

# WITNESS

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

{Together}

LOOKING AHEAD liturgically, with a bit of the civil calendar mixed in:

August 20	Rev. Alexa Slonin preaching Mike Goldberg, clarinet
September 3	Jennifer Johnson and Dennis Elliott, strings
September 4 (Monday)	Labor Day
September 17	Crystal Bayles Lennon, piano
September 30 (Saturday)	Blessing of the Animals
October 1	World Communion Sunday Rev. Katie Gooch preaching Jennifer Johnson and Dennis Elliott, strings
November 5	All Saints Sunday Rev. Meredith McNabb preaching
November 23	Thanksgiving
November 26	Christ the King Sunday
December 3	First Sunday in Advent
December 16 (Saturday)	Tentatively "Get in the Pic": a live nativity photo booth
December 24 (Sunday)	Christmas Eve
December 25 (Monday)	Christmas Day
December 31 (Sunday)	New Year's Eve

The church office will be closed on the following Mondays: Labor Day, Columbus Day, Day After Christmas, and New Years Day.

On the Cover: Chaim Stephenson's *Joseph in fear of his brothers*, plaster.

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

# Boulevard United Methodist Church



Chutzpah, temerity, guts, desperation; what it was we will never know, but this woman in the dust at Jesus' feet winks into a crack in his argument and unlocks the Master's heart, with both fierce logic and evocative need. "Dogs can live off scraps."

- Peter Woods

## August 20, 2017

321 N Boulevard  
Richmond, Virginia 23220  
[www.boulevardumc.org](http://www.boulevardumc.org)

## Order of Worship for the 11<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

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

\* Please stand, as able.

### Gathering

Greeting

Music

Call to Worship

\*Hymn *Now Thank We All Our God* Insert

Prayers of the People *Rev. Rachel May*

Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Interlude *Mike Goldberg, clarinet*

### Proclamation and Response

Time with Children

First Reading *Genesis 45:1-15*

Duet *Down By the Riverside*

Gospel Reading *Matthew 15:21-28*

Sermon *Rev. Alexa Slonin*

\*Hymn *Eternal God Transcending Time* Insert

Offering Tithes and Gifts

Offertory

\*Doxology (94 UMH)

\*Prayer of Thanksgiving and The Lord's Prayer

### Sending Forth

\*Hymn *The Voice of God Is Calling* *UMH 436*  
Tune: Webb

\*Dismissal with Blessing

\*Parting Music

## NURTURE

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

**{Inward}**

WE ARE PRAYING for Jerry Porter, Grayson Foy, Richard Weeks, Wayne, Ben Hamrick, and the family of Yolanda Williams. 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
July 2017	\$15,797	\$13,946

Mid-year giving statements including a word of thanks and a bit of financial analysis are available for pick up outside the nursery.

ON THE CLARINET is Mike Goldberg. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree in Clarinet Performance and continues to perform, record, teach, and conduct when he is not forecasting weather for our region. Welcome back Mike!

## OUTREACH

*participating in ministries of compassion, justice, and advocacy*

**{Outward}**

STAY TUNED for information on September's mission focus. We are currently in the midst of meeting needs at two local elementary schools and blessing teachers who prepare for the upcoming school year.



## Crossing Boulevard

with Rev. Rachel

### 4 I AM YOUR BROTHER JOSEPH - Genesis 45

Joseph is functional (narratively-speaking). He helps us connect the dots between the story of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in Canaan and the story of the liberation of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. He also happens to be a real man with real pain who, by the grace of God, enacts reconciliation.

There is much here that might stun us. The fact that Joseph has tears left to cry (two decades have passed since his brothers devised their plan to do away with him)...that Joseph believes God has had a hand in his coming to Egypt...that Joseph has managed to become “a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his house (v.8)”.

As I get older, what stands out is what Joseph does with his experience of betrayal. What *does* he do with that hurt? Yes, he cries out at the beginning of the passage. One cry, however, cannot possibly do the work of metabolizing what happened all those years ago.

Joseph does what I struggle to do. He is able to identify with those who have hurt him. Not, *who do you think you are?* Not, *you all are dead to me*. But this: *I am your brother, Joseph*. “I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt (v.4).”

He understands himself as connected to the very ones who failed to honor the brotherhood.

“Send everyone away from me,” is Joseph’s first move. He has just outed himself to the brothers on whom it has yet to dawn that this man was the seventeen year old they had sold up the river; or down the Mediterranean coast, as it were. He needs a moment.

*Send everyone away from me* is a natural response when we confront our sense of having been betrayed. The problem is not with that desire or even acting on that desire so as to get some solitude. The problem is in how we humans can stay there. After we have sent everyone away, we don’t always resurface to risk proximity – to identify ourselves as connected to those whose names represent sources of hurt.

When Joseph parts his lips to say “Come closer to me (v.4),” he becomes a moment for each of us to consider how we have or have not arrived at that place. How we get there, to expressing connectedness to those with whom there has been disconnect? Joseph doesn’t detail the process. He illumines the possibility.