



# ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Volume 2 Issue 31

October 31, 2021

## Hope-filled (God gives us hope<sup>1</sup>)



What do you hope for? Recently, the answer to this question for a lot of us goes something like “I just want to feel normal again.” But, unfortunately, the pandemic interrupted

life as we knew it and then hung around long enough to make us wonder whether “normal” is even a possibility for the future.

When hope is accompanied by action, in this case, getting vaccinated and taking recommended precautions, normal is on the near horizon. Hope that involves cooperation among a large number of people can seem more like unwarranted optimism. But we can still hope.

In her book, *You Are Enough*, Danielle Bean

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Please continue to wear your masks when in the building. If you don't have one, let us know we will provide one for you.



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## Trust (Braving the cost of trust<sup>1</sup>)



According to the dictionary Google uses, the word "trust" means a "firm belief in the character, strength, or truth of

someone or something." Not to be confused with a "Living Trust," which legally binds others to your wishes when you're

not around to check on them. Trusting another person is a big deal and full of risks. Trusting my F150 to pull the equipment trailer with the tractor on it is a lot easier.

But people aren't things and how much trust we put into each other is tricky business.

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## Trust (Braving the cost of trust<sup>1</sup>)..cont from page 1

I once had a mentor who told me that he trusts nearly everyone — to do what comes naturally. Of course, this assumption means my mentor trusted some persons not to be trustworthy. I think what he trusted most was his intuition. And this works for some of us.

In addition to finding the definition of trust, my Google search suggested numerous websites where I could learn more about the legal aspects of ensuring that your wishes get done in your absence. A legal Trust sounds like the opposite of trust.

Perhaps my mentor was on to something. Trust comes much easier with a legal contract. That is, provided you have an enforceable contract, a good lawyer, and the temperament to litigate. When did trusting become so expensive?

This week's theme is about trust that doesn't involve lawyers. We're talking about a trust that doesn't have to go to court for resolution. A level of trust that even when all indications are that our trust was in vain, we trust nonetheless. Is this even possible?

Charles Feldman, a community mediator and business consultant, defines trust as "choosing to risk making something you value vulnerable to another person's actions." <sup>2</sup> Okay, now I see the reason a legally binding contract is so important. The flip side of trust is distrust, where we believe that what we hold as valuable in terms of our vulnerability is not safe with another. Ouch!

So what does it take to build a level of trust where I'm willing to give someone the kryptonite that could destroy me?

Dr. Brené Brown, in an episode of one of Oprah Winfrey's Super Soul sessions, offered an acronym for the foundations of trust — BRAVING. Her acronym required a lot of letters because building and holding trust is hard work. It's more complicated than sticking to a diet but like dieting, gaining trust requires developing healthy habits.

**Boundaries — Reliability—  
Accountability— Vault —  
Integrity — Non-judgment —  
Generosity**

For us to trust each other, we need to set and keep boundaries.

We must reliably do what we say we're going to do. We hold ourselves accountable. We keep secrets — not just the secrets between us, but we do the same for others as well. We demonstrate integrity through our courage in making choices that reflect our values. We don't judge each other when we're struggling. And Grace is a given, so we always presume the best by generously giving Grace.

Trust reminds me of the simple requirement that God gave humankind — love each other. Trust, like eating healthy, is not complicated unless we're trying to cheat on our diet. Trust is easy unless we're trying to be untrustworthy while hoping that others will still trust us.

Since trusting each other is so tricky, let's shift our attention to trusting God. What might it look like to trust God? How well does God do on Brené Brown's BRAVING test of trustworthiness?

Scripture answers this question with stories.



**In Our Prayers**

Kevin Croom  
 Sylvia Pittman  
 Shirley Craig  
 Richard Oram



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

Nancy Elston            Elaine Lamoreaux  
 Norma Buzzard        Mary Nations

**Coming up this week**

**\* PASTOR BOOK CLUB NEWS:**

Pastor Book Club is still meeting via Zoom. Please call the Church Office for more info 810-235-0016 as it changes.

Meanwhile, as a lot of you are already aware, sharp increases in new infections of COVID are pushing us back into isolation. While our regular attenders are vaccinated, we realize that a large number of persons are not vaccinated.

Therefore, we reinstated our policy to require masks in our building for all persons when not eating or drinking. If you don't have a mask, we can provide one for you, just ask the office.

Thank you and everyone stay safe!

**\*\* Don't forget to change your clocks, back (1) hour on Saturday (11/6) before going to bed\*\***

- Nov 1      Mon
- Nov 2      Tues    10:00am-12:30pm  
                  Food/Water Distribution
- Nov 3      Wed    12Noon      Pastor Book Club  
                  11:00am-12N    Food Giveaway at  
                          South Flint Soup Kitchen
- Nov 4      Thu
- Nov 5      Fri
- Nov 6      Sat    12Noon      Food Not Bombs
- Nov 7      Sun    10:30am  
                  New Beginnings  
                  Contemporary Worship

(We are live on [Facebook](#) and our newly launched [YouTube channel](#). You can find these links along with more information about us on our website at [FlintAsbury.org](#).)

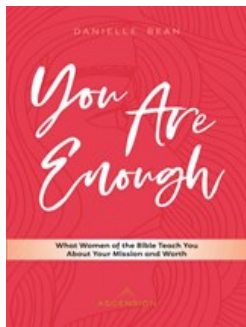
## Asbury Worship Series Better Together



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### Book Club News

We're concluding our discussions of Barbara Brown Taylor's book, *Holy Envy*, so we're ready to jump into our next topic. Barbara is clearly a stand-out among women of her generation. A priest, professor, and frequent speaker, her words and stories continue to inspire us.



Over the past year, we've experienced the election of our first woman Vice President. The election of Kamala Harris places her both in the history books and in the spotlight. Kamala was one of six women who sought nomination as President. A 2019 survey conducted by LeanIn.org found that 53% of registered voters were either "very ready" or "extremely ready" for a woman president.

### Leadership in Worship & Service

Tony, Mirium	Welcome Team
Anthony, Jim	Ushers
Jonathon, Terrance	Production Team
Miriam	Children
Cyndi	Worship Leader
Christine & Norma	Cafe

#### Asbury Staff

Rev. Dr. Tommy McDaniel	Pastor & Exec Dir
Connie Portillo	Office Manager
Sylvia Pittman	Empowerment Arts
Jim Craig	Board & Leadership Chair
Kevin Croom	Exec Chef & Dir Opers

You can't make this stuff up. And you don't have to because it's right there in print. Turn to the book of Judith, and you'll find an intriguing story of sacrifice, deceit, and bravery by a woman willing to risk her life to save her country. A woman with her own book, Judith was a faithful, wealthy widow. When her country is threatened by the Assyrian army, and the people are ready to surrender, Judith

hatches a plan, confident that God will protect her from harm.

But I don't want to spoil the ending.

*Better together* is a 2-part worship series based on women found in the Old Testament. Much of the content for this series comes from the book,

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For our new series, *Better together*, our life group chose a book by a lesser-known yet influential female writer named Danielle Bean.<sup>1</sup> She is the brand manager for CatholicMom.com and former publisher and editor-in-chief of Catholic Digest. Danielle is also the creator and host of a weekly Catholic women's television talk show called *The Gist*. In addition, she has published several books, is a popular public speaker, and hosts her own podcast.

From the back cover of *You are Enough*, we read that Danielle Bean's book is an "invitation from God for belonging and love." Each of us is unique, worthy of love, and called to greatness. But in a divisive world, we get distracted from that truth and begin to doubt God's love is real.

Sadly, too many of us, particularly women, are told that we are not smart enough, pretty enough, sexy enough, or thin enough. So it is no wonder that so many forget that we are already made perfect. We are already enough. And God has made each of us for a unique purpose.

In her book, Danielle Bean introduces us to several women found in the Old Testament. She invites us to see how God's love for each of us shines forth through their stories. She invites us to connect with these remarkable women's hopes, dreams, struggles, and experiences. And to learn how their lives offer valuable lessons for our lives today.

Recent increases in new infections of COVID among the unvaccinated are pushing us back into isolation. While our regular attenders are vaccinated, we realize that a large number of persons are not vaccinated. Therefore, we reinstated our policy to require masks in our building for all persons when not eating or drinking.

We strongly urge all persons to get vaccinated as soon as practical unless advised by your doctor. Avoid news sources that promote baseless claims and pay closer attention to the experts we depend on to keep us safe.

We each make our own arrangements for lunch at this point. However, we look forward to returning to pot-luck lunches when infection rates fall. We anticipate this happening as the number of vaccinations reaches herd immunity levels, and the CDC relaxes precautionary measures.

If you prefer to avoid groups or live too far away I encourage you to [join us online](#) for our Wednesday gatherings. Alternatively, you can call in by phone, be heard, and hear what others say by calling (929) 436-2866 -- enter the meeting ID, 282 039 5568#.

We are a diverse group, and we are delighted when new persons join us. I hope that you will join in on our discussion.

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

Pastor Tommy

<sup>1</sup> [Danielle Bean](#). *You are Enough: What Women of the Bible Teach You about Your Mission and*



## *Better Together ... Asbury Worship Series*

*You are Enough*, a book about many of the women found in the Old Testament.<sup>1</sup>

Our worship team is inviting you to share your favorite women of the Old Testament. Perhaps you identify with a particular story or character. Why? What fits? What doesn't fit? Send a selfie video to [ArtsCenter@FlintAsbury.org](mailto:ArtsCenter@FlintAsbury.org) so we can share your story with others.

Check out Rahab, Abigail, Bathsheba, Tamar, Judith, Delilah, Sarah, Hannah, the un-named Widow helped by Elijah, the Shunammite Woman, Miriam the Princess, Rachael and Leah, Ruth and Naomi, and of course, Eve. Which of these stories intersect with your story?

Man, woman, non-binary, or any combination, you're invited to participate in our series. Share what you admire about one or more of these women. In what ways do they remind you of a particular person in your life? What do you have in common?

Our Book Club plans to follow along in Danielle's book during our series if you want deeper discussions on our weekly themes. We have a few books available, or you can check with the library or order your own copy from several sources.

The latest variants of COVID are more contagious. As a result, there is a resurgence of new infections among the unvaccinated. It's time to come out of whatever fears or biases keep you from being a part of the solution. Get vaccinated!

I pray that you will join us each Sunday morning at 10:30 am. We share our weekly explores live on our [YouTube channel](#). We go live at 10:30 am. You can find these links along with more information about us, or join our live broadcast on our [website](#) at [FlintAsbury.org](http://FlintAsbury.org).

Pastor Tommy

<sup>1</sup> Danielle Bean. *You are Enough: What Women of the Bible Teach You about Your Mission and Worth*. West Chester, PA: Ascension Publishing,

## Hope-filled (God gives us hope<sup>1</sup>)... *cont. from pg 1*

shares a story about a time in her life when she was pregnant with their 4th child, and feeling like normal for her seemed elusive. For Danielle, normal meant more reliable and convenient transportation. All she wanted was a minivan to replace their aging and not-so-reliable station wagon. Don't normal families have a minivan? <sup>1</sup>

So Danielle did what many of us do when we want something we don't have but see little chance of our wish come true. We pray.

Admitting that her prayer was more edgy than usual and definitely more bratty, Danielle took her petition to God. All the while realizing that a minivan, given their constrained budget, would be impossible. She was asking for a divine miracle of convenience, realizing that God indeed saw through her petty whining and complaining. After all, did not Jesus once say something about not worrying about trivial things like food and clothes?

To be more precise, Jesus said something along the lines of "Do not worry about tomorrow; it will have enough worries of its own. There is no need to add to the troubles each day brings" (Matthew 6:34). And elsewhere, Jesus encourages us to ask for the things our heart desires. I'm not so sure that there is a right or wrong when it comes to our wants, although admittedly,

my longing for an F250 that is not rusted out may be affecting my judgment.

Our superwoman story for this week is about a woman who wanted what Danielle already had in abundance. Hannah wanted children, and she also took her request to God. In fact, when the Priest Eli confronts Hannah at the Temple, he thinks she might have come to church a bit high.

Hannah assures the priest that she was simply distressed over her situation and says to Eli, "I have been praying, pouring out my troubles to the Lord" (1 Samuel 1:15).

Hannah's situation was worsened by the constant torment of an adversary that flaunted her children in front of Hannah. And also took every advantage to build herself up by tearing Hannah down. So, admittedly, instead of feeling happy that God blessed Peninnah with children, Hannah was jealous.

I have been praying,  
pouring out my troubles to  
the Lord.

1 Samuel 1:15

"How often do we feel belittled by the blessings God gives to others, but not to us?" Danielle writes. So Danielle realizes as her husband reminds her that normal is not about owning a minivan. But even if there are more important things than minivans, Danielle's hope was motivated by more than jealousy.

Hannah does what a lot of us do when confronted with need. She bargains with God. Hannah's prayer concludes with, "Give me a son, and I will give him completely, unreservedly to you. I will set him apart for a life of holy discipline" (1 Samuel 1:11 MSG).

An article I found on [HopeGrows.net](http://HopeGrows.net) offers that "To have hope is to want an outcome that makes your life better in some way." The article adds that hope is different from optimism because everyone hopes for something, including the most pessimistic among us. <sup>2</sup>

Hope is more than optimism because hope also motivates us to anticipate our hopes coming true. Hope makes it more likely that the steps needed to realize our hope takes place. We meet

One of my favorite stories is about a nameless widow who lived in the village of Zarephath. This single mother was near her wits-end, making a life for herself and her son out of nothing. The cupboard was nearly empty thanks to persistent drought.

According to the events leading up to this story, God caused this drought as punishment for the people breaking their promises to remain faithful to God. The Prophet Elijah predicted the drought in the form of a curse.

Elijah has troubles of his own. His primary worry was that king Ahah and queen Jezebel sent soldiers after Elijah to capture him, dead or alive. So God sent Elijah to Zarephath to hide out at the home of the nameless widow.

Elijah arrived hungry and tired from his trip. Aware of the extreme importance of hospitality in their culture, Elijah doesn't think twice about asking to be fed. But even Elijah's modest request was too much for a nearly empty pantry. "Sure, I can feed you our last meal," was the widow's response. "We're going to starve anyway. So why not finish the job!"

At first, Elijah surely thought he had the wrong widow. Except that Elijah was accustomed to a mysterious God who creates abundance from scarcity. So without hesitation, Elijah assures the widow not to worry.

The widow went and did as Elijah had told her, and all of them had enough food for many days.

1 Kings 17:15

The worried mom prepares a meal for Elijah, herself, and her son with what she had left in her pantry. Afterward, God restocks her pantry with enough for another meal. And promises that grocery delivery will continue for as long as necessary. No subscription necessary, no contract, and no need to resubscribe month-to-month.

But what did it take for this single mom to trust Elijah enough that she would share all that she had left with him based on an absurd promise that God takes care of her needs? According to Dr. Brown, it takes BRAVING.

God, in the widow's experience, always kept healthy boundaries. God was reliable — not just once, but time after time. Perhaps the widow knew the stories of God keeping divine promises to Abraham and his ancestors.

God holds people accountable and seemed to have no problem with us doing the same. God hears and knows all of our secrets along with everyone else's secrets but doesn't divulge them. And God wrote the book on integrity, demonstrating courage in the face of resistance and insults.

And while God alone is the judge of divine justice, we know that God later lived among us, not to judge

us, but to save us from ourselves. Fortunately, God does not judge us for our actions but generously offers each of us grace to repent and try again.

The widow didn't trust Elijah. He hadn't demonstrated the braving that would build such trust. But fortunately, the widow trusted the One who sent him.

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Pastor Tommy

<sup>1</sup> Much of the content of this series is based on the book: Danielle Bean. *You are Enough: What Women of the Bible Teach You about Your Mission and Worth*. West Chester, PA: Ascension Publishing, 2018.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Feldman, *The Thin Book of Trust*. Bend, OR: Thin Book Publishing Company, 2008.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Brené Brown. "Anatomy of Trust." © Oprah Winfrey SuperSoul Sessions, April 27, 2020.

## Life groups questions & notes:

*The widow went and did as Elijah had told her, and all of them had enough food for many days.*

1 Kings 17:15 (GNT)

### NOTES FROM WORSHIP

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### QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS

1. Read 1 Kings 17. Why did God send Elijah to Zarephath? Why would God ask a poor single mother to give shelter and food to Elijah? Why did the widow trust Elijah enough to share her food? What happened next? Did the widow's trust grow even more by the end?
2. Read the article in this week's Circuit Rider, *Trust*. Are there people in your life that you trust? Why? Have they ever violated your trust? If so, why do you still trust them? Do you agree with Dr. Brené Browns definition of trust? Does her acronyms BRAVING work for what it takes to earn your trust? In what ways are you trustworthy? In what ways do you sometimes behave untrustworthy? What does it mean to trust God?
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.



# “Feed Flint”



## “Feed Flint”

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A meal goes a long way for a senior living alone, a family struggling to make ends meet, or a child fearful of empty shelves at home. But for the residents of Flint who carry the effects of lead-tainted water, nutrition is critical. Feed Flint provides locally grown, chemical-free, fresh produce to residents living in and around Flint. And we're hoping that you can help us provide 10,000 meals this summer.

Feed Flint includes takeout meals, produce boxes with recipes, and home deliveries as part of our work to guide and support families in moving to sustainable abundance. The reality is that Michigan's food insecurity levels got worse during the COVID-19 pandemic, and this summer's recovery is leaving behind those at the most risk of having to miss meals.

### **Flint families continue to struggle with the ongoing effects of the water crisis.**

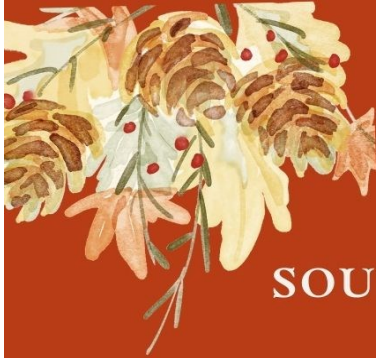
We're bringing together the resources of the Asbury Community Development Corporation. This includes Asbury Farms, the South Flint Soup Kitchen, the Asbury Community Help Center, multiple food pantries, and our Sizzling Culture Mobile Food Trailer. Our plan is to care for our neighbors when they need it most. We accept all people as they are, and our doors are always open to anyone.

Asbury Farms provides locally grown produce used to create fabulous and nutritious meals. Our seed-to-table approach is community-based. This not only helps families make it through emergencies and crises. We help move families towards sustainable abundance.

Our Sizzling Culture program provides jobs and new skills to our city's youth. This includes year-round employment. Our staff and most of our volunteers come from the neighborhoods we support. We call this sustainable abundance because families move from need-based on scarcity to enough based on community-generated abundance.

Our work is also about food and justice. Our vision is a revitalized community where every resident can use their talents and passions for the common good, where children grow into active citizens. And all residents can enjoy safety, good health, and a culture that fosters life-long learning and satisfying lives. This summer, help us address food insecurity and strengthen Flint's budding local food system by supporting the Feed Flint campaign. Thank you for taking the time to see what we're doing and considering how you can help.

**Donate to our Feed Flint Campaign by visiting:  
[flintasbury.org/feed-flint-donate](https://flintasbury.org/feed-flint-donate)**



SOUTH FLINT SOUP KITCHEN  
PRESENTS....

*November Angel  
Closet & Food  
Giveaway Dates*

Food Giveaways - 11/3/21 & 11/24/21  
11am-noon

Angel Closet - 11/10/21 & 11/17/21  
APPOINTMENT ONLY, email or call  
to book an appointment.

Questions??? Call 810-239-3427 or  
email [southflintsoupkitchen@gmail.com](mailto:southflintsoupkitchen@gmail.com)



South Flint Soup Kitchen  
3410 Fenton Road  
3 blocks north of Atherton  
Flint, MI 48507





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**\* CONVENIENT PICKUP AT ASBURY OR AT THE SOUTH FLINT SOUP KITCHEN \***

God part of the way by taking the first step towards what we hope for, followed by another step, and so on.

Sometimes as we move towards that which we hoped for, our desires change. We discover new ideas or realize that what we hoped for is no longer what we want. When this happens, we gain the insight that God really does know what's best for us.

A study conducted by the American Psychology Association found that the majority of persons who succeeded later in life despite growing up in poverty had hope in common. This insight is summed up by Dr. Valerie Maholmes, who said that hope involves "planning and motivation and determination" to get what one hopes for. Dr. Judith Rich writes that "Hope is a match in a dark tunnel, a moment of light, just enough to reveal the path ahead and ultimately the way out."<sup>2</sup>

What do you hope for? Our church building sits in a neighborhood under siege by crime, violence, and poverty. Instead of minivans and trucks, our most profound hopes are for a transformed city. Unfortunately, like eradicating the COVID virus, seeing this hope come true requires cooperation. The hopeful truth is that together we can move our community from its present state of scarcity to abundance.

This has been my hope since coming to Flint over ten years ago. Admittedly, I'm an optimist, and I've learned that I tend to dream bigger than the facts support. But I also am blessed to see divine miracles happening every day. And I believe that God wants abundance for the people of Flint. But more of us have to want this for our community as well.

This past week Asbury received a "Key to the City" from Mayor Neeley along with ten other faith communities. I realize that the key that came sealed in a frame does not really open a locked door. It's just a symbol of gratitude for our efforts.

But what if the key is more than a symbol of gratitude? What if this key is also a sign of optimism from God? What if God recognizes that there is so much justifiable hopelessness in our midst that those of us who still hold onto hope, but find it slipping away, need a divine sign that God wants what we want?

While it may seem like the match we have is too wet to strike a flame, hope can find light in other places. And while the dark tunnel that contains us may seem endless, hope recognizes that there is always light to be found, even when we are not experiencing it at the time.

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Pastor Tommy

<sup>1</sup> Much of the content of this series is based on the book: Danielle Bean. *You are Enough: What Women of the Bible Teach You about Your Mission and Worth*. West Chester, PA: Ascension Publishing, 2018.

<sup>2</sup> "Why Is Hope So Important?" © HopeGrows.net, 2021.

**KEY TO THE CITY \***



Representatives of churches awarded Flint's Key to the City on October 21, 2021. Rev Dr. Tommy McDoniel and Pastor James Cogman (in the back row on left).

(photo taken by Je/Nae Green, Flint Bethel UMC)