

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Holy Goals (Pathway to better health)

Has this ever happened to you? Have you ever said to yourself, "This time is going to be different!" Sound familiar? Whether it is this time or this year, I believe that we have all tried to inspire ourselves with this resolution. "This time..." the outcome will be different than all of the times before. Something is going to change. Right?

And in some cases, this becomes a recurring theme. Nothing really changes despite our plans. Despite our intentions.

We fall short. This has happened to me more times than I want to imagine.



I don't like to let people down. Yet my role as pastor puts me in a lot of situations where I feel that I have done just that. "This year is going to be different," I declare. This year I am not committing to do

things that I cannot do," is one approach I've tried that does not work very well. When I remember that I serve a God who expects me to declare the impossible on His behalf, I remember that I am committed to being a conduit for God's love. And God does the impossible every day. But only when God decides. Meanwhile, people are disappointed in me.

What about you? Do you have significant change that you hope can

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Volume 20 Issue 19

January 19, 2020

Special points of interest:

*** Worship Design will be meeting on the 27th at 6pm in the Asbury Library.

*** Leadership Team will meet on Monday, January 20th at 6pm.

Friends (Others will know)

Most of you know that until a couple of years ago, I was a runner. Shortly after I moved to Flint, I joined up with a group of people that call themselves the *Flint Area Year Round Running/Walking Groups*. You can google them. You can join their Facebook Group. You can join one of their groups. You can

create your own group and stay connected with other groups with similar goals.



Our group met every Tuesday and Thursday at 6 pm at the "clock" that is in front of the UM Flint Student Center. In fact, there is a plaque mounted on the clock dedicated to the numerous groups that meet there.

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Friends (Others will know) ...cont. from page 1

As I got to know people around Flint, both through my CRIM group, I would sign up for races that others in the group planned to run, and, as a group, we would train together. Our group grew closer with each training day. I made some life-long friends that even though I had to give up running for a while, we continue to make time for one another.

Single people often think that finding a partner solves the problem of loneliness. But it does not work that way. Loneliness dissipates within a community. While there is more to loneliness than being around people, living with one person does not fulfill all of our need to be loved by others. We need a community. We need to be loved by persons — plural. We can be fulfilled and single, and we can be lonely and married. The secret sauce is the community.

There was a popular comedy series called *Friends*. The series featured a group of six friends who spent lots of time together. The show quickly increased its base of fans, airing for ten seasons, and reaching number one in its eighth year. The series ended in 2004.

The favorite hangout for the six friends was a coffee house called Central Perk. Two of the characters, Rachael and Monica, shared an apartment situated above the coffee shop. Living in New York City, where anyone could feel lost, this group of friends formed a core social group where each one was loved and cared for by the other five. The show's popularity comes out of a yearning that we all have to be loved, particularly when we are going through stuff.

It can be argued that none of us can ever fulfill our purpose without involving other people. Without debating the possibility that God set aside some people for solitude and we all know people that we would rather be one of those set aside for such a purpose, I want to focus on the rest of us. The person living in isolation still leaves a footprint. And so do we.

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Holy Goals (Pathways to better health)...cont. from page 1

happen in your life? Keep in mind, the focus of my question is on you. I have learned the hard way that we cannot change other people. Nor can we always improve our circumstances all that much. At least, not on our own.

But what about your health? Would you like to be healthier? Would you like to wake up each morning with more energy, think

more clearly, be less dependent on prescriptions, or other ways you use to take the edge off?

I love Jeremiah, chapter 29. The prophet's letter to the exiles in Babylon is priceless. This week we reference one of my favorite parts of this chapter — one of my favorite scriptures. God lets us know that only God knows the divine plans that are in store for us, and they are for our

prosperity. God's plans offer us the future that we hope for, and not the future that the world offers us.

But God alone knows how to get us there. If we trust God with our future, then we will seek God with all of our hearts. We are genuinely all in.

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In our Prayers

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

**FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE
HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE**

Mary Nations	Mary Russell
Elaine Lamoreaux	

**LAY SERVANT MINISTRIES
EAST WINDS DISTRICT
LEADERSHIP TRAINING
MARCH 2020**

This year the East Wind Lay Servant courses will be held at Asbury UMC on Friday, March 6th from 4:30pm-9:00pm and Saturday, March 7th at 9:00am-5:00pm.

Information, along with a list of the courses are on the bulletin board in the Café area, next to the church mailboxes. If you need more copies, just leave me a note in my mailbox and I will get you copies. If you need more information, you may also call Michele Weston at 810-624-1184.

Connie

Coming up this week

Jan 20	Mon	5:00pm	Youth Choir
		6:00pm	Leadership Team
		7:00pm	Flint Jubilee
Jan 21	Tues	10am-2pm	Water Distribution
		6:00pm	Community Gospel Choir
Jan 22	Wed	12Noon	Pastor Book Club
		6:00pm	Beginners Bible Study
		6-8:00pm	Rec Nite
Jan 23	Thu	6:00pm	Worship Band Practice
Jan 24	Fri	11am-2pm	Asbury Cafe Open
Jan 25	Sat	10am-12N	Japanese Jiu Jitsi
Jan 26	Sun	8am-10am	Japanese Jiu Jitsi
		9:30am	Café Open
		10:30am	New Beginnings
			Contemporary Worship

Asbury Worship Series Daniel Plan (January 2020)

If you haven't already signed up to participate in the Daniel Plan then just do it. Walk by faith. The Daniel Plan is not a diet plan, it is a spiritual journey. There is a

lot of information and a lot of changes to be made regarding food, but we begin with faith.



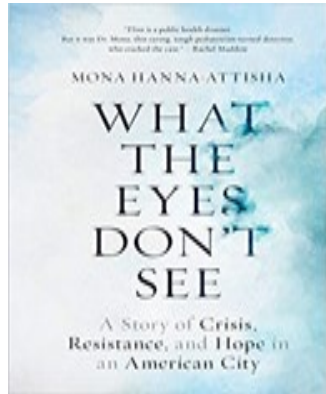
We begin by acknowledging that lifestyle changes don't happen by our own will power.

Here is the game plan, message-wise for our Sunday worship:

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Book Club News

We will be finishing a book written by a local hero in January. However, each week we will have a



“Daniel moment” that focuses some attention on the Daniel Plan. We will watch a short video lesson each week on

important information about the Daniel Plan that will help us with our journey.

Our current book was written by Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha. Dr. Mona

is the courageous, children's doctor who risked her reputation and her career to bring to light that our public water was poisoning us. Being a whistle-blower in the midst of desperate people willing to destroy anyone who disagrees with them requires courage, and other people willing to stand with you. This is Dr. Mona.

What the Eyes Don't See is a story about all of us. It is a personal story. We know the names in the book, or at least most of them. We know a lot that is not in her book. And we can feel the anger, helplessness, disgust, and regrets, that Dr. Mona shares in her testimony. More important, we have an opportunity to learn from the past, and to work together for a stronger Flint. But what does this look like to you?

Dr. Mona's book will challenge you to get involved, just as we challenge each other. And as we reflect on the events that rocked our community, you can anticipate new ideas and discussions that could shape how you view our circumstances. And what you may feel called to do about it.

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. There are a couple of books available. You can contact our office with questions, by phone or simply type your question on our website's homepage — FlintAsbury.org. Please consider making a donation to cover the cost of books.

Leadership in Worship & Service

Welcome Team	Tony, Mirium
Ushers	Anthony, Jim
Production Team	Jonathon, Terrance
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.

Asbury Staff

Rev. Dr. Tommy McDaniel	Pastor
Connie Portillo	Office Secretary
Sylvia Pittman	Empowerment Arts

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

Asbury Worship Series—Daniel Plan (January 2020) ...Cont. from page 4

True Worship—January 5, 2020	Romans 12:1-2
Holy Goals—January 12, 2020	Jeremiah 29:11
Friends—January 19, 2020	John 13:35
God Power—January 26, 2020	Ephesians 3:20
Complicated—February 2, 2020	Psalms 139-14

**The Daniel Plan
Faith, Friends, Fitness, Food and Focus**

Join us each Sunday and invite your friends and neighbors. 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

**Make a New Year's Resolution for
2020 to commit to The Daniel Plan.**

The Daniel Plan offers us guidance, but not a fixed pathway with a precise destination.¹ Instead, this plan is a plan to add the spiritual disciplines back into our life that the world has conspired to take away. The gods of this world demand our allegiance, and they are cleverly disguised as having our best interest in mind. But when another human tells us that they know what is best for us, we need to be careful. Even the suggestions found in the Daniel Plan should not take precedence over what God puts on our hearts.

The Daniel Plan is a guide book based on prayerful discernment.

I alone know the plans I have for you, plans to bring you prosperity and ...plans to bring about the future you hope for.

Jeremiah 29:11

Thankfully, the developers used medical research, experience, and a God-driven desire to help people become aligned with God's plan. God's Word is still the foundation. And God's daily guidance is the secret ingredient that makes it all come together. But we should interpret scripture using experience, tradition, and reason.

But as humans, we have limitations. Our first limitation is that we have a choice to make. The decision is ours to make, postpone, or turn the other way. Freewill is a divine gift that can only come from the God of Creation. "You decide", is the theme of

scripture. And if your answer is yes, the Bible is the best user manual available. All other guides are interpretations. Mine included.

So learning what the Bible has to say is an essential discipline that God offers us to help us find peace and joy in our life. It is sad how many people look elsewhere first. And even more disturbing is how many of us are more willing to listen to someone selling us something. Even though, in the end, only delays our success of achieving, "this time will be different."

I am not criticizing books, articles, papers, advice, or even Wikipedia. I am not criticizing salespeople or marketing teams. Well, maybe a little, when their sales goal is harmful to our health. I am a reader. And I am a life-long learner. I'm blessed not to be so smart that I can't learn something every day. Also, I tend to forget a lot of things that I learned, sometimes things I learned in kindergarten, that I wished I hadn't forgotten. I am talking here about which sources should take priority for us.

For example, the Daniel Plan book and some of the associated references emphasize the need for us to set goals regarding our health. The Bible does not go into some of the details that help us structure our goals. Books and experts on setting goals, emphasize the idea of SMART goals. SMART is a memory aid for writing a goal that is simple, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound. Then track your goals using your personal

*Daniel Plan Journal.*²



Also, one of the essential parts of interpreting scripture is our collective experience. And experience has proven that if we don't write down our goals, we are much less likely to achieve them. For example, experience has taught us that unless we set a goal where progress can be measured, we are unlikely to reach our goal. The specifics of writing down our goals are not found in scripture, but the Bible has a lot to say about how to go about setting life-giving goals.

This week, we are going to talk about *Holy goals*. A play on the word, Holy Ghost, because without God in the loop, our goals are more likely to take us further away from our real goal of peace and joy. On the other hand, there is something that many of us have learned from experience that is worth sharing.

Let's face it, most of us are not all that clear on the idea of God telling us what our goals should be for our health. Some of us simply take the stance that if we are sick, God should heal us. And when this does not happen, we blame God.

THE **D**+ANIEL PLAN

GOD'S PRESCRIPTION FOR YOUR HEALTH

SIGN UP TODAY ...

Why the Daniel Plan is so important ...

I have never met Pastor Steve Willis. But there is something that he said that is haunting me. And I hope that it will haunt you too. Pastor Steve's call to action is powerful, timely, and the shoe surely fits our community. We were poisoned by our public water system. But we can recover. Our children can recover. But the problem, at this point, is not someone else's problem. It is our problem. We have the solution and Pastor Steve's challenge is a call to step up and do something about our health.

The fight for good nutrition was never more real to me than when I watched my kindergarten-aged son struggle with adapting to his physician-prescribed, mind-altering drugs. Lucas had been having discipline problems in school, would frequently struggle with the ability to focus on tasks at hand, and found himself well below grade level in many academic areas...This is more than a health issue; it is a social justice issue. Millions of our children are not reaching their God-given potential because we, as adults, won't take the steps necessary to get them the nutrition they need. For the church, this problem has to be seen as a moral issue. For the sake of our children and our nation's future, we have to do better.¹

I agree. We have to do better. Teachers, healthcare professionals, counselors, clergy, and others are anticipating the first part of Pastor Steve's story to be a common story. Children with higher concentrations of lead in their bodies are prone to exhibiting behaviors that are not conducive to learning, including lower cognition. The only known solution is available to us. But not in a drive-through or at a liquor store.

But how is a community that sits in the middle of one of the least healthy counties in Michigan going to be able to regroup and move forward with the necessary changes to help ourselves and our children?

First, we are going to admit that we are incapable. We are going to stop making excuses for ourselves. We are going to quit pointing to some other power, whether it is the force, the ineffective excuse, "I'm spiritual, but I don't go to church" and the hundreds of other absurd claims that I hear every year as to why I don't see people on Sunday mornings. We are going to repent — that is, we are going to change. Our lives matter. Our children's lives matter.

The Daniel Plan
Faith, Friends, Fitness, Food and Focus

I found myself making a declaration this past week that I have declared before. I wrote and said that responding to God's will for our lives is a human right. And as a human right, we need to treat this right in the same way that we protect other human rights. But it is very difficult to respond to God's purpose for us when our health is less than it needs to be. The Daniel Plan is not the solution on its own, but it is a roadmap that points to and can help us pursue the solution. But the solution begins with God. Without God's power any plan is a non-starter.

By the way, Pastor Steve's son, Lucas, soon was off the drugs and today he is an A student. This story is not a one-of-a-kind, never to be repeated miracle. It is the sort of miracle that God offers every one of us. It is the miracle of making better choices. It is the miracle of taking care of ourselves and each other.

We will begin on Sunday, December 29, by writing down a resolution for 2020. For most of us, our resolution will begin in the same way. "In 2020 I will make my health and well-being a priority by participating in the Daniel Plan." And then we will write down a goal for each of the five areas: faith, food, friends, fitness, and focus. During the first five weeks of 2020, we will learn about each of the pillars of success, possibly modify our goals, and meet regularly with others who have made this same New Year's Resolution.

Make a New Year's Resolution for 2020 to commit to The Daniel Plan.

Join us each Sunday and invite your friends and neighbors. I lead a short Bible study in the Asbury Café at 9:30 am. *Dusty 2.0*, the musical, will be performed on Christmas Eve at 6 pm. We are praying for a big turnout, and that most of our visitors will return to participate in the Daniel Plan.

Pastor Tommy

¹ Warren, Rick. *The Daniel Plan*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan;



Life Group Questions & Notes

And now I give you a new commandment:

love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. If you have love for one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples

John 13:34-35 (GNT)

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS

1. Read John 13:34-35. What does this scripture saying to you? What does “loving each other” look like?
2. Read the article in this week’s Circuit Rider, *Friends*. Name some of the persons you call friends? What makes them a friend? Have you ever confused the exchange of help or other items with friendship? While friends help each other, friendship is not based on the exchange of things.
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?



Sometimes, we confuse friends with persons who might help us fulfill physical needs. While someone who takes an interest in our need to find a place to live, or a hot meal, is undoubtedly showing concern for our well-being, this is not yet friendship. Serving our physical needs is a transaction until we learn more about each other. Friendship takes time because it takes building trust, and friendships are not based on the exchange of material things. Friendship is a journey whereby we never quite arrive at a particular destination because it is traveling together that matters.

This may be why the idea of a journey along with walking is so prominent in the Bible. And why we often talk about our spiritual journey as our "walk." Our lives are like taking a trip from the womb to the tomb. What we experience along with the world as a result of our being affects us and the world. God designed the world in this way. None of us are truly independent of the world, whether we live off the grid or are connected via wires.

There is a story in the Gospel of John, about a time when Jesus gathered with friends.

These are friends who traveled with Him for a couple of years or so. They were together for supper. Jesus knew what was coming, and although He had told His friends what was going to happen, He knew that they needed more. Jesus knew that after He left His life on earth, after His death, these friends needed each other more than ever.

Those of us who claim to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, another journey metaphor, hope that our thoughts and actions are like the thoughts and actions that Jesus had under similar circumstances. We hope that others will see a little touch of Jesus in us. Enough that they will be curious and want to know more.

If you have love for one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples.
John 13:35

Jesus leaves us with this picture of a great way to start. "If you have love for one another, then everyone will know." It's that simple, friends. When we love one another, we are walking through life with an idea of the mindset of Jesus. And people will notice.

Following Jesus involves people. Unlike the directions that come with the gadgets we buy that were written by lawyers, the instructions for following Jesus are clear. Directions don't come any clearer than this.

If you haven't yet signed up for the Daniel Plan, be sure to do so.¹ Each person living in our community who signs up receives your very own copy of *The Daniel Plan Journal*.² If you are not a part of the Asbury Community, we still invite you to participate with us, but we ask that you purchase a copy on your own. These journals can be purchased on Amazon or other vendors. You can also go to the DanielPlan.com store to buy this and other resources.

Following Jesus involves people

We worship each Sunday at 10:30 am. I hope to see you there. You can find more information about us on our website at FlintAsbury.org.

Pastor Tommy

¹ Warren, Rick, Dr. Daniel Amen, Dr. Mark Hyman. *The Daniel Plan*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013.

² Warren, Rick, and the Daniel Plan Team. *The Daniel Plan Journal - 40 Days to a Healthier Life*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013.

Welcome to the Asbury Community

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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.

Holy Goals (Pathway to better health) ...cont. from page 6

We don't blame ourselves. But God gave us the free will to choose how we make choices regarding taking care of our bodies. And most illness is preventable if we take care of our bodies. Ouch!

The Daniel Plan puts it on the line. You choose. If you want better health, refocus your prayers towards the prayer request, "Lord, help me to take better care of my body." Learn about what this means from others, from reading the Daniel Plan resources, and from your own experiences. And prayerfully write down your goals for making the lifestyle changes that you learn are required for you to meet your goals.

So I pray to God to show me the way. Instead of clarity, God puts this Daniel Plan thing in my path. Now what? Here is some advice that I hope can work for you. Do

something. Worry less about whether you clearly heard God's voice with a well-defined SMART goal. Instead, focus more on staying connected to God to help with discerning your day to day progress and challenges. God will answer. In my experience, God answers prayer as you go forward rather than while you are sitting around waiting for a bush to catch on fire.

Trust that God has a plan in mind for you. But God is infinitely wiser and more powerful than we are. If you make a mistake, God still has your well-being in mind. God can work with whatever you give Him. But only when you are all in. It really is a trust thing. Trust that God will help you adjust as you move forward. But first, the decision is yours.

If you haven't yet signed up for the Daniel Plan, be sure to do so. Each person living in our community who

signs up receives your very own copy of *The Daniel Plan Journal*. If you are not a part of the Asbury Community, we still invite you to participate with us, but we ask that you purchase a copy on your own. These journals can be purchased on Amazon or other vendors. You can also go to the DanielPlan.com store to buy this and other resources.

Trust that God has a plan that is good for you.

Here at Asbury, we worship each Sunday at 10:30 am, and 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.

Pastor Tommy