

# ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

*Welcome to the Asbury Community!*

## Ladder Climbing

Joanna Weaver in her video that introduces her book, *Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World*, offers a wonderful metaphor for how many of us view our relationship with God. We imagine a ladder that stretches up to heaven with each rung of the ladder another thing that we need to do. There is reading scripture, prayers, meditation, worship, life groups, concerts, volunteering, witnessing, inviting others and more. Just making a list is exhausting.

We stare at the height of this ladder with tired eyes and muscles knowing before we take the first step that we don't see how we can make it all the way to the top. It may as well be the dangling rope in gym class hanging from the rafters of the gymnasium as we wait our turn to grab the rope and

climb to the top. Only this ladder reaches much higher and will take much longer. And we aren't as young as we once were and much busier.



Some of us started climbing the ladder that we saw in front of us years ago and are still climbing. And after thousands of hours of Bible study, prayer and service we are tired. We are more than tired. We are exhausted. But there are still more rungs to climb. Oh boy! Will I make it in time

## Wagon Pulling

Joanna Weaver in her book, *Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World*, offers a powerful story that illustrates how even when we are determined to do God's will, we are easily distracted by the things that we hold onto that are only weighing us down. We fail in our efforts to follow God's lead, not because we don't want to do what we

know we should do, but because we are distracted by our possessions that God didn't intend for us to own. And we are distracted by other opportunities to do good things that were not intended for us to do.

Sometimes this means that we do jobs given to others rather than encourage them to do what God has given them to do. Imagine that

before the gates of heaven are closed?

Before I go on I need to make sure that if at any time this article gives you the impression that you shouldn't do some if not all of the things listed above and more, I have failed you. These are all good things and crucial to life but set your to-do list aside for a few minutes and read on.

Can I be honest? If you think that you can earn God's love by what you do then frankly you are being just a bit arrogant. For to do so suggests that you know what's best and what you need to do to please God.

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you are pulling a wagon. It is a wagon that God gave you to pull and in the wagon are three rocks that God put in your wagon with instructions to pull the wagon to the top of a hill. You leave on your journey whistling and singing songs of praise that God trusts you enough to take these rocks up the hill.

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### *Special points of interest:*

**Asbury Café is Open!**

**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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## Wagon Pulling ...cont. from Page 1

“Not a problem” you say to yourself. I will just walk a little slower and take more

*You continue on your journey singing praises to God.*

breaks. Sometime later, you are thirsty and tired, but you notice a lemonade stand on the side of the road with a young boy and his sister sitting behind it. “You thirsty mister” the young girl says to you. “Am I. How much for a big glass?” you ask. Along the way, you meet a group of people. They are distraught. You learn that a fire had devastated their town and they lost everything and are on their way to a place that will provide temporary shelter and help them get back on their feet. Bob, one of the men in the group asks about the rocks in your wagon. When you explain how you are serving God Bob is amazed and swings his backpack and places it on the ground. “I’ve got something to show you,” Bob blurts out in his excitement.

He takes two rocks that are similar to the three that you have in your wagon. Bob says to you, “I too was asked to take these rocks up this hill but I won’t be able to do it. Will you take them up the hill for me?” Excited to help you respond “Of course. Put them right next to the other rocks.” The

## Ladder Climbing... cont from page 1

The argument is powerful and I’ve heard this argument from well meaning, somewhat angry Christians in the past. “I know what to do because it says so in the Bible!” Yes it does but be careful not to read with tunnel vision.

Most important, salvation, and by salvation I mean the Good News that comes to us right now, right where we are, without so much as changing our socks, is a gift. Salvation is not given to us because of anything we have done, or not done, or anything that we intend to do. Salvation is ours because of what Christ has already done. We don’t earn salvation. The Good News is a free gift. We just have to accept it.

group leaves on their way and so do you, but you notice that your wagon is quite a bit harder to pull than it was before adding the additional rocks.

While you are enjoying your refreshing lemonade you notice the young boy trying to turn over a bag of rocks that look too heavy for him to lift. “What are the rocks for?” you ask curious that rocks keep coming up. “Oh this bag of rocks was left here by a woman who said that she was supposed to take them up the hill for God” the boy responds.

Now your curiosity is really peaked. There is another person carrying rocks up the hill for God. “I must find her” you say to yourself. “Where did she go?” you ask the boy’s sister thinking that she is more likely to know. “She left a while ago walking back down the hill and told us to keep the rocks” the girl replied. Knowing the importance that God puts on things getting done you ask “Is it ok if I take the rocks with me up the hill? I’m going that way for the same reason and I already have rocks to take up to the top.”

The children agree and you lift the bag of rocks off their table and put them on top

*Martha, Martha! You are worried and troubled over so many things, but just one is needed. Mary has chosen the right thing, and it will not be taken away from her.*

Luke 10:42 GNT

Sounds easy doesn’t it? And it is easy. Jesus said so. In Matthew 11:30 Jesus tells us that the load that He puts on us is light — not heavy. Furthermore, in Psalm 37 God promises to give us the desires of our heart. Why? Because God loves us and lived among people to show us just how much we are loved even before we take our first breath and certainly before we quote our first verse of Scripture.

of the other rocks in your wagon. As you continue on your way you can hardly move the wagon. You use both hands and lean in the direction of the rising hill but the wagon barely moves a few feet at a time. “This is crazy” you say to yourself not worried who may be listening.

“How can You do this to me?” you scream at no one but seemingly aiming your voice towards the sky. “All I wanted to do was to please You!” you cry out as tears begin to run down your cheeks combining with the sweat.

Suddenly, a man is walking beside you. You have no idea where He came from but he was close enough that he put his arm around you. “Why are you so distressed?” He asks. “I have labored hard for the Lord carrying the rocks that must go to the top of this hill, but the load is too much and I am not able to go on” you manage to blurt out through your sobbing.

“Let me see what you have there” the Man says as he looks in your wagon and then He asks “What is all of this?” So you explain how you started with the three rocks that God asked you to carry up the hill and how you met the people in distress and wanted to help and then you met the children with the bag of rocks, and you wanted to help. And how now you have too much weight in your wagon to go on.

The man picks up the bag of rocks and tosses them aside. He then picks up

*There is still one more thing you need to do. Sell all you have and give the money to the poor, and you will have riches in heaven; then come and follow me.*

Luke 18:22 GNT

the other two rocks throwing them on either side of the road. All that was left were the three rocks that were in your wagon when you began your journey up the hills. “Now try it” the Man said.

**Wagon Pulling.. Cont. from page 2**

“But what about the other rocks? Who will carry them up the hill?” you ask. “What happens to the other rocks is not your concern” the Man says. “I asked you to carry only these three but you chose to hold onto more rocks than you could possibly carry and still obey me.”

With that the man was no longer standing next to you. So you continue on your journey, whistling and singing praises to God. Joyful and peaceful in your labor.

Jesus once spoke to a local leader who had a lot of possessions about what it would take for him to have eternal life. The man had kept the commandments. He was trying hard to do the right thing. But what Jesus said to the man was an invitation for a life changing experience. Now and forever. *“There is still one more thing you need to do. Sell all you have and give the money to the poor, and you will have riches in heaven; then come and follow me”* (Luke 18:22 GNT).

Give up what you don’t need. Give up that which God doesn’t want for you. Give up what may be your most prized possessions. And trust that God will give you what you need most and your life will be even richer than you may believe it to be now.

May you surrender all that you possess to the One who knows you better than you know yourself. May God bless you with just what you need to be obedient. And may you have a heart for Jesus. He certainly has a heart for you.

Pastor Tommy

**In Our Prayers**

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

**Ladder Climbing... cont. from page 2**

Here’s the thing about the ladder. We don’t have to climb a ladder to get to God because Jesus comes down to us right where we are and wherever we are physically, emotionally, economically, intellectually. We are given the opportunity to “choose the right thing” which is to listen to Jesus. Sounds easy? Yes. Let someone else worry about washing the dishes? No.

The secret is surrender. Just like our need to climb the ladder we also have a more desperate need that causes us to choose the ladder over intimacy with Jesus. We want our own way. Just like when we were toddlers it is hard to surrender our own desires. And we are masters of justifying that our desires are what God wants.

You say “But pastor, didn’t you say that God would give us the desires of our heart? Well I desire \_\_\_\_\_.” We fill in the blank with what we believe to be true about ourselves without really knowing ourselves. At least not as well as Jesus knows us. We assume that we know exactly what we need.

Our thoughts go something like “Lord just let me do what I like doing and I will consider giving You the credit.” Whether it is the spotlight on stage, a promotion, a new car, some other place to live, whether well-meaning and good on its own, it is what we think we want. And I don’t know about you but I am pretty stubborn, so it took me a long time to finally give into letting Jesus show me the desires of my heart. And boy was I surprised!

Surprise is a common expression among Christians who finally surrender completely to Christ. Sometimes what we thought we wanted turns out to be really close to what God had in mind, but we

still feel like our world turned upside down when our eyes are opened. But quite often it turns out we didn’t know what we were missing. Past wounds, trying to please others, stubbornness, and an unlimited number of distractions throw us off course.

And it seems worse for those of us who have invested years and thousands of dollars in learning a vocation that God never intended for us to pursue. Degrees, accolades, awards, opportunities, promotions. All the trappings of a very tall ladder that surely must reach the heavens.

Jesus is the way and frankly the only way that I know to receive my heart’s desires. In my case, I was shocked and so were a lot of people who knew me. But the day I finally surrendered to my Creator, my Savior, my Lord Jesus Christ, I found true joy and happiness. And God just keeps piling on the blessings in unexpected ways.

Are you a Martha who is climbing the ladder to heaven on your own strength? Or have you given up altogether figuring that the ladder is just too tall and you don’t think you can make it? Or do you just think that God doesn’t really care about you? These are all lies that the enemy has told you. Don’t believe them.

Martha’s make life so much better for everyone around them. Martha’s are priceless. But be a Martha who first turns your attention towards Jesus to get your to-do list. Then all that you do can and will be done for God’s glory and your efforts will no longer be a burden but a blessing for you and others.

But, even if you don’t believe the lies there is still the problem of the voices of the market telling you that you can “Have it your way.” This is only true if you are placing the order on your own power. When God gives you what He has in store there is nothing on earth like it and the bill has already been paid.

*Jesus knows you better than you do.*

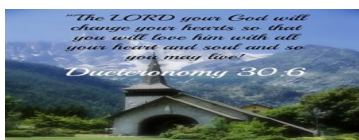
May you surrender your desires to the One

who knows you better than you know yourself. And may you have a heart for Jesus. He certainly has a heart for you.

Pastor Tommy

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

- |                  |              |
|------------------|--------------|
| Sharon George    | Mary Russell |
| Elaine Lamoreaux | Mary Nations |



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



**Asbury Worship Series  
A Heart for Jesus  
Having a Mary Heart in a  
Martha World**

In ancient Israel the people gathered in the tent of meetings for worship. But not everyone gathered. Women in particular were not allowed inside. The closest they could come was to stand outside the door. Have you ever stood outside a door when there was something going on inside? How did you feel? What kept you from going in?

We had an incredible turnout for our Halloween celebration this year. By some estimations 300 to 400 people may have entered the church and made their way to the café. We served just under 200 hot dogs. There was green slime mustard and ketchup along with punch to go with the hotdogs. The line for food was steady.

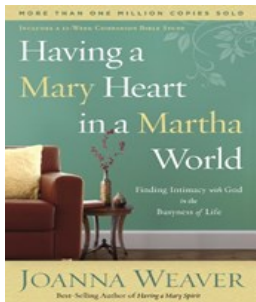


Meanwhile, inside the worship center the music was awesome. God was being honored and gifts were being shared. I know I would have rather spent the entire time listening and worshipping. Surprisingly, at the peak there may have been 100 people at any one time inside the worship center. Most of the time the worship center was less than one quarter full. The vast majority of people chose to stay in the crowded café area for food, getting their picture taken, playing games or just hanging out.

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**Book Club News**

Do you consider yourself a busy person? Are your days generally filled with things to do? Are there some days where you feel like you are falling further behind? These are questions that according to the author of our next book could be proceeded with “You may be a Martha if...” Perhaps you not a Martha-type. Instead of busyness that never ends you take time to “smell the roses” and talk to strangers and manage to be the target of rolling eyes and harsh comments about not doing your share of the chores. Well, “You might be a Mary if...”



On Wednesday, October 31, we begin our next book titled *Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World*. Mary and Martha are named in the Gospels in three places: Luke

10:38–42, John 11:1–44, and John 12:1–11. Scholars suspect that Jesus frequently stayed with the two sisters and their brother Lazarus, but these are the three stories of Jesus visiting them that we find in scripture. One thing is clear in terms of their type-casting, Mary is not Martha and Martha is not Mary. They are two very different people who both want to know and serve Jesus Christ.

This study offers an invitation for everyone of us who feels like we just aren’t godly enough... or loving enough...or that we just aren’t doing enough. Our lives today really are not all that different from that of Mary and Martha in the New Testament. Like Mary, don’t you also long to sit at the Lord’s feet... but the daily demands of a busy world just won’t leave you alone? Like Martha, don’t you love Jesus and really want to serve Him... yet don’t you often struggle with weariness, resentment, and feelings of inadequacy?

Just like the story told by Luke, Jesus comes right into the midst of your busy Mary/Martha life and extends the same

invitation He issued long ago to the two sisters of Bethany. Tenderly He invites you to choose “the better part” of life. A joyful life of “living-room” intimacy with Him. An intimacy that flows naturally into serving Him. Come learn how can you make that choice. In this study we will learn how all of us, Marys and Marthas alike, can draw closer to Jesus Christ, deepening our devotion, strengthening our service, and doing both with less stress and greater joy.

Author Joanna Weaver’ book has sold over a million copies and her books and Bible studies have been used by hundreds of churches, life groups and individuals. Our time with Joanna’s book will be guided using a ten week study guide that she provides along with short video clips from her companion DVD. Joanna is the mother of three children and the wife of a pastor in Montana so she has plenty of experience in the church environment. While this book is written from a woman’s perspective the story and lessons are equally applicable to all gender identities.

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

\* Weaver, Joanna. *Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World: Finding Intimacy with God in the Busyness of Life*. CO: Crown Publishing Group, 2000.

**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

**Asbury Worship Series ..A Heart for Jesus.. continued from page 4**

There were a few activities in the café area to keep children occupied. There was a Photo Booth and a few children's games. But honestly, given the size of the crowd, not everyone got their turn and even then it only occupied a few minutes of their time. People came, hung out for a while and left rather than join in the worship celebration. What kept so many people standing at the door of worship rather than joining in?

As we transition from Fall to the season of Christmas decorations we will spend two weeks preparing for the busyness that usually comes along with the celebrations.

The stores have been busy moving merchandise around and preparing to accept our money in exchange for decorations and those gifts that we know our friends and family just can't live without. The worship planning team is already feeling the busyness as we prepare for our Community Christmas concert coming up November 29th.

We spent the past few months considering what we know to be true about God's plan for our community and for each of us individually. From relationships to hearing God's voice to recovering from and avoiding train wrecks we tackled the question of preparation. God has a plan for our well-being, but FIRST what can we do to hear and know God's voice?

God has a plan for Asbury that includes all of us in one way or another. God has a plan for every person and it is a plan for our own good, and we can become so busy with life that we may miss the better thing. God tells us through the Prophet Jeremiah that we each have a desire within us to know God, but are we able to sit still long enough to do so?

Our book club is reading and discussing a book titled *Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World* written by a pastor's wife by the name of Joanna Weaver. We will use Joanna's advice over the next couple of weeks to take a breath before the busy season gets into full gear to sit at the feet of Jesus and enjoy the better thing.

Whether you join us each Sunday for a practical message that can help you face your challenges.

Pastor Tommy

**Coming up this week**

- Nov 19 Mon** 10-2pm Thanksgiving  
Baskets pickup
- Nov 20 Tues** 10am-2pm Water Distribution
- Nov 21 Wed** 12Noon Pastor Book Club  
6PM Beginners Bible Study
- Nov 22 Thu** **HAPPY THANKSGIVING!**
- Nov 23 Fri** 10am-2pm Asbury Cafe Open
- Nov 24 Sat**
- Nov 25 SUNDAY**  
9:30am Café Opens  
10:30am New Beginnings  
Contemporary Worship

**Last Week for Worship  
Attendance 27 Offering \$ 534**

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

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

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**Our Asbury church directory has been printed. If you would like one, please leave me a note in my mailbox or leave me a message and I will make sure you get one.**

**Connie**

**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.

SAVE THESE DATES!



"A COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION"

SPECIAL GUEST ARTIST: RICHARD KERRY THOMPSON

FEATURING:

- \* FENTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
- \* THE FLINT JUBILEE CHORALE
- \* THE FLINT COMMUNITY GOSPEL CHOIR
- \* THE ASBURY PRAISE BAND

TIME:

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 29<sup>TH</sup> - 7:00PM-8:30PM  
ASBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
1653 DAVISON RD FLINT (810) 235-0016

**(A Free Will offering will be collected)**

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**EAST WINDS DISTRICT FIRST ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BRUNCH!**



*Dear East Winds District Clergy, Laity and Friends,*  
Rev. John Hice and the District Leadership Team invite you to this year's

District Christmas Party

***Saturday, December 1, 2018*** from 10:00AM - 12:30PM at

**GOODRICH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

8071 S. State Road; Goodrich (810) 636-3558

Please join us for our morning's festivities:

10-10:30AM  
10:30-11:15AM  
11:30-12:30PM

Check In, Coffee and Fellowship  
Brunch Is Served!  
Gather in Sanctuary for our Program,  
singing Christmas Carols and sharing  
the Blessings of the Season

Put the date on your calendar and join us for a morning of fun and celebration. Call to make your reservation with Michele Weston at (810) 624-1184 or email her at [mweston38@att.net](mailto:mweston38@att.net). PLEASE **RSVP** with your name, phone number, Church name and head count today!! Reservations must be in by **Monday, November 26, 2018** for an accurate headcount for our meal.

**(A Love Offering will be taken for the meal with proceeds to be donated to UMCOR.)**

## Asbury Farm to Table



While turning blight into beautiful and productive landscape is good on its own, transforming a food desert into abundance is life giving. But Asbury wants to make sure that produce is available on the tables of our residents. Our culinary arts and nutritional education programs offer residents the know how just as our farms offers nature's bounty. In addition, the Asbury Café is a culinary experience accessible to our neighbors and anyone with an appetite. Our "pay what you can" approach means that no one is turned away. Those who can help either on the farm or in the café are offered special MyFlintStones tokens that can be used either in the Asbury Café or in exchange for produce to prepare at home.

We proudly accept MyFlintStones

The Asbury Café is open Fridays 10am to 2pm & Sundays 10 am to 12 Noon

### ASBURY CAFÉ MENU

Open Fridays 10am to 2pm

*Pay what you can*

#### DELI SUBS

Lettuce, onions, tomato plus choice of ham, turkey or beef

#### STIR FRY

Local grown garden vegetables sautéed with love and herbs

#### GARDEN SALAD

Local grown greens & vegetables. Ham, turkey or beef upon request

#### WRAPS

Lettuce, onions, tomato plus choice of ham, turkey or beef

#### MUFFINS

Chef Kevin's special recipe with fruit, love and other delights baked in.

#### SMOOTHIE

Assorted flavors of the day

#### COFFEE

Regular or decaf





# 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.

## POETRY

## "Holding on to What Might Have Been"

I took a step outside myself to walk in shoes facing me, and watch the man I once knew to see if I could tell where he was headed.

Surprised I wish I could say I felt divine insight would show different I hoped; for I saw a man crippled with life weighed down by what might have been.

It takes time to walk forward when you carry too much stuff; the clutter drops even as you try to pick up what has already fallen.

I could not stand too far away for the bonds of subjectivity held tight, but I strained against the pressure to watch which path was taken.

My heart began to open, speaking to my mind and thoughts, whispering so as not to be heard, lest the man I watched over hear.

"He is feeling lonely I say," my heart said with a sigh, "he misses being held by another," it told me without pause

"But the stuff he carries," I began to ask; "Why carry so much at once?" "Why not just let it go?"

The man strained to step while holding tight to his burden this strain of life in his grimace showed like a closed sign at night.

My trip was a short one it hurts to be apart from one's self for what is means to be whole weighed heavy on my heart.

The burdens I drag along with me are not all mine to carry but it's hard to sort your load while running towards the horizon

But should I pause too long and sort through my burdens, would I find something lost more precious than all my load?

So often what you search for is not that far away, but it's hard to see the obvious while straining not to drop what might have been.

By Tommy McDoniel