

# Stardust and Promise

(inspired by Genesis 15:1-18)

Once there was a traveler who had seen many things in his days for he was an old traveler and was settling down to retire. He had seen all he wanted to see but he was a disappointed man. Even though he had seen many lands, even though he had seen his wealth grow, he had no children and this disappointed him.

But just when he was about to slip into being a sad old man he was turned towards the night sky and God said,  
'I dare you, if you can, count the stars.'

And Abraham went silent. "I am an old man. I can hardly see the stars to count them and I am old enough as it is! How old do you think I'd be by the time I counted even a small portion of the stars?"

And God said, "My childless friend, those stars have names, each a name of one of your children for you will have more children in generations to come than there are stars in the sky."

Abraham, who had been holding his breath, breathed again, a great sigh of faith. He realized he was not going to be settling down after all and from that day on, whenever night came, you could hear him counting quietly to himself.

And here we are, made of stardust and promise.  
Abram's children and still counting.



# First Baptist Church

columbia

## *Our Worship of God*

*August 28, 2016*

*11:15 am*

(† Indicates those who are able, please stand)

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### **Abraham and Sarah: Stories of Faith and Failure**

*“I will certainly bless you. I will multiply your descendants beyond number,  
like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore.”*

Genesis 22:17

**Greeting**

Carol McEntyre

**Invitation to Worship**

Ed Rollins

**Prelude**

A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing  
Colleen Ostercamp, Organist

arr. Manz

**Call to Worship (responsive)**

Ed Rollins

We are met in the presence of God

**And we do not meet alone.**

With the angels in the highest heaven

**We gather to worship the Lord.**

With Abraham and Sarah

**We gather to worship the Lord.**

With the saints of every age

**We gather to worship the Lord.**

We embark on our own journey of faith

**God's Holy name be praised.**

God makes of us a great people

**God's Holy name be praised.**

We journey in the presence of God.

**And we do not journey alone.**

**†Processional Hymn #130**

To Abraham and Sarah  
sung to ELLACOMBE

*(Please turn to face the cross as it enters)*

**To Abraham and Sarah the call of God was clear:**

**“Go forth and I will show you a country rich and fair.**

**You need not fear the journey, for I have pledged my word**

**That you shall be my people and I will be your God.”**

**From Abraham and Sarah arose a pilgrim race,  
dependent for their journey on God's abundant grace;  
and in their heart was written by God this saving word,  
“That you shall be my people and I will be your God.”**

**We of this generation on whom God's hand is laid  
can journey to the future secure and unafraid,  
rejoicing in God's goodness and trusting in this word,  
“That you shall be my people and I will be your God.”**

**†Prayer of Confession (responsive)**

Gracious God, you reached into Abraham and Sarah's lives and asked them to dream what seemed impossible – that you would transform what appears to have been a barren and lifeless situation into one overflowing with promise and hope – and, through faith in you, they believed your promises.

**Forgive us, O God, if we never get beyond thinking of your call on our lives as an impossible dream or even as an unwelcome interruption.**

Faithful God, the apostle Paul emphasizes Abraham's complete trust and faith in your promises and how he grew ever stronger in faith, fully convinced of your ability to fulfill what had been promised.

**Forgive us, O God, when we find it hard even to hear your promises above commercial assurances of transformation – promises tempting us to trust the newest and trendiest product to realize our dreams.**

Gracious and loving God, forgive our lack of trust in you; have mercy on us and forgive us. Help us when we hesitate, and strengthen us when we are weak.

**Breathe your Spirit afresh into our hearts and minds – our lives – so that we have the courage to follow Jesus wherever he takes us.  
Amen.**

### **†Passing the Peace of Christ**

*As God has given us peace through Christ,  
so let us pass the peace of Christ to each other.*

### **Child Development Center Report and Blessing**

#### **Scripture Reading**

Hope Watson

Genesis 11:29-12:30, selected verses

The Call of Abram

*...the name of Abram's wife was Sar'ai... Now Sar'ai was barren; she had no child...*

*Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

*So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. Abram took his wife Sarai and his brother's son Lot, and all the possessions that they had gathered, and the persons whom they had acquired in Haran; and they set forth to go to the land of Canaan. When they had come to the land of Canaan, Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land.*

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Abram: A Monologue**

Ken Hammann

**Anthem**

Bound for the Promised Land  
Deb Carr and Colleen Ostercamp, Pianists

arr. Wilberg

On Jordan's stormy banks I stand and cast a wishful eye,  
To canaan's fair and happy land where my possessions lie.  
There gen'rous fruits that never fail on trees immortal grow;  
There rocks and hills and brooks and vales with milk and honey flow.

(refrain)

I am bound for the promised land, I'm bound for the promised land,  
O who will come and go with me? I am bound for the promised land.

O the transporting rapt'rous scene that rises to my sight,  
Sweet fields arrayed in living green and rivers of delight.  
When shall I reach that happy place and be forever blessed?  
When shall I see my Father's face and in His bosom rest?

(refrain)

**Message**

**Blessed to Be a Blessing**

Carol McEntyre

**†Hymn of Commitment #45**

Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing

**†Offertory Sentence**

**Offertory**

God Himself Is Present

arr. Hardt

**†Benediction**

God's promises endure from generation to generation.  
May the God of Abraham and Sarah,  
the God who sent Jesus to redeem us,  
the God whose covenant is eternal,  
bless you and make you fruitful.

**Postlude**

Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken

arr. Bender

# Worship Notes

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The cover text is from Roddy Hamilton, posted on Mucky Paws,  
<http://www.nkchurch.org.uk/index.php/mucky-paws>

The Call to Worship, inspired by Genesis 12:1-4, was written by Rev. Daniel B. Randall and is posted on the United Church of Christ's *Worship Ways* website,  
<http://www.ucc.org/worship/worship-ways>

Hope Watson is today's scripture reader.

The Prayer of Confession, written by Moira Laidlaw, is based on Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Mark 8:31-38; and Romans 4:13-25.

The Benediction is based on Genesis 17.

## Week at a Glance

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### Sunday, August 28

**9:15 am Awakening Worship**

*Fellowship Hall*

**10:15 am Small Groups**

*Various Classrooms*

**11:15 am Traditional Worship**

*Sanctuary*

**12:15 am Fall Kick-off**

*Front Lawn*

### Wednesday, August 31

**5:30 pm Psalm Players Rehearsal**

**6:30 pm Chancel Bells Rehearsal**

**7:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal**

*All rehearsals in Sanctuary*

### Thursday, August 25

**6:30 pm Praise Band Rehearsal**

*Fellowship Hall*

### Sunday, September 4

**9:15 am Awakening Worship**

*Fellowship Hall*

**10:15 am Small Groups**

*Various Classrooms*

**11:15 am Traditional Worship**

*Sanctuary*

# Announcements

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**Fall Kickoff:** Don't forget the Fall Kickoff right after worship TODAY on the front lawn of the church – food, fun, and fellowship for all!

**Knowing God:** This fall, Pastor Carol McEntyre will be leading two Covenant Groups that will focus on creating the space in our lives to hear from Christ through the spiritual practices. One group meets the first Tuesday evening of every month beginning Sept. 6 at 6:00 p.m.; the other meets on Thursdays at 1:30 p.m. beginning Sept. 8. To sign up, or for more information, email Carol at [mcentyre@fbc-columbia.org](mailto:mcentyre@fbc-columbia.org) or call the church office at 442-1149.

**S.A.F.E. Seminar: Sexual Awareness and Family Empowerment**

Friday, September 23 and Saturday, September 24

S.A.F.E. teaches caregivers the tools to engage in conversations with their children about sexuality. Topics include sexual development; body safety; boundaries; common myths about safety; exploring intuition and how to teach and trust it; and mobilizing a trusted community of adults to help guide and protect children.

Full details are available in the latest Spire and on posters around the church.

**Join our music ministry:** Share your talents and energies with God, your church, and your friends by participating in a bell choir, vocal group, or band. Rehearsal schedules are in full swing – join us in the sanctuary any Wednesday at the following times:

- Psalm Players Band – 5:30-6:30 p.m.
- Chancel Bells – 6:30-7:30 p.m.
- Chancel Choir – 7:30-8:45 p.m.

Enter the sanctuary through the Waugh Street door closest to the parking lot.

**The Calling:** Our youth group will meet Sunday nights beginning Sept. 11 at 5-6 p.m., when we will officially open Studio 1B, a new interactive experience for 6-12<sup>th</sup> graders designed to engage the Scriptures in a new way. Come join us!

**Ann Judson Circle: A Peek at the Past** – September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1 p.m. in the parlor:

What did you do on your summer vacation? Ken Hammann spent his summer on the third floor of the church, organizing the archives. All persons – men and women – are invited to get a glimpse of the church's unofficial history, as Ken shares many interesting finds, including the founding document from November 22, 1823. Come and see how you might get involved in researching the church's history!



## 11:15 am Traditional Worship Service

For those who may prefer a more contemporary worship experience, First Baptist Church offers Awakening worship at 9:15 a.m. each Sunday morning in the Fellowship Hall.

*The flowers are given by Jim and Judy Elliott.*

Nursery: (ages birth-three) located on the first floor outside the sanctuary and is available from 9:15-12:15 while parents are in worship or Sunday Morning Small Groups.

Extended Session: children ages 3- 5 including kindergarten may be dropped off during both worship services in the nursery for extended session, an extension of First Kids Sunday School.

10:15 Spiritual Formation Hour:

First Kids Sunday School (3 year olds through 5th grade) is on the third floor.

Youth Bible Study (grades 6-12) is on the third floor.

Adult Small Groups are combined for the summer, through August 7<sup>th</sup>, and meet in the parlor.

First Baptist Church partners in mission with the American Baptist Churches USA, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, and Alliance of Baptists.

To view the live webcast of our 11:15 am Traditional worship service, go to [www.ustream.tv](http://www.ustream.tv).

Search for fbcwebcast (one word), and you should be able to worship from anywhere!

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### Church Staff

Carol McEntyre, Senior Pastor † Ed Rollins, Associate Pastor

Michael McEntyre, Associate Pastor of Youth, College and young Adults, and Missions

Yvette Chambers, Director of Children's Ministry

Alex Bennett, Awakening Worship Coordinator † Colleen Ostercamp, Pianist and Organist

Janet Deneke, Admin. Assistant † Brenda Rice, Project Coordinator

†Bethany James, Nursery Director †Glenn Owings, Custodian