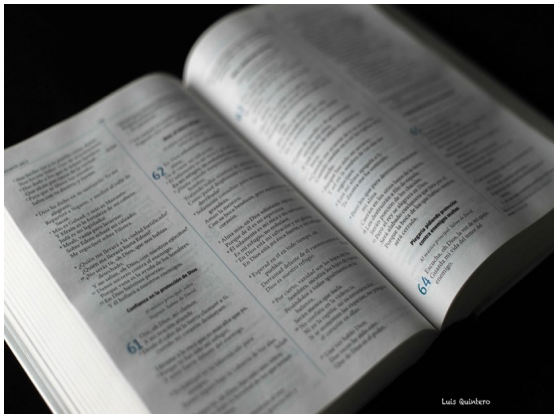


ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Volume 4 Issue 7

Judged (Convicted)



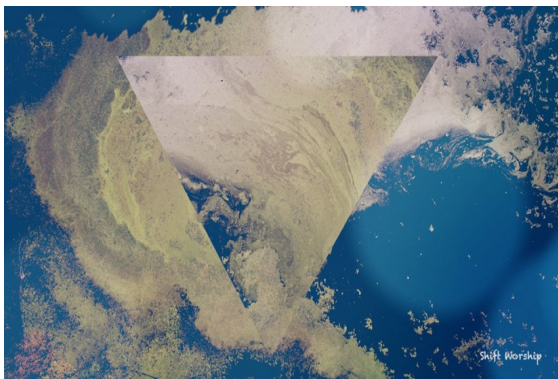
We've all been or felt judged at some point. Judged is a common circumstance for the vast majority. And depending on our level of healthy self-esteem, some of us feel under constant judgment.

Judgment is also a frequent topic in scripture.

The word judgment appears over 400 times in various contexts. Judge appears over 450 times. Judging is clearly an important topic. But no one wants to be judged unless it's favorable and there's a prize at the end.

Page 2

Risen (Who are you looking for?)



It's Easter Sunday and John's story, told in the first person by the *Living Bible*, is the appropriate text for ending our study of Revelation. Together with the Lord's description of the New Jerusalem found in Isaiah, we're ready to move

on. That is, move back to the Gospel of Matthew for our new series starting next Sunday.

The writer of John's Gospel says he believed Jesus had risen after seeing the empty tomb. But Mary did not go into the tomb. She wasn't yet convinced. Two angels asked her why she was crying and we learn she believed the practical. Someone stole the body. Page 13

APRIL 7, 2024

EVERYONE
HAVE A
WONDERFUL
WEEK!!



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Judged (Convicted) *cont. from pg 1*

So what is the prize? And what are the contest rules?

First, judgment implies power over the judged. Otherwise, judgment is an academic exercise, which it more often is any way. Ultimately, God is the only power that matters. But it doesn't seem that way, does it?

Judgment also needs a yardstick. Some standard to measure against. And the standard must be achievable by the judged. Otherwise, judgment is oppressive.

There's another factor deserving consideration. Is the judge held to the same standard as the judged? If so, does the judge consistently meet or exceed the standards, or is hypocrisy taking place?

Last, what happens when we deserve the judgment? Is forgiveness possible? Is forgiveness conditional? If so, what are the standards for forgiveness to be possible?

No wonder life feels so complicated.

When I first realized the possibility that God created me to fill the role of pastor, judgment seemed to pollute the very air around me. My inner child

needed convincing of my worthiness. But what standard determines this?

I received a piece of advice from on the clergy at the church I attended. A candidate for ministry must be beyond reproach. Her overall message was condemning. This isn't you!

There is a word I learned years ago that has the power I needed to respond to God's call in my life. Grace. I learned about this word during a near-death experience almost two decades before.

Grace is unconditional and unearned forgiveness.

Fr Richard Rohr sets forgiveness and judgment in proximity to one another. "Without a forgiveness great enough to embrace even the obscure side of things, we are burdened (and I do mean burdened) with our own need to explain and to judge everything."

The Old Testament uses the language of clean and unclean to distinguish between the sacred and the less sacred. These same labels are then applied to animals, people and situations.

A person becomes unclean in the ordinary pursuit of life, requiring a special ritual before engaging the sacred.

The sacred relates exclusively to God. Everything else belongs to the secular world.

Fr Rohr notes, "The false sacred can be spotted because it is always self-serving and other destroying. The insecure and false self seems to need an enemy to scapegoat so that it can feel superior and saved. False gods, by definition, must be appeased. The true God needs nothing.

This concept drips judgement in mind. And religious systems, even if these words never appear in doctrine. Organized around clean and unclean, sacred and not sacred, righteous and unrighteous, saved and unsaved. And so on. Judgement!

Jesus had something different in mind. Jesus offers an alternative. And He lays His plan out in a familiar monologue known as the Sermon on the Mount. This week's text includes what Jesus said about judgment in His sermon.

IN OUR PRAYERS

Kevin Croom
Sylvia Pittman
Kim Sims

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

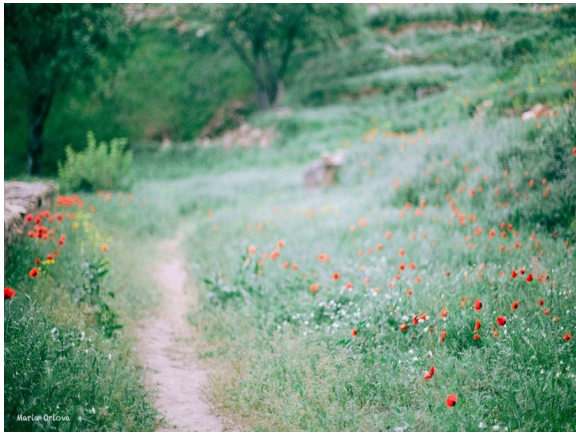
APRIL 8 - 14



Apr 8	Mon	2:30pm	Staff Meeting
Apr 9	Tue	10:00am	Food Distribution
Apr 10	Wed		
Apr 11	Thu		
Apr 12	Fri		
Apr 13	Sat		
Apr 14	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 "The Alternative"



Beginning the Sunday after Easter we begin a new series titled *The Alternative*. Our series is based primarily on Jesus' Sermon on the Mount where Jesus offers us a better way forward.

The teachings of Jesus was commonly known as the Way, acknowledging that following Him is a way of life that changes everything. And, throughout history, the faithful thoughtfully tried to emulate the ways of Jesus.

Our companion book is titled *Jesus' Alternative Plan* by Richard Rohr (see Book Club News). Father Richard positions Jesus' sermon from Matthew within the context of the gospels as a whole. The reality is humanity continues to customize Jesus' plan to suite us. But, in His sermon, Jesus offers us an alternative.

Page 5

Book Club News



Our companion book for our new worship series, coming in April, is Jeremy Richard Rohr's insights into the Sermon on the Mount. His book is titled

Jesus' Alternative Plan.

Amazon's website describes his book this way:

When Jesus talked about the Kingdom of God, he was talking about an utterly different way of relating to human society as we know it. Discover a transformative understanding of faith in Jesus' *Alternative Plan: The Sermon on the Mount* by acclaimed spiritual leader and Franciscan priest Richard Rohr. In this updated edition of *Jesus' Plan for a New World*, Rohr explores the implications of

Christ's best-known teachings in the Sermon on the Mount, offering a fresh perspective on what it means for Christian life today.

Through his insightful analysis and commentary, Rohr explains the historical and cultural context of each of these Bible verses, shedding light on the revolutionary nature of Jesus' blueprint for an alternative way of being. From the Beatitudes to overturning conventional wisdom and challenging traditional power structures, this paperback book provides guidance and inspiration for those seeking the true heart of their faith.

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Asbury Staff

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Kevin Croom Executive Director/CDC
Connie Portillo Office Secretary
Kim Sims Finance Director
Sylvia Pittman Empowerment Arts
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Mike Sampson Farms Manager
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South Flint Soup Kitchen

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Cyndi Worship Leader
Anthony & Jim Ushers
Jonathon & Terrance Production Team
Yasheah & Mirium Nursery
Christine & Norma Cafe

Upcoming Worship Series — “The Alternative” ..cont from pg 4

Here is the outline for covering Matthew’s Sermon on the Mount with chapters from our companion book:

	<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Jesus’ Alternative Plan</u>
Apr 7	Matthew 7:1-5	Judging	Chapters Intro-1
Apr 14	Matthew 6:24-34	Possessions	Chapters 2-3
Apr 21	Matthew 5:13-16	Condiments	Chapters 4-5
Apr 28	Matthew 5:38-42	Violence	Chapter 6
May 5	Matthew 5:3-12	Beatitudes	Chapters 7-8
May 12	Matthew 7:7-12	Knocking	Chapters 9

Jesus saw the crowds and went up a hill, where he sat down. His disciples gathered around him, and he began to teach them.

Matthew 5: 1-2

I pray that you will join us each Sunday morning at 10:30 am. We share our weekly episodes on [Facebook](#) and 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 [FlintAsburyChurch.org](#).

Pastor Tommy

“Feed Flint”



“Feed Flint”



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**

LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS & MORE:

God will judge you in the same way you judge others, and he will apply to you the same rules you apply to others...

Matthew 7:1-5

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS:

1. Read Matthew 7:1-5. Are you familiar with the Sermon on the Mount? If so, state your impression of this sermon. What did you learn from this text?
2. Read this week's articles titled *Judged*. Do you often feel judged? Who is judging you? What are their standards? Do they meet the standards they use? What does grace mean 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.



South Flint Soup Kitchen ...

BOTTLED WATER DRIVE

All Year 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

11:00am-12 Noon at South Flint Soup Kitchen,

3410 Fenton Rd (3 blocks north of Atherton Rd)

Flint MI 48507

Any questions, please call 239-3427 or 235-0016 or

Email us at southflintsoupkitchen@gmail.com

To donate: www.mightycause.com/feedflint



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We need your help to purchase fencing to keep our furry friends from eating up all our crops and not sharing with us.

How You Can Donate

- Text "FARMCDC"
- to 53-555
- Scan QR Code

Donate Now



More Information :



(810) 235-0016



funding@flintasbury.org

The enlightening book offers a new way of understanding and living as a Christian woman or man, according to the teachings of Jesus. Whether you are a long-time follower of Jesus, a knowledge truth seeker, or are just beginning to study his religious sermons, Jesus' Alternative Plan: The Sermon on the Mount offers a clear yet challenging look at the vision presented by the holy Jesus. Gain a transformative understanding of his preaching and embark on a spiritual journey toward a complete relationship with the Kingdom of God.

We have a limited number of copies of Father Rohr's book. But copies are available through most book retailers and libraries.

Here is the schedule of chapters for our *Revelations* Series:

Apr 7	Chapters Intro-1
Apr 14	Chapters 2-3
Apr 21	Chapters 4-5
Apr 28	Chapter 6
May 5	Chapters 7-8
May 12	Chapters 9

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. You can 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.

Pastor Tommy

Richard Rohr. *Jesus' Alternative Plan*. Cincinnati: Franciscan Media, 2022.

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

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

Practical is usually the best strategy. Just not in this case. The same goes for our other natural reactions, like judgment and retaliation. And Revelation punctuates the impracticality and improbability of the gospel.

The more popular interpretations of Revelation rely on a practical strategy. From a practical approach, when Revelation reuses the description of the New Jerusalem found in Isaiah, it portrays this city as God's plan for heaven. Otherwise, why move the U.S. embassy from the capital of Israel to the Holy City?

In a Washington Post article written in 2018 in response to the U.S. Embassy's move to Jerusalem, political journalist Philip Bump wrote about the reasons conservative Christians supported this decision. Eighty percent of respondents believed that the creation of Israel in 1948 was a fulfillment of biblical prophecy that would bring about Christ's return, according to a poll conducted by LifeWay.

The bottom line for many Christians is U.S. policy and support of Israel speeds up the return of Christ and the end times prophecies found in Revelation. The ultimate victory for the church, in their opinion, ends with violence.

What's interesting, and worrisome, is an insistence that salvation depends on the actions of others. This conclusion seems counter to the notion that each of us is saved by faith alone. Which means salvation is personal and not tied to the merit of our actions. And certainly isn't tied to the freedom for others to make choices for themselves.

We don't earn salvation through our actions. And this includes political actions.

Setting aside the idea that God needs our help to bring Jesus back, Revelation seems to presume the victory is already won. Easter reminds us Jesus paid the price for salvation on our behalf. And the Kingdom of Heaven is already here. There aren't any political actions needed on our part.

Perhaps it's a good political strategy to support Israel as an ally in the Middle East. We've got plenty of enemies in that region of the world. But political support for defense reasons differs from claiming God needs the U.S. supporting Israel to bring Jesus back.

According to World Bank, people living in the Gaza Strip import nearly two-thirds of food consumption. However, since the invasion of Israel began food imports trickle in, creating a human made famine. These circumstances are clearly inconsistent with God's will.

There is no reason for the public to stay in the dark about the misery created by violence. The violence in the Middle East is between groups fighting for power. Meanwhile, ordinary people suffer. Suffering is never God's will.

"Why are you crying?"
Jesus asked her. "Whom
are you looking for?"

John 20:15

Mary did not stay in the dark on that first Easter morning. And neither should we. Once Mary heard Jesus say her name, she recognized Him as her Lord and Savior

The Good News Translation offers this version: “God will judge you in the same way you judge others, and he will apply to you the same rules you apply to others. As insightful as this statement is, it's tempting to jump to conclusions too quickly.”

God will judge you in the same way you judge others, and he will apply to you the same rules you apply to others ...

Matthew 7:2

Jesus also said, “How dare you say to your brother, ‘Please, let me take that speck out of your eye,’ when you have a log in your own eye?” Ouch! More insight yet only scratching the surface of the alternative.

Welcome to our post-Easter series titled, *The alternative*. Over the next few weeks, we'll touch on several of the parts of Jesus' sermon, but focus mostly on context.

In our companion book, Fr Rohr, goes to great length providing context for finding the alternative Jesus offers in His sermon. Otherwise, our religious baggage blinds us, and we're stuck running with the parts that suit us and ignoring those that don't.

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*](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

Parts of our series was inspired by Fr. Richard Rohr. *Jesus' Alternative Plan*. Cincinnati: Franciscan Media, 2022.

Revelation lays out a poetic and prophetic summation of God's plan through Jesus Christ. Salvation is for all who hear Jesus calling their name. All are welcome. Jesus is calling people from all nations and races.

Jeremy Duncan writes, "There is no pursuit of scapegoats or religious violence—no need to drive anyone away to justify ourselves ever again. Christ has dismantled our desire to see a scapegoat excluded in order to know we are loved."

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

Parts of our series was inspired by Jeremy Duncan. *Upside-Down Apocalypse: grounding revelation in the gospel of peace*. Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2022. Philip Bump. *"Half of evangelicals support Israel because they believe it is important for fulfilling end-times prophecy."* © Washington Post, May 14, 2018. Retrieved from: [*link*](#)



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