

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Volume 3 Issue 17

Mirrors (Forgive me)



In this week's chapters from our companion book, *The Shepherd's Wife*, Phedora learns that her plan to sell her goats for the Festival of Atonement will not work. The amount of money she will receive is not enough to cover her husband's debt. As readers, we know that his imprisonment isn't about the money, so her plan was never likely to work.

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SEPTEMBER 17, 2023

EVERYONE
HAVE A SAFE
WEEKEND!



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Doubt (Free the goats)



In this week's chapters from our companion book, *The Shepherd's Wife*, Phedora 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?

Mirrors (Forgive me)

cont. from pg 1

Motivated by a new understanding of her brother Yeshua's death, Pheodora concludes that her only option is to sell herself into slavery for six years. The amount of money she expects receiving should be more than enough to cover her husband's debt. Even though her new plan may also fail, Pheodora will not stop trying to free her husband.

The evening before she was to meet her owner, the auctioneer advises her to rest and not worry about what would happen the next day. It reminded Pheodora of similar advice spoken by her brother, Yeshua. Don't worry about tomorrow, for it will come soon enough.

Meanwhile, Yeshua appears to her. The experience seems like a dream at first, but she quickly realizes that it's really happening. Earlier, Pheodora prayed God would reveal to her any debt she owed. Yeshua, aware of her prayer, reminded her that everyone falls short and owes a debt. However, His death covered all debt.

But there is something else eating away at Pheodora. As the youngest of seven children, Pheodora never felt she measured up to her older siblings.

This was particularly true when she compared herself to Damaris, her older sister. In Pheodora's eyes, Damaris was prettier, smarter, and more popular. Her stored up resentment bubbled up when Damaris refused to help her free Chiram from prison.

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

Matthew 28:19-20

Surely there are pieces of Pheodora's story that resonate with you, even if you have never read a single page of Angela Hunt's book. According to the Mayo Clinic, not forgiving others results in resentment. While forgiveness actually frees you from the control of the memory of the offense.

Pheodora's revelation began when a stranger told her a story she heard from Yeshua when she heard Him speak. The story was about forgiveness.

Matthew tells us that one day Peter asked Jesus, "If my brother keeps on sinning against me, how many times do I have to forgive him?" The

opinionated Peter offered the number seven. To which Jesus responded, "No, seventy times seven!"

Those who need an exact number for keeping score can do the math. But Jesus moved from keeping score to an illustration to describe the Kingdom of Heaven.

There was a king to whom was owed a large sum of money by one of the king's subjects. When the king demanded payment, the man didn't have the means to repay him and the king planned to throw him in prison. But the man pleaded for mercy and the king canceled his debt. What a wonderful ending to what could have been an unhappy outcome.

The man also had others who owed him, although not nearly as much as the amount forgiven by the king. The man demanded repayment of a loan, which the man who owed him the debt was not able to repay. But when the man owing him asked for forgiveness of his debt his request was denied.

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 18 - 24**



Sept 18	Mon	2:00pm	Staff Meeting
		6:00PM	Leadership Team
Sept 19	Tues	10am-12N	Food Distribution
Sept 20	Wed		
Sept 21	Thu		
Sept 22	Fri		
Sept 23	Sat		
Sept 24	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.

Pastor Tommy

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

LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS & MORE:

Lord, if my brother keeps on sinning against me, how many times do I have to forgive him?

Matthew 18:21-35

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS


1. **Read Matthew 18:21-35. Who do you most identify with among the characters in the story Jesus tells? Why? What are some similar experiences you've had with forgiveness of debt?**
2. **Read this week's articles titled *Mirrors*. Who do you need forgiveness from? Are there persons that you've chosen not to forgive? Are you carrying grudges that may be causing ongoing resentment towards others? What would forgiveness look like for the offense and offender you haven't forgiven?**
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 11am-12Noon. 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.

Refer people!!

Questions??? Call 810-239-3427

or email 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.

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.

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.

Apparently word got back to the king, who, understandably, was furious. He called the man whose debt he had forgiven to come before him. Only this time he threw the man in prison who hadn't offered forgiveness after receiving forgiveness himself.

With whom do you most identify with among the characters in the story Jesus tells? Why? What are some similar experiences you've had with forgiveness of debt?

The story helped Pheodora see that, like the man who refused to forgive the person who owed him, she hadn't forgiven her sister. But did Pheodora owe a debt?

Are there persons that you have chosen not to forgive? Are you carrying grudges that causes ongoing resentment? What would forgiveness look like for the offense and offender you haven't forgiven? Who do you need forgiveness from?

Most, if not all, of us know the Lord's Prayer by heart. In this familiar prayer, we ask for forgiveness in proportion to the forgiveness that we offer.

We all fall short of God's expectations. We all owe a larger debt than we can ever repay. But God chose forgiveness over punishment, sending His Son into the world to cancel any and all debt that we owe to God. If we believe this to be true, then we should be able to find a pathway towards forgiving others who owe us.

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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