



Pride T-Shirts are here!

- B4 & after service in Narthex
- Office during regular hours

Suggested donation \$10



On August 6, we will be commemorating World Peace Sunday in worship with music, liturgical gesture, and liturgical art. Part of this will involve a congregational project with the goal of folding 1000 peace cranes out of paper. Please join us after worship on July 16th for a crane folding workshop in the coffeehouse!

Additionally, we will have an art exhibit in the

Narthex in conjunction with World Peace Sunday and we need your help! If you have created any art or own any art that coincides with the themes of peace and love, please get in touch with Alex at alexr@countrysideucc.org.



Please join us for a pop-up Pride choir for the service on July 16.
Just show up at 9 a.m. No experience required!

COUNTRYSIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH

13130 FAITH PLAZA | OMAHA, NE 68144 | 402-391-0350
COUNTRYSIDEUCC.ORG

REV. DR. KEITH HERRON



PLAYBILL®

Countryside Community Church
OMAHA, NE

Summer Sermon Series

GENESIS

THE FIRST STORIES

The First Stories: Smitten

July 9, 2023

Genesis 24:34-38,

42-49, 58-67

SYNOPSIS

Rebekah's home. Abraham's servant is explaining to Rebekah's brother, Laban, and father, Bethuel, what brought him there. He was sent by his master, Abraham, to find a wife for Abraham's son, Isaac, in the land of Abraham's kindred. Abraham, who was living in the land of the Canaanites did not want Isaac to take a Canaanite wife. Among Abraham's concerns was probably that the Canaanites worshipped many gods. That is not something Abraham would have wanted in his family.

The servant shares his prayer to God for a specific sign that will tell him he has found the right woman to be Isaac's wife. The woman God brought to him was Rebekah.

Rebekah, who is seen by her family as a woman who could make her own decisions, is asked by her mother and brother if she would be willing to go with Abraham's servant. Rebekah agrees to go. Rebekah's control over the circumstances of her life will continue to be an important part of her character.

When Rebekah sees Isaac for the first time she takes the initiative to cover herself with a veil and go to him. Again Rebekah makes her own decision about what she would do. No shyness there.

Upon meeting Rebekah Isaac takes her to the tent of his mother, Sarah, where she is welcomed. Though it is Abraham who sends his servant to find a wife for Isaac it is Sarah to whom Isaac brings Rebekah.

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Join us as we pray for our congregation members and their loved ones who are on our Joys and Concerns list every week on Thursdays at 9:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary. If you have someone who would benefit from prayer, want to share a joy or be included on the bulletin list and/or on Countryside's Prayer Chain, contact Rev. Sarah Rentzel Jones at 402-391-0350, ext. 225 or sarahrj@countrysideucc.org

JOYS:

We celebrate with the United Church of Christ that the Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson was elected at the 34th General Synod as the UCC's General Minister and President. She is the first woman and first Black woman elected to the position.

CONCERNS:

Don (Louise) Giger's good friend died this week, and he asks for prayers for himself in his grief, as well as for his friend's family.

Friends of Countryside, Joyce Dixon and John Kidd, would appreciate your prayers for John who is hospitalized in the ICU in Tucson, Arizona. Please pray for John's healing and support for Joyce.

Kari Randazzo's father, Dan Rishel, had open-heart surgery on July 7. Please pray for the surgical team as they operate on him and pray for all to go smoothly during his recovery.

Don (Bev) Sarton had a pacemaker placed on Friday, July 7 at UNMC. Please keep him in your prayers for all to go well and for him to have a smooth recovery.

Dee Schlautman is in Acute Care at Madonna in Lincoln. She requests prayers and support for her rehabilitation.

We continue to pray weekly for the Pastoral Search Committee, as they continue in their discernment towards calling Countryside's next Settled Pastor. We appreciate all the time and effort the PSC is putting into this process, and we continue to hold them in prayer.

CAST AND SCENES

CAST

GOD (PRODUCER/DIRECTOR)

ABRAHAM'S SERVANT

REBEKAH

LABAN (REBEKAH'S BROTHER)

BETHUEL (REBEKAH'S FATHER)

REBEKAH'S MOTHER

SARAH

SCENES

**REBEKAH'S HOME NEAR THE CITY OF NAHOR IN
THE TERRITORY OF ARAM-NAHARAIM**

A FIELD IN THE NEGEB

WHERE ISAAC WAS WALKING

SARAH'S TENT

FOR DEEPER THOUGHT

1. A wondering...Why is there no conversation between Abraham and Sarah about this important event in the life of their son? Is this even important?
2. As this story plays out God is understood to have had a hand in it. Do you see God as having a hand in the direction your life has taken? How?
3. With every child born...with every marriage that takes place...the direction of a family takes a turn. How has your life changed the direction of your family history?
4. How has your family gotten where it is now?

Order of Worship

Gathering

Prelude:

In a Sentimental Mood -

Duke Ellington / Irving Mills / Manny Kurtz

Words of Welcome / † Mission Statement

Rev. Dr. Keith Herron

Announcements

Dan Loven-Crum

Examen

Dan Loven-Crum

Call to Worship

Kyle Barchus

Hearing God's Word

Children's Church

Rebecca Morello

Musical Reflection:

In My Life - Lennon / McCartney

Scripture:

Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67

Kyle Barchus

Reflection

Rev. Dr. Keith Herron

Musical Meditation:

The Story - Phil Hanseroth

Responding to God's Word

Communion

Rev. Dr. Keith Herron

Pastoral Prayer and Lord's Prayer

Rev. Dr. Keith Herron

The Basket

Musical Reflection:

A Last Year's Rose - Roger Quilter

Countryside Blessing

Nancy Deetz

Postlude:

Isn't It Romantic - Lorenz Hart / Richard Rodgers

OUR WORSHIP HAS CONCLUDED.

NOW OUR SERVICE BEGINS.

† Indicates those places where those who are able
are invited to stand.

MUSIC NOTES:

This Sunday the Lectionary provides a somewhat rare opportunity for "romantic" music in church, as a way to examine the scripture readings from different angles. In addition to the Genesis reading, the Song of Solomon is also prescribed scripture for the day. Of course, religious leaders over the centuries have proscribed such music in both religious and secular life, but music has been used as a tool for self-expression and exploration of these topics since the dawn of human creativity. Indeed, it is a way to understand where these narratives fit in the arc of our own lives along with those of the figures in these first stories.

"A Last Year's Rose" is a beautiful and poignant art song that captures the essence of the fleeting nature of life and the bittersweet nature of memories. It tells the story of a fading rose, a symbol of the passing of time and the ephemeral nature of life's experiences, and becomes a metaphor for the inevitability of change. The piano accompaniment is cleverly written in that it evokes a sense of nostalgia and contemplation as the melodic lines rise and fall, echoing the rise and fall of emotions and the passage of time.

"In My Life" is a timeless and iconic composition, written mostly by John Lennon. This song and "A Last Year's Rose" complement one another in interesting ways. Both songs delve into the contemplation of time, memories, and the people who have shaped our lives. "The Story," recorded by American singer-songwriter Brandi Carlile in 2007, weaves a narrative of self-discovery, resilience, and the transformative power of personal experiences. The introspective lyrics explore the complexities of life, love, loss, and the search for identity.

Julia Olynyk - Christian Vihstadt, vocals - Matt Wallace, sax
Rick Avard, piano - Alex Ritter, piano - Steve Gomez, bass

Sunday Flowers This Week

Flowers were given today by Ann and Kevin Naylor.