

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Welcome to the Asbury Community!

Good Medicine

The fear of rejection is usually built into to us or so it seems. It becomes a rude awakening when we come to realize that we are not the center of the universe and it usually happens at a young enough age that we are cannot remember the details — but the results linger. A few struggle to let go of the myth that they are at the center of all things even into adulthood. Perhaps we fear that if we let go we may disappear altogether. This fear may be built in as a means of survival. We simply cannot make it on our own for very long. We are built for community.

James wanted to be healed in the worse way. Even more, James wants to

be wanted. He wants to know that people care about him despite his illness. His addiction had gotten worse over the past few years or so, and while he realized it was happening, James felt powerless to fight it. Graduating from a recovery program was more celebrated by others than James. He knew his recovery was temporary. Life was simply too hard for him to cope without a daily dose of escape where his body and his soul rotted while the enemy celebrated keeping yet another of God's children isolated and in bondage. Our community is full of stories that sound familiar to James.

Now I See

You may sometimes hear this question from evangelist or perhaps a stranger who came your door as part of a church outreach campaign, "Do you know Jesus Christ?" How do you respond? Likely most of would say "Sure I

know Jesus Christ." But this week's scripture asks a different question. "Does Jesus Christ know you?" This week we read a warning that should cause us to pause and reflect.

Our scripture for this week makes it more difficult to live in

...people immediately recognized Jesus. They ran through that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever he was rumored to be and wherever he would go...they would place the sick in the marketplace, and would ask if they could just touch the edge of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed.

Mark 6:54-56 NET

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denial about our personal relationship with God since it gets at the heart of the gospel. But it is a difficult text to reconcile with other parts of the gospel where Jesus comes across as laid back with an approach that allows for loads of user error. Grace, after all, is found throughout scripture. Even the Apostle Paul admits that we are all guilty of sin (Roman 3:23).

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Special points of interest:

> **Asbury Café is now Open!**

Stop in on Fridays from 10:00am-2:00pm outside the Worship Center on the main floor.



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Now I See ...cont. from Page 1

But these words from Jesus seem to go beyond this reality. For example, we all struggle from time to time with forgiveness even though forgiveness is necessary to maintain any sort of healthy relationship. We all do things that we should not do and fail to do things we should do. So we ask others to give us break.

A parent forgives a child countless times even when the child knows better. The bond of love is strong and both parent and child are familiar with one another.

But what happens when the child leaves home and loses touch with the parent? Likely, the bond of love is still there. But is the relationship that the two once had still there? No. The child has changed in significant ways. The child has aged. Hopefully, the child has matured. The child is still loved by the parent but the familiarity is gone. And the child has not received direction from the parent during their absence.

Good Medicine ... cont. from page 1

Addictions, from smoking to hard drugs is common enough that the addicted are able to find co-conspirators. Self-destruction feels more like it was meant to be. Poor health and low expectations for the future are the norm. Of course, there are miracle stories but they are far fewer. Yes, there are persons being healed but how long will it be before the enemy reclaims them? Sickness is more the norm and Flint's bad water is just further evidence that the enemy has won. Miraculous healings must either be hopeful fiction or ancient history.

There is some truth to the history part. The Gospels, which tell of a time over two Thousand years ago, are full of healing stories. The writer of Mark writes that everywhere that Jesus shows up sick people either came to him or others brought them, begging Jesus to restore them.

When the Judgement Day comes, many will say to me, "Lord, Lord! In the name we spoke God's message, by your name we drove our many demons and performed many miracles!" Then I will say to them, "I never knew you".

Matthew 7:22-23a GNT

When Jesus is about to enter Jerusalem knowing that He will be rejected we read in Luke that He wept. Jesus knew the people would not accept Him for who He is and would crucify Him. Jesus knew that there were many righteous people in the sense of following the laws of Moses. People who lived in obedience to God, or so they thought. For them, God was a strict parent who expected disciplined children who always followed the rules.

But in the Gospel we learn that God wants more than this. God lived

Since healing is so powerful all on its own we can miss the less immediate consequences. Healed persons return to a more normal relationship with their community. The more debilitating the illness or injury the more distance between the person and their community. Jesus restores relationships when He heals us. This is what it means to be whole. We can better deal with the illness or injury if we are able to stay connected to our community. I have spoken to James and to numerous others like him. Men and women. Young and old. Each has a unique story with a similar ending taking shape. Isolated from a community of loving and understanding people who, just like them, have listened to the lies of the enemy and taken the path of certain destruction.

among people to build personal, loving relationships. Parent and child love. A love that is not lost when we lose touch but a love that should keep us from ever wanting to lose touch. A child who leaves home and loses touch is not returning the love that was shown by a truly loving parent. And the parent no longer knows their child.

Have you lost touch with your divine parent? Knowing that Jesus loves you is important but it is just the beginning. Jesus wants you to stay in touch. But this means more than saying your prayers or even declaring healing in the name of Jesus Christ. Relationship requires intimacy both with Jesus and with His other followers.



If you are not active in a local church find one. If you are active in Asbury or some other local church invite someone else to join you. On September 16 we are celebrating "national back to church Sunday" as a way to emphasize that its time for any who have lost touch to return home. Church is not a religion. Church is a community of believers all living in constant relationship with each other and with Christ.

Join us each Sunday as we grow together in love. Invite others to do the same.

Pastor Tommy

Good Medicine ...cont. from page 2

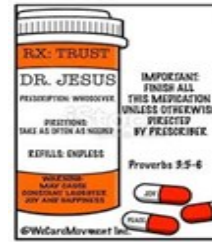
The difference, which makes James feel more justified in claiming uniqueness, is that Jesus healed them and restored them to community. James and many others, look at me in disbelief. "You don't understand — you can't possibly understand — I'm the one that grace missed."

My father was fond of telling me that "You can't know a man unless you have walked a mile in his shoes." The lesson my father wanted me to gain from this is that I can never walk that mile. There is only room for one person in a pair of shoes and whatever path another person is on, whatever the circumstances, we each walk in our own shoes, metaphorically. But there is a difference between understanding and experiencing.

The thing that those of us recovering from whatever illness the enemy has helped us succumb to in our past is that we have learned that the Gospel stories are not just there for a history lesson. They are living stories that happen all over the world and right in our neighborhood. Jesus continues to be on call. The doctor is in but He depends on each of us to care for one another. Recovery is a life-long process and we heal one day at a time.

Even if our sickness is relieved in a flash our rejoining to community is a process that requires daily work. But it is a labor of love. We read in the Gospel stories time and time again that the sick were

brought to Jesus by family, friends, neighbors and even strangers.



As we began our preparations for "Back to Church Sunday" my hope is that you will be reminded both that your own recovery is a divine gift but

also that Jesus is sending you out among the sick. This week look for creative way to restore community with someone who is struggling to stay connected. If you feel disconnected yourself ask others how your connection can be restored or improved.

Pastor Tommy

FREE SUMMER MEALS

Asbury UMC - 1653 Davison Rd Flint MI (810-235-0016)

"Meet Up and Eat Up"

Free Healthy Meals * Fun and Games * All Youths ages 18 & under are welcome

(MONDAY – FRIDAY)

Breakfast served from 8:00am-9:30am * Lunch from 11am-1:00pm

For more information visit the website at
www.fbem.org/programs/summer-food-service

Food Bank of Eastern Michigan - Michigan Department of Education - USDA

FOOD THAT'S IN, WHEN SCHOOL IS OUT!

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 Do you hear what I hear? Second of Three Series

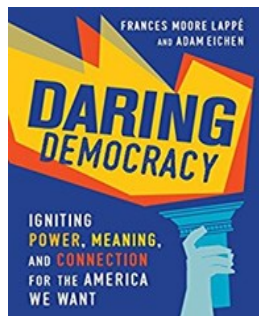
One of the goals for our first series in our trilogy was to shift our focus from the rules of religion to the opportunities for relationship with God and each other. One of the goals of this series is to help us further shift our thinking towards relation-

ship by considering how to listen for the voice of God. Religion calls this “discernment” and talks a lot about God’s Word particularly when criticizing others. Here we will explore what this word means for our community. Our focus in this next series is on how to listen, compare what we hear, and coming to a common understanding.

Book Club News

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

As the people of the Exodus grew in numbers Moses could not longer handle all



of their disputes so he had each of the 12 tribes choose a leader from among their group and a form of representative democracy was born. It was in the wilderness that God worked through Moses

and the other leaders to help the people emerge as a new nation.

be like other nations. They wanted a king to rule over them. God reminded Samuel that it was their God the people were rejecting. So a monarchy emerged among God’s people. Despite God’s warnings and despite a few periods of political and economic success the consequences that God warned the people about happened. Kings exploited the people taking the best for themselves and the people’s voice was silenced. Is this happening again in our country? Are we being exploited by the rich and powerful?

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...” Do we have a democracy in our country? Does our government represent the hopes and dreams of the people that they represent?

Fast forward a bit and young Samuel, the prophet, becomes older Samuel and the people are grumbling that they want to

The separation between the very wealthy and the rest of us has never been

Leadership in Worship & Service

Welcome Team Tony, Mirium,
Children’s Time Rev Tommy
Ushers Anthony, Jim
Production Team Mark
Nursery Mirium
Worship Leaders Cyndi
Coffee Hour Christine

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

Discernment requires a relationship with God and with others. It is best done in community since God seems to offer a little bit of insight to each person in a group — even a group of two — requiring that we compare notes and requiring that we ask each other “Do you hear what I hear?”

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greater and the influence of the very wealthy, and other countries, on our elections has never been greater. In our own beloved Flint, our governor was able to circumvent democracy with the stroke of a pen. The result: economics prevailed over people and we continue to suffer. We have a president who boasts that he is among the super rich and whose decisions favor their economics over ours. How does this happen? Is the voice of the people being heard or are voters and elections manipulated behind the scenes?

This is not about conspiracy theories. Certainly, we do not all agree on who and how policy and laws should come about. But an increasing number of us are ashamed of our country’s policies and embarrassed by our choices to represent us. But what can we do? We can dare to make a difference by standing together and by using both our voice and our vote.

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 Connection for the America We Want.* (p. 4). Beacon Press, 2017.

Do you hear what I hear? *continued from page 4*

There is an ancient parable that was constructed into a poem by John Godfrey Saxe, about six blind men who encounter an elephant. Each man has a different understanding of the elephant based on the part of the elephant that they are touching. None of them really know much about the elephant overall since they are each limited to their own experience.

*Six men of Indostan
To learning much inclined,
Who went to see the Elephant
(Though all of them were blind),
That each by observation
Might satisfy his mind...
And so these men of Indostan
Disputed loud and long,
Each in his own opinion
Exceeding stiff and strong,
Though each was partly in the right,
And all were in the wrong!*

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1 John Godfrey Saxe, The Poems of John Godfrey Saxe. (1873), (pp. 135-136)

Coming up this week

Aug 13 Mon 4:30pm StandUp Education Prog

Aug 14 Tues 6:00pm Worship Team Meeting

Aug 15 Wed 12Noon Pastor Book Club

Aug 16 Thu 1:00pm Cooking Classes

Aug 17 Fri 10am-1pm Asbury Cafe Open
4:30pm StandUp Education Prog

Aug 18 Sat 1-4:pm StandUp Education Prog

Aug 19 Sunday

9:30am Café Opens

10:30am New Beginnings
Contemporary Worship

**Last Week for Worship
Attendance 31 Offering \$ 699**

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

Email announcements by the Friday
before to:

FlintAsburyUMC@gmail.com

Back to Church Sunday

September 16

Invite your neighbor

invite a stranger

Bring a friend

**** New Asbury UMC
Coffee Cups are available
by bringing a friend or
neighbor to Sunday
Worship with you! Just
fill out a Connect Card so
we can get to know them
too, turn it in to the Café
ladies and you and your
guest will be given one of
these coffee cups.**

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



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.

Do you hear what I hear? *continued from page 5*

Discernment involves a community open to the possibility that God is speaking through actions and decisions all around us. For example, why is our weekly book club small group studying a book about democracy? Clearly, our situation in Washington has reached an all time low, but some question whether the church should take a position on politics? When Jesus said to give to Caesar (government) that which they claim and give to God what God claims was He making a politically neutral statement?

Here is a possible discernment: What if God is calling Asbury to become more active in making a political statement of inclusion and democratic process? After all the work that we are doing in our community cannot be done in a vacuum.

...anyone who hears these words of mine and obeys them is like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain poured down, the rivers flooded over, and the wind blew hard against that house. But it did not fall, because it was built on rock.

Matthew 7:26 GNT

The City's Master Plan affects our community and the people we serve. Decisions about land usage, whether we can combine lots, drill wells, eliminate streets and use buildings are all a part of God's plan for good.



But FIRST ... Do you hear what I hear?

Pastor Tommy