

Boulevard United Methodist Church



I will place the key of the House of David on his shoulder;
what he opens, no one will shut,
what he shuts, no one will open.

- Isaiah 22:22

December 9, 2018

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PO Box 14507 Richmond, VA 23221
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Second Sunday in Advent
4:00 pm at 1837 W Broad St.

Greeting Rev. Drew Willson

Opening Words

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,
who has come to set the chosen people free.

**The Lord has raised up for us
a mighty Savior from the house of David.** Luke 1:68-69

Hymn *Hail to the Lord's Anointed 1-2, 4* 203

Time with Children

Hymn *People, Look East 1-2* 202

Prayer

*O come, thou Key of David come,
And open wide our heavenly home.
The captives from their prison free,
And conquer death's deep misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

Scripture Malachi 3:1-4

Hymn *Trim the Cruise's Failing Light*

Scripture Luke 3:1-6

Sermon "Zechariah's Boy" Rev. Rachel G. May

Song *Wade in the Water*

Offering

Prayer

The Lord's Supper

Hymn *Come Thou Long Expected Jesus* 196

Dismissal with Blessing



Storefront Inklings

with Rev. Rachel

THAT THEY MAY BRING OFFERINGS - Malachi 3:3

I had the chance to ask her, recently. *Why give as you have given, all these years?*

Her parents met at Boulevard. But then, so did a lot of people's parents. There had to be more to it. I did my best to articulate my wonder over voicemail. *Would you be willing to share with me a little about your support for UMFS?*

As far back as I can access, Boulevard has chosen to highlight the work of United Family Services during the weeks leading up to Christmas. Individuals from the congregation have been invited to contribute to a kind of second offering plate.

I figured I had botched the voicemail. When, over lunch, several days later, she looked up at said, "Let me tell you about the Family Services," I couldn't tell if I ought to steady myself for a reprimand or get out my pen and paper.

"It's all trimmings. Rudolph, the snowmen, the decorations.... it's okay to have a little fun with it, as long as it doesn't get in the way, but...."

I recall feeling the glare of cardboard Santa posted up across the café.

"If it's about Christ then it's about what Christ did – what he wanted. The children, for example. He cared for the children. I was not going to have children. I couldn't. I knew that I couldn't from a young age, and so this is my way."

It was "the orphanage" when she was coming along. UMFS adjusted course several times thereafter. As the challenges faced by children and families changed, the response did too. Several minutes passed. She had told me what she knew.

Then this (with fierceness): "Children *need* families. They do."

I was startled by the statement and by my own realization. Her contribution to our current mission focus had little to do with wanting the children to get presents. It had everything to do with UMFS providing the sorts of services that it does.

What exactly Malachi had in mind when he spoke of a time when righteous offerings would once again be brought to Lord: I cannot say. God gifts us with glimpses, though, and blessed are those who reveal to me the substance of things hoped for~

Malachi 3:1-4 (NABRE)

- ¹ Now I am sending my messenger—
he will prepare the way before me;
And the lord whom you seek will come suddenly to his temple;
The messenger of the covenant whom you desire—
see, he is coming! says the Lord of hosts.
- ² But who can endure the day of his coming?
Who can stand firm when he appears?
For he will be like a refiner's fire,
like fullers' lye.
- ³ He will sit refining and purifying silver,
and he will purify the Levites,
Refining them like gold or silver,
that they may bring offerings to the Lord in righteousness.
- ⁴ Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem
will please the Lord,
as in ancient days, as in years gone by.

10:30 AM on Christmas Eve
at 1837 W. Broad

A service that is less and yet more.

Long ago they called it a

The words "Love feast" are written in a large, elegant, handwritten cursive script.

And so shall we.

There will be Moravian Sugar Cake and tables with chairs.

It'll be earnest and honest and simple and gentle.
It'll be what we, collectively, manage to give and to receive.

Come.

Give an old, old story the chance to be bread for the journey.

OUTREACH

participating in ministries of compassion, justice, and advocacy
{Outward}

OUR CURRENT MISSION FOCUS is United Methodist Family Services. We help them put hope into the holidays for children and families in Virginia. Making a check out to Boulevard UMC and designating it UMFS is the way that we ask you to contribute. Online givers can select the mission box.

NURTURE

caring for one another and for our growth as disciples
{Inward}

WE ARE PRAYING for those grieving the deaths of Deanna Spain and Charlie Ruxton. Also on our prayer list: Nancy Tate and Leslie. Wish to add or restore a name? Say so via the offering plate or the church's e-mail address.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH for infants - 5 year olds begins after the children's moment (approximately 4:15). They rejoin us for Communion. Ms. LaRonda is an experienced childcare provider currently employed by Grace Covenant Child Development Center.