

WITNESS

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

{Together}

A WORKING LENTEN CALENDAR:

March 13	5 th Sunday in Lent	Flower forms due	Greeter(s) & reader needed
March 20	Liturgy of the Palms Liturgy of the Passion		Greeter(s) & many readers needed
March 24	Maundy Thursday		7:00 pm
March 26	Holy Saturday Easter Vigil	details forthcoming	
March 27	Easter Morning Holy Communion	Hollywood Cemetery Sunrise Service  Sanctuary Worship	7:00 am 11:00 am

TELLING OUR STORIES or part of our story is an act of Christian witness. Describing how life unfolds as a mix of tragedy and triumph, darkness and light, ordinary and extraordinary, hard times and holy moments: This can be a means of grace for others. Beth Nelson will be a story gatherer among us for a season. Why not let her know that you would be willing to be interviewed? Similar to StoryCorps' mission, at Boulevard we hope to:

- share stories in a one-on-one setting
- build connections between people
- cultivate compassion
- uphold the value of listening
- appreciate the humanity we have in common

Boulevard United Methodist Church



John makes it clear that Judas's question to Mary is not born out of concern for the poor. Judas is uncomfortable with Mary's display of devotion. What Judas critiques as waste is, in fact, the greatest gift that Mary can give...the offering of her very life, stripped of all masks, given in service to Christ.

- Chana Tetzlaff

March 13, 2016

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

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

An Order of Worship for Lent 5
(UMH) - The United Methodist Hymnal
(TFWS) - The Faith We Sing
* Please stand, as able.

GATHERING

Introit *Higher Ground*

Centering
A brief invitation to prayer and praise is offered.
Silence

Greeting

*Hymn *O Come and Dwell in Me* UMH 388

*The Peace

Prayers of the People
Joys and Concerns
Pastoral Prayer
Interlude

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

Epistle Lesson *Philippians 3:4b-14*

First Lesson *Isaiah 43:16-21*

Time with Children

Anthem *Be Not Afraid*

Gospel Lesson *John 12:1-8*

Sermon *Rev. Rachel G. May*

*Hymn *Cast Out, O Christ* Insert

Offering Tithes and Gifts
Offertory
Prayer of Thanksgiving and The Lord's Prayer (895 UMH)

SENDING FORTH

*Hymn *More Love to Thee, O Christ* UMH 453
*Benediction

NURTURE

caring for one another, for our space, and for our growth as disciples
{Inward}

WE ARE PRAYING for Oscarlyn and Todd Elder, Delight Andrews, Mary Marshall, and Casey Bowman Miles. Wish to add or restore a name? Say so via the offering plate or the church's e-mail address.

GIVING IS an imitation of Christ. Prayer, fasting, and almsgiving: These are things of Lent. Let us encourage and affirm each other along this way.

	Ministry Costs	Your Gifts
Feb. 28 – March 5	\$3,090	\$1,787

OUTREACH

participating in ministries of compassion, justice, and advocacy
{Outward}

JOIN A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION with Richmond Mayor Dwight Jones, Dr. John Moeser, Senior Fellow at the Bonner Center for Civic Engagement University of Richmond and Dr. Thad Williamson, Director of the Office of Community Wealth Building in the City of Richmond, and other Richmond residents. On Tuesday, March 22 from 8:30 am to 12:00 pm, attendees will have the opportunity to look again at the census data that initiated new efforts to reduce poverty's impact throughout the region. This event is free. Registration is required <http://us.iofc.org/forum-series>.

Easter Flowers

A two-fold invitation:

- (1) To provide flowers for Boulevard's sanctuary on Easter morning and
- (2) To support our worship fund.

Prices below are therefore slightly higher than cost.

If making more than one contribution, use another form.

Your Name:

Attached is payment for—or, expect payment from me between now and March 13 for:



- Potted Lily at \$14.00 each
- Potted Hydrangea at \$20.00 each

- The Worship Fund (no flowers) \$15.00

REMEMBERING:



CELEBRATING:

- I wish to dedicate these anonymously.
- I wish for them to be dedicated by:

If you wish to support our worship services, but do not want to receive actual flowers, your gift to Boulevard UMC will be acknowledged in the bulletin accordingly. If you wish for another to receive the flowers that you purchase, please make those arrangements independently. Thank-you!

John 12:1-8 (The Message)

Six days before Passover, Jesus entered Bethany where Lazarus, so recently raised from the dead, was living.² Lazarus and his sisters invited Jesus to dinner at their home. Martha served. Lazarus was one of those sitting at the table with them.³ Mary came in with a jar of very expensive aromatic oils, anointed and massaged Jesus' feet, and then wiped them with her hair. The fragrance of the oils filled the house.

⁴ Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples, even then getting ready to betray him, said,⁵ "Why wasn't this oil sold and the money given to the poor? It would have easily brought three hundred silver pieces."⁶ He said this not because he cared two cents about the poor but because he was a thief. He was in charge of their common funds, but also embezzled them.

⁷ Jesus said, "Let her alone. She's anticipating and honoring the day of my burial."⁸ You always have the poor with you. You don't always have me."



Crossing Boulevard

with Rev. Rachel

²⁰ THE WILD ANIMALS WILL HONOR ME Isaiah 43

It's funny what we humans are willing to believe and what we dismiss. Last week, this thought brought to mind a Will Willimon story. This week, I direct your attention to the little guy above; who apparently doesn't buy it either, this New Creation business.

He does not read my writing on regular basis. Bird literacy efforts would make use of more remarkable literature. But if he were to have read the recent bit about cosmic renewal, he would be like [face above]. *Say what? Where?*

Birds, after all, are mediums of the message that all is not well. Out of the hundreds of species considered in a recent international review, one in four are responding negatively to disturbances in habitat, food availability, weather, predation, and disease.

For a second week we are nevertheless confronted with imagery involving God doing a new thing. God's eye is on "the people whom I formed for myself (v.21)". God's eye is also on the jackals and ostriches (v.20).

The new thing here in Isaiah 43 is corrective; which is to say, it is restorative. It puts creatures, including humans, back in the position to relate well and thereby flourish. Do we perceive it (v.19)? Have we caught glimpses of divine restoration?

We cannot always spot this sort of grace springing forth. We might fail to invest the prayers, presence, gifts, and service, all of which align us with what God is up to. Or we might step on it. We can crush the source of life as it is being given with our efforts to do life and life together *our* way.

According to Isaiah, God's renewing grace does not always go unnoticed or get squashed. It provokes the wild animals to praise (v.20). They perceive it! Tell me that you too delight in this image. It makes my heart smile.

Regarding our friend above: Maybe he isn't so disbelieving. Maybe this is his praise face. Just as animals can be messengers of hurt, they can be harbingers of how and where we are relating rightly. God help you and I to perceive and participate in the renewal heaven intends.

Isaiah 43:16-21

¹⁶ Thus says the Lord,
 who makes a way in the sea,
 a path in the mighty waters,
¹⁷ who brings out chariot and horse,
 army and warrior;
they lie down, they cannot rise,
 they are extinguished, quenched like a wick:
¹⁸ Do not remember the former things,
 or consider the things of old.
¹⁹ I am about to do a new thing;
 now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness
 and rivers in the desert.
²⁰ The wild animals will honor me,
 the jackals and the ostriches;
for I give water in the wilderness,
 rivers in the desert,
to give drink to my chosen people,
²¹ the people whom I formed for myself
so that they might declare my praise.