

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Welcome to the Asbury Community!

Logical Illusions

Magicians are masters at creating illusions. Our minds are trained on what appears to be the main act — the details that matter — and when the real act is revealed we wonder “How did he do that?” Sometimes we aren’t sure what to expect but what happens isn’t anything we imagined. Other times, we expect one outcome and witness another. What we see creates what we expect to see next. When reality defies logic we are amazed.

God’s actions can appear to be like a magic act to us. We see what is happening and based on our knowledge and experience we expect a certain outcome. And we are surprised. Sometimes it is a pleasant surprise. Other times, we may be disappoint-

ed. But perhaps our disappointments are more often misplaced. Because our logical mind gets in the way of divine will.

Our current worship series is titled *Do you hear what I hear?* Perhaps an alternative title for this week’s message is *Are you expecting what I’m expecting?* From out of our prayers, meditation, observation and other ways that we listen for God’s voice we have certain expectations for the outcomes that we anticipate. And in faith we go about our day with our expectations firmly planted on our brain. And stuff happens.

We expected a raise but we got fired. We expected to get fired but we got promoted. We thought our friend

would be excited but our friend is angry with us. We agreed to offer our testimony during worship but we fell flat.

Whenever we act based on our limited knowledge of the mind of God we risk discovering that we are indeed limited. Our logical mind assessed the landscape and misinterpreted the likely outcomes. We thought there wasn’t going to be enough and there was plenty leftover.



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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 differ-

ent 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 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!**

Remember that the Asbury Café is opened for lunch on Fridays from 10:00am-2:00pm outside the Worship Center on the main floor.



These selections will also be available on Sunday mornings before and after worship.

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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.

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

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.

Logical Illusions ..cont. from page 1

Does God set us up for surprise like a more clever friend making fun of our lesser ability of reason? Scripture tells us otherwise. God is like a really good parent and teacher who may allow us to believe what we choose knowing in advance that we will soon be surprised. It is our often poorly fabricated assumptions that can lead us in the wrong direction. Take the story of David and Goliath. We all know this story. It comes up when there is an underdog going up against a superior force. Will the underdog prevail against all odds? Or will the giant once again rule the day? Somedays its good to be the underdog but we underdogs often feel a bit anxious about what to expect.

Writer Malcolm Gladwell in his book *David and Goliath: Underdogs, Misfits, and the Art of Battling Giants*, speculates that Goliath suffered from a medical condition known as acromegaly. This disorder which manifests as gigantism is caused by a tumor on the pituitary gland. One of the side affects is poor vision.

So here we have a battle about to ensue between a 9-foot "giant" — a man larger than anyone else caused by an overactive gland that puts him at a disadvantage except in hand-to-hand combat.

Logical Illusions ... cont. from page 2

Goliath is a foot soldier. His weapons require very close proximity to his opponent and his defense is heavy metal which impedes mobility to the point that another person carries his shield for him.

Enter David. A shepherd skilled in the warfare tactic known as artillery. Using a sling shot David's advantage comes from distance. He is accustomed to his foes being much larger, more fierce and requiring close physical proximity. Their weapons, like those of Goliath, require that they are close enough to their opponent to strike.

Who is the underdog? If we tend to use what we see to interpret past history

and project future outcomes we likely see giant versus small boy and give the advantage to Goliath. But God knew that a different outcome than the prevailing conclusion would come about. And it did. And a future King was introduced to his future subjects. And the giant was defeated.

Jesus warned us that we too often make presumptions about God's mind that get us into trouble and encouraged us instead to listen for God with an open mind. Ideas like the first shall be last, the weak shall inherit the earth go against conventional logic. We are accustomed to the strong prevailing.

But perhaps this is because we didn't have enough of the facts.

Discernment begins with an open mind. Allowing our past perceptions and bias to be replaced with divine insight and inspiration. Do you hear what I hear? If not, lets go to prayer and to others in our community to discover what God has in mind. And then, lets enjoy the show.

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

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) PROGRAM ENDS AUGUST 31st.

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 Out of Time Second of Three Series

I miss being able to talk to my mom. When she passed she left a quiet legacy. Some said "It was her time." And it was I presume. She missed my dad and believed that they would some day be reunited. It was time. I suspect that my mom seldom "wasted time" but her pri-

orities were not the same as others. For example, mom liked to keep up with the news using TV, the internet and printed media to get her daily coverage. She also took the time to talk to other people. Staying in touch was a high priority.

I recall my mom telling her grand and great grand children to find something to do when they seemed to sit around lifeless neither playing

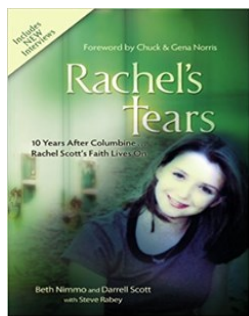
nor talking to the people around them. "Your acting like an old person" my 90 year old mother would sometimes say. She followed her observation with "If your going to act like an old person find some place else to go...I don't care to hang out with old people." I suspect that my mom may have said this to friends of hers in the same category of age. She was a woman on the move even when she

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Book Club News

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

Has any one ever invited you to watch a movie or read a book with the qualifier "Are you ready for a good cry?" For some of us, this "sweetens" the invitation and the answer is nearly always YES. For some, this qualifier is a dis-



qualifier. Why set my self up to cry on purpose? Then there is the middle ground — the majority. We may dip our toes in emotionally but hold out as long as possible. "There's no

crying in baseball!" is a line that comes to mind for me. That's a lie. I've coached hundreds of children in baseball and tears are a part of the game. And a part of life.

As we put our last book selection behind us we turn from analysis to real life. While our last book was non-fiction and full of reporting on life it was mostly at a societal level as we analyzed the

state of our democracy, or lack there of, from a safe distance. Our next book invites us into the story — into the lives of a family devastated by our inability as a people to provide safety for our children. Not because we aren't trying hard. But perhaps our lack of democracy plays a bigger role than we may care to recognize.

In our study just finished, 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..." The burning question is "What is the world that we want to create together?"

Certainly, our children are at the center of our hopes. As school shootings continue at an increasing rate while politician huddle in back rooms to find new ways to protect the interest of gun manufacturers and political contributions our youth are rising up and calling them to come out and look into the faces of children who are both afraid and tired of adults unwilling to take action. Our children are using their voices and their votes for change, even as some states try to create new obstacles that discourage them from voting.

Our next book takes us also into the heart of a teenager. A student at Columbine High School who once wrote in her personal journal, "I am not going

to apologize for speaking the name of Jesus... If I have to sacrifice everything... I will." While I am not one who readily takes on a book that promises to turn on the tears I was hooked as soon as I began reading. And the tears...well have some tissues close by. Amazon's website describes our next book, *Rachael's Tears*, as follows:

The Columbine tragedy in April 1999 pierced the heart of our country. We later learned that the teenage killers specifically targeted Rachel Scott and mocked her Christian faith on their chilling, homemade videotapes. Rachel Scott died for her faith. Now her parents talk about Rachel's life and how they have found meaning in their daughter's martyrdom in the aftermath of the school shooting.

Rachel's Tears comes from a heartfelt need to celebrate this young girl's life, to work through the



grief and the questions of a nation, and to comfort those who have been touched by violence in our schools today. Using excerpts and drawings from Rachel's own journals, her parents offer a spiritual perspective on the Columbine tragedy

and provide a vision of hope for preventing youth violence across the nation.

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.

* Nimmo, Beth, and Darrell Scott. *Rachel's Tears: The Spiritual Journey of Columbine Martyr Rachel Scott*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2000, 2008.

Leadership in Worship & Service

Welcome Team Tony, Mirium,
Ushers Anthony, Jim
Production Team Mark
Children Mirium & Emily
Worship Leaders Cyndi
Café Christine & Norma

Jim Craig Leadership Chair
Connie Portillo Office Secretary
Kevin Croom Farm to Table
Israel Unger Business Operations

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
Sylvia Pittman Worship Arts

Out of Time *continued from page 4*

was sitting or unable to physically get up and go. She often spoke about her older friends who inspired her by their energy.

There is another expression that I don't recall ever hearing from my mother but I have said it and heard it too many times. "We are out of time." Its one thing to hear this on a game show and another to hear it while feeling the pressure of completion in our daily lives. There is so much finality to this statement. And anxiety.

My mom was one of those persons who saw the glass as half full rather than half empty. Rather than fret over spilled milk she grabbed a mop and cleaned it up. Its funny when I think about it now. I don't recall a time when I thought that God was speaking to me through my mom's words but I do now. Mom wasn't out of time. The messages that God spoke to her are still ringing in my ears like church bells awakening me to her reminders that God controls the time. It is amazing how often I



hear Jesus in the words of people around me. I suppose that one

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Coming up this week

- Aug 27 Mon** 6:00pm Worship Meeting
- Aug 28 Tues** 10am-2pm Water Pick up
- Aug 29 Wed** 12Noon Pastor Book Club
- Aug 30 Thu** 10am-2pm Water pick up
- Aug 31 Fri** 10am-2pm Asbury Cafe Open
- Sept 1 Sat**

Sept 2 Sunday

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

Last Week for Worship Attendance 32 Offering \$ 559

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

Email announcements by the Friday before to:

FlintAsburyUMC@gmail.com

September 16, 2018 is Back to Church Sunday. Be sure to invite your friends, family and neighbors to join us for worship.

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.

** 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.



THE FLINT FARMING PROJECT



Small Group Questions & Notes

So do not worry about tomorrow; it will have enough worries of its own. There is no need to add to the troubles each day brings.

Matthew 6:34 GNT

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

QUESTIONS FOR SMALL GROUPS

1. What are you worried about? Are the things you worry about outside of your control? Do you believe that they are all within God's control? Why or why not?
2. Can you say that you trust God but still worry? How does your answer mesh with the words of Jesus in Matthew 6:34?
3. How can the members of your group help you this week?

Welcome to the Asbury Community

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FLINT, MICHIGAN
PERMIT #151

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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.

Asbury Worship Series ..Out of Time *cont.. from page 5*

advantage I may have is that I have had the privilege of studying scripture for years, particularly the Gospels. There is not a day that passes when I haven't read and learned something new from Scripture. Often, the same lesson I learned in the past. Conversations with Jesus never end as long as we are willing to "sit at his feet" with Mary and others to hear His voice.

Alison Ledgerwood is a professor of social psychology. She did a Tedx talk that is still available on YouTube about our propensity to get stuck in the negative. Research indicates that once we see a glass as half empty it takes a concerted effort to see the potential in a half glass of water. I'm convinced that this affects our discernment of God's voice. I can't imagine God focusing on the negative. Otherwise, salvation wouldn't be possible. I'm glad that God sees my potential as a glass half full.

"But what about the time" I frequently hear from persons after suggesting they spend more time with prayer and scripture. I get it. Its the same reasoning that I use to justify not running as I have done in the past. Time is our most convenient go to reason for not doing something that, let's face it, we have decided is not important as other things in our schedule.

So do not worry about tomorrow; it will have enough worries of its own. There is no need to add to the troubles each day bring.

Matthew 6:34 GNT

I don't think we need to feel ashamed of how we spend our time. This is the lesson for this week. We so often think of time as the past and the future we can easily miss that the only time that matters exists only in the present.

Time is a convenience for us or should be. We agree that Sunday worship begins at 10:30 am so that we can all plan on being together at the same time. Starting a little late is no big deal. Deciding to start at 9 am or Noon creates a problem for anyone who didn't get the email or text and had other plans during the new time. Choosing a time was a group discernment based on a bunch of factors that culminated in discerning what God had to say on the matter.

Jesus spoke about time and even more about anxiety and worry. Time, however, seemed to be about living in the present and letting the future take care of itself. Which is another way to saying let God handle the future who knows what is best. "Do not worry" are words that require trust that God is really in charge and has plans for our well being.

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