

OUTREACH

participating in ministries of compassion, justice, and advocacy

{Outward}

IT IS DELIVERY TIME. Having received financial gifts and completed the shopping, school supply drop-off has been arranged for this coming Tuesday. It is a quick morning trip to two local schools. Be a bearer of the bounty—a representative of our care. Speak with Mark Suter or Rachel about going along for the ride.

KUDOS TO COLLEGE PREP. Monday marked the final session. For the next several weeks, [Change the World RVA](#) is focused on securing financial aid, registration, and student housing. Founder Natalie May and crew continue to advance the cause of some of Richmond's most remarkable young people. With the fall will come new opportunities for Boulevard to be in their corner. Stay tuned. [The thank-you poster: From them, for you.]

WITNESS

telling our stories, offering expressions of faith, being Christ-like

{Together}

SAVE THE DATE: The [Richmond Marathon](#) and Half-marathon is on November 16. Last year, friends of Boulevard posted up out front to cheer on runners and to offer hospitality to the passer-byers. It is an opportunity to give the cold cup of water and the encouragement Christ commends (Matt 10:43; 1 Thess 5:11). Who can lead us?

On the cover: *The Prophet Isaiah*, The Basilica of St Josaphat, Milwaukee

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

We make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world (Matthew 28).

Boulevard United Methodist Church



We can do better. We should do better. God expects us to do better.

J. Clinton McCann

August 18, 2013

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Order of Worship for the 13th Sunday after Pentecost

Welcome, guests.

(UMH) - The United Methodist Hymnal
(TFWS) - The Faith We Sing

* Please stand, as able.

Gathering

Words of Welcome

Introit *Awake, My Soul*

Call to Prayer and Praise

Give grace, O Lord, as we seek your way,
that we may grow more and more into your likeness
and that we may bear your ensign
as a banner of hope and direction before all.

Through this time of devotion
Instill in us your own gentleness.
Quiet our over-wrought alarms.
Help us to rest in your wisdom.

These things grant by the power of your Spirit. Amen.

*Hymn *O God Beyond All Praising* 2009 TFWS

Prayers of the People
Joys and Concerns
Pastoral Prayer
Interlude

Proclamation and Response

Time with Children

Psalter *Psalm 80* 801 UMH

Anthem *Hear us, O Shepherd*

Scripture Lesson *Isaiah 5:1-7*

Sermon "What to Expect When God's Expecting"

*Hymn *Grace, Greater than Our Sin* 365 UMH

Offering Tithes and Gifts

Offertory *When the Roll is Called up Yonder*

Supply Dedication

*Prayer of Thanksgiving and The Lord's Prayer (895 UMH)

Sending Forth

*Hymn *Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us 1-2, 4* 381 UMH

*Benediction

*Postlude

NURTURE

caring for one another, for our space, and for our growth as disciples

{Inward}

A SERMON SERIES continues on the prophets. From Amos and Hosea we moved to Isaiah. Up ahead: Jeremiah.

REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY READINGS typically shape our order of service, including the sermon. If you'd like to prepare:

Next Sunday—14th Sunday after Pentecost

Jeremiah 1:4-10

Psalms 71:1-6

Hebrews 12:18-29

Luke 13:10-17

WE ARE PRAYING for the Carels, the Mays, the Seipps, Kimberly, Donna, Sheldon, Nancy Tate, Patricia Stansbury, Roy Burgess, Tonya Toney, David Johnson, John McConnell, Katie Anderson, William Wagner, Wilmer Chipiwalt, Wendy McClellan, Porter Anderson, Buster Riddell, and June Robinson. Want to add someone? Say so via the offering plate or call the office.

OUR NURSERY is not staffed. However, the door to "Noah's Ark" is an open one. This space is on the first floor. Please feel free to exit and return at any point during this morning's service. We welcome infants and young children in the sanctuary. With them, we are more complete.

GIVING GROWS US. Clicking "like" on our Facebook page and visiting SignUp Genius to offer your time? These count too.

August 4 - 10

Ministry Costs
4431

Your Contributions
2218



Crossing Boulevard

with Rev. Rachel

² BUT IT YIELDED WILD GRAPES [Isaiah 5](#)

The land, the supplies, even the life-giving relationship; these were there for the taking. Yet, the only growth was wild, Isaiah reports. I have to wonder: Is this a bad thing? To a girl whose heart beats for Chincoteague ponies, roadside blackberries, the surprise scent of honeysuckle...this reads harshly.

With further thought, I hear a diagnosis (which is only harsh for those accustomed to taking things personally and/or unaccustomed to examination). To point out the presence of wild grapes is not an attack on the part of Isaiah. While it may suggest that God intended some other variety to grow, the prophet speaks descriptively.

We humans are quick to hear the *prescriptive*. This is one of the many reasons why we cannot follow Christ without tending to our inner soil. The good news is that holy cultivation can happen most anywhere, anytime. The not so good news is that we don't always want the vinedresser to mess with that which we forget belongs to the vineyard in the first place.

It is no wonder that Isaiah suffered. When he grabbed a hold of things that God's people saw as *theirs* to brand and market, the popularity contest was lost. Hearing others tell the stories we would tell differently has never been easy.

I am reminded of the hours in pre-ordination psychological assessment and the sense that if I were the PhD in the armchair across from me and had another's livelihood in my hands, I would not be so off about this or prone to overemphasizing that. I could not see then what I appreciate now. Laying down the sword that is defending, justifying, vindicating one's self—oh, would I need the discipline. God was providing the practice.

These days, when I offer my take on a particular aspect of congregational life, bodies can occasionally stiffen. Once or twice I think I've seen the prune face. [You know, scrunching everything in to meet the nose. You can thank my yoga teacher for the name.] Remembering that the look I get is the look I have given is grace. It is the grace that unsticks me from self, putting me back to vineyard work.

Maybe this is the kind of fruit God has in mind. I don't know. I have to believe that embracing the invitation to never quit becoming is cause for celebration at The Great Potter's wheel. Just thinking that willing clay may be held in those hands all the more...It is plenty sweet for today~