

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Volume 4 Issue 8

SEPTEMBER 8, 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

Just Kidding (See me)



As we begin our new worship series, *Miracles*, Jones is in jail and Andy drives to the small Florida town to pick him up. During his brief stay, Jones meets Keely. Since their encounter is brief and Jones makes little progress in breaking through Keely's hard outer shell, we will learn more later on in our companion

book for this series, *Just Jones*.

The sub-title for our companion book points to a conundrum that brings the idea of a miracle to mind. "Sometimes a thing is impossible until it is actually done." After all, a miracle isn't really a miracle unless it didn't seem possible.

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**EVERYONE
HAVE A
SAFE
WEEKEND!!**

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 9 - 15



Sept 9	Mon	2:30pm	Staff Meeting
Sept 10	Tue	10:00am	Food Distribution at Asbury UMC
Sept 11	Wed	11am-1pm	Angel Closet at South Flint Soup Kitchen
Sept 12	Thu	1:00pm	United Women in Faith
Sept 13	Fri		
Sept 14	Sat		
Sept 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 "Miracles"

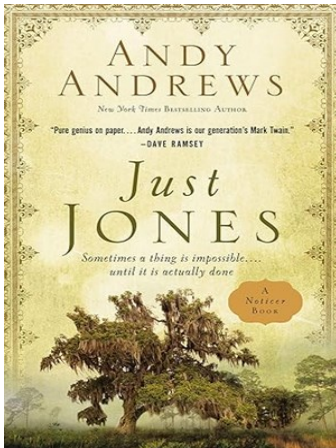


On the Second Sunday in September, we begin a new series titled *Miracles*. Our series is based, in part, on a book by Andy Andrews from his *Noticer Series*, titled *Just Jones*.

In our last series, we used the first book from the *Noticer Series*, where Andrews introduced the importance of perspective. While this theme continues in this series, our primary focus is on the miracles performed by Jesus. We hope to gain new perspectives with each miracle we engage.

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Book Club News



We finish our current worship series, *Perspective*, on Sunday, September 1st. We used Andy Andrew's

book *The Noticer* as a companion

book. Feedback on his book was extremely positive.

I'm pleased to announce our companion book for our new worship series beginning on Sunday, September 8, is a sequel to *The Noticer*. In *Just Jones*, Andy Andrews continues the stories of a stranger reaching out a helping hand to others.

Andy Andrews is the author of multiple New York Times bestsellers,

including *The Traveler's Gift* and *The Noticer*. He is also an in-demand speaker, coach, and consultant for the world's largest organizations. ABC's *Good Morning America* featured *The Noticer*, and this popular book appeared on bestseller lists around the world after being translated into over 40 languages.

Just Jones is Andrew's third book in *The Noticer* series. His stories about the main character affecting the lives of the persons he meets inspire us and help us with new perspectives on our own issues.

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Terry Kinze South Flint Soup Kitchen

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

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:

Go back home, where you will find that the demon has gone out of your daughter.

Mark 7:24-30

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS:

1. Read Mark 7:24-30. Does Jesus' reaction to the Mother's request surprise you? Why? Why do you think Jesus changed His mind?
2. Read this week's article titled Just kidding. Are you or have you prayed for miracles? What was the result? What are some pitfalls of kidding yourself? Does this happen to you?
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



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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

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

On the other hand, the idea of a miracle doesn't necessarily need such tight constraints. Generally, the idea of miracles involves divine intervention. When the experts say no way but a way happens despite their assessment, we say, "It's a miracle," in response to the good news.

Meanwhile, tragedy and terror struck again when a teenager killed two teachers and two students at Apalachee High School in Winder, Georgia. The shooter surrendered to police who later arrested his father, charging him with several offenses, including four counts of involuntary manslaughter and two counts of second-degree murder. The fourteen-year-old used an assault rifle given to him as a Christmas present for his attack at the school he attended.

Several articles appeared focusing on Colt Gray's mental health and home environment. Quotes from officials and other public figures contained a variety of labels for the mass shooting, including that Colt committed an evil act.

We all want answers. We all want the violence to end. Sadly, we seem more worried about the price of chicken at Kroger than dealing with problems that affect us less directly.

Dr. Harold I. Schwartz, in an article published in the *Journal of The American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law* in 2023, offers insight into common attributes among the perpetrators of school shootings. Is there a switch in the mind of a teenager that causes them to reach a point where they're willing to murder other children? And is this preventable?

One commonality noted by Dr. Schwartz is the choice of the school the shooter attended. And the common experience that their schools "were places of failure and, for many, of isolation, bullying, rejection, or ostracism."

However, our solutions, thus far, focus on the speed of response by law enforcement once the shooting begins. And taking every sign of a potential threat seriously. Dr. Schwartz argues, "Finger-pointing at people with mental illness is a politically motivated distraction from the centrality of guns in mass shootings."

Brian McLaughlin works as a mental health professional in his role as Director of Advocacy and Recovery. In an article published in 2011, he shared his personal experience dealing with his mental health diagnosis. After his diagnosis, McLaughlin recalled

praying feverishly for a miracle. Years later, he concluded his condition was the miracle he needed, so he could do his work as an advocate more effectively.

The gospel selection listed in this week's lectionary readings is a story about a mother born in the Syrian area of Phoenicia who asked Jesus for a miracle. Her daughter was suffering from some form of demon. Since scripture isn't clear on the girl's actual condition, we're left to speculate and invited to consider the mother's description of her daughter as a metaphor for a wide range of situations.

Go back home, where you will find that the demon has gone out of your daughter.

Mark 7:24-30

Perhaps her daughter was depressed. Perhaps she struggles in school, stays isolated from classmates, does not have friends, or has many issues. Whatever the specifics, her situation is dire enough that her mom asks Jesus to intervene.

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.

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

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And, at first, Jesus refuses the woman's request. Since Mark tells us the woman's heritage was Syrophenician and Jesus uses derogatory language in explaining His decision, we are left to draw an initial conclusion of bias.

Whether Jesus' bias is justifiable is mute. When the woman persists, Jesus changes His mind. At least, it appears this way on the surface. Since we're unable to know fully His motivation, we're left to consider the nature of Jesus from other interactions.

Jesus tells the mother that when she returns home, she will discover her daughter's crisis is over.

Jones gets Keely's attention when he muses about an 11th commandment. "I've always thought that if Moses'd had a little more time on the mountain, he'd have come back with eleven," Jones tells Keely. "Number eleven would have been Thou shalt not kid thyself."

Jones realizes Keely is dealing with some form of demon. But instead of confronting her circumstances, she tells herself lies disguised as truth. Keely's miracle waits for another day.

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Harold I. Schwartz. "The Mind of the Mass School Shooter." © American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law, 2023. Retrieved from: [link](#)



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ZERO WASTE**

by **Kroger**

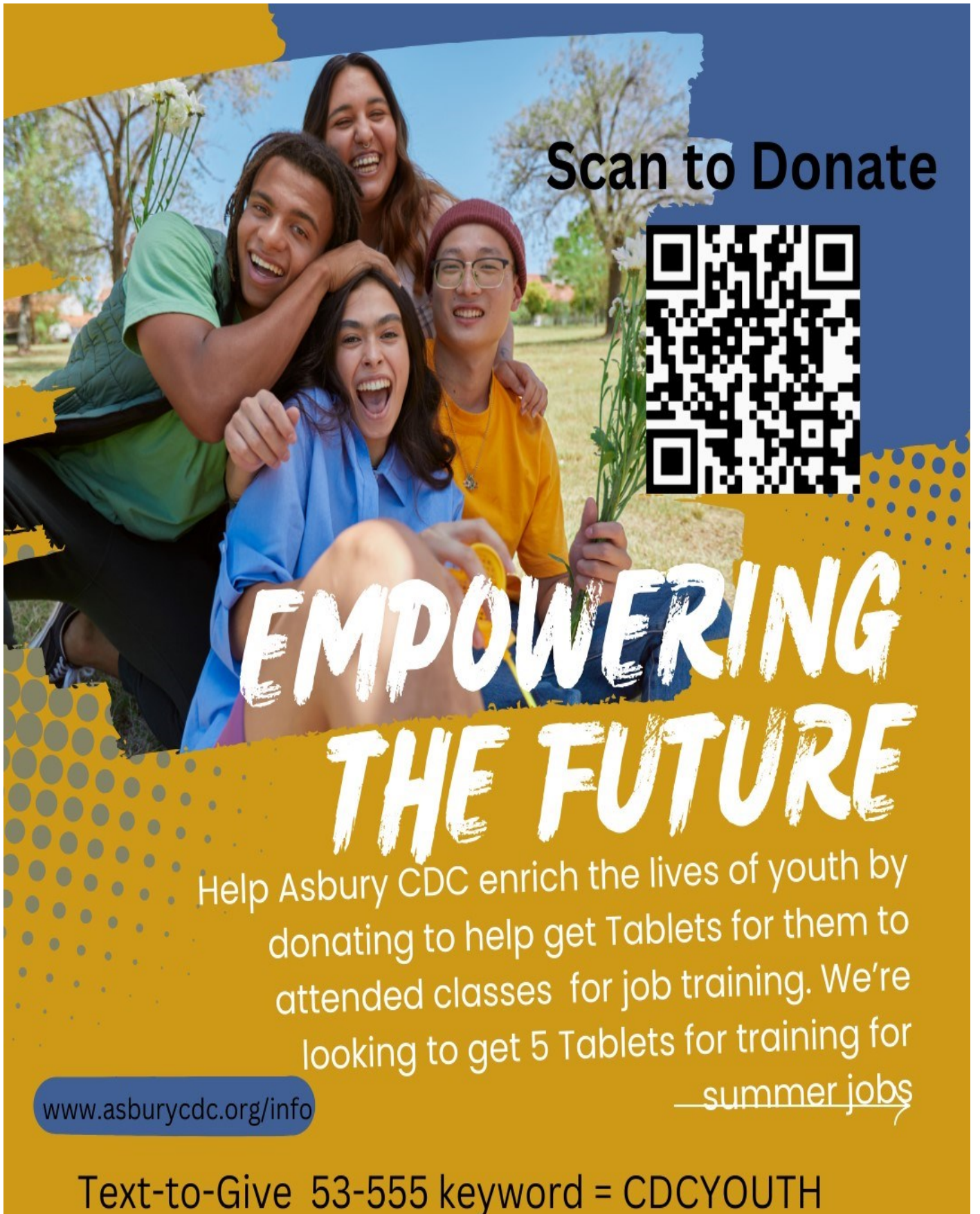
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www.asburycdc.org/info

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FOOD GIVE AWAY

FREE

**UPCOMING
DATES**

July 19

Aug. 21

Sept 18

Oct. 16

Nov. 20

Dec. 18

SOUTH FLINT SOUP KITCHEN

southflintsoupkitchen.org

FROM 9 AM UNTIL GONE!





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experience filled with fresh,
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artisanal goods, resource
specialist, and a wonderful
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Friday Sept. 20th, 2024.

4:00 pm - 7:00 pm

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Flint, MI. 48506

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\$10

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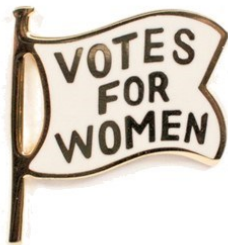
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Join Grand Blanc United Methodist Church Women of Faith for a

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