

WEEKDAY WORSHIP

February 19-25, 2018

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 17:1–7, 15–16 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?q=382680758>).

Other readings are: Psalm 22:23–31; Romans 4:13–25; Mark 8:31–38.

The theme is: The Blessing of Generations.

I recently talked with several people who were interested in researching their genealogies. Learning one's family history can help to impart a stronger sense of identity and connection. In this week's reading, God enters into a covenant in which God's love and presence are known through the blessing of the generations. The promise of numerous descendants throughout the generations is given to Abram and Sarai, who receive the new names of Abraham ("father of a multitude") and Sarah ("mother of nations") in order to reflect their new identities. But in the first verse, God has a new name as well. God's new name is *El Shaddai*, which is translated in English "God Almighty." The root word *shad* means "breasts," and the word *Shaddai* means fertility. It is usually associated with images of the breast and womb. The "Almightiness" of God is demonstrated in birthing and nurturing a family that will continue to thrive and grow through all time. The promise is everlasting, as is God's love and presence. God is not just making this promise with Abraham and Sarah but with all of those who come after them. Through them God is giving birth to a family that will bless all the earth.

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.

In biblical culture names were intentionally given to reflect one's identity or purpose. If God were to give you a new name, what would it be?

Continue to reflect upon the worship theme of February 18:

The rainbow is a visible reminder of the covenant God made with Noah. What reminds you to live in a covenant relationship with God?