

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER



Volume 3 Issue 3

SEPTEMBER 3, 2023

Birds (You matter a lot)



In this week's chapters from our companion book, *The Shepherds Wife*, Pheodora reflects on a lifelong struggle with low self-esteem. While she believes God takes care of important people and situations, she is not so sure that God has time to worry about a shepherd's wife and her problems.

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EVERYONE

HAVE A SAFE

LABOR DAY

WEEKEND!

DONATE

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Proof (Pudding proof)



One of life's more disappointing moments is when we bite into something that looks scrumptious only to discover that the taste does not match the presentation. Often, our disappointment may be based on prior experience and less on the merit of whatever we're biting into.

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I feel that way about thornless blackberries. The shiny black fruit that looks like the blackberries I carefully picked while trying to avoid pricks from thorns was sweet. The blackberries Cyndi and I picked the other day were tart and noticeably void of sweetness. They looked ripe and brought back joyful memories, but the taste did not match the presentation.

In an article for the Hindustan Times, journalism student Tania Bagwan shared her research into the expression “the proof of the pudding is in the eating.” Pile-up tart blackberries on top of your culinary creation without sweetener and the eating may not be so pleasant.

In her article, Tania points out that the phrase “the proof of the pudding is in the eating,” isn’t necessarily about pudding or eating. Instead, she writes “it says that the real worth or success of something cannot be determined unless it has been tried and tested, all appearances and promises aside.”

I’m more accustomed to the shortened version of the phrase — “the proof is in the pudding.” And according to the dictionary.com “The proof is in the pudding is an expression that means the value, quality, or truth of something must be judged based on direct experience with it—or on its results.”

In our companion book for this series, one of Angela Hunt’s fictional characters is Shimon, who is married to a sister of Jesus named Damaris. In this week’s chapters, we read about a ritual that confirms Shimon as a member of an elite religious order known as the Pharisees.

This group believes God sets their members a part to teach and hold others accountable for living according to the laws of Moses and certain interpretations. They dressed differently and supposedly held themselves to the highest standards of compliance with their beliefs.

Angela Hunt describes a scene that occurs during the ritual that encapsulates our catch phrase:

Then, with the innocence of a child, Shiri spoke in a voice loud and high enough to echo through the building: “Why is Uncle Shimon acting like he does not know us?” She might have turned to say something, but James did not give her a chance. He stood, turned to Shiri, and said, “Because he no longer considers himself one of us, little niece. We are the am ha’ aretz, the common and ignorant, while he fancies himself one of Adonai’s elite.”

What does it mean to be one of God’s elite?

Meanwhile, rumors and reactions to Jesus were becoming more frequent. Particularly, regarding the possibility that He was the promised Messiah.

Pheodora remembers a song from childhood. God does not sleep on the job, but watches over us day and night. God is always by our side to protect us. So where is God's deliverance for Pheodora, she wonders.

When news comes of Yeshua's death, Pheodora recalls a conversation she had with her older brother as a child. "Everyone loves you," he said, "especially me." But if the news was true, her brother died on a Roman cross and would not be there for her.

Does any of this sound familiar? Do you sometimes wonder, particularly when everything seems to be falling apart, if God really cares about you? Do you worry and wait for more bad news rather than trust that God is at work on your behalf? Does it sometimes feel like Jesus died on the cross and won't show up when you need Him the most?

While the backstories of Angela Hunt's novel are fictional, we've all shared many of the same feelings her characters experience despite God's promises.

After all, there are over 8 Billion people living on our planet, and the universe is larger than we can measure. Individually, we're insignificant by

comparison. Meanwhile, our planet is suffering from centuries of exploitation and abuse. And with damage from natural disasters occurring with greater frequency, God's time is surely occupied with more pressing matters.

During the time of Jesus' ministries, they still expected people to bring animals to the temple to sacrifice for special events and festivals. However, most persons could not afford livestock to offer as a sacrifice so they purchased sparrows instead. Jesus said, "For only a penny, you can buy two sparrows, yet not one sparrow falls to the ground without God's consent."

Do not be afraid; you are worth much more than many sparrows!

Matthew 10:31

Now the numbers get ridiculous. Googling the number of creatures, one source estimated over 20 quintillion. I did not dive into find out their definition of creature and I'm not sure I correctly counted the commas. But it does not really matter how many, how much or how far.

Perhaps when Yeshua comforted Pheodora, He was thinking about the same song that she later recalled while feeling down.

Perhaps Jesus also had this song in mind when He assured us that God loves us and knows every minute detail of our circumstances.

By some estimates, low self-esteem affects 85 percent of us. That is billions of people for whom this song can be a reminder that God thinks of them. During those time when you feel like the world does not care about you, remember you matter a lot to God.

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](#).

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

IN OUR PRAYERS

Kevin Croom
Sylvia Pittman
Jonathon Misner



FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE
HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE

Dean Lamoreaux
Norma Buzzard Nancy Elston

**COMING UP THIS WEEK
SEPTEMBER 4 - 10**



Sept 4 Mon

Sept 5 Tues

Sept 6 Wed

Sept 7 Thu

Sept 8 Fri

Sept 9 Sat

Sept 10 Sun

10am-12N Food Distribution

10:30am New Beginnings
Contemporary Worship

3:00pm 9th Annual Family Promise Benefit Concert
at Riverview Park in Downtown Flushing
(see flyer on page 15 of this newsletter)

(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

Asbury Staff

- Rev. Dr. Tommy McDoniel Pastor
- Kevin Croom Executive Director
- Connie Portillo Office Manager
- Kim Sims Finance Director
- Sylvia Pittman Empowerment Arts
- Jim Craig Board & Leadership Chair
- Mike Sampson Farms Manager
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- 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.

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.

LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS & MORE:

For only a penny you can buy two sparrows, yet not one sparrow falls to the ground without God's consent... You are worth much more than many sparrows!

Matthew 10:26-31

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

Five horizontal lines for taking notes.

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS


- 1. Read Matthew 10:26-31 and Psalm 121. How are these texts related? How are they different? What does it mean that every hair on your head was counted, metaphorically?
2. Read this week's articles titled Birds. Do you ever struggle with feelings of insignificance? If so, what helps you to remember that God cares about you? Try to imagine having a conversation with Jesus about your feelings. What would you say to Him? What might He say to you?
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

In one exchange, Jesus is asked point-blank if He is the Messiah. Although the expression did not exist yet, Jesus responds with His version of "The proof is in the pudding" when He answers, "The deeds I do by my Father's authority speak on my behalf."

The deeds I do by my Father's authority speak on my behalf.

John 10:25

The crowd turned from inquisitive to violent as they focused on what Jesus said while ignoring His actions. After all, the experts, the Pharisees, publicly condemned the notion that Jesus was the Messiah. I suspect they believed the Messiah would come from their group. Either way, wouldn't they be the first to know, given their inside track as one of God's elite?

Jesus appeals to the crowd's anger with logic. "Even though you do not believe me, you should at least believe my deeds, in order that you may know once and for all that God is in me and that I am in God."

There are many who believe that Jesus illustrated, through His actions, what it means to live a moral and righteous life. Yet they stop short of accepting that Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah who is God living among us.

In this week's text, Jesus is offering grace to any among us who have doubts He is also God. If this is where you are, you're blessed that you tasted the pudding and discovered the truth that the proof is in the eating.

God's grace is sufficient for us all. And it can take a lifetime to accept that Jesus is your Savior, too. But you don't have to wait. The joy of knowing Jesus is your's for the asking. So ask today and start living the life and plans that God has for you.

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Tania Bagwan. "Where does the phrase "the proof of the pudding is in the eating" originate from?." © Hindustan Times, Mar 14, 2022. Retrieved from: [link](#)



9TH Annual
Family Promise
BENEFIT
CONCERT

live music
FEATURING

1 FIFTY

Sunday, 09.10.2023 / 3PM

Riverview Park Band Shell
Downtown Flushing

230 S. Cherry St., Flushing MI

Donations
go to:



Family Promise

of Genesee County

Ending homelessness...one family at time.

Hosted by:



Flushing

United Methodist Church



6 Approachable Health Strategies for The Whole Family

If you're like most parents, you want everyone in your family to lead happy and healthy lives. But too often, maintaining optimal health can feel like an overwhelming task. How can a busy family like yours find the time to ensure everyone eats well, exercises often, and gets enough sleep? And even if you're running on all cylinders trying to meet these health goals, you'll never get time to relax and practice some much-needed self-care. Good health is about moderation and balance. If you want your family to maintain healthy habits in the long run, stick to approachable health strategies that can easily be incorporated into your everyday life. Here are some tips from [Asbury](#) to get you started.

Take Charge of Your Family's Health Care

Taking charge of your family's health means being proactive about managing your medical care. Keeping your family's [medical files and documents](#) organized will help you understand important information and gain a better picture of your family's health. If you need to share these files with doctors or other healthcare providers, PDFs are often the preferred format. If you find that some of your PDF pages need to be rotated to portrait or landscape mode, you can easily do this with a PDF rotator – [go here](#) to learn more! By taking an active role in your family's health care, you can optimize their health outcomes as patients in the medical system.

Cont...from pg 16

Sign Your Kids up for Sports

Signing your kids up for sports can be a great way to promote their physical health and social development. According to Healthdirect Australia, sports can help children [develop important life skills](#) such as teamwork, communication, and sportsmanship, as well as build self-confidence and self-esteem. Encouraging your children to participate in sports can also help them establish healthy habits and a positive relationship with physical activity that can last a lifetime. Look for sports options that match your children's interests and abilities.

Start the Day with a Healthy Breakfast

Starting every morning with a healthy breakfast will set the stage for a productive and energized day. [Eating a nutritious breakfast](#) provides the body with essential nutrients and energy needed for the physical and mental activities to come, and can also regulate appetite and help you avoid overeating later on. When planning breakfast, aim for a balance of protein, whole grains, and fruit or vegetables. [Some healthy breakfast options](#) include oatmeal with nuts and berries, Greek yogurt with fruit and granola, or whole-grain toast with avocado and scrambled eggs.

Avoid Screen Time in the Evening

Avoiding screen time in the evening can be beneficial for both the physical and mental health of your family. Teladoc Health explains that the [blue light emitted from screens](#) can disrupt sleep by suppressing the production of melatonin, the hormone that regulates sleep. Exposure to screens before bedtime can also increase alertness, further delaying the onset of sleep. Instead of screens, encourage your family to engage in calming activities before bed, such as reading a book, taking a warm bath, or practicing relaxation techniques such as deep breathing.

Cont...from pg 17

Keep Your Home Clean and Cluttered

A cluttered home can really contribute to rising stress levels, so do what you can to keep your home clean and organized. The trick is to do a little at a time so that the mess doesn't become overwhelming. Try putting on some music and cleaning just a few minutes a day – you'll be shocked at the difference it makes! There are plenty of useful tips out there; click here to [find out more](#).

Encourage Enjoyable Hobbies

Engaging in hobbies [that are enjoyable and fulfilling](#) can help reduce stress, improve mood, and enhance overall well-being for everyone in your family. For children, hobbies can help with the development of important life skills, such as problem-solving, creativity, and self-expression. Hobbies can also promote physical health by encouraging regular exercise, improving motor skills, and enhancing cognitive function. Plus, engaging in hobbies as a family is a great way to bond and strengthen your relationships!

Prioritizing the health and well-being of your family doesn't have to be an overwhelming task. By implementing approachable health strategies like organizing your family's medical files, signing up for sports, and starting the day with a healthy breakfast, you can help your family establish healthy habits that last a lifetime!

[Asbury](#) is here to help the Holy Spirit as it works through our community. [Click here to get involved!](#)

Submitted by Jason Lewis