

# ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Volume 3 Issue 10

## Birds (You matter a lot)



SEPTEMBER 10, 2023

EVERYONE  
HAVE A SAFE  
WEEKEND!

**DONATE**

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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## Doubt (Free the goats)



In this week's chapters from our companion book, *The Shepherd's Wife*, Pheodora discovers the Romans executed her brother, Yeshua, on a cross.. But there's more.

Three days later, His followers discovered that the tomb where her brother was buried was empty and witnessed Him being alive. Could He be the long-awaited Messiah?

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Meanwhile, Pheodora realizes she has too much invested in the hope she and her husband put into two goats that she needed to sell for an upcoming festival. The money she expected for two unblemished white goats should be enough to pay her husband's debt and free him from prison.

If her brother really is who He and others claimed, there would be no need for sacrificial goats. After all, if His death was the final sacrifice, once and for all, then there would no longer be a need for the priests to slaughter an innocent animal as atonement. "Of course," she mused to herself, "As long as the religious leaders held onto the past, they would always need goats!"

The writer of Matthew does not tell us about the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus in Jerusalem that we read about in Luke and John. Instead, we are told that the eleven disciples, on the word of the testimony of a few women, expected to meet Jesus at a mountain in Galilee, where Jesus told them to meet Him.

Matthew tells us they saw Jesus and worshiped Him, but some of them doubted. Jesus then told His disciples that He held all authority in heaven and on earth, and that they were to go to the people of all nations and teach them to be disciples.

Jesus says that they are to baptize these strangers and teach them to do everything Jesus told them to do. Jesus also leaves them with the promise that He would be with them always.

Go to all people and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you.  
Matthew 28: 19-20

Dr. Thomas Long, a preaching professor at the Candler School of Theology writes, "Jesus is on an unnamed mountain in backwater Galilee with a congregation of eleven, down from twelve the week before, and even some of them are doubtful and not so sure why they have come to worship this day."

Telling these original disciples to go out and make disciples of the world is bit like telling them to go find a cure for leprosy. And while you're at it stop hunger and bring about world peace. Or it's like me telling you all we need to transform this neighborhood from a place that people avoid to a community of abundance where people would love to spend time. It's an overwhelming expectation.

There was something about the relationship that these faithful disciples had with Jesus, that despite prevailing wisdom, something in them led them to believe that what Jesus was asking them to do could be done. Likewise, we are called to be just as faithful.

Really?

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](#).

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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.

IN OUR PRAYERS

Kevin Croom  
Sylvia Pittman  
Jonathon Misner  
Mirium Watson



FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE  
HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE

Dean Lamoreaux  
Norma Buzzard                      Nancy Elston

**COMING UP THIS WEEK  
SEPTEMBER 11 - 17**



Sept 11	Mon	2:00pm	Staff Meeting
Sept 12	Tues	10am-12N	Food Distribution
Sept 13	Wed		
Sept 14	Thu	1:00pm	United Women in Faith
Sept 15	Fri		
Sept 16	Sat		
Sept 17	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

### 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
- Terrance Williams      Arts Center Mgr
- 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:

*Go to all people and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you.*

Matthew 28:16–20

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

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QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS

1. Read Matthew 28:16–20. What does this text mean for you? How are you teaching others what you know about Christ?
2. Read this week’s articles titled *Doubt*. What doubts do you have about your role as a disciple of Jesus Christ? What doubts do you have about God? What are some ways that you’ve discovered help you to carry on even when you doubt?
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](https://flintasbury.org/feed-flint-donate)

South Flint Soup Kitchen



# Bottled Water Drive

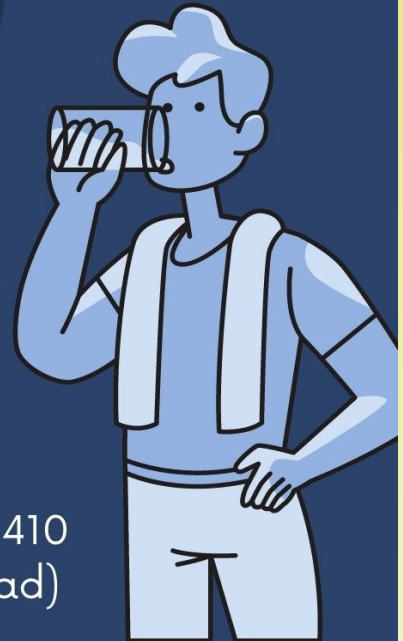
ALL SUMMER LONG!

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](mailto:southflintsoupkitchen@gmail.com)

To donate: [www.mightycause.com/feedflint](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](mailto:southflintsoupkitchen@gmail.com)

Mother Teresa became Saint Teresa of Calcutta on September 4, 2016. She also received the Nobel Prize for her work with the poorest of the poor. Hanging on a wall inside her home was a poem that reminded her that no matter how much she did to fulfill the mission that Jesus gives His followers to do, there will always be critics and naysayers. And whatever work you accomplish will not quite be finished and most of the good you do will go unnoticed, even by the people you help.

But the poem reminded her to do it, anyway. After all, your work is not about what others think about you. It's what God knows about you.

Based on her writings published after her death, the world was left a lasting gift by Saint Teresa. We learned that even a Saint struggles with feelings of doubt and inadequacy.

The disciples and others we read about in scripture who followed Jesus—Peter, John, James, Thomas and the others—they are us. They are you and me. The disciples were real

people, for sure. Perhaps the reason Jesus chose who He chose means that anybody can be a disciple.

You just have to give up trying to be someone you're not long enough to become who God created you to be. And this is hard for most of us.

As long as we hold on to a past where we did not know that Jesus is Lord, we will still need goats of some sort. But if we're willing to free the goats, we will also be free to tell others about the God we know. Better yet, when we do that which God gives us to do, the good news of Jesus Christ comes to life.

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Dr. Thomas Long.

"Homiletical Perspective," *Feasting on the Word, Year A, Vol 3*, David Bartlett, Barbara Brown Taylor, Eds. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011.



9<sup>TH</sup> 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