

For the Journey

June 4/26 - Rev. Dave Crawford



Please Read Genesis 18:9-15; 21:1-7.

“Sarah could not contain her laughter when she heard the strangers outside the tent renew the promise: Though her womb was barren and her husband good as dead, she would give birth to a son. That promise so filled with adventure when God first called Abram and Sarai to leave home now feels like a distant dream. They are in the middle space. For their hope, they have been laughed at by many.

“The stranger interrupts Sarah’s laughter with a question: ‘Is anything too wonderful for the Lord?’ The question frames our journey as God’s people. So often, God call us to inhabit the middle space. We pray to become instruments of peace in a world hellbent on violence. We seek justice for our neighbours even when leaders and institutions of power are not listening. We long for forgiveness, though we do not know the first healing step.

“Sarah’s laughter is the answer to the stranger’s question. God is faithful to the promise. A baby is born, Isaac, whose very name means, ‘God made me laugh.’”

- Will McLeane, United Methodist pastor, West End UMC, Nashville, Tennessee.

Is anything too wonderful for the Lord? The answer to the question resides in the extent to which we believe God “is”. And if we believe God is, how far do we believe God is involved in the world, not just in Abraham and Sarah’s time, but in ours? As McKeane points out, those ancient examples of faithfulness are in the middle space, mid-journey, half-way between promise and fulfilment. So are we.

News coming out of the United States in recent months suggests that a significant percentage of GenZers are seeking out God, going to church, checking out institutional spirituality. Roman Catholic cathedrals in the big cities baptized thousands of young adults and their kids on Easter Sunday this year. We can only assume the same is happening among smaller parishes too. Other conservative denominations are seeing a similar trend. It appears younger generations are as troubled by the unusual challenges of today’s world as are seniors. It also appears to be the case that societal trends are leaning further away from traditional baby-boomer liberalism in the seeking of truth.

Something new is emerging in the West, gradually, and that new thing is the “old, old, story of Jesus and his love”. As we in the UCC imagine what may lie ahead for us in our journey “Toward2035”, may the astonished, overjoyed, faith-filled laughter of Sarah become ours as well. For is anything too wonderful for the Lord?

Grace and Peace,
Rev. Dave