

OUTREACH

participating in ministries of compassion, justice, and advocacy

{Outward}

LAST CALL to contribute to a special collection for disaster relief. In the wake of two hurricanes, our mission focus is the people who must clean up before they can rebuild. www.umcor.org: The Relief Supply section provides instructions. If you wish to assemble one and can get your cleaning kit to the church by Monday October 9, we'll get it shipped.



Checks memo-lined "disaster relief" or cash enveloped "mission" will be put toward the cost of the items for these kits.

Boulevard United Methodist Church



"The position of witness should not be limited to one individual. It is the task of all who have experienced God's loving kindness to speak about it and, thus, offer to others reasons that we might trust in God in any circumstances."

- Callie Plunket-Brewton

October 1, 2017

Cover: *Moses Striking the Rock and Bringing Forth the Water*, Marc Chagall, 1887-1985.

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 World Communion Sunday

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

* Please stand, as able.

Gathering

Music

Opening Words

Music

*Call to Worship

*Hymn

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

UMH 140

Prayer

Interlude

Jennifer Johnson
Dennis Elliott

Proclamation and Response

Time with Children

First Reading

Psalm 78:1-4, 9-16

Music

Crystal Bayles Lennon

Scripture Lesson

Exodus 17:1-7

Sermon

“How’d We Get So Thirsty?”

Rev. Katie Gooch

*Hymn

All Who Hunger

TFWS 2126

Thanksgiving and Communion

Words of invitation give way to The Great Thanksgiving. You may offer tithes and gifts as you come forward to celebrate the sacrament. Gluten-free friends receive first. The Lord’s Table is set for everyone.

Offertory

Prayer

Sending Forth

*Hymn

God Wills a Full Life for Us All

Insert

*Dismissal with Blessing

*Parting Music



NURTURE

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

{Inward}

WE ARE PRAYING for James May, Mary Marshall, 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.

GUESTS: Might you send a text message to boulevardumc@gmail.com? Include your name and snail-mail address and we can then acknowledge your gift (of presence) to us.

A LOOK AT LIFE TOGETHER in numbers.

	Ministry Costs	Your Gifts
September 1 - 23	\$21,191	\$6,623

We purchased a portable sound system this month! And it is an appropriate, most promising addition to our toolbox for future services and gatherings.



Crossing Boulevard

with Rev. Rachel

! THE WHOLE CONGREGATION JOURNEYED BY STAGES - Exodus 17

Don't make too much of the fact that this wilderness has a name. In Exodus 17, Sin is capitalized. It's a place (in Hebrew). The wilderness of Sin describes geography. It is not meant to direct our *theology*.

Wilderness is not inherently sinful. [Though I suppose one can certainly sin as hard there as anywhere.] Wilderness is an experience. Some folks describe it as tough. Others speak of it as transformative. It *can* be painful. It *may* involve solitude. It definitely includes an element of risk. In the wild, ever-present is the possibility of loss, injury, or failure.

When Bible-readers point out that it is God who leads people into the wilderness, we sometimes fail to follow that up with important qualifiers: (1) Sometimes wilderness is a result of our own action. (2) There is more than one kind.

The prophet Elijah had a wilderness experience, as did Paul, Job, Jesus, and presumably John the Baptist. That is to say nothing of people in the Bible whose experiences did not make it into the canon of Scripture or whose wilderness played out in the country of the heart.

Here's the thing: For some of our spiritual ancestors, their lives were mostly wilderness. That could cause us to feel sorry for them. Or, it could cause us to look at wilderness differently.

The problem with saying that wilderness is a problem is that it diminishes the faithful contributions of others, namely this generation (v.1). You could tell Moses, Miriam, Aaron: *It's a shame how the wilderness took up so much of your life. God should have made you successful.*

You could say that. I'm not sure I want to hear how that goes!

Recently, I was listening to some storytelling out of San Quentin State Prison. While an inmate articulated how perspective was everything for guys on the inside, my mind wandered to how crucial it is for all of us (in varying degrees). If we knew that wilderness is what we have, possibly all we have, would it dawn on us, the grace?

Word has it: You hear a whole lot from God there. Real community happens. In spite of or perhaps because of the drama, the law of God, which is to say the love of God, is made plain and plenty sufficient. So, dear friends, once more unto the wild~

Exodus 17:1-7

From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the Lord commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. ²The people quarreled with Moses, and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?" ³But the people thirsted there for water; and the people complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?" ⁴So Moses cried out to the Lord, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me." ⁵The Lord said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people, and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. ⁶I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink." Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. ⁷He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the Lord, saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?"