

Looking for (Little) Love Stories

One of my seminary professors once said that she always looked for the little love stories in the Bible. There are plenty of stories of war, hatred, revenge and cruelty. If you pay attention, however, you will find these little love stories. They are not only delightful, they reveal to us a way that God works through us in the world in the most necessary and basic of human relationships.

The story of Abigail is an example. Close to the end of Saul's time as king, he and David were actively engaged in a civil war. David had once been Saul's court musician, close friends with Saul's son Jonathan, and remained even in the midst of war unwilling to harm God's anointed king. Because of Saul's actions, however, David was on the run with his supporters in a guerrilla-style war with Saul's forces. In the midst of this dangerous time, he sends some of his men to Nabal, a wealthy landowner, for help with food and supplies. David's men had been camped with Nabal's flocks and had helped protect animals and shepherds. David thinks this is a fair trade for help. Nabal refuses. David, furious, is about to retaliate violently when Nabal's wife Abigail, described as "intelligent and attractive," intercedes with gifts of food and words of peace and reconciliation. David is grateful and takes note of Abigail's practicality and peacemaking. When Nabal dies shortly thereafter, David invites Abigail to become his wife, and she accepts.

Despite cultural differences in marriage, marital roles, and love, I still see this as a love story. Abigail acts to save her husband, even though he is a wicked fool. David offers marriage without having even seen her, because of her faithfulness, practicality, and the fact that she saved him from vengeful bloodshed. It is a unique but real beginning of their relationship. Abigail becomes, of course, one of several wives of David and we never hear of her again. But I like to think of her as one who had the opportunity in her marriage to organize, lead and keep the peace in the chaotic times of David's monarchy. His love for her was different from the disastrous relationships with Saul's daughter Michal and Bathsheba. In fact, it was a blessing.

We thank you God for the blessing of love found in the practical and intelligent side of our relationships with each other. Lead us to act swiftly for peace and safety for all, because of our love for you. Amen.

by Rev Karen Oehl

*David said to
Abigail, "Bless the
Lord God of Israel,
who sent you to
meet me today! And
bless you and your
good judgment for
preventing me from
shedding blood and
taking vengeance
into my own hands
today!"*

1 Samuel 25:32

STAFF:

Pastor: Rev Karen Oehl
revoehl@gmail.com

Assistant Pastor: Rev Bob Alexander
reverendrla@yahoo.com

Admin Asst./Financial Secretary:
Rhonda Williamson,
officegaystumc@gmail.com

Treasurer: Sherri Pembrook

Organist: Bob Hendrickson

Wesley Ringers Dir: Mary Kepple

Chancel Choir Dir: Mary Kepple

Youth Bells Dir: Heather Stewart

Kitchen Mgr: Karen Pritchard

Custodian: Keyaira Daniel