

March 31	4 th Sunday in Lent	
April 7	5 th Sunday in Lent	Flower forms due
April 14	Liturgy of the Palms Liturgy of the Passion	
April 18	Maundy Thursday	6:00 pm service at 1837 W Broad St.; childcare offered
April 21	Easter Sunday	6:30 am Sunrise Service at Hollywood Cemetery 5:00 pm service at 1837 W Broad St.

Boulevard United Methodist Church on Broad



How astonishing, that you lived within arm's reach of your father all these years, and never glimpsed the merriment that is at his core. "We *have* to celebrate and rejoice." He insists. But there you stand, 100% right — and 100% alone... Some hearts will only be healed at the Feast.

- "To the Boy Who Stayed", D. Thomas

March 31, 2019

On the front: The Prodigal Son, Auguste Rodin.

THE VIRGINIA CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
✦ *where disciples are lifelong learners influencing others to serve* ✦

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Fourth Sunday in Lent
4:00 pm at 1837 W Broad St.

Greeting Rev. Drew Willson

Opening Words

Hymn *As We Gather at Your Table*

Time with Children

Interlude

Prayer

The Peace

Scripture Luke 15:1-3

Music *Open My Eyes 1-2 (seated)*

Scripture Luke 15:11b-19

Hymn *Far From Home We Run Rebellious 1-2 (seated)*

Scripture Luke 15:20-24

Hymn *Far From Home 3-6*

Scripture Luke 15:25-32

Sermon Rev. Rachel G. May

Hymn *Grace Greater than Our Sin* 365

Offering

Prayer

The Lord's Supper

Hymn *They'll Know We Are Christians* 2223

Benediction



Storefront Inklings

with Rev. Rachel

SO HE TOLD THEM THIS PARABLE - Luke 15:3

The endgame for Jesus is not to destroy this contingent of Pharisees and the scribes. The endgame is something altogether different.

You may have heard about the homeless chess champion, a young boy who has taken New York City by storm. He and his family fled Boko Haram and came to this country with nothing, save the hope of survival and a second chance. When I say that this child has learned to play chess, *he has learned to play chess*.

Tani has guts. At the state tournament, the coaches – all of them – shook their heads when he sacrificed a bishop for a pawn. Someone apparently entered the move into a computer and a second round a head shaking ensued when it was clear that he had done the thing that would, in fact, advance the mission.

This child has great in him. In particular, he has the ability to see several moves beyond where he is, at any given point. Some of it is innate talent. Intellect paired with focus certainly plays a role. At the risk of reading into the story more than what is there, I say that Tani has heart. His heart is in it in such a way that he cannot help but champion more than a personal victory.

Jesus is like that. He sees beyond the moment (even as he is very much in it) and his responses, in the back and forth of first century debate, are appreciative of the long game.

The parable of the parent who had two children is not told in a vacuum. Jesus tells this story to folks who are voicing discontent with his ministry. They don't like how he does table fellowship and they can't see where it is going.

What we miss, when we lose sight of the context, is perhaps as important as whatever we might take away from the plotline. Jesus tells a story that communicates a big-hearted possibility. Rather than *you can have your tables and I'll have mine*, the parable tells of a table where both of them are desired – a table where the father whom they share transforms the same old squabble.

Jesus cannot help but champion the feast. He came to our flesh with nothing, save the hope of repairing the breach.

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

Now all the tax-collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. ²And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, 'This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.' ³ So he told them this parable:

¹¹ Then Jesus said, 'There was a man who had two sons. ¹²The younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me." So he divided his property between them. ¹³A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and travelled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. ¹⁴When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. ¹⁶He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷But when he came to himself he said, "How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! ¹⁸I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; ¹⁹I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.' "

²⁰So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. ²¹Then the son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son." ²²But the father said to his slaves, "Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; ²⁴for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!" And they began to celebrate.

²⁵ 'Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. ²⁷He replied, "Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound." ²⁸Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. ²⁹But he answered his father, "Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. ³⁰But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!" ³¹Then the father said to him, "Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. ³²But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found." '

NURTURE

caring for one another and for our growth as disciples

{Inward}

WE ARE PRAYING for Chris Gregory, the Anderson family, the Kirkland family, the United Methodist Church, Grayson Foy, Nancy Tate, and Bishop Sharma Lewis. 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 years of age begins after the children's moment (approximately 4:15). They rejoin us for Communion. Our childcare provider is employed by Grace Covenant Child Development Center.

GIVING GROWS YOU and us.

	Ministry Costs	Your Gifts
March 1 - 18	\$3,842	\$4,046

OUTREACH

participating in ministries of compassion, justice, and advocacy

{Outward}

MARCH AND EARLY APRIL IS FOR FOOD. During Lent, we are collecting funds for those doing the hard work of feeding our neighbors and improving access to fresh food in our city. To contribute to this collection, make a check out to Boulevard and write "food" in the memo line. Or, online, use the "mission" designation.



In addition to supporting Shalom Farms and FeedMore financially, we also have a time-given goal. Together, can we give 40 hours to food-related ministries and initiatives? You can log hours via Track It Forward, <https://www.trackitforward.com>. Simply click on "find your organization" and type in Boulevard UMC.

p.s. - Belmont UMC's food pantry is open on Fridays and they are receiving clothing, kitchen accessories, and pots and pans to better serve the families that come for food. Joel Thigpen can tell you more.

Easter Flowers

Members and friends of Boulevard, you are invited:

- (1) To provide flowers for our worship space on Easter afternoon and
- (2) To support our worship fund.

If making more than one dedication, use another form.

Your Name:

Attached is payment for—or, expect payment from me
between now and April 7 for:



- ☐ Potted Lily at \$12.00 each
- ☐ Potted Hydrangea at \$20.00 each
- ☐ The Worship Fund (no flowers) \$15.00

IN MEMORY OF:

IN HONOR OF:

☐ I wish for the bulletin to reflect that this was given anonymously.

☐ I wish for the bulletin to reflect that this was given by:

If you wish to support our worship services, but do not want to receive actual flowers, your gift will be acknowledged in the Easter Sunday bulletin accordingly. If you wish for another to receive the flowers that you purchase, please make those arrangements independently. Thank-you!