

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Volume 5 Issue 2

NOVEMBER 2, 2025

Memory (Jesus was woke)



Cyndi and I are building a log home. As each log was placed during the first stage, I picture an old story coming to life through the grain—an ancient, steady, and deeply human tale. There's a sense of nostalgia that makes you imagine pioneers carving out a life in the wilderness, gathered around a fire while snow falls softly outside.

It's a beautiful picture. But as I learned more about the origins of log homes, I've realized that what we call nostalgia often smooths over the rough edges of memory.

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DON'T FORGET TO
CHANGE YOUR CLOCKS
ONE HOUR BACK ON
NOVEMBER 1- BEFORE
GOING TO BED...

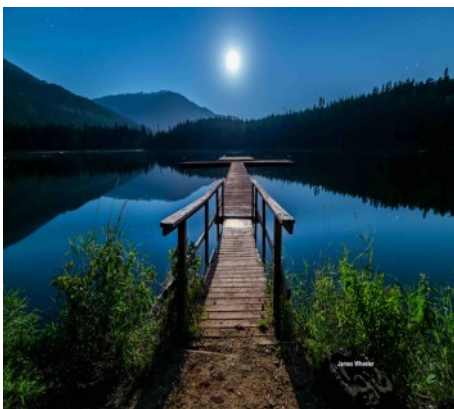


DONATE

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Wonder (Jesus was woke)



Senator Elizabeth Warren, commenting on a photo showing roof tiles and windowpanes falling from the East Wing of the White House, said it captures our current president in a single image. "Illegal, destructive, and not helping you."

Journalist Jess Bidgood, in a New York Times article, writes, "Images of the demolition,

which began on Monday, have rocketed around the globe, swiftly becoming political fodder and a perfect Rorschach test for a deeply polarizing presidency."

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The first log homes were not built for charm. They were born out of necessity — crafted by settlers who had more courage than comfort, more endurance than luxury. In the 1600s, Swedish and Finnish immigrants brought this building tradition to North America, using what the land gave them: timber, tools, and time. The thick logs kept out the cold and stood against the wind, a simple technology of survival. But these homes also trapped smoke, leaked heat, and demanded endless maintenance. Life in them was rough, unpredictable, and often lonely.

Nostalgia remembers the hearth; memory recalls the hardship.

And yet, there's something redemptive about remembering both the hearth and the hardship. Today's log homes are far different from those early structures — not because we've abandoned the past, but because we've learned from it. Modern builders have kept the wisdom of the old ways — the strength, sustainability, and simplicity — while applying what time and experience have taught us: better materials, stronger seals, safer designs. That's what true memory does. It preserves what matters and redeems what was broken. It honors the past not by romanticizing it, but by letting it teach us how to live more faithfully in the present.

On the other hand, there's a strange comfort in forgetting. Forgetting helps us move past what hurts, gloss over what shames us, and escape what demands change. But the comfort is shallow and temporary. When we forget our history, our pain, and our promises, we lose something sacred. We lose awareness. We lose compassion. We lose the thread that ties us to one another and to God's redemptive work.

Nostalgia doesn't respect memory, but it still draws us in, similar to forgetting but potentially more damaging. Nostalgia creates a false story that only shows the good parts of the past, hiding the failures—though not always consciously.

We live in a culture of amnesia. Our news cycles are shorter than ever. Yesterday's outrage vanishes by morning. And we live in an age where nostalgia has become a sales tactic, a political slogan, and a weapon. An alluring story we tell ourselves about a past that feels safer, cleaner, simpler.

But nostalgia, unlike true memory, is not faithful to truth. It is selective, cosmetic, and seductive. It turns history into a lullaby that keeps us asleep. Memory, by contrast, keeps us awake. It demands honesty. It holds both the beauty and the pain of what was so that we can be alert to what is—and faithful to what can be.

Political scholar Tinatin Japaridze, writing for the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs, compares and contrasts the current leaders of the U.S. and Russia, two of the most powerful global figures, and how they use nostalgia to gain support. She warns that instead of presenting a realistic, hopeful future, "the powerful narratives crafted by political 'nostalgists' can hinder society's ability to envision a future built on present realities."

Our current administration is recycling nostalgia, labeling it as "make America great again," and rewriting parts of our shared history that remind us why we should steer clear of the direction they want to take us. The very idea behind the movement taps into a longing for a supposed era of American "greatness" in the "good old days," sparking pride and desire while hiding realities such as racial injustice, inequality, and environmental consciousness.

Japaridze goes on to note that "the belief that the past was superior to the present and that the only path forward is to revert to earlier times poses a tangible risk of national decline."

Her words expose more than political rhetoric; they diagnose a spiritual illness. When people lose the courage to face the present, they take refuge in a past that never was. Nostalgia becomes a

IN OUR PRAYERS

Virginia Bigger
 Sylvia Pittman
 Mirium Watson
 Brian DuFour

Fred Hahns
 Jonathon Misner
 Terrance Williams
 Richard Oram

FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE
 HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE

Dean Lamoreaux Norma Buzzard
 Nancy Elston

COMING UP THIS WEEK: NOVEMBER 2—9

Nov 3 Mon (We apologize for the convenience but Angel Closet at SFSK is closed at the present time. I will post when we reopen it back up.)

Nov 4 Tue 9am-until gone Produce will be available each week, along with canned goods, until further notice

12Noon-6pm Taco Tuesday at Flint Asbury UMC
 (see flyer on pg. 20)

Nov 5 Wed

Nov 6 Thu

Nov 7 Fri

Nov 8 Sat

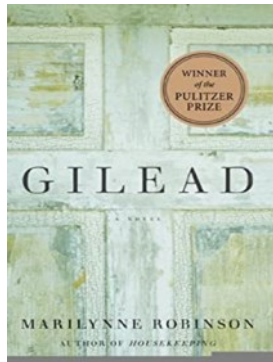
Nov 9 Sun 10:30am New Beginnings
 Contemporary Worship

(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 "Woke"



Book Club News



The companion book for our next series, "Jesus was woke," was written by Marilynne Robinson. She won a Pulitzer Prize

for her bestselling novel, *Gilead*, which also became a selection for Oprah's Book Club.

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
Israel Unger (Izzy)	Business Service Mgr
Terrance Williams	Arts Center Mgr
	South Flint Soup Kitchen

A movement is underway to change both the meaning and original intent of the word "woke." The word first appeared in African American communities in the 1940s. And through the 1960s, to "stay woke" meant to be aware of racial injustice and the need to be alert to systemic racism or hidden prejudice.

The term was revived through the Black Lives Matter movement and came to describe people who are conscious of social inequalities. Not only racism, but also sexism, homophobia, and other injustices. Being "woke" meant being informed and active in seeking fairness.

The word was adopted and often mocked by critics who saw "wokeness" as excessive political correctness, moral posturing, or ideological conformity. For some, "woke" became shorthand for progressive activism that had gone too far. The administration now labels any language or policy that encourages diversity, equity, and inclusion as "woke." Page 5

Robinson has honorary degrees from Brown University, the University of the South, Holy Cross, Notre Dame, Amherst, Skidmore, and Oxford University. She was also elected a fellow of Mansfield College, Oxford University.

Gilead takes the form of a long letter written by Reverend John Ames, a 76-year-old Congregationalist

minister, to his seven-year-old son. Ames is dying of heart disease, and he wants to leave behind a written record of his life, faith, struggles, and hopes for the boy who will grow up without him.

Through these letters, Ames tells the story of three generations of preachers in his family. His fiery abolitionist grandfather, his pacifist father, and himself. He recalls the moral and spiritual tensions that shaped their lives, particularly around questions of justice, forgiveness, and grace.

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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 — “Woke”

So today, “woke” is a contested word, which still means being aware and caring about justice for all of us. But to the radical right, “woke” means being overly sensitive or performative about social issues.

Beginning on the last Sunday in October, we’ll start a new series, titled “Jesus Was Woke.” This 5-Week spiritual journey was inspired by the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *Gilead*, by Marilynne Robinson. Together, we’ll explore what it truly means to be awake—to live with eyes open to the wonder, memory, grace, belonging, and love that form the heart of the gospel.

To help guide us, we’ll be reading Marilynne Robinson’s novel as background. You can find a reading schedule in the Book Club article.

The story unfolds as the aging Rev. John Ames writes a letter to his young son, reflecting on his long life, his faith, and the light of grace that shines even through sorrow. It’s a quiet, deeply spiritual novel—filled with beauty, forgiveness, and the struggle to love well in a complicated world.

Psalm 8 reminds us that God created us, cares for us, and put us in charge of caring for our planet.

*What are human beings,
that you think of them, mere
mortals, that you care for
them? Psalm 8*

Each week, our worship, scripture readings, and reflections will connect with a section of the novel. A companion devotional guide will be available to help you follow along, offering weekly scripture, insights from *Gilead*, and reflection questions for personal or group use.

This series invites you to slow down, listen deeply, and rediscover what it means to live awake—to notice the sacred in the ordinary, to remember how God has carried us, to extend grace where it’s hardest, to belong with humility, and to love as Jesus loved.

Whether you read along with the novel or simply join us in worship each week, this is a season to open our hearts and wake up to the living presence of God among us.

Here is the outline of our series:

<u>Episode</u>	<u>Sundays</u>	<u>Theme & Title</u>
One	Oct 26	Wonder - Awake to God’s presence
Two	Nov 2	Memory - Awake to our stories
Three	Nov 9	Grace - Awake to mercy
Four	Nov 16	Belonging - Awake to community
Five	Nov 23	Love - Awake to the heart of Jesus

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](http://www.FlintAsburyChurch.org).

Pastor Tommy

Marilynne Robinson. *Gilead*. NY: Picador, 2004.

“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:

Then Jesus took a piece of bread, gave thanks to God, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in memory of me.

Luke 22:14-22

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS:

1. Read Luke 22:14-22. You should read this entire chapter to gain enough context to realize the significance of this week's text. We have an open table at Asbury Church—everyone is welcome to receive Communion. What does this practice mean for you?
2. Read the article in this week's Circuit Rider titled Memory. This week, take time to remember. Not just the pleasant parts of your story, but the parts that still ache. Sit with them. Name them before God. Ask what they might still be teaching you about love, humility, or justice.
3. Reach out to someone who carries a different story — a neighbor, a coworker, an elder in your family — and listen without defending or correcting. Let their story expand your own. 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.



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

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

<u>Sunday's</u>	<u>Pages</u>	<u>Themes</u>
October 26	1 - 60	Light
November 2	61 - 120	Memory
November 9	121 - 180	Grace
November 16	181 - 230	Belonging
November 23	231 - 247	Love

A word of caution on the above schedule. There have been several publications of this book with slightly different pagination, and therefore a different total number of pages. Use the above as a guide and stop on an obvious division near the ending page.

I invite you to take your *Gilead* experience deeper with our weekly devotional guide. Each week pairs passages from the novel with Scripture, reflection questions, and prayer prompts. Our goal is to help you notice the overlooked, reflect on God's presence, and live fully awake in your daily life. The guide can be used for personal study or small-group discussion.

We'll have a few used books available for purchase for \$6 or new for \$10. Additional new copies of the paperback edition are available through Amazon for \$10.35, and used copies in good condition start at \$8.15. This book may also be available at the local library. Note that the weekly reading guide uses a paperback edition with no chapter divisions and 147 pages.

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

Marilynne Robinson. *Gilead*. NY: Picador, 2004.

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

kind of idolatry—an emotional Egypt we keep wandering back toward. We then find ourselves retreating to the comforting, yet often illusory, embrace of a past that never truly existed and the darkness of an uncertain future.

Families fracture under the weight of unspoken stories. Communities forget the shoulders they stand on. Even churches can be tempted to skip over the more difficult parts of our story, including the wounds, the injustices, and the failures of courage. Forgetting feels easier than facing the discomfort of memory. But when we forget, we fall asleep to the truth of who we are.

Her warning is prophetic, and it echoes one of Scripture's oldest commands: "Remember the long way that the Lord your God has led you..." (Deuteronomy 8:2). In this ancient directive, remembering is not a sentimental exercise—it is a divine mandate. Don't just remember the victories, but also remember the hunger, the mistakes, the moments when faith nearly failed. God wanted His people to remember the whole journey — because in their remembering, they would stay humble, grateful, and faithful

As the Israelites faced the harsh realities of their escape from captivity, nostalgia kept them chained to Egypt. But God urged them to remember that they were once slaves, freed by

God's grace and led through the hardships to a promised land. But nostalgia crept in even then. They longed for Egypt — not the chains, not the cruelty, but the taste of meat and onions by the fire. They remembered comfort and forgot captivity. They wanted to go back, not forward. Nostalgia made them forget who they were and whose they were.

To remember is to resist the falsehood of nostalgia. To remember is to honor both the pain and the promise that shape us. Forgetting, by contrast, is how injustice repeats itself, how fear finds its footing again.

In this week's pages from our companion book, *Gilead*, Reverend Ames wrestles with his family's divided legacy. A grandfather who carried a gun for abolition and a father who renounced violence altogether. Between them stands Ames, trying to reconcile zeal and peace, justice and grace. His story mirrors ours: the tension between what we inherit and what we choose.

Each of us carries a story we would rather not remember — personal, familial, or cultural. Yet memory, when held in the light of God's mercy, becomes sacred ground for transformation.

Memory is a part being woke and a biblical mandate. The command to remember runs like a golden thread through the story of God's people. Biblical

remembrance is never passive. It's not nostalgia—it's an act of faith. To remember is to bring God's past faithfulness into the present moment. It's how the people of God stay rooted when everything else feels transient and loud.

If Jesus were to speak directly to our age of distraction, perhaps he would say: "Stay awake to the story that made you. Stay awake to the pain you'd rather not see. Stay awake to the love that refuses to die." That's what remembrance looks like in a restless world—it's holy attentiveness.

Imagine what would happen if we truly practiced remembrance as a community of faith. If we remembered the courage of those who fought for freedom and justice, we might find new strength to confront racism and poverty today. If we remembered our own seasons of doubt, we might offer gentler grace to those still searching. If we remembered what it felt like to be forgiven, we might become less judgmental and more merciful.

Memory transforms us because it roots us in truth — and truth, as Jesus said, sets us free. When a people forget their story, they lose their soul. But when we remember in the light of Christ, our stories become part of God's ongoing redemption.

Will the madness and the incompetent dismantling of our national decency ever end? Each day seems to bring new horrors and further erosion of our image as a nation that welcomes and cares for the most vulnerable.

It's exhausting, and we seem to be living in an age of exhaustion. Our devices keep us connected, but not always alive. We scroll through headlines about wars, climate crises, political hatred, and the erosion of trust. We are constantly aware—but rarely amazed. Our hearts have traded wonder for worry.

Sadly, there is much to fret over. The current administration's dismantling of the federal government, our economy, global trust, and morality has given the vast majority of Americans a lot to worry about.

Weariness is not confined to one group, but crosses political lines. There is grave concern even in areas that voted overwhelmingly for our current president. Farmers—the backbone of rural America—are sounding the alarm. For example, in the State of Arkansas, we stand to lose 25-40% of farms this year. Nationwide, farm-state representatives are pleading for help to avoid a financial calamity.

Just as we watch a wrecking ball rip apart a large section of the White House, every community is feeling the weight of brokenness. Even those who believed the promise of economic revival are grappling with uncertainty. The need for hope, awe, and transcendence is real for all of us.

To help us get through the darkest period in our nation's history, we need to recover wonder and a sense of God's presence. We need to see again that even our small lives shimmer with divine glory.

Psalm 8 begins and ends with the same cry: "O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!" Between these verses lies a tension we all need to feel. The vastness of creation and the smallness of humanity.

The writer is astonished.

"When I look at the sky, which you have made, at the moon and the stars, which you set in their places, what are human beings, that you think of them; mere mortals, that you care for them?" He sees the galaxies and can hardly comprehend that the Creator of it all not only notices us but also cares for us and gives us the tremendous responsibility of taking care of it.

When I look at the sky, which you have made, at the moon and the stars, which You set in their places, what are human beings, that You think of them; mere mortals, that You care for them?

Psalm 8

Psalm 8 invites us to wake up. It assures us that we are not forgotten. It reminds us that creation is purposeful, not random. And it confirms that our smallness does not mean we are insignificant. While the world tell us to measure

worth by power, achievement, or visibility, scripture says we are made a little lower than the angels. In other words, we matter because God has marked us with divine fingerprints. This is what our companion book, *Gilead*, reveals as well. John Ames observes an ordinary town, an ordinary life, and finds the extraordinary presence of God within it. His reflections transform the mundane—dust motes in the morning sun—into moments of revelation.

Ames, an elderly Congregationalist pastor in the small town of Gilead, Iowa, writes a lengthy letter to his young son, whom he knows he will not live to see grow up. As he writes, Ames reflects on the beauty and delicacy of life, and the wonder that shines through even in the everyday. Confronted with mortality, he writes to hold onto wonder and begins his letter by contemplating the fleeting nature of life and the sacredness of ordinary things—the sunlight on water, children's laughter, and the stillness of prayer.

He recounts stories from his childhood and his ancestors. He recalls his fiery abolitionist grandfather and his pacifist father. He ponders how divine grace threads through the generations.

Throughout these pages, Ames reflects on simple moments: the sunlight illuminating a child's hair, his son at play, and the peaceful rhythm of small-town life. His voice weaves together theology, memory, and awe. He marvels at the beauty of creation and mourns its fleeting nature. His reflections echo Psalm 8, standing before the vastness of creation, feeling small yet deeply loved.

Our own culture has forgotten that sacred pause. We've become cynical, dismissive, and quick to explain everything. But slow to be astonished by anything. Yet without wonder, our souls shrink. We forget who we are and whose world this is.

In a time when most of us feel overwhelmed by anxiety, political division, and cynicism, *Gilead* reminds us that seeing the world with wonder is a spiritual act — a way of reclaiming hope. Psalm 8 and Ames's reflections both declare that awe is the foundation of faith. When we pause long enough to recognize beauty — even in ordinary life — we rediscover that we are held in divine care.

Wonder transforms how we see ourselves, others, and creation. It breaks the illusion of control and replaces it with gratitude. Let us choose to see the world again — to let light, laughter, and memory become sacred.

After all, faith begins in wonder. If we allow Psalm 8 and the spirit of Gilead to reframe our seeing, the world opens up again. Our work, our relationships, even our grief become holy ground. We start small, but we begin with divine insight.

Imagine a church—and a world—where people are not dulled by despair but stirred by awe, where we pause to notice a child's laughter, the sound of rain, the persistence of kindness. Where we no longer see creation as a backdrop but as a living testimony to the Creator.

That kind of seeing heals us. It restores our weary hearts. It allows peace to enter where anxiety once lived.

Wonder doesn't ignore pain—it transforms how we see it. As Ames says in *Gilead*, "There are a thousand thousand reasons to live this life, every one of them sufficient." When we live with that posture, heaven begins to break into the ordinary.

This week, pause once a day to look around with gratitude.

Try reading Psalm 8 aloud so as to remind yourself who made you and who holds the world. Write down one thing that made you feel wonder, no matter how small. And let these small acts reopen your eyes to God's presence. Because when we see rightly, we live rightly.

Wonder is not childish—it is holy. It brings our faith from stale duty back to joyful discovery. And in a world weary of cynicism, the Church's greatest witness may not be its arguments but its awe.

In every sunrise, in every breath, in every unnoticed act of grace—God is waiting to astonish us again. Faith begins in wonder!

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 companion book for this series is Marilynne Robinson. *Gilead*. NY: Picador, 2004.

Jess Bidgood. "The White House Wrecking Ball." © New York Times, Oct. 22, 2025. Retrieved from: [link](#)

Worth Sparkman. "Arkansas farmers express alarm about their future at hearing." © Axion NW Arkansas, Sep 25, 2025. Retrieved from: [link](#)

This week, take time to remember. Not just the pleasant parts of your story, but the parts that still ache. Sit with them. Name them before God. Ask what they might still be teaching you about love, humility, or justice. Reach out to someone who carries a different story — a neighbor, a coworker, an elder in your family — and listen without defending or correcting. Let their story expand your own.

Because memory keeps us awake — awake to compassion, awake to gratitude, awake to God's continuing work, maybe that's what it means, in the truest sense, to say that Jesus was woke: He remembered — every name, every wound, every promise — and He refused to fall asleep to the suffering or beauty of this world. There's a kind of remembering that heals, and there's a kind that harms. And it's easy to confuse the two.

Then Jesus took a piece of bread, gave thanks to God, broke it, and gave it to them, saying "This is my body; which is given for you. Do this in memory of me."

Luke 22: 14-22

When God calls us to remember, it is not to make us sentimental — it is to make us awake. Memory, in Scripture, is not a wistful glance backward; it is a moral act that ties our past to our present calling. But nostalgia — that longing for "the good old days" — is a counterfeit memory. It selects only the parts of the past that comfort us, sweeping pain and failure out of sight. It feels harmless, but it quietly blinds us to truth.

In our time, nostalgia has become one of the most dangerous spiritual temptations — not just personally, but nationally. We've seen it packaged and sold in slogans that promise to "make things great again," while rewriting or erasing the parts of history that challenge our pride. Nostalgia is memory without repentance.

When we sanitize the past, we risk repeating it. The Bible isn't a collection of feel-good stories — it's a record of human drama lived out before a faithful God. Scripture remembers the betrayals, the failures, the regrets — not to shame us, but to keep us awake to the truth that grace has always been greater than our forgetfulness.

Memory keeps us awake. Nostalgia puts us to sleep.

The Table of Memory

Centuries after God led the Israelites out of slavery, Jesus gathered his disciples for what would be His final meal with them before He was arrested and executed. Luke tells us Jesus took a piece of bread, gave thanks to God, broke it, and gave it to His friends, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in memory of me."

This was not a call to mere ritual — it was a command to stay awake. To remember who Jesus was, what He did, and why it mattered. And in that room sat Judas — a living reminder that betrayal, greed, and human frailty are part of the story too. Although Jesus knew that Judas would later betray Him, He did not push Judas out of the circle. Jesus saw and acknowledged Judas. Jesus remembered him.

Because remembering means facing the full truth of our story — not editing out the parts that make us uncomfortable.

At the Communion table, we are invited to the same act of sacred remembering. We hold the bread and the cup, and we hold our stories — the parts we're proud of, and the parts we'd rather forget. Christ gathers them all, redeems them all, and says, "Do this in remembrance of Me."

It's not nostalgia for a simpler faith. It's a radical act of honesty. It's how we stay awake to love in a world that keeps falling asleep to pain.

When Nations Fall Asleep

Since the time of Luke, whole societies have fallen captive to nostalgia — longing for imagined golden ages while ignoring the suffering those eras required. In every generation, nostalgia has been used to justify inequality, to excuse authoritarianism, and to disguise fear as patriotism.

When leaders promise to "restore" greatness without reckoning with the sins that corrupted it, they invite people to worship an illusion. Nostalgia thrives where memory has been silenced.

Faith, however, demands remembering. Real remembering. The kind that humbles nations and heals people. The kind that teaches us not to repeat Egypt, even when the wilderness feels hard.

Memory keeps us awake!

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 companion book for this series is Marilynne Robinson. Gilead. NY: Picador, 2004.

Tinatin Japaridze. *"Erase & Rewind: The Politics of Nostalgia & its Ethical Implications."* © Carnegie Council for Ethics, April 23, 2025. Retrieved from: [link](#)



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**Where shopping and giving
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**1-800-KROGERS, (576-4377)
OPTION #3**



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

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**The Kroger
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ZERO
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Soup Kitchen to your
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**We're giving
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Use your Kroger Plus Card
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come together and you can help!**



WE WISH YOU A WARM AND JOYFUL THANKSGIVING!



THANKSGIVING DINNER

**NOVEMBER 27
11:30AM-12:30PM**

Join us for a big celebration dinner on
Thanksgiving Day. There will be a toy
giveaway for all children in attendance.

**NORTH END SOUP KITCHEN
735 E. STEWART AVE, FLINT, MI 48505**

AMERICAN DRUM & DANCE PARENT ASSOCIATION PRESENTS:
DRUM and DANCE CONFERENCE 2025

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AFRICAN DRUM & DANCE PARENT ASSOCIATION PRESENTS
KUUNGANA
DRUM AND DANCE CONFERENCE **2025**

ASBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, 1653 DAVISON ROAD, FLINT, MI 48506

LEARN TO DANCE

LEARN TO DRUM

DRUM & DANCE WORKSHOPS

NOVEMBER 7TH-9TH

UTAMADUNI

**NOV 8TH @ 7PM
LIVE CONCERT**

Swahili For Culture

**OLD BEECHER HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM
1020 W. COLDWATER ROAD, FLINT, 48505**



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THIS PROGRAM IS SPONSORED BY THE GREATER FLINT AREA COUNCIL SHARE ART GENESEE GRANT PROGRAM MADE POSSIBLE BY THE GENESEE COUNTY ART EDUCATION AND CULTURAL ENRICHMENT MILLAGE FUNDS. YOUR TAX DOLLARS AT WORK!

African Drum and Dance Parent Association Presents

TACO TUESDAY

**Every Tuesday in November
November 4, November 11, November 18
and November 25
12:00 PM to 6:00 PM**

**Asbury United Methodist Church
1653 Davison Road, Flint, MI 48506**



**Call Baba Collins at 810-394-3880
or Mama Mel at 810-394-6521**





**WINTER
WARM UP
Coat Give Away**

Nov 1, 2025

1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

You must be present to take items
(children and adults)

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

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