



# ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Volume 2 Issue 9

October 9, 2022

## Praise (Let God be God)



“Do you know anything about this?” I asked Cyndi the other day. “No,” she replied, “but I’ll google it.” I suspect this is a familiar conversation. Over half of the world’s popula-

tion use Google. And 77% of google users will search for something on Google at least 3 times per day.

And if you use Google to search, you’ll see a lot of Google and YouTube advertisements.

We are inundated with messages intended to convince us that we’re in need of whatever the source of the message is selling. By 2007 persons using social

Page 6



EVERYONE  
HAVE A  
WONDERFUL,  
SAFE WEEK!



## The Road to Awe (Why we pray)



Praying in public gets dicey depending on the circumstances, who is praying, and who is witnessing the prayer. For example, in June, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of a high school football coach who was fired for praying at midfield after each game. The court's ruling overturned the Lemon test that had been the

standard for determining cases involving the separation of religion and government activities.

The coach's win resonated with many religious groups even though almost three-fourths of U.S. adults believe religion should be kept separate from government policies. This article neither defends nor advocates opinions regarding this particular example. However, I favor praying without ceasing, whatever that might mean.

Page 2

## Inside this issue:

Praise	1
The Road to Awe	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
Praise	6
Life Group Questions & Notes	7
Feed Flint	8
Feed Flint	9
SFSK October Dates	10
Asbury Veggies Boxes	11
Pastor Book Club	12
The Road to Awe	13



The Reverend Robert L. Morris, Jr. concludes, "Prayer is the most talked-about subject in Christendom, but very few people regularly do it." Yet, writes Morris, "Developing a rich and vital prayer life is the chief spiritual struggle for all believers."

According to a Pew Research study, approximately one-third of U.S. adults say they seldom or never pray. This number is rising as only 18% in 2007 responded similarly. On the other hand, 45% report praying daily. While this is encouraging, this number is lower than the 58% who reported praying daily in 2007.

Since 63% of us identify as Christian, I wouldn't expect the number of us who pray daily to be much lower. This is a dilemma. Jesus clearly saw prayer as crucial and thus prayed frequently. So why, as followers, are our prayer habits not consistent with His? And what can we do to improve our own prayer habits?

A lot gets in our way when it comes to prayer beyond fear of what others might think about us if we pray in a public space. In particular, most of us are constantly pressed for time. I often feel like I'm running from one activity to the next without enough time to process or do a follow-up.

As a result, I'm often praying on the run. It's still prayer but also more of a monologue than a dialogue. This means I may miss out on a lot that's more important than what is causing me to rush.

My best prayers come when I'm feeling a sense of awe. And this is the best advice I can offer to those who hope to improve their prayer life. But, first, determine how you traverse the road to awe.

Dictionaries define "Awe" as a feeling of reverential respect mixed with fear or wonder. According to a white paper published by the Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley, awe shifts our "attention away from ourselves, makes us feel like we are part of something greater than ourselves, and make us more generous toward others."

It's no wonder that the road to awe leads us to prayer.

But prayer has a lot of layers. The outer layer is easily articulated. To pray is to communicate to a source of power beyond our own. What comes next can be formal, artistic, and familiar. Or what comes next may be a disheveled hot mess.

There is no mold for prayer. Just as the hearing impaired communicates with hand signals and the blind read braille, prayer is even more nuanced, personal, and challenging to

personal, and challenging to define, describe, or categorize.

Perhaps my most bizarre prayer experience ever came when I was actually yelling at God. "What do you want from me?" I shouted at the sky. Honestly, I wasn't expecting an answer, but I got one that changed my life forever.

On those occasions when I'm upset with God, my demeanor shows up in my prayer as a lack of awe. I often forget who I'm talking to as though God has no idea what I'm up against. It is a similar stance taken by children worldwide in conversations with parents.

I've noticed that from time to time, I swear I can hear similar words that God spoke to Job in one of my favorite biblical stories.

Anyone who knows the story of Job has a divine gift. His story is a gift because no one has it worse than Job. He lost everything, including his wealth, family, and health.

But since Job was a believer, he wanted God to weigh in on his circumstances. Job's friends didn't abandon him but offered advice that missed the mark. It was God who had to answer for Job's plight.

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

CHARGE CONFERENCE REPORTS

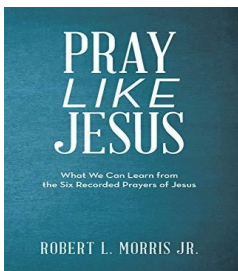
Get your reports into me ASAP.  
Please and thank you! Connie

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PASTOR BOOK CLUB NEWS

Pastor Book Club is still meet-  
ing 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).



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

Thank you and everyone continue  
to stay safe!

**COMING UP THIS WEEK**  
**OCTOBER 10 –OCTOBER 16**

- Oct 10    Mon    3:00pm    Worship Team Meeting
- Oct 11    Tues    10:00am-12:30pm  
                  Food/Water Distribution
- Oct 12    Wed    Angel Closet at  
                  South Flint Soup Kitchen (appts only)  
                  12Noon    Pastor Book Club
- Oct 13    Thu
- Oct 14    Fri
- Oct 15    Sat
- Oct 16    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"

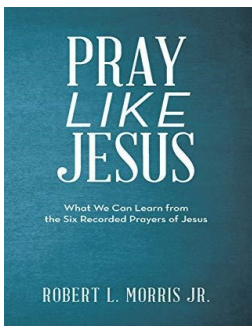


"Will you pray for me," the man asked his friend. "Of course," came the response. What else could his friend say? Prayer is so easy. It doesn't even have to be verbal. And prayer is so personal that no one knows if it even takes place.

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](http://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.*

media and email were seeing around 5,000 ads every day. Today the average online person sees around 10,000 ads per day.

Most of us have learned the hard way that even if we decide to purchase whatever the message is selling our feelings of satisfaction are short-lived. First, our satisfaction is short-lived because the barrage of messages doesn't stop. And whether abruptly or subtly, each message reminds us of deficiencies in our appearance, our vehicles, our homes, our entertainment, and in nearly every aspect of life.

From a need for a prescription, better hair, a more powerful truck, or a more comfortable bed. How can we ever feel like we've arrived when we're always traveling to the next store to buy whatever we're told we're missing.

And even when we feel satisfied our satisfaction is short-lived. Our satisfaction is short-lived because that which truly satisfies us cannot be purchased from somebody else. The result is that we feel lacking and convinced that we're never enough. Recent surveys suggest that somewhere between 70 and 80% of us report feeling inadequate.

So I'm guessing that feelings of inadequacy often show up in our prayers. "Lord, help me to be more," fill-in-the-blank. And why not ask for that new truck while on the topic of inadequate. After all, Jesus said that we should expect to receive what we ask for in prayer (Matthew 7:7).

Father, Lord of  
heaven and earth! I  
thank you because...

Matthew 11:25

There is no doubt from scripture that Jesus prayed often. But one difference from the prayers of Jesus and my own is the absence of requests for self-improvement. And in the first of six actual prayers of Jesus, found in scripture, His focus is on God.

Father, Lord of  
heaven and earth!  
I thank you be-  
cause you have  
shown to the un-  
learned what you  
have hidden from  
the wise and  
learned. Yes, Fa-  
ther, this was how  
you were pleased  
to have it hap-  
pen... (Matthew  
11:25-26).

Depending on where you believe Jesus' prayer ends there is more to this lesson than these two verses. Jesus was speaking to a crowd and now He is addressing you and me. Jesus says a prayer that is heard by the crowd right after sharing His reflection on how some of the smartest and most powerful people around missed the obvious.

Jesus travelled from town to town teaching and performing miracles that included healing incurable illness and disability. Yet, a large number of eye witnesses seemed to miss the point altogether. By way of illustration, Jesus reminds the crowd that some of the least knowledgeable and a few of the worst offenders believed what they saw and heard. But their revelation is a divine gift that they didn't earn by their own efforts.

Instead, salvation that comes from knowing that Jesus Christ is God is simply a gift. The facts are so straight forward that they confuse the wise. And God's message is often overlooked by the comfortable.

Jesus said "Unless you change and become like

Life Group Questions & Notes:

Father, Lord of heaven and earth! I thank you because you have shown to the unlearned what you have hidden from the wise and learned. This was how you were pleased to have it happen.  
Matthew 11:25-30 (GNT)

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

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QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS

1. Read Matthew 11:20-30. Try not to let the first few verses get you off track from the prayer Jesus prays beginning in verse 25. Where do you think His prayer ends? How do you make sense of His prayer? Where do you fit in Jesus’ description of people?
2. Read this week’s article titled Praise. Are you online? Do you use Google often? Have you noticed that your search results usually begins with ads? Which ad messages most often catch your attention? Why? Do you ever feel inadequate? How does knowing that Jesus loves you conditionally affect how you view yourself? Do you ever start your prayers with praise? Why or why not?
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](https://flintasbury.org/feed-flint-donate)

# **SOUTH FLINT SOUP KITCHEN OCTOBER FOOD GIVEAWAYS & ANGEL CLOSET DATES**

**Food Giveaways - October 5th & 19th  
11am-Noon**

**Angel Closet (appointment only) -  
October 12th & 26th**

3410 Fenton Road (3 blocks north of  
Atherton)  
Flint, MI 48507  
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](http://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.*

After several speeches by Job to provoke God to explain why so many bad things had happened to him, God responded. "Who are you to question My wisdom," God says, "Where were you when I created the world?"

Among other infractions of holy etiquette, Job was missing the awe that should come naturally whenever we speak to God. Nevertheless, this is how I expect my conversations to go when I'm upset with God and start lecturing the Creator from the back of the bus.

Were you there when I made the world? If you know so much, tell me about it.

*Job 38:4*

The obvious answer is nowhere. I didn't exist and wouldn't exist if it weren't for God making it possible for me to live. And I know that this fact challenges every one of us at times. And a few can't quite get past the idea that the world wasn't a fortunate accident of natural causes.

This unfortunate attitude can be corrected on the road to awe.

As the UC Berkley team pointed out in their paper, awe has a way of shifting focus away from our individual needs. Awe shrinks our perception that the world revolves around and answers to our needs. Humility is a beneficial by-product of awe that we discover along the way.

In a letter to the church in Philippi, the writer encourages us to have the same mindset and humility as Jesus, whose humility is legendary. While humility may look different to each one of us, imagine having tremendous power to command armies but choosing to do jobs that no one else wants to do. I've found that awe comes with humility.

Does this mean that we shouldn't yell at God? Probably not. But like any parent an upset child is better than a silent one so if you're upset with God just be yourself. Just be ready to learn and be transformed.

Each Sunday during our series, Pray, we're collecting prayer requests. You can submit a request online from our website [home page](#). In addition, prayer request forms are located around the church and during water and food giveaways.

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

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Dalia Fahmy and Rebecca Leppert. "10 facts about religion and government in the United States." © Pew Research, July 5, 2022. Retrieved from: [link](#)

Alex Swoyer and Stephen Dinan. "High court allows football coach's prayer as private religious expression." © Washington Times, June 27, 2022. Retrieved from: [link](#)

"The Science of Awe." © Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley, 2022. Retrieved from: [link](#)

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](mailto: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” ...

little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 18:3). When I think of children I think of potential and possibility. I feel like children come into the world so much smarter than adults because they haven’t learned limitations. And, as a result, they still believe anything is possible and they learn to navigate life at lightening speeds.

In Jesus’ first prayer in scripture He gives thanks and praises God for divine wisdom on display. For He knows that unless we’re able to let go of the regrets, hurts, disappointments and failures we miss the offer of grace coming from Jesus. And perhaps even harder, unless we let go of the successes, accomplishments, one-ups, wins, and trophies, we miss out on the humility that allows God to be in charge.

Do you want to improve your prayer life? Take a tip from Jesus and begin your prayer letting God know that you notice divine wisdom even when you don’t understand it.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise God all creatures here below. This week, try starting your prayers with praise.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise God all creatures here below. This week, try starting your prayers with praise.

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Pastor Tommy

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*South Flint Soup Kitchen  
Thanksgiving*

# FOOD DRIVE

WE NEED THE FOLLOWING ITEMS FOR OUR  
THANKSGIVING FOOD GIVEAWAY:

- \*100 TURKEYS
- \*STUFFING
- \*CRANBERRY SAUCE
- \*GREEN BEANS
- \*CREAM OF MUSHROOM SOUP
- \*DURKEE ONIONS/FRIED ONIONS FOR CASSEROLES
- \*POTATOES/MASHED POTATOES
- \*DESSERTS/PIES
- \*ROLLS/BREAD
- \*COLLARDS/GREENS
- \*GRAVY PACKETS/CANS
- \*GALLONS OF MILK



For questions call  
810-239-3427