

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Welcome to the Asbury Community

Dark Matter

There is a common myth about ancient maps. The myth is that beyond the boundaries of the known world cartographers would add the words "Here be dragons." According to the website maintained by the Forum on the history of cartography there is only one such map, which is actually a globe, found in the New York Public Library. Look closely at the Lennox Globe and you will find off the coast of Asia this warning to anyone who dares travel beyond the known world. Apparently we may find images of unknown creatures on ancient maps as a way to identify whatever lies beyond the ex-

plored world but no specific warning labels.



There are modern day examples of dragons. Outer space was considered vertically empty until scientists begin to notice the likelihood of a strong gravitational pull exerted by whatever is beyond the known universe. The term "dark matter" is

used to describe whatever this incredible, unknown force might be. Scientists now postulate that 80% of the universe lies beyond our known world. Meanwhile, this subject is a great source of fictional novels and movies as writers take us to places where "no man has gone before" or woman, other than in our imagination.

Page 2

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.

Page 2

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Special points of interest:

> **Worship Design Team will meet on Monday, June 4th at 6:30pm in the Asbury Library.**

> **United Methodist Women Monthly Meeting will be meeting Wednesday, June 6th at 1:00pm in the Asbury Wesley Room.**

> **Cooking Classes - Nutritional classes/cooking for company/lead abatement regarding meal preparations and also tips on gardening offered by master gardeners. Each Thursday from 1:00-2:30pm at Asbury UMC. For more information call Kevin Croom at 810-625-6115.**

Inside this issue:

Dark Matter	1
Love Me Tender	1
New Worship Series	3
In our Prayers	3
Pastor's Book Club	4
Leadership in Worship & Service	4
Coming up this Week	5
Farm to Table	6

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

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

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-

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

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

version of fear: "What if we stop what we are doing and we get lost. What if we don't get back to whatever we are currently doing?" Fear expects that we take one of three actions. We either run away, we attack or we simply freeze in place.

Dark Matter ... continued from page 1

But why go somewhere that is empty? Why travel into an empty place where there is nothing — no nourishment. Won't we starve? Yet, argues writer Frances Moore Lappe, isn't this what great spiritual leaders have done before us? Didn't the Holy Spirit lead Jesus out into the wilderness after His baptism and didn't Jesus return prepared to face a life of offering redeeming healing and love? Perhaps there is something in the void after all.
1

As Frances Lappe shared her story of how hard it was for her to decide to move from one career to different one. During her interview, her host offered

the following observation: "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." Feeling fear is as common as feeling hungry. We can't eliminate it altogether but we can rethink how we respond to fear.

The "unknown" is both frightening and exciting at the same time. Perhaps this tells us something about fear. That the emotion we call fear coexists with another emotion. One thing for sure, in order for us to travel to the unknown we must stop what we are doing. This realization often results in a different

Dark Matter ... continued from page 2

Fear is a basic survival instinct that keeps us from bear wrestling and losing. Fear also can cause us to provoke a hungry mountain lion when we run away since in this case the animal is not likely to go away, but chase after us. Our mind and body doesn't easily distinguish between the fear of being attacked and the fear of going where we haven't gone before.

But what if we faced fear with curiosity? What if in the midst of the tensions grabbing out body we begin to think about the source of our fear? Theodore Zeldin writes that it was quite insightful when science discovered that

our bodies response to fear is quite similar to curiosity. They are indeed close cousins. While the symptoms we feel from fear are more intense what if we respond to our fear with curiosity? What if we ask ourselves what we are afraid of?

Then Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan River. He was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where he was tempted by the devil for 40 days. Jesus ate nothing all that time and became very hungry.

Luke 4:1-2 NLT

Curiosity is not by itself a decision to go out into the unknown. Curiosity is a pause to listen. The problem may be that the voices we hear are mostly our own and the messages that we hear that feed our greatest fears are more false than true. Perhaps if we take the time to be curious about our fears we may find that there is really something to the statement that *Fear is a liar*.

Pastor Tommy

¹Lappe, Frances Moore. *You Have the Power: Choosing Courage in a Culture of Fear*. Penguin Publishing Group, 2004.

²Theodore Zeldin, *An Intimate History of Humanity*. New York: Random House, 1994. p. 180.

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)

Food * Water-Related Supplies * Education Opportunities On-site Enrollment for Health & Basic-Needs Services * Employment Resources * Mental & Community Resource Information

COMMUNITY HELP CENTERS

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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

In Our Prayers

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

FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE

Sharon George	Mary Nations
Elaine Lamoreaux	Carmen Misner
Mary Russell	



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."¹

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.

Page 5

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	Carolyn
Worship Leaders	Cyndi
Coffee Hour	

Asbury Staff

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

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.

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

- May 28 Mon** 4:30pm StandUp Education Prog
- May 29 Tues** 12Noon Pastor Book Club
- May 30 Wed** 4:30pm StandUp Education Prog
6:00pm Beginners Bible Study
6:30pm Asbury Youth
- May 31 Thu** 1:00pm Cooking Classes
- June 1 Fri** 4:30pm StandUp Education Prog
- June 2 Sat** 1-4pm StandUp Education Prog

A 2008 article in *Psychology Today* makes the following argument: "We live in two minds - fear and joy. Mostly, we live in fear." The article goes on to say that our fear shows up as anxiety as we regret our past or long for a different future. Joy, on the other hand, is about the present. When we feel joy we are able to let go of the past and the future as we experience joy in the moment.²

Our next worship series will take us through a transition from thinking about fear as an emotion to dread and even avoid to the idea of embracing our fear as a signpost or progress. While we reserve the need to follow the Spirit's guidance

June 3 Sunday

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

Last Week for Worship Attendance 29 Offering \$ 1,180

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

Email announcements by the Friday before to:

FlintAsburyUMC@gmail.com

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

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

² 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.



Prayer is at the heart of our beliefs

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.

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.

And let the growing began... Farm to table...

