

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Seeding (Anticipating a Harvest)

We have a saying around the Asbury Farms. "You can't expect to harvest if you didn't put any seeds in the ground." Seeding is necessary if there is to be a harvest. On the Asbury Farms since lettuce is a crop that grows quickly, doesn't keep for long and is widely popular, we try to seed beds with lettuce every week. We know that if we miss seeding for very long we don't have lettuce to harvest. The same is true for any other harvest that we hope to have in the future. If we don't plant strawberries we don't harvest strawberries. No carrot seeds, no carrots, and so on.



Likewise, if we don't seed we don't have a future harvest. In this case, seed becomes a

metaphor for a number of actions that we may choose from dependent upon the harvest that we hope for in the future. If we hope to know more about the Bible then we will need to read and study scripture. If we do this with others we are increasing our variety of seeds and our future harvest.

Welcome to week one of our new worship series *Grow*. Over the next several weeks we will be using a lot of farming metaphors to convey lessons from scripture and how we can apply them to our daily lives. All of our farming terms will have multiple meanings. But these other meanings can be what helps us to better understand how to apply the teachings Jesus has for us. Part of planting seeds is sharing insight with each other. This seems to be God's favorite way of conveying divine insight. We learn from each other.

Chapter 13 of Matthew is full of parables and we will cover most of them over the next few weeks. But we begin with the question why parables? Why did

This people will listen and listen, they will look and look; but not see, because their minds are dull, and they have stopped up their ears and have closed their eyes.
Matthew 13: 14-15

Jesus teach using stories to convey such important information and risk having people not understand Him? Verse 34 of this chapter in Matthew explains that Jesus' use of parables fulfilled ancient prophecy. *Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable. So was fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet: "I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things hidden since the creation of the world"* (Matthew 13:34-35 GNT).

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intense at times as our messages were intended to surface some controversial subject matter. Last week's message was uncomfortable for me. While I enjoy being creative with scripture it is unsettling for me when my discernment takes me too far off the well worn path. There have been a couple of news stories lately about hikers getting lost after venturing off the trail.

We began our discussions that we entitled *Chosen* with a metaphor. A center-pivot irrigation

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Volume 19 Issue 23

June 23, 2019

Special points of interest:

»» **Worship Design will meet on Monday, June 24th at 6pm in the Asbury Library.**

»» **Coming soon : Vacation Bible School—Summer Bible Camp at Asbury UMC. (see flyer in this newsletter)**

»» **UMW will be meeting on Friday, July 5th at 1pm with a potluck lunch at Norma Natrass's house. Norma will be providing a wonderful ice cream sundae bar for dessert. Please call her at 235-1116 and let her know what you will be bringing.**

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Breathe (Life as Jazz)

Apparently, we are not all musicians. At least, this seems to be the consensus. Otherwise, shows like *The Voice* would not have the public appeal that they have. We seem to be fascinated by each others talents only when a particular talent sticks out among the rest. But what if we are all created to be musicians?

This week we transition

from our Spring worship series, *Chosen*, to our Summer worship series, *Grow*. The past few weeks have been



Breathe (Life as Jazz)...cont. from page 1

system that was designed to irrigate crops. This system provides life-giving water to those plants that are within its reach leaving a lush circle in the midst of less healthy vegetation. This metaphor for us was the gospel as dispensed by the “church” and not the gospel as lived out by Jesus and His followers. The plants that are left without water are apt to wither and die. The persons unreached by the gospel, those in the corners, are likewise left-out from the nourishment of the gospel.

Religion has a history of doing just this. Leaving out and leaving behind persons based upon a human-made system of boundaries. While these boundaries are negotiated through interpretation of the holy scriptures interpretations change over time and have never been static. Not in the first church, not in the 100th church, not in today’s churches.

Finding perfect truth is elusive. And a claim to divine truth historically results in an oppressive power that is given out in a system of barter. Believers are told that they must declare their allegiance to the

Seeding... cont. from page 1

This prophetic statement is found in the Book of Isaiah. God spoke to Isaiah after the Prophet came to realize that God had some divine insight for him to hear. This story is found in Isaiah chapter six. The prophet believed that he has seen the glory of God first hand and it scared the crap out of him. He realized that he hadn’t exactly been a model citizen. And the folks he hung around with were no better. And here he is about to hear directly from God. “I’m screwed,” Isaiah said to himself.

But we learn from scripture that God isn’t all that interested in the pettiness of our lives. God sees the bigger picture. The potential. Our potential. But God also knows about the pettiness in our lives. God knows all the drama and our propensity to be dramatic as a smokescreen for accountability. God knows us better than

belief in exchange for a ticket to heaven. Those who believe differently are excluded. I have been unknowingly a part of this. But God has gotten on my case about this subject. Now I know that I must respond to this situation with “Not on my watch.” And the other leaders of Asbury have responded “Not on our watch.”

One day when many tax collectors and other outcasts came to listen to Jesus, the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law started grumbling, “This man welcomes outcasts and even eats with them!”
Luke 15:1

Our first step was to inform. To share insights into the beautiful diversity of scripture that is read differently based on our particular context. Again, the universal truth that we seek is known completely by God and revealed in scripture. And God empowers people, all people, to come together in living out these truths as we discover them together. And when we begin this process with the priorities that

we know ourselves. And Isaiah realizes this. No wonder Isaiah felt like he was about to get the business from God.

Instead of “smiting” Isaiah God didn’t even bring up Isaiah’s past. God wanted to focus on the business at hand. God has plans for Isaiah and it was time for Isaiah to step up to the plate and start doing it. Isaiah was right. He was hanging around with a lot of folks just like him and this was about to change but likely not without a lot of struggle. We simply don’t face up to our screw-ups and move on with a different approach to life. We repeat the same mistakes over and over again expecting different results.

Jesus gave us that universal truth revolves around loving God and neighbor this influences how we read all sacred text.

One of the sacred moments that God has shared with me had a well-worn path at its center. I wrote a poem while I was in Kentucky with a bunch of high school youth to work on houses. After the physically worn-out teenagers were in their sleeping bags with the lights out I went out into the hallway to be alone with God and my journal. A poem came out of my pen that puzzled me.

It was a poem about a man choosing a well-worn path through life. The first three lines makes my point:

I took a certain road that led me toward its end.

A way determined before me, by other men.

I did not question to where it led.

The assumption that comes with taking the same road that others have taken before is that it must lead to a place where we hope to be. We often have a vision of the place the road leads to based on testimony or advice from people we trust. But people are vulnerable to repeating mistakes and the more people who repeat them the more accepted that mistakes are the norm. And when our mistakes harm people or the planet God raised up prophetic voices to shout “Not on my watch.”

The funny thing is that when I wrote the poem I didn’t really understand what it meant. The next day one of the mission leaders, a college student, sat down at the table where I was eating and asked if she could talk to me about a personal problem. She was struggling with what



In our Prayers

Curtis Young	Shirley Craig
Rachel Bastine	Christopher Lewis
Norma Buzzard	Sarah Tanner
Virginia Bigger	Elizabeth Wright
Barbara McIvor	Judy Tanner
Austin & Mary Suffle	Mary Lyons

FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE

Elaine Lamoreaux Mary Nations
 Mary Russell

Coming up this week

June 24	Mon	5pm Youth Choir
		6pm Worship Design
		7pm Flint Jubilee
June 25	Tues	10am-2pm Water Distribution
		4-8:00pm Way Academy Graduation
		6pm Community Gospel Choir
June 26	Wed	12Noon Pastor Book Club
		6pm Beginners Bible Study
		6pm Youth Group
June 27	Thu	4:30-6pm Gaming as Education
		6pm Worship Band Practice
June 28	Fri	10am-2pm Asbury Cafe Open
		6:00pm Asbury Youth Group
June 29	Sat	10am-12N Japanese Jiu Jitsi
June 30	Sun	8am-10am Japanese Jiu Jitsi
		9:30am Café Open
		10:30am New Beginnings
		Contemporary Worship

Breathe (Life as Jazz) ...cont. from page 2

felt like a call on her life to go to seminary. Yet, she had just finished a four-year degree and she anticipated that her parents would be disappointed after sacrificing for her to go to college. Her question to me, "If I was your daughter how would you respond?"

Perhaps she knew that I had a daughter attending college. Perhaps she just knew that I was a parent. I shared my poem with her thinking that it was intended for her. She politely read what I had written but had a puzzled look on her face. Hoping that the words would shed light on her dilemma I was let down by her reaction.

It would be a couple of years before this poem would resurface for me. The mission trips that I took collectively planted seeds in my heart that were growing. I had taken a certain road, one that was well worn. A road that was certain, I thought. Yet, the closer that I came to the place where the road led the more doubt that developed in my spirit. Am I really headed to where I hope to be?

Over the past several weeks we have been on a journey off the main path. We haven't gotten lost because we stayed within sight of God's Word as our map. Our choice to take a different way was prayerfully considered by our church leadership. Our collective discernment was that as a faith community we needed to do this. Our worship series was a first step towards our new destination.

Come to me, all of you who are tired from carrying heavy loads...for the yoke I will give you is easy, and the load I will put on you is light."

Matthew 11:28-30

The irony is that it was never the destination that was in question for us. It was the path. The road leading to where we hope to go that was too well worn. Our destination is oneness with God through Jesus Christ. A destination that we have in common with Christians everywhere. While we also share that Jesus Christ is our way to oneness with God with other Christians there is an amazing diversity of interpretations of the road that takes us there.

I believe that this diversity is sacred. The diversity of creation is beyond my ability to comprehend. Each snowflake is different, each stone, each tree, each human is uniquely created by a loving God who seems to take great joy in creating diversity. God has an imagination that is beyond our capabilities to understand. And I believe that this diversely, created world, dances to a rhythm that we all can feel in our bones.

For many Christians, the Bible is absolute truth and they absolutely believe that they know what that truth says about God, creation and our relationship with God and creation. The problem for the rest of us is that they don't agree with each other. I also reserve the right to be wrong even when I am trying hard to be faithful. The problem for me comes in when I witness harm being done to people or any part of creation. Oppressive harm is what I am most sensitive to. This is how God created me.


I have said that I can feel power-imbances "in my bones." Like a joint that aches when it is about to rain, my body senses oppression well before my mind can recognize it. For me, this is a most inconvenient grace that God has seen fit to put into me. It is inconvenient because like the joint that aches until the rain has finished my bones ache until the oppressive force is removed.

Asbury Worship Series Grow Seed the Future

In the three synoptic Gospels Jesus tells a story about a farmer who goes out to seed his field. Farmers at that time scattered their seed by hand. A lot of us still seed this way for grass seed or cover crops. In Jesus' story the farmer was planting seeds for grain.

This farmer's field was not all fine loam. It was more like an urban farm with a variety

of soil conditions. A lot of clay and rocks. A lot of old driveway pieces and other items that don't belong in a farmer's field.



As the farmer scattered the seed in the field, Jesus noted, some of the seed fell

along the path. Soil that had been compressed by walking on it. While this was good for the birds that came and had a snack it wasn't good for the farmer's production. Like a couple of our fields some of the seed fell on rocky ground. In this case, the seeds sprouted but couldn't find room for their roots to provide moisture. And without deep roots the young plants soon dried up in the hot sun.

Book Club News

Meet Nadia Bolz-Weber who is also the Rev Nadia Bolz-Weber. Nadia is a writer, a mother and a Lutheran pastor who founded a church that is called The House for all Sinners and Saints. And Nadia has a calling that she takes own with a passion. Her calling is to take the good news to persons who have been sent to the corners by the church left to believe that somehow God made a mistake when creating them. Her passion is to speak the truth to powerful, but misinformed church leaders and pastors who preach a gospel that isn't good news for a large number of people.*



When Pastor Nadia speaks about her passion and her role as pastor she notes that "being a preacher is like having a not-very-interesting mental illness." But she goes on to say that the biblical story offers a great deal of clarity when we manage to read it with fresh eyes and leaving our own garbage by the curb. Welcome to Nadia's latest book, *Shame-less*.

Our book club began reading and discussing this book over the past couple of weeks. There are still copies available and there is one waiting for you to join us. *Shame-less* takes us into the corners where people have been left out of the circle drawn by churches and offers a more grace-filled way to interpret scripture. The purpose is not to change scripture to fit our preferences. Our purpose is to faithfully interpret scripture so that we are better able to fulfill God's purposes for each of us.

Each generation of believers are called to read scripture and to faithfully seek the will of God. Scripture is not crystal clear. And the church has made numerous erroneous interpretations over the centuries. And we continue to do so. The question is whether we can learn to offer the grace and love that God has offered each of us. Whether we live in the center or in the corners.

The Amazon website describes *Shame-less* this way:

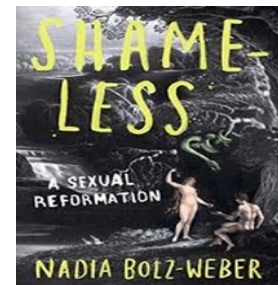
Christians are obsessed with sex. But not in a good way. For generations countless people have suffered pain, guilt, and judgment as a result of this toxic fixation on sex, the body, and physical pleasure. In the follow-up to her celebrated New York Times bestseller *Accidental Saints*, Bolz-Weber unleashes her critical eye, her sharp pen, and her vulnerable but hopeful soul on the caustic, fear-riddled, and religiously inspired messages about sex that have fed our shame.

Leadership in Worship & Service

- | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Welcome Team | Tony, Mirium | Jim Craig | Leadership Chair |
| Ushers | Anthony, Jim | Kevin Croom | Farm to Table |
| Production Team | Jonathon | Israel Unger | Business Operations |
| Children | Patrice & Mirium | | |
| Worship Leaders | Cyndi | | |
| Café | Christine & Norma | | |

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 |
| Connie Portillo | Office Secretary |
| Sylvia Pittman | Worship Arts |

Asbury Worship Series— Grow (Seed the future)... *Cont. from page 4*

The Asbury Farmers deal with a wide variety of undesirable plants that we often refer to as weeds. And some of these weeds are quite aggressive. Some have very deep roots. Some are thorny like thistles and others send out vines that like to wrap around plants like tomatoes or strawberries. In our story some of the farmer's seed fell among undesirable plants which choked the farmer's newly seeded plants.

Fortunately, most of the time when our farmers put out seed it falls on nutrient-rich, fertile soil. And the seeds germinate into beautiful plants. And this happened in the story that Jesus told. Some of the farmer's seeds fell in good soil. And the farmer had a bountiful harvest as many of the plants produced large amounts of grain.

This story that Jesus told is not just a cute story about farming. Jesus told the story as a parable. This means that there are lessons to be learned. This story applies to other situations in life. There is a lot of symbolism. And Jesus taught that our insight into the meaning of His parables is a divine gift. The Holy Spirit helps us to apply the lessons that the parable teaches.

In this case, Jesus also offers an interpretation for His parable after first explaining why He uses parable at all. As a result of His explanation, there is little debate regarding the meaning of this particular parable. This can lead to the erroneous conclusion that there is nothing else to learn. Jesus says that parables confuse some persons and seem quite clear to others. Jesus said "they look, but do not see, and they listen, but do not hear or understand" (Matthew 13:13 GNT).

Insight is a divine gift that we receive out of our belief. We open our minds to the possibilities that God has in mind for us and surrender our bias to divine insight. A light bulb comes on. We come to realize something about God and our relationship with God that we hadn't understood before. We gain clarity. We experience insight. And we grow in our oneness with God.

On the other hand, Jesus explains that not everyone who hears one of His parables gains insight. Jesus says that this is "because their minds are dull, and they have stopped up their ears and have closed their eyes" (Matthew 13:15 GNT). Jesus is not calling those who miss the point stupid. They could be an absolute genius. A person who struggles to understand even the most basic subjects may get the point and the genius miss it. Insight is a divine gift that comes out of belief and not intellect. That is, faith that Jesus Christ is who scripture says He is.

This is puzzling for non-believers and for believers. This idea is not cut and dry. Just like the farmer seeding the field. While every seed has potential not every seed reaches its potential. Growth is a process that requires total commitment. A lot of crap happens along the way. Rocks, thorns, birds, well-worn paths, sun and rain. Things that we cannot control but may seek to control us.

How we respond to the world matters. Many responses are hurtful. Some responses are helpful. Left to our own we don't get it right often enough. Ask for divine help and some way, some how, things work themselves out. Like the musician playing jazz we come to feel the rhythm of the universe. The song that God has given creation. And beautiful music happens.

The further irony is that even after we taste the sweetness of divine insight our taste buds can become dull. We come to believe that we know what the scripture says. We make all of our decisions based on a static view of creation like we already know everything that we need to know. Our minds become dull and divine insight either ceases or is minimal. This happens to clergy in particular. We think "God hasn't changed. God is consistent." But life is jazz. The rhythm is constantly changing. We need to keep us. We need to listen and feel the beat.

While it may be true that God hasn't changed it is also true that none of us know everything that can be known about God. Our minds can't grasp God's greatness. But when we read a parable that perhaps we have read hundreds of time before. Even after we have written reflections, papers and articles about the insight that we gained. There is still more. God has more to say to each of us. If we will only listen. This is how we grow.

We start our new worship series on June 23. The Asbury Farms are already bustling with growth. Blair and Matt are harvesting every week. And new seeds are going in the ground every week. This is how our farm does what it was intended to do. To grow. Likewise, we need to harvest that which is ready and plant new seeds every week. This is how we grow.

I pray that you will join us for our new worship series, *Grow*. Also, our Summer Bible Camp (VBS) is coming up the week of July 15. Our summer youth program starts on Monday. Be sure to pass the word and find out how you can help. I hope to see you each Sunday for worship at 10:30 am. Remember Bible study in the Asbury Café is before worship at 9:30 am.

Pastor Tommy

Book Club News.. *Cont from page 4*

I hope that you will join us for frank, but sensitive discussions about the topics of gender, sexual orientation and a way forward for the church to offering healing rather than harm to persons that don't fit traditional mold.

Our conversations come out of both our shared and our differing beliefs which often lead us into new insights about ourselves, our world and our God. I am grateful for all of the individuals who have made this an every week item on their schedule. Our current worship series, *Chosen*, will parallel our discussions in a number of ways.

I encourage you to come to our Wednesday gatherings. Our small group is a diverse group and we are delighted when new persons join us. I 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.

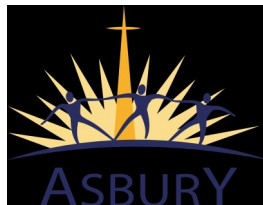
Pastor Tommy

* Bolz-Weber, Nadia. *Shameless - A Sexual Reformation*. New York: The Crown Publishing Group, 2019.

★ SUNDAY June 16 ★
 9:30am Café Opens
 10:30am New Beginnings
 Contemporary Worship
 Last Week for Worship
 Attendance 34 Offering \$ 509

Vacation Bible School
Summer Bible Camp
at Asbury UMC

July 15th to 21st - Monday-Friday 6 pm to 8 pm
Saturday 11 am to 2 pm - Sunday 10:30 am to 11:30 am
Pre-school to 6th Grade



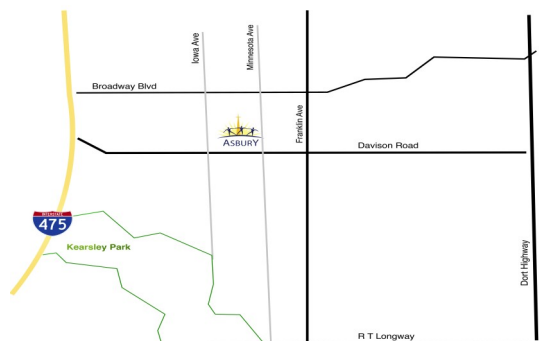
FlintAsbury.org

810-235-0016

info@FlintAsbury.org



1653 Davison Rd, Flint, MI 48506



Come create a musical with Ms. Sylvia Pittman—Vocal Teacher, Musician
and Producer

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

Life Group Questions & Notes

The reason I use parables in talking to them is that they look, but do not see, and they listen, but do not hear or understand. So the prophecy of Isaiah applies to them: 'This people will listen and listen, but not understand; they will look and look, but not see, because their minds are dull, and they have stopped up their ears and have closed their eyes. Otherwise, their eyes would see, their ears would hear, their minds would understand, and they would turn to me, says God, and I would heal them.'

Matthew 13:13-15 (GNT)

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS

1. Read Matthew 13:13-15 this week's article titled *Seeding*. What comes to mind? Are you sometimes confused by parables? What might help you to better understand them?
2. We begin our new series this week. We will be discussing a couple of parables about farming. Jesus talks about seeding the field. What are your expectations for seeding? What are some other meanings for this idea of seeding that applies to our faith?
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?

Unlike rain that does eventually end it can seem that the propensity for humans to oppress one another is endless. Oppression was happening long before God knitted me together in my mother's womb and it will continue long after I am gone, unless Jesus shows up for the final judgment. Like the competition that takes place between children when competing for attention humans compete with each other for power and control.

My prayer is that this is really a beginning of an emerging, inclusive community that welcomes all persons to the table of grace.

Pastor Tommy

As we come to an end of our current worship series my prayer is that this is really a beginning of an emerging inclusive community that welcomes all persons to the table of grace. My prayer is that God will help us each to focus on our own spiritual growth rather than try to fix others. That we we will trust the Holy Spirit to do what it does. Our condemnation is not helpful and says much more about our own deficiencies than the person it is directed towards.

If I have offended anyone with my messages I am truly sorry. If anyone takes offense because they feel that condemning other people is necessary then you anticipate to be offended even more in the future. I will take you on even though I hate conflict. I have no choice. You are not God and you have no say in another person's salvation or Salvation worthiness. And you are doing harm. Therefore, you are in the wrong no matter how right you are about the Word. Salvation worthiness. And you are doing harm. Therefore, you are in the wrong no matter how right you are about the Word.

I pray that if you are already a part of Asbury that you will make it a priority to join us for worship each Sunday. You are greatly missed when you are not with us. If you have not attended worship with us I pray that God will lead you to us. We are far from perfect and we know it. But we try hard to faithfully love others.

We worship each Sunday at 10:30 am. I lead a short Bible study in the Asbury Café at 9:30 am. You can find more information about us on our website at FlintAsbury.org.

Pastor Tommy

Welcome to the Asbury Community

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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.

Seeding...Anticipating a harvest ..cont. from page 2

This is where God tells Isaiah about taking in parables. This wasn't and isn't a trick on God's part. God knows that until we come to realize that God really expects obedience and those voices in our heads that tell us otherwise, whether they are coming from our best friend, a superhero or even from church-folk, cannot be right if they are keeping us from the presence of God. It's that simple.

So in the Gospel of Matthew we read that *"people will listen and listen, but not understand; they will look and look, but not see, because their minds are dull, and they have stopped up their ears and have closed their eyes"* (Matthew 13:14-15 GNT). This is not about IQ. This is not about how well you paid attention in school. This has nothing to do with whether you can read at all. This is about belief. When we actually believe what Jesus is telling us clarity begins. Not all at once, however.

So one of our main stories for this worship series is about planting seeds. Jesus tells a parable about a farmer planting seeds. A lot of folks listening

didn't get it. Or they really didn't want to get it because they didn't see the point in listening to Jesus. And the writer of Matthew goes on to tell us how Jesus explained the meaning to His followers and why he taught in parables. And we benefit from all of this dialogue and explanation. But this doesn't take the place of divine insight.

In order for us to harvest divine insight we don't have to do anything particularly special. Anything that we do that is consistent with the teachings of Jesus helps us to open our senses to the kingdom of God. To see God in our midst. To hear divine insight and to gain understanding. For now, let's call this *seeding*. We are planting these seeds, or allowing seeds to be planted, in us.

In order for us to harvest divine insight we don't have to do anything particularly special. Anything that we do that is consistent with the teachings of Jesus helps us to open our senses to the kingdom of God. To see God in our midst. To hear divine insight and to gain understanding. For now, let's call this *Seeding*. We are planting these seeds, or allowing seeds to be planted, in us.

Consider what seeds you can plant this week. What about attending Book Club or Bible Study? What about getting together with someone to talk about faith? What about praying? Consider asking God to reveal a seeding plan for you to help you get started. What about attending worship?

We worship each Sunday at 10:30 am. I lead a short Bible study in the Asbury Café at 9:30 am. You can find more information about us on our website at FlintAsbury.org.

What seeds can you plant this week?

Pastor Tommy