

WHEREVER WE ARE

Aim

To explore one another's frontlines and how you might become more aware of God's presence there.

Recall your Sunday theme

Pray to start, then read Genesis 28:10–22, and briefly recall the sermon together, asking what stuck with each person.

Sermon reminder

The sermon explored the story of 'Jacob's Ladder', his encounter with God at Bethel. It's easy to rush over the central point of the story: God meets Jacob! We sometimes think we're most likely to meet God in 'holy' places: churches, chapels, prayer rooms, etc. but the Bible is clear: most of the time God meets people in the least likely places – ordinary, everyday places – and sometimes unexpectedly. God transforms the ordinary place into a holy place. When we go to our ordinary places 'in the name of Jesus', they become the touching points between heaven and earth. Jacob 'owns' the place and knows that it is significant, marking this ordinary place with a stone. God has not finished with him yet. Can we see how God is present in our ordinary places and become attentive to how he meets us there? Let's discover how these places are transformed because God is with us.

Explore and discuss further

This session offers the opportunity to understand one another's frontlines more deeply, so it's important that everyone has a chance to be heard. Plan to spend about a third of your time discussing the sermon and passage, and the remainder exploring your frontlines. Adjust your timing depending on the number of people.

Discuss the passage

- 1 When God met Jacob, God promised to build a new community that would be a means of blessing to the whole world, through Jacob (v.13–15). It's like God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 12 (discussed in Frontline Sunday 1). God's promise is still with us. If we see ourselves as people who inherit this blessing, how might it change our perspective on our everyday lives?
- 2 Look at all the assurances that God gives Jacob in these verses (v13–15). How would they have changed Jacob's understanding of his own life? Take a look at Matthew 28:20 (which sounds very similar). What difference can that make for our lives?
- 3 Have you ever experienced God's presence in an ordinary and everyday place? What happened?
- 4 Jacob marked the spot by setting up a stone pillar and pouring oil on it. How could you mark a place in your everyday life to remind you that 'God-encounters' can happen there too?

Watch the film

Watch *Film 2 – Wherever* (licc.org.uk/frontlinesundays) and discuss what struck each person.

Explore your frontlines

In the last session, you identified your frontlines. Take time now – either as a group or in pairs – to allow each person to explain their frontline situation more fully, using the This Time Tomorrow questions below. Take notes of each person's answers. Make sure to leave time to pray together!

Think about your frontlines. What do you think God might be doing there, or what might he want to do there?

Frontline questions

- Tell us where you are on a typical week day.
- What do you like about it there?
- What's a pressure point there for you?
- What might be God's purpose for you there?
- How do you experience God's presence in that place?
- How can we pray for you?

Close in prayer

The film shows people going through the doors into their day, discovering God with them there. As you go through various doors this week know that God is in each place already. Try to sense where he is at work and join in with what he's doing.

You might close with this prayer:

Lord, would you open doors of opportunity for us this week as we learn to live for you.

May we have the courage to walk into opportunities to speak words of encouragement, do acts of kindness, be a listening ear, be a witness to you.

Make a difference through us wherever we are this week.

Most of all, may we be aware of your presence in the places we find ourselves.

Amen.