

## **Sarah Laughed**

**June 14, 2026**

**Third Sunday after Pentecost**

**Green**

**Gen 18:1-15, (21:1-7)**

### **Sarah Laughed**

In a sea of youthful faces, Sarah's wrinkled skin stood out in the lecture hall. The 75-year-old was there to earn her Master of Divinity degree. Her classmates wondered why. Did she think she would serve a church late in life?

Many succeeded in suppressing their laughter. Others did not. Sarah didn't mind. She laughed, too, when the dream of being a minister emerged. Even her denomination didn't support her she confided to me one day before class.

"They laughed, too," she said with a smile that soon melted from her face when she continued. "It's sad that all who laugh are the ones who claim they know God. What God are they learning about here in these hallowed halls?"

There was once another Sarah who laughed at God's startling, unbelievable plans — Abraham's wife. She overheard angels talking to her elderly husband that she, who was barren, would conceive a child. Their son, Isaac, would come into the world when Sarah was 90 and Abraham 100.

When she heard the news, she couldn't help but laugh. Perhaps it was an incredulous laugh. After all, prayers for a child have gone unanswered for years. And let's not forget, the old couple was kept waiting another 25 years after God first made the promise to Abraham that he would be the father of a great nation.

When God asked why she laughed, Sarah tried to deny it. God wasn't mad with her. I think God was probably suppressing a chuckle, getting a kick out of how once again those who follow God still get so surprised at the impossible becoming possible.

"Is anything too wonderful for the Lord?" asked seminarian Sarah that day in the lecture hall, repeating God's words spoken to our biblical Sarah so long ago.

I have found myself repeating these words many times to churches that were struggling, even dying. "Is anything too wonderful for the Lord?" Other translations replace "wonderful" with "hard."

I ask because we all forget that the Almighty can bring life to that which is barren — even dead. Nothing is impossible with God. Sarah's story is one all churches this day need to hear, for the laughter of hope is still possible amid empty pews.

Just ask seminarian Sarah. She was ordained at 78 and called to serve a struggling rural congregation, where for five beautiful years they laughed together, cried together and grew together.

Is anything too wonderful for the Lord? No, it is not. Just remember the Sarahs.

*God of laughter and beautiful promises, many of us are feeling like life has passed us by and that it is too late to start over, try again — even dare to believe dreams can still come true. But nothing is too wonderful for You. Strengthen our faith to believe that all things are possible and give us the patience to trust Your perfect timing. 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*.)