

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Volume 5 Issue 27

JULY 27, 2025

Healing (Prayer)



Jelly Roll shares a common dilemma in one of his hit songs released two years ago, which starts out with the realization, "I only talk to God when I need a favor. And I only pray when I ain't got a prayer." His first stanza ends with, "But God, I need a favor."

Welcome to episode two of our series, *Prayer*. This week, we focus on prayers for healing. Not just healing from physical ailments, though. The stories from this week's chapter in our companion book cover a wide range of requests, from help recovering from addictions to cancer and grief.

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Rhythm (Prayer)



According to Google, "rhythm is a pattern of recurring elements in time." Rhythm is probably most often associated with music, but it also applies to language, nature, and the human body. For me, rhythm also expresses a harmony that creates a pleasing sensation that all is according to how it should be.

In the creation story, the Garden of Eden offers a glimpse of God's intentions for humankind. There was harmony between God and God's created. Unfortunately, sin entered the world. So it wasn't long before arrogance erupted into violence. The rhythm created by God was no longer harmonious.

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When God answers our requests, we celebrate. But when we feel ignored, we want to understand why. In fact, “why” might be our default question for many things we blame on God that seem pointless.

Since humans thrive on meaning, “why” is our most crucial emotional fuel. “We’re simply far more likely to accept a change,” explains Alex Lickerman, M.D. In a *Psychology Today* article, “if we understand the reason for it.” Even if we don’t benefit and it causes us harm, as long as the “why” satisfies our sense of fairness, we’re far more likely to accept change and even embrace it.

The closest example of an official formula for prayer, found in scripture, is the time when Jesus taught His disciples how to pray. The Lord’s Prayer comes out of this story.

Jesus began by addressing God with intimacy. “Our Father” conveys a more personal relationship than a transactional one. Nevertheless, Jesus didn’t shy away from requests. However, His focus was more on needs than wants.

Forgive us, as we forgive others, on the other hand, sounds like a form of bargaining. More relevant, however, is the humility conveyed in our conversations with God. We’re all in need of mercy,

but shouldn’t expect it if we’re unwilling to offer mercy to others.

Prayer, for many of us, often comes in the form of complaints and requests, which is understandable when we’re hurting. And “why” accompanies most of our complaints.

Scripture sometimes addresses why, especially in the Old Testament. But the common answer we get in most cases is often unsatisfying. The people we read about in scripture believed that a connection exists between our actions and outcomes. Regardless, however, of what people did or didn’t do, whatever happened, it was because God decided to or said so.

Perhaps the most well-known example is the story of Job, found in a book titled the same. The Book of Job is part of what is called the wisdom section of the Bible. The Book of Job is regarded as a classic of wisdom literature.

Job is the poster child for bad things happening to good people. Job was a wealthy man with a large house, a family, and many friends. He was a model husband, citizen, churchgoer, and more. Job had it together and did everything the way things are supposed to be done. But then Job lost everything, including his wealth, his family, and his health.

His good fortune symbolizes what most of us think life should be like for those of us who play by the rules. Good people come out on top, and bad people don’t. Except life doesn’t seem to work that way, and the number of exceptions we’re experiencing recently is off the hook.

Job’s fortunes turn to crap, and he loses everything. His estate burns down, he loses his family, and Job develops a horrible skin disease. He becomes homeless and lives outside the town with the other lepers.

Not all of Job’s friends abandoned him. But when they went to visit him, they lectured Job on the reality that surely his fate was because of something he had done. According to Job’s friends, while everyone thought that Job was a model citizen, they no longer believed this was the case. “You need to confess your failures to God and ask for mercy,” his friends advised him.

However, while Job also believed that God rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked, Job lived his life in a manner befitting his character. He was a believer who lived according to the rules. So Job took his complaints to God. Job believed it was God who had to answer for his plight, and he demanded to know why this was happening to him.



IN OUR PRAYERS

Virginia Bigger	Fred Hans
Sylvia Pittman	Jonathon Misner
Miriam Watson	Terrance Williams


FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE
HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE

Dean Lamoreaux	Norma Buzzard
Nancy Elston	

COMING UP THIS WEEK: JULY 28—AUGUST 3

July 28	Mon	11am-12N	Angel Closet (at South Flint Soup Kitchen)
July 29	Tue	9am-until gone	Produce will be available each week, along with canned goods, until further notice
		11am-12N	Angel Closet
July 30	Wed	11am-12N	Angel Closet
July 31	Thu	11am-12N	Angel Closet
Aug 1	Fri	11am-12N	Angel Closet
Aug 2	Sat		
Aug 3	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 "Prayer"

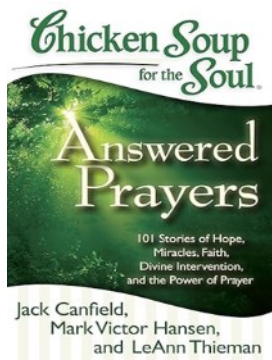


In our last worship series, *Heaven*, we gave thought to what heaven might be like. And we considered the plausibility of someone in heaven speaking to the living. Is it possible? It would be a miracle if it were to happen.

In this series, *Prayer*, we give thought to words, mostly going the other direction. We talk to God, but we also hope to hear back. If not audibly, we hope to see evidence that our prayers were heard. Well, at least some of them once in a while.

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Book Club News



There are hundreds of books under the umbrella title *Chicken Soup for the Soul*. So many that this title is now its own publishing

company. Out of the hundreds of options, we've chosen one special

edition of our new series, *Prayer*.

According to their website, motivational speakers Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen started in 1993 with the idea that people could help each other by sharing stories. The two had shared stories told to them over the years, and their audiences kept asking if any of the stories had ever been published.

But when the two tried to get their first book published, they were turned down by every single big publisher. Fortunately, the book was published by a small health and wellness publisher in Florida named HCI. After the owner, Peter Vegso, read some of the stories, he decided to give the book a chance.

Since then, more than 100 million copies have been sold in the U.S. and Canada, 400 titles, and translations into more than 40 languages. Their goal is to spread happiness, inspiration, hope, and wellness across the globe, "changing your world one story at a time."®

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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
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Leadership in Worship & Service

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

Upcoming Worship Series — “Prayer”

The gospels share that Jesus often prayed, and Matthew and Luke include stories about Jesus teaching His disciples how to pray. This is our source for that which we call the Lord's Prayer.

We also learn about the importance of humility as we pray. After all, we are dependent on God for all that we have. Fortunately, God showers us with love and good things. Unfortunately, humankind is more often out of rhythm with God's intention. Therefore, God's plans are thwarted by selfishness, cruelty, and arrogance.

But we continue to pray not just for ourselves, but for others. God hears our prayers and God acts for our good.

For motivation and some content, we'll utilize a book of stories from people who share their experiences with prayer. Our companion book is part of the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* series. You can read more about this book in the Book Club article, which includes a reading schedule.

Here is the outline of our series:

<u>Episode</u>	<u>Sundays</u>	<u>Title</u>
One	July 20	Rhythm
Two	July 27	Healing
Three	August 3	Asking
Four	August 10	Grateful
Five	August 31	Trust
Six	September 7	Angels

Please join us each Sunday at 10:30 a.m. We share our weekly episodes on [Facebook](#) and our [YouTube channel](#), and go live at 10:30 a.m. You can find these links and more information about us, or join our live broadcast on our [website, FlintAsburyChurch.org](#).

Pastor Tommy

Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, LeAnn Thieman. *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Answered Prayers: 101 Stories of Hope, Miracles, Faith, Divine Intervention, and the Power of Prayer*.
Cos Cob, CT: Chicken Soup for the Soul, 2011.


“Feed Flint”

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“Feed Flint”

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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:

Were you there when I made the world? If you know so much, tell me about it.

Job 38:1-8

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS:

1. Read Job 38:1-8. What experiences have you had taking your complaints to God? Did you receive a response? How did you feel afterwards?
2. Read the article in this week's Circuit Rider titled Healing. What healing requests have you made to God? Have you received a response to your prayers, or are you still waiting? How does why enter into your attitude towards change?
3. How can your group members help you be more receptive to hearing and understanding the Word of God this week? Pray for one another to be blessed by the Holy Spirit with greater courage.



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More Information :



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Miracles happen all the time and became a major theme from our last series. The stories in our companion book for the new series of answered prayers are sure to leave you in awe. We hope these stories will not only inspire you but also strengthen your faith and hope.

These stories offer testimony that God is actively involved in our lives. And that God hears our heartfelt hopes and needs. The stories include miraculous true accounts of healing, divine appointments, angels among us, signs from above, timely gifts, and other answered prayers.

Since each story exists independently of the others, you can choose to read all of them or just a few. Perhaps read one story each day as part of a daily devotional routine. For our series, we'll select one or two stories from a specific chapter in case you want to read ahead.

If you choose to follow along, I suggest using the following schedule:

<u>Sunday's</u>	<u>Pages</u>	<u>Chapters</u>
July 20	4 - 45	One
July 27	116 - 153	Four
August 3	182 - 217	Six
August 10,	252 -293	Eight
August 31	294 - 327	Nine
September 7	328 - 351	Ten

We'll have a few books available for purchase. New copies of the paperback edition are available through Amazon for \$11.60, and used copies in good condition are usually under \$6, including shipping. This book may also be available at the local library.

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

Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, LeAnn Thieman. *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Answered Prayers: 101 Stories of Hope, Miracles, Faith, Divine Intervention, and the Power of Prayer*. Cos Cob, CT: *Chicken Soup for the Soul*, 2011.

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

After several speeches by Job to provoke God to explain why so many bad things had happened to him, God responds. "Who are you to question my wisdom with your ignorant, empty words?" God began (Job 38:1-2).

Job got his response, but it wasn't what he expected. For one, God didn't say, "Remember that time when you did this or you failed to do that?" What Job did or didn't do never comes up.

Instead, God speaks to Job like a Father about to give His son a good talking to. "Stand up straight and answer the questions I ask you!" God continues. (Job 38:3).

What questions do you think the Creator of the Universe might ask Job? What questions does God ask you and me when we're angry and expecting God to explain something terrible that happened?

"Were you there when I made the world?" God begins by reminding Job who he is talking to. "If you know so much, tell me about it. Who decided how large it would be? Who stretched the measuring line over it? Do you know all the answers?" (Job 38:4-5).

Among other infractions of holy etiquette, it appears that Job was missing the awe that should come naturally whenever we speak to God. And he made an erroneous assumption. Job believed that our blessings are rewards for the good things we do, and whenever bad things happen, it is a punishment for the bad.

Were you there when I made the world? If you know so much, tell me about it.

Job 38:1-8

And Job was learning, along with the rest of us, that the universe doesn't revolve around any one of us. Nor does it revolve around people who do everything right or people who don't. Instead, the universe was architected out of tremendous, creative power that is beyond our comprehension.

Fortunately, the world was created by a loving God who genuinely takes the time to listen and respond to each of us, regardless of merit, credentials, or our ability to speak or hear. And often, God needs to remind us that His wisdom is far beyond our understanding. However, when in doubt, go to what Jesus had to say and do likewise.

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.

This is a reminder that we publish a weekly newsletter called the Circuit Rider. You can request this publication by email by sending 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 Connect - choose [Newsletters](#).

Pastor Tommy

Our series was inspired by Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, LeAnn Thieman.

Chicken Soup for the Soul: Answered Prayers: 101 Stories of Hope, Miracles, Faith, Divine Intervention, and the Power of Prayer. Cos Cob, CT: Chicken Soup for the Soul, 2011.

Alex Lickerman, M.D. Reviewed by Jessica Schrader. "Why We Need to Know Why." © Psychology Today, November 15, 2010. Retrieved from: [link](#)

You and I can feel when the rhythm is off, even if we can't put a name to it. We sense that there's disharmony in our nation as the U.S. drifts further from its democratic roots, grounded in mutual love for God, one another, and our planet. Our leadership is quickly moving toward policies that favor the wealthy and use cruelty as a main tool.

We're a bit like a wall that isn't quite plumb. It's clear that something isn't right, and it's not safe.

The Prophet Amos had a vision in which he saw God standing beside a wall. "Amos, what do you see?" God asked the prophet. "A plumb line," answered Amos. God wasn't happy with the rhythm.

Nicolas Iglesias Schneider, in a reflection on Amos's visions, reminds us that Amos's visions remain relevant today as we confront ecological crises and deep-seated social injustices. Millions of people are exploited, displaced, and unable to live with dignity. Nicolas, a social worker for The Methodist Church in Uruguay, concludes, "Amos's world and our world are both systems built not on love but on calculating the usefulness of others and the planet to serve oneself."

As our rhythms crumble, so does our sense of well-being. We often drift aimlessly. And before long, we feel lost. But we're not lost, we're just out of rhythm or at least the world around us seems to be.

Luke tells us that one day, when some Pharisees and the teachers of the Law started grumbling about the way Jesus would eat with people they considered to be bad company, Jesus shared stories that were sure to cause reflection.

It was common for Jesus to tell relatable stories about ordinary people and circumstances. We often refer to His stories as parables because His stories offered illustrations into the heart of God. His stories continue to impact lives centuries later, even though the specific stories are less relatable at first glance.

One of His parables came up in the first chapter of our companion book for this series. A co-worker, Edie, handed a manila envelope to Lucille as the story began. One page of the envelope's contents was immediately recognizable. It was a copy of the official adoption certificate for her son, Ron. "Who are you?" she asked her co-worker.

Have you ever experienced a coincidence that felt less like

chance and more like a well-orchestrated plan?

Lucille began working for Trinity Broadcasting Network three months earlier, answering the phone and praying for callers. She had no idea that she was working next to her son's biological sister. What are the chances?

She and her brothers had tried unsuccessfully for ten years to get access to the sealed records. Edie decided to try one more time and was able to convince a person working at the children's home to allow her to copy the adoption records.

Lucille's adopted son, Ron, grew up without knowing his biological family. His parents tried their best to help him find them, but to no avail. Ron felt like he was out of rhythm. However, when he finally met his long-lost family, he discovered that some of them lived nearby.

When his sister, Edie, arrived at their home, she shared the Parable of the Lost Coin with her brother's adopted family before revealing their connection to her brother. Like the woman in the parable, Edie searched for her brother, who had been lost from her family.

Luke tells that Jesus told the parable in response to criticism levied against Him for associating with people whom His listeners condemned. Jesus didn't try to defend their actions, nor did he condemn or even disagree with His critics. Jesus told stories.

"Suppose you had 100 sheep and one of them was missing. A woman had ten coins and misplaced one." Surely, His listeners could identify with one or both of these stories. "You would go and search for the lost sheep, wouldn't you? The woman celebrated finding her lost coin." Of course, she did.

Jesus drew a parallel between searching for something of value that is lost and how God doesn't give up on any of us when we're lost. Of course, the word "lost" can describe a wide range of possibilities. The word is the past participle of the word "lose."

But if we lose our job or a friend, we know where the job is or isn't. We know if our friend died or moved away, at least in most cases. However, if we lose our keys, we may have clues like where and when we last saw them, but if we know where they are, they're not lost.

Similarly, the lost Jesus is referring to a relatively wide range of possibilities. Lost persons don't necessarily know they're lost. For example, I suspect Jesus could see that His critics were a bit lost. Oh, they thought they knew exactly where they were. Yet, they didn't seem to know who was speaking to them or whom they were complaining about.

Jesus searches for the lost until they are found. God never gives up on any of us, even when we have given up on God. Eventually, we are found, and if we are fortunate enough to be discovered while still alive on this planet, we find joy in knowing who we are and whose we are.

Suppose a woman who has ten silver coins loses one of them. What does she do? In the same way, the angels of God rejoice over one sinner who repents.

Luke 15:8-10

Once we allow Jesus to find us, our rhythm is restored. We can feel the harmony even when the world around us is off-key. Poet David Wagoner, in his poem *Lost*, advises, "Stand still. The trees ahead and bushes beside you are not lost. Wherever you are is called Here."

You are not lost, but you could be a bit off rhythm.

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Pastor Tommy

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Nicolas Iglesias Schneider. "The Justice of Reconciliation." *The Upper Room Disciplines 2025*. Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2025, Pg 374.

David Wagoner. *Traveling Light: Collected and New Poems*. © 1999 by David Wagoner.

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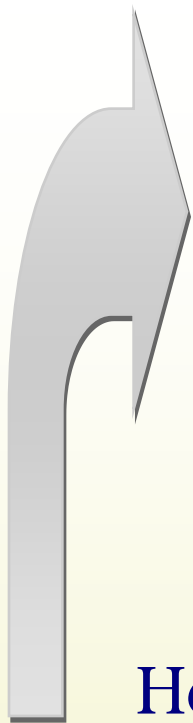


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