

Boulevard United Methodist Church



One occasionally sees a bumper sticker on a vehicle declaring “Jesus saves.” I can say amen to this slogan but I think it should be balanced by another bumper sticker on the other side of the car saying, “God blesses.” These are the two primary shapes of God’s activity: 1) the dramatic acts of *saving* or rescuing and 2) the quiet, almost unnoticed action of *blessing*...

- James Limburg

May 1, 2016

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 for the Sixth Sunday in Easter

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

* Please stand, as able.

Gathering

Introit *What A Day That Will Be*

Greeting

*Call to Worship *Psalm 67* UMH 791

*Hymn *Up From the Grave He Arose* UMH 322

Prayer

Proclamation and Response

First Reading *Acts 16:9-15*

Time with Children

Gospel Reading *John 14:23-29*

Sermon *Rev. Alexa Slonin*

*Hymn *One Bread, One Body* UMH 620

Thanksgiving and Communion

Our service continues with a liturgy for celebrating the Lord's Supper. You are invited to offer tithes and gifts as you come forward to celebrate the sacrament by intinction.

Offertory *Come to the Table of Grace*

Prayer

Sending Forth

*Hymn *Dona Nobis Pacem* UMH 376

*Dismissal with Blessing

NURTURE

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

{Inward}

WE ARE PRAYING for Brittany Leggett, the families of Arthur C. Thurston, Sue Lockhart Larson and Audrey Clements, Mary and Keith Bedson and family, Oscarlyn and Todd Elder, and Casey Bowman Miles. Wish to add or restore a name? Say so via the offering plate or the church's e-mail address.

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.

A LOOK AT LIFE TOGETHER in numbers.

	Ministry Costs	Your Gifts
April 1 -23	\$10,900	\$8,630

OUTREACH

participating in ministries of compassion, justice, and advocacy

{Outward}

SAFE HARBOR-DIRECTED LOVE currently looks table full of items from the organization's wish list and \$233.00. Today is a final chance to bolster Boulevard's generosity via designated cash or checks (made out to Boulevard UMC and memo-lined "Safe Harbor"). A \$3.00 gift from everyone present for worship would allow us to make a more impactful gift.

Safe Harbor empowers survivors of sexual and domestic violence to transform their lives, and promotes healthy relationships for all. Volunteer teams include the House Team, Hospital Accompaniment Team, Court Advocacy Team, Children's Advocacy Team, and the Community Outreach/Education Team. Safe Harbor provides training for these roles. Applications can be completed online or by calling (804) 249-9470.



Crossing Boulevard

with Rev. Rachel

! **FLOWING FROM THE THRONE** Revelation 22

Revelation 22:1-2

Then the angel showed me the river of life-giving water, shining like crystal, flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb ²through the middle of the city's main street. On each side of the river is the tree of life, which produces twelve crops of fruit, bearing its fruit each month. The tree's leaves are for the healing of the nations.

You've reached the Green River crossing. What would you like to do?

1. Attempt to ford the river.
2. Pay for a ferry to take you across.

The moment you begin to celebrate a bargain of a victory, up pops the news that "Your cart has flipped and you have lost three oxen, six hundred pounds of food, and four sets of clothes." Thus, the wisdom that maybe only my generation circulates: NEVER ford a river. NEVER.

Over the course of several summers in the mountains of North Carolina, I actually crossed paths with the Green. Rather than try to ford it, virtually, I saw to it that campers got there for kayaking and fly-fishing. [I'm terrible at both, by the way.]

In time, I'd begin a life in Lynchburg. If you can get past the unfortunate fountain feature, the view of the Hill City coming across Route 163 can cause one's heart to leap.

For another place along the James I would be asked to pack. That was the spring of 2012. After nearly four years here, I am only beginning to understand the magnitude of Richmond's relationship with the river that runs through it.

Here I am reading about how rivers help to determine the urban form of cities and neighborhoods and how their corridors present opportunities for urban renewal. *Of course there is a river. Of course it flows from the throne—from God, this city's center.*

"Most of the major cities of the world are situated on the banks of rivers"...I am gazing at Wikipedia text and processing...*So too is the city of God (Revelation 21).*

In this vision of creation renewed, the inspired author describes a river of life (v.1). I am struck by a longing I did not know I had. There is a river that we will not have to ford. We'll not have to fight to keep it clean, nor will a surge be cause for fear.

I was made for the bayside or seaside, but not for the river. I could have sworn to that much as recently as yesterday! Stay in love with God, friends. Put another way: Be impressionable. To be surprised at your own self is often a matter of being surprised by grace and grace is ALWAYS a good idea. ALWAYS.