



ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Volume 2 Issue 18

September 18, 2022

Mustard (Travel light)



My mom was known for her greens and cornbread. But my dad set the precedence for kicking them up a notch at the table. I still remember dad using a paring

knife to cut up white onion on top of the greens on his plate, along with hot peppers. Not all of my siblings follow his practice, but I do. And we all apply generous amounts of vinegar infused with hot peppers.

But if I wanted a taste of my mom's greens in between visits, I had to learn how to cook them myself. One secret my mom shared with me was variety. While she liked the taste of mustard greens, she preferred adding collards or turnip greens to neutralize some of the peppery taste. I also learned to cut up a turnip in my greens for texture.

Page 6

ing, and yeast makes a versatile metaphor. Yeast is a living organism with chromosomes and DNA and, thus, a eukaryote. And yeast as a single-cell organism reproduces and converts sugars and starches into alcohol and carbon dioxide in fermentation. This makes this naturally occurring fungi popular among wine and beer makers and bakers.

Page 2



EVERYONE
HAVE A
WONDERFUL,
SAFE WEEK!



Inside this issue:

Mustard (travel light)	1
Multiplication	1
In Our Prayers/Coming up this Week	3
Upcoming Worship Series – Pray	4
Pastor's Book Club	4
Leadership in Worship & Service	4
Upcoming Worship Series - Pray	5
Mustard (travel light)	6
Life Group Questions & Notes	7
Feed Flint	8
Feed Flint	9
SFSK September Dates	10
Asbury Veggies Boxes	11
Pastor Book Club	12
Flint Food Not Bombs	13

Multiplication (A little of that)



Baking was one of the more popular indoor activities that people took up during the pandemic. Celebrities and ordinary people traded starters, recipes, and baking tips. So surely bread eating increased across the world.

Yeast is a common ingredient in bread mak-



The art of bread making often includes adding yeast to flour and water. This initiates a process where carbon dioxide is released into the dough, causing it to rise. A little yeast is all it takes to begin the transition, which is aided by creating conditions conducive to the fungi's growth.

However, not all bread is made with yeast. For example, Matzo is a popular bread among people of the Jewish faith that is eaten during the celebration of Passover. A tradition began during the Exodus as the Hebrew slaves were instructed to bake bread without yeast. There was no time to wait for the dough to rise, and it's said that the people "took their dough before the yeast was added, and carried it on their shoulders in kneading troughs wrapped in clothing" (Exodus 12:34).

According to an article by Steve Nubie, published in *Off the Grid News*, *Matzo was an obvious choice for their trip into the wilderness. Without yeast and properly stored, Matzo could last several years without molding.*

As I mentioned earlier, yeast causes bread to rise and helps beer and wine ferment by turning sugar and starch into alcohol. And yeast is also a versatile metaphor to illustrate the power that a little fungus can have on a large batch.

I don't remember the first time I heard the ancient wisdom that "a bad apple spoils the whole bushel." But I'm guessing it had something to do with choosing persons I would spend time with and how I might be negatively influenced.

Jesus used yeast similarly when He cautioned followers about listening to the religious

leaders who opposed Him. In one story found in Matthew, several religious leaders were pressing Jesus for a miracle to trap Him. Afterward, Jesus tells His followers to "be on guard against the yeast" coming from them.

In his version of this story, Luke claims that Jesus was referring to the hypocrisy of the religious leaders, not their actual words. This interpretation is supported elsewhere in scripture by Jesus in His criticism of persons who instruct one way but live another.

Get the point? So did Jesus only eat bread that wasn't made with yeast?

The Kingdom of God is like this—a baker takes some yeast and mixes it with a bushel of flour until the whole batch of dough rises.

Luke 13:20-21

Perhaps, but before jumping to this conclusion, let's consider a comparison that Jesus makes between yeast and the Kingdom of God. In Luke, we read Jesus saying that the Kingdom of God "is like taking a little yeast and mixing it with a bushel of flour until the whole batch of dough rises" (Luke 13:21).

So the corollary to the ancient wisdom is that good yeast makes great bread, fine wine, and tasty beer. Likewise, avoiding hypocrisy is a good recipe for a better life. Fortunately, avoiding hypocrisy is simple. Just do that which you say you plan to do.

If avoiding hypocrisy is so simple, why are Christians known more as hypocrites than as people who follow the teachings of Jesus? It's complicated because you and I have layers of good and not-so-good

experiences influenced by unholy temptations.

In other words, it is nearly impossible to avoid all the bad yeast surrounding us.

Fortunately, we're also surrounded by God's Spirit. So while we can't avoid all of the bad things in life, and every one of us makes less than stellar choices, we can stay in constant touch with God. One way to do this is through prayer. In our next series titled *Pray, we'll dig into the prayer life of Jesus in more detail.*

Just as important as prayer, in avoiding hypocrisy, is worship.

You can join us each Sunday in person or online by clicking the button on our [website's](#) homepage - [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](#).

A reminder that we publish this newsletter that we call the *Circuit Rider each week*. You can request this publication by email. Send a request to connect@FlintAsbury.org or let us know when you send a message through our [website](#). We post an archive of past editions on our website under the tab, [Connect - choose Newsletters](#).

Pastor Tommy

Content for this series is based in part on: Candace Simpson. *Who Can We Be Together? A Biblical Exploration of Luke 13*. New York: United Methodist Women, 2022.

Steve Nubie. "Long-Lasting Breads You Can Stockpile For YEARS and YEARS." © Off The Grid News, date. Retrieved from: [link](#)

Lindsey Valich. "Baker's yeast: Three surprising things you might not know" © University of Rochester, February 18, 2021. Retrieved from: [link](#)

Eric Ferreri. "After 9/11, A Short-Lived Rush to Church." © Duke Today, August 19, 2016. Retrieved from: [link](#)

In Our Prayers

Kevin Croom
Sylvia Pittman
Shirley Craig

Richard Oram
Chris Freeman



FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE

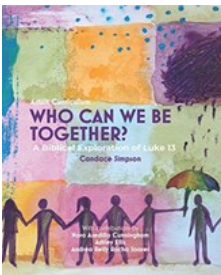
Nancy Elston Elaine Lamoreaux
Norma Buzzard

PASTOR BOOK CLUB NEWS

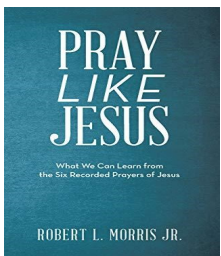
Pastor Book Club is still meeting via Zoom, but we are also gathering in the Asbury Library Conference Room at 12Noon every Wednesday, unless otherwise noted.

Please call the Church Office for more information, as things could change (810-235-0016).

This month's book series is called, *Who Can We Be Together?* authored by Candace Simpson with help from Nora Asedillo Cunningham, Ashley Ellis, and Andrea Reilly Rocha Soares.



October's upcoming book series is called, *Pray like Jesus* written by Robert L. Morris, Jr. *What We Can Learn From the Six Recorded Prayers of Jesus. Stay tune ...*



Thank you and everyone continue to stay safe!

**COMING UP THIS WEEK
SEPTEMBER 19 – 25**

Sept 19 Mon 6:00pm Leadership Team Meeting

Sept 20 Tues 10:00am-12:30pm
Food/Water Distribution

Sept 21 Wed 12Noon Pastor Book Club
10:03am-12Noon Angel Closet

Appts are needed at South Flint Soup Kitchen -239-3427

Sept 22 Thu

Sept 23 Fri

Sept 24 Sat 12Noon Flint Food Not Bombs

Sept 25 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](#).)

Upcoming Worship Series "Pray"

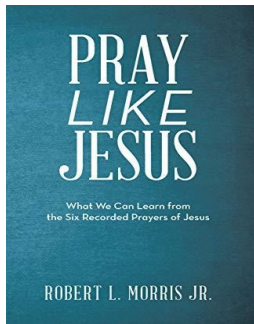


"Will you pray for me," the man asked his friend. "Of course," came the response. What else could his friend say? Prayer is so easy. It doesn't even have to be verbal. And prayer is so personal that no one knows if it even takes place.

But to whom will his friend pray and how will his friend go about praying? After all, nationally, we are a diverse group demographically and politically, and our religious beliefs vary.

Book Club News

Our worship series beginning in October focuses on



prayer and our book club selection that accompanies our series is titled *Pray Like Jesus*.

This book, written by Robert L. Morris, Jr., examines six prayers of Jesus, found in the Gospels, to help us

become more consistent prayers.

Prayer is probably the most talked-about subject in churches. However, not enough of us actually pray regularly. Rev. Morris believes that this is because we don't know enough about how to pray. The six prayers of Jesus can teach us how to grow our prayer life deeper and wider than ever before.

According to Amazon's description of our book selection:

Pray like Jesus is intended to be a simple

spiritual how-to-manual for those who do not have a vital prayer life but seek one. It is one intended to be an academic book as much as it is an epistle from a fellow believer who may have learned a few things in forty-one years of ministry. Author Robert L. Morris Jr. invites you to join him and look at six prayers of Jesus, but you will intentionally not examine the Lord's Prayer in depth. The reason is simple: the Lord's Prayer contains valuable information on how disciples should pray, but this book is about how Jesus personally prayed.

Asbury Staff

- Rev. Dr. Tommy McDoniel Pastor & Exec Dir
- Connie Portillo Office Manager
- Sylvia Pittman Empowerment Arts
- Jim Craig Board & Leadership Chair
- Kevin Croom Exec Chef & Dir Opers
- Matt DePalma Farms Manager
- Chris Freeman South Campus Bldg Mgr
- Israel Unger Finance Director
- Kim Sims Connections Suprv
- Terrance Williams Arts Center Mgr
- Katelin Maylum Sr Prog Mgr Local Foods
- South Flint Soup Kitchen

Leadership in Worship & Service

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

Upcoming Worship Series - "Pray" ...cont from pg 4

As Christians, we believe that there is one God and we're likely to presume that praying means taking our petitions there. Yet we also believe that God lived among humanity and that we know God through Jesus Christ. And that God is ever-present through the Holy Spirit.

But according to a 2021 Pew Research Study, just under one-third of the U.S. population do not claim an affiliation with a particular religious group. Instead, they identify as atheist, agnostic, or simply respond "nothing in particular" when asked about their religious identify. And while the majority of U.S. resident self-identify as Christian, this percentage dropped 11 points over the past decade from 3/4 to less than a third.

Does this mean that prayer is a dying trend? The news is disturbing.

According to an article published in the *Christian Post* based on the Pew Study, *less than half of Americans pray daily. This is quite a contrast to the prayer habits of Jesus. As a Jew it's likely that Jesus prayed at least three times each day.*

Doesn't it make sense that, as Christians, our prayer life would resemble that of our Savior, Jesus Christ? Of course.

Our new series, *Pray*, examines the prayer life of Jesus by looking at each of the six actual prayers that we find in the Gospels. While there are numerous references of Jesus praying there are only six actual prayers preserved for our benefit.

Come learn how Eat, Pray, Love gets lived out when we try to emulate the prayer habits of Jesus.

Our series is based on a book written by the Reverend Dr. Robert L. Morris, Jr., a Presbyterian pastor for over 45 years. Our series will utilize his book titled *Pray Like Jesus as a guide. Be sure to get your copy before or after Sunday worship, or find a copy at your local library or favorite source for books. And join us at Book Club each Wednesday at Noon for further discussions on each Sunday's message.*

Everyone is invited to submit prayer requests for each worship. Each prayer request will be dedicated during worship and be included in our prayers. Prayers requests can be submitted through the homepage of our website or filling out a prayer request form.

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

Robert L. Morris, Jr.. Pray Like Jesus: What We Can Learn From the Six Recorded Prayers of Jesus.. Bloomington, IL: Westbow Press, 2019.

Mustard greens are easy to grow. The hardest part for me is handling the tiny seeds. Some are barely a millimeter (.04 inches) in diameter. While they're not the smallest of the vegetable seeds, they're in the running. But they germinate in just over a week.

The plant grows into a shrub if mustard greens are left to their own desires. As a result, there are mustard shrubs almost ten feet high. According to her website *SimpleStead.com*, Tasha Greer harvests brown mustard seeds when the plants are 5 to 6 feet tall, and the seed pods are ready to split open.

You get the familiar yellow mustard condiment if you add vinegar to crushed white mustard seeds. Recipes call for additional spices such as garlic powder, salt, and turmeric. Add brown mustard seeds to get the familiar darker color of specialty mustards. Use black mustard seeds to add flavor to curry dishes.

Let's set the mustard aside for the time being.

This Sunday marks the 21st anniversary of the attack on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, commonly known as 9/11.

A Pew Research conducted in the months following the Sept. 11 attack found that 78% of those surveyed believed that the prominence of religion in the United States was growing. This was a considerable increase from the 38% who believed this only eight months earlier. It had been 40 years since religion held such a position in the minds of ordinary people.

Nevertheless, this shift was not matched by a sustained increase in attendance at religious services. Nor was there evidence that religion played a more prominent role in Americans' personal lives.

The same study also validated a president's impact on their political party. A call by President George Bush for tolerance toward Muslims paved the way for nearly two-thirds of conservative Republicans to respond favorably toward Muslims in this country. This number was up 29 percentage points from a survey conducted earlier that year. However, only one-third of those surveyed saw any commonality between their religious beliefs and those of Muslims.

American confidence in government and President Bush, in particular, climbed to unprecedented heights after 9/11. Only to fall a short time later as the shock waned and concern over daily realities returned. The approval ratings of President George W. Bush reached new lows along with Americans' confidence in the government with rising gas prices and concern over the war in Iraq. In addition, the administration's mishandling of disaster relief following the Hurricane Katrina disaster in 2005 resulted in further decline.

All of this is to say that public opinion swings from peaks to valleys as we individually react to events while influencing each other's opinions and attitudes. Like mustard seeds, public opinion is easily scattered and germinates quickly.

The three synoptic gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, each offer a comparison that Jesus made between mustard seeds and the Kingdom of God. In His telling, Jesus focused on the size of the seed compared to the benefits of the shrub that

Life Group Questions & Notes:

Jesus asked, "What shall I compare the Kingdom of God with? It is like this. A woman takes some yeast and mixes it with a bushel of flour until the whole batch of dough rises."

Luke 13:20-21 (GNT)

NOTES FROM WORSHIP


Handwriting lines for notes.

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS

- 1. Read the Parable of the Yeast found in Luke 13:20-21. Have you ever made anything that required yeast such as bread, wine, or beer? Describe your experience? Why do you think that Jesus used yeast to describe the Kingdom of God?
2. Read this week's article titled Multiplication. In what ways does bad yeast effect bread, wine, or beer? Do you prefer bread made with yeast or without yeast? Why do you suppose God asked the Hebrew slaves to celebrate Passover with bread not made from yeast? In what ways were the religious leaders bad yeast? In what ways is the Kingdom of God like good yeast?
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”





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

SOUTH FLINT SOUP KITCHEN

SEPTEMBER GIVEAWAYS



**CLOTHES
HALLOWEEN
COSTUMES
& MORE**

ANGEL CLOSET (APPT. ONLY)

21ST & 28TH 10:30AM-NOON

**FOOD GIVEAWAYS (NO APPT.
REQUIRED)**

7TH & 14TH 11:00AM-NOON

**3410 FENTON ROAD
(3 BLOCKS NORTH OF
ATHERTON)
FLINT, MI 48507**

FOR MORE INFORMATION

CALL:

810-239-3427



ASBURY FARM FRESH

- TRY OUR WEEKLY VEGGIE BOX FOR \$10.00 -

SIGN UP FOR A FREE ASBURY FARMS ACCOUNT TODAY

AND

Receive a \$15 credit on your account for your first purchase

CREATE YOUR OWN VEGGIE BOX

Select what goes in your box from each week's harvest. Get \$5 off your next order when you fill your box with \$15 of produce.

WANT US TO DECIDE FOR YOU?

Choose Veggie Box Subscription and we will fill your order with a variety of each week's harvest. Pay when you pick up your box. **A \$15 VALUE FOR \$10.**

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

The Reverend Dr. Robert L. Morris Jr. has served in various ministerial positions for more than forty-five years. This includes serving as senior minister at First Presbyterian Church in Jacksonville, Florida, for over seventeen years. Rev. Morris has since returned to Young Life staff, where his ministry began.

He is on the board of the Salvation Army and an organizing board member of First Ministries, a nonprofit serving the poor and homeless in Jacksonville. Rev. Morris is also a former board member of Habitat for Humanity in both Jacksonville and North Carolina.

I invite you to join us each Sunday for worship as we explore the six prayers of Jesus and consider how to improve our prayer life. Each Wednesday, we'll dig deeper into the wisdom offered by our book selection. You can pickup a copy of the book when you attend worship.

If you prefer to avoid groups or live too far away, I encourage you to join us via Zoom 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

Robert L. Morris, Jr.. Pray Like Jesus: What We Can Learn From the Six Recorded Prayers of Jesus.. Bloomington, IL: Westbow Press, 2019.

**Providing a HOT MEAL and/or local, organic
PRODUCE weekly.**

SATURDAYS starting around 12NOON

Asbury United Methodist Church

1653 Davison Rd, Flint (810) 235-0016

Flint Food Not Bombs is a loose-knit group of independent collectives, sharing free vegan and vegetarian food with others. **Flint Food Not Bombs** believes that access of food among other necessities of life-should be viewed as a right, not a privilege. Yet in a nation with a military budget many times that of other nations, people continue to go hungry. This is immoral and unjust.



JOIN THE CONVERSATION!

Facebook.com/flintfoodnotbombs

Twitter.com/flintfub

Email: flintfub@protonmail.com

Website: foodnotbombsflint.wordpress.com



**We're currently looking for volunteers so we can expand. If interested,
send us a message! Solidarity!**

**A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense
than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death.—MLK**



Summer is getting into full swing at the farm!!!

Coming soon, the farm's new twist on a
CSA Food Box!!!!

Bring home only the veggies you love!

First Pick-Up Date: Saturday, July 16th, 11am-1pm and until further notice. We will post if anything changes.



Want more information??
Email: kelly.jewett@outlook.com

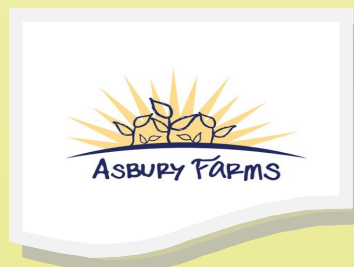


We were stoked to be kicking off our very first Asbury Farms Sliding Scale Food Box Program last week! Get the most local, organic, delicious produce!! Grown on the East Side!

Pick what veggies you want, how much you want and pay what you can between \$12.00 — \$24.00.

Every Saturday from 11:00am to 1:00pm
1601 Jane Ave Flint MI

Look for the big banner that says "SALE" ...



grows from the seed. "A man takes a mustard seed and plants it in his field," says Jesus. "And the plant grows large enough that birds make their nests in its branches" (Luke 13:18-19).

My family and commercial growers, including Asbury Farms, harvest greens while they're only a few inches high. At this stage, the leaves are still tender. But the Kingdom of God features mature plants bearing tiny seeds that easily travel.

Why do you suppose that public opinion towards the prominence of religion in the U.S. soared after 9/11? Was it that churches led the response and recovery? Of course not. Public figures with the power to organize a response and allocate resources had to step up and lead the way.

What is the Kingdom of God like? The tiny mustard seed grows and birds make nests in the branches.

Luke 13:18-19

But there was something about the hope represented by churches that brought comfort amid fear and uncertainty. And church attendance spiked for a few weeks before returning to the slow, downward trend that began several decades ago.

Duke Professor Mark Chaves noted that while there was a spike in church attendance in the weeks following 9/11, this event did not have a lasting effect on Americans' attitudes toward attending church.

So what might have an effect on public opinion towards church attendance? First, the gospel is a story about God choosing salvation over destruction. Second, God chose love over hate, offering divine grace and reconciliation by living among us and leaving us with instructions for an abundant life.

But this truth needs to travel light and be easily carried. The gospel must stick to our clothes and feet to take root wherever we travel.

Elsewhere Jesus says that the burden He brings to us isn't heavy. Instead, those who follow Him find joy and abundance amid chaos and conflict.

If you're already a believer, share your testimony wherever you go. Not as a burden you try to place on others, but as an invitation to abundant life.

And if you have doubts, you owe it to yourself to dig deeper into the source of your disbelief.

The Kingdom of God is like planting a tiny seed that grows to provide a safe haven while producing even more seeds and more abundance.

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Pastor Tommy

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"Two Decades Later, the Enduring Legacy of 9/11." © Pew Research, September 2, 2021. Retrieved from: [link](#)

"Post September 11 Attitudes." © Pew Research, December 6, 2001. Retrieved from: [link](#)

Eric Ferreri. "After 9/11, A Short-Lived Rush to Church." © Duke Today, August 19, 2016. Retrieved from: [link](#)