

THE ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Delivering Water

Every week our Asbury neighborhood connection team go out to deliver water to families in need. They brave the rain and cold to make sure families have supply of water for the week.



Volunteer Spotlight Corner

Chris Freeman is our Spotlight Volunteer for this edition of the Circuit Rider. Seen here moving mulch from the dumpsite to the orchard for the fruit trees, Chris is always willing to help out with the Asbury gardens and giving out food and water. Chris is also a regular at Book Club with insightful questions.



No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket

That's How the Light Gets In

You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

Matthew 5:14-16 NLT

I began writing this article using a new “smart” stylus that is designed to connect with my iPad using bluetooth. My new stylus is not working up to its potential. A connected stylus is designed to behave more like a mechanical writing instrument. For example, the app that I am using to handwrite this article should be able to sense the pressure, responding with darker lines when more pressure is

Neighborhood Connection

Every week truckloads of food and water are delivered to Asbury for distribution. Asbury serves thousands of families each month in our parking lot, but hundreds of families are unable to come to us so we go to them. If you know of a family in need, or have any questions, you may call Reggie at 810-308-8648.



Asbury Food Pantry

Every week individuals and families turn to Asbury to help them supplement their food supply. Asbury is a partner with the Genesee County Food Bank where we can purchase at a big discount. WE NEED YOUR HELP with food items, including meats, and diapers. We also need your financial contributions.



FlintAsbury.org

Join in on the conversation taking place on our blog. Pastor Tommy posts his reflections during the week along with other special guests. Let us know if you have information or other content that you wish to share.

applied. A stylus that is not connected still writes. Just not as well and depending on the app my writing is unintelligible. It is the connection that allows the stylus to do what it was created to do. That is, to write beautiful script in the hands of a person writing.

Prayer is our divine Bluetooth. Prayer connects us to our source of creative purpose. Without such a connection we may claim to be Christian, but we cannot possibly live up to our potential. We may fool people who themselves have not experienced a connection with Christ. But we are really an imposter and fall short of fulfilling the purpose God created us to be. We may produce fruit, but not the quality of fruit we could produce if we are connected. The story we write is confusing and may be unintelligible.

When we are connected to God there is a “light” that is visible to the people around us. I know that both through observation and because Jesus said for us to be a lamp, a visible example, of what it means to be connected with God. We are the lamp but we are not the light. When I think of this metaphor of light as a visible manifestation of Christ within us, I often recall the chorus of a song written by the late, Leonard Cohen titled *Anthem*. His chorus is powerful:

Ring the bells that still can ring
Forget your perfect offering
There is a crack in everything
That's how the light gets in ¹

There are likely many interpretations for this song. I was reading a **blog which validated that I am not the first to be taken by Cohen’s song**, nor is this my first time to write about it. Cohen spent 10 years writing this song and it was finally released in 1992. In an interview, Cohen shares that every line of the song has deep and significant meaning for him. When I reflect on Cohen’s words, I think of my own sense of unworthiness to stand before God and particularly to claim that God speaks through me. It does not help when antagonist work so hard to point out that I am flawed. But I give what I can, cracks and all. That’s how the light of Christ gets in and shines from within me.

We are God’s masterpiece. God declared humanity “good” after creating the first humans in the Book of Genesis. Really? Look at all the obvious flaws. Babies abandoned, cancer, pesticides, homicides. Need I go on? “There is a crack in everything” seems like an understatement when it comes to humanity. Things have gone to H... in a hand-basket. If we believe God to still be in control do we conclude that we simply cannot understand what God knows? Meanwhile Jesus' words ring out



"The LORD your God will change your hearts so that you will love him with all your heart and soul and so you may live!"

Deuteronomy 30:6

Worship Guide

Traditional Service
 10:00 AM
 WELCOME
 JOYS AND CONCERNS
 OPENING HYMN
 CALL TO WORSHIP
 ANTHEM
 READING OF SCRIPTURE
 CHILDREN'S MESSAGE
 HYMN OF PREPARATION
 TEACHING
 PASTORAL PRAYER
 OFFERING & BLESSING
 CLOSING HYMN
 BENEDICTION
 POSTLUDE

Change in Worship Service

Starting times for Worship have changed:

Bible Study	10:00 am
Traditional Worship	10:00 am
Coffee Break	11:00 am
New Beginnings	11:30 am

In Our Prayers

Curtis Young	Rachel Bastine
Norma Buzzard	Carmen Misner
Merle Supernaw	Barbara McIvor
Shirley Moose	Nancy Elston
Austin & MarySuffle	Shirley Craig
Mary Armstrong	Sarah Tanner
Elizabeth Wright	Judy Tanner
Charlayne Oram	Mary Lyons
Jonathon Misner	

FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE

Sharon George Elaine Lamoreaux

like church bells calling us to worship. Each of us are to be a visible lamp and collectively we are to be a lighted city on a hill that can be visibly seen by our surrounding neighbors.

What if we took Cohen's advice seriously and ring whatever bell we can ring? What if we forget about perfection long enough to give whatever we can? What if we are already enough? What if we wear our scars, our raggedness, our deformities, our cracks, as though God is proud of us? That God is pleased with God's creation? God's handiwork? What if God was not aiming to meet whatever standard we have decided to use for ourselves and each other? Could God's light find a way to shine from within us?

None of us are perfect. I think that this statement is factual enough to be accepted by anyone reading this article. But neither is God done with us. God continues to write word after word, sentence after sentence, perfecting the story of our lives. But God wants to write our story through us in beautiful, divine handwriting. So we need to stay connected through prayer. Our divine bluetooth.

My prayer for you is that you stay connected with the God who created you and never find yourself a disconnected imposter.

Pastor Tommy

¹ *Anthem* by Leonard Cohen.

Should I Drink Filtered Water?



If you live in Flint this is the question to answer for 2017. The pipes are not replaced but the scientists are reporting that our lead problem is not what it was. In some meetings there are reports heard that Flint water is now safe, direct from the tap. Others suggest that filters are simply part of Flint's future. What decisions are you making about the water you drink?

The State of Michigan is hiring and sending out approximately 160 water filter "experts" to ensure that every Flint resident is able to make this decision for themselves and their children. Meanwhile, we are in another winter where bottles of water freeze quickly when left outdoors and so do workers who are out in the cold to make sure that those who need bottled water are able to get it.

While opinions vary as to whether it is safe to drink Flint water even after it passes through a properly installed and certified filter, there is consensus that depending on bottled water is an inconvenience. There are also differences with regards to how much lead in drinking water is

Book Club News



We continue with Part 3 of our study, *Trusting the Covenant* as we begin 2017. The prophets and books of ancient history are rich in Biblical tradition and are too often not well understood. It is always the right time to join in. Your insights and questions are welcomed.

Our goal is to continue to “widen our circle” and so we hope that you will join in on our discussion. We meet each Tuesday at Noon. Come join us for a light lunch, fellowship and discussion. Our food selections have been fantastic and we always have plenty to share. We are always on the lookout for our next book, video lesson or topic. Your participation and suggestions are greatly appreciated.

Jan 17 1 Chronicles 10-11, 28-29
2 Chronicles 33-36

Jan 24 Ezra

Jan 31 Nehemiah

The Chronicles, Ezra & Nehemiah are part of the history books that tell the story of ancient Israel.

acceptable. Health officials argue that there are no “safe” levels of lead but practically, lead is present in more than just water. Also, proper nutrition can help protect bodies from absorbing lead. How do we make a decision about what to do?

The key is to be informed. There is a lot of partial information and neighbors are not always as expert as they sound. There is more information available than most of us have time to read. FlintCares.com is the best source for information that has been reviewed for consistency from various sources. Keep in mind that the bottled water industry standards for lead in the water they provide still allows for small amounts of lead – more than the NSF approved water filters allow. Asbury utilizes high-capacity filters for water that is used for food preparation including coffee. What about you?

Ways to get involved...

Worship helps us to connect with God through music, scripture, biblical teaching, prayer, reflection, adoration and fellowship.

Video & Sound Support – We are looking for persons willing to support worship and other events by running our media control center. Training available.

Music Ministry – Join the Asbury Choir or Praise Team. We are looking for vocalists and musicians.

Community Gardening – The Asbury Center for Nutrition has several gardens, orchards and a hoop house that need your attention.

Neighborhood Connect is a ministry that assesses individual gifts and passions and looks for ways to bring people together in ways that improve relationships and our community.

Food & Water Giveaway – Join us on Thursdays at 8:30 AM to help give away food and bottled water.

Pantry - We need food items, including meats, paper products; personal items diapers, and financial support.

Social Media allows us to tell others about the work that God is doing. All of us can help enhance our presence in the social media by posting on our Facebook and utilizing our website for blogging.

Student Housing - the Asbury House offers local college students a way to use their gifts and passions together with their faith in building a better neighborhood.

Women’s Circles - The women of Asbury meet regularly in small groups.

Pastor’s Book Club meets each Tuesday at 12 for fellowship, food and learning.

Sunday Bible Study meets each week at 10 am to review & discuss scripture.

What's coming up...?

Distress Truck Delivery

We have a distress food truck delivery scheduled for Wednesday, January 18th starting at 10:00am. Let your family, neighbors know, and this is on a first come, first serve basis.

Our Worship Series

SAD: Spiritual Affective Disorder

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises over you. *Isaiah 60:1*



We began the New Year with Epiphany Sunday when we celebrated the gift of divine enlightenment. God revealed the birth of the Messiah to non-Jews who traveled to Bethlehem to worship the Christ child. We are in the midst of winter when we have longer periods of darkness. Winter can be a time of Seasonal Affective Disorder when the lack of sunlight affects our moods and ability to cope effectively.

Spiritual Affective Disorder can also be a factor as we lead lives that are too crowded, busy, overcommitted, sometimes disturbing and uncertain. At the turn of this new year, we will explore everyday life activities that can become spiritual practices—deepening our experience of a meaningful life and make us more “light-hearted.”



January 15 Notes & Reflections –Sound of Music

He has given me a new song to sing, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see what he has done and be amazed. They will put their trust in the lord.

Psalm 40:3 NLT

Coming up this week ...

Jan 16	Mon	6:30pm	Church Council
Jan 17	Tues	9:00am	Water Resources Mtg at Food Bank
		12Noon	Pastor Book Club
		5:30pm	Worship Leader Training
		6:30pm	Flint Garden City
Jan 18	Wed	10:00am	Distress Truck Delivery
		4:00pm	Youth Recreation
Jan 19	Thurs	10:00am	Water Delivery
		3:00pm	Taking it to the Streets
		6:30pm	Choir Practice
Jan 20	Fri		
Jan 21	Sat	12Noon	Youth Recreation
Jan 22	Sun	10:00am	Bible Study
		10:00am	Traditional Worship
		11:00am	Coffee Break
		11:30 am	New Beginnings Worship

Look for announcements scrolling on our screen prior to the start of worship. Email announcements by the Friday before to FlintAsburyUMC@gmail.com

In our worship service

Greeter	Christine	
Children's Time	Jessica	
Candle Lighting	Karen	
Usher	Richard, Kathy, Jim	
Media Support	Jim	
Nursery	Carolyn	
Coffee Break		
Worship Leader	Karen	10:00am

Last Week for Worship

Attendance 43 Offering \$1,473

Coffee Break

Plan to meet outside the sanctuary each Sunday after the first service for coffee, tea, snacks, conversation and so on. The music will start when it is time to wrap up and head in for *New Beginnings*.

Asbury Staff

Rev. Dr. Tommy McDoniel	Pastor
Jim Craig	Church Council Chair Asbury CDC Board Chair
Connie Portillo	Office Secretary
Kathy Howe	Choir Director
Rebekah Britton	Organist
Phone/Fax	810-235-0016 (call first when faxing)

WELCOME! - Bienvenidos!

We are happy you are here to worship with us today. Please fill out an information card and place it in the offering plate in order that we may be able to serve you further.

OUR VISION – Nuestro Vision

We envision a community in love with God, one another and our neighbors, evidenced through the transformation of ourselves and our neighborhood

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS - Anuncios de la Semana

2017 Worship Schedules: If you are interested in leading worship or supporting worship through video and audio technology support, talk to Pastor Tommy.

There will be another Worship Leader Training class on Tuesday, January 17th from 5:30-6:30pm, for those that were not able to attend the one today 1/15 from 1-2pm.

2017 Annual Local Church Report: *The due date for these reports is just around the corner, and I hope you have all been working on them to get them to me on time.* Keep in mind the report has to be submitted by January 31st but I need your reports by **January 23rd** in order for me to enter all data in the computer. If you have any questions, please call the office 235-0016.

Just a reminder: When leaving me a note in my mailbox for a request, please remember to put your name on it. When there's no name I cannot follow up on it as I don't know who to call if I have questions and it will go back in my mailbox. Connie

Please put your cell phone on stun!

Por favor poner el teléfono en silencio!

In order that we may be fully present in worship, please set your cell phone to silent mode. Tweets & Facebook posts are encouraged if they are relevant to our worship.