

Boulevard United Methodist Church



When Isaac finally appears in the story, he has just returned from a journey to Beer-lahai-roi. It is unclear what Isaac was doing at this well where God appeared to Hagar as she fled from his mother Sarah's cruelty...In this unconventional love story, it turns out that Isaac had been visiting one well while Rebekah was at a distant well watering camels.

- Esther M. Menn

July 9, 2017

On the cover: Statue of Rebecca, Johannes Takanen, 1877.

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

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

Order of Worship for the 5th Sunday after Pentecost

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

* Please stand, as able.

Gathering

Music

Call to Worship

Words of Welcome

*Hymn *Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing* UMH 400

Prayers of the People

Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Interlude

Landmark Brass

Proclamation and Response

First Reading Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Children's Moment

Scripture Lesson Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67

Sermon "The Light in Our Tent" Rev. Rachel G. May

*Hymn *Just a Closer Walk with Thee* TFWS 2158

Offering Tithes and Gifts

Offertory

*Doxology (94 UMH)

*Prayer of Thanksgiving and The Lord's Prayer

Sending Forth

*Hymn *How Firm a Foundation* UMH 528

*Dismissal with Blessing

*Parting Music

NURTURE

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

{Inward}

WE ARE PRAYING for Ben Hamrick, the family of Yolanda Williams, Rusty Moellencamp, Mary Anderson and her new to the family son, the friends and family of David McConnell, Colleen Bouldin, Kimberly Gwynn, Merle and Laurie. 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
June 2017	\$19,676	\$7,444

OUTREACH

participating in ministries of compassion, justice, and advocacy

{Outward}

JULY AND EARLY AUGUST is for school supplies. Gifts designated for mission or marked "school supplies" will help two local primary schools equip our children.



Why do we collect money rather than ask you to shop? Doing it this way allows administrators and teachers to tell us what they need and for Boulevard to plan our buying and distributing accordingly.



Crossing Boulevard

with Rev. Rachel

⁶⁷ SARAH'S TENT Genesis 24

Back in the day, sports radio was what was on. I was a child. I wasn't thinking all that deeply about my father's affinity for a certain AM broadcasting. Now I think: Those announcers really had a job to do! There were no screens in our Atlanta-bound station wagon. Those voices were everything, especially on game days.

More recently, I finally said yes to the headphones at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. [I had been the "I'll do the exhibit my way" type.] The audio tour didn't just enhance my experience. Had I gone audio-less, I would have walked away with a different and lesser understanding of Auguste Rodin.

I'm looking at our faith family tree and re-realizing something: We Christians pick up the Old Testament and engage it in a way that Jesus would not have...as though Genesis, for example, can and ought to be read apart from the oral tradition.

What the Rabbis have said about this or that story is far from fluff. Like the announcers on sports radio or the curator in our headphones, their voices can fill the gaps with truth and beauty.

This week I have marveled over Isaac and Rebekah's story in a whole new way. I have taken the oral tradition up on what it brings to the text and it has not taken me away from God or God in Jesus. I feel *more* connected.

If I felt sorry for Rebekah for being ripped from her home, I now ponder the rabbinical footnote that reports how her family of origin was not so swell of a place to be. If I still had a bad taste in my mouth with regard to Sarah—see her behavior in Chapters 16 & 21—well, my snark has been softened by the tradition of her tent. Evidently her bread was the best and her candles stayed lit. Oh, how I would love it there!

Preaching is not the same thing as the oral Torah but it *is* one way that Christians have honored this idea that a life of faith is not lived by the book and only the book. The Word proclaimed is, after all, something beyond reading.

When my sermon doesn't do it for you, seek out another. And when in Genesis, try doing as our Jewish brothers and sisters do. Say yes to the good announcers, the guided tour. *Hey Siri, what do the Rabbis say about why Isaac was walking in that field?*

Genesis 24:62-67

⁶² Now Isaac had come from Beer-lahai-roi, and was settled in the Negeb. ⁶³ Isaac went out in the evening to walk in the field; and looking up, he saw camels coming. ⁶⁴ And Rebekah looked up, and when she saw Isaac, she slipped quickly from the camel, ⁶⁵ and said to the servant, 'Who is the man over there, walking in the field to meet us?' The servant said, 'It is my master.' So she took her veil and covered herself. ⁶⁶ And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done. ⁶⁷ Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent. He took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.