

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Ordinary

When I was a teenager I wanted to play in the NBA some day. I played basketball so much that I really don't remember a whole lot of other things that I did back then. When I talk about this time in my life I usually fail to mention that before basketball it was football that captured my fantasy. But when I didn't make the 7th grade football team but did make the basketball team, my focus changed. My dreams were about standing out. I seemed to have a fear of what life would be like if I was only ordinary.



Ordinary. Doesn't stand out. No distinctive features. For me these words described someone who couldn't hit 90% from the free-throw line. They described someone who didn't have an awesome jump shot. Someone who couldn't play above the rim. Who wants that?

Speechless

Our message last week was about God using ordinary people like us to do extraordinary things. And one thing that all of us ordinary have in common even with the extraordinary people is that we communicate. Most of us can speak audibly. A lot of us can write. Some

of us can sign. We can all make joyful noises even if they are silent to the human ear. We ordinary people are not speechless.



Overtime I have grown rather fond of ordinary. There is something comfortable about a familiar pair of jeans, a black t-shirt and the same shoes I've worn for months. I like the fit. I don't have to worry about matching colors or stripes with plaid. It's comfortable. It's ordinary.

After all, people who stand out are the first ones to receive criticism when someone either disagrees with them or is jealous that they aren't getting the attention.

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While there are some who do not have an ability to speak audibly we all have an innate ability to communicate. Our very survival depends on communication. Even without audible words the exchange of energy that place between each of us and the rest of creation speaks

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Volume 19 Issue 17
February 17, 2019

Special points of interest:

>>> **Leadership Team will meet on Monday, February 18th at 6pm.**

>>> **Breakthrough Concert with Pastor Nick Hill has been rescheduled for Friday, February 22nd at 7:00pm. Call the church office to reserve your tickets, (235-0016). See enclosed flyer.**

>>> **Church Women United of Greater Flint will meet on Friday, March 1st from 10am-12:30pm in the Asbury Sanctuary. Annual day of prayer.**

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Speechless ...cont. from Page 1

volumes. Yet we are too often speechless when we ought to speak up and talking when there is nothing that need be said. This is part of the human condition but like all matters of this world, God is not speechless when it comes to helping the world to know about Him.

God, speaking through the prophet Isaiah tells us that His words are never lost and never impotent. *“So also will be the word that I speak — it will not fail to do what I plan for it; it will do everything I send it to do” (Isaiah 55:11 GNT)*. When God speaks the words we hear can render us speechless as our brains tries to digest the magnitude of our experience, but soon our speech returns. And we are called on to speak in turn. But what do we say?

How can we articulate a sentence that could capture even a moment of insight that God has spoken to us? Surely, our words, unlike the word of

Ordinary... cont. from page 1

Who needs that? Us ordinary folks are not the targets when it comes to rock throwing. We’re just as happy to see someone else take the heat.

There’s a story found in the Gospel of Luke about a time when Jesus was talking to some folks on the beach and he noticed some guys who had just come in from fishing. I’m thinking that they were ordinary because when Jesus stepped into one of the boats that belonged to a man named Simon and asked him to push off from shore so Jesus could keep speaking

God will fall short. Who are we any way that we can say anything of significance about God? Won’t others simply dismiss us as too ordinary?

The honest answer is that some, maybe even most, of the persons that you tell will doubt what you have to say. In the Gospel of Luke, we read a story about Jesus, after His baptism and after overcoming the enemy’s tempting Him in the wilderness, paid a visit to His hometown. While He was there, Jesus participated in worship and was given the Scroll of Isaiah to read from. Jesus read a prophetic text from the scroll about God empowering a person with the Holy Spirit who will set the prisoners free ushering in the Year of Jubilee — the Year of the Lord.

It’s likely that everyone present had heard that scripture before. But Jesus added His own prophetic statement about God’s Word spoken to Him. Jesus told the gathered commu-

to the crowd, Simon did it. Simon didn’t do any speaking. He just did what he was asked. He let Jesus do the standing out.



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nity that this prophecy from Isaiah was filled in His reading the text that day. Jesus was the One. God is speaking through Him and all gathered were therefore hearing first hand the Word of God.

By the time Jesus was finished speaking that day an angry mob was ready to throw Him off the cliff. I’m guessing that none of us want to have our words heard in such a way that the crowd wants to throw us off the cliff. I have felt this sort of anger toward me because of things I have said and done more than once. It’s a very uncomfortable feeling and I prefer not to make this a habit.

My father had a favorite saying for my oldest brother and I. We were the “talkers” of the family. Put the two of us in a room and the sun may be coming up before we run out of words for each other. I would like to think that the reason it takes us so long to wind down is that we also listen to each other. A lot of words get exchanged. We explore most of the dictionary through our stories.

But my father knew that our words reveal a lot about the person speaking them. And sometimes what our words reveal is not so flattering. My dad would say to us, “Sometimes it is better not to say anything and let people think you are a fool then to open your mouth and verify it.” Dad’s advice would leave us speechless. At least for a moment.

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Ordinary..cont. from page 2

When Jesus is finished speaking to the crowd on the beach he tells Simon to take the boat out into deeper water and for Simon and his fishing buddies, James and John, to put out their nets. Now the boys had fished all night without anything to show for it but despite a little grumbling they did what Jesus told them to do. And it worked.

Their nets were so full of fish they called for backup. It took their boat and crew along with the other boat that they had fished with to haul in the load of fish. So many fish that their nets strained and nearly ripped from the weight.

Simon was so overwhelmed that he fell to his knees in front of Jesus. "Go away from me. I am a sinful man" Simon blurts out. Simon is one of those guys who says what others are thinking. This fishing trip was the sort of miracle that had Holy Man written all over it and Simon was not in the same league with anyone that had that much pull with God. After all, God only does this sort of miracle for people who stand out from the crowd. Simon was ordinary and not necessarily the better version of ordinary.

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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 | |

FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE

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

Speechless...cont. from page 2

My dad had personal experience with words. As a forward observer in WWII he once was faced with a decision where his words would have resulted in a school being destroyed. He decided to remain speechless and suffer the consequences. His gamble worked that time. But my dad did speak up at Town Hall and church meetings, and more than once there were at least a few angry people who thought my dad to be a fool. Frankly, I'm proud of my dad. But his warning wasn't lost on me. Sometimes I am speechless too.

Then the Lord reached out, touched my lips, and said to me, "Listen, I am giving you the words you must speak".
Jeremiah 1:9 GNT

Knowing when to speak and when to remain speechless is quite an art unless we put all of our trust in the One who will speak through us. I believe that my dad knew when to remain speechless because deep in his spirit he knew what had to be done. Likewise, the Holy Spirit will resonate with our own spirit and guide our speech. But we

need to trust. We need to have the courage of a soldier whose life and the lives of many others are on the line. Words matter.

In another message we will focus our attention on doing. Speaking through our actions. But this week we take some time to consider moving from speechless to words given to us by the Spirit of God. Words that will not return empty. Words given to and spoken by ordinary people like you and me that have the power to heal. The power to save lives.

We need to have the courage of a soldier whose life and the lives of many others are on the line.

As we continue our worship series, Love does, I pray that you will join us each Sunday morning at 10:30 am for worship. Even better, plan to arrive by 9:30 am and join us in the Café where we will discuss the scripture that underlies the message in more depth. Invite a friend. Invite a stranger. Your words could be life-saving for them.

Pastor Tommy

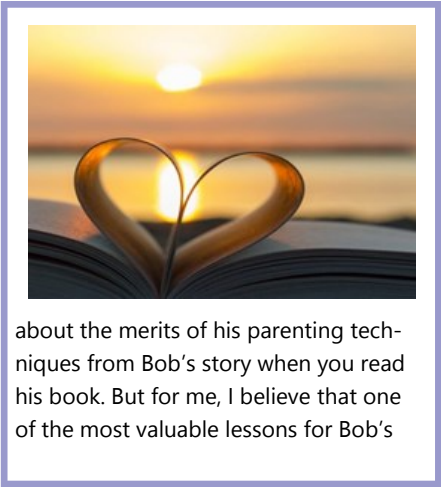


Prayer is at the heart of our beliefs

Asbury Worship Series
Love does
Living a Breakthrough Life

Bob Goff established a tradition with his children that merits examination. On their 10th birthday the child chooses an adventure go to on. And they just go. No advanced planning. No preparation. As the Nike slogan mandates. Just do it! *

You can draw your own conclusions



about the merits of his parenting techniques from Bob's story when you read his book. But for me, I believe that one of the most valuable lessons for Bob's

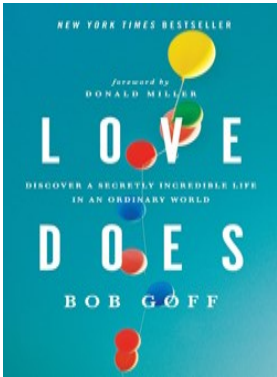
children was to have a taste of what it is like to follow Jesus. It is the adventure of a lifetime. And while I'm convinced that God knows the plan, we who follow Jesus seldom know much more than what is happening right now and perhaps a next step. Our adventure unfolds without us knowing anymore than that God has promised a life lived with Him that lasts forever.

Let's face it. People too often say

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Book Club News

Our next book for discussion at our weekly Book Club is *Love Does* by Bob Goff. This book is an easy read and a great joy that is hard to put down. Bob's view of life comes through the pages and his literary skills allow his readers to feel a part of the action. And a part of the life lessons.



See Pastor Tommy, contact the office, or just show up for Book Club to receive a copy. A donation of \$10 is encouraged for each book and we appreciate any help with purchasing books for those unable to pay for

one. Please refrain from taking a copy if you don't intend to read and discuss the book with us. Copies are readily available through Amazon and other sellers.

Bob writes that he keeps his office on Tom Sawyer Island at Disney World. Sporting a season pass he spends time in a place where many people who visit Disney World don't bother. One travel guide listed Tom Sawyer Island as an oasis within the madness of long lines, crowds and the hot sun. But our writer uses this getaway as a metaphor for missing out.

Tom Sawyer Island is no amusement ride. You bring your imagination to the attraction. And apparently it is one of those attractions that most visitors to Disney World leave on their "if I get around to it" list and they are fresh out of "round tuits" and pass — and miss out on an adventure. "Tom Sawyer Island is like most people's lives, I think: they never get around to crossing over to it" writes Bob Goff.

In his assessment of "people" the writer brings the words and stories of Jesus into his analysis as well as his own journey that began with a couple of believers who seemed to live out their faith to a relatively unimpressive high school student. While Jesus told parables and stories to illustrate truth Jesus also spoke plainly about a lot of very important topics. For one, Jesus made

it clear to the people around Him that it isn't enough to just look like you love God. Instead, Jesus pointed out that the way to tell how much we love God is by how well we love people.

Let's face it. People can be hard to love at times. But if we truly believe that God created us and wants what is best for us, this makes God rather easy to love. And I suspect a lot of people — most people stop there. They love God but not so much God's people. And let's face it, church people can be hard to love. But this isn't the point.

Perhaps this is one of the challenges for those who don't believe that God lived among people as Jesus Christ. They may even like Jesus but they don't care much for what Jesus told them they needed to do. In one of the stories Jesus tells a young man with a lot of belongings that he needed to get rid of his stuff. It must have been getting in the way of the young man loving others. He went away sad we read. Most of us go away sad at the thought of giving something up.

Bob takes the Gospel seriously by living whimsically. A contradiction? Not really. We can never quite know what God is up to so even our best laid plans may get interrupted by a God request. Are we willing to drop everything, or sell everything, or just change our mind about what we plan to do tomorrow? This is how love does.

Since God is insistent that we love one another, this state of feelings toward another person we call "love" must move from a noun to a verb. We do because we love. We go because we love. We respond because we love. This all looks quite whimsical to the world outside the Kingdom of God. But this is how love does.

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 Staff

- Rev. Dr. Tommy McDoniel Pastor
- Mark Vorenkamp Children & Youth
- Sylvia Pittman Worship Arts

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 Worship Series- Living a breakthrough life.. Cont. from page 4

Book Club News.. Cont from page 4

and do another. People say one thing and mean another. We have all put our faith in another person only to be disappointed. It's easy to grow callous and indifferent. It is admirable that Bob kept his promise to his children. It is even more important that his children learn that he may sometimes fail them but God never will. Bob loves his children. God loves Bob's children, and Bob, even more.

But love without an accompanying action is first of all a noun. It gives a label to something without sufficient detail to know much about the thing it names. It leaves a rather empty feeling as though something important is missing. Love requires action to be full. Love as a verb is life-giving and life-saving when animated with God's Holy Spirit. Love does rather than sit back or hold back. While love honor's the Sabbath love does not hide behind rest to avoid hard work. Love is a light shining in the darkness that finds a way forward even where brokenness casts shadows. *Love does.*

We can read in the Gospel how Jesus chose His first followers and the

invitation that they received. "Come and see" is the prevailing message. Rather than offer His followers a detailed itinerary of their adventure Jesus knew that words without action are just words. Followers need to do and not just hear. If this sounds a bit whimsical then you get the point. Come and see.

My children, our love should not be just words and talk; it must be true love, which shows itself in action.
1 John 3:18

God established early on that Words spoken by our Creator never return empty. We read that God spoke through the Prophet Isaiah the following: *So also will be the word that I speak — it will not fail to do what I plan for it; it will do everything I send it to do* (Isaiah 55:11 GNT). And Jesus Christ is God's Word that was sent that we might know the nature of God more completely. But this requires trusting that our plans are only as good as our willingness to trust God with the outcomes.

The leadership of Asbury believes that 2019 will be a breakthrough year for Asbury. We believe that God has taken us on a wild adventure that has seen God's love in action. While there has been heartbreak and disappointment, aren't these a part of what makes an adventure an adventure?

The outcomes are still not certain. God alone carries the weight of foresight. But this we have learned. *Living a breakthrough life* requires the courage to take the next step, trusting that Jesus is who He says He is and will do everything He said he will do. Jesus Christ is, because God loves the world and wants to save us. God is love. And *love does.*

Join us each Sunday for our new series, *Love does*, and learn about *living a breakthrough life*. Invite your friends, family and everyone that you meet. They will thank you.

Pastor Tommy

* Goff, Bob. *Love Does: Discover a Secretly Incredible Life in an Ordinary World*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2012.

Author Donald Miller, writes this about his friend and colleague, "Bob Goff loves people with a force that is natural, and by natural I mean like nature, like a waterfall or wind or waves on the ocean. He loves effortlessly, as though love packs annually in snow on a mountain, melting and rushing through him in an infinite loop. There's no explanation for a man who can love this well save God. I think Bob Goff knows God, and I think God's love flows through him."

The review on Amazon writes that "When Love Does life gets interesting. Each day turns into a hilarious, whimsical, meaningful chance that makes faith simple and real. Each chapter is a story that forms a book, a life. And this is one life you don't want to miss. Light and fun, unique and profound, the lessons drawn from Bob's life and attitude just might inspire you to be secretly incredible, too."

Jason Russell, Co-founder of Invisible Children writes "If all people loved the way Bob Goff loves all people, the world would change overnight. In this book, he reminds us of the truest virtue the kingdom calls us to practice: Love Does. It's active. The Jesus we serve is surprising and subversive. Bob knows this because he himself is both paradoxically wise as a wizard and as joy-filled as a toddler."

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

* Goff, Bob. *Love Does: Discover a Secretly Incredible Life in an Ordinary World*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2012.

- Coming up this week -

- Feb 18 Mon** 6:00pm Leadership Team
- Feb 19 Tues** 10am-2pm Water Distribution
- Feb 20 Wed** 12Noon Pastor Book Club
6pm Beginners Bible Study
- Feb 21 Thur** 6pm Worship Band Practice
- Feb 22 Fri** 10am-2pm Asbury Cafe Open
6pm Asbury Youth Group
7pm Pastor Nick Hill Concert
- Feb 24 SUNDAY**
9:30am Café Opens
10:30am New Beginnings
Contemporary Worship

**Last Week for Worship:
Attendance 31 Offering \$ 642**

A-Muse Me Entertainment & Asbury Empowerment Arts Center

Presents:

Performing Artist Pastor Nick Hill



"BREAKTHROUGH"

Album Release Party / \$5 cover Fee at the door
Or visit flintasbury.org also on Facebook
Friday, February 22nd @7:00pm

Asbury United Methodist Church
1653 Davison Rd, Flint MI 48506
(810) 235-0016

With Special Guests:
The Flint Jubilee Chorale & The Flint Community Gospel Choir
Directed by Sylvia Pittman

GARDENING TIPS

2ND ANNUAL

NUTRITION, WELLNESS AND HEALTH EXPO

MEDICAL

INSURANCE

FOOD

ASK A DIETICIAN

GAMES

PRIZES

MINDFULNESS

HERE'S TO YOUR HEALTH

SATURDAY MARCH 16TH, 2019

10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

ASBURY U.M.C.

1653 DAVISON RD.

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 MyFlint-Stones 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



Phone: 810-235-0016
Fax: 810-235-0016 (call first when faxing)
E-mail: FlintAsburyUMC@gmail.com
CircuitRider@FlintAsbury.org

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Neighborhood Connection



We envision a community in love with God, each other, and our neighbors evidenced by the transformation of ourselves and our neighborhood. We are a center for worship & spiritual growth, a center for connections and a center for health & wellness.

Our goal is a revitalized community where every resident can use their talents and passions for the common good, where children grow into citizens who contribute to building and maintaining a vibrant neighborhood, and all residents are able to enjoy safety, good health, a culture that fosters life long learning and satisfying lives.

We believe that such an ambitious goal can never be attained without God's grace and abundance and Christ calls each of us to be disciples willing to share our witness through words and acts.

Ordinary... cont. from page 3

This story ends in a way that ought to get our attention. Jesus asks this ordinary fishing crew to follow Him. They pulled their boats back up on the shore, left their nets and followed Jesus. Perhaps I was wrong about these men. Do ordinary people just drop their stuff and leave like that?

The word ordinary is misleading when it comes to describing people. None of us are really ordinary. Each one of us has a blemish here and there. A spot here and there. Most of us, and I really believe all of us, have said and

They pulled the boats up on the beach, left everything, and followed Jesus.

Luke 5:11 GNT

done things that we are not very proud of and perhaps even in the same day said or did something amazing. Something extraordinary.

Scripture doesn't tell us what they did with all of the fish. Did one of them stick five of them in their pocket for later? Did they give the fish to the crowds that Jesus had been talking to?

Perhaps the other fisher guys took all of the fish to market and promised to save their share for them.

These details don't seem to matter so much as that Jesus sees these ordinary guys who may have been lousy at fishing, based on the evidence at the time, led them out into deeper water where Jesus filled their nets with more abundance than they could handle by themselves. These ordinary, questionable fishers, became part of Jesus' first team that Jesus was putting together to carry on the mission of building His church after He got them started and partially trained.

These ordinary guys made it to the Jesus movement version of the NBA without so much as a tryout. No signing bonus. No contract. Just a covenant to be explained later after the adventure of a lifetime. These ordinary men would someday be thought of as extraordinary. Not because of who they were or what they did, but because of what Jesus did with them and through them.

Being ordinary doesn't mean that we are not seen by Jesus. Even while Jesus

is dealing with the crowd He notices us, and He notices when we're having a bad day. And He is willing to turn our frown upside down but we need to be willing to wait for Him and listen as he teaches the crowd. And then we need to be willing to go with Him out into the deep water.

You will no longer be ordinary, but then you never really were ordinary.

But plan on needing help and calling your buddies standing on the shore to come and help haul in the load. Be prepared to fall on your knees as you realize who is in the boat with You that all of Creation listens to. And be ready to drop everything you're holding onto and follow Him.

You will no longer be ordinary, but then you never really were ordinary. God sees you standing there and He knows what kind of day you're having. Come join us on Sundays for our new worship series, *Love does*, that begins with this week's message that we simply call *Ordinary*.

Pastor Tommy