

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Volume 2 Issue 24

April 24, 2022



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.

DONATE

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Bread (Via Dolorosa)



Cyndi plans to sing one of my favorite tributes for our Easter Sunday celebration that is more often associated with Good Friday. The song is titled *Via Dolorosa*. The song title comes from Latin and is literally translated as "sorrowful road."

The song refers to the route from the location of the judgment hall to the place where Jesus was crucified, called Golgotha after Pilate sentenced Him. Traditional remembrances retrace the final walk made by Jesus as he was forced to carry the cross used for His execution. In one version of the lyrics, we hear this:

Down the Via Dolorosa
called the way of suffering..

Like a lamb came the
Messiah, Christ the King..

But He chose to walk that
road out of..

His love for you and me.

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pointing out that everything takes time. Nothing happens with human effort that takes zero time. And usually, something else has to give, be delayed, or not happen at all.

But how long is a jiffy? I turned to the internet library known as Wikipedia. I discovered that before jiffy was a muffin mix or a place to get my oil changed, a jiffy was sometimes used for units of measure elsewhere. For example, in quantum physics, a

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Jiffy Plus (It's okay to be unfinished)



"I'll get that fixed in a jiffy," the plumber said. "That's great," I replied, "I can't afford to pay for a big project." Little did we know that a corroded water line was about to break just beyond our view.

So how long is a jiffy? I've learned to respond to requests that come with "this shouldn't take long" by



Jiffy Plus (It's okay to be unfinished) ...cont from page 1

jiffy is defined as the time taken for light to travel one fermi or about 3×10^{24} seconds to cross the diameter of a proton. That's really fast!

An oil change at a Jiffy Lube takes at least 15 minutes, even when there is no wait. Muffins made from Jiffy Mix need to bake for 15 to 20 minutes. So some jiffies take longer than others.

So how long is a jiffy? Perhaps a jiffy is fast enough that we're not annoyed by the wait. So how long are we willing to wait for something really important? Such as something that frees us from emotional harm that persistently interferes with our happiness?

According to Aundi Kolber, a licensed therapist living in Colorado, this sort of work takes a long time. Let's call this wait a "Jiffy plus" to represent anything we want to occur in less time than it actually takes. Long enough to push our buttons, cause us to sweat, and annoys us. A jiffy plus is how long it takes to accomplish something worth doing.

Creating a masterpiece takes a jiffy plus.

Welcome to episode one of our new series, *Masterpiece*. This series is about you and your work on the masterpiece that God created when God created you. You are a masterpiece that takes a Jiffy plus to make.

But how long is a Jiffy plus?

A long time. Long enough to annoy you, make you sweat, and create just enough anxiety and impatience that you'll want to find any shortcut you can. Spoiler alert! There aren't any shortcuts to creating a masterpiece.

In her book *Try Softer*, Aundi Kolber reminds us that in creating the masterpiece that is you "the true work is slow and deep." Aundi shares her struggles with wanting to push through emotional pain rather than face the hard work of healing. However, she recommends that we let go of looking for the quick fix and try softer rather than trying harder to push through.

Psalms 13 offers a universal question that many of us want answered but are afraid to ask. The writer asks God, "How long must I endure trouble?" In other words, the writer of this Psalm asks God, "How long is a jiffy plus?"

There's a story in Isaiah about a time people were feeling the same way as the writer of Psalm 13. It's understandable. They were following the rules, showing up at church almost every weekend, and even fasting for the most part. But God didn't seem to notice, or so it seemed.

Their snide remarks and persistent whining got God's attention alright. But instead of coddling them, God called them out. God pointed out that they go through the motions without putting in the hard work of getting along with and taking care of each other. God put the answer to "how long" back into their hands.

"You tell me," God responded, "How long you'll fight with each other rather than doing the hard work that allows you to work together in harmony?"

There are plenty of reasons we struggle to get along with one another. But we don't need to agree on politics or solutions to work together. Unfortunately, however, arguments frequently break out after a response that seems out of place or unwarranted. And we take it personally, not knowing that what we said struck a nerve we didn't know existed. Nor can we know, mainly if our antagonist isn't aware that their outburst was caused by deep-seated hurt they chose to suppress.

It's complicated. This is why God gives folks like Aundi Kolber the capacities and passion for helping folks like you and me deal with our deep-seated emotional problems. Our emotional and mental health is just as important as brushing our teeth.

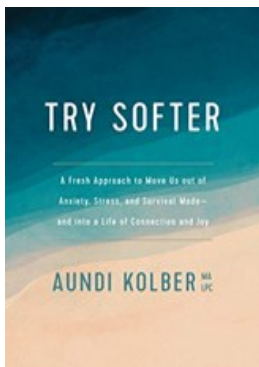
The problems in our community are solvable. But the solutions require cooperation and finding common ground. Instead, I've witnessed continued bickering leading to personal attacks and threats over the past decade. Do you wonder what God is thinking?

Asbury Worship Series "Masterpiece"



In Psalm 13 we find questions that everyone feels at times. "How much longer will you forget me, Lord? Forever? How much longer will you hide yourself from me? How long must I endure trouble? How long will sorrow fill my heart day and night? How long will my enemies triumph over me?" (Psalm 13:1-2).

Book Club News



We began reading and discussing *Praying with the Church* by Scot McKnight as the Season of Lent started in March. We

plan to finish our study next week and turn our attention to Easter. ¹

We chose this book as a study during the Season of Lent because of the importance of Prayer in the

lives of nearly every person on the planet. Even persons who don't believe in a God may turn to whatever power that may be greater than their circumstances in search of comfort, protection, and forgiveness.

On the Wednesday after Easter we start a new adventure into the slow but rewarding process of self-discovery.

In parallel to a new worship series, *Masterpiece*, our Book Club digs deeper into the process of self-discovery. But not as a burden to be endured. Rather, as an exciting exploration of who we are behind our layers of protection. Let's call it our un-doctored selfie.

We're in search of that divine image that reflects our Creator. We know it's there beneath the layers

of past disappointments, hurts, and abandonments.

Whether you're a regular on Sunday mornings, only attend on an occasional holiday, or don't cross the threshold of a church building without coercion, there is something for everyone in this conversation.

The write-up found on Amazon has this to say about our next book:

In a world that preaches a "try harder" gospel—just keep going, keep hustling, keep pretending we're all fine—we're left exhausted, overwhelmed, and so numb to our lives. If we're honest, we have been

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 McDoniel	Pastor & Exec Dir
Connie Portillo	Office Manager
Sylvia Pittman	Empowerment Arts
Jim Craig	Board & Leadership Chair

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Matt DePalma	Farms Manager
Chris Freeman	South Campus Bldg Mgr
Israel Unger	Finance Director
Kim Sims	Connections Suprv
Terrance Williams	Arts Center Mgr



“Masterpiece”... Asbury Worship Series ...cont from pg 4

More often than not, we feint humility to cover up our feelings of despair. We wonder if God made some sort of horrible mistake while creating us. Perhaps a part was left out or a piece cross-threaded during our assembly.

Other times, we hypothesize that it isn't God's fault. It was our parents or caregivers that dropped the ball. Maybe it was that horrible thing that happened. That thing that we don't want to talk about lest we condemn ourselves by our own testimony.

The most damning theory of all is that we're somehow irreversibly flawed. It all started with a wrong decision that we can never take back. And no matter how hard we tried, we never really recovered. For years, denial worked best and would still work if it weren't for those voices that won't stop reminding us. "You know what you are!" they shout.

Welcome to our new series, *Masterpiece*. A series about you and your struggle for loving yourself as much as God loves you. Not just through rational logic or because the Bible says so, but because you actually believe you are a masterpiece.

Masterpiece is conceived as a trilogy. The first two parts are based on a book by Aundi Kolber. A licensed therapist who shared her own struggles and dedicated her life to helping others deal with their own brokenness. Her book is titled *Try Softer*.

John Li joins our series design team as a content expert. With advanced degrees in Psychology and Sociology, John brings academic rigor to this intersection between faith and science.

As Psalm 13 continues we read a recognition of God's saving grace at work. The Psalmist sings out to God "I rely on your constant love; I will be glad, because you will rescue me. I will sing to you, O Lord, because You have been good to me (Psalm 13:5-6).

I pray that you will join us each Sunday morning at 10:30 am. We share our weekly episodes 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.

Pastor Tommy

² Aundi Kolber. *Try Softer: A Fresh Approach to Move Us out of Anxiety, Stress, and Survival Mode--and into a Life of Connection and Joy*. Carol Street, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2020.

Bread (Via Dolorosa) ... *cont. from pg 1*

The Season of Lent ends at sunrise on Easter morning. Those who chose to fast over the past few weeks return to their favorite menus. Some will attend early morning worship that includes a hearty breakfast. Easter is a celebration of God's victory over death. So why sing a song that reminds us of the horrors of Jesus' death?

Heavy crosses

Scripture is packed with stories that cause us to think deeply about the message waiting for us. For example, Jesus taught in parables that used illustrations from everyday life. And He alerted listeners to the layers of meaning that awaited the faithful. These insights are examples of God's grace offered to every person willing to accept it.

We're invited to walk with Jesus down the Via Dolorosa. We're asked to imagine our own cross. But not a cross made of wood. Instead, we each carry the wounds inflicted by weaponized pain.

You're invited to walk alongside Jesus on His way to Golgotha. But there is a difference. You're not Jesus. The cross you're carrying when you arrive at the place of execution is taken off your shoulder. Jesus died on your behalf to set you free from the cross you bear.

Unfortunately, too many of us turn away from the Via Dolorosa, choosing to take our cross with us. We mistakenly believe that our crosses become a part of our identity. As a result, we lose our ability to recognize the image of our Creator that we each carry from birth.

If this describes you, there is great hope. It is never too late, and God's love for you isn't lessened by anything you've ever done or done to you.

The end

According to the Gospel accounts, the tomb where Jesus' lifeless body was placed three days earlier was empty on Easter morning.

Last week, we talked about a concept called cognitive dissonance. When faced with two seemingly incompatible realities, our bodies feel tension when both cannot be true. Cognitive dissonance happens when we're content with our beliefs, and suddenly we're faced with the possibility that we're wrong.

The more the circumstances of our dissonance matter to us, the greater the anxiety. And we know that death is the end because we've attended funerals and lost

pets. Jesus' friends knew this reality, so the empty tomb confronted how they viewed life and death.

Some of them saw Jesus make that walk down the Via Dolorosa, and a few witnessed the moment He took His last breath. Some helped prepare His body for burial and placed Him in the tomb. A large stone was rolled in front of the entrance, and guards stood watch to ensure that His body wasn't stolen.

It was the end for Jesus and for the movement He started. But we know better, don't we?

Remember Me

According to Luke, two of Jesus' followers left Jerusalem later that same day, heading for a village about seven miles from Jerusalem. As they walked along the road to Emmaus, the two tried to process everything. In particular, they needed to resolve the dissonance they felt.

As they walked, a stranger caught up with them and joined in on their conversation. They didn't recognize Jesus. After all, Jesus was dead.

There is good news. We are the ones we're waiting on.

Our Savior already came, offered each of us salvation, and gave us the power to choose for ourselves. Do we want heaven on earth? It's simple. Love God with all your heart, soul, and mind, and love your neighbor as much as you love yourself.

The truth is ...you pursue your own interests... and you quarrel and fight. Do you think this ...will make me listen to your prayers”?

Isaiah 54:3-4

The question is, how much do you love yourself? And this is where hard work is needed.

In the first chapter of her book, Aundi Kolber offers a way to help us examine how we arrived at whatever point we find ourselves. Take a sheet of paper, place the paper on its side and draw a line across the middle. Label the left side of the paper “born” and write your birthdate. Next, label the other end of the line “Today.”

Start listing significant events in your life, paying careful attention to place them in the order they occurred. Start with your favorites, such as the birth of a child or a wedding. Next, include other key events that significantly impacted your life. Finally, pay attention to how your body responds to the events. Are there a few things that you're not sure you can even write down?

Hold onto this. We're just getting started and it's going to take a Jiffy plus before we're done.

I invite you to join us each week for our series called *Masterpiece*. Our goal is to learn how to let God help us find joy, but not by trying harder.

You can join us each Sunday online by going to the button on the homepage of our [website](#) - **Click here to watch**. This button takes you to our **YouTube channel**. You can find more information about us on our website at [FlintAsbury.org](#).

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Pastor Tommy

¹ Aundi Kolber. *Try Softer: A Fresh Approach to Move Us out of Anxiety, Stress, and Survival Mode--and into a Life of Connection and Joy*. Carol Street, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2020.

Life Group Questions & Notes:

The truth is ...you pursue your own interests ...and you quarrel and fight. Do you think this ...will make me listen to your prayers?

Isaiah 54:1-12

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS


1. Read Isaiah 54:1-12. What do you think God is saying in this text? How might it apply to our community today? Try substituting helping others for the word fasting. How does this change the meaning for you?
2. Read this week's article titled *Jiffy plus*. What are you waiting on that seems to take more time than you're willing to wait? What do you do to take care of your mental and emotional health? When was the last time that you met with a licensed therapist? If you haven't why not? Commit yourself to finding out how you can have regular appointments with a therapist.
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



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SOUTH FLINT SOUP KITCHEN

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FLINT, MI 48507

810-239-3427



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

Jesus asked them what they were talking about. Then, with a look we expect from someone who tragically lost a close friend, the one named Cleopas asked, "Are you the only visitor in Jerusalem who doesn't know the things that happened these last few days?"

Playing dumb, Jesus asks, "What things?"

The two men tell Jesus their understanding of the role of Jesus as a divine prophet to His death on a cross. They talked about how Jesus was accused and turned over to Roman authorities. And how, three days earlier, Jesus was executed and buried. But some women claimed an angel told them He was still alive. However, the men checked the story out for themselves and dismissed the women's claim as nonsense.

Jesus took the bread and said the blessing; then he broke the bread and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened.

Luke 24:30-31

The men summed up their disappointment with one statement. "We had hoped that he would be the One who would set Israel free!"

Jesus shifted from stranger to teacher. He shared with the men how what they perceived as a contradiction was foreseen in ancient prophecy. While Luke doesn't share many details, I can imagine the men respectively listening. I can also imagine some of their sorrow dissipating, along with a bit of their grief.

I can also imagine that what they heard from Jesus along this particular road, while easing some of their pain, the reality of His death never entirely went away.

Bread of Life

According to the story, when they arrived in Emmaus, Jesus seemed to be headed further. So the men invited Jesus to stay with them for the evening. And the three men headed to supper together.

When Jesus sat down to eat with them, He picked up the bread and said a blessing. Then Jesus broke the bread and offered it to His hosts.

I chose the theme picture for our series, *Hunger* because it was a powerful reminder of this moment and others like it. I saw myself in the child reaching out for a piece of bread handed to him by his father. Although the child's face is hidden, I imagine the child is hungry.

I also see in the child the pain and suffering taking place in Ukraine, where children are dying next to mothers, aunts, and grandmothers. Instead of bread, children are blown apart by weaponized pain manifested as explosive evil.

I see the child representing the anxiety and brokenness of humanity reaching for the bread of life.

As I write this, it is Holy Thursday. A day we remember the last supper that Jesus had with His friends. It was the evening that Jesus knew He would be betrayed by a person close to Him and arrested.

I see the child representing victims of betrayal weaponized by pain and justified by the betrayer as payback. Or worse, justified by self-declared righteousness. The bread offered by the child's father is both an acknowledgment of pain suffered and a healing balm.

over functioning for so long, we can't even imagine another way. How else will things get done? How else will we survive?

It does not have to be this way.

Aundi Kolber believes that we don't have to white-knuckle our way through life. In her debut book, *Try Softer*, she'll show us how God specifically designed our bodies and minds to work together to process our stories and work through obstacles. Through the latest psychology, practical clinical exercises, and her own personal story, Aundi equips and empowers us to connect us to our trust self and truly live. This is the "try softer" life.

According to her author biography, Aundi Kolber is a Licensed Professional Counselor (MA LPC), writer, and speaker in Castle Rock, Colorado. She specializes in trauma- and body-centered therapies and is passionate about the integration of faith and psychology.

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, delighted when new people 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

¹ Scot McKnight. *Praying with the Church*. Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2006.

² Aundi Kolber. *Try Softer: A Fresh Approach to Move Us out of Anxiety, Stress, and Survival Mode--and into a Life of Connection and Joy*. Carol Street, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2020.

Jesus' last night is depicted in the art of many types and genres. And one of our most sacred rituals comes out of the meal Jesus shared with His followers.

At that supper, Jesus took bread and said a blessing. And then Jesus breaks the bread and offers it to His friends. Like the child in our series illustration, the faithful followers accept their piece of bread from the One who loves each of them enough to give His life for them.

Then Jesus says, "This bread is my body broken for you." Why is Jesus broken for you and me? Because when we reach the end of the Via Dolorosa, we find resurrection. A new beginning that resolves our dissonance and renews our spirit.

While our new beginning may include the remnants of past pain, recent injuries, and continued suffering, we don't walk our Via Dolorosa alone. Nor does our road end with our death. So this is the invitation to the Lord's Supper.

We are God's children reaching for the Bread of Life offered to us by the One who saves us.

According to Luke, when the men were offered the bread by Jesus, their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him. And then Jesus disappeared from their sight. Afterward, they said, "Wasn't it like a fire burning in us when he talked to us on the road and explained the Scriptures to us?"

The Bread of Life is offered to you by the God who created you, loves you, and wants to be with you forever. Won't you accept this holy offering?

Feeding people is holy and it's important to remember that feeding Flint is not a problem of enough. It's a problem of available healthy options and equitable access. To learn how you can help address food insecurity in our community, go to FeedFlint.org.

I invite you to join us next week as we begin a new series called *Masterpiece*. Based on the book, *Try Softer* by Aundi Kolber, we learn how to let God help us find joy. But not by trying harder. We find happiness by trying softer.

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United
Women
in Faith

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN IS NOW UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

We've taken a new name to better reflect how we answer our calling today. It's an exhilarating time, as we commit to even greater inclusivity, action, and impact in our mission to support women, children, and youth.

All Women of Asbury UMC are invited to join our monthly meetings on the 1st Thursday of the month at 1:00PM in the Library. Your friends and neighbor ladies are also invited, they don't have to be United Methodist any longer. Any questions, please call Michele Weston, our President, at 810-624-1184.



Save The Date!! **Sunday, May 15, 2022 at Noon**, after Morning Worship, The Asbury United Women In Faith will be having a Brunch to "Celebrate Spring" and to "Thank our Farm Workers" for all they are doing to get our Hoop Houses planted for this growing season for Asbury Farms.

Watch for a flyer coming soon to tell you more about it, the cost, the menu and reservations etc... The most exciting part of this event is to finally have an Asbury gathering and meal together since we stopped when the pandemic began.

South Flint Soup
Kitchen

Grand ReOpening

Monday, May 2nd



DOORS OPEN 10:45AM, MUST BE SEATED BY 11AM TO RECEIVE LUNCH!

Questions? Call 810-239-3427
3410 Fenton Road (3 blocks north of Atherton Road) Flint, MI 48507

Hello friends! We are **so excited** to be reopening for indoor service May 2nd. We have a few things you will need to know before you come have lunch with us:

Doors will be open at 10:45am for clients to be seated, Monday through Saturday. **If you are not seated or in line to be seated by 11am, you will not be able to come inside.** Please make plans accordingly to be on time for lunch.

Once you are seated, there will be no one allowed to get up from their seat unless there is an emergency or someone needs to use the restroom.

We will no longer be doing buffet style meals; clients will remain seated for the entire time during lunch and will be served at their tables, restaurant style.

Per the Fire Marshal, **our max capacity is 49 clients.** We are a very busy facility and we cannot guarantee

anyone a seat, so please be **on time** to ensure we can serve you!

Please leave any toxic attitudes at the door, we are volunteers and we may refuse service to anyone who is disrespectful or not following the rules. Peace and love always!

Masks are not required, **but if you are unvaccinated, we strongly suggest you wear a mask when not eating or drinking.**

The most important thing: **ALL ARE WELCOME!** However you identify, wherever you are from, **you are loved and welcome in our facility!**

If you are interested in volunteering with us, we'd love to have you! Volunteers are asked to arrive at 9:30am and are usually done by noon/12:30pm. Give us a call at 810-239-3427 if this sounds like something you'd be interested in.

As always, please let us know if you have any questions or concerns and we will get back to you as soon as possible. We can be reached at 810-239-3427 or via email at southflintsoupkitchen@gmail.com.

God bless and see you (inside) soon!

South Flint Soup Kitchen Management