ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Legends in Black History

Our African American heroes this week are Phyllis Wheatley and Maya Angelou. Both women were outspoken trailblazers that used poetry to express thoughts and opinions that served as cultural change agents.

Phyllis Wheatley was born in West Africa in 1753, at the age of seven or eight she was sold to slave traders. After being transported to America she was placed on the auction block and sold to John Wheatley a wealthy Boston merchant and tailor.



Phyllis Wheatley

Wheatley bought the young girl to be a servant for his wife Susanna. John and Susanna named the child Phyllis after the ship that had bought her to America. The Wheatley's daughter Mary tutored Phyllis in reading and writing. By the age of 12 she was reading Greek and

Latin Classics as well as different passages from the Bible.

Phyllis wrote her first poem at the age of fourteen. In 1773 at the age of twenty, she went to London with the Wheatley's son, Nathaniel to investigate the possibility of getting her poetry published. Phyllis' book was published in England. In November of 1773 the Wheatley's formally set her free from slavery. Phyllis Wheatley became the first published African American

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Special points of interest:

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

*** Join us for Ash Wednesday Service on February 26th at 7pm at Flushing UMC (413 E Main Street).

*** City of Flint Neighborhood Planning will meet on Tuesday, March 3rd at 4:30pm.

How to have more courage (The way of courage)

We end our three-week, mini-series, that began with Jesus telling us to love our enemies, with the way of courage. And this week we focus on life-or-death sorts of enemies. Are we really supposed to love them too?

During the first century, the Jewish people were threatened and on the brink of war. The burning question was, "What sort of savior do



we want?" There is a story from the Gospels that usually

comes up around Easter, that needs to be told now. The story involves a man called Barabbas. But this story is also a story about all of us.

You see, there are always two ways before us. And the more we feel under attack, the more tempted we are to choose a savior who

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How to have more courage (The way of courage) ...cont from page 1

promises to put an end to our enemies. Whatever voices in our head that tell us that killing is wrong are drowned out by shouts of desperation.

This is also a story that reinforces that the gentle way of Jesus is not just for bloggers who annoy us and neighbors who get on our nerves. When Jesus says to love your enemies, He means the people who have chosen the way of evil and are literally seeking to destroy you.

The cross and resurrection are about life and death. Loving our enemies in this way requires a belief in love more powerful than death. And loving in this way takes more courage than anyone I know actually has within them.

There is a quote by a man named Gilbert Keith Chesterton that comes to mind. ""The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult; and left untried." This is truer than we would like. While there are examples where one person has shown a love that approaches the love shown to us by God, in Jesus Christ, there aren't many. The way of Jesus, sometimes called the way of the cross, is a way for the courageous.

Our culture too often thinks of courage as taking on our enemies. Standing up to others. Lately, standing up to enemies has become synonymous with namecalling. I picture two nine-year-olds on the school playground, trading

childish names for one another in a verbal tic-for-tac battle.

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She released her first album "Miss. Calypso "in 1957. In 1961 she appeared in an Off Broadway play "The Blacks" with James Earl Jones, Louis Gossett, and Cecily Tyson. The show was a success with over one thousand performances.

Tall and majestic with a deep rich voice, she described herself as a poet in love with the music of language. Maya Angelou mastered French, Spanish, Italian, Arabic and the West African language "Fanti" during her years living in Cairo and Ghana.

In 2000 Maya received the Presidential Medal of the Arts. And in 2011 President Barack Obama awarded her the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Ms. Angelou passed away in 2014 at the age of 86.

Sylvia Pittman

Legends in Black History....cont. from page 1

woman to make a living with her writings. She died in 1784 at the age of 31.

Maya Angelou was born Marguerite Johnson in 1928 in St. Louis. Maya was raised by her grandmother in Stamps, Arkansas. She would follow the path that Phyllis Wheatley trod, overcoming the shame of rape and the pain of racial discrimination. Maya studied modern dance

with Martha Graham and partnered with Alvin Ailey on TV variety shows.



Maya Angelou

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In our Prayers

Curtis Young Mirium 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

NOTE: THE DATES HAVE CHANGED

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, May 1st from 4:30pm-9:00pm and Saturday, May 2nd 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



Feb 24	Mon	5:00pm	Youth Choir
		6:00pm	Worship Design
		7:00pm	Flint Jubilee
Feb 25	Tues	10am-2pm	Water Distribution
		6:00pm	Community Gospel Choir
Feb 26	Wed	12Noon	Pastor Book Club
		6:00pm	Beginners Bible Study
		6-8:00pm	Rec Nite
		7:00pm	Ash Wednesday Service
		at Flushin	g UMC (413 E Main St)
Feb 27	Thu	6:00pm	Worship Band Practice
Feb 28	Fri	llam-2pm	Asbury Cafe Open
Feb 29	Sat	10am-12N	Japanese Jiu Jitsi
Feb 29 Mar 1	Sat Sun		jupanione junjuni
			July account of the July
		8am-10am	Japanese Jiu Jitsi



*** Elaine Lamoreaux is home from the hospital. She indicated they had taken out her pacemaker and put in a defibrillator. She said she feels a lot better but still has a long road ahead of her, but would still like for you to send your prayers that she heals quick and she will be back attending church service soon.

Connie

Page 4 ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

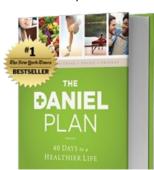
Asbury Worship Series Woven (Coming March 1)

The Season of Lent, which begins March 26, is seven weeks long. Including the partial week that starts on a Wednesday, we count forty days until Easter. That is when we don't count Sundays.

Book Club News

Want to know more about the Daniel Plan? Join us each Wednesday at Noon, downstairs in the large meeting room adjacent to the Asbury Event Center. For the next few weeks we are reading and discussing The Daniel Plan: 40 Days to a Healthier Life.

Written by a pastor and two medical doctors, this book can be a game



changer for anyone willing to try their proven plan for better health. The *Daniel Plan* makes the bold claim to be "God's prescription for your

health." Why? Because without God's

These forty days are symbolic of the time that Jesus spent in the wilderness following His baptism. We believe that this time is steeped in Holy mystery. But our traditions can reduce the Holy Mystery that we claim for it when viewed by those just outside the fence that separates traditional believers from everyone else.

We design worship at Asbury, based on what little we know about the people that God plans to send to worship with us. This goal leads us to

help there is no plan. At least there is no plan that works.

The *Daniel Plan* is based on five building blocks: faith, friends, food, fitness, and focus. Each building block is crucial to success. We can imagine these pillars with faith in the center, connecting the other four building blocks.

The *Daniel Plan* is not a diet. Rather, it is a proven approach to achieving a healthy lifestyle. Unlike the thousands of other books on the market, this book is not about a new diet, guilt-driven gym sessions, or shame-driven fasts.

We believe that this book, written by Pastor Rick Warren and fitness and medical experts Dr. Daniel Amen and Dr. Mark Hyman, offers a proven guide to making healthy choices. Most important, the concepts in this book will encourage you to deepen

Jim Craig Leadership Chair
Kevin Croom Dir. Operations
Blair Neifert Farm Manager
Matt Dee Farm Operations
Israel Unger Function to Funding
Kim Sims Connections

istine & Norma Asbury Café

Plan to meet outside the sanctuary each
Sunday before worship for coffee, tea,
snacks, conversation and so on. The music
will start when it is time to wrap up and
head in for worship.

set aside our customary language. Instead of "Lent," we choose Easter preparations or some other phrase using more familiar words. Words that are more secular because they have multiple meanings in everyday use.



Wall Street, , Seung Hoon Park Susan Spiritus Gallery

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your relationship with God and develop a community of supportive friends who will encourage you to make smart food and fitness choices each and every day.

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 still books available. While we appreciate donations to help with the cost of purchasing books, your participation is what matters the most. Please accept a copy of this book as a gift.

You can contact our office with questions, by phone or simply type your question on our website's homepage — FlintAsbury.org.

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, Terrance
Children Patrice & Mirium
Worship Leaders Cyndi
Café Christine & Norma

Asbury Staff

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



Woven (Coming March 1) ... Cont. from page 4

Woven, is what we call our worship series that begins on March 1. The first month that we associate with Spring. And our series concludes on Easter Sunday.

For this next series, we reference a book, titled *Woven*, as a thematic outline.¹ Woven is about a spiritual awakening. The writer identifies three modes, phases, stages, or otherwise, poetic labels for his spiritual journey. The invitation is for us to determine how his journey relates to our own. And to be changed. He identifies these segmentations as sculpted, unraveled, and woven.

These milestones or places can be thought of as phases. The first place is our starting point. The place where our journey begins. We start here in our series by first celebrating together in the spirit of *Mardi Gras*. Fat Tuesday. We dance to the music, only partially aware that in doing so, our bodies are moving. One of the five critical foundations prescribed by the Daniel Plan. Some of us will indulge in a *paczki*, or two. After all, it is a party.

The next day is Ash Wednesday. This year we join with our friends in Flushing as we kick off the Season of Lent with worship. We haven't left home. We are still our sculpted selves. We still live within both visible and invisible fences that keep us safely separated from the other. And in some frightening ways, separated from God.

The first day of March. The month of Spring. We begin our process of unraveling by first meeting ourselves. We meet ourselves from a distance. As though we are strangers who encounter ourselves for the first time. Who are we? Am I meeting the person I expected to meet? We begin with the community that shaped our views. How we see the world.

By March 15, we hope to transition from the safety of our fenced-in world to a place where our sculpted self crumbles. We are in the wilderness with Jesus. We see, hear, and experience ideas that seem foreign to us. We try to imagine life outside the fence. We meet our unraveled self along the path we walk.

By the first Sunday in April, our attention turns towards new possibilities. Can we imagine resurrection? The place we are headed towards becomes more visible. We find a new weave by taking the deconstructed strands of our past beliefs and discover a new way of being and doing. A place where the inside and outside come together. We meet our woven selves.

I pray that you will plan to journey with us.

Here is the plan for March and the first two Sundays in April.

Fat Tuesday Celebration - February 25, 2020

Sometimes we just have to be bad to remind us that being bad is not worth it. Join us for a *paczki* and music at 6 pm in the Asbury Event Center in the lower level. While your here be sure to sign up for Daniel Plan 2.0 and take home a personal journal to help guide you through the Season of Lent.

Ash Wednesday - February 26, 2020

Treat your *paczki* hang-over with a worship service to kick-off your participation in *Life raft*. We join with other communities at Flushing UMC for a worship service at 7 pm.

March 1 & 8, 2020

Sculpted

March 15, 22 & 29, 2020

Unraveled

April 5 & 12, 2020

Woven

¹ Joel McKerrow, Woven - a faith for the dissatisfied. Sydney, Australia: Acorn Press, 2019.

² Seung Hoon Park, an artist from Seoul, S. Korea, is creating the most unusual images with the use of an 8×10" camera and threading the film to mimic the look of woven textiles. He uses both 8mm and 16mm films to create his work, each with a different outcome.

Volume 20 Issue 23

Life Raft (Daniel Plan, version 2.0)

Who doesn't need a life raft? Someone who doesn't need saving? I don' know any of these people. Except for those who don't realize they are drowning.

My experience is that we all need a life raft. Sometimes we need a life raft waiting just in case. Hanging off the side of whatever boat in which we are traveling in case we start taking on water, and our boat is in danger of sinking. Can you identify?



2020 began, here at Asbury, with announcing an invitation to participate in the *Daniel Plan*. I'm guessing that the vast majority of persons who heard this invitation figured that the *Daniel Plan* is just another diet scheme to lose a few pounds. Some wondered, "Who is this Daniel guy?" A few made their protests known. My favorite was, "No one is telling me I can't eat meat!"

First, Daniel refers to a prophet found in the Old Testament. He has his own book with his name on it.

Second, the *Daniel Plan* is not a diet.

While it is true that there is a lot of emphases, perhaps too much, on

what we eat, the *Daniel Plan* is much more than a diet.

Midway through the first 40 days of launching the Daniel Plan, it was clear that we needed a relaunch. We needed a *Daniel Plan 2.0*. But if we relaunch the same ideas, there is too much risk that our invitation will be ignored. We need a divine plan. A plan inspired by the Holy Spirit that is custom made for our community.

Introducing *Life raft*. The idea of a life-saving raft came out of our community. Specifically, our community of artists. We need a revolution. And artists know that revolutions come together around powerful ideas with broad appeal. Also, good revolutions are started by artists who show us our reflection and offer new, often prophetic horizons.

I believe that art is the language of the divine. That God speaks through art, and that artists express God through art. Before you react, allow me to unpack this claim.

We have all seen art and said,
"What is this?" The painting didn't
speak to us. And most of us have
experienced art that we found lacking in quality. A singer is off-key, a
dancer is out of step, a painting is
uninspiring, or an instrument is out
of tune. This doesn't mean that we
didn't experience art. Nor does it say
that God was silent.

I also believe that God likes to

personalize. Like a brilliant speaker, an artist, who can speak to millions of people, and each one feels like the speaker is talking just to them. God, speaking through art, is like a painting that we can't quite figure out, but holds us spellbound and wanting to know more.

But personal also means selective. Sometimes a message isn't intended for us, even though we may be listening in.

When I was a teenager, I enjoyed listening to Bob Dylan. His music spoke to me. While attending college, I discovered my roommate didn't share my taste in music. When I heard Dylan, I heard God speaking through a fellow poet. A colleague. Another artist. Later I would feel the same way about Leonard Cohen. I don't know for sure what is meant by the lost chord in *Hallelujah*. But I want to.

I pray that you will consider joining us each Sunday for worship and during the week as a volunteer. Email us at connect@FlintAsbury.org to learn about volunteer opportunities. I lead a short Bible study each Sunday in the Asbury Café at 9:30 am. You can find more information about us on our website at FlintAsbury.org.



YOU CAN STILL SIGN UP ...

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 hour 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

Lagree. 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 drivethrough 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 guit 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.

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

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 req-

ularly with others who have made this same New Year's Resolution.

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.

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

Volume 20 Issue 23

Life Group Questions & Notes

What, then, shall I do with Jesus called the Messi-

ah?" Pilate asked them. "Crucify him!" they all answered.

Matthew 27:15-23 (GNT)

NOTES FROM WORSHIP				

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS

- 1. Read Matthew 27:15-23. Is this story familiar? What insights did you gain when you read it this time? Where are you in the story? Are you in the crowds?
- 2. Read the article in this week's Circuit Rider, *How to have more courage*. Do you ever feel like you are afraid to speak up when you know you should? What kind of Savior are you looking for? How does your image of a Savior compare or contrast with the idea from Jesus that we should love our enemy?
- 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? Pray for each other to have the Holy Spirit bless you with more courage.

How to have more courage (The way of courage)...cont. from page 2

But name-calling too often leads to violence. While we can laugh at the lunacy of it all, we also realize that these childish grownups often have access to destructive forces. What kind of savior do we want? Can we follow a savior who demands courage from us?

Pilate asked the crowd, "Which one of these two do you want me to set free for you?" "Barabbas!" they answered.

Matthew 27:21

Jesus is arrested. But there is still a chance to save Him. What will I do? What would You do? The momentum of the crowds is against Him. Going against popular opinion is risky. And what can one person do anyway? Yet, Jesus was arrested because He dared to speak truth to power. This is the Way of Jesus. Are you ready?

Most of us are not ready. But it's inspiring to read about people who seem to be. And it isn't very comforting to imagine ourselves being ready. I love the stories of Peter's enthusiasm bubbling over. But there is

nothing written about Peter speaking up when the authorities offered to release Jesus. Forgetting about the irony that any human can actually save the Savior. Where was Peter's enthusiasm then?

Fortunately, like the question we tackled last week about how to have more patience, there is a way to have more courage. It is the way of the cross. And it is the way of embodying God's Spirit within us. Even as our body shakes, and our instincts tell us to put our support behind the Savior who will put a stop to our enemies, the Holy Spirit will move us forward. Forward along the way of Jesus.

This is the Way of Jesus. Are you ready?

On Tuesday, February 25, we are throwing a party. After all, it's *Mardi Gras*. Sometimes known as Fat Tuesday. We celebrate a tradition of turning our attention to God and seeking the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Beginning the next day, we launch the Daniel Plan, version 2.0. The "new and improved" designation is a reference to the new and improved you. We are calling this version 2.0 plan, *Life raft*.

If you haven't yet signed up for the Daniel Plan, be sure to do so.² Each person living in our community who signs up receives your very own copy of *The Daniel Plan Journal*.³ 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 from other vendors. You can also go to the <u>DanielPlan.com</u> store to buy this and other resources.

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.

XXX

² Warren, Rick, Dr. Daniel Amen, Dr. Mark Hyman. *The Daniel Plan*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013.

³ 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

1653 Davison Rd Flint, MI 48506



NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION U.S. POSTAGE PAID FLINT, MICHIGAN PERMIT #151

Phone: 810-235-0016

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

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.

Bible Study & Meal

Spanish & English

Cena y Studio Biblico

En Ingles y Espanol

Come for a time of fellowsip, study, and a family meal where we offer adult Bible Study an discussion and AWANA program for kids from 2 years old to 12th grade.

Ven con nosotros a un tiempo de convivio, studio, y cena para toda la familia donde ofreceremos studio Biblico con platica para adultos y AWANAs para ninos de 2 a 16 anos.

Every Monday from 6:30-8:30pm starting Monday, March 9, 2020.

Todos los Lunes empesando el dia Marzo 9, 2020 de las 6:30-8:30pm.

Asbury Wesley Room (downstairs) 1653 Davison Rd, Flint

Jesus answered, "It is written: Man shall not live on bread along, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." Matthew 4:4

RSVP to Gus@cstoneepc.com or text to 810-923-3847 with name and number of attendees and if any children are coming.

RSVP a Gus@cstoneepc.com o manda un texto a 810-923-3847 con nombre, numero de invitados y si vendran ninos menores.

North Flint Church

