

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Volume 3 Issue 19

March 19, 2023

Chemistry (A drink between friends)



My parents made it abundantly clear that the well behind my grandparent's home was out of bounds for my sister and me. Perhaps this is what created the intrigue for me. Something about a hole in the ground where fresh, pure water can be fetched captured my imagination.

"Don't go near that well, Tommy. If you fall in, you'll drown, and no one will know you down there!" Well, that was good enough for me. Sort of.

I was anxious to go with my father to the well and help him get water. The well had a bucket tied to a rope running through a single pulley connected to a rafter holding up the small roof over the well. My dad lowered the bucket down the well until it broke the water's surface, tipped over, and filled with

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EVERYONE
HAVE A
WONDERFUL
AND SAFE
WEEK!

DONATE

Roots (Everyday miracles)



Is there such a thing as a minor miracle? Can a divine intervention be so unnoticeable that it's seldom mentioned? If so, what makes the miracle minor? Is it the number of words printed that tells us the miracle happened? Is it a lack of media coverage or social media hits that we use as a yardstick?

Cyndi and I are germinating seeds for spring planting. So is the Asbury Farms team. So are people in most places where spring is near. By germinating seeds indoors, the plants have time to establish robust root systems and get a jump on a relatively short growing season.

Is a tiny tomato seed pushing its way toward light and eventually producing delicious fruit a miracle, or is it just a part of our everyday expectations? The plant depends on sufficient water and nutrients, so the strength of its root system makes a huge difference in the

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outcome. Similarly, how close the emerging plant is to a light source impacts the thickness of the plant's primary trunk. These all require interventions to increase the plant's chance of flourishing.

Perhaps miracles require participation from those who benefit the most from the outcome.

People took on the challenge when the City of Flint was forced to change our water source to save money. Rather than whine about the injustice of an outsider making such an important decision without involving the people, the city's leadership and public water systems experts went to work to implement the change.

But the results were disastrous. Soon after the change of water source was made, years of corrosion entered our water as it made its way from the source to our homes, businesses, and churches. Sometimes it was apparent. The water was no longer clean and clear. But, most of the time, our water contained an invisible, deadly additive. Lead was leaching into our water and taking up residence in our bodies.

No one wanted harm to the residents and persons working in Flint. But when harm came, miracles started happening all around us. Residents banded together initially in responding to an emergency. Nearly one hundred thousand people needed clean, safe water for everyday use. But, none of us were sure whether the water coming into our homes, businesses, or churches was safe for human consumption.

Our miracles played out over time as thousands of minor miracles occurred daily. Today, although most of us remain understandably skeptical, the crisis is becoming part of our past. Nevertheless, the damage to bodies remains, and we hope for new miracles, both minor and significant.

We started our *Thirsty* series with a miracle done for the Prophet Elijah. An angel cared for his basic needs for food, water, and rest. Sometime later, after the Prophet Elijah passed, he left a legacy and a replacement named Elisha.

Before this happened, Elijah called on God to cause an extended drought. The draught responded to his ongoing conflict with king Ahab and queen Jezebel. The monarchy installed a new national religion based on gods other than Elohim. And Elijah warned them God would take away their rain until this changed. And a severe drought parched the land.

Even after the rains returned, there remained areas without safe water. One such city was Jericho. Even though there was plenty of fresh water, it was causing sickness, death, and miscarriages. Elisha was new in his position. His teacher and mentor passed on the torch to him, but he was unproven.

Nevertheless, Elisha instructs the city's water caretakers to bring him a bowl of salt. Afterward, Elisha dumped the bowl of salt into the city's well, saying, "The Lord has healed these waters." And the well provided safe water from that point on.

A delegation of the city officials of Jericho visited Elisha, "We have a problem," they told him, "Our water is bad!"

1 Kings 2:19

This story is given a few sentences organized into a couple of paragraphs. That's it! The story ends with, "And sure enough! The water was purified, just as Elisha had said." The end!

There is no media coverage, and no one posted a video of this miracle. There were no committees or community help centers. At least not according to the story we find in scripture. As a result, very few, if any, of you likely know about this miracle. Does this make it a minor miracle?

The people of Jericho didn't have a pediatrician noticing that children in her care were showing signs of a problem with lead in their water. Nor did any of them know the chemistry of their water. What they learned was what they observed. Residents and visitors were getting sick, and some died, including children. And a community full of promise was becoming a barren wasteland. The city could not survive without clean, safe water.

I'm betting their recovery took a generation or more, but it began with one miracle, and then another, and more following.

There is another story in scripture that takes place centuries later. A woman suffers from a condition that prevents her from realizing her potential. She didn't know what was causing her condition, nor did the experts. But she knew the results and believed that Jesus had the power to heal her body.

Making her way through the crowds surrounding Jesus, the woman touches His outer garment and is instantly healed. Is there any such thing as a minor miracle? If so, this miracle might have gone unnoticed were it not for the awareness of Jesus. And were it not for the importance of telling the world that the Messiah had come.

The people of Jericho didn't go to Elisha to hear a sermon or his report of the excellent news that Elijah's mantle was passed on to him. They came in desperation. They were dying and believed that Elisha had access to the only power to save them. And to Elisha's credit, he responded with what he knew how to do, even during his grief.

Jericho's water was restored to health. With their basic need for water fixed, they could germinate seeds, plant, and harvest. And the woman who touched the garment of Jesus could get on with her life, all as a result of one miracle after another.

There are some weeks that I hope for the days to go by quickly. Over the years, I've missed witnessing a lot of miracles as a result. But the years have taught me that even when failures overshadow me, miracles are happening all around.

And my prayers more often include a plea for God to hold my attention so that I won't miss the miracles. But, more importantly, my prayers extend to all the residents of Flint. Prayers that we won't miss out on the miracles happening around us. Miracles that require our participation and intervention.

It will take a generation or more for Flint to recover. But all recoveries begin with hope, followed by cooperative participation. Do this and with God's help we'll make miracles together.

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](#).

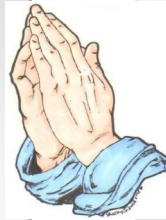
Pastor Tommy

Our series was inspired by and relies on content provided by [CleanWaterfortheWorld.org](#).

Content for this series is also based in part on: Eric Nilsen. *Understanding Social Justice*. © Eric Nilsen, 2022. Independently published.

In Our Prayers

Kevin Croom
 Sylvia Pittman
 Chris Freeman
 Richard Oram



FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE
HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE

Nancy Elston Virginia Bigger
 Norma Buzzard



EXCUSE OUR MESS WHEN COMING INTO OUR ASBURY BUILDING.. WE WILL BE UNDER CONSTRUCTION FOR NEXT FEW WEEKS ...BUT WE WILL STILL BE HOLDING SERVICE EVERY SUNDAY!

Our Asbury Offices are working out of the Library Conference Room at the present time. If you need to get a hold of us, please use our email at FlintAsburyUMC@gmail.com and I will try to follow up with your questions/concerns as soon as I am able to.

Connie

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 "Thirsty" This series promises to be informative, challenging and inspiring... And I hope you all will join us each Wednesday at 12Noon.



**COMING UP THIS WEEK
 MARCH 20 – MARCH 26**

- Mar 20 Mon 6:00pm Leadership Team Meeting
- Mar 21 Tues 10:00am-12:30pm
 Food Distribution
- Mar 22 Wed 11am-12Noon Food Giveaway at
 South Flint Soup Kitchen (no appts needed)
- 12Noon Pastor Book Club
- Mar 23 Thu
- Mar 24 Fri
- Mar 25 Sat
- Mar 26 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 "Thirsty"



The Season of Lent is a special time of year for many churchgoers, and Lent is celebrated in various ways. For many, Lent represents a time of deep reflection. For others, Lent is a time for dieting or giving up favorite foods. The day before Lent begins is commonly referred to as "Fat Tuesday") as some of us indulge by eating a pastry known as a Paczki.

We launch our new series on Wednesday, February 22, with an Ash Wednesday service at Court Street Church. The themes for our series is shared among Flint Area United Methodist Churches. Our series is based on content provided by a local non-profit, Clean Water for the World.

At Asbury Church, we're calling our series *Thirsty*.

Book Club News

As the Season of Lent

progresses we put our belief into practice inspired by a new series, *Thirsty*. A lot of our content for our series is inspired and provided by the nonprofit CleanWater-

fortheWorld.org. Access to clean water is necessary to sustain life. Therefore, clean water is a social

justice issue when access is denied.

In order to help us navigate the complexities of social justice while digging into what scripture has to say about God's view on clean water, we're turning to journalist and author Eric Nilsen.

Author of *Democracy From Then to Now* and *Understanding Social Justice*, Nilsen has lived and worked in different parts of the world. His experiences give him an informed perspective and knowledge of different cultures, religions, and societies. These experiences inspired him to share his knowledge and

viewpoints with us through our study of one of his books.

Understanding Social Justice offers us a clearer understanding of issues, their causes, and the need to address and resolve them. Eric Nilsen offers an opportunity to make a passion for human rights a way of life. And to motivate us to pursue social justice for everybody.



If you are serious about switching from equity talk to equity walk and making the world a fairer and more just place where everyone can thrive, you first need to comprehend how and why prevalent and ingrained in our society.

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
Mike Sampson	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 - "Thirsty" ...cont from pg 5

We launch our new series on Wednesday, February 22, with an Ash Wednesday service at Court Street Church. The themes for our series is shared among Flint area United Methodist Churches. Our series is based on content provided by a local nonprofit, Clean Water for the World.

At Asbury Church, we're calling our series *Thirsty*.

Water is a powerful metaphor in scripture. From the creation story in Genesis to the river of the water of life in Revelations that sparkled like crystal, water is crucial to life. Life is unattainable without water, but not all water is suitable for human consumption.

In this series, we'll dig into a few water stories from scripture as we explore the obstacles preventing access to clean water for everyone. And we'll learn about responses and how we can help ourselves and others.

The *Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church*, adopted in 2016, calls access to clean water a human right. Yet, estimates of water usage predict that global water demand could surpass sustainable supply by 40 percent by the end of the decade. This prediction is based on energy production utilizing 75% of total water consumption combined with rising energy usage and population growth.

In the U.S., we take access to clean water for granted. At least we did until 2016, when residents of Flint discovered that our public water supply was unsafe to drink.

Speaking of Thirsty. Did you know Flint is not the only U.S. city dealing with lead in their public water? According to the NRDC, high levels of lead are showing up in the public water of Baltimore, Chicago, Detroit, Milwaukee, Newark, New York, Pittsburgh, and Washington D.C. Another study estimates that over half of U.S. residents drank water with detectable levels of lead between 2018 and 2020.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates the number of lead service lines to be between 6 to 10 million. However, a 2021 NRDC survey estimates a number closer to 12 million. Either way, there is a lot of damage left to undo.

Lead is a national crisis, and President Biden has called for eliminating all lead service pipes. But is this enough?

Most Flint residents are familiar with the dangers of lead. We took the time to learn about lead because too many of us ingested lead by drinking water coming out of our public water source. In 2016, Flint appeared in headlines worldwide when it became public that children were testing for high lead levels. In fact, lead levels had doubled since the city water began coming from a different source.

If life itself is a human right then so is access to clean water. I invite you to join us for this series that promises to be informative, challenging, and inspiring.

We welcome Pastor Brian Willingham from Bristol / Burton Christ Churches who plans to be at Asbury on March 12.

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

Clean Water for the World, a Michigan nonprofit. Find more information at CleanWaterfortheWorld.org.

The Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church 2016. © Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 2016.

Keith Mulvihill. "Causes and Effects of Lead in Water," © NRDC, July 09, 2021. Retrieved from: Link.

water. Then he pulled on the rope, letting it curl up by his feet until the bucket emerged from the top of the well, overflowing with water.

When my dad lifted me up so I could look into the well beyond the darkness, I could see the bucket sinking into the water below, if the light was just right. A common dipper was hanging on the side of one of the corner posts holding up the roof. It was too high for me to reach it. But once the bucket was out of the well, my dad would offer me a drink out of the dipper. The water was cold even on the hottest days.

My mom was right. It was a long way down to the water below and dark. And it was impossible to tell the depth of the water. So my sister and I found other places to explore, leaving the well for the adults. But as I got older, my grandmother would send me out to the well to fetch water for meals or ensure her dogs had fresh water. Fortunately, her well was only a short distance from the backdoor and her kitchen.

My grandparents were fortunate to have their own well, close to their home. Although by today's standards, at least in the U.S., their situation was archaic. My grandmother finally got water coming directly into her kitchen a few years after my grandfather passed. Initially skeptical, she worried the water wouldn't be as fresh.

It's hard to imagine that millions live without access to clean water and millions more spend a lot of their time fetching water for everyday use. Research offered by water.org estimates women and girls spend 266 million hours daily accessing water for their

families. And 771 million people lack access to safe water. How can this be in a world where so many of us fill our tubs and take longer showers than necessary for cleanliness?

The challenges are numerous but solvable. However, many systemic obstacles require changing cultural norms founded on bias and discrimination. The solution begs for **divine intervention** and transforming hardened hearts even as we hold tight to the way it was. Okay, the way we think it was!

Cultural do's, and don't do's take time and effort to learn. And as they're passed down through generations, the details get lost and convoluted into new justifications. While many, if not most, customs come out of learned experience, some are based on bias. Unfortunately, caretakers often pass these on to the children under their care camouflaged as wisdom.

Jesus saw through bias and frequently ignored traditions based on prejudice rather than wisdom. A famous example is the story of the woman at the well.

Jesus and His followers pass through Sychar on their way to Galilee. Jesus finds a place to sit next to a well while the rest go into town to find food. We learned last week that the well was first dug by Jacob and his family when they settled there. And the well provided water for the generations that came after them. After the others left for town, a Samaritan woman came to the well to fetch water.

Constructing plausible scenarios that fill in missing information has long been a favorite pastime for theologians. Our pursuit of what isn't said is understandable. While the most important facts are found in the conversation between Jesus and the woman, a lot is going on between the lines that isn't said.

For example, one of the cultural never do's could have prevented the conversation from taking place at all. For one, according to Jewish custom, men don't engage in discussions with unfamiliar women. Moreover, this woman was of Samaritan descent, which created a strong cultural barrier that wasn't ordinarily crossed. And the woman was quite aware of the rules.

When Jesus asks the woman for a drink of water, she responds, "You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan, so how can you ask me for a drink?" But then, the narrator adds a further complication. The two conflicted cultures also don't share common dippers.

Whether Jesus was thirsty when he asked the woman for a drink is buried in the backstory and not spelled out. Jesus and His friends were on the road and likely tired, dusty, hungry, and parched from a day of walking. Have you ever been so thirsty the word "parched" described your condition?

Roger Owens, a Professor of Christian Spirituality and Ministry at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary,

LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS & MORE:

A delegation from Jericho visited Elisha. "We have a problem...The water is bad" they told him. "Bring me a new bowl filled with salt." Then he went out to the city well and threw the salt in and declared, "The Lord has healed these water" ... And sure enough! The water was purified...

2 Kings 2:19-22

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

Handwritten notes area with horizontal lines.

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS

- 1. Read 2 Kings 2:19-22 and Matthew 9:20-22. Were you already familiar with the story of Elisha and the miracle of Jericho's well? Is there anything about this story that feels familiar? Explain. How is the miracle of the woman being healed after touching the edge of Jesus' coat similar or different from the miracle of Jericho's well?
2. Read this week's articles titled Roots. Have you noticed any miracles happening around you this week? Are some of them less significant than other? What was your's or someone else's role in the miracle? What miracles are yet to happen that are needed for Flint's recovery? What is your role in these miracles?
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”



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**

FLINT ASBURY WATER BOX IS IN FULL OPERATION
SERVING FRESH WATER – PLEASE JOIN US
ON TUESDAYS FOR A 5 OR 2.5 GALLON OF WATER.
STOP BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 10:00AM AND 1:00PM.



COMING SOON FLINT ASBURY DELICIOUS AND WHOLESOME MEAL KITS!!!

STAY TUNE ...

WILL POST MORE IN

OUR WEEKLY ASBURY

CIRCUIT RIDER!!





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 ***

In this reading of social justice, you will find a broad analysis of the big issues around social justice, and new insights that will challenge your understanding of what justice really means.

For Lent, our group will dig deeper into each week's message utilizing reference materials from Clean Water for the World, *Understanding Social Justice*, and our Sunday message. Our goal is to wrestle with obstacles preventing access to clean water and reflect on possible solutions. Stories from scripture offer guidance on every aspect of life. Interpreting and applying biblical truths, however, require prayerful discernment that is best done in a group.

I invite you to join us each Sunday for worship as we explore what it means that access to clean water is a human right. I invite you to join us for this series that promises to be informative, challenging, and inspiring. And I pray that you'll join us each Wednesday as we dive further into each week's teaching.

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 and are 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 or enter a prayer request on our website's homepage — FlintAsbury.org.

Pastor Tommy

Clean Water for the World, a Michigan nonprofit. Find more information at CleanWaterfortheWorld.org.

Eric Nilsen. *Understanding Social Justice*. © Eric Nilsen, 2022. Independently published.



WOULD YOU LIKE TO VOLUNTEER AT APPLEWOOD?!

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EXPERIENCE APPLEWOOD AS A VOLUNTEER!!

Have you been looking for a way to serve your community? The Ruth Mott Foundation is adding to our roster of dedicated Applewood volunteers for the 2023 season.

Applewood was built in 1916 as the historic home of Charles Stewart Mott and his family. Today, it's a community resource open to visitors from May through October near the Flint Cultural Center.

Volunteers at Applewood play a vital role in programming and customer service. The benefits of volunteering are learning new skills, meeting new people, and serving your community.

If you're interested in learning more about volunteering or signing up, please visit applewood.org and scroll to the Volunteer section.

If you have questions, please contact Julia, Manager of Visitor Services, at jpopler@ruthmott.org.

Visit applewood.org to apply!



South Flint Soup Kitchen

MARCH GIVEAWAYS

**Food Giveaways (No appointment needed ever!)
March 8th & 22nd, 11am-Noon**

**Angel Closet (appointment no longer needed!)
March 15th & 29th, 11am-Noon**

NEW ANGEL CLOSET PROCEDURES:

YOU MUST BRING PROOF OF INCOME WITH YOUR NAME AND THE DATE (FROM THIS YEAR ONLY) CLEARLY LISTED ON THE PROOF. CLIENTS QUALIFY FOR FREE ANGEL CLOSET SERVICES IF THEY MEET THE FOLLOWING:

HOUSEHOLD SIZE ANNUAL INCOME:

1 - \$17,667

2 - \$23,803

3 - \$29,939

4 - \$36,075

IF YOU DON'T MEET THESE REQUIREMENTS OR HAVE A PROOF PRESENT, THERE WILL BE A SMALL ADMINISTRATION FEE OF \$5

QUESTIONS??? CALL 810-239-3427

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

shared a story in a reflection published in the *Upper Room Disciplines*. A student's presentation was particularly impactful, using parched repeatedly to emphasize a thirst that demands resolution. Have you ever been parched?

Have you ever reached a point where your mouth was so dry you could taste and feel the gritty dryness?

Likely, there wasn't a common bucket and rope at the well and no pulley to make retrieving water less burdensome. And clearly, Jesus wasn't carrying a bucket when he arrived. But Jesus also had the woman's attention. Social customs melted, making way for a deeper conversation.

Thirst is a condition of dryness caused by more than dehydration. The same is true for hunger. Even after we're hydrated and satisfied, we're still parched if lacking other necessities for abundant life.

The answer that Jesus offers back puts outdated social customs in their rightful place while opening the treasure chest of possibilities. "If you only knew what God gives and who it is that is asking you for a drink, you would ask Him, and He would give you life-giving water," Jesus replied.

Those who drink the water that I will give them will never be thirsty again.

John 4:14

This scene took place centuries before tele sales, TV ads, and email spam. Nevertheless, the woman knew a line when she heard it. But instead of walking away, she dug a little deeper. After all, she came to a public well for water. "You don't have a bucket, and the well is deep. Where would you get that life-giving water?" the woman replied.

I'm willing to go out on a limb here and tie the way this conversation progresses to the **divine intervention** I mentioned earlier. How can some of us access extravagance while millions lack the means for basic sustenance? How can parts of our country be food deserts amid so much waste? How can most of us sleep in comfortable beds within the safety of an affordable home while numerous others lack dependable shelter?

These injustices happen because so many of us are parched. We're thirsty for living water that transforms us into doers rather than complainers.

Jesus reminds us that when we quench our thirst for basic necessities, we get thirsty again. So experts tell us to drink water daily and eat balanced meals. But each day is another meal schedule and another trip to the well for water.

And then Jesus tells us about living water that quenches a deeper thirst. A thirst that creates competition for resources and bias towards anyone who we perceive as threatening our advantage. And all who drink the water that Jesus offers will never be thirsty again. Instead, the Holy Spirit will be in them like a spring, providing them with life-giving water and eternal life.

"Sir," the woman said, "give me that water! Then I will never be thirsty again."

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

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Roger Owens. "Thirsty for God." *The Upper Rom Disciplines 2023: A Book of Daily Devotions*. Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2022. p. 125.



Your hobby farm probably started as a way to get back to your roots, literally. It was a way for you to reconnect with nature, your food, and the land and a way to create a sustainable lifestyle. And you're probably aware that there is a growing demand for organic produce and healthy living.

Thus, the idea of turning what was once a hobby into a business enterprise is a smart one. And there are several ways of going about monetizing your farm, depending on what you enjoy doing, what your farm will support, and what the need is in your area. Below, Asbury Farms explains more about how to develop your passion into a hobby farm.

Choose the Products You Will Sell

The first step is deciding what you want to sell. You can sell vegetables, eggs, honey, or other goods that you produce

on your farm. If you are not sure what will be popular with the public, then ask your friends and family for their opinion.

Besides produce, you might consider selling crafts like [wreaths made from items on your farm](#), homemade soap, beeswax candles, handmade birdhouses, or whatever craft you enjoy.

You can have a U-pick for strawberries, a Christmas tree farm, or a pumpkin patch with hayrides. But of course, all of those would mean your farm has easy access to a road and a town within easy commute.

Determine Your Target Audience

Next, you need to think about where your audience is. Do you want to sell at a farmers market, a grocery store, or through a CSA, [Community Supported Agriculture](#)? Next, how much time do you want to spend on sales? Do you want to be more hands-on and sell at markets in person? Or do you prefer the convenience of selling through an online shop?

If you're selling online, HostGator explains that you must make sure your website [lists all of the items](#) that you want to sell as well as what they will cost per item or by weight (if it's something like honey). You also need to include information about where the product is coming from (your farm) so customers know they are getting quality goods from an ethical source.

You may decide to get involved in a community organization like [Asbury Farms that resources local farms](#) to feed those in need. Look into similar programs in your area to give back to the community.

Make Your Marketing Efforts Count

Make sure that you have a website that is [easy to navigate](#) and provides information about your farm. This will attract customers who want to know more about the products that you have available.

Use social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter to get the word out about what you have to offer in terms of products or services. These platforms are free and easy for anyone with an internet connection, so they are accessible to a wide range of people. Share pictures of what goes on there on a regular basis, and include videos. You can also [make a YouTube channel](#) to provide how-to tutorials.

As you are selecting content for your social media and other digital marketing posts, be sure to focus on SEO (search engine optimization) practices. You'll want to use the right key words and phrases in your content and metadata so that search engines pull your content when people search for those phrases. It's important to know that PDFs are more SEO compatible than other file formats, so use them for your posts. [You can convert](#) most files over to this format using a free online conversion tool. It's as simple as dropping in the file and saving the newly formatted version.

How to Structure Your Business

The next step is deciding what kind of business entity will work best for your needs. How much capital do you need, and how much time do you want the business to take up in your life? Will it be a sole proprietorship, partnership, LLC, or S-Corp? Many small businesses [prefer to structure as S Corps](#), which is not a separate type of business entity like a corporation or an LLC. Instead, it is a tax election that you make with the Internal Revenue Service. It is taxed as a regular corporation but not as a partnership, and it keeps the business separate from its owners, which means that you [don't have to pay self-employment taxes](#).

Turn Your Garden into a Growing Business

If you are a homesteader who is looking to monetize your hobby farm, you have everything you need in your own backyard, literally. Just decide what you want to do and what your area will support, choose the business structure best suited to you, market like crazy, and your hobby can soon turn into a very enjoyable and profitable business.



THE SIZZLING CULTURE YOUTH GROUP WAS INVITED BY
FLINT CREPE COMPANY TO TAKE A TOUR
OF THE RESTAURANT AND LEARN ABOUT CREPES.



WHAT THEY ARE, THE DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN SAVORY AND SWEET,
AND HOW THE BUSINESS GOT
STARTED.

THEY ALSO GOT A CHANCE TO
SAMPLE DIFFERENT CREPES.
THE YOUTHS LOVED THE PRESENTA-
TION BY GEORGE MARZONIE,
AND TRYING SOMETHING NEW.

A FEW OF THE YOUTH SAID
THAT “FLINT CREPE COMPANY IS
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A BIG “THANK YOU” TO FLINT CREPE FOR ALLOWING THIS TOUR!