

# ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Volume 4 Issue 10

NOVEMBER 10, 2024

## Neighbors (Will you be?)



Jesus was not a climate scientist or activist. He didn't have to be. Neither was he a vegan or vegetarian.

Jesus didn't need to wear labels for everyone around Him to know how much He loved creation. It was apparent in His everyday life.

Jesus was pro-life, but He didn't carry posters, lobby for changes in the law, or protest outside of doctor's offices.

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## Good News (At least, it should be)



Climate change is negatively affecting Florida in several ways and is expected to have increasing negative effects over the next couple of decades. For example, statewide annual average temperatures have accelerated in recent decades, increasing at a higher rate than global temperatures.

The number of extreme heat days is expected to rise by 40 in inland areas of the state. Extreme precipitation events have increased, causing substantial damage, and are expected to increase as a result of climate change.

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**EVERYONE  
HAVE A  
SAFE  
WEEKEND!!**



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Jesus was also pro-choice. He gave each person the freedom to decide for themselves. And He loved each of us regardless of our individual choices.

He wasn't complicated. In fact, Jesus simplified the complicated network of laws down to two that matter most. Love God and each other. These two imperatives guided His decisions and undergirded His teachings, encouraging us to do the same.

We don't need to guess what Jesus would do, given the circumstances we face each day. Instead, we can and should use His examples, words, and actions to illustrate what it means to love God and each other. And do likewise.

Welcome to our new series, *Life*. Over the next five weeks, we'll look at perhaps the most pressing issue facing us collectively: How to respond to climate change. We begin our first episode one week before election day.

Millions have already cast their vote. Cyndi and I voted by mail as we have for each election since it became possible to do so. We both used Jesus' two imperatives to guide us in selecting candidates within the realities of our two-party system.

We voted pro-life, choosing candidates who we believed to be most likely to face the challenges as leaders well-grounded in love for God and neighbor. In particular, we chose candidates who openly support changes in our laws and practices that protect and preserve our planet while allowing each of us the freedom to choose how we make decisions regarding our bodies. For us, this is what it means to be pro-life.

Moreover, the United States does not exist in isolation. The world looks to our country and leaders as examples of what it means to be a good neighbor. Our country was founded on the principles of personal freedoms that don't infringe on the freedom of others to worship God as they choose and to enjoy life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

The writer of Luke shares a story that is among the most recognizable illustrations of what it means to be a good neighbor. He tells us that one day, Jesus was confronted by adversaries, hoping Jesus would say something controversial enough to condemn himself. A lawyer from the group asked Jesus a question that he calculated would enrage a large group of people regardless of His answer. "What must I do to receive eternal life?"

"What do the Scriptures say?" Jesus responded. "How do you interpret them?"

The lawyer answered brilliantly. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and Love your neighbor as you love yourself."

"I agree," replied Jesus.

But the lawyer wasn't satisfied, Luke tells us. He shot back a follow-up question. "Who is my neighbor?"

Ah yes! Who qualifies as the target of the love I'm to show to others? This is important, isn't it? Am I expected to show the same love towards the people of other tribes as I show towards my own? What about the people of Ukraine? What about people I don't know? What about immigrants?

Jesus responded with a story choosing the main characters, persons in highly respected positions who are expected to set examples for others to follow. And one person from a different tribe altogether. In fact, the main character came from a group despised by His listeners.

IN OUR PRAYERS

Virginia Bigger      Fay Lapp  
 Sylvia Pittman      Jonathon Misner  
 Mirium Watson      Terrance Williams



FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE  
 HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE

Dean Lamoreaux  
 Norma Buzzard      Nancy Elston



**COMING UP THIS WEEK**  
**NOVEMBER 10 - 17**



Nov 11	Mon	2:30pm	Staff Meeting
Nov 12	Tue	10am-until gone	Produce will be available each (until further notice), along with canned goods
Nov 13	Wed		
Nov 14	Thu	1:00pm	United Women in Faith
Nov 15	Fri		
Nov 16	Sat		
Nov 17	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](#).)

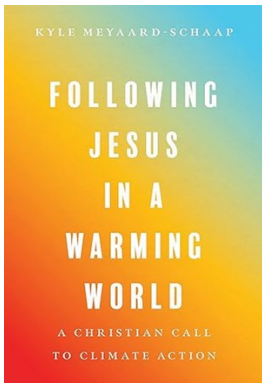
## Upcoming Worship Series "Life"



On the Sunday before we celebrate everything scary for Halloween, we begin a new series titled *Life*. Speaking of everything scary. The debate is long over, and the consensus is that climate change is real and taking an increasing toll on our lives together. The time for Christians to be a part of the solution is long overdue.

One other scary note is that the election is coming up fast. While climate change may not be visible on the ballot, as voters, we need to know where the candidates stand on this issue and what they plan to do about it. We owe this to ourselves and to future generations.

## Book Club News



We finish our current worship series, *Miracles*, on Sunday, October 20. As our companion book, we used Andrew's book *Just Jones*, a sequel to

*The Noticer*. Feedback on his books was extremely positive.

I'm pleased to announce that *Following Jesus in a Warming World* will be the companion book for our new worship series beginning on Sunday, October 27. We'll spend the weeks leading up to Advent looking at what scripture has to say about our role in caring for our planet.

While listening to news coverage of the most recent hurricane to hit Florida's coastline, I was dismayed

by an exchange the reporter had with a local resident. When the reporter connected the size of the storm to climate change, the resident pushed back. "Not all scientists agree," she said.

While technically true, surveys of thousands of scientists determined that somewhere around 99.9% agree that climate change is real. So why do some politicians and lots of Christians believe otherwise?

What does scripture say?

## Asbury Staff

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Kevin Croom      Executive Director/CDC  
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Anthony & Jim      Ushers  
Jonathon & Terrance      Production Team  
Yasheah & Mirium      Nursery  
Christine      Cafe

## Upcoming Worship Series — “Life”

Our next series looks at our changing climate, assisted by a book written by a fellow Michigander, Kyle Meyaard-Schaap. *Following Jesus in a Warming World* will be the companion book for our new worship series beginning on Sunday, October 27th. We will spend the weeks leading up to Advent looking at what Scripture says about our role in caring for our planet.

*Then the Lord God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and guard it.*

Genesis 2:16

Millions of Christians took a stance they claimed to be pro-life. Honestly, while their position is understandable, the focus was more on decisions that shouldn't be theirs to make. More important, climate change is taking away life. Taking action to care for our planet is a pro-life position.

Here is the outline of our series and each week's reading assignment if you want to read our companion book as we progress through our series:

<u>Title</u>	<u>Sunday</u>	<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Reading</u>
Neighbors	October 27	Luke 10:25-37	Intro & Ch 1
A Love Story	November 3	John 1:1-18	Ch's 2 & 3
Good News	November 10	Luke 4:16-22	Ch's 4 & 5
Habits & Idols	November 17	Matthew 6:24-34	Ch's 6 & 7
Investing	November 24	Matthew 25:14-30	Ch's 8, 9 & 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](http://FlintAsburyChurch.org).


Pastor Tommy

Kyle Meyaard-Schaap. *Following Jesus in a Warming World: A Christian Call to Climate Action*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2023.

“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](https://flintasbury.org/feed-flint-donate)**

LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS & MORE:

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor...*

Luke 4:16-22

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

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QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS:

1. Read Luke 4:16-22. Do you see any connection between this story and your own mission and priorities? Explain.
2. Read this week's article titled Good News. How optimistic or pessimistic are you that our country will take steps to reduce our use of fossil fuels? Explain your optimism or pessimism. What can you do to bring good news to the poor?
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

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Our clients need bottled water for cooking,  
going with sack lunches, to bathe and brush  
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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](mailto:southflintsoupkitchen@gmail.com)

To donate: [www.mightycause.com/feedflint](http://www.mightycause.com/feedflint)



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More Information :



(810) 235-0016



funding@flintasbury.org

This question motivated climate activist Kyle Meyaard-Schaap to publish a book for Christians. After spending years speaking to and equipping Christians to work for climate action, he's optimistic. Younger Christians, waking up to the realities of climate change, want to help but aren't sure how. You may be in the same boat.

His book offers hope to Christians paralyzed by the scale of the crisis by helping us move from paralysis to meaningful action. *Following Jesus in a Warming World* serves as a field guide for Christian climate action. However, his book is not grounded in a sense of guilt or drudgery. Rather, we're encouraged to experience the joy of caring for creation.

Here is our schedule of chapters for this book:

October 27	Introduction & Chapter 1
November 3	Chapters 2 & 3
November 10	Chapters 4 & 5
November 17	Chapters 6 & 7
November 24	Chapters 8, 9 & Epilogue

We'll have a few books available for purchase, but both new and used copies are available through most book retailers and libraries. As of the publication of this article, the price on Amazon for a new paperback edition is \$13.49. Used copies are available for less, and the Kindle version is \$12.82.

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](http://FlintAsburyChurch.org).

Pastor Tommy

Kyle Meyaard-Schaap. *Following Jesus in a Warming World: A Christian Call to Climate Action*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2023.

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)

State officials realize that the state will need to prepare for sea levels to rise by just under two feet by 2050. This will have detrimental impacts on coastal forests and estuaries, contaminate drinking water, and greatly increase flooding.

Recent polls show that over 90% of Floridians believe climate change is real. Yet Trump easily won Florida with over 56% of the vote. This doesn't add up for me.

Coral Davenport and Lisa Friedman, in a recent New York Times article, began with this observation: "The fight against climate change has taken a body blow with the election of Donald J. Trump, who calls global warming a 'scam' and has promised to erase federal efforts to reduce the pollution that is heating the planet." Their conclusion is based in part on his promise to increase U.S. oil production beyond record levels.

During his first term in office, over 100 major environmental rules and regulations were repealed, and the U.S. withdrew from the 2015 Paris Climate Accord. What will happen next is unknown since truth is so hard to find within his hate-filled rhetoric.

Fortunately, there are economic reasons pushing back on Trump's threat to end U.S. efforts to participate in fighting climate change, according to their article. Most importantly, Republican congressional districts have benefited from around 80 percent of the money spent so far from funds to promote renewable energy. And lawmakers and business leaders want to protect that investment and the jobs they bring.

Kyle Meyaard-Schaap writes this about the disconnect seen in our priorities in this week's reading assignment from our companion book for this series, "The runaway warming of God's creation is a potent, physical, and global manifestation of the sum total of all of this brokenness. Climate change is rapidly changing the basic operating system of the world, making it fundamentally more dangerous and unpredictable."

Perhaps Floridians have the necessary resources to deal with the damage from climate change. However, they won't be able to replace the loss of life from catastrophic weather events.

And the cost of rebuilding is likely to skyrocket. Last year's price for recovering from weather-related catastrophes nationwide exceeded \$165 Billion. Our tax dollars supplement Florida's recurring recoveries from the effects of climate change.

But climate change doesn't just affect Florida. We're all negatively affected, and it's getting worse. Yet, the majority of voters see other priorities as more pressing. However, most of the world's population disagrees with our priorities.

It's estimated that nearly 80 percent of the world's population, living relatively close to the equator, feel the greatest impact of climate change. Yet the vast majority of the world's population collectively owns less than one-third of the world's wealth. This means they have the least resources to find ways to adapt to a much more dangerous climate.

Since economic development and wealth accumulation over the past centuries were proportionate to the amount of fossil fuels consumed, those most affected by climate change contributed the least to causing the problem.

The story started to sound like an insensitive joke you may have heard or told. There were three men: a Priest, a highly respected political figure, and a man you probably don't want to meet on the street. But as the story continues, it's clear just how serious Jesus is about the illustration He's making.

Who will stop to check on the man lying in the ditch? Who sees this man as a neighbor?

The Priest and politician walk on by, crossing to the other side of the street to avoid eye contact. Perhaps the injured man won't see them. And if they're seen, the observer may conclude they didn't notice a person in distress. After all, they live busy and important lives.

The third man is a Samaritan. Jesus is Jewish. So is the man who asked Him the questions, as are the vast majority, if not all, of those listening, had a long-standing feud with Samaritans. But guess who stops?

Not only that, the Samaritan goes the extra mile. Which, by the way, is a phrase from another time when Jesus gave to illustrate what it means to love others. The Samaritan tends to the injured man and takes him to a safe place to mend.

*Which one of these three acted like a neighbor toward the man attacked by the robbers?*

Luke 10:36

"Which one of these men was a neighbor to the man in need," Jesus asks. The answer is obvious. The one who didn't ignore the plight of a stranger in need.

"Go and do likewise," Jesus says. And so we should.

Our planet is in trouble after centuries of neglect and abuse. This puts us and our neighbors in jeopardy. Millions are already suffering the effects of climate change. Mostly, those who are unable to get out of whatever ditch climate change has forced them into.

Vote, not just with your allegiance to a person. Vote, not just for yourself, but vote with your neighbors and future generations in mind. Vote with your obedience to a God who loves creation enough to live among us. Let us not go back to the past. Instead, let us work together to protect the planet that God put under our care.

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](#).

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Pastor Tommy

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I continue to be dismayed by the priorities of Christians claiming to follow Christ while supporting candidates and policies inconsistent with biblical mandates.

Let me explain.

Luke tells a story about when Jesus returned to his hometown. The scene is the church in Nazareth, where Jesus grew up. Nazareth was one of those small, rural towns located in the hills. A similar town in the U.S. would likely be red on a political map.

Jesus grew up in a working-class family as the son of Joseph, the carpenter. While Mary was his biological mother, Joseph adopted Jesus after Mary became pregnant and gave birth while the couple was engaged. This adoption was likely a not-so-well-kept secret among the hometown folks.

The story is told in chapter 4 of Luke. Jesus went to Nazareth on the Sabbath and went to the synagogue as usual. When He was asked to read the scriptures, He stood up and was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Most people back then could not read. But this hometown boy, Jesus, is handed a bible to read scripture during the church service. All eyes were on Him as

the townsfolk listened to find out if this homeboy's reading ability matched the rumors about His popularity as a healer and teacher.

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor ...*

Luke 4:18

Luke tells us Jesus unrolled the scroll and read where it is written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed and announce that the time has come when the Lord will save his people."

The crowd was impressed. I imagine that His diction and pronunciation of the ancient text were flawless. It was like a book reading by a famous author, reading one of her favorite parts of her book to a grateful audience.

I like to imagine how the crowd reacted. I don't know much about what actually happened. It's easier for me to imagine a church like the one I grew up in and a Jesus more like a young person today, returning home, with her reputation preceding her arrival. You probably can imagine something similar. Perhaps a scene where a lady whispers in her husband's ear, "I heard he graduated from some Ivy-league school."

Many of us are intimidated by smart people rather than grateful for their gifts. Jesus wasn't just smart; He was wise and full of divine insights into God's priorities. This story reinforces God's love and plans for the poor.

Luke tells us that after Jesus rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. All the people in the synagogue had their eyes fixed on him. He told them, "This passage of scripture has come true today, as you heard it being read."

Jesus fulfills God's promise to reconcile all of creation. And His mission makes our priorities clear.

The author of our companion book says it this way, “If your ministry in the name of Jesus does not result in actions that are good news for the poor, you are doing it wrong. In a warming world this means that if our proclamation of the gospel does not result in actions that are good news for those suffering under the burden of an unequally changing climate—good news for those choking on pollution, losing precious farmland to rising seas, languishing under oppressive heatwaves, escaping deadly disaster and wasted homes only to run headlong into the arms of traffickers—then we, too are doing it wrong.”

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Florida Climate Center. “Climate Trends in Florida.” © Florida State University, 2024. Retrieved from: [link](#)

Coral Davenport and Lisa Friedman. “What Trump’s Victory Means for Climate Change.” © New York Times, November 7, 2024. Retrieved from: [link](#)





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