

Boulevard United Methodist Church



Transfiguration Sunday says “take off your sad rags,” “ditch the frown and the furrowed brow,” “fire the thought police and arbiters of orthodoxy,” “give the inner police officer the light off,” and invite in imaginative “lovers, lunatics, and poets” to give us visions of new selves and new heavens and earths.

- Bruce Epperly

February 26, 2017

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 Transfiguration Sunday

11:00 AM

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

* Please stand, as able.

Gathering

Introit

*Call to Worship

*Hymn

Sing for God's Glory

Insert

Prayers of the People

Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Interlude

Deb Saidel, flute

Proclamation and Response

Time with Children

First Lesson

Exodus 24:12-18

*Gospel Lesson

Matthew 17:1-9

Duet

Sermon

Rev. Rachel G. May

*Hymn

O God Beyond All Praising

TFWS 2009

Offering Tithes and Gifts

Offertory

*Doxology (94 UMH)

*Prayer of Thanksgiving and The Lord's Prayer

Sending Forth

*Hymn

Give to the Winds Thy Fears

UMH 129

*Benediction

*Parting Music

NURTURE

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

{Inward}

WE ARE PRAYING for Grayson Foy, Merle and Laurie, Jeanette, and Jay McKinney. 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
February 1 - 18	\$13,080	\$3,911

OUTREACH

participating in ministries of compassion, justice, and advocacy

{Outward}

FEBRUARY IS FOR HEART HAVENS. Heart Havens, with help from congregations like Boulevard, empowers adults with intellectual disabilities to find their places at tables both at church and in the community. We are collecting financial gifts and supplies (paper products, cleaning supplies, art supplies).



Crossing Boulevard

with Rev. Rachel

⁵ **AND FROM THE CLOUD** - Matthew 17

Sing for God's glory that colors the dawn of creation,
racing across the sky, trailing bright clouds of elation;
sun of delight
succeeds the velvet of night,
warming the earth's exultation.

Sing for God's power that shatters the chains that would bind us, s
earing the darkness of fear and despair that could blind us,
touching our shame
with love that will not lay blame,
reaching out gently to find us.

Sing for God's justice disturbing each easy illusion,
tearing down tyrants and putting our pride to confusion;
lifeblood of right,
resisting evil and slight,
offering freedom's transfusion.

Sing for God's saints who have travelled faith's journey before us,
who in our weariness give us their hope to restore us;
in them we see
the new creation to be,
spirit of love made flesh for us.

Tune: LOBE DEN HERREN
K. Galloway (1952), author

You're either a mountain person or you're not. I don't recall ever being given the option. In fact, it was understood that time with Dad mean time with Grammy and Grand-pop and when Grammy and Grand-pop weren't in Atlanta, they were in Jonas Ridge, North Carolina. On Gingercake Mountain.

Getting to Gingercake was easy – three-quarters of the way. Then came the twists and turns for which the front seat and chewing on ice did a whole lot of nothing. The only thing that made a difference in the last leg of the trip was the weather.

Fog meant less visibility. Less visibility meant a heightened fear of tractor-trailers. Fog meant, for this girl, carsickness compounded.

Pilots know. Those who forecast weather know. Clouds can mean turbulence. Clouds can mean damaging storms. A cloud is a force to be reckoned with: Appalachia taught me that.

If you're with me in gladness that there are 26 more days left in winter, and 18 days until the time springs forward, the fewer the clouds the better. Right?

Well, this Sunday's texts feature God, God calling, mountains, and—wait for it—clouds. “Moses entered the cloud (Exodus 24).” “Suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them and from the cloud a voice (Matthew 17)...”

The Scriptures have tied the glory of God and encounters *with* God to clouds.

If there is a prayer we can pray when we find ourselves looking up at them, maybe it begins with remembrance. A cloud pillar led the Israelites out of Egypt; for the Mesopotamians, Egyptians and Greeks, the cloud symbolized creation, fertility, divine power, and protection.

Author limani David: “Thirty-nine years of my life had passed before I understood that clouds were not my enemy; that they were beautiful, and that I needed them.”

I am not prepared to make a case for why we, the Church, need them. I am however inclined to soften my stance toward those vapor masses travelling the sky. We are a people born not only of the water (our baptism) but also of the mist. Any chance to connect with our sacred past and present is most precious.

Exodus 24:12-18

¹² The Lord said to Moses, “Come up to me on the mountain and wait there. I’ll give you the stone tablets with the instructions and the commandments that I’ve written in order to teach them.”

¹³ So Moses and his assistant Joshua got up, and Moses went up God’s mountain.

¹⁴ Moses had said to the elders, “Wait for us here until we come back to you. Aaron and Hur will be here with you. Whoever has a legal dispute may go to them.”

¹⁵ Then Moses went up the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain.

¹⁶ The Lord’s glorious presence settled on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days. On the seventh day the Lord called to Moses from the cloud. ¹⁷ To the Israelites, the Lord’s glorious presence looked like a blazing fire on top of the mountain. ¹⁸ Moses entered the cloud and went up the mountain. Moses stayed on the mountain for forty days and forty nights.

Matthew 17:1-9 (CEB)

¹ Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and brought them to the top of a very high mountain. ² He was transformed in front of them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as light.

³ Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Jesus. ⁴ Peter reacted to all of this by saying to Jesus, “Lord, it’s good that we’re here. If you want, I’ll make three shrines: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.”

⁵ While he was still speaking, look, a bright cloud overshadowed them. A voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son whom I dearly love. I am very pleased with him. Listen to him!” ⁶ Hearing this, the disciples fell on their faces, filled with awe.

⁷ But Jesus came and touched them. “Get up,” he said. “Don’t be afraid.”

⁸ When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

⁹ As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, “Don’t tell anybody about the vision until the Human One is raised from the dead.”