

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Hungry

The Beatitudes found in Matthew and Luke illustrates in plain talk the paradox of God's plan for humanity and as compared to the outcome when we do it our way. In Luke's version we learn that the Kingdom of God belongs to the poor. Why? Because the poor, the hungry and those who are in tears will experience God's power in ways that the well-off, the comfortable and the privileged cannot. If I already have everything materially that I need; if I am already too full to take another bite; or if I am already celebrating, I am likely to miss out on what it is like to experience a *breakthrough*.

We all know that it's better not to shop for food when you are hungry. But



it's worse. According to a Forbes article on this topic researchers have found that any shopping that we do when we are hungry will result in our spending more money. Hunger increases our desire to buy more stuff – even things that we can't eat. One study found that when people were offered free binder clips, those who were hungry took home 70% more binder clips. Apparently, when we are hungry we want to take anything that isn't

should we expect another. Instead of a physical transfiguration of Jesus' body being the evidence of Jesus' divinity we read a summary of actions. Jesus responds to John's question with "*the blind can see, the lame can walk, those who suffer from dreaded skin diseases are made clean, the deaf can hear, the dead are raised to life, and the Good News is preached to the poor*" (Luke 7:22).

nailed down. Hungry people will load up their plate at a buffet with way more food than they should eat at one sitting and are often oblivious to how many others are in line to eat.

But I prefer to go shopping for groceries when I am hungry. I've noticed that when I'm not hungry, even worse if Cyndi and I go to the grocery store right after we eat a big meal, it is all I can do to motivate myself enough to put something in our cart. I'm in a hurry to get only what we came for and get out. On the other hand, if we go to the grocery store when I haven't eaten in a few hours

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There is a joke about a man who was arrested for being a Christian. On the day of his trial the Judge dismissed all charges when the Prosecutor couldn't show a shred of evidence. "Are you the One?" John the Baptizer asked Jesus. The evidence speaks for itself. Jesus is the One that scripture told us would come. The evidence is clear. How about the evidence that your claim to be a Christ follower?

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Volume 19 Issue 3

March 3, 2019

Special points of interest:

>>> **United Methodist Women will meet on Thursday, March 7th at 1:00pm in the Wesley Room. All are invited to attend.**

>>> **2nd Annual Nutrition/Wellness Health Expo to be held on Saturday, March 16th from 10am-2pm in the Asbury Fellowship Hall. (see enclosed flyer for more info)**

>>> **Ash Wednesday Service. Please join us Wednesday at 6:00pm for Ash Wednesday Service.**

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R U the One?

Our text for this Sunday's message is from Luke chapter 7. In this story, John the Baptizer is asking whether Jesus is the One or



R U the One? ...cont. from Page 1

Does the evidence prove without doubt that you follow the One you say that you follow?

It's confusing at times. We know that we are saved by our belief that Jesus Christ is Lord. We pray the sinner's prayer that Jesus will come into our life. We surrender our past mistakes, our faults, our misgivings to the One who died for the sin of the world. And we are saved. We are clean again. We are Christ followers. But now what?

Christ followers do what Christ did. Perhaps not everything Christ did. But at least some of the things He did. We are each gifted differently. Some of us are healers and we have seen miraculous healing take place after prayer. Perhaps we have helped a person come back from a path that would lead to certain death. Perhaps we have preached the good news to those who have not heard about Jesus Christ. Most of all, we love as Christ loved. Or at least we try to.

Hungry... cont. from page 1

my imagination goes wild and our cart fills up. I'm looking closely at every aisle just knowing that I might miss something that we will need for our next meal.

I thought about this quirk mine as I read Jesus' words in Luke chapter 6 during what we sometimes call Jesus' sermon on the plain. Jesus said that day, "Happy are you poor; the Kingdom of God is yours! Happy are you who are hungry now; you will be filled! Happy are you who weep now; you will laugh!" (Luke 6:20-21).

Happy are you who are hungry now; you will be filled!

Luke 6:21 GNT

God sees through insincere prayer for God knows our heart. I wonder how many feel pressured into saying the sinner's prayer and it's like they have their fingers crossed behind their back. Perhaps, in the moment we believe that we are sincere. Perhaps we know that we have a long ways to go but our hope is that Christ will sort of meet us half way. And He does. But do we meet Christ even part way? Or do we conclude now that we are members of the club we can continue living our life as we did before, but guilt free?

When they came to Jesus, they said, "John the Baptist sent us to ask if you are the one he said was going to come, or should we expect someone else?"

Luke 7:20 GNT

In 1 John we find what it means to know God. We read that *Whoever loves is a child of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love* (1 John 4:7b-8). Easy enough. Right? And when we love it shows. We do what love

does. Or at least we try. And sometimes we fail.

Left to our own power we fail to be that which Christ calls us to be. Turn control over to the Holy Spirit and the miraculous happens through us or even despite us. Try to control the details and we get results that don't look much like a miracle. We get that which we can do on our own, which may be good but falls short of that which we could never do on our own.

Fortunately, our place in the Kingdom of God does not depend on our report card. But our place does depend on our willingness to surrender all that we are holding onto to God. And when we do so we cannot help but love God by loving others. We are guilty of being a Christian and our conviction is certain. There will be a line of witnesses eager to tell all of the ways that our love can be visibly seen.

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It is like when we are hungry we are more motivated to experience God's Kingdom. But if we are full we just pay lip service to the experience.

I don't think that Jesus glorified the idea of being poor. I don't believe that being anxious about keeping your heat and water turned on and keeping shelter is the life that Jesus has in mind for us. In fact, Jesus elsewhere tells us not to be anxious about anything. This is what happens when we are full of the Holy Spirit. But unless we are first hungry for God we walk away satisfied with ourselves and our place in the world.

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Hungry...cont. from page 2

Here is the paradox facing us. We like to be in control. God has gifted each of us in special ways but these gifts are intended for us to build a community together that realizes the source of all that we have and thus worships the One who provides for us. Instead, we seem determined to use our gifts to satisfy ourselves. We get in the buffet line ahead of our neighbors to satisfy our hungry. We overfill our plate with food that, in the end, will not satisfy us.

Jesus in His debate with the enemy reminds us that the bread, anything that is not of God, will not satisfy our hunger. Jesus was physically hungry that day after not eating for forty days but the enemy wasn't just offering food to satisfy Jesus' hunger. The enemy was offering control so that Jesus could satisfy His own hunger. Most of us would take the bread.

The metaphor of hunger and food can be confusing, particularly when we are hungry. So imagine a mother and a son sitting at their table. There is only one item of food for a meal. The mother hasn't eaten in days but she knows that her son must eat to stay healthy. She feeds her son and goes without.

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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 |

R U the One?...cont. from page 2

Are you guilty of following the One who loved you so much that He gave Himself so that You can live? Is the evidence clear? For most of us, the case is not so clear. There may be a few witnesses, mostly our closest friends. But there are plenty of witnesses who cast doubt on our sincerity.

In this same letter of 1 John we are reminded that if we are honest with each other we do fall short. And we know it. But we don't give in to the temptation to give up. We pray the sinner's prayer over and over again, and each time our sincerity is a bit more real. A bit more authentic. And we readily confess. We are who we say we are. We are children of God, Christ followers, lovers of all creation. And when our spirit surrenders to the power of God's Holy Spirit, the evidence is clear.

This message brings our worship series, *Love does*, to a close. The Season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. We will meet for worship and celebration on March 6 at 6 PM. Our new series is titled *Multiply*.

Fortunately, our place in the Kingdom of God does not depend on our report card. But our place does depend on our willingness to surrender all that we are holding onto to God.

You won't need to brush up on your math but keep your Bible near by. Christ followers spread the love that Christ offers to all persons. And when we do so, others join us, like a movement that gathers momentum week by week until the numbers seem to multiply. Come join our movement and we will follow Christ together.

Pastor Tommy



REMEMBER TO CHANGE YOUR CLOCKS FORWARD ONE HOUR BEFORE GOING TO BED ON MARCH 9TH ...



ITS SPRING FORWARD!!



Prayer is at the heart of our beliefs

**Asbury Worship Series
Multiply
Be Fruitful and Multiply**

We move from our February worship series, Love does, into the Season of Lent. A time when we prepare for our Easter celebration. The Season of Lent is generally a time of reflection. Winter will soon come to an end. The Asbury Farm team is busy germinating

transplants in anticipation of longer and warmer days. The Spring flowers will soon emerge from overwintering as bulbs. We associate the Season of Spring with new birth when creation seems to *Multiply*.

Jesus was a *Multiplier*. He multiplied in his "doing". Jesus equipped His followers to do the same. And then Jesus sent them out to tell others and to multiply the Kingdom

of God. Jesus often used metaphors in His teaching that are found in the multiplication of creation.

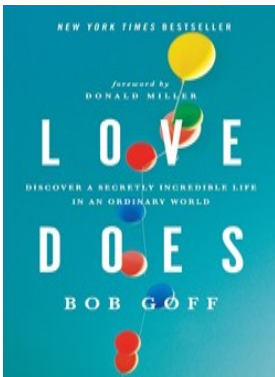
I am the vine, and you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will bear much fruit.

John 15:5 GNT

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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 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– Be Fruitful and Multiply ... Cont. from page 4

In John chapter 15, Jesus says "I am the vine, and you are the branches. Those who remain in Me, and I in them, will bear much fruit" (John 15:5). Within each seed exists an entire field. An entire orchard. Jesus teaches us to think of multiplying Himself through us into others.

This Seasons of Lent we will prepare for our Easter celebration by reading and studying a few of Jesus' teachings on farming. Our theme scripture begins with Jesus as the vine and each of us branches. We will work along with the Asbury Farm team in sowing seeds that will produce the nutrition that we need to live. And perhaps we will find that we are all farmers who follow Christ. For each of us is an orchard that produces fruit which results in still more fruit.

Join us each Sunday. Easter is right around the corner and our Empowerment Arts team is working on a special presentation for Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday. More to come. Let's Multiply the Kingdom together. Let's sow seeds of love together. And we will become a movement that continues to multiply and to flourish.

Pastor Tommy

Book Club News.. Cont from page 4

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 -

Mar 4 Mon

Mar 5 Tues 10am-2pm Water Distribution

Mar 6 Wed 12Noon Pastor Book Club
6pm Beginners Bible Study
6pm Ash Wednesday Service

Mar 7 Thur 1:00pm United Methodist Women
6pm Worship Band Practice

Mar 8 Fri 10am-2pm Asbury Cafe Open
6pm Asbury Youth Group

Mar 10 SUNDAY

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

Last Week for Worship:

Attendance 36 Offering \$ 673

GARDENING TIPS

MEDICAL

INSURANCE

2ND ANNUAL

NUTRITION, WELLNESS AND HEALTH EXPO

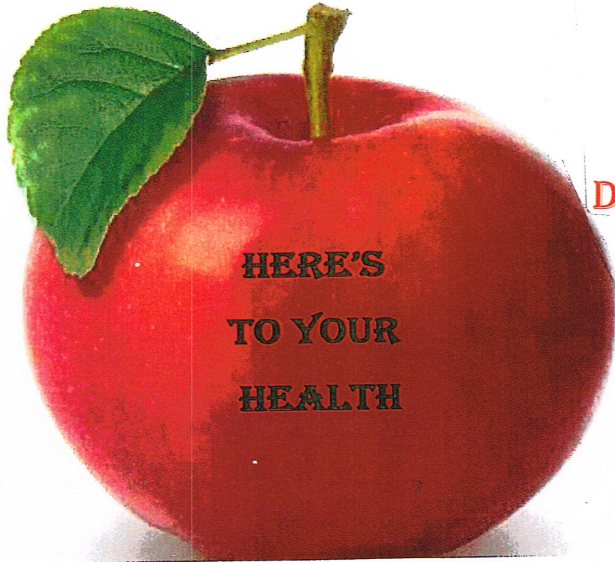
FOOD

ASK

A

DIETICIAN

GAMES



**HERE'S
TO YOUR
HEALTH**

PRIZES

MINDFULNESS

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

Life Group Questions & Notes

When they came to Jesus, they said, "John the Baptist sent us to ask if you are the one he said was going to come, or should we expect someone else?"

Luke 7:20 GNT

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS

1. Read the story about the messengers sent by John the Baptizer to ask Jesus if He is the One or will there be another in Luke 7:18-23. Jesus responds with the evidence that He is the One. Imagine someone asked you if you are a Christ follower. Does the evidence support that you are?
2. In 1 John chapter 4, the writer equates God with love and Christ followers with persons who love others. Out of our love for others comes the evidence of what we claim to be. What are some ways that you can show your love to others?
3. How can the members of your group help you this week and on-going to help you remove obstacles that stand in the way of your witness?

Welcome to the Asbury Community

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Flint, MI 48506



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

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



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.

Hungry... cont. from page 3

The mother is in control of who eats. But her love for her son is stronger than her hunger. The child eats and the mother is satisfied. Not because she is no longer hungry but satisfied because she has eaten spiritually. The Kingdom of God is like this.

Jesus does not intend for mothers to go hungry so sons can eat. So here is where we come in. The mother in this illustration is imaginary. Yet there are mother's everywhere that are facing this sort of challenge. What is not the Kingdom of God is that in another home there is a buffet with people overfilling their plates taking too much for their own well-being. While a mother starves. In the Kingdom of God we are all just poor enough, just hungry enough, just sad enough that we never lose sight of the love that God has shown us and we offer this love to others in our community.

In the Kingdom of God, when our neighbor is lacking we are also lacking. In the Kingdom of God when our neighbor's child is hungry, we are also hungry. In the Kingdom of God, we don't look for ways to build bigger walls to keep others out. We look for way to build bridges so that God's Kingdom is available to all of God's creation.

We do not own that which God has given to us. We do not own our houses and cars, our cell phones nor our bank accounts. Nor do we own our gifts. All that we have is a gift from a God who loves us enough to die for us. A God who will go hungry so that we can eat.

In the Kingdom of God we are all just poor enough, just hungry enough, just sad enough that we never lose sight of the love that God has shown us and we offer this love to others in our community.

There is nothing else that this world offers, nothing else that we can create by our own power, nothing else that can satisfy our hunger except the One who gives us the gift of life and all that comes with it. But God has a better plan than each of us filling just our own plate. We who are just poor enough, hungry enough and sad enough to know Jesus Christ, are given all that we are given, including this gift of insight that Jesus Christ is God, with a hungry world.

The enemy said to Jesus, "If you are God's son, order this stone to turn into bread." But Jesus would know that His hungry can only be satisfied by that which God offers. Jesus answered,

The scripture says, 'Human beings cannot live on bread alone' (Luke 4:3-4). And we can't. We can never be satisfied with less than the Kingdom of God living in us.

This is the third week of our worship series *Love does*. We began with the realizing that God does extraordinary things through ordinary people like us. In our message last week, titled *Speechless*, we explored how God gives us the words that we are to share through our experiences. Through our testimony. And that rebuilding our neighborhood begins with worship. This week we consider what it is like to make a *breakthrough* and realize that unless we recognize that we are poor, *hungry* and sad without Jesus Christ, without living in the Kingdom of God, we can never really experience a breakthrough.

Come join us each Sunday at 10:30 am to worship together. It is through worship that building a vibrant community begins. We discuss the underlying scripture in the Café each Sunday at 9:30 am. Bring your appetite. Come *hungry*.

Pastor Tommy