

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Humbled (Humility and your Health)

This past Wednesday, our Book Club read two articles published in the NY Times on the subject of humility. One of the pieces was from the opinion section of the publication. This article was written by a seminary professor who emphasized that humility is a foundational trait for Christians. The professor cited scripture in support of his argument.



Jesus was humble, and scripture reminds us that God lived among humans. An act of astonishing humility by itself. But Jesus did not live like a king or even among the middle class. Jesus lived a life of austerity. And Jesus submitted Himself to treatment as a common criminal, publicly humiliated, falsely accused, and executed. Jesus set a standard for humility that none of us can quite reach.

There is no shortage of emphasis on humility in scripture. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus tells us that whoever makes them self-great will be humbled, and whoever humbles themselves will be made

great (Matthew 23:12). Earlier in this same Gospel, when Jesus is teaching a large crowd from the side of a hill, Jesus begins His teaching, stating that the humble are blessed because they will receive that which God has promised (Matthew 5:5). I suspect that without humility, it may not be possible to receive the blessings that God wants for us.

Perhaps the most compelling illustration of humility found in scripture is in the Gospel of John. Jesus is with His followers on the night that He anticipates His arrest.

Page 2

Volume 19 Issue 10

November 10, 2019

Special points of interest:

>>> **Worship Design will meet Monday, November 11th at 6pm in the Asbury Library.**

>>> **Leadership Team will meet Monday, November 18th at 6pm in the Asbury Library.**



Inside this issue:

Humbled	1
Dungeons & Vegans	1
In Our Prayers/Coming up this Week	3
Asbury Worship Series	4
Pastor's Book Club	4
Leadership in Worship & Service	4
Asbury Worship Series	5
Humbled	6
Asbury Farm to Table	7
Small Group Questions & Notes	8
Dungeons & Vegans	9
Humbled	10

Dungeons & Vegans (An adventure towards wellness)

Dungeons & Dragons is a fantasy, tabletop game where each player can choose their own character. Players take on the persona of the character as the players embark on an imaginary adventure within a fantasy setting. The game is monitored and facilitated by a dungeon master. The dungeon master determines the results of each charac-

ter's move in the game by interpreting the rules. A



group of players can form an adventure-party, and

more adventures become a campaign. Each character chooses the next step. The outcome of each decision is determined by rolling polyhedral dice.

The characters meet challenges along the way, including dragon-like creatures that block the path of the characters. Players decide whether and how they will engage the

Page 2

Dungeons & Vegans (An adventure towards wellness) *...cont. from page 1*

unusual and dangerous creatures which often stand between them and their destination. Encounters usually take the form of battles with hostile "monsters" that may have the characteristics of animals, aberrant beings, or mythical creatures.

The party of characters interacts with the setting's inhabitants and each other. Together they solve dilemmas, engage in battles, and gather treasure and knowledge. In the process, the characters earn experience points, which results in an increase in power. The adventure requires that the players utilize their imagination and intelligence in making choices. At Asbury, D&D was a favorite game for our youth program that uses popular board games to help participants improve their learning abilities.

I chose to substitute "dragons" with "vegans." Vegans are another group of aberrant beings that many find challenging. I am not a vegan, but I do not eat beef, pork, chicken, or any other meat from animals. Nor

am I a pure vegetarian, since I do eat seafood, eggs, and dairy.

Over the past few years, I have found it challenging to stick to my choice of avoiding meat. Frequently, when food is served at events I attend, there are limited choices that do not contain either meat or meat products. Occasionally, there are no options available at all. My "meat-loving" friends and family have been known to let out a loud sigh when they see me avoiding their favorite dishes. When it comes to popular choices for food, I am clearly an aberrant being.

I discovered a few years ago that breakfast specials seldom exclude meat. And if I order the same selection, but without meat, from the menu, my breakfast will cost significantly more than the same choice with meat that is on special. I have given away a lot of breakfast meats in the past. It reminds me of the stories about taking the lead out of gasoline. When unleaded gasoline was first mandated, the prices rose sup-

posedly due to the cost of taking the lead out. But the lead had to be added, to begin with. Why not just skip that step and lower the price?

We are in the midst of a health care crisis in this country. Healthcare costs are rising. The quality of healthcare that we receive is tied to a great extent to our pocketbook. The wealthier are more likely to be able to afford better care. Too many of us do not have access to healthcare that could help prevent problems later.

Where we live, our zip code also affects both our access to healthcare and our need for healthcare. For example, the life expectancy for a person living in Summit County, Colorado, is almost 87 years. The life expectancy for residents of Genesee County is barely 76 years. This may not seem important to a lot of us, but Genesee county residents in their 70's might be a bit more anxious than a Gen-X'er. Numerous factors affect our health, including genetics. Still, you and I have control over some of the most critical factors that affect our health. What we put into our bodies and what we do with our bodies.

Page 9

Humbled (Humility and your Health) *cont. from page 1*

Instead of ranting about how unjust the world is and plotting to get out of town, Jesus washes everyone's feet. Even those whom He knows can't be trusted. It was a great teaching moment on the subject of humility (John 13:4-17).

In last week's article, *Mirrors*, I wrote about the importance of reflecting Jesus. It is not who we see in the mirror, but who we try to mirror that counts. This goal puts humility as a way of life for all who claim to be faithful to Christ. To be boastful, arrogant, or self-

absorbed, while claiming to be a follower, is to be an imposter. Yet we all fall into this mode from time to time.

Two weeks ago, our theme reminded us that our bodies are temples for the Holy Spirit. Therefore, what we do with our bodies matters. Anything that harms our bodies is an offense to God. Our bodies belong to God. We are simply caretakers.

Page 6



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	

The Salvation Army

2019 Christmas Assistance LATE Sign-Up

Beecher Corps, 1475 W Coldwater Rd.

Tuesday, November 12th, from 9:00am-2:00pm

Flint Citadel, 211 W. Kearsley Street

Wednesday, November 13th, from 9:00am-7:00pm

Thursday, November 14th, from 9:00am-7:00pm

Friday, November 15th, from 9:00am-2:00pm

The Salvation Army's Christmas Assistance program is intended to help Genesee County residents who would otherwise be unable to provide Christmas gifts to their children. Children over 14 years of age are not eligible for toys.

To sign up for assistance you must have the following documents with you:

☐ Michigan I.D. and Social Security Cards for ALL adults in the household. CASE SUMMARY FROM DHHS WILL BE ACCEPTED AS PROOF OF SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER.

☐ Proof of dependents in the home - Birth Certificates and Social Security Cards. *Must be parents or provide proof of legal guardianship.* CASE SUMMARY FROM DHHS WILL BE ACCEPTED AS BIRTH RECORD AND SOCIAL SECURITY CARD.



Coming up this week



Nov 11	Mon	5:00pm	Youth Choir
		6:00pm	Worship Design
		7:00pm	Flint Jubilee
Nov 12	Tues	10am-2pm	Water Distribution
		6:00pm	Community Gospel Choir
Nov 13	Wed	12Noon	Pastor Book Club
		6:00pm	Beginners Bible Study
		6:00pm	Youth Group
Nov 14	Thu	6:00pm	Worship Band Practice
Nov 15	Fri	11am-2pm	Asbury Cafe Open
Nov 16	Sat	10am-12N	Japanese Jiu Jitsi
Nov 17	Sun	8am-10am	Japanese Jiu Jitsi
		9:30am	Café Open
		10:30am	New Beginnings
			Contemporary Worship

☐ **Current Bills for the last 30 days** – Bills must contain the name and address of the individual applying for assistance. Current bills include Rent, Mortgage, Water, Gas, Electric, Telephone, Cable, etc. **SALVATION ARMY WILL PRINT WATER OR CONSUMERS ENERGY BILLS ON SITE, IF NEEDED.**

☐ **Proof of Income for the last 30 days** - Pay stubs, Child Support Statement, Social Security, SSI, SSDI, Unemployment/Workman's Comp, etc. **NOTICE OF CASE ACTION (from DHHS) WILL BE ACCEPTED AS INCOME STATEMENT (statement cannot be more than 6 months old).**

Information Line: (810) 232-2196



Asbury Worship Series Food as Medicine

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.

Page 5

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

Mirroring Jesus leads us to both realizing that what we do with our bodies matters, and to receive the power to do something about it. But this promise is a non-starter without humility. We must first recognize that we are not capable of doing what we know we should do. Nor are we capable of not doing what we should not do. Our humility turns us towards God as the source of the power that we need. Left on our own, we will fail every time.

Most of us don't view ourselves as arrogant. And I suspect that most of us believe that we have a healthy degree of humility. But when we try to mirror Jesus on our own, after learning from scripture that this is not possible, isn't this an example of arrogance? Scripture tells us that Jesus emptied Himself, giving up His will for God's will. And He was obedient even when obedience would lead to His execution. This example of humility is powerful.

The second article that we read and discussed in Book Club is by a science reporter and author of books on science. The article cited research that has been completed by Psychologists that looks into humility as a trait. The study shows that only a rather small percentage of people are genuinely humble — between 10 and 15 percent.

Psychologists are looking into the mental health benefits of humility. Perhaps in the future, your therapist may be quizzing you on your humility and prescribing exercises to help you become more humble, as a prescription to improve your mental health. Research by Elizabeth Krumrei Mancuso of Pepperdine University showed that humility is strongly linked to curiosity, reflection, and open-mindedness. Research has also shown that humble people are less aggressive and less judgmental toward members of other religious groups, particularly after being challenged about their religious views.

I, your Lord and Teacher, have just washed your feet. You then, should wash one another's feet. I have set an example for you, so that you will do just what I have done for you.

John 13: 14-15

In our current series, *Food as medicine*, we turn to scripture for advice on how what we do with our bodies matters to God and our health. Our health matters to God. And it is no secret that most of us are not very good stewards of our bodies.

So our willingness to be humble matters because when we believe that we know better than God, our arrogance gets in the way of our well-being.

One of our core strategic goals at Asbury is to be a center for health and wellness. What we do with our bodies is fundamental to our health. Prescriptions that doctors write for patients are frequently as a result of not taking proper care of their body. And a big part, perhaps the most critical part of a prescription that is critical for life, is our spiritual development.

Health and wellness are not possible without a spiritual life. So we gather each Sunday for worship. Worship is critical for our health and well-being. Our third strategic goal for Asbury is to be a center of connections. Like our spiritual lives, our relationships matter.

To learn even more about humility and how it affects your health and well-being, be sure to join us on Sunday. If you are interested in learning more about humility there are lots of articles in addition to those cited here.

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 12 Noon 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

“Test us for ten days,” he said. “Give us vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then compare us with the young men who are eating the food of the royal court, and base your decision on how we look.” He agreed to let them try it for ten days. When the time was up, they looked healthier and stronger than all those who had been eating the royal food.

Daniel 1:11-16 (GNT)

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS

1. Read Daniel 1:11-16. Are you familiar with this story? Does it surprise you to find this story in scripture? What do you suppose is the relevance to this story? Why do you think that this story is included in scripture?
2. Read this week’s article titled *Dungeons & Vegans*. Have you chosen a fast for yourself? Tell the others your choice of fast and how you are doing so far. Have you noticed anything about your spiritual life during this time of fasting?
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?



Scripture is infrequently used as a source for recipes when it is time to prepare a meal. The list of entrees and ingredients are vague. And much of scripture that describes the food from that period is from a time when ancient grains were not ancient.

This week the Book of Daniel offers us one view of food choices. This book begins with Daniel and his Jewish friends being tempted by an offer to enjoy the choice foods that were fit for a king. They would be eating the same selections of food that the king enjoyed. A breakthrough for these young men who had been taken to a foreign land against their will.

Give us vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then compare us with the young men who are eating the food of the royal court...When the time was up, they looked healthier and stronger than all those who had been eating the royal food.

Daniel 1: 11-16

The "royal food" clearly was not a buffet for a vegan. More likely, the royal buffet consisted of meat dishes, rich foods, and lots of options. When I go to buffets, I tend to overeat. Even though I pass on the meat dishes, I still manage to put too much food on my plate. I can hear my dad's voice asking me if I am worried that I won't get another meal anytime soon. I can't put it back.

That would be rude. And even more rude not to clean my plate.

But Daniel, according to the story, was a vegan, or at least, Daniel did not believe that the king's buffet was as good a choice as a vegan diet. Daniel convinced the guard watching over him and his friends to allow them to eat vegetables and drink water. Daniel proposed that the guard give them ten days and then see whether they looked healthy.

I believe that the argument over the importance of eating vegetables was settled a long time ago. "Eat your vegetables" is a common directive from mothers. Unfortunately, too many mothers and fathers don't follow their own instructions. While encouraging each other to eat more vegetables is seldom controversial, suggesting that we eat less meat often results in an abrupt end to the conversation.

As more news surfaces about the health benefits of eating more vegetables and less meat, so has fears of a vegan take-over. There is a lot of misinformation about veganism. And misinformation about what is too much meat abounds. McDonald's spent over \$1.5 Billion on advertising in 2018. According to the USDA, beef sales in the U.S. for 2018 was over \$65 Billion.

My goal is not to convince people to become vegans or even vegetarians. I hope that we can all improve our health. Flint does have to be a place where people live shorter lives with more health issues than other areas. Change begins with our decision to allow God to do what God does. Fears that someone might take away our hamburger,

or drumstick, or whatever food that is your favorite, get in the way of allowing God to guide us to a healthier lifestyle.

Flint does not have to be a place where people live shorter lives with more health issues than other places.

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 9:30 am. You can find more information about us on our web site at FlintAsbury.org.

Pastor Tommy

Welcome to the Asbury Community

1653 Davison Rd
Flint, MI 48506



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

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.

Humbled (Humility and your Health) ...cont. from page 6

But the most important decision of all is the one that leads you to look to Jesus Christ for who God created you to be. Remember, while we look into the mirror to see ourselves, it is not what we see in the mirror that really matters. It is the One who we try to mirror that makes all the difference.

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 9:30 am. You can find more information about us on our website at FlintAsbury.org.

Humble people are less aggressive and less judgmental towards members of other religious groups, particularly after being challenged about their religious view.

Pastor Tommy

Be Humble, and Proudly, Psychologists Say. Benedict Carey. NY Times. Oct. 21, 2019.

The Quiet Power of Humility. Peter Wehner. NY Times. April 15, 2017.