



# ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

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*Welcome to the Asbury Community*

## A Mother's Love

I'm going to get into your business for a while so if this is a big problem for you at this time perhaps you should come back to this article later. But don't skip it altogether. All of us need someone getting into our business from time to time. I do this out of love. Love for you — love for your children — love for all children. God loves you and God loves your children. And so do I. So here it goes.

Parenting is hard. Children can be impossible. But so can adults. Parenting is both science and art. Most of us get better at parenting with practice. Some of us seem to get

## Love Me Tender

We end our worship series on the Sunday when we celebrate Pentecost with our title the same as our series: *Love me tender*. Yet the description of Pentecost, found only in the Book of Acts Chapter 2, is anything but tender. Tongues of fire, the sound of a powerful wind-storm, and persons speaking

worse. How can I tell if my parenting is effective? I'm glad you asked. I keep a laminated heading that I clipped out of the Wall Street Journal decades ago that reads "Success is measured by results." So what are the results of effective parenting?

Let me begin with a statement of mission from our non-profit, Asbury CDC:

*Our vision is a revitalized community where every resident can use their talents and passions for the common good, where children grow into*

in other languages. This is more a description of confusion, randomness and even **fear**.

What an appropriate word to use as a possible response to such a powerful description of how the Holy Spirit suddenly appeared — FEAR. This Sunday is also a transition to our next worship

*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.*

The results that we are after are affected by the quality of parenting in our midst and perhaps more so by the quality of parenting that took place with the adults in our midst.

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series, *Fear is a liar*. We cannot presume that when the Holy Spirit came on Pentecost, those present who were filled with the Spirit, felt any fear whatsoever. Fear better describes our sense of what it might be like when this takes place since we read a scene where that which is not present is **control**. So if we fear a loss of control then fear it is.

But we end our series on love with "tender love" that we claim is a better way to describe Pentecost.

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### *Special points of interest:*

> Neighborhood Connections: is delivering bottled water. Call the City of Flint at 810-410-1138 for information. This service is for persons who are disabled and/or unable to receive water in any other way.

> Leadership Team: will be meeting on Tuesday, May 21, 2018.

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## Love Me Tender ...continued from Page 1

More in line with how we describe the incarnation. Tender love is the love we spoke about last week, at least in title, when we celebrated Mother's Day with the title *A Mother's love*. How can powerful winds and tongues of fire be seen as tender?

Back to the **incarnation** — a big word for God living among people. We say that God lived incarnate, or embodied in flesh and bones, with an appetite and with human emotions. Jesus Christ was fully human. But was fear one of the emotions that Jesus felt? The truth is we don't really know. F-E-A-R appears 330 times in the translation of scripture I am using but only in reference to others. This emotion is not directly attributed to Jesus.

But why not? Jesus was fully human and the humans I know are occasionally fearful. Some of us live in constant fear. Some of us might be considered paranoid, allowing fear to control what we do with much of our time. But what does this have to do with tender love and the com-

## A Mother's Love ... continued from page 1

We are all a work in progress in the same way that our children are a work in progress. And over the centuries, the science and art of parenting has evolved along with other knowledge like taking care of our earth and brushing our teeth.

How can I tell that many parents are failing at parenting? Look around you and you will see trash blowing along the streets and yards. How did the trash get there? Last Fall I was working in our orchard on Bennett Avenue when three teenagers walked past me. I watched as one of them finished eating the contents of

ing of the Holy Spirit to those members of the first church?



For one, we too pray for the Holy Spirit to come at Pentecost and other days as well. The Holy Spirit replaces our fear with tender love. We are no longer fearful of the future and we are capable of love in the present. It is a tender love because it is a love delivered to us in doses and in ways that resonate with our spirit.

If our love language is quality time, the Holy Spirit will sit with us, showering us with attention and opening our hearts to the world as God sees it. But if our primary love language is touch, the Holy Spirit

a bag which they simply tossed on the ground as though it belonged there. Where did they learn this? Quite likely from their parents.

Before you condemn only the parents of children in our neighborhood, have you noticed how many trash bags are lined up along an interstate after a cleanup crew has walked the landscape picking up trash. I am using trash here as a metaphor and also as a real, physical assault to our earth and to our neighborhood.

may indeed be like tongues of fire landing on us warming us to break our chill, or it may be the way I sense the presence of Jesus Christ holding my hand as I pray.

What if my primary love language is gifts? What a blessing God has in store for you as you give gifts to others and receive from God much more than you can ever give. Gifts given without condition. Love given without expectation.

If your primary love language is service imagine what God has in mind for you. The great joy you feel as you serve others and the times that you find yourself being served by others like you. And if your primary love language is words of affirmation the scripture will resonate deep with your soul reminding you of God's love in Jesus Christ.

Happy Pentecost. While Pentecost is a remembrance — a designated time on our calendar, the Holy Spirit is now. The Holy Spirit is the fulfillment of Christ's promise to all who follow Him. It is our Advocate. Our Companion and Teacher. Go and make disciples and teach them was Jesus' parting words to His followers and Jesus will be with us even to the ends of the earth and certainly He is with us here in Flint and in our neighborhood.

Pastor Tommy

## A Mother's Love ... *continued from page 2*

Trash blowing around is a metaphor for what happens when parenting fails.

Children are selfish. They are made this way and they need to be. They have a lot to learn about themselves and the world and not a lot of time to do it in. So they are wired to focus their energy in this way rather than concern themselves with what adults need and want. It our job as adults to model behavior that teaches the chil-

dren around us that their well being is dependent as much on the well being of others as their own. This takes love.



The golden rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" is not only a divine and not optional commandment, it is also divine wisdom. Although it may seem like a stretch at first, if a person only care about themselves they had better care a whole lot about others as well. Otherwise, their well-being is greatly compromised. What a beautiful paradox.

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FREE & available to everyone, no income requirements!

Bethel UMC 1309 N. Ballenger Hwy (Mondays 10am-2pm)

Asbury UMC 1653 Davison Rd (Tuesdays 10am-2pm)

Greater Holy Temple COGIC 6702 N Dort Hwy (Thursdays 10am-2pm)

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### COMMUNITY HELP CENTERS

Physical Health Options and more...

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Partnering Organizations: City of Flint, Food Bank of Eastern Michigan, Genesee County Health Dept, Genesee Health Systems, Habitat for Humanity, Hamilton Community Health Network, Michigan Department of Health & Human Services, Mott Community College, Michigan State University Center for Community & Economic Development, United Way of Genesee County, Valley Area Agency on Aging

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 2-1-1 OR GO to [FlintCares.com/HELPcenters](http://FlintCares.com/HELPcenters)

## In Our Prayers

- Curtis Young
- Rachel Bastine
- Norma Buzzard
- Virginia Bigger
- Barbara McIvor
- Jonathon Misner
- Nancy Auger
- Austin & Mary Suffle
- Shirley Craig
- Christopher Lewis
- Sarah Tanner
- Elizabeth Wright
- Judy Tanner
- Mary Lyons
- Brenda

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

- Sharon George
- Elaine Lamoreaux
- Mary Russell
- Mary Nations
- Carmen Misner



Prayer is at the heart of our beliefs

## Asbury Worship Series Fear is a Liar ...

Writer Francis Moore Lappe shares a quote in the book she co-authored, *You Have the Power*, that she recalled being said by a radio interviewer in Missouri, "In today's world, it's impossible to avoid fear. It's everywhere. Since we're going to feel it, we might as well feel it because we're doing something important."<sup>1</sup>

## Book Club News

We finished with our discussions of chapter 4 of the book, *The Last Hunger Season*. This chapter, titled *wanjala*,



which means "hunger" or the season of hunger covers the time of the year when families are sometimes out of options for what to put on the table for dinner. We began our discussions of a better

time, called *wekesa*, or the harvest. A short season of plenty, provided their crops are doing well and their harvest is plentiful.

We hope that you will join us on Tuesdays at Noon. In western Kenya, the *Luhya* people customarily name their children for the time of year in which they are born. Francis Mamati, a smallholder farmer shares this about his

So do we live in a culture of fear? I recall talking to a fellow runner who lives in our neighborhood who shared with me how much effort he feels he has to put into securing his home and property against potential thieves. This is a man who served in the military and is still young and strong enough to carry himself without fear. Nevertheless, his worry about his property is rooted in fear. He fears the potential invasion of his privacy and the loss of his property. Can you blame him?

birth month: "I think it must be May or June...because my mother gave me a third name: *Wanjala*,...our word for hunger, for the time of year when we run low on food. The hunger season. And that is usually May and June."

*Wanjala*, or hunger, is real in many parts of the world. Many of us heard references to "starving children in Africa" as children when we refused to eat our peas or whatever food item we were offered but preferred not to eat. Africa's smallholder farmers, most of whom are women, know misery. They toil in a time warp, living and working essentially as their ancestors did a century ago. With tired seeds, meager soil nutrition, primitive storage facilities, wretched roads, and no capital or credit, they harvest less than one-quarter the yields of Western farmers.

The small family farms that award-winning author and world hunger activist Roger Thurow witnessed in Kenya was a horror scene of malnourished children, backbreaking manual work,

Do we live in a culture of fear? Our current President is insistent that we build an impenetrable wall on our southern boarder with Mexico so that we can control who comes into our country.

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and profound hopelessness. For these families, growing food is their driving preoccupation, and still they don't have enough to feed their families throughout the year. The *wanjala*—the annual hunger season that can stretch from one month to as many as eight or nine—comes out of a lack of possibilities.

But in January 2011, a woman named *Leonida* and her neighbors came together and took the enormous risk of trying to change their lives. Roger Thurow spent a year with four of them—*Leonida Wanyama*, *Rasoa Wasike*, *Francis Mamati*, and *Zipporah Biketi*—to both witness and to share their stories. In *The Last Hunger Season*, we read about the profound challenges these farmers and their families faced, and follow their stories through the seasons to see whether, with a little bit of help from a new social enterprise organization called *One Acre Fund*, they might transcend lives of severe poverty and hunger.

The daily dramas of the farmers' lives unfold against the backdrop of a looming global challenge: to feed a growing population, world food production must nearly double by 2050. If these farmers succeed, so might we all.

We encourage you to come to our Tuesday gatherings. Our small group hopes 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. And we are always on the lookout for our next book, video lesson or topic. Your participation and suggestions are greatly appreciated.

Pastor Tommy

## Leadership in Worship & Service

Welcome Team	Tony, Mirium, Christine
Children's Time	Rev Tommy
Ushers	Anthony, Jim
Production Team	Jim
Nursery	Norma
Worship Leaders	Michele
Coffee Hour	

Connie Portillo	Office Secretary
Kevin Croom	Farm to Table
Israel Unger	Business Development

### Asbury Café

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

### Asbury Staff

Rev. Dr. Tommy McDoniel	Pastor
Mark Vorenkamp	Children & Youth
Jim Craig	Leadership Chair



## Fear is a Liar ... *continued from page 4*

I'm guessing his fear is rooted in economics. He can't admit his fear since an economic argument is hardly solid.

In fact trump claims that "Current immigration policy imposes as much as \$300 billion annually in net fiscal costs on U.S. taxpayers." As is the case with most everything that trump says this statement is only partially true and can be shown to be mostly false. Again, it may be "economic fear" but it is still fear. We are afraid, it seems, that while nearly all of us are immigrants with ancestors who entered the U.S. without formal screening, most of the "good ones" are already here. This is sarcasm by the way.

## Coming up this week

### Neighborhood Water Deliveries

- May 21 Mon** 4:30pm StandUp Education Prog  
6:30pm Leadership Team Mtg
- May 22 Tues** 12Noon Pastor Book Club
- May 23 Wed** 4:30pm StandUp Education Prog  
6:00pm Beginners Bible Study  
6:30pm Asbury Youth
- May 24 Thu** 1:00pm Cooking Classes
- May 25 Fri** 4:30pm StandUp Education Prog
- May 26 Sat** 1-4pm StandUp Education Prog
- May 27 Sunday**

- 9:30am Café Opens
- 10:30am New Beginnings  
Contemporary Worship

### Last Week for Worship Attendance 36 Offering \$ 453

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

Email announcements by the Friday before to:  
FlintAsburyUMC@gmail.com

## Ways to Connect

**Donate** –You can give online at 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

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.

along the way here is our discernment for now on how this series will play out:

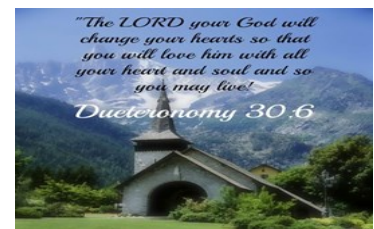
- Week 1 May 27  
Dark Matter
- Week 2 June 3  
Showing Up
- Week 3 June 10  
Big Bang Reaction
- Week 4 June 17  
The Dragon's Mouth
- Week 5 June 24  
Chosen Last
- Week 6 July 1  
A Drip in the Ocean

I look forward to learning together and growing closer to God and to each of you. On behalf of the worship planning and production teams I invite you to join us each Sunday as we explore what it means to claim that *Fear is a liar*.

Pastor Tommy

<sup>1</sup> Lappe, Frances Moore. *You Have the Power: Choosing Courage in a Culture of Fear*. Penguin Publishing Group.

<sup>2</sup> Formica, Michael J. "Living in Fear versus Living in Joy." *Psychology Today*. October 1, 2008. Retrieved from: [psychologytoday.com/us/blog/enlightened-living/200810/living-in-fear-versus-living-in-joy](http://psychologytoday.com/us/blog/enlightened-living/200810/living-in-fear-versus-living-in-joy).



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

## Welcome to the Asbury Community

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E-mail: FlintAsbury@gmail.com

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### 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.

## A Mother's Love ...continued from page 3

Good parenting begins with love and I use a "mother's love" as the gold standard. I've been told by mothers that the act of carrying a child in their womb and birthing a child creates a bond of love that can never be broken. It is an unconditional love that the child does not need to earn and can never be lost. It is an eternal love. The sort of love that Jesus spoke of when God demonstrated the love that our Creator has for each of us.

Unless a child receives enough love, punishment, the least effective of all approaches to parenting, will only help to raise another lousy parent. Yelling and screaming likewise are not only ineffective but reflect more on the parent than the behavior of

the child. Discipline is a form of love and is best offered with abundant amounts of love in ways that children recognize that they are loved.

Children receive love through the five love languages and like adults each child has a primary language that fills their love tank completely. All five, touch, affirming words, quality time, gifts and act of service, are important, but one is more natural than the other four for each child, and one or two of the others can be a close second. Learning a child's love language takes some effort but it is worth it. It makes the job of parenting less an art and a bit more of a science.

This Sunday is Mother's Day and at Asbury we plan to celebrate this special day with lively music, a special gift for anyone who mother's (gives unconditional love) to children — anyone's children. The theme for our message will be the love languages of children along with a few ideas from Dr. Gary Chapman's book.<sup>1</sup>

Pastor Tommy

<sup>1</sup> Chapman, Gary. *The 5 Love Languages of Children: The Secret to Loving Children Effectively*. Moody Publishers.