

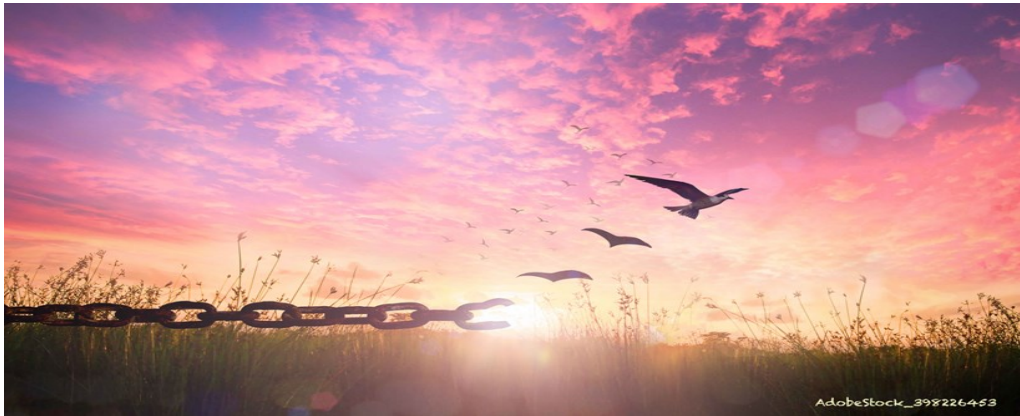
ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER



Volume 3 Issue 2

JULY 2, 2023

Freedom (Kings and Taxes)



Every nation's history includes stories about how it first emerged to claim its identity as sovereign. And like all recorded history, what gets passed on skims over bits and pieces of the story. In particular, we generally prefer the

version that makes us proud of the country we claim as home.

Of course, while sovereignty implies freedom, not everyone living in a sovereign nation enjoys

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EVERYONE

HAVE A

WONDERFUL 4TH

OF JULY

WEEKEND!

DONATE

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Oneness (Finding the Way)



"Well, I guess it's over!" the man said, exasperated and out of breath. "But there's still time on the clock. We can't give up now!" she responded with winded enthusiasm. That's the problem with time. It has limits. When I think about it, it is consistent with almost everything we know about life.

Not everything has limits. Scientists tell us that the universe continues to expand even though the belief is that all energy that ever existed is already out there. The vast majority of us stand in awe. We don't understand it and can't explain it.

In an interview about his son Max after winning a national competition for solving Rubik's cubes, Schwan Park said, He looked like a kid who

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who found his tribe." On ABC's World News the other night, Max's father noted that once you find your tribe of people you connect with, the sky's the limit." Max Parker is autistic and recently set a new world record by solving a Rubik's cube in just over 3 seconds.

Who is your tribe? First, a tribe extends beyond biological connections. The common ingredient is a mutual love for one another and a desire to do things together. An identity merges out of a tribe, even if no name is chosen to represent it.

Several years ago, a group living a couple blocks from Asbury found a common purpose in what they wanted their community to be like. They called their tribe the "Peace Mob." I miss their enthusiasm and energy.

Schwan Park is on to something. When we're part of a tribe, our connections resemble our ever-expanding universe. Whatever limits may still be limited, they're out there waiting to be discovered. How does this happen, and how can we all be part of a tribe that goes beyond expected limits and enjoys record-setting accomplishments?

What better source for the answer than the One who created the ever-expanding universe.

"Let Us make humankind in Our image after Our likeness!" said God. "God and I are One," said Jesus. Hmmm? Meanwhile, the Spirit hovered upon the surface of the water. "Is it possible?" Tasmin thought to herself.

As her novel nears the end, things start jelling for the main character of Angela Hunt's novel, *Daughter of Cana*. While Tasmin is an imaginary character in a fictional book, her story is also a mirror for anyone hoping to find a tribe they belong to.

I am the way, the truth and the life... Now that you know me, you know God ...

John 14:6-7

The only spoiler alert necessary as we finish our companion book for this series is the specific details of characters that aren't spelled out in scripture. Yet, every thought, action, and reaction we read reveals our struggles with imagining how an already massive universe keeps expanding. And how we can be a part of the expansion rather than a victim of downsizing. In other words, don't we all prefer abundance over scarcity?

On the night that Jesus was arrested, He gave us all a summary glimpse of what was to come. Everything pointed to what followed but, like an ever-expanding universe, it is too much for us to wrap our heads around.

Follow the logic as Jesus laid it out at supper with His friends. First, notice the venue. They are gathered together for a meal. They are a tribe that chooses to spend time together and work together.

Second, Jesus uses an ordinary custom to teach the secret of abundance. Similar to today, it was customary to wash up before a meal. The feet of Jesus and His followers carried layers of dust and dirt from each road and pathway they traversed. And custom-mandated clean feet and hands at the supper table.

Hospitality customs included the host providing water and, in the case of wealthier hosts, a servant to wash the feet of guests. Jesus and His tribe weren't well off. So Jesus washed the feet of each friend, one by one. They were flabbergasted. Jesus was their teacher, leader, and long-awaited Savior. Messiahs don't wash feet, do they?

Oneness (Finding the Way)

cont. from pg 2

Later, during His toast, Jesus shares the secret to an ever-expanding universe and reveals the secret to abundance. Love God and love each other. And what does love look like? Love looks like a tribe of persons that matter to each other. They share a common connection. In this case, Jesus is talking about a tribe we call Christianity.

But Christianity is too much like the universe. The name represents hundreds of millions of diverse people and thoughts about what it means to say this is who I am. The name itself conjures both positive and negative images.

Nevertheless, this is a starting point. Our shared connection with other Christians is we believe that Jesus Christ is God. And Jesus makes it abundantly clear that if you know Him, you know God. Most importantly, if you love Him, you do as He teaches you.

Love is the key that opens the door to God's abundance. Find Jesus and you will find your tribe. Find your tribe and do as Jesus teaches and your community will flourish.

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 Angela Hunt. *Daughter of Cana*. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2020.

John Branch. "Children of the Cube." © New York Times, August 15, 2018. Retrieved from: [link](#)

IN OUR PRAYERS

Kevin Croom
Jose Trejo
Sylvia Pittman
Mirium Watson
JoAn Kirby
Jonathon Misner



FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE

Dean Lamoreaux
Norma Buzzard
Nancy Elston



PASTOR BOOK CLUB NEWS

OUR WEDNESDAY BOOK CLUB WILL BE TAKING A BREAK FOR THE MONTHS OF JULY AND AUGUST. STAY TUNE FOR UPDATES ON THE START DATE HERE IN OUR WEEKLY ASBURY NEWSLETTER.

EVERYONE ENJOY YOUR SUMMER!!

**COMING UP THIS WEEK
JULY 3 - JULY 9**



July 3 Mon

July 4 Tues

HAPPY 4TH TO ALL!

July 5 Wed

Meet Up and Eat UP
(Monday -Friday)

9am-10am Breakfast

12N-1pm Lunch

July 6 Thu

July 7 Fri

5pm-9pm Asbury Farms Plant Sale
at Buckham Alley-downtown

July 8 Sat

July 9 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 "Belonging"



Don't shoot the messenger," she said noticing the look of pain on the faces of those let down by her news. No one I know wants to deliver bad news.

The Prophet Isaiah seemed to understand this human reality when he said "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those who bring the happy news of peace and salvation." Who would not want to hear the good news of peace and salvation? Who would not want to hug the person bringing such a message.

Book Club News



Our companion book for our new worship series is Angela Hunt's second book in her Jerusalem Road Series. The

Shepherd's Wife retells the gospel stories through the eyes of two sisters.

The sisters have one thing in common. Their older brother is a traveling prophet spreading controversy wherever He goes that He claims to be good news. But for whom? The sisters live at different ends of the economic and social hierarchy.

ble to a system that preys on the less powerful. Shepherds and the families of shepherds are not invited to proper social gatherings.

Damaris married into money. Her husband, Shimon, is on the path toward becoming a Pharisee. A powerful group of prestigious and influential men held in high regard by society and suspicious of her older brother.

The wives of Pharisees aren't supposed to socialize with shepherd's wives.

Pheodora's husband is forced to borrow money to pay an arbitrary tax at an exorbitant interest rate. Failure to pay his debt results in imprisonment, leaving Pheodora to provide for her children

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
	South Campus Bldg Mgr
Kim Sims	Finance Director
Kim Sims	Connections Suprv
Terrance Williams	Arts Center Mgr
Katelin Maylum	Sr Prog Mgr Local Foods
	South Flint Soup Kitchen

Pheodora married a shepherd. A man who cares for livestock and spends weeks at a time away from home. They live in poverty and are vulnera-

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— “Belonging” ..cont from pg 5

In the 2nd book of Angela Hunts Jerusalem Road Series, we meet two sisters at different ends of the social hierarchy. Damaris married into money. Her husband, Shimon is on the path towards becoming a Pharisee. A powerful group of prestigious and influential men held in high regard by society.

Pheodora, on the other hand, married a shepherd. A man who sleeps with livestock and is away from home more often than not. Scarcity is the prevailing condition of their household. Her husband, Chirac belongs to a group of men not invited to social gatherings.

The sisters have one thing in common, however. Their older brother. A traveling prophet spreading controversy wherever He goes that He claims to be good news.

Well good news for shepherds at least. Pharisees failed to see what was so good for those who already had more than they needed. The good news that Yeshua brought turned the usual rules of social expectations upside down. What kind of a world would it be if shepherds and Pharisees sat at the same table for supper?

Welcome to our series, Belonging. We begin our exploration of pharisees and shepherds the first Sunday in July. Our companion book, *The Shepherd's Wife*, offers a fictional story, based on scripture, that challenges us to explore the good news of the Gospel from fresh perspectives. I hope that you'll join us each Sunday. You can find a copy of Angela's Hunt's book online, in bookstores, or at your local library.

I hope that you will join us each Sunday. You can find a copy of Angela Hunt's book online, in bookstores, or at your local library.

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

Angela Hunt. The Shepherd's Wife. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2020.

freedom. Depending on your perspective, as long as there are rules and laws to live by, none of us are totally free to do as we please. Instead, we discover a pact, constitution, declaration, or other recorded list of ideals and stipulations we all abide by. Along with penalties and plans to enforce whatever was agreed to.

This week our nation celebrates the birth of our independence and subsequent freedom. Since our original (Continental) Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, we light up our skies with rockets on July 4 each year to celebrate our freedom. However, we celebrated freedom for over a century while many of our residents were enslaved.

Last month we celebrated freedom of a different sort. According to Prosperity Now, "Juneteenth National Independence Day commemorates the Emancipation Proclamation, in which President Abraham Lincoln issued the proclamation to free enslaved African Americans in secessionist states on January 1, 1863. It would not be until two years after this proclamation, however, that the last enslaved Black Americans in Galveston, Texas, would learn of their freedom."

The article points out that freedom is a work in progress: "This holiday reminds us of the delayed freedom granted to Black Americans living in Texas in 1865, paralleling the delay in economic justice and equity for Black Americans in the present day."

The idea of "freedom" has many meanings and understandings. This was certainly the case for the nation of Israel, whose history is shared with us in scripture.

As Jesus began His public ministry, He traveled from town to town, sharing the good news that a long-awaited Messiah was living among the people. But there was a long history of waiting, and a lot happened during their wait.

Jesus was born when Palestine was occupied by Roman authorities and the military. Jesus was not born in a sovereign nation free to elect its own government leaders, build their schools, and raise their children as it pleased. Again, we all have a wide range of ideas and ideals about what it means to be free.

Instead, Rome collected taxes from the people used to pay the soldiers who held them captive on their own land. However, Rome managed their colonies by negotiating an arrangement that allowed some measure of local autonomy. And the local authorities imposed taxes to cover their expenses, and for some, to support lavish lifestyles.

Rome invaded Jesus' homeland more than 60 years before His birth. But the people weren't necessarily free before then. Centuries after Judah split off from Israel, both nations were later taken over by outsiders, and many of the people of Judah were taken into exile. Some of their descendants later returned to rebuild.

Who pays duties or taxes to the kings of the world?

Matthew 17:25

LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS & MORE:

Who pays duties or taxes to the kings of this world?

Matthew 17:24-27

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

Handwriting lines for notes.


QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS

- 1. Read Matthew 17:24-27. Why do you think that Matthew shares this story? Any thoughts on why Peter answered the way he did? Why did Jesus pay the taxes if they weren't owed?
2. Read this week's articles titled Freedom. What does freedom mean for you? What are some ways that you celebrate your freedom? What freedoms do you give up in order to live in a more peaceful society? What are the most important freedoms that you hold dear? What freedoms do you not have that you feel you should have?
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

South Flint Soup Kitchen



Bottled Water Drive

ALL SUMMER LONG!

Our clients need bottled water for cooking, going with sack lunches, to bathe and brush their teeth with, and more!

Donations are accepted Monday-Friday
9:30am-Noon at South Flint Soup Kitchen, 3410
Fenton Road (3 blocks north of Atherton Road)
Flint, MI 48507

Questions? Call 810-239-3427 or email
southflintsoupkitchen@gmail.com

To donate: www.mightycause.com/feedflint





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 ***

while finding a way to free her husband. Where is the good news that her brother is talking about for her?

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?

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.

Our Book Club is not meeting as a group this summer. Stay tuned for more Book Club news towards the end of summer. You can contact our office with questions, by phone or simply type your question or enter a prayer request on our website's homepage — FlintAsburyChurch.org.

Pastor Tommy

Angela Hunt. *The Shepherd's Wife*. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2020.

“Ways to Give to South Flint Soup Kitchen”

Cash or checks can be sent to/dropped off at South Flint Soup Kitchen, 3410 Fenton Road, Flint, MI 48507. Please make checks out to South Flint Soup Kitchen!

Online at www.mightycause.com/feedflint

Cash App \$SFSK48507

Donations can be dropped off Monday-Friday 9:30am-Noon. Calling ahead is not necessary, but our needs change frequently, so calling ahead of time is a good idea!

Give time! We need volunteers!!! Volunteers arrive at 9:30am and are done by 12:30pm. Tasks include handing out lunches, assisting in the Angel Closet, light cleaning, putting together items to pass out to clients, and more.

Visit our Ebay store! Our handle is southflint84
We have old school Beanie Babies (tags still attached!) and vintage graded baseball cards currently. Look back frequently for the addition of new items!

Refer people!!

Questions??? Call 810-239-3427

or email southflintsoupkitchen@gmail.com

Family with Infant needed for Graduate Student Learning Experience!

What & Why?:

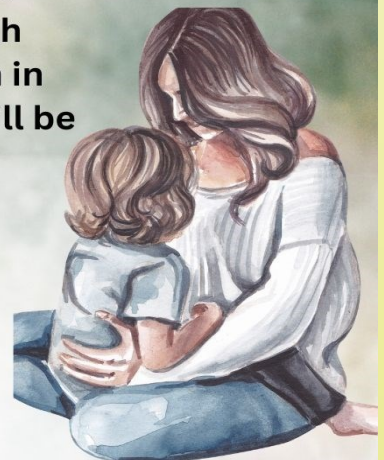
The parent and baby will be observed as they go about their daily routine. They will be video recorded for five minutes during one of each month's observations to further the student's developmental and relationship understanding and to connect their classroom learning to real life experiences. Observations will be used to better understand early experiences and development of an infant as they are engaged in a relationship with their parents.

Qualifications:

- Volunteer family who will have an infant younger than 3 months old in September 2023. A family who is expecting a child before October 1, 2023 is also eligible.
- Agree to be available for two observations each month from September 2023 through April 2024. Observations can be in person in the family's home or virtually and each will be approximately 30-60 minutes.



Interested? Contact Katelin Maylum at
kmaylum@gmail.com.



During one period, Judah was occupied and controlled by the Seleucid Empire. This occupation was particularly ruthless as the people were forbidden from worshipping God as they believed was necessary nor participating in their traditional festivities. A war of independence eventually freed the people again, at least for awhile.

As we read the first five chapters of our companion book, *The Shepherd's Wife*, we learn that Damaris, a name the author created for a sister of Jesus, is married to a candidate to become a Pharisee. A powerful group of prestigious and influential men held high regard by society.

The Pharisees dated back to the war for independence as defenders of the Jewish religion and the right to worship God as scripture describes. During Jesus' time, this group saw themselves as examples and gatekeepers for gaining God's favor. However, Jesus saw things differently.

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"The Rising Juneteenth Tide: Pursuing Racial Economic Justice." © Prosperity Now, June 19, 2023. Retrieved from: [link](#)

NEWS ...

FROM SOUTH FLINT SOUP KITCHEN



WE WANT TO LET EVERYONE KNOW THAT WE WILL NOT BE HOSTING FOOD GIVEAWAYS OR THE ANGEL CLOSET IN THE MONTH OF JULY. WE NEED TO TAKE A MONTH OFF TO RECALIBRATE SOME THINGS, THEN WE WILL BE BACK IN AUGUST.

AS ALWAYS THOUGH, WE ARE HERE FOR EMERGENCIES, SO IF YOU KNOW OF ANY FAMILIES OR CLIENTS WHO NEED SOME EXTRA ASSISTANCE WITH FOOD, CLOTHING, HYGIENE PRODUCTS, OR HOUSEHOLD GOODS, PLEASE SEND THEM OUR WAY.

ANY QUESTIONS - CALL 810-239-3427

OR EMAIL SOUTHFLINTSOUPKITCHEN@GMAIL.COM



TO
REV. DR TOMMY MCDONIEL!!

and a



HAPPY JULY 4TH BIRTHDAY... and
MAY YOU HAVE MANY, MANY MORE!!

ENJOY YOUR RETIREMENT!!