



# ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Volume 3 Issue 9

April 9, 2023

## Never the Same (Quenching our Thirst)



It is customary during Holy Week to look back at what the first followers of Jesus witnessed. We imagine what it must have been like to see firsthand what appeared to be the end of their hope that Jesus Christ was and is

the long-awaited Messiah. After all, deliverance means something different for each of us. Yet salvation also has commonality. In particular, we desire that our thirst be quenched.

We've talked, reflected, and considered what it means to be thirsty for several weeks. We began by exploring the depths of our thirst, imagining what it

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**EVERYONE HAVE A WONDERFUL AND SAFE EASTER !!**



## A New Era (Are you Committed)



"We've been waiting for you?" Has anyone said these words to you? Perhaps your parents when you arrived home late, or a time when you arrived late for supper? This question is loaded with supposition. Context is everything.

Asbury CDC was formed as a Michigan non-profit corporation in the fall of 2011. Earlier that

year, on Palm Sunday, our message featured the simple phrase, "Are you committed?" Well, are you committed? Are you all in? Do you plan to stick with us? Are we in this together?

In this case, these are questions of loyalty to an idea, a direction, and a vision. Our series topic was the Abundant Community. It was the Season of Lent, and our celebration of Palm Sunday was reminiscent of past years, complete with palms suitable for waving and setting the mood.

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In Eric Nilsen's book *Understanding Social Justify*, he defines classism as "the discriminatory treatment and oppression of various segments of the society, merely based on their socio-economic background." For example, classism means a waitress may be treated differently than a doctor at a store simply because it is believed that there are appreciable differences between the two. Such as the waitress makes less money than the doctor and has less money to spend. While both may be true, the judgment is based on perceived socio-economics.

The libertarians among us would argue that it is the shop owner's right to treat potentially better customers with more money to spend with more care and attention. After all, the waiter can shop elsewhere unless it's the only shop in town for what he needs. But what about discrimination that affects access to fundamental human rights based on a person's wealth?

If we agree that healthcare is a human right, it should be accessible to everyone. Yet, studies show that healthcare quality in the U.S. depends on a person's wealth. Wealthier persons generally receive better care and live longer.

This Sunday, we celebrate Jesus entering Jerusalem to confront the political and religious leaders. If this happened today, who would Jesus confront? Some would point to leaders of institutions that don't put Jesus first. Others might single out inclusive churches. Some of us believe that Jesus would confront the conservative Christian right.

Honestly, the evidence suggests that we all deserve the wrath of God based on our own merit. However, this is not to excuse us from working on the changes needed for justice. Are you committed?

Palm Sunday marks the beginning of Holy Week and a day when we recall the impact-filled entry of our Lord into the city of Jerusalem. There were two different crowds gathered. First century was steeped in traditions that favor wealth and power over humility and equity. Thus, the difference in the crowds represented two ends of the economic spectrum who lived in different realities. For one group, the elite, life was abundant in comfort and access to resources. For the other, life was steeped in scarcity and lack.

Palm Sunday and the events following happened during the Jewish festival of Passover when thousands of visitors show up for the festivities. Estimates of the size of the crowd vary. René Schlaepfer, Lead Pastor of Twin Lakes Church, uses a number the ancient Jewish writer Josephus calculated. His estimate was over 2.5 Million based on a count of over 250 Thousand lambs brought into the city for the festival. This number is several times larger than the estimated population of Jerusalem during the first century, of approximately 40,000.

Soon after Jesus entered the city, His opponents planned his expedient death. This time he had gone too far. Jesus had the nerve to March on the capital city and challenge the very foundation that powers of domination depend on for their effectiveness.

It doesn't seem possible for one man to take on both the imperial power of Rome, the largest war machine in history and at the same time, take on the religious authorities of God's chosen people. But He did and paid for it with His life. Well, at least at first, it appeared this way.

Reverend Schlaepfer connects the dots between a large number of lambs, the festival, and why a large crowd gathered to welcome Jesus into Jerusalem. Passover had evolved from a remembrance of the Hebrew escape from slavery into an independence day celebration of Judas Maccabees' triumphant revolt against the oppressive Seleucid Empire. The Palm branch symbolizes freedom from oppression and a return to justice.

If Jesus was the long-anticipated Messiah, freedom from Roman oppression would come soon. The crowd was hyped up, reflecting the fervor of the entire festival crowd.

Soon after His arrival, Jesus headed for the place where non-Jews were allowed to pray, near the Temple, which doubled as stockyards for the lambs belonging to the temple authorities.

The legally approved and licensed lambs were expensive, but they were the only lambs declared suitable for sacrifice. It was an exclusive market that favored the well-off and well-connected. Pilgrims arriving with their lambs had to pass an inspection conducted by the authorities selling their own lambs. Not surprisingly, many imported lambs didn't make the grade, significantly increasing the sale of state-owned lambs.

Hosanna; Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

Mark 11:9

But not everyone could afford a lamb, neither a lamb of their own nor an overpriced lamb offered by the elite. For them, pigeons were offered at a fraction of the cost of a lamb.

Of course, temple merchants only accepted local currency. Therefore, Roman coins had to be exchanged for Temple currency at an exchange rate favorable to the merchants. A perfect scam where theft is legal and protected by law. And apparently offensive to Jesus.

Meanwhile, the Roman governor visited Jerusalem to oversee peacekeeping during the festival. In contrast to the entrance Jesus made, high-ranking officials came into Jerusalem in style amid a demonstration of military power. Residents and visitors proved their allegiance to Rome and improved their political connections through their presence at Governor Pilate's arrival.

The pieces fell into place in ways that surprised even the closest followers of Jesus. Later, it would all make sense. But Palm Sunday and the days following proved full of surprises. Are you committed?

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](#).

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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. Braveman P, Acker J, Arkin E, Proctor D, Gillman A, McGeary KA, Mallya. "Wealth Matters for Health Equity." © Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, September 1, 2018. Retrieved from: [link](#).

René Schlaepfer. "The Palm Sunday Mystery." *Jesus Journey: 40 days in the footsteps of Christ*. © 2012 René Schlaepfer, Twin Lakes Church. Retrieved from: [link](#).





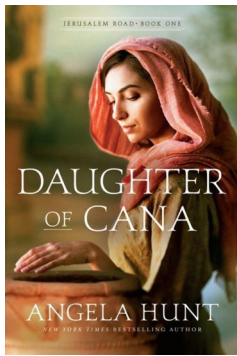
## Upcoming Worship Series "Water into Wine"



According to scripture, Mary, the mother of Jesus, attended a wedding in Cana. The guest list was apparently quite long and included Jesus and other friends of the family, relatives, and friends of friends. Weddings lasted multiple days, and the groom was expected to provide ample food and wine for all guests to have their fill. And this wedding was no different. But a problem was brewing.

The Gospels are full of stories void of detail. Rather than a fictional novel where an author takes us through every twist and turn, building characters with dialogue and description, the bible leaves us hungry for more.

## Book Club News



The very first Easter marked the beginning of a new era in human history. God chose to live among humans, and, as a result, life

would never be the same.

We begin a new worship series called *Water into Wine* in

the spirit of new beginnings. Our companion book was written by best-selling author Angela Hunt. This book is a part of her *Jerusalem Road* series that takes readers on a tour of the many characters found in scripture and a few that didn't get mentioned.

Although Hunt's book is fictional, her attention to details in scripture challenges our knowledge of the Bible. With each character, we meet the questions that percolate inside us. What parts of her description are likely genuine,

and which are made up? Was Thomas really like that? Did Thomas have a twin sister?

Allow our author's creativity to ignite your creativity in exploring the stories of Jesus. Here's what the publisher says about the book:

Thomas and Tasmin, twin siblings hired to oversee a wedding feast in Cana, worry when the host runs out of wine . . . until a guest tells Tasmin to have the servants fill the pitchers by the gate with water from the cistern. Reluctantly, she obeys and is amazed when rain-water becomes the finest wine ever tasted in Cana.

## Asbury Staff

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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
Yasheah, Mirium	Nursery
Cyndi	Worship Leader
Christine & Norma	Cafe

## *Upcoming Worship Series* ...cont from pg 5

Who is the twin brother of Thomas, or is she his sister? Who else was in the room when Jesus washed the feet of His closest allies? Who prepared the meals? What did they eat?

Beginning the first Sunday after Easter, join us as we explore possible answers to questions left hanging from Nazareth to Jerusalem. We start with a story of Jesus as a young boy gone missing as His family returned home from celebrating Passover in Jerusalem.

We won't dive into every story, but all of the tales add to a greater familiarity and a deeper understanding of the Gospels.

We won't allow best-selling author and theologian Angela Hunt to fill in some of the details behind the stories. Each week, after reading the story as told by Angela's creative imagination and gift for storytelling, we will dig into what scripture actually tells us. And we will imagine and share our own versions, as we find ourselves immersed in the stories of Jesus.

In a book from her *Jerusalem Road* series, *Daughter of Cana*, Angela follows Jesus from Nazareth to Cana, Capernaum, and Jerusalem. Along the road to Jerusalem, we will meet other characters, some only mentioned by name or reference, nevertheless, witnesses of God living among us.

You are invited to join us on Wednesdays at Noon to dig deeper into each week's message. You can purchase Angela Hunt's book, look for it at the library, contact our office for a copy, or pick up a copy before or after worship on Sunday.

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

must be like to be so dehydrated that we're parched. And we prayed for millions worldwide who know the meaning of parched firsthand as it relates to a lack of clean water.

Our journey began on Ash Wednesday. Unfortunately, the worship service we planned in common with our friends at Court Street was canceled due to dangerous weather conditions. Nevertheless, setbacks don't keep us from pursuing relief. So we didn't let the difficulty of the journey keep us from making it. After all, the stakes are too high. We're thirsty, and relief lies at the road's end, not the beginning.

Most of us are spiritually parched. Oh, we believe and all that. Yet, not a day goes by when we're not distracted by everyday worries, disappointments, and doubt. And most of us turn to our habitual goto for comfort.

I tend to eat when I'm feeling stressed. Usually, without conscious awareness, I'm not enjoying my food or even paying attention to what or how much I eat. And I'm blessed that my coping habits aren't more damaging to my well-being.

Jesus sat down to eat with them, took the bread, and said the blessing; then He broke the bread and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized Him.

Luke 24:30-32

You know the feeling. You're thirsty. So you go to the refrigerator for something cold to drink. Afterward, you feel better for now. Yet, there is still something missing. You're still thirsty.

But your thirst is not for more of whatever you drank. The hunger you're feeling isn't for more chips or candy. The urges bubbling up within you are not for whatever habitual coping crutch you've grown attached to that gets you through another day.

During our journey for Lent, we turned to an expert on social justice. This topic lies at the core of what a Messiah was expected to accomplish. Eric Nilsen writes, "By social justice, we mean that everyone deserves equal economic, political, and social rights and opportunities – irrespective of their religion, caste, or creed – and particularly those in greatest need."

So if our Messiah came and ushered in a new era of justice, why does the world's richest one percent own over forty percent of its wealth? How does ten percent of the world's population live in poverty?

Perhaps for many of us, it's shocking when we discover that we are the ones we've been waiting for to make the changes that we so desperately want to happen. We know that the handful of influential leaders controlling most resources aren't interested in the kind of changes that Jesus came to make. The truth is they're more parched than most of us but have not learned that wealth and power won't quench their thirst.

This Easter, we walk along side Cleopas and His unnamed friend as they flee from disappointment and hopelessness. The person they hoped was the Messiah was executed as a common criminal and died like we all die. Once again they thought, they put their trust in another human only to be disappointed that letting each other down is too much part of our shared human condition.

LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS & MORE:

Jesus sat down to eat with them, took the bread, and said the blessing; then He broke the bread and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized Him.

Luke 24:13-35

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

Five horizontal lines for taking notes.

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS

- 1. Read the story of two followers leaving Jerusalem after Jesus is crucified in Luke 24:13-35. Can you place yourself in this story? In what way? Which character? What would you tell a stranger about the story of Jesus' death on a cross? What do you tell others about His resurrection?
2. Read this week's articles titled Never the same. Are you experiencing spiritual thirst? Are you spiritually parched? How does this week's story from scripture reflect your own spiritual thirst? What is social justice for you? What injustices make you angry? What is your role in changing that which you feels should change? What spiritual practices help you to feel satisfied? What gets in your way of staying spiritually satisfied?
3. How can the members of your group help you this week and on-going to help you to be more ceptive 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](https://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 \***



When Thomas impulsively decides to follow the teacher from Nazareth, he and Tasmin argue. The twins have been together since the womb, and Tasmin can't accept losing her brother to some magician-prophet. But, aided by Jude, younger brother to Jesus of Nazareth, she decides to follow the Nazarene's group and do whatever she must to mend the fractured relationship and bring her brother home.

Angela Hunt has published over 100 books, selling nearly 5 million copies worldwide. Angela, a New York Times bestselling author, received the Times Book Club Lifetime Achievement Award in 2006. She has a Ph.D. in biblical studies in theology and is well-versed in biblical text. Angela can be found online at [www.angelahuntbooks.com](http://www.angelahuntbooks.com).

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](http://FlintAsbury.org).

Pastor Tommy



## 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](http://applewood.org) and scroll to the Volunteer section.

If you have questions, please contact Julia, Manager of Visitor Services, at [jpopler@ruthmott.org](mailto:jpopler@ruthmott.org).

Visit [applewood.org](http://applewood.org) to apply!

*South Flint Soup Kitchen*

## 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

So they dealt with their disappointment the only way they knew how using the only power they had under their control. They ran away.

Sometimes we can collect our thoughts, reenergize and recharge, and set out on another quest. However, no matter how often we quench our thirst, we discover that our physical thirst returns and our spiritual thirst are never satisfied. Until that is, we see and recognize that Jesus is alive.

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Pastor Tommy

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SOUTH FLINT SOUP KITCHEN

# APRIL GIVEAWAYS

Angel Closet - April 5th &  
19th, 11am-Noon (\$5 or  
proof of income, see back  
of flyer for details)

Food Giveaways - April 12th  
& 26th, 11am-Noon

No appointments needed!

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

**810-239-3427**

