord.

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

P: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

L: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

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**P: Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,**

heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

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L: Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

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L: On the night in which he gave himself up for us he took bread gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

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L: When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

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L: And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

P: Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

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L: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

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L: By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.

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P: Amen.

Communion/Songs

Benediction

Song

Good Bye