

June 7, 2026

Genesis 12:1-9

## The Call of Abram

Corrie Ten Boom once said, “Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God.” It was that belief in God’s protection that gave her the courage to hide Jewish families during the World War II German occupation.

It’s amazing what we can do when we trust our next steps to God. Sadly, many of us never get the chance to be awed by this great God because we prefer the safety of what we are familiar with rather than risk any new beginning.

Yet throughout the generations the stories overflow of those who dared to say “yes” to God’s invitation to step off the beaten path. Abram is one of those who can tell such a tale. Although Abram was beyond the dreaming big stage, as we often believe we enter as we age, God told him to leave kindred behind. It was time to go to a land where God would make Abram’s name great. It would be a place Abram’s offspring would inhabit and keep multiplying in.

Abram couldn’t pass up this offer. It was too enticing, especially since he and his wife, Sarai, were childless. Could there still be a chance to leave a legacy?

They packed their belongings and set forth. And God did not disappoint. Abram, whose name was changed to Abraham, signifying the new thing God was doing in his life, had descendants as numerous as the stars in heaven. Sarai’s name was also changed to Sarah.

I’ve always been enamored by Abram’s call story, as it has bolstered my fainting heart when daring to step into an unknown future. But before you applaud my faith, let me point out that my Abram moments happened when I was filled with youthful ignorance.

Now that I’m older, I find myself hesitant to go in any direction without first asking God, “Does the journey come with a pension and health care?” I had always hoped my faith, not my fear, would grow stronger as I aged.

It’s one thing to heed God’s call in our youth, but who among the AARP card carriers would be excited for such a journey? Our golden years should be ones of rest and comfort, not unknown adventures. Yet God doesn’t worry about the fire hazard those numerous candles on our birthday cakes have turned into. God still wants to blaze a glorious future for us.

Who will dare to have the faith of old Abram? I pray I will. I pray you will. For we all have a call story still waiting to be told.

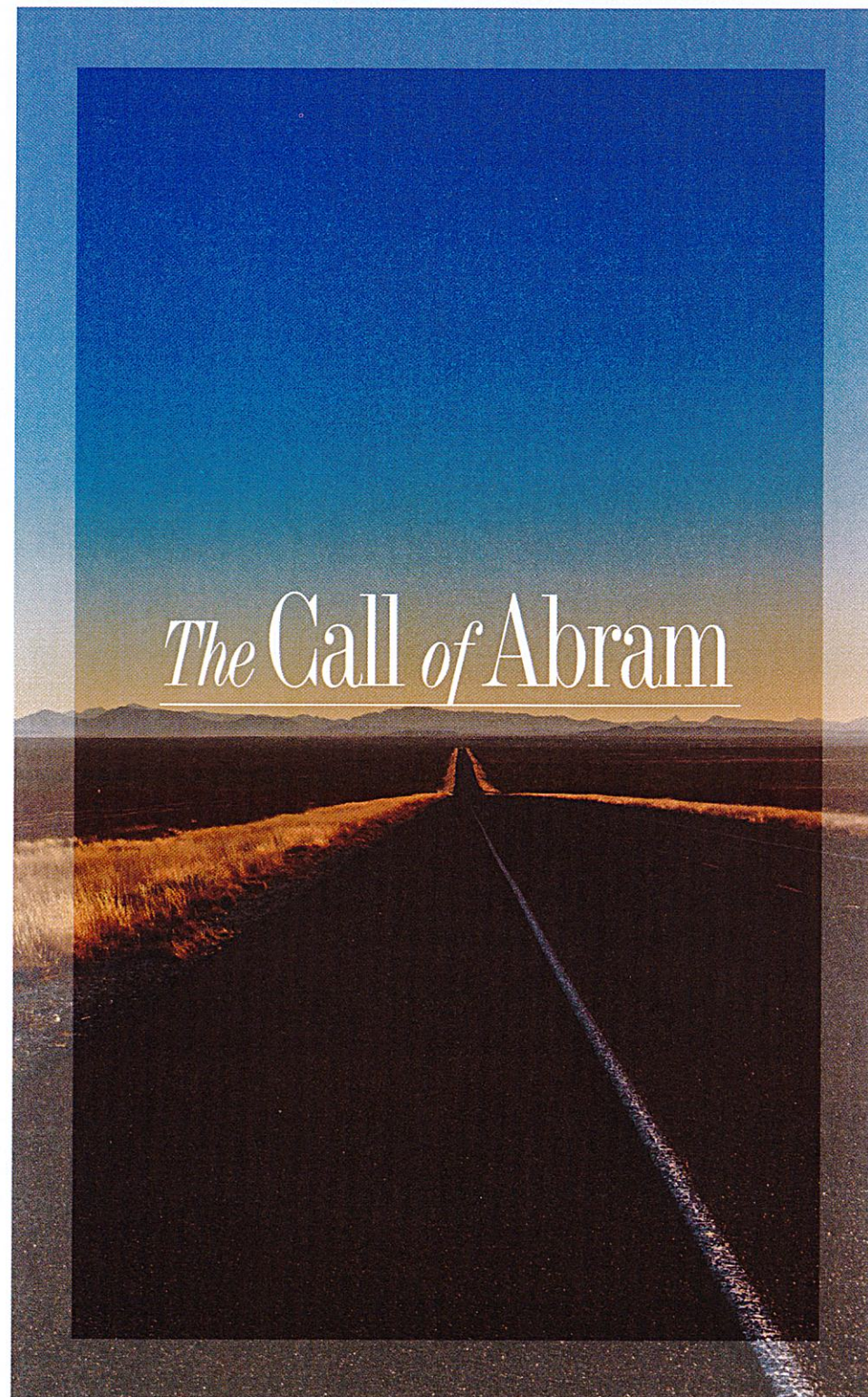
*God of amazing adventures and divine protection, may this day we tell our fears to be gone. May faith overflow in our hearts, helping us to trust our unknown futures to a God who we do know: the God of love who never lets us down. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.*

*(Rev. Donna Frischknecht Jackson is a communications specialist for the United Church of Christ and author of today’s Sunday Bulletin.)*



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*you. May our whole being – body, mind, and spirit – turn and face you, may we acknowledge the power of your truth and love, may that truth transform us, make us new, so we may live a life that fully responds to your invitation to have life and to live in abundance. Amen.*

#### **Assurance of Grace**

The love of God is given to us without requirements or condition, it comes to us with grace and mercy. God's love is eternal, and nothing can separate us from God's love. Receive God's love and honor that love by giving that love to others and to life in the same way revealed to us by Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### **+Passing of the Peace**

### **WE HEAR GOD'S WORD**

**The Hebrew Reading:** Genesis 12:1-9

#### **Ministry of Music:**

**+The Gospel Reading:** Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26

**Reflection:** Rev. Jeff Munnis

**Hymn of Reflection:** He Touched Me Celebration #505

#### **Prayers for the Church and for the People**

##### **The Lord's Prayer**

*Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.*

### **WE SHARE OUR GIFTS**

#### **Invitation to Generosity:**

God calls us to be a light to the world. We make our offering as witness to God's love at work among us. In gratitude for the gifts we have received, and in hope for the light God is still bringing into the world. Amen.

*Your generous offerings are appreciated and used for continuing the missions of this church.*

*For electronic giving, a QR code is available in the pews or in your bulletin at the end of the printed worship service.*

#### **+Doxology**

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God, for all that love has done;  
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen*

### **Sacrament of Holy Communion**

#### **Words of Institution**

We come to this table knowing that Jesus instituted the sacrament of communion at a Passover meal, through his call for us to remember him, and in remembering him we recognize that he revealed to us a God of truth and love, a God of presence, our God of mercy and forgiveness. He took bread, blessed it, and shared it. We have learned that in our sharing, the elements we share become sacred. The bread and drink, through our prayers and blessing, become gifts emblematic of God's abundance and providence.

#### **Blessing of the Elements**

Pour out your Spirit on us and these gifts of bread and drink, so in this sharing we recognize Christ in our midst. This offering of praise and thanksgiving is an offering of us to you. Hasten the day when the prophets' dreams come to pass: when justice rolls down like waters and nations no longer threaten each other, neither shall they learn war anymore. This we pray by the authority of Jesus and in your holy grace. Amen.

## The Invitation to Communion

These are the gifts of God for the people of God. This is bread and beverage for the journey. In this church community, we share an inclusive communion, which means you need not be a member of this congregation or any community of faith to join us at the table. We believe Jesus Christ sets the table and Christ welcomes all. Likewise, no one is required by the host to participate. Now, let all who wish to share in this meal, partake, for God's table is ready.

## Receiving the Bread and the Cup

*Gluten free elements are available*

*The trays of covenant include – inner circle of grape juice  
the outer circles are wine.*

*Parents, please help your children in selecting.*

***Please hold the elements and we will commune together.***

*Words for partaking the bread: The bread of life*

*Words for partaking the wine: A cup to remember  
Jesus Christ our Lord.*

***Please take communion cup and dispose of it in the  
Narthex after worship.***

**Hymn During Communion:**      All Who Hunger      Faith We  
   Gather Gladly      Sing #2126

## Prayer of Thanksgiving

***We give thanks for the gifts we have received during this communion of remembrance. We are sustained by the spiritual power of your presence. Your presence strengthens us, gives us hope, inspires us to share your love. May we grow in love, may we grow in our ability to see and understand your truth. Help us to hold sacred the covenant promised by Jesus that you are in us, and we are in you, through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Amen.***

## WE GO OUT TO LIVE AND TO SERVE

### +Commission and Blessing

Our worship is ended.

Our service begins.

What does God need from us?

***“Simply do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with your God.”***

Continue to serve with faith and love,

Depart from this time today committed to sharing the best of yourself,

Through extravagant generosity of time and resources,

Meeting the needs of others, both spoken and unspoken, seen and unseen, heard and unheard.

***We will go now to share loving compassion and hope for justice with the world.***

My dear friends in faith, will you go into your worlds to be people of God in Christ's name?

***We will. Amen!***

### +Closing Hymn:

The Trees of the Field

Faith We  
Sing #2279

### +Benediction

We welcome you this morning, and invite you to return, and worship with us every Sunday morning at 11:00 AM

*For your convenience you can scan our QR code  
to contribute electronically.*



# Connections...

Connecting our community through prayers, thoughts, and actions  
– no matter where we are today!

## Name Tags for Members and Friends!

Members and friends are asked to wear name tags for worship time because they help other people. It is also helpful for folks who may know the face but not the name of another. Wearing a name tag is voluntary but shows that you care about others.

If you need a name tag, please ask a greeter or usher at the welcome desk to fill out a badge request slip!

## New Address:

Michele and Hogie Rolf  
209 Mountain Rd  
Linthicum Heights, MD 21090

*St. John's Grace United Church of Christ*  
*Stjohnsuccmd.com*  
*410-744-5700*  
*welcome@stjohnsgraceucc.org*

*Senior Pastor and Interim Minister: Rev Jeff Munnis*  
*Email: revjeffmunnis@stjohnsgraceucc.org*  
*Office Manager: Barbara Burck*  
*Email: barbara@stjohnsgraceucc.org*

## ***WE HOLD in LOVE and PRAYER:***

*Please keep these friends and loved ones in your prayers! If there is someone you would like added to our list, let Pastor Jeff or Barbara know. The church email is [welcome@stjohnsgraceucc.org](mailto:welcome@stjohnsgraceucc.org).*

Those added to the prayer list will remain for three months before being removed. If prayers need to be continued for another three months, please let Barbara know your request.

## **Continuing Prayers**

Linda Ballard  
Judy Saul  
Nicole Webb  
Ken Mowery  
Danny Waltemyer  
Lois & Jim Benson  
Linda Ballard  
Family of Herb Dement  
Family of Kathy Collins  
Mary Weaver  
Luanne Schaeffer

## **Serving Our Country**

Michael Barbarino    Joe Clark  
Andrew Robey        Jon Fuller  
Ty Smith                Jay Robey  
Tom Myers              Josh Tullius  
John Howard            Jason Shoemaker

## **Hospice**

## **Assisted Living**

Doris Bush  
Virginia Hoffman

## ***Prayers for the people of Cuba during power blackout***

## **Cards and Visits Welcome**

Mrs. Lois Benson  
Keswick Rehabilitation  
700 West 40<sup>th</sup> Street  
Baltimore, MD 21211

Keswick Phone 410-235-8860

**Upcoming Meetings & Events**

<b>ONA Lunch &amp; Learn</b>	<i>Sun, June 7<sup>th</sup></i>	<i>Noon-1:30</i>	<i>Hall</i>
<b>Sorrento Restaurant Event</b>	<i>Sun, June 14<sup>th</sup></i>	<i>Noon – 8:00</i>	<i>Arbutus</i>
<b>Ministries Council Mtg</b>	<i>Tues, June 16<sup>th</sup></i>	<i>6:30 pm</i>	<i>Zoom</i>
<b>Board of Trustees Mtg</b>	<i>Tues, June 16<sup>th</sup></i>	<i>7:00 pm</i>	<i>Zoom</i>
<b>Celebrate with Us!</b>	<i>Sun, June 28<sup>th</sup></i>	<i>5:30 pm</i>	<i>Hall</i>

**Governing Body Minutes**

Our governing body consists of the Board of Trustees and the Ministries Council. Meetings are held monthly via Zoom. Interested parties are welcome. Contact the office if you would like a paper copy or email copy.

**View Past Services on our Website**

If you missed a worship service here at St. John’s Grace, you can now view the service on our website!

**Go to [www.stjohnsuccmd.com](http://www.stjohnsuccmd.com) Worship/ Online Worship tab** and scroll down to the service you would like to view.

They are on our YouTube channel so you can subscribe if you like.

**Deadline for Submitting Announcements**

Announcements or changes to announcements need to be submitted by noon on Tuesday prior to the Sunday service to be included in the bulletin. Email to [barbara@stjohnsgraceucc.org](mailto:barbara@stjohnsgraceucc.org).



**Sorrento’s Restaurant Fundraiser**

**NEXT SUNDAY, June 14<sup>th</sup> Noon until 8PM**

Join us after worship in Arbutus for fun, fellowship and good food. You can eat in and/or take out.



**Make sure to mention St. John’s Grace so we receive 10% of all purchases.**

**5401 East Drive, Arbutus, MD 21227**



**ONA Lunch & Learn**

***TODAY!! Please Attend!***

The Open and Affirming (ONA) and the Hospitality Committees remind you to join us for lunch in Fellowship Hall today, noon – 1:30. Enjoy lunch while hearing about why we should become ONA and discussing:

- What does affirming mean to you?
- How do you affirm others?
- How does being ONA change our church?

Our next Lunch & Learns will be held on July 12<sup>th</sup> and August 7<sup>th</sup>.

Please save the dates!

**Come and Celebrate with Us!**

**Evening Worship Service on Sunday, June 28<sup>th</sup> 5:30 pm**

Good Music, Good Food, Good Community

Share a Meal

Worship Service

Ice Cream Social

Followed by a concert by



**THE MARYLAND MILITARY BAND**

Featuring Favorite Marches and Patriotic Songs

*Reminder Note: No Worship on Sunday Morning*





### **Westside Men's Shelter Donation Needs**

There is an ongoing need for shower shoes (flip flops) and these can be given and collected at any time into the bin in the Mission Hallway.

### **CEA: June is for Pancakes!**

If you can find smaller boxes or bags of pancake mix – they will work better for our clients.  
Many are families of 1-2.  
But all sizes are accepted.



*As usual, CEA welcomes ANY food, at any time!*

CEA can use any donations so please pick up whatever you can for our neighbors!

*When Faith Goes to Market – It Always Takes a Basket!*

#### **Always available ways to help CEA:**

***Include*** a donation marked 'CEA' in the offering plate.

***Go*** to the 'Donations' page on our website and use the CEA button to donate via credit/debit card.

***Gift cards*** are accepted to enable CEA to purchase needed foods.

Please stop by our new website: [www.catonvillehelp.org](http://www.catonvillehelp.org) for lots of information about CEA and your community!

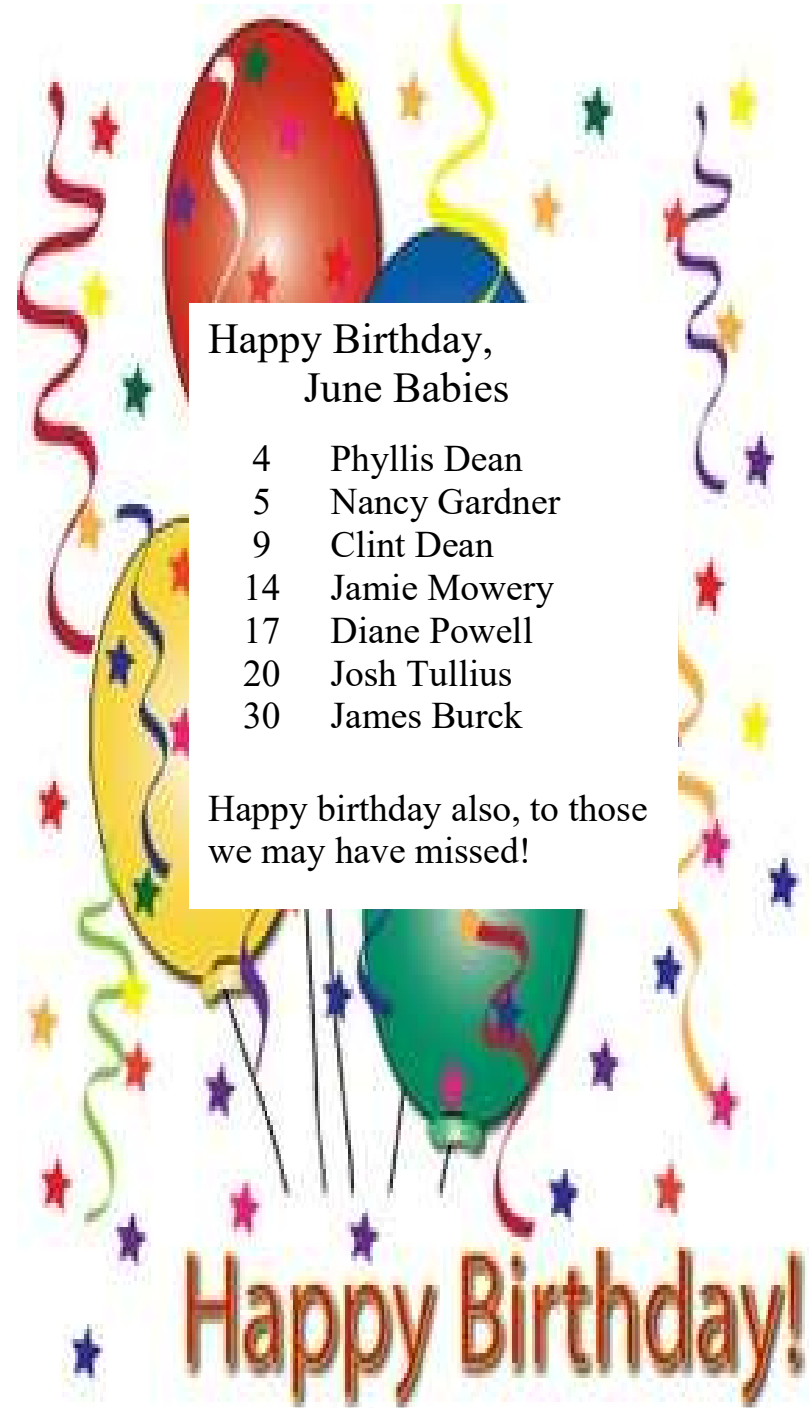


### **Mission & Outreach Transitional Hold-Alls**

The National Capital Treatment and Recovery Center (a nonprofit organization based in Arlington & Alexandria, VA) provides substance abuse and mental health treatment to those who need these services. One of their programs is an 84-bed residential treatment center for men who are in need. When admitted, these men usually have their belongings in paper bags.

*You can help them feel prouder when they leave with the donation of gently used or new backpack, duffle bag, or piece of luggage.*

Please forward donations for Ken or Charlene Mowery.



Happy Birthday,  
June Babies

- 4 Phyllis Dean
- 5 Nancy Gardner
- 9 Clint Dean
- 14 Jamie Mowery
- 17 Diane Powell
- 20 Josh Tullius
- 30 James Burck

Happy birthday also, to those we may have missed!

Happy Birthday!