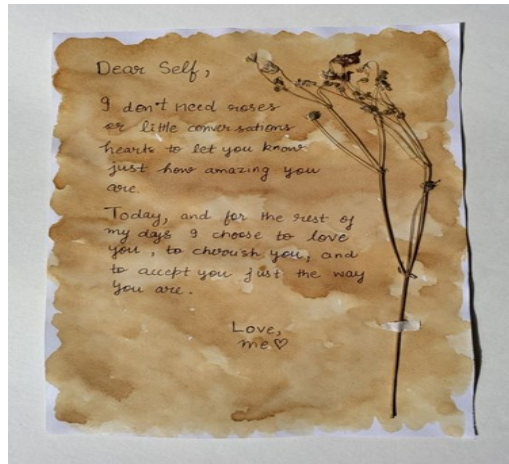


# ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Volume 3 Issue 8

## Called (Should I answer?)

OCTOBER 8, 2023



**EVERYONE HAVE  
A WONDERFUL  
AND SAFE  
WEEKEND!**

**DONATE**

Welcome to the first episode of our new worship series, *Words*. Each week there is a reading assignment in our companion book, *Woman of Words*, by Angela Hunt. You don't have to read with us. I'll summarize the chapters and point out references to Bible stories. Page 3

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

## I am (Your best selfie)



Last week, we explored some factors that can cause us to feel unworthy to be called by God to do particular tasks or to take on a challenge. We discovered that feelings of unworthiness often surface when our actions contradict our values. Page 2

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As believers, we strive to follow values consistent with the teachings of Jesus Christ. However, since we all fail, at times, it is understandable that when opportunity knocks, we're afraid to answer. We're fearful that we won't measure up or that we're mistaken about what God wants from us.

Often we feel that our past somehow disqualifies us, while other times we disqualify ourselves because we don't want to do whatever God is asking us to do. We may feel justified in our hesitation.

In many situations we feel that our unworthiness runs deep. Unworthiness is who we are and not just what we've done. It is our identity.

According to the Dictionary of the American Psychologists Association, identity is our sense of self defined by two groups of factor. First, identity comprises our physical, psychological, and interpersonal characteristics that make us unique. Second, our identity comes out of our affiliations, such as ethnicity and our social roles.

Psychologist Erik Erikson is credited for discovering the importance of identity and the crisis that ensues when who we are is uncertain. An identity crisis is characterized by a time of intensive analysis and exploration of different ways of looking at the question "who am I?"

In a *Psychology Today* article, Kendra Cherry notes, "an identity crisis can occur at any age." They most often come when facing new challenges and experiences. A frequent challenge in a rapidly changing world. Cherry reminds us that an identity crisis is not an actual psychological diagnosis, however.

In this week's chapters from our companion book, *A Woman of Words*, Matthew comes to grips with his new role as bookkeeper for the church in Jerusalem. "I was willing to do whatever He wanted me to do," Matthew mused to himself, "But I had hoped for a task that would not remind me of my past. I had hoped for a job that reflected my changed character."

**No one patches up an old coat with a piece of new cloth, for the new patch will shrink and make an even bigger hole in the coat.**

**Matthew 9:16**

There was a time in Matthew's life when money was his primary focus. Money coming from neighbors who could not afford to pay the taxes imposed by Rome. During that time in his life, Matthew took advantage of the unfortunate circumstances of others to enrich himself.

Jesus liberated Matthew from the hold that money had on him. "But He did not liberate your abilities," replied Peter, "and I know you are still better at calculations than anyone I could name."

## Called (Should I answer?) *cont. from pg 1*

We chose this approach to our series based on experience. Those who read the companion book report a deeper connection to scripture.

We begin with the first four chapters. Peter, John, and James, asked Matthew, an apostle of Jesus, to move to Jerusalem to offer help. Meanwhile, Mary, the Mother of Jesus, realizes that someone needs to write the story of God's Son to preserve His teachings for others to read who were not around. Mary believes God called Matthew to Jerusalem, through the church leaders, to be that person.

But there is the question of Matthew's past. Before Jesus asked Matthew to follow Him, his name was Levi, and he was a tax collector. A profession known for collaborating with the Romans and taking advantage of people. But tax collectors also knew how to keep orderly accounts or payments.

Matthew was well aware of both his past and what people thought of him. He was self-conscious, with persistent feelings of unworthiness and low self-esteem.

Many, if not most, of us can identify with Matthew in feeling as though we don't quite measure up to standards set by others. It is as though there is some overall system of scoring that ranks us against an unpublished standard.

Dr. Gina Simmons Schneider, in a *Psychology Today* article, writes, "Feelings of unworthiness can stem from childhood trauma, previous rejection, or shame. Feeling unworthy, at its extreme, is a symptom of depression, a potentially life-threatening illness."

In her article, Dr. Schneider connects healthy self-esteem with having a clear sense of what we value. Noting that we feel good about ourselves when our behavior aligns with what we truly value. However, things get messy when you don't know what you find important or meaningful, or your behavior is out of alignment with your values.

We don't know who actually wrote the four gospels found in scripture. The traditional titles and implied authorship are Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Scholars widely agree that Mark wrote the first Gospel. Matthew and Luke contain many of the same stories, with several parts matching word for word.

Angela Hunt invents a creative story about how Matthew's Gospel came about. Angela Hunt's story about the author of Matthew's Gospel is creative and believable because she paid attention to details.

While interesting in its own right, perhaps what is more pertinent to this week's theme is the commonality that you and I may have with the story. Matthew's past weighed heavily on his conscience, creating obstacles for him and others.

IN OUR PRAYERS

Kevin Croom  
Sylvia Pittman  
Jonathon Misner

Terrance Williams  
Mirium Watson



FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE  
HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE

Dean Lamoreaux  
Norma Buzzard  
Nancy Elston



**COMING UP THIS WEEK  
OCTOBER 9 – OCTOBER 15**

Oct 9	Mon	2:00pm	Staff Meeting
Oct 10	Tues	10am-12N	Food Distribution
Oct 11	Wed		
Oct 12	Thu	1:00pm	United Women in Faith
Oct 13	Fri		
Oct 14	Sat		
Oct 15	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 "Words"



There is a plethora of metaphors that warn us about the impact of the words we speak. One that comes to mind is words are like toothpaste. Once you squeeze toothpaste out of the tube, you can't put it back.

And God said through the Prophet Isaiah that God's Word never returns empty, but always does whatever God intended.

We refer to the Bible as God's Word. We read Jesus is God's Word in the opening lines of John's Gospel.

## Book Club News



Our companion book for our new worship series is Angela Hunt's third book in her Jerusalem Road Series. *A Woman of*

*Words* recounts the time after the Resurrection of Jesus when the church first takes root as His followers share the good news.

The narrators are two familiar characters. Matthew was a tax collector named Levi when he first met Jesus. One of the least likely candidates for ordination. But Jesus saw in Matthew what others could not.

of all the persons who travelled with Jesus. Angela Hunt fills in the gaps using her imagination and an in-depth knowledge of scripture and speculation about scripture.

James, Peter and John ask Matthew to move to Jerusalem and help with the growing church. He dreams of preaching and performing miracles, but finds his dreams postponed after speaking with Mary, Yeshua's mother. Mary asks Matthew to help her write down the stories of Yeshua while the eyewitnesses are still available to be consulted.

### Asbury Staff

Rev. Dr. Tommy McDoniel	Pastor
Kevin Croom	Executive Director
Connie Portillo	Office Secretary
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

Mary, the Mother of Jesus, is one of the most recognized, and perhaps, least understood

### 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 — “Words” ..cont from pg 5

Speaking of scripture, do you ever wonder where the four gospels we have in our bibles came from? Did four of the apostles try to capitalize on their inside knowledge with a lucrative book deal?

Welcome to our worship series, *Words*.

Our Worship Series beginning in October will take us to Thanksgiving. I encourage you to follow along with our companion book for this series, *A Woman of Words*, by Angela Hunt. This is the third book in her series, *The Road to Jerusalem*.

In her book, the Mother of Jesus asks Matthew to help her record the story of her Son’s ministry. But Matthew is hoping to preach and teach like his colleagues do. Also, Mathew would not mind performing a few miracles.

However, he gets invited to help with the growing church in Jerusalem because Matthew has a head for numbers. After all, he was formerly a tax collector. A past Matthew would sooner forget rather than be defined by his former vocation.

Of course, Hunt’s creative imagination regarding the origin of the gospels isn’t based on verifiable facts. She invites us to imagine together while learning more about how the early church evolved.

In this series, we focus on what happened after the Resurrection of Jesus.

I pray that you will join us each Sunday morning at 10:30am. We share our weekly episodes on our [YouTube channel](#). We go live at 10:30am. 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, *A Woman of Words*, Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2021

LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS & MORE:

No one patches up an old coat with a piece of new cloth, for the new patch will shrink and make an even bigger hole in the coat.

Matthew 9:16-17

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

Five horizontal lines for taking notes.

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS

- 1. Read Matthew 9:16-17. How do these parables relate to your faith? In what ways did your identity change when you were baptized?
2. Read this week's articles titled / Am. Do you remember finding yourself as a teenager? Have you experienced an identity crisis as an adult? Explain. Are you struggling with your identity now?
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”

Page 9



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 -**

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**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 \***

Reluctantly, he agrees, although the two face numerous complexities. For one, Gaius Caesar, more commonly known as Caligula, decides to raise a statue of himself in the Holy Temple. And he is willing to kill every man in Israel if needed.

Matthew's attention turns to saving his people. Meanwhile, Mary encourages him to come to terms with his past. When they finally near the completion of their project, Matthew realizes that the job he reluctantly accepted might be his God-given destiny.

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 does not meet as a group. However, our weekly messages reference that weeks chapters. You can anticipate spoiler alerts unless you keep up with the pace. I've purchased ten books but when they're gone you can still purchase your own copy or visit your local library.

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. *A Woman of Words*. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2021.

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)

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](mailto:southflintsoupkitchen@gmail.com)

Instead of punishing him for his past, God used the capabilities that Matthew once used for his own gain to help grow His church.

Jesus reminds us we're transformed when we come to know Him as our Lord and Savior. But our past does not go away. Instead, experiences become building blocks for new ways of serving His church. We're given a new identity as a follower of Jesus Christ.

What abilities do you have that may sit on a shelf? How might God help you use your capabilities to help grow His church?

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](http://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](mailto: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. *A Woman of Words*. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2021.  
"Identity." APA Dictionary of Psychology. © American Psychologists Association, 2023, [Link](#).

Kendra Cherry, MEd. Medically reviewed by Daniel B. Block, MD. *"How to Recognize and Cope With an Identity Crisis."* © VeryWellMind.com, April 11, 2023. Retrieved from: [link](#)

Life is messy. Most of us make decisions that conflict with our values under the everyday stress that accompanies the challenges we face. But as we do, we're more likely to experience an uneasy feeling that our past disqualifies us from possibilities in the present.

Jesus went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting in his office. Jesus said to him, "Follow me." Jesus got up, left everything, and followed Him.

Luke 5:27-28

In her book, Matthew is wrestling with his desire to preach and teach like Peter, John, and James do. However, his past vocation qualifies him to keep the books. The same past that Matthew wants to leave behind.

One night, Matthew dreams of meeting Jesus face-to-face. In his dream, Matthew says to Jesus, "I want to serve you, Lord. Whatever you ask, I will do it." He questions whether it is right or wrong for him to want to do something other than keeping the books. The response Matthew hears in his dream from Jesus, "Trust the Father, Matthew. He will use you in ways you cannot imagine.

Matthew realized it was only a dream. But he awoke with a sense of reassurance that whatever he was called to do, God had plans for him.

And God has plans for you and me.

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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](mailto: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](#).

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Gina Simmons Schneider Ph.D., "How to Stop Feeling That You're Not 'Worthy'." © Psychology Today, October 25, 2022. Retrieved from: [link](#)



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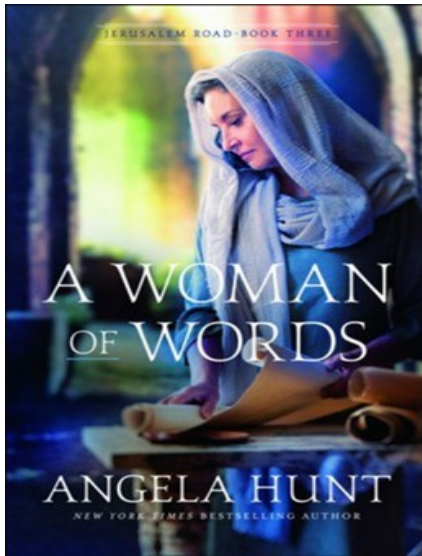
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OFFICE 810-235-0016

PRICES ARE: 12 oz. \$4.99

24 oz \$8.99

THE GREEN SALSA WILL BE MILD.

THE RED SALSA WILL BE HOT.



Welcome to the first episode of our new worship series, Words. Each week there is a reading assignment in our companion book, *Woman of Words* by Angela Hunt.

Reading along with us is completely optional. I plan to recap each week's chapters and focus on one or more of the author's references to stories found in scripture.

Nevertheless, we chose this approach to our series based on experience. Those who read the companion book report a deeper connection to scripture.

We begin with the first four chapters. Matthew, an apostle of Jesus is asked by Peter and John, also apostles, and James, a brother of Jesus, to move to Jerusalem to help.

Here is the schedule for episodes two through eight:

Oct 8	Chapters 5 - 9
Oct 15	Chapters 10 - 15
Oct 22	Chapters 16 - 21
Oct 29	Chapters 22 - 28
Nov 5	Chapters 29 - 33
Nov 12	Chapters 34 - 40
Nov 19	Chapters 41 - 45

Cyndi and I are on vacation Sunday, November 26. The Season of Advent begins Sunday, December 3 with a new worship series.

Our Book Club does not meet as a group. However, our weekly messages reference that week's chapters. You can anticipate spoiler alerts unless you keep up with the pace. I've purchased ten books but when they're gone you can still purchase your own copy or visit your local library.

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).

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