

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Volume 3 Issue 30

JULY 30, 2023

Choices (Discernment)



Discernment is a twenty-five-cent word that implies a process that tries to determine God's preference regarding a particular situation in the pursuit of better decisions. In our tradition, discernment involves phrases like prayerful consideration and the Holy Spirit's guidance. Discernment involves decision-making that corresponds to what we believe God had in mind. Whether or not a decision is well discerned is a judgment call that attempts to utilize scripture, tradition, experience, and reason.

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EVERYONE
HAVE A
WONDERFUL
WEEKEND!

DONATE

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Goats (Day of atonement)



Cyndi and I are dealing with a rather large infestation of poison ivy. Both of us are allergic and risk serious side effects if we allow one of the plants to come in contact with our skin. However, we hope to put a fence through the middle of a large patch.

My language tells you that I'm not fond of poison ivy. Perhaps I wouldn't call it an infestation if I wasn't allergic.

While googling "How to get rid of poison ivy?" one suggestion was to get a goat. Apparently, goats like the taste of poison ivy. Of course, goats are known for eating almost anything they can put into their mouth. But we need to put in a fence first to keep the goat from straying.

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The word "goat" has varied uses, including both derogatory and complimentary. A person may be called a silly goat if they're not so bright or just a goat if they're a gifted athlete. On the other hand, no one wants to be a scapegoat, taking the blame for something bad they didn't do.

And when Jesus described the final judgment, he used goats for those of us who don't show mercy to others in need. We don't want to be counted among the goats when our days are over.

In Leviticus, God, speaking through Moses, shares detailed instructions for a ritual involving goats on a day known as Yom Kippur. Although the instructions don't specify characteristics for the goats other than gender, over time, the selection of goats evolved with great specificity. In particular, the goats needed to be white with no different colors appearing in their coat. Moreover, the goats could not have other imperfections or marks distinguishing one goat from another.

According to Psychology Research, the origin of scapegoating comes from this ancient ritual that began during the time of the Exodus from Egypt. On

The Day of Atonement, a goat is chosen by casting lots. The good news for the scapegoat is that the other goat is slaughtered as a sacrifice to God. The bad news is the scapegoat is led into the wilderness and pushed off a cliff to its death as a sacrifice for Azazel. William Tyndale is credited for the term scapegoat from a literal translation of the Azazel or "goat escapes."

Professor Julia Blum writes, "Tradition tells us that during the Second Temple period, these two goats had to be purchased at the same time and for the same price: they had to be almost identical in appearance and value."

In this week's reading from our companion book, *The Shepherd's Wife*, Pheodora and James travel to Caesarea to retrieve two pregnant goats as her husband, Chiram, instructed. He carefully chose the goats anticipating that each would bear identical, all-white male offspring. Perfect enough to be selected by the Levites in charge of purchasing goats for Yom Kippur when the goats were one year old.

White goats are rare, and the price paid for ceremonial goats was high enough to cover Chiram's debt and release from prison.

Atonement involves reparations. That is payment for harm caused as a result of wrongdoing. Since we can rarely undo the adverse outcomes of sin, we trust that God is more patient and lenient than we are. And the rituals of Yom Kippur offer evidence of God's grace towards humanity and our failures.

The Book of Isaiah begins with a reminder that while rituals help our memory, they can also dull our senses. The people of the covenant strayed far away from God's plan for a just society. The marginalized were exploited instead of helped. Ancient holy rituals became meaningless, losing their significance. And God expected more.

God noted that donkeys know more than people when it comes to loyalty. Nevertheless, God promised that the stain of sin would be washed clean.

Instead of God leading you and me into the wilderness and pushing us off a cliff to our death, an innocent goat is selected to take our place. The Priest lays all of the people's guilt onto the chosen goat, ties a red ribbon around its neck, and sends it off with a person selected as executioner. The belief is that God's memory of our wrongdoing dies with the goat.

Goats (Day of atonement) *cont. from pg 2*

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Blum also shares a revelation she discovered regarding the rationale for two goats. Remember, Abraham had two sons, Ishmael and Issac. Ishmael and his mother were sent into the wilderness, where God watched over them. Issac was later chosen for sacrifice, but God provided a goat instead.

Taking the sin of the world on Himself, we believe Jesus Christ took our place for all sins committed since the beginning of time. His death and resurrection were the final sacrifice. Jesus was the last scapegoat.

Donkeys know where their master feeds them, but that is more than my people know. They don't understand at all.

Isaiah 1:3

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 FlintAsburyChurch.org.

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Pastor Tommy

Our series was inspired by and relies on content provided by Angela Hunt. *The Shepherd's Wife. Jerusalem Road Series.* Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2020.

"Scapegoat Theory." © Psychology.iResearch, 2023. Retrieved from: [link](#)

Julia Blum. "Two Goats Of Yom Kippur." © Israel Institute of Biblical Studies, October 13, 2016. Retrieved from: [link](#)

IN OUR PRAYERS

Kevin Croom
Jose Trejo
Sylvia Pittman

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 31 - AUGUST 6**



- July 31 Mon Meet Up and Eat UP
(Monday -Friday)
9am-10am Breakfast
12N-1pm Lunch
2:00pm Staff Meeting
- Aug 1 Tues 10am-12N Food Distribution
- Aug 2 Wed
- Aug 3 Thu
- Aug 4 Fri
- Aug 5 Sat
- Aug 6 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.

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-

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

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Kevin Croom	Executive Director
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Kim Sims	Finance Director
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Jim Craig	Board & Leadership Chair
Mike Sampson	Farms Manager
Terrance Williams	Arts Center Mgr
Katelin Maylum	Sr Prog Mgr Local Foods
	South Flint Soup Kitchen

Leadership in Worship & Service

Tony & Mirium	Welcome Team
Cyndi	Worship Leader
Anthony & Jim	Ushers
Jonathon & Terrance	Production Team
Yasheah & Mirium	Nursery
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.

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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

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

Our decisions reflect our priorities, privilege, perceptions, and experiences, to list just a few of the factors involved.

In this week's chapters from our companion book, *The Shepherd's Wife*, we witness several examples of decisions made by various characters that beg for debate, particularly concerning whether the character's decisions are consistent with God's intent.

For example, Damaris is shopping with four of her six children at the local market when a woman goes into labor. The husband cries out to all within earshot that his wife needs assistance from someone with experience in childbirth. Damaris had a lot of experience and could help. But despite the encouragement of one of her children, she chooses to walk away. Why?

It's complicated. The woman was a Gentile, and Damaris was the wife of a candidate to join an elite group known as the Pharisees. As community leaders well versed in law, the Pharisees sought to be examples of keeping the finest details. Avoiding contact with Gentiles was high on their list. Should Damaris

help the woman, there would be witnesses, and she might endanger her husband's chances. But was her discernment consistent with God's intention?

Meanwhile, Pheodora receives a letter from prison. A stranger, Uriah, visited Chiram and the other prisoners one day each week and brought him materials to write home. When asked why he chose to do what he did, Uriah told Chiram that he was motivated by something Yeshua said to a crowd. By visiting Chiram and the other prisoners, it was as though Uriah was visiting God in prison. And God would remember the decision Uriah made later.

Whenever you refused to help one of these least important ones, you refused to help me.

Matthew 25:45

Shimon could easily pay Chiram's debt releasing him from prison and had good reason to do so. After all, Chiram was his wife's brother. But he knew that many of the Pharisees had business dealings with lenders. And infringing on the profits a lender stood to gain from the usury charged could have negative consequences. Shimon's mentor, Lavan, advised him not to get involved since it set a dangerous precedence. Instead of paying off the debt, Shimon suggests that Pheodora could sell one of her daughters to cover her husband's debt.

You and I are faced with decisions almost every day. Generally, the circumstances are less daunting than those faced by the characters mentioned above. Nevertheless, they're our circumstances and our decision to make. And every discernment has consequences that affect everyone around us.

LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS & MORE:

Whenever you refused to help one of these least important ones, you refused to help Me.

Matthew 25:31-46

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

Four horizontal lines for taking notes.

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS

Two horizontal lines for taking notes.


1. Read Matthew 25:31-46. Are you familiar with this teaching? What comes to mind as you read it? How does this teaching affect your everyday life? Are you a sheep or a goat based on this text? Explain.
2. Read this week's articles titled *Choices*. How often does prayer affect your decisions? What other methods do you use to make important decisions. How do you decide if you're willing to help someone in need? When is it okay for you to not help?
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”

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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.

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.



So what did Jesus say that motivated Uriah to visit strangers in prison?

Matthew shares the story in his book. If our bible has headings, we often see something like "Final Judgment" ahead of this story. Jesus uses sheep and goats to illustrate God's intention when making decisions involving giving aid to others.

The details of the story are straightforward. At the final judgment, God will separate those chosen for eternal life in heaven like a shepherd separates sheep from goats. And God will say to the sheep that they decided to give aid when God was thirsty, hungry, naked, sick, or in prison. The goats chose not to offer clothing or something to drink or eat, nor did they tend to God's illness or visit God in prison. Neither group recalled a situation where they were faced with such a decision. After all, when is God ever lacking?

That's the catch. It was how we responded to situations when we were confronted with someone in need that mattered to God. And the story offers insight into the importance God places on aiding those in need. But it's complicated, isn't it?

Every decision we make has consequences. We can't be in two places simultaneously, nor does God stretch the days because our to-do list isn't finished as the sun goes down. The discernment we use to make decisions is essential and has eternal consequences.

Jesus also said that there will always be poverty of some sort. He knew the brokenness of human nature firsthand. We can't control the decisions that others make. We can't always help. But we always have a choice.

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August Giveaways

South Flint Soup Kitchen

Angel Closet - August 9th, 11am-Noon
(see back of flyer for qualifications)

Food Giveaway - August 16th, 11am-
Noon



3410 Fenton Road
3 blocks north of Atherton
Flint, MI 48507

FOR MORE INFORMATION: 810-239-3427

✉ southflintsoupkitchen@gmail.com

🌐 www.mightycause.com/feedflint

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

South Flint Soup Kitchen

WHAT IS AN ANGEL CLOSET PROOF?

IT IS A DOCUMENT WITH YOUR NAME FROM THIS YEAR ONLY CLEARLY STATING NEED. AN ACCEPTABLE PROOF CAN BE:

- CHECK STUB
- SOCIAL SECURITY/DISABILITY STATEMENT
- STATEMENT FROM DHHS SAYING YOU'VE BEEN APPROVED AND/OR STATING BENEFITS
- COPY OF FREE LUNCH APPROVAL FROM A LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
- WRITTEN REFERRAL FROM A LOCAL SERVICE AGENCY, I.E. CATHOLIC CHARITIES, CROSSOVER OUTREACH, ETC.

UNACCEPTABLE PROOFS:

- EBT CARD
- PROOFS FROM LAST YEAR OR OTHER YEARS PREVIOUS
- DRIVER'S LICENSE
- ANOTHER PERSON'S PROOF (I.E. SOMETHING IN ANOTHER PERSON'S NAME)

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR ANOTHER PROOF NOT LISTED, PLEASE CALL 810-239-3427 BEFORE YOU MAKE THE TRIP!!

PROOF APPROVAL IS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE ANGEL CLOSET COORDINATOR AND/OR SENIOR PROGRAM MANAGER.