

July 2020

Summer Sermon Series

Hot Times in the Bible

The Hottest Part of the Day

July 5, 2020

First Reading

~ *Genesis 18:1-10a, from The Message Translation*

YHWH appeared to Abraham at the Oaks of Mamre, while Abraham was sitting at the entrance to his tent. It was the hottest part of the day. He looked up and saw three travelers standing nearby. Abraham ran from the entrance of his tent to greet them and bowed before them saying, “If I have found favor in your eyes, please do not pass by our tent. Let some water be brought, that you may bathe your feet, and then rest yourselves beneath this tree. As you have come to your faithful one, let me bring you a little food, that you may refresh yourselves. Afterward, you may go on your way.”

“Very well,” they replied, “do as you have said.”

Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, “Quick — take three measures of our best flour and knead it into loaves of bread.” Abraham then ran to the herd, selected a choice and tender calf, and sent a worker hurrying to prepare it. Then Abraham took cheese and milk and the calf which had been prepared and placed it before the travelers; and he waited on them under the tree while they ate.

“Where is Sarah?” they asked.

“There in the tent,” Abraham replied.

One of them said, “I will surely return to you this time next year, and Sarah will then have a child.”

Second Reading

~ adapted from Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson, Second Moderator of UFMCC, in
“Outing the Bible: Queer Folks, God, Jesus, and the Christian Scriptures.”

In June of 1972, I marched down Fifth Avenue with my lesbian friend Jean in one of New York's earliest Gay Pride parades. I'd only been out of the closet for three months. And there I was walking down Fifth Avenue next to Jill Johnston, author of *Lesbian Nation*, and the original “queer nation,” and author Isabel Miller. I don't think I ever closed my mouth for four hours. The most queers I'd ever seen in one place together before that had been maybe five or six. That day, we were at least 50,000 people: drag queens, leather queens, lesbian separatists—a raucous, irreverent, heart-pounding throng. We marched breathing fire and freedom. As we moved up Fifth Avenue, I fell in love with this movement. Whatever part of me that still had doubts, still wondered if I was not just in love with this one particular woman—just a phase, a fluke—evaporated in the steamy June New York Sunday afternoon heat. Everyone smiled at everyone; we delighted in one another, no strangers among us. It felt like my tribal initiation. I knew we were made in the image of God!