

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Volume 4 Issue 1

SEPTEMBER 1, 2024

Seeds (The best is yet to come)



What an ending! By this I don't mean *The Noticer* ends with a twist no one saw coming. Instead, the townspeople find Jones' well-worn suitcase in the middle of the parking lot. But where is Jones?

His suitcase went everywhere Jones went. So what happened to Jones?

Page 2

Small (Small things matter)



Henry Warren sees the big picture. His challenge is being in all the cameos calling for his attention. Busy is an understatement for Henry. Perhaps it's his big picture that allows him to ignore any internal voices calling telling Henry how he treats people matters. Perhaps his vision is just far enough out of focus

that he can't see the chaos created by his lack of ethics.

Page 13

EVERYONE
HAVE A
SAFE



DONATE

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Seeds (The best is yet to come) *cont. from pg 1*

In retrospect, chapter 9 foreshadowed the coming end. Jones took Andy back to the place where they first met. And there, under the same pier, they meet Jason, weeping. *Déjà vu*. Only this time, Andy knows what Jones means when he says to Jason, "Move into the light." Once again, Jones takes three books out of his suitcase, but this time, he offers them to Jason.

As the townsfolk gathered at Café Béignet, they shared story after story. We, along with the residents of Orange Beach, learn that Jones helped almost everyone living there. His suitcase was light. It felt empty, but the townsfolk discovered the suitcase was full of seed packets.

And they find a letter from Jones in the suitcase.

We learn more of the mystery and intrigue about this man Jones through stories of Jones' encounters. Jones suddenly appears on a boat at sea, next to the bed of a dying man and in the ambulance of an injured teenager. Jones appears wherever and whenever he is needed, right on time.

For me, the metaphors developed by the book's author, Andy Andrews, jump off the page. Of course, it's a matter of perspective, isn't it?

I read scripture as poetry. Divinely inspired stories about real people. I'm not like any of them, yet I resemble all of them. For me, even though the bible contains a multitude of genres, the stories share a common bond held together by metaphors, offered by God intended to give us perspective.

Jesus uses storytelling to teach us and empower us to gain perspective. His stories overflowed with metaphors and other literary devices to enrich our lives.

One expression Jesus uses a lot goes something like, "Those who have ears should listen." Jesus didn't say "Those who can hear" or any variation that excludes any of us. We all should listen, but many don't.

Some will look and look; but not see because their minds are dull, and they have stopped up their ears and have closed their eyes. Otherwise, their eyes would see, their ears would hear, their minds would understand, and they would turn to Me.

Matthew 13: 14-15

We call the stories Jesus told, regardless of the complexity of the plot, parables, whenever they're stuffed full of meaning. We get this notion from conversations between Jesus and His disciples.

According to Matthew, Jesus left these instructions for followers: Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you."

While this sounds like a straightforward plan, Jesus tells us earlier that not everyone who has ears listens to Him. So they're even less likely to listen to you and me.

As an illustration, Jesus told a story about a farmer scattering seeds. Not all the seeds fell on soil that allowed them to take hold.

The three synoptic gospels tell this story. This parable's uniqueness includes behind-the-scenes insight into parables. Jesus explains why parables and interprets the parable He told to the listening crowds. A crowd included some who listened and got it but a lot who listened but only heard a story about scattering seeds.

IN OUR PRAYERS

Virginia Bigger
Sylvia Pittman
Mirium Watson

Richard Oram
Jonathon Misner
Terrance Williams



FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE
HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE

Dean Lamoreaux
Norma Buzzard
Nancy Elston



COMING UP THIS WEEK
SEPTEMBER 2 - 8



Sept 2	Mon		
Sept 3	Tue	10:00am	Food Distribution at Asbury UMC
Sept 4	Wed		
Sept 5	Thu		
Sept 6	Fri		
Sept 7	Sat		
Sept 8	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 — “Miracles”

“Blow the trumpet and sound the alarm,” the Prophet shouts, “The day of the Lord is coming soon!” What follows sounds like a list of campaign promises, too good to be true. However, unlike politicians who say whatever to mind that might cause people to like them, every Word from God is truth with impact.

Blow the trumpet and sound the alarm. The day of the Lord is coming soon!

Joel 2:1

God says, “You will know that I am among you and that I, the Lord, am your God and there is no other ... I will pour out my Spirit on everyone. Your sons and daughters will proclaim my message. Your old people will have dreams and your young people will see visions.”

We’re not sure just how many miracles Jesus performed. Somewhere around 40 show up in the four gospels, depending on how you count them. But we’re told Jesus performed many more than were recorded.

And Jesus was not finished.

You and I are also equipped for miracles, according to scripture. But if this is true, where are they? Why can’t we stop climate change before it destroys us? We can! But it takes a movement inspired and led by God’s Spirit.

Here is the outline if you want to read the chapters from our companion book as we progress through our series:

September 8	Chapters 1 to 4
September 15	Chapters 5 to 8
September 22	Chapters 9 to 12
September 29	Chapters 13 to 16
October 4	Chapters 17 to 20
October 11	Chapters 21 to 24
October 18	Chapters 25 to Epilogue

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

Andy Andrews. *The Noticer: Sometimes, all a person needs is a little perspective*. Nashville: W Publishing Group, 2011.

“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:

And Jesus concluded, "Listen, then, if you have ears!"

Matthew 13:1-23

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS:

1. Read Matthew 13:1-23. Are you familiar with this parable? Did you discover any new perspectives as you read it this time? Are you sometimes confused by parables or by Jesus' explanation of a parable? Explain.
2. Read this week's article titled *Seeds*. What stories do you have about Jesus in your own life? Have you shared them? Why or why not?
3. How can the members of your group help you this week 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



Show Your Support For Your Local Farm

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

Jones is back in town, but he is also in jail. Andy receives a call in the middle of the night to pick him up. Jones is tight-lipped about the circumstances of his brief incarceration. After arriving to bail him out, Andy learns his friend opened an unusual business in one of the resort town's most high-profile shopping districts.

As summer nears, a practical joker becomes bolder and more inventive with each prank. Could Jones be behind some of it? Why is it every person Jones meets has a secret they will reveal only to him?

Based on a true story, Just Jones wraps fiction, allegory, and inspiration into stories about people needing miracles. Andy and Jones invite us on a journey. Along the way, we're reminded of the importance of perspective, the power of connection, and the ability we all have to help make miracles happen. To make the impossible happen.

We have a few books. But both new and used copies are available through most book retailers and libraries. The price on Amazon for a new hardcover edition, as of the publication of this article, is \$13.22. Used copies are available for less, and the Kindle version is \$9.99.

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

September 8	Chapters 1 to 4
September 15	Chapters 5 to 8
September 22	Chapters 9 to 12
September 29	Chapters 13 to 16
October 4	Chapters 17 to 20
October 11	Chapters 21 to 24
October 18	Chapters 25 to Epilogue

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. 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

Andy Andrews. *Just Jones: Sometimes a Thing Is Impossible . . . Until It Is Actually Done*. Nashville: W Publishing Group, 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

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

There's a lot of Henry's out there. Big picture people who conclude life is a competition where the golden rule and fair play is for losers. For some, their motto is do to others before they can do something worse to you.

Henry was miserable. But his busyness distracted his attention just enough to convince Henry he had little choice but to stay on track. It was like he was spinning too many plates and there was always one plate teetering, ready to stop and crash.

Henry thought he was building success. Instead, Henry was more like a teetering plate about to crash. But his focus on the big picture caused him to miss the details that make a big picture worth seeing.

We each choose how we'll spend the precious hours and days of our lives. Henry made choices with each phone call, each worker he shorted and each promise he made he did intend to keep.

According to a 2022 Gallup poll, the vast majority of Americans are pessimistic about the moral fiber of our country. While the results of their moral polls vary by political party affiliation, there is a consensus that improvement in the future seems bleak.

The number one issue cited as evidence of moral decline is a lack of consideration for others.

Three years before the Gallup study was released, anthropologists at the University of Oxford released the results of research identifying seven universal moral rules. The common rules discovered among 60 cultures they surveyed included help your family, help your group, return favors, be brave, defer to superiors, divide resources fairly, and respect others' property. The research concluded these seven cooperative behaviors are considered morally good in all cultures.

Lead author and senior researcher at the Institute for Cognitive and Evolutionary Anthropology, Dr. Oliver Scott Curry noted, "All agree that cooperating, promoting the common good, is the right thing to do."

According to Matthew, in His Sermon on the Mount, after Jesus listed numerous blessings for His listeners, He reminded them not only do they matter a great deal, but everything they do matters. People notice even the smallest acts of kindness.

We impact the moral fiber of our community by treating others with kindness and respect.

Your light must shine before people so that they will see the good things you do and praise God.

Matthew 5:14-15

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 FlintAsburyUMC@gmail.com 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 Andy Andrews. *The Novelist: Sometimes, all a person needs is a little perspective*. Nashville: W Publishing Group, 2011. Megan Brenan and Nicole Willcoxon. "Record-High 50% of Americans Rate U.S. Moral Values as 'Poor'." © Gallup, June 15, 2022. Retrieved from: [link](#)

"Seven moral rules found all around the world." © Oxford University, Feb 11, 2019. Retrieved from: [link](#)

Jones explains the purpose of the seed packets in the letter he left for the townspeople. The seeds are symbolic. They represent words, but their power comes later as the seeds sprout new perspectives.

In an interview with ChurchSource, Andy Andrews said, about his book *The Noticer*, "The book is based on Biblical principles but doesn't overtly talk about Jesus. I've found this extremely effective to reach the lost with the Gospel."

Andrews was scattering seeds and sharing what's worked for him. This is our shared mission as Christians.

We can inspire others by sharing our stories. Our stories are the seeds we're given to plant. Sometimes they find fertile soil and our story resonates with one or more of our listeners. Other times, they're just stories.

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come together and you can help!**

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Or, call Kroger Customer Communications at

**1-800-KROGERS, (576-4377)
OPTION #3**



Eligible Organizations

Kroger Community Rewards is open to organizations that are tax exempt under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Participants include school groups, churches and synagogues, youth sports, food banks, animal support groups and many others. Kroger does not make donations to individuals.

Get your favorite local organization

enrolled

today! Enrollment applications can be downloaded at Kroger.com

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Community Rewards
Program is designed to be
the easiest fund-raising
program in town! Simply
swipe your Plus Card and
earn rewards!**

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ZERO
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by **Kroger**

**Add the South Flint
Soup Kitchen to your
Kroger Rewards Card
and Help Feed Flint**

**We're giving
\$2 million**

to local area non profits

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and earn rewards for your
favorite organization.

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come together and you can help!**



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www.asburycdc.org/info

Text-to-Give 53-555 keyword = CDCYOUTH

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UPCOMING
DATES

July 19

Aug. 21

Sept 18

Oct. 16

Nov. 20

Dec. 18

SOUTH FLINT SOUP KITCHEN

southflintsoupkitchen.org

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Join us for a delightful
experience filled with fresh,
locally-grown produce,
artisanal goods, resource
specialist, and a wonderful
community atmosphere.

Friday Sept. 20th, 2024.

4:00 pm - 7:00 pm

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OR GO TO

WWW.FLINTASBURYCDC.ORG

Join Grand Blanc United Methodist Church Women of Faith for a

CELEBRATION

OF WOMEN'S' RIGHT TO VOTE.



FREE LIBERTY LUNCH

followed by

guest speaker Kathy Freeland

Saturday, October 5, 12 noon

What happened on August 18, 1920?



***The 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution
made it legal for women in the United States to VOTE!***

CALL FOR RESERVATIONS (BY 9/30/24)

Virginia Sullivan (810-869-8581) or Sandy Jones (810-691-3013)

19TH AMENDMENT
HONORING WOMEN'S RIGHT TO VOTE

Grand Blanc United Methodist Church is located at 515 Bush Ave, Grand Blanc, MI