



# ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Volume 4 Issue 24

NOVEMBER 24, 2024

## Habits & Idols (Earth keepers)



It's been a warm summer and fall, with record-breaking warm temperatures recorded every month from June 2023 through this past September. It's even hotter than climate scientists expected. 2024 is on track to be the warmest year ever.

persist in much of the country.

In addition to the unusual heat wave, drought conditions

*Page 2*



## Investing (Using our talents)



We are facing an imminent crisis regarding the health of our planet and our prodigy's well-being. Experts predict that global warming will cause consequential and likely irreversible damage by 2030 if drastic emissions reductions are not implemented to limit warming to 1.5° Celsius above preindustrial levels.

I'm betting that the majority of U.S. voters ignore this warning. A few refuse to believe what science tells them. Others take the word of a rather dim-witted reality TV host over the advice of experts who actually know what they're talking about. And for others, doing something about climate change is too inconvenient.

*Page 13*

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Investing	1
Habits & Idols	1
Habits & Idols	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
Investing	13
Habits & Idols	14
Investing	15
Kroger Rewards	16
Empowering the future	17

Climate change “is no longer theoretical or a distant threat, an abstract one,” explains Aradhna Tripathi, a climate scientist from UCLA who helped author the latest national climate assessment. “It is not something that happens in the future here. It is not something only happening in places far away from where we live. All weather is now being affected.”

In an article for Vox titled “It’s not normal for the East Coast to be on fire,” Paige Vega writes, “This extreme period of dry weather is a part of the larger picture that scientists have come to expect: that our weather will become more extreme and unpredictable and that we will collectively experience more pronounced swings from incredibly dry periods to incredibly wet periods.”

Brian Fuchs, a climatologist with the National Drought Mitigation Center, explains that “when it’s 80 degrees in New York in November, trees and vegetation are still consuming water. There’s an extra period of demand on the overall water system, and that taxes water sources — lakes and streams begin to draw down and the ground holds onto less moisture.

Vegetation that grew earlier in the year begins to dry out — and fuel wildfires. It’s increasingly important for people to know where their water comes from and conserve it the best you can at any time.”

In this week’s chapters from our companion book for this series, Kyle Meyaard-Schaap offers helpful suggestions for Christians who want to contribute to addressing climate change. He begins with a familiar charge: tell your story.

That is, we can share our own stories about how climate change is affecting us and invite others to find their own ways to join the effort. However, “in order for our stories to be invitational,” explains Schaap, “we must do not three but four things: bond, connect, inspire, and invite.”

But how do we get started?

As Christians, we’re familiar with the idea of spiritual disciplines, even if we don’t call what we do disciplines. Prayer is one of the most basic spiritual disciplines.

And when spiritual disciplines become habitual, we naturally grow spiritually. We open ourselves to God’s offer of grace. Our priorities align more with God’s plans for us. We worry less, and we find joy.

Jesus encourages us to set aside worries—even worries about climate change. While this may seem contradictory, spiritual disciplines help us see and do the things we need to do rather than worry about them.

“We actually know how to solve climate change,” writes Schaap. “We have the knowledge, and we have the technology. All that’s missing is the will.”

*You cannot serve both God and money.*

Matthew 6:24

The issue comes when we make things sacred that aren’t. That is, when we take positions and make decisions contrary to the priorities God has established and called to us to honor. “You cannot serve both God and money,” Jesus tells us. It’s a matter of priorities.

IN OUR PRAYERS

Virginia Bigger  
Sylvia Pittman  
Mirium Watson

Jonathon Misner  
Terrance Williams



FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE  
HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE

Dean Lamoreaux  
Nancy Elston  
Norma Buzzard



**COMING UP THIS WEEK  
NOVEMBER 25 - DECEMBER 1**



Nov 25	Mon	2:30pm	Staff Meeting
Nov 26	Tue	10am-until gone	Produce will be available each week, along with canned goods, until further notice
		3:00pm	CDC Board Meeting
Nov 27	Wed		
Nov 28	Thu	<b>HAPPY THANKSGIVING TO ALL!!</b>	
Nov 29	Fri		
Nov 30	Sat		
Dec 1	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, *Life*, on Sunday, November 24. We used *Following Jesus in a Warming World* by Kyle Meyaard-

Schaap for this series as our companion book.

We're trying something a little different in preparation for Christmas this year. Instead of chapters to read in preparation for Sunday's message, we'll have a short reflection to read each day.

*Daring to Connect* is a daily devotional for the four weeks of Advent. Each day, we'll read a reflection that explores faith through daring stories of risk, birth, and radical trust. Dr. Week's stories can help

revitalize our connection to faith, community, and personal transformation.

The Season of Advent offers opportunities each year to consider the stories we know as part of our faith: stories of risk, birth, and trying again. Moreover, these are stories of mutual, radical trust between God and God's people, trust manifested by God sending Jesus to live among us.

In *Daring to Connect*, we will read contemporary versions of similar stories experienced by members of Pastor Dawn Darwin Weaks' congregation. A church totally focused on

## Asbury Staff

Rev. Dr. Tommy McDoniel      Pastor  
Kevin Croom      Executive Director/CDC  
Connie Portillo      Office Secretary  
Kim Sims      Finance Director  
Terry Kinze      Ops Manager/CDC  
Sylvia Pittman      Empowerment Arts  
Jim Craig      Board & Leadership Chair  
Mike Sampson      Farms Manager  
Terrance Williams      Arts Center Mgr  
Venus McBeth      South Flint Soup Kitchen

## Leadership in Worship & Service

Tony & Mirium      Welcome Team  
Cyndi      Worship Leader  
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:

*“Well done!” said his master. “Come on in and share my happiness!”*

Matthew 25:14-30

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

---

---

---

---

---

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS:

1. Read Matthew 25:14-30. What are some of the “talents” (skills, capabilities) that God gave you? Which of them bring you joy when you’re using them?
2. Read this week’s article titled Investing. What are some things you can do that might motivate others to pay attention to climate change? What can you do to influence local and federal legislatures to work towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions? What can you do differently in your own life that can help?
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](mailto:southflintsoupkitchen@gmail.com)

To donate: [www.mightycause.com/feedflint](http://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](mailto:funding@flintasbury.org)

personal transformation through mission in their community. Beginning with the first Sunday of Advent, each day's devotion includes an Advent scripture, reflection, and prayer. Candle-lighting moments for each Sunday and Christmas make *Daring to Connect* an engaging Advent experience.

Rev. Dr. Dawn Darwin Weaks received her B.A. from Baylor University, her M. Div. from Brite Divinity School at Texas Christian University, and her D. Min. from St. Paul School of Theology. Initially ordained in the Southern Baptist Church where she served as an associate minister, Pastor Weaks answered a call to become a Disciples of Christ minister in 1999. She is now the co-pastor of Connection Christian Church in Odessa, Texas, with her husband, Rev. Dr. Joe Weaks.

A frequent speaker at events nationwide, she has her writing published in various venues. Her three passions are her family, her relationship with God, and helping others hear and live out the calling God gives them.

Pastor Weaks offers this insight in her introduction:

Sometimes the weight of the world can bog us down. Everything can feel so heavy, it's hard to move. Yet Advent, this season of waiting for the coming of Christ anew, is meant to be an adventure. It's right there in the word! Within the pages of this devotional are stories of playfulness, courage, trying again, laughter, and radical trust- from God and us. After all, our story as Christians centers on God's outrageous risk of sending Jesus to us in the first place.

We'll have a few books available for purchase, but 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 \$4.99, and the Kindle version is also \$4.99.

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

Dawn Darwin Weaks. *Daring to Connect: Advent as Adventure*. Danvers, MA: Chalice Press, 2024.



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)

The World Meteorological Organization's report on the state of our climate for 2024 reported that greenhouse gases reached record levels in 2023 and continue to rise so far this year. They anticipate 2023 and 2024 will be the two warmest years on record. And 2024 is on track to be the warmest in history. Note that the past 10 years have been the warmest ten years in the 175-year observational record.

Some skeptics wonder why warmer isn't better, particularly as temperatures drop here in Michigan as winter approaches and winter sports don't move their needle.

First, while our needs, wants, and desires are important, humans habitually make choices that aren't consistent with satisfying even ourselves. We choose the short term with bad information, reducing our joy without realizing why we're not satisfied. And we guard our bad choices as though we don't have a choice. But we do have a choice.

Second, we organize into neighborhoods, churches, cities, and so on because we recognize that working together gives us a better chance of meeting our needs, wants, and desires.

This notion is validated by experience and encouraged in scripture. Humanity long ago realized that survival, comfort, and progress result from cooperation more than conflict.

In our companion book this week, we read about vocation and advocacy. While we may vaguely agree on what it means to have a vocation, Kyle Meygaard-Schaap, author of *Following Jesus in a Warming World*, turns to Christian pastor and author Frederick Buechner, who describes your vocation as that place "where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."

While poetically inspiring, more clarity is needed before we connect our individual roles in a warming world.

For some, vocation is obvious, and it's easy to see that many individuals are engaged in activities that suit them. Numerous contributors who discovered new ways to address survival, comfort, and progress made the Industrial Revolution possible. Discoveries utilizing fossil fuels, in particular, contributed substantially to meeting the needs, wants, and desires of everyone on the planet. This

contribution was significant enough that we find a direct correlation between national wealth and consumption of fossil fuels.

So why isn't a plan to substantially increase exploration the right one for the United States?

This plan, touted by our incoming administration, will financially benefit a very small number of already wealthy individuals in the short run. But it will be disastrous for all of us in the next few decades.

The good news is that cleaner energy sources are available. The challenge is to apply our talents to meet our needs, wants, and desires and greatly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This is where advocacy comes in.

The obstacles we face are systemic. Fossil fuels impact every facet of life, from how we grow food to what we choose to eat to how we get to the store to buy groceries. Addressing them will require strong, visionary leaders, investment and new legislative. Fortunately, the U.S. is still a democracy, giving each of us a voice and vote.

The exchange of goods, or barter, is a communal ritual that connects our needs with the gifts of others. Money is merely a medium of exchange that underwrites barter. The priority, however, isn't the exchange or the medium. The priority is serving God by embracing divine priorities.

We're all earth keepers, a sacred calling established by God at creation. God empowers each of us to do our part but loves us enough to allow us to make our own decisions.

In his book, Schaap provides two websites with ideas for participating in earth keeping: ***Project Drawdown*** and ***Living the Change***. Each offers ideas that you can consider turning into habits and spiritual disciplines.

In my experience, following God brings great joy, but it also brings heartbreak when we put anything else before God.

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

Paige Vega. "It's not normal for the East Coast to be on fire." © Vox, Nov 12, 2024. Retrieved from: ***link***

Gavin Schmidt and Zeke Hausfather. "We Study Climate Change. We Can't Explain What We're Seeing.." © New York Times, November 13, 2024. Retrieved from: ***link***



Advocacy involves using our collective voices to remind legislators that they work for us. We hired them with our vote, and we can fire them in the next election if they don't listen.

Our companion book describes an effective process for communicating with legislatures at the local and federal levels. In addition, Schaap offers a tutorial on advocating through writing and social media posting.

Each of us is uniquely gifted to advocate for positive change. As Christians, we're called to utilize our gifts for the common good.

Matthew tells us about a story Jesus told that is frequently connected to vocation. Like other stories told by Jesus, this one brilliantly uses metaphors, allegory, and insight. This particular story is traditionally known as the Parable of the Talents.

**"Well done! Said his master.  
"Come on in and share my  
happiness!"**

**Matthew 25-21**

While a talent, at the time Jesus told the story, was a particular amount of money, the homophone "talent" also means a capability, such as public speaking, singing, carving, cooking, and connecting. The parable describes God's expectation for utilizing the unique giftedness we each receive.

Granted, it seems like some of us are more gifted than others. The point is we're to use whatever we have to help each other without harming the planet we're expected to care for.

"There was a wealthy person," begins Jesus, "who left His servants in charge of His wealth while He was away. When He returned, He anticipated that each would invest whatever they were given in charge of, thus multiplying His wealth. Two of them did as expected, while one chose to bury what his Master gave him to invest rather than risk losing it."

"Good job," said the Master to the two who invested. "Terrible job," said the Master to the one who chose to bury His wealth."

God gives each of us capacities, gifts, and resources to make the world better. We're faithful when we invest whatever we're given in doing the vocation we're gifted for.

As we approach the end of our series, Life, we are left with the question: What is your role in following Jesus in a warming world?

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 [FlintAsburyUMC@gmail.com](mailto: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 Kyle Meyaard-Schaap. *Following Jesus in a Warming World: A Christian Call to Climate Action*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2023.



Where shopping and giving come together and you can help!

### Learn more at

KrogerCommunityRewards.com  
Or, call Kroger Customer Communications at

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



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

### 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

**ZERO HUNGER  
ZERO WASTE**

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  
Use your Kroger Plus Card and earn rewards for your favorite organization.

Where shopping and giving come together and you can help!





Scan to Donate



# EMPOWERING THE FUTURE

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

[www.asburycdc.org/info](http://www.asburycdc.org/info)

Text-to-Give 53-555 keyword = CDCYOUTH