

# ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

*Welcome to the Asbury Community*

## Just the Facts

I watched a short video presentation that was shared on Facebook that explained why people have such difficulty handling the truth when it contradicts their beliefs. The video presentation explained the reasons that the statement "You can't handle the truth" is a valid observation of people when confronted with a truth that confounds that which they hold onto as truth. The very instincts that help us to survive also get in the way of our handling truth. Is it possible that what is true for you may not be true for me? Perhaps this observation is what lead to the question that Pilate asked Jesus during his interrogation, "What is truth?" (John 18:38).

There is a sort of disorientation that we all feel to some degree when we are confronted with a truth that rocks us. I like the label "liminal space" for this place where we experience a form of vertigo where for at least a short

time we are unsure of the way forward. It is as though we stuck our head in the rabbit hole only to experience a world that does not fit the mold that we know. We are faced with a decision. Do we push forward into a future that may change everything about us or do we retreat backwards into the more comfortable world that is familiar to us. If we are fortunate we realize the way back to the past is no longer available.

The choice for discipleship confronts us as a decision to push forward into the unknown from a worldly perspective. Jesus spent a lot of His teaching time emphasizing that the Kingdom of God is not like the world we know. In Pilate's interrogation of Jesus we read that "My Kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36). If Jesus' Kingdom is not of this world then what world is His king-



Pears ripening at the Asbury Farm

dom" is a great question when it comes to confronting our world with truth.

In John 18:37 Jesus goes on to say that "I was born and came into the world to testify to the truth. All who love the truth recognize that what I say is true."

Page 2

## Glow in the Dark

Our worship series for the Fall is titled Glow in the Dark. This was also the title for a sermon during our last series based on Jesus' teaching that we are to be a light on a hill. The timing for this series is good as we begin to see even more visible signs of God's

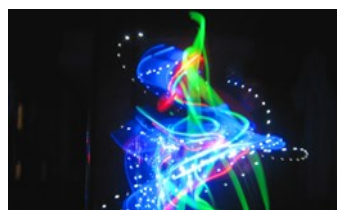
leading us into the future. A lot has happened already and more is happening all of the time. God is on the loose.

Sept 17

*But the crowds found out where he was going, and they followed him. He welcomed them*

Luke 9:11

Page 2



*and taught them about the Kingdom of God, and he healed those who were sick.*

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### Special points of interest:

- > SPRC will be meeting on Wednesday, September 13th at 4:00pm
- > Mark your calendars for Sunday, November 5 for Asbury's 90th Anniversary celebration
- > Neighborhood Connection is delivering food and bottled water. Call Kevin at 810-625-6115 or the church office for information, 235-0016

### Inside this issue:

Just the Facts	1
Glow in the Dark	1
Just the Facts	3
In our Prayers	3
Pastor's Book Club	4
Leadership in Worship & Service	4
Coming up in Worship	5
Coming up this Week	5
Back to Church Sunday	6

## Glow in the Dark...continued from Page 1

Have you ever felt unwelcome somewhere? At a church? Our new series begins with You. You, no matter if you believe or not, no matter what you struggle with, no matter how you dress or speak, you are welcome here. Just as Christ welcomed the crowd, not asking any questions to determine worth, value, or genuine interest. So too we, as the Church, welcome everyone without question. You are welcome here.

Sept 24

*If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much. If you are kind only to your friends, how are you different from anyone else? Even pagans do that.*

Matthew 5:46-47

It's not natural for us, as people, to be welcoming of people who are different from us. But as Christ followers, we are expected to welcome everyone. Jesus slammed those who only welcome their

friends by comparing them to tax collectors, who were considered thieves at that time. Even thieves are willing to welcome friends. You are welcome here no matter who you are. So make sure that everyone else here feels just as welcomed.

Oct 1

*The Lord is close to the brokenhearted; he rescues those whose spirits are crushed.*

Psalm 34:18

Church is not a museum full of perfect people. Church is a hospital for the broken. God welcomes us even with all of our brokenness, and God is anxious to heal us. We are made more beautiful and stronger through our brokenness, by giving it to God. You are welcome here, broken as you are. You are not expected to be "okay" and you are not expected to put on the face of a perfect person.

Page 4



A youth volunteer from California plowing a row at our Jane Ave site

*"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house."*

Matthew 5:14-15

## Just the Facts...continued from Page 1

This declaration by Jesus sheds light on Jesus' affirmation that Peter's insight into Jesus true identity was a divine revelation. Only persons whose eyes are open to truth can really recognize the truth. Otherwise, we stay stuck either in liminal space where we remain disoriented with a sense of unsettledness or we retreat back into the comfortable arms of this world where truth is relative and Jesus remains a historical figure rather than our God and Savior.

Too many of us who claim to be Christ followers confess with words alone while never quite leaving the comfort of that which we know. This retreat back into the comfortable allows us to deceive ourselves into thinking that we are good to go.

Nothing could be further from the truth and when we are confronted with the truth our defenses go into full alert.

We sense danger as the life that we currently live seems to be under attack. Some of us retreat. We run away. Some of us remain frozen, disoriented and unable to move forward or backward. Sadly, some of us attack as though our very survival depends upon how much damage we can inflict. We seem willing to sacrifice our self and any and all around us to remain in our comfortable denial that does not ask for sacrifice.

Sadly, we have seen all of this played out at Asbury just as we have seen this played

out throughout the history of the church and in the public forum. Jesus says that "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6), But Jesus also said that if we want to have eternal life we must be willing to die to life in this world.

Eternal life begins with a confession that Jesus is the Messiah. But we must move forward out of liminal space, out of our disorientation and denial, and into the light of Jesus Christ. This is a light which does not attack, does not insist that we live in the past, and it is a light towards a future kingdom that looks nothing like our current existence.

*"But who do you say I am?"*

Matthew 16:15

Page 3

## Just the Facts...continued from Page 2

Scripture, the voice of truth, tells us that in Christ we are made into a new creation. We are not the outdated furniture in what was formerly called the parlor. We are not the sign that still hangs above the door as we come into our worship center that reads "nave." We are not the fixtures and furniture that has served us and earlier generations well but is no longer serving the church of today. We are not the building, the furniture, the fixtures nor even our own ideals about what things should look like and be. We are disciples of Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, Messiah, Emmanuel.

Last Sunday we talked about how the Holy Spirit is given to us as a gift. In our prayers we prayed that the Holy Spirit would open our eyes to the truth. This Sunday our prayer bead is not a bead at all, but a cross. We began our series on prayer with recognizing God (the larger, gold bead) and we end our series with the cross.

God lived incarnate in the world that we inhabit. A world of violence. And God illustrated God's nature in the nature of Jesus the Christ. But the world did not recognize the nature of divine truth which seemed to contradict that which they knew. It seemed even harder for those who grew up in the church to recognize truth. Those who

claimed to be righteous because they worshiped at the temple which reflected the order that they had arranged were blind to their own sin. Jesus confronted their deeply held beliefs about themselves and the world and they seemed blinded by the truth.

Jesus knew that the Temple would soon be destroyed and He warned His disciples not to become enamored with buildings. As they left the Temple the disciples were mesmerized by the fixtures and artwork when Jesus told them what was to come. Later His detractors would use His words against Him in their charge that Jesus was guilty of sinning against God. These keepers of the temple fixtures were blind to the truth even as the truth was right in front of their faces. God had chosen not to reveal divine truth to them. Perhaps God gave them a choice to make and in their disorientation they simply could not move forward into a future that was unfamiliar. Can you empathize with their stubbornness? Have you ever felt so certain of something only to discover that you were on the wrong side of the facts?

Perhaps you are there now or at least you are wondering if you could be wrong

about Jesus Christ. Perhaps you realize that even though you have been baptized, even though you have spent years in church, or reading your Bible, or believing that your confession that Jesus Christ is Lord was sufficient. Perhaps you have been wondering for some time now "Is this all there is to following Jesus?"

Don't let your baptismal water remain stagnate. Stop accepting the lie that following Jesus Christ is all about proper form or ancient traditions or pieces of furniture, artwork, memorials, pictures or even stained glass. If you are feeling unsure about your relationship with Jesus Christ pray that He will reveal Himself in some powerful and undeniable way. Tell Him that you are ready to follow Him but aren't sure just what this means. If you are feeling comfortable with your relationship with Jesus Christ pray that He challenge you to go to the next step in your discipleship. Jesus is the way and the truth. Amen.

Pastor Tommy

The Asbury UMC Family has new opportunities to join the Asbury Worship Team. We are looking for your help with to introduce our congregation and visitors to the Inspirational Worship Service that begins on September 10. We need leaders and members for the WELCOME and CONNECT Teams. There are opportunities to serve in hospitality, as greeters, media, and the new Cafe'. Our mutual goal is to make sure our members, visitors and guests are fully connected with us, as we go forward to become the spiritual beacon in our neighborhood. More information and job descriptions will be coming soon but in the meantime, please pray and ask God where your place can be in this exciting new time in our life together. Call Michele Weston to share your ideas and offer your service. 810-694-6266 or by e-

### In Our Prayers

Curtis Young  
Rachel Bastine  
Norma Buzzard  
Merle Supernaw  
Barbara McIvor  
Jonathon Misner  
Nancy Auger

Austin & Mary Suffle  
Shirley Craig  
Mary Armstrong  
Sarah Tanner  
Elizabeth Wright  
Judy Tanner  
Mary Lyons

### FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE

Sharon George  
Elaine Lamoreaux  
Mary Nations  
Mary Russell  
Shirley Moose  
Charlayne Oram  
Carmen Misner



Prayer is at the heart of our beliefs

# Glow in the Dark...continued from Page 2

Oct 8

Matthew invited Jesus and his disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors and other disreputable sinners. But when the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with such scum?"

Matthew 9:10-11

We aren't expected to come into a Church

having already conquered all of our struggles. We're sinners who are seeking healing, and that's okay. There's no need to put on a perfect face or to hide our struggles. The key to Christian Community is accountability, having people who know your struggles and care enough to help you to conquer them. There is no judgement here for failures, just support to try again and succeed.



Terry Kinzie

## Book Club News

.We are in the midst of a discussion of a book titled *Soil and Sacrament*. Parker J. Palmer writes this about our book: "Fred Bahnsen believes that faith is expressed in the work of our hands as well as our minds and hearts, and that in community we can meet the needs of a hungry world. After reading his beautifully written book, I believe these things, too, and see new ways to put my beliefs into action. *Soil and Sacrament* is about new life—for ourselves, our descendants, and the earth on which we all depend."

A couple words of caution as we work our way through this book. First, you do not have to read the book to attend, but it does

help with the discussion and what you receive back from it.

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.

\* Bahnsen, Fred. *Soil and Sacrament: A Spiritual Memoir of Food and Faith*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2013.

## Leadership in Worship & Service

- Greeter
- Children's Time
- Candle Lighting
- Usher
- Media Support
- Nursery
- Christine
- Pastor Tommy
- Karen
- Bob, Carolyn, Jim
- Bob
- Carolyn

### 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 Piano & Organ

### Coffee Break

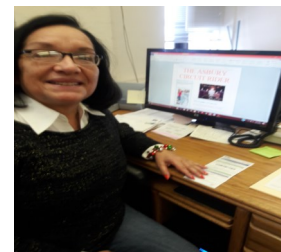
Plan to meet outside the sanctuary each Sunday after the first service for coffee, tea, snacks, conversation and so on. The music will start when it is time to wrap up and head in for New Beginnings.

Worship times will change on September 10, 2017

- 9:00 am Traditional Worship
- 10:00 am Connect Break
- 10:30 am Contemporary Worship

*Stretch out your hand with healing power; may miraculous signs and wonders be done through the name of your holy servant Jesus."*

**Acts 4:30 (NLT)**



I am creating a new directory so look over your information & let me know if you have any changes or need to add a new number, address, a family member or you want to add an email.



## Coming up in Worship

The design team has been busy with the flow of worship. We are moving to a simple 3-Step worship flow for our contemporary service:  
MUSIC - MESSAGE - CONNECT.

### MUSIC

Music is worship here at Asbury. We worship God because God has done so much for us and blesses us despite our past or present. The words are on the screen for you to sing along or just contemplate what they mean for you. Allow the Holy Spirit to fill you with joy and awe for the God who created you.

## Coming up this week

Neighborhood Deliveries /water-food

**Meet Up and Eat Up:** Breakfast & Lunch -  
Mon-Fri 8:00-9:30am & 12Noon-1:00pm

**Sept 4 Mon LABOR DAY**  
**Sept 5 Tues 12Noon** Pastor Book Club  
**Sept 6 Wed 6pm** UMW  
**Sept 7 Thurs 6:30pm** Choir Practice  
**Sept 8 Fri 10am-2pm** Fresh Produce Give  
**Sept 10 Sun 10:00am** Bible Study  
10:00am Traditional Worship  
11:00am Coffee Break  
11:30am New Beginnings

## Ways to Connect

**Donate** –You can give online at [FlintAsbury.org/donate](http://FlintAsbury.org/donate)

**Music Ministry** –We are looking for vocalists and musicians.

**Community Gardening** – The Asbury Farm needs volunteers.

**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

### MESSAGE

Our messages are simple, divinely inspired by the Word of God, and practical. We believe church is a hospital for the broken and not a memorial for the perfect, so our prayer for you is that you leave with whatever God has in mind for you to take away - an action that you feel compelled to carryout that will make a difference for you.

### CONNECT

Each worship experience is an opportunity for you to come closer to God. But life too often gets in our way. Our CONNECT team will be with us as we

near the end of our worship time to hear your concerns, pray with you and connect you with resources. Our goal is to help you find a way forward to grow in love with God, in love with the others worshipping with you and in love with your neighbor. You are here because you belong here.

### Happy Labor Day



Traditional Worship  
team meets Monday,  
September 18th at  
5:30pm

**Last Week for Worship**  
**Attendance 35 Offering \$ 1,366**

Look for announcements scrolling on our screen prior to the start of worship.

Email announcements by the Friday before to:  
[FlintAsbury@gmail.com](mailto:FlintAsbury@gmail.com)

**CHOIR PRACTICE WILL START ON**

**THURSDAY,**  
**SEPTEMBER 7TH—6:30PM**

help enhance our presence in the social media by posting on our Facebook and utilizing our website for blogging.

**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 12Noon for fellowship, food and learning.



**Prayer is at the heart of our beliefs**

## Welcome to the Asbury Community

1653 Davison Road  
Flint, MI 48506

Phone: 810-235-0016  
Fax: 810-235-0016 (call first when faxing)  
E-mail: FlintAsbury@gmail.com



### Neighborhood Connection



We envision a community in love with God, each other, and our neighbors evidenced by the transformation of ourselves and our neighborhood. We are a center for worship & spiritual growth, a center for connections and a center for health & wellness.

Our goal is a revitalized community where every resident can use their talents and passions for the common good, where children grow into citizens who contribute to building and maintaining a vibrant neighborhood, and all residents are able to enjoy safety, good health, a culture that fosters life-long learning and satisfying lives.

We believe that such an ambitious goal can never be attained without God's grace and abundance and Christ calls each of us to be disciples willing to share our witness through words and acts.

## Back to Church Sunday

September 17 is "Back to Church Sunday" and the launch of our new worship experience. There is still a long list of things to do in preparation. Be sure to call Michele Weston if you are looking for a way to help out. We need volunteers for the Welcome Team, the Connect Team, the Café Team, the Hospitality Team and the Production Team. Each person and each team can make a huge difference in God's kingdom.

Be sure to check out the Asbury Café just outside the sanctuary. Jim Craig installed the new counters and countertop. The design team is searching out new tables & seating to make our CONNECT time more comfortable. The Hospitality team is continuing to bake fresh selections made with healthy recipes developed by Chef Kevin. New ideas for good food that is good for you are coming.

Church Council approved the next step in refurbishing our worship center to accommodate a wider

range of artistic expression. The goal is to remove as many obstacles from the platform as possible, to create a single level and to make it possible for persons with mobility challenges to more easily participate. The removed items will find new homes where they will be just as loved as they have been at Asbury. With so many churches going through similar changes to update worship spaces there is not a market for them. These changes will take some time to implement so meanwhile we will ask our regulars and visitors to please excuse our dust.

*PLEASE EXCUSE*

*OUR DUST*

*AS WE*

*JOURNEY*

*TO THE FUTURE*