

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Body Temple (Being different is your superpower)

I got the idea for our subtitle for this week's message from a new situation comedy. The show is about a family living in the 80's and dealing with their differences from the norm. The father's ancestors are from Scotland, while the mother is of African descent. The family's adventures begin when they move from a commune into a suburban neighborhood. The story is told through the eyes of their 7th-grade daughter. "Being different is your superpower," was the advice to the

daughter as she completes a school project to create a storyboard about her family.



This worship series is about being different, or at least being a progressive leader in the war against poor health. Since Genesee County is at the bottom of the list of

Michigan counties when ranked by health outcomes, we need to be different. Our health depends on it. Being different is our superpower. Food as medicine is about fighting poor health by treating our bodies as holy and making sure that the food that we eat is that which our body needs to function well.

Food as medicine is not just about the real food that we put into our bodies. What we do for spiritual health is even more

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Tool Belts (work & pray for the city)

God, speaking through the prophet Jeremiah, tells the people of Judah, who are in exile in Babylon, to hang in there, but don't be idle. Instead, "Build houses and settle down. Plant gardens and eat what you grow in them." Building for the future, when you feel like all hope is lost, requires a belief in the unknown and a trust that God and you have similar ideas.



I looked up a quote from a retired Episcopal Priest whose books I have enjoyed reading through

the years. Barbara Brown Taylor shares one of her most intimate encounters with God that was life-changing for her. On the fire escape of an abandoned building that was once home to the Culinary Institute of America, Pastor Barbara realized that she had heard the voice of God.

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Volume 19 Issue 20

October 20, 2019

Special points of interest:

>>> Free Concert! Michael Fletcher & The Michael Fletcher Chorale...see flyers in the Café area.

>>> Worship Design will meet on Monday, October 21st at 6pm in the Asbury Library.

>>> We are in need of bags of wrapped candy for our "Halo Harvest". If you can donate some, please drop off at the church office during the week. (see flyer on page 3)

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Tool Belts (work & pray for the city) ...cont. from page 1

It was not an audible voice that the priestess heard, however. The voice came to her within her own head. But it was a thought that could not have been her own. It was a statement of direction for her life that she had never considered. Barbara shares that she was earnestly willing to do anything that God asked of her, whether it was continuing with her education and teach college or traveling to places no one else wanted to go, and cleaning restrooms. But neither option came up in her conversation with God on that fire escape.

Instead, Barbara heard, "Do whatever pleases you, and belong to me." When I first read this story I struggled to imagine God being so easy-going. I can identify with Barbara's feelings of complete surrender. Before I had ever heard of Barbara Brown Taylor I too had committed to God that I would go anywhere and do anything that God wanted me to do. "Just tell me what You want, Lord," was a common prayer request coming from me.

It would take several years before I would be able to make sense out of the words that Barbara heard that day. And now, I sometimes share her story with persons asking me how to hear God's voice, and to be certain that they are doing that which God wants them to do. "Do what pleases you," sounds like an invitation that would come from the enemy rather than from God.

Build houses and settle down. Plant gardens and cut what you grow in them.

Jeremiah 29:5

But whatever Barbara chose to do was to be done, not by her own power and authority, but by the power of God's Spirit. The "and" that God's voice added makes all the difference. "And belong to me" is an invitation of intimate connection. At

any point, God might decide on a different direction, or a different purpose and Barbara committed herself to obedient listening.

Barbara counted ten different jobs since her encounter with God on the fire escape when she was in her twenties. I have a lot of experience with changing jobs and careers. This is more like the life of a nomad than a lifelong resident.

A "nomad" is someone who doesn't stay in one place very long. A person without a permanent home. Nomadic life is hard. There is a concept in social psychology and in horticulture known as "root shock." When a plant is uprooted and planted in different soil, the plant experiences a post-traumatic reaction. A form of shock. It takes some time for the plant to recover and flourish. Each transplant comes with a risk that the plant will not recover.

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Body Temple (Being different is your superpower) cont. from page 1

critical. We have heard that it is diet and exercise that affects our body shape. The truth is that it is diet, physical activity, and our connection to God that affects our overall health and well-being. And when we stay connected to God, we find ourselves being better neighbors, better to ourselves, and better to our planet. But, sadly, this means that we will be different than the norm.

In Paul's letter to the church in Corinth, he reminds us that our body is a temple for the Holy Spirit of God. Our bodies are holy. Most of us would not do things that would harm a church building. But most of us do a lot of harm to our bodies. If we are to host the Holy Spirit, our bodies are a church in the way that we go to a building for worship. Our bodies are temples.

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In our Prayers

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

FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE

Mary Nations	Mary Russell
Elaine Lamoreaux	

Asbury UMC
1653 Davison Rd., Flint
“Halo Harvest”



Food Fun
Music/Costume Contest
5:00 pm to 7:00 pm
Come Join Us!

(We are looking for donations of wrapped candy to give out for the Halo Harvest which will be in October. If you can donate some, please bring to the office on Sunday or drop it off during the week.)

Coming up this week

Oct 21	Mon	5:00pm	Youth Choir
		6:00pm	Worship Design
		7:00pm	Flint Jubilee
Oct 22	Tues	10am-2pm	Water Distribution
		6:00pm	Community Gospel Choir
Oct 23	Wed	12Noon	Pastor Book Club
		6:00pm	Beginners Bible Study
		6:00pm	Youth Group
Oct 24	Thu	4:30-6pm	Gaming as Education
		6:00pm	Worship Band Practice
Oct 25	Fri	10am-2pm	Asbury Cafe Open
		6:00pm	Asbury Youth Group
Oct 26	Sat	10am-12N	Japanese Jiu Jitsi
Oct 27	Sun	8am-10am	Japanese Jiu Jitsi
		9:30am	Café Open
		10:30am	New Beginnings
			Contemporary Worship

SUNDAY, October 13th

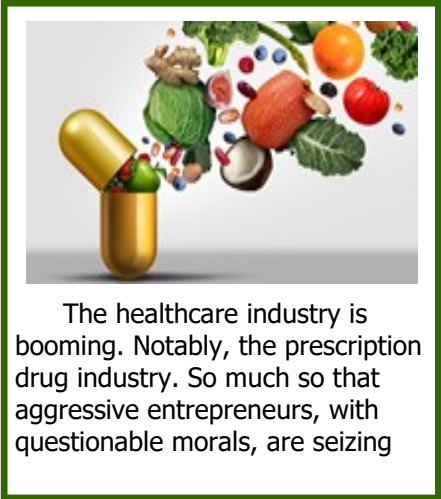
9:30am Café Opens
10:30am New Beginnings
Contemporary Worship

Last Week for Worship

Attendance	28
Offering	\$599

Asbury Worship Series Food as Medicine “Beginning on October 20th”

The expression “Food as medicine” is catching on. I’m hoping that it catches on even more. Food is medicine. Some foods are bad medicine and perhaps shouldn’t be called food. Some food is great medicine and could even be called, well, medicine.



The healthcare industry is booming. Notably, the prescription drug industry. So much so that aggressive entrepreneurs, with questionable morals, are seizing

control of drug companies that manufacture “must-have” drugs. The prices of life-saving prescriptions, such as EpiPens, are increased by large amounts to driving profits higher. Pure capitalists may applaud such efforts. After all, according to their playbook, it is supply and demand that should determine outcomes, and saving lives only count to the extent that saving lives will increase profits.

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Book Club News

We finished Jericho, written by Dennis Sykes. For the next couple of weeks, until we decide



on our next book, we are reading and discussing current events. Last Wednesday, we

read an article from the New York Times about the rebuilding of the Island of St Martin. This tiny, Caribbean island was devastated by Hurricane Irma two years ago. There has been a lot of progress,

but many of the island’s poorer residents are in a standoff. Our group discussed the complexities of rebuilding a community and the trade-offs facing community leaders.

We also read an article about a rebuilding effort that took place in Battle Creek, Michigan, in the 1950’s. In this case, an area of the city that was flooded was rebuilt. The residents, who were mostly poor, were forced to leave their homes and be relocated to another part of the city. Most of the residents chose to move to the Washington Heights neighborhood. This community is served

by the local United Methodist Church, which has operated as a hub in a neighborhood that is much like ours.

Each week, Pastor Tommy, with input from regular attendees, will select one or two articles that are about subjects that have implications for Asbury and our community. Our focus is on considering what scripture might have to say about these subjects.

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

Leadership in Worship & Service

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

- Jim Craig: Leadership Chair
- Kevin Croom: Operations
- Blair Neifert: Farm Manager
- Israel Unger: Function to Funding

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.

- Rev. Dr. Tommy McDoniel: Pastor
- Connie Portillo: Office Secretary
- Sylvia Pittman: Empowerment Arts

Asbury Worship Series—Food as Medicine ... *Cont. from page 4*

Healthcare professionals are finding that food is a competitor to prescription drugs. Sometimes eliminating the need altogether for a particular prescription. Frequently preventing the need to write prescriptions altogether. So food as medicine is a proposal for doctors to be able to write prescriptions for healthier food. This would require that health insurance cover most of the cost, in the same way that prescription insurance covers a particular drug. But the payback is actually better health which would in turn increase profits.

Radical? You bet. Effective? Research suggests that food as medicine could reduce healthcare costs in this country. For example, providing a 20 percent incentive for fruit and vegetable purchases to Medicaid and Medicare beneficiaries is estimated to prevent 1.95 million cardiovascular disease events and to save \$40.9 billion in healthcare costs.



This is a big enough number to create a stir. And it has. A threat to the profits of prescription drug companies is a threat that will be met with political opposition. The drug companies are making large campaign contributions to help politicians who are willing to support them win elections. And, they expect help in fighting against ideas that could reduce their profits.

Food, both physical and spiritual, is medicine. And both are necessary for life. Doctors should also be writing prescriptions for

spiritual food as medicine.

Healthcare professionals know that our spiritual lives affect our physical health. Some doctors have learned this from Jesus, but most professionals rely on medical journals that are more likely to quote research rather than scripture. I will leave the scientific research to the professionals and focus on the scriptural research.

The 2018 Farm Bill allocated money for prescription produce programs that encourage physicians and medical institutions to make food a formal part of treatment, rather than relying solely on medications. But this money is for actual, physical food, and not prescriptions to join a local church. But this was a start, albeit a small start, with only \$4 Million total allocated to such programs nationwide. Perhaps future legislation can move a little further away from supporting the pharmaceutical industry and allocate some of that money for both physical and spiritual food as medicine.

The idea of spiritual food as medicine is found in scripture. In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus quotes ancient scripture in response to the enemy's suggestion that Jesus change stone into bread when He was hungry from fasting. "You must not depend on bread alone to sustain you, but on everything that the Lord says" (Deuteronomy 8:3 GNT).

This first temptation of Jesus by the enemy is a classic strategy that most of us have heard levied at us. "If you are really _____?" the enemy challenges us, "then you would _____." The blanks depend on the person. The temptation is often to shift our focus away from what matters most to God and towards satisfying our immediate desire. The impulse buy. The fast food ad.

Jesus seemed to be referencing His need to put God's will ahead of His own. Not to mention that making that first decision to give in to the temptation to put something else first, ahead of God, in our lives, is a slippery slope. Like that quick stop at McDonald's when you can smell the fries cooking a block away. It doesn't take long before McDonald's is one of your frequent stops. Turn this into a habit long enough, and the cardiologist will also be a frequent destination for you.

If you have followed our recent worship series, *Back to the future*, you have heard me talk about the criticality of worship in rebuilding our neighborhood. The work that we do, no matter how helpful, will fall short without worship. Likewise, the work that we do for ourselves will fall short without worship. We are a hot mess of spirit and flesh. And we are created by, and in the image of, a God who demands our attention.

Our next worship series is scheduled to begin on Sunday, October 20. I'm calling it *Food as medicine*. It may be a great time to start that diet that you have been putting off. It may also be a great time to begin that spiritual practice or join that Bible study group that you have been thinking about doing. There is a great synergy between spiritual practices and what we choose to put into our bodies. Food as medicine is a great idea on multiple levels.

Be here each Sunday and invite your friends and neighbors. 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

Body Temple (Being different is your superpower) ...cont. from page 2

I've noticed that conversations about what we should be eating can be frustrating. What we know about the impact of various foods changes. Are eggs bad for us? Is chicken better than red meat? What about butter? Should I give my children milk? Opinions and attitudes change. New studies sometimes appear to contradict prior studies. Special interest groups representing different food choices, such as beef, dairy, poultry, and pork, exert influence on how information is discovered and shared.

Don't you know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and who was given to you by God?

1 Corinthians 6:19

Isn't it all about balance? This seems to be the default "throw up our hands" response when a room full of opinions cannot agree on the latest information. But a little bit of some things is not good for us, while small quantities of other choices may not be enough. The phrase "balanced diet" sounds healthy, while unbalanced anything seems problematic.

I admit that I may be more susceptible to extremes that seem to cause imbalances than other people I know. I occasionally utilize a strategy that suggests if a little bit is right, then a lot more is better. But I have learned that this doesn't apply to ice cream and cookies. It doesn't apply to a lot of good things. Even sunshine.

So what does it mean that our bodies are temples for the Holy Spirit? For one thing, it means that what we put into our bodies matter. This includes our mind and spirit. Fortunately, the Bible is full of practical advice. Jesus is a master teacher. So large servings of scripture are a good thing. Scripture contains loads of benefits and no calories.

Worship is another excellent way to keep our mind, body, and spirit in better shape. Worship requires participation. We cannot be spectators on Sunday morning and call it worship. That would be like turning on a football game and claiming that we played football. We only watched football. Worship requires participation, just like eating carrots is not the same thing as looking at them.

Speaking of carrots. Our Asbury Farms team has planted a lot of carrots that we hope to harvest this winter. While doing research a few years ago, I came across a story about carrots that I found insightful. As temperatures drop, carrots convert starches to sugars. The plant does this because it doesn't want ice crystallization. If it gets ice crystallization, the carrot dies. The result is a sweeter carrot with more nutrients.

Worship requires participation just like eating carrots is not the same thing as looking at them.

This series is motivated in part by what I learned about carrots. While a carrot is a plant, it is a living thing. And, like other living creations, plants flourish under ideal conditions and suffer when conditions threaten their health. And in the suffering that carrots experience from cold temperatures, their contribution to our well-being increases.

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 12Noon to 2pm &
Sundays 10am 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

Like us on Facebook~ under "Asbury Farms"



Life Group Questions & Notes

Don't you know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and who was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourselves but to God; he bought you for a price. So use your bodies for God's glory.

1 Corinthians 6:19 GNT

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS

1. Read 1 Corinthians 6:19. What does this scripture say to you? What might Paul mean when he writes that our body is a temple for the Holy Spirit? What does he mean that we belong to God?
2. Read this week's article titled *Body temple*. Do you agree that your body is a temple? If so, how does this affect your self-image? What are some ways that you can treat your body temple better?
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?



There are a lot of people living in Flint who move around a lot. Most stay in and around Flint, but in different apartments or houses, and often after only a few weeks or months. But their stability comes out of their connections to Flint people and resources. Nomadic living creates more anxiety when the distances are greater. In these cases, connections are usually lost, and new connections are made, only to be lost again with the next move.

I am nomadic. I began my nomadic lifestyle while in my mother's womb. My family had moved to Memphis. I was born in Arkansas. Soon after my birth, my mom and I rejoined our family in Memphis. My first move happened before my first birthday. There would be many more moves in my future, with each move being to a different city and occasionally a different state. There is something unsettling about a nomadic life.

The first consequence that comes to mind is the future. I have planted trees that I did not see bear fruit. I don't know if they are still bearing fruit. I have lived in homes that I haven't seen since. I have left behind friends, family, homes, jobs, cities, and more. Sometimes I felt as though I was in exile, and I sometimes dreamed of a time when I would return home. But where was home?

This is the paradox of the nomad. Home is where I am most recently transplanted. Like the strawberry plants that we transplanted on Hamilton Avenue, a nomad bears fruit where ever they are planted. And I am planted here on the Eastside of Flint.

What about you? Are you nomadic or have you lived wherever you now live for most of your life? Either way, how does God's message to the exiled people of Judah strike you? How does building for the future affect you? Have you strapped on your tool belt and started to work on building homes and planting gardens?

Their prosperity would come as a result of their combined efforts

The truth is that our home is with God. Where ever we are planted during the handful of decades that we live on this earth, we are nomads. We are planted here and there during a lifetime that is a blink of an eye as compared to eternity. Nevertheless, the seconds, days, weeks, and years seem like a long time while we are in the midst of life. And what we do during this time matters a great deal to God.

Whether, like Barbara, God chooses to green-light whatever pleases us, or provide specific instructions on place, time, and activity, we are to build houses and plant gardens. God would eventually return the exiled people back home. It would be a generation of waiting. Meanwhile, God instructed the people to work for the prosperity of the city where they were transplanted.

What about you? What work is God calling you to do to work for the prosperity of Flint? God did not say to the exiled people that they should concentrate on their own prosperity. Rather, they were to put their community and city first. Their prosperity would come as a result of their combined efforts.

We worship each Sunday at 10:30 am. I suspect that God is calling you to join us. But joining a group that is betting on God to guide our neighborhood and our city to prosperity may seem risky. But if on some Sunday morning, you have this feeling that you should be somewhere, it just may be that God is answering my prayer and calling you to Asbury.

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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Flint, MI 48506



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

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
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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.

Body Temple (Being different is your superpower) ...cont. from page 6

The letter from Paul continues with You do not belong to yourselves but to God; he bought you for a price. Christ suffered for our well-being, and we are healthier when we allow His sacrifice to have the maximum benefit on our lives. Just as watching carrots isn't the same as eating them, keeping Christ at a distance, is not the same thing as allowing Christ into our lives.

We worship each Sunday at 10:30 am. I believe that God is calling you to join us. Come and participate in worship, not as a spectator, but as someone who belongs to God.

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

Pastor Tommy