

# WITNESS

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

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

October 8	Charge Conference 3:00 pm at Ramsey Memorial UMC (5900 Hull St.)
October 29	Sunday Services begin at Fox Elementary
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)	"Get in the Pic": a live nativity photo booth

# Boulevard United Methodist Church



We lose ourselves, our destination, God; we forget what we know, and we cling to our grief over what we've lost. And God seeks again to call us, to enfold us within a community of fellow travelers, to provide us with a place and a way of living, and to say, "This is what you were made for."

- Elizabeth Webb

## October 8, 2017

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](http://www.boulevardumc.org)

## Order of Worship for the 18<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

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

\* Please stand, as able.

### Gathering

Music

Greeting

\*Call to Worship

Psalm 19

UMH 750

\*Hymn

*Holy, Holy, Holy*

UMH 64

Prayers of the People

Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Interlude

### Proclamation and Response

Time with Children

First Reading

Exodus 19:1-6

Music

Harrison Koontz

Scripture Lesson

Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20

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

*Be Thou My Vision*

UMH 451

\*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.

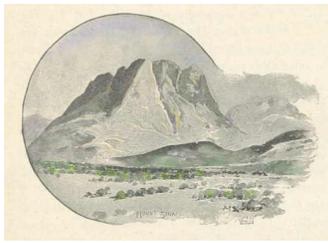
## OUTREACH

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

**{Outward}**

THANK YOU generous friends. Your missional giving for late August and September's focus totaled \$1285.50! This will fund critical disaster relief. Homebound community members continue to participate in these special collections and we are grateful in a particular way for the boost they give us.

OCTOBER IS FOR PET FOOD. Get dollars or the food itself to Boulevard  and we'll stock the shelves of those who provide for our hungry four-legged neighbors. How about ten cans or one ten-pound bag of dry food or a \$10 contribution, which can feed a pet for a month? Elaine Kennedy and Linda Crowder are point persons for this effort. Make it easier rather than harder on our transporters by considering product weight and packaging! Drop-off location: The cart outside our main office.



## Crossing Boulevard

with Rev. Rachel

! **ALL THESE WORDS** - Exodus 20

God has a lot to say at Sinai. It can feel like a speech to those of us who drop in for a few minutes. And so we have to dig in and perhaps stay a while to experience something of what was experienced in real time.

This is a third anniversary; three months, that is. “On the third new moon after the Israelites had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that very day, they came into the wilderness of Sinai (19:1).”

Three months on that new lunar calendar of theirs had come and gone. The glitter was falling off. They were free. They had been saved from the house of slavery. Toward whose house were they headed: This wasn’t exactly clear.

Some indication of what God had in mind for them would be helpful. It has been touch and go. The Hebrews have had issues with Moses and with God. God has been working six days a week to provide food and water. Moses is having a hard time. Believing in the project and the people is taxing.

So when God makes clear that there is something other than this—a point to the present predicament—it is grace. “Although God has brought them out of Egypt and performed a number of miracles, it is not until this point in the story that God tells the people about God’s intentions for them (A. Erickson).”

I suppose there have been hints along the way, but at the foot of Sinai the truth is made plain. God’s devotion to them plus their devotion to God equals the future. The law was going to help them live lives worthy of their designation.

Exodus 20 without Exodus 19 may be what we are used to and yet it is somewhat of a travesty to try and make sense of the law apart from the promise. The Ten Words are uttered on the heels of—maybe in the same breath as—*you shall be my treasured ones...you shall be for me a priestly kingdom (19:6)*.

A kingdom of priests implies that they will become a kingdom (they are but a band of pilgrims) and be like priests (priests are esteemed). It sounds like good news to those whose sense of self has faltered.

It feels like a promise of a house after Egypt. And because it is at this moment and not any other, the giving of the law feels like the gifting of the framework; which is sweet to behold when it’s a house, a structure to *really* live in, that is in the making.

Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20

Then God spoke all these words: <sup>2</sup>I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery;<sup>3</sup>you shall have no other gods before me. <sup>4</sup>You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

<sup>7</sup>You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name. <sup>8</sup>Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. <sup>9</sup>Six days you shall labor and do all your work.

<sup>12</sup>Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. <sup>13</sup>You shall not murder. <sup>14</sup>You shall not commit adultery. <sup>15</sup>You shall not steal. <sup>16</sup>You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. <sup>17</sup>You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

<sup>18</sup>When all the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, they were afraid and trembled and stood at a distance, <sup>19</sup>and said to Moses, “You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, or we will die.” <sup>20</sup>Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid; for God has come only to test you and to put the fear of him upon you so that you do not sin.”