

WITNESS

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

Boulevard United Methodist Church

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

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.



"Interestingly, both those within the oppressed community, the midwives, and those in power, e.g. Pharaoh's daughter, are exemplars of this at-times humorous undermining of the ways of power and death in favor of life and freedom."

- Howard Wallace

August 27, 2017

On the Cover: "Moses in the Basket" by Shlomo Katz (1937 - 1992)

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 12th Sunday after Pentecost

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

* Please stand, as able.

Gathering

Music

Greeting

*Call to Worship

*Hymn

Christ for the World We Sing

UMH 568

Prayers of the People

Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Interlude

Proclamation and Response

Time with Children

Gospel Reading

Matthew 16:13-20

Scripture Lesson

Exodus 1:8-2:10

Sermon

“One Holy Refusal”

Rev. Rachel G. May

*Hymn

Your Love, O God

UMH 120

Tune: Finlandia

Offering Tithes and Gifts

Offertory

To Show By Touch or Word

*Doxology (94 UMH)

*Prayer of Thanksgiving and The Lord's Prayer

Sending Forth

*Hymn

Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness

TFWS 2120

*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
August 1- 16	\$7,855	\$4,051

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 distributing \$1,300 worth of love among two local schools and teachers in our community.



Crossing Boulevard

with Rev. Rachel

¹⁷ **SIMON SON OF JONAH!** - Matthew 16

So, there is this cave at Caesarea Philippi; or at the place the Bible refers to as Caesarea Philippi. Tourists take pictures. Later they caption it (the cave opening): Where Jesus asked his disciples "Who do the people say I am?" Or: Where Peter answered, "You are the Messiah. The Son of the Living God (v.16)."

Contemporary photographs cannot capture the atmospheric of our text. I have heard someone describe 1st century Caesarea Philippi as imperially charged. In other words, then, you could've reached out and touched the magnitude of Roman rule.

"But who do you say I am?": Jesus doesn't ask this question at any ole' place. It leaves the lips of our Lord in a place that is named for Caesar. *Caesar* is Lord. Duh.

One interpreter invites us to imagine a kind of Mount Rushmore and I think that helps us into the shoes of the disciples. All around them that day were monuments to governance. Statues representing the accepted powers were placed in niches—niches carved into the side of a nearby cliff.

It's a bold move, then, to promote an alternative. Jesus does it. "And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church...(v.18)"

Ahem. Rome hasn't asked anyone to build a community called church.

This is serious stuff. So serious that humor is not optional but rather, a necessity. There may be some barely detectable playfulness before us—playfulness made manifest in nicknaming. Jesus calls Peter "Simon son of Jonah" and as far as anyone can tell, Peter's father was not named Jonah. Kayla McClurg's words:

I wonder what Jesus might have meant, calling Simon "son of Jonah." Maybe Jesus is using humor, which means saying something important in an unexpected way. Simon has just acknowledged him as coming from God. So maybe Jesus is saying, I see you, too, my friend. You come from an honored line yourself—from Jonah, the one who runs away. What a whale of trouble you can get yourself into! Yet God chooses you again and again, even when it means having to chase you down and roust you from your clever hiding places.

Friends, in the midst of big asks that make you feel small, stay in love with God in Jesus who knows you well enough to nickname you. He delights in you; and, in your quirks. Caesarea Philippi? It has nothing on the feeling of being known like that.

Matthew 16:13-20

¹³Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. ¹⁹I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." ²⁰Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.