

Re: Order 16548
J. G. Campbell

To the officers, members and friends of Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church, greetings and grace in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. As we celebrate 150 years we can truly say, that the Lord has brought us from a mighty long way. We have not made it this far by ourselves, there have been many who have gone before us that paved the way for where we are in the year 2017.

Our theme for this 150th Anniversary celebration is "We are Climbing Jacob's Ladder," some of us may not know the story of the ladder, but our ancestors and founders did. Jacob like our ancestors was in the wilderness. He was a refugee, running for his life from the wrath of his brother Esau from whom he had hoodwinked a birthright. In his running he found himself tired and as the sun went down, he laid his head on a stone for a pillow. That night alone, frightened, and vulnerable, Jacob had a life changing experience. Jacob had a dream. In his dream he saw a ladder, with its top in the heavens. Well today is just another night for us to dream, a night to imagine possibilities, a night to commit ourselves again to look to the top of the ladder, to set our gaze on heavenly things.

If our spiritual forebears were to join us this morning, they would probably be surprised. But I feel certain they would also be pleased and proud. They would be delighted at our attempts in climbing the ladder to reach out to our community and to witness to justice in so many ways. They would be excited at the ways we have ministered to our youth and children, members of this congregation, to our community, to include the least of these through our food pantry, our homeless ministry, a place of recovery for those who are addicted, and place where "the man on the middle cross said that all could come" regardless of their condition.

I pray that you join me in the dream as we continue to "Build Bridges" that we build a more profound spiritual life for all of our members, characterized by prayer, serving the oppressed and the outcast. Let us dream of a church that reaches beyond its own neighborhood to offer the compassionate love of Jesus Christ to all. Let us dream of a ladder that will break down barriers that divide us, as we unite as the body of Christ to make disciples for the transformation of the World.

What we do today will have a far reaching impact on people who we do not even know. As we seek to serve the Lord the fruit of ministry will touch many as we remain committed to Christ, and our response like Jacob will be - "Surely the Lord is in this place."

Still in one Peace,

Reverend Geraldine W. McClellan