

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Volume 4 Issue 22

SEPTEMBER 22, 2024

Voice (Fruitfulness)



Cyndi and I have several fruit trees but have yet to enjoy a fruit harvest. Healthy orchards take more care than we've had time to give them. Fortunately, our raspberries and blackberries are healthy and doing well. The red raspberries are best when their color is a deep reddish purple. But the blackberries start red

and turn deep black at their peak. If we didn't know the difference between them we might pick the fruit before its time. *Page 2*

2nd Chance (Voices)



This week's reading from our companion book begins with Keely in a courtroom. Keely is alone. Her one phone call to her younger brother reminded her she was on her own. Keely had no close friends or family willing to help her. And she was facing a judge notorious for harsh sentencing.

Keely meets briefly with her public defender during an unusual court recess and learns the reason for her arrest. As a result, Keely no longer has a job. Keely's future looks hopeless. She needs a miracle.

Page 13

**EVERYONE
HAVE A
SAFE
WEEKEND!!**

DONATE

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

2nd Chance	1
Voice	1
Voice	2
Coming up this week	3
In our prayers	3
Upcoming Worship/Book Club	4
Upcoming Worship Series/Book Club	5
Feed Flint	6
Feed Flint	7
Life Group Questions	8
Bottled Water Drive for SFSK	9
Support your local farm	10
Book Club News	11
Ways to Give to SFSK	12
2nd Chance	13
Voice	14
2nd Chance	15
Kroger Community Rewards	16
Food Giveaway—SFSK	17

Recently, I reflected on a connection between fruit trees, vines, and briars and the health of our nation. A healthy democracy takes work to produce the freedom we hope for.

Jesus often used fruit as a metaphor for gauging whether a person's actions are consistent with His teachings. We learn a lot about a person's moral compass from the fruit of their actions.

I'm dismayed by the number of conspiracy theories circulating. Some theories promote bias towards persons of a particular heritage. Others question the integrity of our elections.

Conspiracy theories create division. And they gain traction when influential individuals repost them and mislead the public. Instead of strengthening our nation, their actions weaken our democracy by further dividing us.

Their actions are like bad fruit. Reposting conspiracy theories that divide smells of diseased and rotted fruit. Likewise, using conspiracy theories as grievances to justify one's self have the odor of spoiled fruit and an unhealthy tree.

A healthy democracy depends on giving voice to every person. Our nation is blessed with millions who responsibly show up at polls or mail in their choices for issues and candidates for each election.

Nevertheless, millions of Americans work, raise children, volunteer, and use their time to their limits and have little time to wade through misinformation and conspiracy theories to understand whether issues and candidates are consistent with their values.

A healthy democracy depends on the peaceful transfer of power after the votes are counted and the people's choices are identified. This has been a trademark of our nation since its inception.

Attorney General Merrick Garland, in a passionate speech he gave this past week, rebuked the use of conspiracy theories to smear the U.S. Justice Department for political gain. Quoting Garland in a Washington Post article, AP Journalist, Alanna Durkin Richer writes, "These attacks have come in the form of conspiracy theories, dangerous falsehoods, efforts to bully and intimidate career public servants by repeatedly and publicly singling them out, and threats of actual violence."

The fruit of a healthy democracy includes a voice for all citizens. And protection from baseless attacks by public figures.

We're blessed with dedicated volunteers and public servants working diligently to ensure our elections are fair. And we're fortunate that few discrepancies are found after challenges to the results are settled. The plethora of challenges following the last election were found to be frivolous, destructive, and void of evidence of irregularities. Instead, we've learned the attacks were motivated by individuals simply unwilling to accept the results.

Jesus performed many miracles of healing, and Matthew's gospel covers most of them. Often, the details are sketchy. But the miracle itself may not be the most important lesson. While each miracle removes walls that interfere with God's work in our midst, the reactions of witnesses offer mirrors for our own reflections.

Matthew tells us about a couple of times when Jesus healed a man who could not speak. In one story, the man was also blind. In both stories, the crowds watched in amazement. We don't know if any of them were or became followers. But we know that they saw what happened. *Page 14*

IN OUR PRAYERS

Virginia Bigger
 Sylvia Pittman
 Mirium Watson

Jonathon Misner
 Terrance Williams



FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE
 HOMEBOUNDED OR IN NURSING CARE

Dean Lamoreaux
 Norma Buzzard

Nancy Elston



COMING UP THIS WEEK
SEPTEMBER 23 - 29



Sept 23	Mon	2:30pm	Staff Meeting
Sept 24	Tue	10:00am	Food Distribution at Asbury UMC
		3:00pm	CDC Board Meeting
Sept 25	Wed	11am-1:00pm	Angel Closet at South Flint Soup Kitchen
Sept 26	Thu		
Sept 27	Fri		
Sept 28	Sat		
Sept 29	Sun	10:30am	New Beginnings Contemporary Worship

*** For those of you that were not aware, Stephanie Warden, Norma Nattrass's niece, passed away a few weeks ago in Grand Haven. There will be a memorial service for her, here at Asbury, on Thursday, October 3, 2024 at 11:00am.

*** PLEASE WORK ON 2024 CHARGE CONFERENCE REPORTS TO TURN IN TO ME...

(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.)

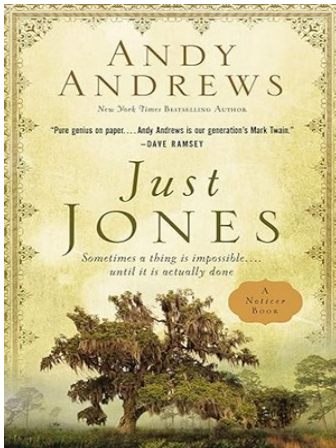
Upcoming Worship Series "Miracles"



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.

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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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:

They found the man from whom the demons had gone out sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind.

Luke 8:26-39

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS:

1. Read Luke 8:26-39. What catches your attention the most in this story? Why, do you suppose, is the story about the pigs important? Can you imagine similar circumstances happening today? Explain.
2. Read this week's article titled 2nd chance. Have you experienced a 2nd chance? Describe your experience. Does this help you consider other interpretations of Luke's story about the man from Gerasa?
3. How can the members of your group help you be more receptive to hearing and understanding the Word of God this week? 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

Second chances exist," Judge Gritney began. "That having been said, it is a common misconception that everybody deserves one. On the contrary, they do not. In fact, considering the human condition and our many sins, most of us do not deserve a second chance."

Keely understood and didn't expect one. And so she didn't notice a miracle was unfolding. "A second chance is an expression of grace," Judge Gritney explained. "It is unmerited favor. When bestowed from one person to another, a second chance involves the undeserved generosity of the giver."

Judge Gritney offers Keely a conditional second chance. She is willing to give her probation only if someone offers her a job. Keely needs a redeemer, but who is willing to redeem her?

Luke tells a story about a man living with demons. The more direct translation describes the man's condition as being possessed by demons. The idea of demons can mean a lot of things. Most often, I think of those persuasive negative voices that sound oddly familiar and get louder when things appear to be falling apart. Often with a chorus of "I told you so,"

Whatever voices the man was hearing inside his own head, the voices owned him. His daily life was dictated by internal voices that did not have his best interest in mind. No longer welcomed among others, the man spent time in shackles and alone in the caves outside of town.

In this story, Luke offers unusual details regarding the multiple spirits demonizing the man Jesus heals but very little about the man himself. Similar to other miracle stories, we're left to speculate about the man's life leading up to meeting Jesus.

The only hope for this man from Gerasa was a miracle. He needed a redeemer.

Luke tells us that when Jesus stepped off the boat in Gerasa, he was met by a man living outside of town. When he saw Jesus, the man gave a loud cry, threw himself down at his feet, and shouted, "Jesus, Son of the Most High God! What do you want with me? I beg you, don't punish me!"

What an unusual greeting! How did the man recognize Jesus? Had they met before? And what past experience troubled this man enough that it caused him to presume punishment from God? Luke doesn't share this detail, so I presume it wasn't anything in particular.

Rather, his self-condemnation came from the chorus of voices in his head singing about his unworthiness.

Luke tells us this was a sign that healing was already beginning. Like an orchestra director, Jesus ordered the voices to stop. It was time for the man to be free. His redeemer had arrived.

"What is your name?" Jesus asked him. "My name is Mob," he answered. Luke shares that the man answered Jesus this way because he had lived with so many voices for so long.

What follows is either a bizarre sacrifice of livestock or a carefully crafted story packed with opportunities for further insight. Jesus sends the voices into a herd of pigs, which run off a cliff and drown.

The end? Of course not! Witnesses ran to tell the townfolks what they saw. When the spectators arrived, they found the ostracized man sitting with Jesus as though he were attending his first day of school.

However, Jesus antagonists saw things differently, offering conspiracy theories about source of Jesus power. Instead of using the opportunity to unite the people and bring them all closer to God, they offered positions that turned people away from God.

Jesus healed the man so that he was able to talk and see.

Matthew 12:22

In the situation where Jesus gives a man sight and voice, Jesus responds to the conspiracy theory circulated by political influencers. Jesus reminds them that a nation dividing itself into opposing groups soon falls if they are unable to work together.

Jesus took the conspiracy leaders head-on. "To have good fruit you must have a healthy tree," Jesus says. "If you have a poor tree, you will have bad fruit." And adding, "A tree is known by the kind of fruit it bears."

Indeed, each tree produces good or bad fruit based on its health. And in the same way, Jesus promises our acts will be judged based on who they serve.

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 are inspired by Andy Andrews. *Just Jones: Sometimes a Thing Is Impossible . . . Until It Is Actually Done*. Nashville: W Publishing Group, 2020.

Alanna Durkin Richer. *"Garland says he won't let the Justice Department be used as a political weapon."* © Washington Post, September 12, 2024. Retrieved from: [link](#)

So they celebrated his recovery and worshipped Jesus? While this would make for a great ending, their recovery waits for a later chapter. Instead of sharing the man's joy, Luke tells us the townfolks were afraid and asked Jesus to leave. And he did.

They found the man from whom the demons had gone out sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind.

Luke 8:35

The man wanted to go with Jesus. Perhaps he was worried that His cure only worked in Jesus' presence. But Jesus gave the man a mission. "Go tell others what I've done for you," Jesus told the man. And this is how the story ends, or at least this particular chapter in the man's life.

Jones shows up in court as Keely's redeemer. She needs a job, and Jones needs results that Keely can achieve. Keely is free to go. But her voices go with her, waiting for the next time Keely feels alone and unloved.

Most of us suffer from one or more voices that often contradict reality. These voices can be pervasive and persuasive, and sometimes, they lie in wait until we're facing adversity. Sometimes, we just need a second chance.

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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.

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enrolled

today! Enrollment applications can be downloaded at Kroger.com

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Help Asbury CDC enrich the lives of youth by donating to help get Tablets for them to attend classes for job training. We're looking to get 5 Tablets for training for summer jobs

www.asburycdc.org/info

Text-to-Give 53-555 keyword = CDCYOUTH

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