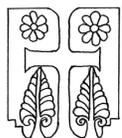


NURTURE

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

{Inward}



O RADIX JESSE—O root of Jesse—is the third of the seven O Antiphons of Advent, which are based on Isaiah’s messianic vision. Traditionally sung in Latin, today, these Antiphons are more often spoken in prayer: “O Root of Jesse, standing as an ensign before the peoples, before whom all kings are mute, to whom the nations will do homage: Come quickly to deliver us.”

WE ARE PRAYING for David McConnell, Jamie and Lanier May, June Robinson, Joe Morgan and family, Jane Frisa and incarcerated residents of metropolitan Richmond. Wish to add or restore a name? Say so via the offering plate or the church’s e-mail address.

REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY READINGS typically shape our order of service, including the sermon. Next Sunday: Malachi 3:1-4, Luke 3:1-6, and Philippians 1:3-11.

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.

PLEASE USE SIDE AISLES in the sanctuary this morning. That is not to say the center aisle is off-limits to all people! It is, however, an acknowledgement of the Advent wreath’s purposeful placement.

Boulevard United Methodist Church



A 30-foot pine tree had riven this man’s house. But as cleanup crews broke down that tree to remove it, the man saved the top 7 feet of the tree and planted it upright in his front yard as a kind of pre-Christmas Christmas tree. He dug out a few surviving ornaments from his house. Soon neighbors added symbols of the storm itself—surgical masks, battered coffee cups, and the like. It was a sign of resilience, a sign of hope and of a desire to re-build.

Scott Hoezee

November 29, 2015

321 N Boulevard
Richmond, Virginia 23220
www.boulevardumc.org

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

Order of Worship

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

* Please stand, as able.

Gathering

Introit *There's Something About that Name*

Opening Prayer

- Branch of Hope,
- Root of Possibility,
- Shade of Compassion,

Shelter us a while
while we tell your story of incarnation,
of new life,
of the "yes" breaking through
the dry cracked soil.

Come to us.
Stay with us.
Restore to us the joy.

*Hymn *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*
VERSES 2,3,4,7

○ come, thou Wisdom from on high
And order all things far and nigh
To us the path of knowledge show
And cause us in her ways to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, ○ Israel.

○ come, ○ come, great Lord of might
Who to thy tribes on Sinai's height
In ancient times once gave the law
In cloud and majesty and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, ○ Israel.

○ come, Desire of nations bind
All peoples in one heart and mind.
From dust thou brought us forth to life;
Deliver us from earthly strife.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, ○ Israel.

○ come, thou root of Jesse's tree,
And ensign of thy people be
Before thee rulers silent fall
All peoples on thy mercy call.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, ○ Israel.

Prayers of the People

Joys and Concerns
Pastoral Prayer
Interlude

Proclamation and Response

Time with Children

Gospel Reading *Luke 21:25-36*
Anthem *My Lord What a Morning*
Scripture Lesson *Jeremiah 33:14-16*

Sermon

Rev. Rachel G. May

*Hymn *Hymn of Promise*

UMH 707

Offering Tithes and Gifts

Offertory
*Doxology (94 UMH)
*Prayer of Thanksgiving and The Lord's Prayer

Sending Forth

*Hymn *The Trees of the Field*

TFWS 2279

*Benediction

OUTREACH

participating in ministries of compassion, justice, and advocacy

{Outward}

OUR MONTHLY MISSION FOCUS is United Methodist Family Services. We help them put hope into the holidays for children and families in Virginia. There is more than one way to contribute. Making a check out to Boulevard UMC and designating it UMFS is one avenue. Walkers, joggers, and runners: Consider taking on the December 5th Nutzy Rotary Funn Run. UMFS is a beneficiary.

WITNESS

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

{Together}

GIVING BEARS WITNESS to an attentive and generous God; as does offering to read Scripture or greet/usher (via SignUp Genius or by calling our office).

	Ministry Costs	Your Contributions
November 1 - 21	7,657	6,516

THANK YOU for dedicating candles in honor of those through whom, for you, the light has shined. Your faith expressed this way means much. Neighbors have voiced their appreciation. Those of us in and out of the building after dark or in the early morn are likewise blessed by the glow.



FLOWERS are given to thank God for the life of Barbara L. McGhee by David Smith.

ADVENT IS HERE. Your saints, our **saints** are communing. They're keeping watch in these windowsills, remembering to us how **we are called**

IN 2013 AND 2014

Estelle & Roy Burgess Sr. (2)
Tammy Estep
Edythe Harlow
Frank Hazel
Hattie Johnson
Alice & Hereford "Pappy" Johnson
Edward Kennedy
Helen Kennedy
Ernie Martin
Ann & Fred Monroe (2)
Jim Raines
Karen & Mark Suter
All People Everywhere
Margaret Arey
Aunts & Uncles
Boulevard's Choir
Herman Burton
David & Tonya
Quirio Del Cid
Margaret Gregory
The Hammacks
Mary Martin
Gene & James "Jimmy" May
Melissa McIntire
Barbara L. McGhee
Rachel
Sue Stewart

IN 2015

Edith Waldbauer
Kim & Family
Leslie & Family
Walter O. Harlow
Bertie B. Howlette
Ruthie Ponder
Mike Ponder
Barbara L. McGhee (2)
Alec Cobb
Dodd Crowder
Alecia Crowder
Those in Need

to lend our light.



Crossing Boulevard

with Rev. Rachel

28 STAND UP STRAIGHT AND RAISE YOUR HEADS Luke 21

Not everyone can get behind the idea that our own death is a force with which we are reckoning; heck, a good many of you may wonder why you ought to think about something that isn't really an issue for you. *Pastor, I'm frying other fish.*

Among the reasons that a theologian takes kindly to the psychologist in the room is this likelihood: The student of human behavior is quite comfortable affirming the God-studier's hunch that something can be a problem for us--it can exert a force, exact our energy--without our permission.

That's where I am, this week. I am feeling free to wonder about the things below the surface affecting my way in the world.

As to why I am open to receiving insight through atypical avenues, God only knows. This bit by Suzanne Guthrie, for example. Her thoughts will not get me standing up straight and raising my head to the full extent of Jesus' invitation (v.28). But maybe my interaction with her reflections is an early indicator of what might be? If I show up to the next 29 days...

She contends that the church helps us to show up to the grace of God by offering us the chance to face our deepest fears. On Sundays like this one the community puts texts before us that give us the opening to say, *you know what, maybe I am afraid. And maybe fear is in fact operative in me.*

God knows you and I better than we know ourselves. The Spirit uses the household of faith to pull us out of that place where we aim to "stay oblivious". Entertain the possibility.

What might that look like?

Letting the Word do its thing. Not apologizing for the crazy-talk that comes to us through Scripture at the beginning of the church year. Trusting the texts to reveal to you or another beloved community member "that one great worry in the shadows"—so that they might, with upright posture and a lifted gaze, experience the something wonderful on the other side.

"My Deepest Fears"
by Suzanne Guthrie

Why does the new year begin with dread, darkness, portents in the sky: the sun darkened, the moon obscured, stars falling, the heavens shaken? Why does the new year begin with the ultimate ending: the end of life, the end of the world, the end of time itself?

A beginner in faith might come to church on the first Sunday in Advent expecting to catch an early glimpse of the baby Jesus. Instead, the sky roils with doom, earthquakes shaking us until our bones rattle. Why begin the liturgical year with the end of everything?

Keep awake! says the Church on the First Sunday of Advent. The very warning cuts to the heart of my deepest, unnamed fear. This fear lurking at the edges of my being arises from my implicit worry about existence itself. If I exist, I can be annihilated. Dread is the twin sister of consciousness. As soon as I realize I am awake, I know that I can die.

Surely I can choose to wake just a little, and stay oblivious to larger questions of the puzzle of existence. Surely I can fill my life with distractions and glittery things and a thousand lesser worries, to keep that one great worry in the shadows behind the lesser ones. But the church asks me right from the first day to enter my dread, my fear of death, my existential anxiety.

On the first Sunday of Advent the church says, *Look! Keep awake! Face your profoundest fear, and then, my Love, I have something wonderful to show you!*

I was not particularly thrilled when I realized that I was on a Christian path forty years ago. But at least I knew from the beginning that the Church kindly acknowledged my deepest fears.