

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Catty (Who do they say I am?)

One of the many treasures that I receive whenever I read scripture, particularly the stories told by and about Jesus, is I frequently learn something new. The subject of what I learn varies from new insights about God to insights about others, to insights about myself. What is really interesting for me is that I often can't see the connection between the insight and what I'm reading at first. I love it. No wonder the bible continues to be a best seller.

A few weeks ago I was thinking about our new series that starts this Sunday, *Tell your story*. The first scripture that came to mind when this subject



surfaced was a story told about Jesus. In the Gospel of Luke, towards the end of the book, Jesus is talking to His disciples. He asks them "Who do the crowds say I am?" It wasn't the answers that the disciples gave that caught my attention. It was Jesus' question.

We don't seem to outgrow our need to be visible. And we definitely don't outgrow our desire to be liked. "People-pleasing" is a great idea for restaurants and

politicians running for election. But the benefits can become liabilities when we stretch too far to fit someone else's mold. I don't think that this was the issue that Jesus was wrestling with but I do believe that Jesus knows that this sort of thing mattered to His followers. And, as often is the case with Jesus, His question becomes a teaching point.

How about you? Have you ever wondered what others are saying about you? I've noticed that cattiness is a common practice in our neighborhood. In conversations I have had

Page 2

Superpower (Join the faith hall of fame)

Have you ever visited a "hall of fame" such as the one dedicated to people who played a prominent role in rock-and-roll located in Cleveland, Ohio? It must be quite an honor for your name to appear there. There is a link on their website for the 2019 in-

ductees. You find names like Janet Jackson and Stevie Nicks on this list. The Zombies are listed as well. The first year that people were inducted into this hall of fame is 1986. That first class included Chuck Berry, Fats Domino, James Brown and Elvis Presley,

to name a few that I recognized.



Page 2

Volume 19 Issue 18

August 18, 2019

Special points of interest:

>>> Leadership Team will meet on Tuesday, August 19th at 6pm in the Asbury Library. Worship Design will meet on Tuesday, August 26th at 6pm.

Inside this issue:

Catty— Who do they say I am?	1
Superpower	1
In Our Prayers / Free Movie Nite	3
Asbury Worship Series-Tell your Story	4
Pastor's Book Club	4
Leadership in Worship & Service	4
Asbury Worship Series	5
Updates—	6
Asbury Farm to Table	7
Small Group Questions & Notes	8
Superpower	9
Catty—Who do they say I am?	10

Superpower (Join the faith hall of fame)...cont. from page 1

Each inductee had a superpower that set them apart from thousands of others who contributed to rock-and-roll. Some played an instrument. Others had outstanding vocal abilities. Still, others wrote songs, produced records, organized events. For example, Dick Clark was inducted in 1993. He hosted a show and is listed in the “non-performer” category. There are influencers, such as Billie Holliday, a “sideman” category that is all men and includes Earl Palmer. Altogether there are 330 names listed of individuals and groups. It’s quite a list.

We associate the idea of a superpower with a superhero. Someone with extraordinary gifts that are used for the good of humanity. But there are superpowers attributed to not so helpful persons. These

are often the antagonist of our superheroes. Outside of comic book characters, however, we usually reserve superpower status for countries who have global influence, generally as a result of the nation’s ability to exert power militarily, economically, technologically and culturally. But here we are talking about persons and perhaps groups of people, but not countries.

I suspect that most of us do not claim any particular superpower. More of us feel powerless than we feel powerful. We turn to people that we hope to have a superpower that can be used on our behalf. For a child, this may be a parent or guardian. The person feeding an infant is that child’s superhero for the moment since they have a su-

perpower that the child cannot imagine having on their own.

So this suggests that superpowers are related to the circumstances. And what one person considers to be a superpower another person may think differently. Just because a friend feeding an infant gives them a temporary superpower doesn’t mean they still have this superpower after the bottle is empty.

Each one of us has a superpower. Some of us have claimed our superpower and others haven’t accepted their superpower. Your superpower is a gift. What is your superpower? Your story is your superpower. It’s that simple.

Page 9

Catty... cont. from page 1

with people participating in this practice, I have wondered if taking trash about others is an accessible way to exert power. Having power is a natural action to feelings of powerlessness.

I overheard a conversation the other day. I won’t say who was involved to protect the innocent. In this case, me. The subject was another

person who apparently was a friend but the person’s behavior was hurtful to one of the people airing their complaints to someone else. I interrupted the conversation with a question. “Is this what they call being catty?” The response to my question was somewhat timid, “yes.” Just checking. This article was already developing legs.

partially about getting feedback on our sermons. The question is mostly about wanting to be liked. Most of us put ourselves out there every time speak. A feeling of being judged comes to mind. Do you get what I’m saying?

Page 10

One day when Jesus was praying alone, the disciples came to him, “Who do the crowds say I am?”

Luke 24:18b

“What are they, the crowds, other people, so-called friends, saying about me?” It might surprise you to know that pastors are particularly susceptible to asking this question. We think about this question even if we know better than to ask. And it’s only



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

Mary Nations Mary Russell
Elaine Lamoreaux

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- FREE MOVIE NITE -

**ASBURY FELLOWSHIP HALL
THURSDAY, AUGUST 29TH
AT 6:00PM**



Coming up this week



Aug 19	Mon	5:00pm	Youth Choir
		6:00pm	Leadership Team
		7:00pm	Flint Jubilee
Aug 20	Tues	10am-2pm	Water Distribution
		6:00pm	Community Gospel Choir
Aug 21	Wed	12Noon	Pastor Book Club
		6:00pm	Beginners Bible Study
		6:00pm	Youth Group
Aug 22	Thu	4:30-6pm	Gaming as Education
		6:00pm	Worship Band Practice
Aug 23	Fri	10am-2pm	Asbury Cafe Open
		6:00pm	Asbury Youth Group
Aug 24	Sat	10am-12N	Japanese Jiu Jitsi
Aug 25	Sun	8am-10am	Japanese Jiu Jitsi
		9:30am	Café Open
		10:30am	New Beginnings
			Contemporary Worship



SUNDAY, August 11th

9:30am Café Opens

10:30am New Beginnings

Contemporary Worship

Last Week for Worship


Attendance 34 Offering \$ 928

Asbury Worship Series Tell your Story "Who do you say He is?"

Our book club participants are reading a book that tells a story about a man traveling to Mississippi in the hope of starting a business. The man leaves his family in Chicago and hopes that they will be reunited after he can afford to have them travel to where he will find a place for them to live as soon as he saves enough money. But the facts of his journey are only part of his story.

The man named Jaymes has a friend give him a ride to the bus station. On the way he learns

that his friend's story had taken a twist. His friend was not the same person that he had been



in the past. He had changed a lot. For the good, Jaymes concluded. And his friend's change began with learning that God knew his whole story and invited him to begin a new adventure. His friend's story caught Jayme's interest.

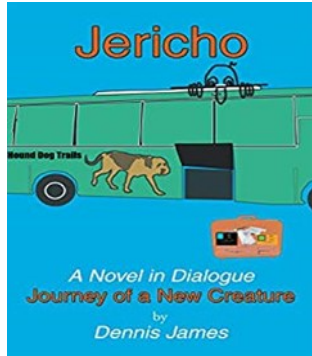
Jaymes wondered if he might be interested in a similar adventure.

His friend had a going away gift for Jaymes. A bible. The very bible that his friend had used to learn about God. This Bible that his friend gave him became a central park of an unfolding story. There would be others on the same bus who would encourage Jaymes to read the stories about people who had wrestled with belief and faith. Each person that appeared in scripture had their own story. And parts of their stories have been told and retold not because they did anything particularly impressive. But because parts of their story help us to know a little more about God and other ourselves.

Page 5

Book Club News

After reading and discussing the book Shame-less written by Nadia Bolz-Weber our group is taking a short break. On July 10 we hosted our youth who are working with



us for the summer and a youth choir from Omaha, Nebraska. A week after that we watched a video from the Nooma series by Rob Bell titled *Sunday*.

A great discussion followed the video on why we go to church. We concluded that we don't get together out of a sense of duty, although these feelings are often felt. Ultimately, we go because we encounter God in our worship and in our time together.

Our next book was written by Dennis Sykes. Most of you have seen Dennis around Asbury at one point or another. Perhaps you would better recognize Dennis as the Roman Governor, Pilate, whom Dennis played in our Easter musical. Perhaps you remember Dennis in one of our concerts. He sings with our community gospel choirs. Dennis is a member of Ebenezer Ministries located a short distance from Asbury.

Our next book is titled *Jericho*. The book follows a man by the name of Jaymes Devans. As the novel begins, James is leaving Chicago, Illinois. He is going South to make a better life for the family he loves. However, Jaymes finds out that his plans and God's plans are not the same. He becomes caught up in a world of murder, drug smuggling, crooked businessmen, politicians, secret agents, and a God with a plan.

Jericho will challenge our own knowledge of scripture as the people Jaymes meets challenges him to continue reading and studying God's Word. Jaymes is amazed by how much people around him had changed for the better after coming to know Jesus Christ for themselves. And a long bus ride was just what Jaymes needed to spend some solid reading time.

Since this is novel is hot off the shelves and since we want to support Dennis in his first book publishing we ordered ten copies at just under \$20 each. A few of us have purchased our books directly from Dennis but it helps him even more when we buy his books from retailers. Dennis hopes to participate in one our sessions to answer questions and autograph books.

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.

* Dennis James (Dennis Sykes). *Jericho: a Novel in Dialogue: Journey of a New Creature*. Xlibris, 2018.

Pastor Tommy

Leadership in Worship & Service

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

Sylvia Pittman	Worship Arts
Jim Craig	Leadership Chair
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
Connie Portillo	Office Secretary



Asbury Worship Series—Tell your Story (Who do you say He is?) ... *Cont. from page 4*

What's your story? Where were you born? Do you live in Flint or do you live elsewhere? Are you a Flintstone or did you move here recently? How old are you? What is your gender? Who raised you? Are your parents still living? Do you keep in touch?

You could answer a thousand questions for me and I still don't know your story. Our story is not about answering questions. Our story is not just about the facts of the case. During a jury trial after one side of the legal argument is finished asking the witness questions the other side has to opportunity to cross-examine. That is, the other attorney is given the opportunity to ask questions. The Judge might say to the other attorney something like "*Your witness.*"

Jury trials are a lot more than getting to the facts of the case. There are questions of motive, credibility

"What about you?" he asked them.
"Who do you say I am?"

Luke 24:18

and other subjective opinions. The jury is asked to come to agreement on whether the evidence is sufficient for a verdict. Does the evidence, which includes all allowable testimony, provide sufficient proof, without any doubt, that the defendant did what the prosecutor claimed?

Our stories all involve witnesses who frequently offer testimony about us. But this isn't our story either. This is only a part of our story. Very few of us have the same person around us at all times. I don't know anyone who has experienced such a thing. People come into our lives and eventually are no longer a part of our unfolding story as a first hand witness. But they are still a part of our story. Just a part of our story. Not our whole story.

For example, our stories include events, thoughts, and feelings that are not witnessed by anyone. This is one of the many remarkable things that I believe to be true about God. That God is the only One who knows every part of our story. Our real story. The rest of our story that isn't told by witnesses even if everyone who ever knew us was called to testify.

The Bible is full of stories and Jesus taught through stories. And Jesus became the subject of the stories told by others. Jesus once asked His disciples "Who do the crowds say I am?" Jesus seemed curious about the story that others were telling about Him. Jesus knew His story but do others? Did His disciples know His story?

We all have a story. Some stories are long novels while others are short stories or just a few lines. All of us want our lives to matter. We don't all try to achieve earth shattering feats or even try to stand out of the crowd. A lot of us are content just to blend in with the rest. But to matter is to be noticed. To be heard. To be visible. But a lot of us also have a fear that if we are too visible we won't



be loved. So we hide just enough of us and expose only those parts that we presume are acceptable to the people whose opinions matter.

I suspect that most of us have parts of our stories that we would rather disown. Perhaps even pretend that they never happened and sometimes deny they ever happened. But they did. And they are a part of our story. But no event, nothing that anyone ever did to us or we did to someone else is who we are. These are just chapters and sometimes a single scene within a fascinating story of what it is to live.

A key testimony at any trial is the actual person on trial. The defendant. I use the idea of a trial as a metaphor because one major reason that so many of our stories are not told is that having our story told feels a lot like being on trial. What will people think when they know the truth? Can I tell only those parts of my story that bring out the best version of me? When we are the witness in our own trial we hope to tell only the parts that we choose to tell.

Our stories matter to God and our stories should matter to each other. Our stories intersect and intertwine as we interact and find ways of living and working together. But how do I tell my story? What parts of my story will even matter to someone else? This is the crux of our new worship series, *Tell your story.*

Our focus over the next few weeks will be on how and when to tell parts of our story. And which parts. Have you ever heard a part of someone's story that touched you? Perhaps what happened also happened to you. Perhaps you were inspired and see yourself having a similar experience. These are life-giving gifts when we receive them. And when we give them.

You can be a life-saver simply by telling your story when the parts you tell are about life-saving experiences. Don't think you have any? We all do but most of us miss the significance of our own experiences. God is active in each of our lives even when we don't give God credit or believe that this could be true.

I invite you to come and hear the stories of others who can inspire you and teach you to be aware of your own stories. Learn to share your own story so that others can be inspired. Learn to observe ways that God is active in your life and in the lives of those around you. Come and ***Tell your story.***

I pray that you will join us for our new worship series called *Tell your story.* 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

THE CROP HUNGER WALK NEEDS YOU!!



What is the CROP Hunger Walk?

- A community-led fundraising event to end hunger.
- A way to show global solidarity with the millions who walk miles every day in search of food and water
- An opportunity to support CWS (Church World Service) development projects and disaster assistance globally
- A source of income for more than 1,500 local food banks and soup kitchens in the U.S.

So, We NEED YOU!

It's easy to register, just by calling Connie (810)814-7985 or in the office at 235-0016 and I will get a packet to you. MARK YOUR CALENDARS, **THE WALK WILL BE SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2019.** WE WILL MEET AT 1:30PM AT COURT STREET UMC AND WALK WILL BEGAN AT 2:00PM. ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CALL ME.

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

To have faith is to be sure of the things we hope for, to be certain of the things we cannot see. It was by their faith that people of ancient times won God's approval. It is by faith that we understand that the universe was created by God's word, so that what can be seen was made out of what cannot be seen.

Hebrews 11:1-3 GNT

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS

1. Read Hebrews 11:1-3. What does faith mean for you? In what ways are you being faithful? In what ways are you struggling with being faithful?
2. Read this week's article titled *Superpower*. Have you ever thought of your faith story as a superpower? The rest of Hebrews chapter 11 is a hall of fame listing of characters that we read about in the Old Testament. The heroes of the faith. They are heroes not because of what they did themselves. Their superpower is their story of faith. And so it is with you. Tell each other a part of your own story of faith. Welcome to the faith hall of fame.
3. How can the members of your group help you this week and on-going to help you to be more receptive to hearing and understanding the Word of God?

The Bible has a hall of fame list that is found in the 11th chapter of Hebrews. We see one of the most famous names, Abraham, with some of his stories. While a few biblical celebrities have a few words about why their name is listed, the writer ends the section by just listing several names.

What an honor. Can you imagine being named in the Bible’s list of superheroes? Of course, this would mean that you have been dead for centuries. But still — can’t you imagine how many people throughout history have wondered whether or not if they had lived during biblical times if their name might have appeared?

Given the timeframe of the writing of Hebrews, we don’t see any of the names from the time of Jesus ministries. They appear elsewhere. Hebrews is looking at the Old Testament scriptures. But more important than which names appear is how the writer of Hebrews chooses the names for this list?

Life is full of obstacles. And all of us respond to the challenges we face with varying degrees of heroism and disgustingly poor decisions. None of us are perfect and we face a system that is racist, oppressive, and full of bullies using their power to beat us up. Some of us are bullies. So how could a pastor make a claim that any of our stories is a superpower?

I do this because I realize that those listed in Hebrews chapter 11 also faced similar obstacles. Powerful nations led by violent leaders. Bullies who used their power against anyone who disagreed

with them. They also faced self-doubt, heard voices in their heads that led them astray, and questioned God’s decisions. Perhaps the most common doubt was, “Why in the world would God choose me?”

Let’s consider how the writer of Hebrews begins chapter 11. “To have faith is to be sure of the things we hope for, to be certain of the things we cannot see.” So we will have doubts like why me, I don’t deserve this, there are too many obstacles, no one would love me if they really knew me, and more. The question to be wrestled with is “Despite all of the obstacles do I believe that God will come through.”

It is by faith that we understand that the universe was created by God’s word, so that what can be seen was made out of what cannot be seen.

Hebrew 11:3

Knowing that God will come through. This is faith. This is the heart of our story. This is our superpower. The biblical hall of fame is not a list of superheroes who could leap over buildings. The biblical hall of fame is a list of ordinary people who didn’t stop believing that God will deliver, even in the face of their own doubts. And God delivered. It is God who can leap over buildings, feed thousands with not enough food, walk on water and bring the dead back to life.

Our superpower is our story. When we tell our story we change lives for the good. When we share our hurts, our failures, and our doubts people find someone like them. When we can say that while we have our doubts, when we don’t see how, when we can’t reason why, but we know that God not only

can, but will deliver. Our story takes on superpower status. It is like Superman putting on his cape or Popeye chewing on his spinach. What emerges is a superpower.

Last week I asked you to write down 2 to 3 subjects that are on your heart. Things about you, parts of your story, that by telling them to someone they would find out something about you that makes you uncomfortable. I didn’t ask you to share them but to pray about your list. Now consider the requirement for being a superhero listed on God’s hall of fame. That is, the superpower of faith. God gives each of us this superpower as a gift. Now rethink your list of subjects in light of your superpower. Reflect on how your story of faith can shed light on your superpower of faith.

My prayer for you is that you will share your superpower with the world for good. It takes a superhero to be vulnerable enough to share our hurts and doubts, and to be faithful despite the apparent obstacles. We can see the obstacles. The way around or over them is usually not visible. But God already knows the outcome. God saw the obstacle coming. And God will deliver just as God delivered for our list of biblical hall of fame inductees.

Your story of faith is your superpower.

Use your superpower. Come join us. We worship each Sunday at 10:30 am. Come learn why it is important to tell your story and how to do so. 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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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.

Catty...Who do they say I am? ...cont. from page 2

Before we can get around to telling stories that reveal something about who we are we have to deal with our fear of judgment. Some of us can just start talking. My dad used to tell us children that sometimes we are talking out loud to ourselves because we want to hear our story. We talk towards someone else to make it seem less weird. More often, we feel a hesitancy if the story we are sharing reveals something about us that no one else knows. "What will they say about me?" questions can both precede our telling and immediately follow our telling.

What if you could reach a point where what others say about you no longer concern you? I'm not talking about a lack of caring about what others think altogether. I'm talking about being free from worrying what others might be saying behind your back. Wouldn't this free you to tell your story? Wouldn't this allow you to be heard? To be visible?

While the answers that the disciples gave Jesus were insightful Jesus followed up with the more important question. "Who do You say I am?" This is more than just a play on words. Knowing Jesus changes everything. And when others know us it also is a game-changer. And this is true when we know others. Jesus was inviting His followers to reflect on where they stand on His identity. By chapter 24 of Luke, His followers had spent a lot of time with Jesus. Have they come to know who He is?

When we tell our story people come to know who we are. And yes, sometimes what they come to know about us can taint their view of us. We may either rise or fall in how they evaluate our character. But our question should be just as deep as when Jesus asks His question. "Who do you say I am?" Peter responded to the question with an insight that only comes from God. "You are God's Messiah."

Each of us is created in God's image. This means that who we are is rooted in Jesus Christ. And this means that the more that others come to know

What if you could reach a point where what others say about you no longer concern you?

who we are at our core the clearer this image of God becomes. But wrapped around this inner image are stories of try and fail. Stories of try and do. These stories can become the bonds that hold us together. While our stories are uniquely ours, the experiences we have are likely similar to the experiences that others have had also.

I hope that you will join us. We worship each Sunday at 10:30 am. Come learn why it is important to tell your story and how to do so. 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