

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Welcome to the Asbury Community!

Big Bang Reaction

This article is about conflict. But read on any way. I really don't like conflict. What about you? Conflict means trouble. Sometimes it seems like the world is divided between persons who hate conflict and persons who get their way most of the time. I have noticed that conflict is oftentimes used just for this purpose. If I respond to a request with a sudden show of anger the requestor backs down. Teenagers learn this well and it can be quite effective in avoiding interruptions to their busy, self-indulgent schedule.



Author Frances Moore Lappe is convinced that “Our aversion to conflict pops out in the sentiments of parents who brag about their ‘good kids’ who ‘never give us problems.’ Or school principals whose extra praise is reserved for teachers maintaining the most obedient classrooms. Or bosses who make it

hand. Somedays I just have to go through the motions and hope that my attendance is enough. And often it is.

“So don't worry about tomorrow for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today”.

Matthew 6:24 NLT

clear that those who fall in line will be rewarded.” She is convinced, she writes, that “it's not just a bruised ego at stake; it's a primal fear of losing standing in our tribe, of being cast out into the wilderness.”¹

Is this true? Does our resistance to conflict run even deeper? Is it a primal fear of being tossed out on our own only to die in the wilderness? Is this how trump got elected?

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Being a pastor, I am promised a lot that folks are going to show up for Sunday worship and other events. I can't help but get excited when I hear this promise. And I can't help being disappointed if they don't show up. Which happens far too often. What if they knew how much it means to me? What if they knew how much of a difference their showing up makes to everyone else?

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Volume 18 Issue 10

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Special points of interest:

> Leadership Team will meet on Monday, June 18th at 6pm in the Asbury Library.

> 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.

> Way Academy of Flint will be holding their graduation here on Tuesday, June 19th from 4:00-8:00pm.

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Showing Up

“Just showing up is most of life.” I've heard this expression hundreds of times over the decades and I've probably said it a number of times myself. Sometimes I need to hear it to get my body in motion when I'm not feeling adequate for the task at

Showing Up ...continued from Page 1

Why do so many folks not show up? I'm not talking about not committing and not showing up. I'm talking about saying one thing and doing another. "Something came up." Stuff happens and our plans change. I get this part. But I've noticed a pattern that is a bit disturbing. I have to wonder if hidden behind the excuses is the attitude "Why bother?" Why bother to show up?

Author Frances Moore Lappe asks the question in her book, *You Have the Power*, "How is it possible to create a more vibrant culture and livable world if most people view their potentially unique contributions as impossibilities?"¹ But why bother if I feel that my contribution is not useful? For one, the reason that showing up is most of life is that we cannot know whether our contribution will make a difference unless we show up. What if

we anticipated that our showing up will make all the difference?



God has an amazing ability to make sure that timing, people, and the most interesting coincidences all work together to make the impossible into the possible. This is the reason to show up. The One who invited us is already there waiting for us to show up and knowing the difference that our presence will make.

In our desire for predictable outcomes we think we need to know all the answers before we can start. This leads to the unfortunate conclusion that if we

are feeling fear then we're not ready. Check out the article, *Dark matter?* What if we show up with our curiosity? What if we take that hard first step? What if we allow things to unfold along the and on their own schedule?

The human brain is remarkable. Our brains have the ability to reprogram. Our brains can turn our sensations of fear into curiosity as a habitual response. As we start showing up, and we put ourselves into new, initially uncomfortable situations, we reprogram our brain's responses. Psychologists have notice what is now called "fear extinction," when people expose themselves to exactly the situations that scare them. After repeated exposures, our memory of fear competes with the new learning that there's no reason to be afraid, and the brain relearns its fear triggers. By showing up today, we change the fears we might face in the future.²

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

² Lott, Deborah. "Unlearning Fear: Calcium Channel Blockers and the Process of Extinction," *Psychiatric Times*, May 2003, pp. 9-12.

Big Bang Reaction ... continued from page 1

Was trump's playground style of bullying anyone who disagrees with him using childish name calling sufficient for us to put a leader in charge with no apparent qualifications other than playground bully?

Burmese Nobel Peace Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi her book *Freedom from Fear* argues that it is actually fear that most threatens democracy. Her late husband published her letters that she wrote while under

house arrest. In her letters she notes that a lack of confidence and skills in dealing with conflict can erode democracy. "It is not power that corrupts, but fear," she writes, "Fear of losing power corrupts those who wield it and fear of the scourge of power corrupts those who are subject to it."²

Jesus did not back down from conflict although none of us can love those we disagree with in the same

Pastor Tommy

way that Jesus did. At least not on our own power. In Matthew, if we pick out certain verses to support our argument, we can choose the Jesus we want to portray.

Big Bang Reaction ... *continued from page 2*

The combative debater giving the religious leaders holy heck or the peaceful Jesus telling us that we must forgive anyone who offends us. While it is more challenging to hold all of scripture in tension as we consider how God is guiding our lives it is really critical that we are able to discern a communal direction. Where is God leading us as a people?

It seems to me that the democratic process lies at the heart of

what it takes to faithfully accomplish this whether in a small group or a larger group. We need diversity of voices if we are to arrive at a faithful discernment. This is not to suggest that God does not speak through prophets. But even the prophets are prone to narrow mindedness. We do not know that what we read in scripture from the prophetic voices was not debated before it was captured in the

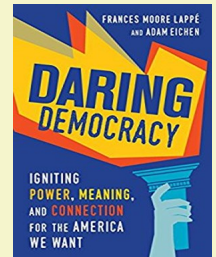
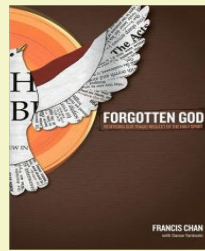
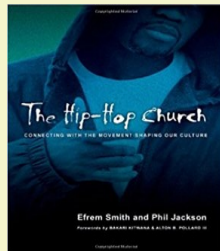
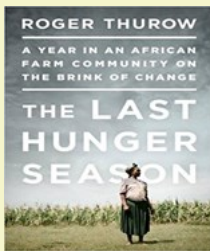
words that we read. Holy Spirit inspired to me suggests something less than an orderly, single-minded process when I read about Pentecost in the Book of Acts.

After one of the statements that we seem to have consensus on such as Jesus is Lord, differences of interpretation arise. Even statements that may seem universal such as "Jesus died for our sins" can take us in differing direction.

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS ...

Pastor Book Club will be meeting on Wednesdays, instead of Tuesdays at 12Noon during the Summer months, with a potluck, if you are able to bring a dish to pass.

We will let you know as we move back to Tuesdays ...



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

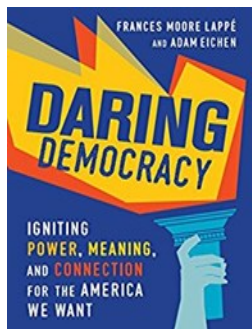
Asbury Worship Series Fear is a Liar ...

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."¹

Book Club News

NOTE - WE ARE NOW MEETING ON WEDNESDAYS AT 12 NOON. While we

are between books we are exploring the connections between scripture and



some of life's challenges using teaching videos by the popular pastor, preacher

and author Rob Bell. This past week our topics included the

cross as a symbol of hope and wonderment. Using several of the Psalms for inspiration and insight we took on these subjects.

Leadership in Worship & Service

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

Asbury Staff

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

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

First, how could the cruelest form of execution in human history become a symbol for hope? As Christians we know the answer. God took on the worst we could throw at Him and He overcame. The cross is a symbol of God's promise that we too overcome all that life can throw at us. Even death itself.



Second, what happened to awe? When was the last time you looked out the window in amazement of the world that God has created? When was the last time that you looked at yourself and realized what a wonderful, awesome and beautiful creation you are?

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.

of his property. Can you blame him?

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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This very moment is filled with awesome things going on that we can see through eyes of wonderment.

We will utilize more of Pastor Rob's videos for the next couple of weeks before we tackle the subject of democracy. Authors Frances Moore Lappe and Adam Eichen argue that "Democracy is not a choice. Creating democracies truly accountable to their citizens is essential to our very survival—to the flourishing of societies supporting human life, and now, because of climate change, to the survival of the Earth..." A week or so after our books arrive we will begin a discussion of our roles as a faith community and as individual citizens of this planet in assuring that democracy thrives.

We encourage you to come to our Wednesday gatherings. Our small group hopes to widen our circle and so we hope that you will join in on our discussion. We meet each Wednesday 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

*Frances Moore Lappe and Adam Eichen. *Daring Democracy: Igniting Power, Meaning, and Correction for the America We Want*. (p.4) Beacon Press, 2017.

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

- Jun 11 Mon** 4:30pm StandUp Education Prog
- Jun 12 Tues** 6:30pm Washington Neighborhood
- Jun 13 Wed** 12N Pastor Book Club
4:30pm StandUp Education Prog
6:00pm Beginners Bible Study
6:30pm Asbury Youth
- Jun 14 Thur** 1:00pm Cooking Classes
- Jun 15 Fri** 4:30pm StandUp Education Prog
- Jun 16 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 17 Sunday**
9:30am Café Opens
10:30am New Beginnings Contemporary Worship

Last Week for Worship Attendance 38 Offering \$ 1,744

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:

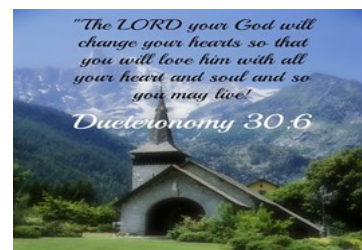
- Week 1 May 27
Dark Matter
- Week 2 June 3
Showing Up
- Week 3 June 10
Big Bang Reaction
- Week 4 June 17
The Dragon's Mouth
- Week 5 June 24
Chosen Last
- Week 6 July 1
A Drip in the Ocean

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.



THE FLINT FARMING PROJECT





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 & Physical Health Options Community Resource Information and more...



COMMUNITY HELP CENTERS

Sink & Shower Filters, On-site Food Demonstrations

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



Welcome to the Asbury Community

1653 Davison Rd
Flint, MI 48506



NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
FLINT, MICHIGAN
PERMIT #151

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

Big Bang Reaction ... continued from page 3

For example, is it "sin" or "sins?" and does this nuance matter? Does this statement suggest exclusion of other statements of interpretation such as *Jesus died because He was rejected by those in power.*

Decisions that we make as a people matter. Even decisions where we had no voice. I believe very much in empowerment and representative government. I can't possibly weigh in on every detail and I would rather not have this expectation put on me. While I may disagree with putting parking meters on Saginaw Street, I put my quarters in when I park because persons who I played a role in empowering made a decision on our collective behalf. Elections come frequently and representative government can and does offer opportuni-

ties to change the way things are done.

Disagreements are certain to happen. How can we disagree in ways that do not result in an explosive reaction? How can I get over my own fear of conflict? One idea is to begin here with admitting that I have this fear and recognize that I'm not alone in having this fear. Another step is in realizing that conflict is simply a part of living in relationship with others, no matter how close. Francis writes "Simply acknowledging that conflict is inevitable can help ease our fear of it. It also helps to remember that no matter how much we think we're drawn to people similar to us, to engage in relationships with others is to engage difference. Relating to difference is what it means to be in a relationship. It's not a side issue; it's at the heart."

Perhaps big bang reactions come out of holding back from voicing our differences to the point where anger has percolated to the edge of explosion. Scripture offers both good and bad examples and step by step instruction on resolving differences. If we can focus more on God's way rather than our own way there is hope that resolution can be both peaceful and life-giving. Meanwhile, the fear that tells us to avoid conflict is once again caught in a lie.

Pastor Tommy

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

²Aung San Suu Kyi, *Freedom from Fear.* New York: Penguin Publishing Group, 1991, p. 180.