



# ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

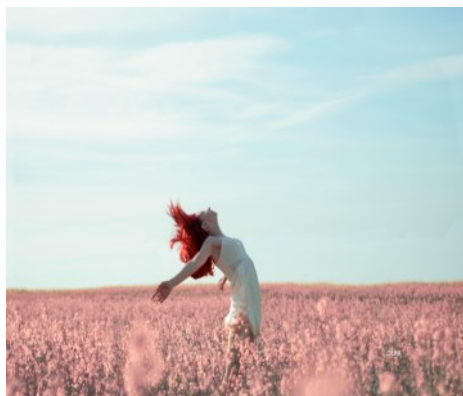


Volume 6

Issue 24

MAY 24, 2026

## Worryfree (Pace)



Cyndi and I, like many of you, enjoy certain forms of reality TV. Cyndi's favorite shows tend to be the home renovation series — especially *Home Town* and *Fixer to Fabulous*. And honestly, I enjoy those too... at least to a point.

But I find myself especially drawn to Discovery's off-grid homesteading shows — particularly *Homestead Rescue*. If you haven't seen it, the show features families who are trying to build a simpler, more self-sufficient life, often in difficult conditions and sometimes far from modern conveniences.

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## Rhythms (Pace)



I suspect that every parent eventually deals with the question of focus versus shared attention. I can still remember arguing with my parents about homework. They wanted the television off. I insisted I could multitask. "I can do both," I insisted, "I can keep one eye on my homework and one eye on the TV."

Looking back...I'm pretty sure I was learning neither math nor life particularly well. My parents understood something I didn't understand yet: shared attention usually weakens both things.

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Usually, by the time the Raney family arrives, things are not going well. Water systems are failing. Food sources are uncertain. Shelters are unfinished. And more often than not, winter is coming. Worse, the dream that once felt exciting is becoming overwhelming.

The Raney's show up with tools, experience, creative solutions, and a small construction crew.

In just a few days, they help each family establish critical infrastructure — clean water, reliable shelter, food systems, heat, and protection.

But more than anything else, they restore something many of those families are beginning to lose: Hope.

And I think part of the reason these shows resonate with so many people right now is that deep down, many people are searching for stability in a world that feels increasingly unstable. We live in a world that constantly tells us we do not have enough. We don't have enough money. There is not enough security. Not enough time. Not enough savings. Not enough preparation. Not enough success.

But, "there is good news," the onslaught of ads tells us. And if we listen long enough, we start to believe peace is always one purchase, one upgrade, one election, one investment, one emergency fund, one achievement away.

But somehow, even with more technology, more convenience, more access, and more possessions than previous generations could have imagined... people are exhausted.

Recent surveys show Americans are carrying enormous financial stress. Grocery prices alone have become a major source of anxiety for many families. People are increasingly worried about debt, instability, and whether the systems around us can actually be trusted anymore.

And honestly, some of that worry makes sense. The latest inflation numbers confirm what most of us already know. Grocery prices are going up.

And more people are taking steps they hope will make a difference. And honestly, that shouldn't surprise us.

When leadership feels unstable...when the news cycle runs on outrage...when institutions disappoint us...when people fear economic uncertainty...of course, people start trying to become more self-sufficient.

Some are planting gardens. Some are learning old skills again. Some are raising chickens. Some are simplifying their lives. Many are dreaming about living off-grid altogether, and a few are giving it a try.

Not because they are crazy. But because people are searching for some sense of stability. And there is wisdom in that.

The problem is not preparation. The problem is when fear becomes the thing organizing our lives.

Because fear always demands more. More control. More accumulation. More consumption. More security. More proof that we will somehow be okay.

And human nature has a way of fixating on whatever seems to relieve our anxiety... especially when we are not sure we can trust God to take care of us. Whether we're believers or not, the truth is, we simply find a religion that we think will work for us.

John Mark Comer, author of our companion book, put it this way: "Amazon.com is the new temple. The Visa statement is the new altar. Double-clicking is the new liturgy. Lifestyle bloggers are the priests and priestesses. Money is the new god."

That sounds harsh at first. Until we realize how much of modern life is built around teaching us to seek peace through consumption. And yet the more we consume, the more anxious many people become.

Which raises an uncomfortable question: What if simplicity is not about owning less...What if simplicity is about refusing to let fear and greed rule your life?

Because eventually, we all serve something. And that is exactly where Jesus takes us in His Sermon on the Mount. Matthew tells this story as though he is still standing there on the hillside, listening.

IN OUR PRAYERS

Virginia Bigger

Sylvia Pittman

Mirium Watson

Paula Gamble

Richard Oram

Jonathon Misner

FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE  
HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE

Dean Lamoreaux

Norma Buzzard

Nancy Elston

## COMING UP THIS WEEK: MAY 25—31



May 25 Mon

May 26 Tue 9:00am–until gone Produce will be available each  
week, along with canned goods, until further notice

12Noon–6pm Taco Tuesday (see pg. 20)

3:00pm CDC Board Meeting

May 27 Wed

May 28 Thu

May 29 Fri

May 30 Sat

May 31 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 "Truth"

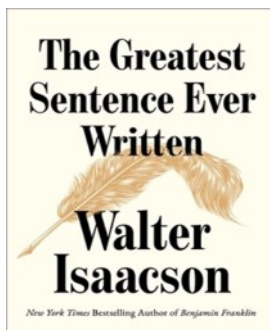


As the United States approaches its 250th anniversary, Americans are once again arguing about who we are, what we value, and whether truth itself still matters. Nevertheless, our experiment in representative democracy has been the model to which other nations strive. Unfortunately, we are living through a moment when public trust is collapsing. Driven in large part because the truth is increasingly treated as flexible.

Facts are dismissed as inconvenient. Conspiracy theories spread faster than wisdom. Cruelty is rewarded as strength. Neighbors become enemies. Fear becomes a political strategy.

Sadly, too often, the language of faith is twisted into a tool for power, exclusion, and control. And we're often watching this happen publicly in the name of Jesus. **Page 5**

## Book Club News



As we approach the 250th anniversary of the United States, our attention is already filling with arguments about history, patriotism, politics, identity, and

the meaning of America itself. Some voices will insist that the story of our nation is simple. Others will insist it is

hopelessly broken. Most of us, meanwhile, are left trying to make sense of the noise and wondering whom to believe.

We begin our summer at Asbury with a new worship series called *Truth*.

Each week, we will explore questions that sit at the center of both faith and public life. Along the way, we'll also look at what happens when truth becomes flexible. The reality is that when truth bends, trust breaks.

To accompany our series, our Book Club will be reading *The Greatest Sentence Ever Written* by Walter Isaacson.

Many readers know Isaacson through his bestselling biographies of figures such as Leonardo da Vinci, Steve Jobs, and Benjamin Franklin. In this recent work, however, Isaacson turns his attention to a single sentence from the Declaration of Independence:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal..."

Rather than treating the sentence as untouchable mythology, Isaacson explores both its brilliance and its contradictions. He examines how those words emerged, why they mattered, and how generation after generation has struggled to live up to them.

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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         |
| Jim Craig              | Board & Leadership Chair |
| Israel Unger (Izzy)    | Business Service Mgr     |
| Terrance Williams      | Arts Center Mgr          |
|                        | 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 — “Truth”

The bending of the truth for personal gain by those in authority is not new. The prophet Isaiah described a similar moment long ago: “Truth stumbles in the public square, and honesty finds no place” (Isaiah 59:14).

This summer at Asbury, we invite you to join us for a new worship series called *Truth*. Over six weeks, we will explore some of the deepest questions facing our nation, our communities, and our faith:

What happens when people stop trusting one another?

What does Scripture say about truth in an age of manipulation and outrage?

What becomes of a society that proclaims equality while practicing exclusion?

What could happen if we allow Christian nationalism to replace neighborly love?

How do followers of Jesus remain faithful when political movements demand unquestioning loyalty?

This series is inspired in part by Walter Isaacson's latest book, *The Greatest Sentence Ever Written*. In his book, Isaacson reflects on the enduring and often controversial words of the Declaration of Independence: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal...”

Those words have inspired generations. They have also been ignored, distorted, and denied throughout much of our history. And “these truths” are, once again, under attack. This tension is not new.

When Jesus stood before Pilate, a political leader more concerned with preserving power than pursuing truth, Jesus declared that He came to speak about truth. And Pilate responded with a question that still echoes today: “What is truth?” (John 18:37-38).

We continue to live with the consequences of that question.

What is new is how openly deception, grievance, and the pursuit of power have begun reshaping public life — often with religious language wrapped around them. The result is a culture that is growing more cynical, more divided, and less capable of recognizing the truth when it appears.

**When truth bends, trust breaks.**

And when trust breaks, communities fracture. Democracies weaken. Churches lose credibility. Human beings made in the image of God become easier to dismiss, fear, or dehumanize.

Yet Scripture points us toward another way.

## Upcoming Worship Series — “Truth”

*No more lies, then! Each of must tell the truth to the other believer, because we are all members together in the body of Christ.*

Ephesians 4:25

The prophet Zechariah writes: “Speak the truth to one another, render in your gates judgments that are true and make for peace” (Zechariah 8:16).

And perhaps that work begins with a simple but difficult commitment: “No more lies, then! Each of you must tell the truth to the other believer, because we are all members together in the body

of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:25).

Scripture calls people of faith in another direction.

Jesus did not call his followers to dominate culture. He called them to embody truth through humility, courage, mercy, justice, repentance, and love of neighbor. In a world filled with noise, distortion, and outrage, Christians are called to become trustworthy people again.

This series will not ask whether America was ever perfect. It wasn't. Nor will it pretend our divisions are simple.

Instead, we will ask harder questions: What truths are worth holding onto? What kind of people are we becoming? And what does faithfulness require from us now? We hope you will join us this summer for *Truth*.

From the Sunday following Memorial Day until the Sunday after our celebration of 250 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence, we'll celebrate our mutual anniversary by looking at the truth of what is arguably the “greatest sentence ever written.”

| <u>Episode</u> | <u>Sundays</u> | <u>Title</u> | <u>Scripture</u>       |
|----------------|----------------|--------------|------------------------|
| One            | May 31         | Us           | 1 Corinthians 12:12–27 |
| Two            | June 7         | Evident      | John 18:37–38          |
| Three          | June 14        | Equal        | James 2:1–9            |
| Four           | June 21        | Dignity      | Acts 17:22–28          |
| Five           | June 28        | Pursuit      | John 10:10             |
| Six            | July 5         | Together     | Ephesians 2:14–22      |

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://FlintAsburyChurch.org).

Pastor Tommy

*The series concept and some content come from: Walter Isaacson. *The Greatest Sentence Ever Written*. NY: Simon & Schuster, 2025.*



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

**LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS & MORE:**

*Amazed and confused, they kept asking each other, "What does this mean?"*

Acts 2:1–13

**NOTES FROM WORSHIP**

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**QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS:**

1. Read Acts 2:1–13 and this week's Circuit Rider article titled Rhythms.
2. This week, try one or more of the suggestions from our companion book to achieve greater attentiveness and less fragmentation. Try turning off notifications for a period of time each day. Driving somewhere without constant noise in the background. Sharing a meal without screens. Praying before opening social media. Giving another person undivided attention during a conversation. Allowing silence to exist without immediately trying to fill it.
3. Practice Sabbath rest. Learn once again how to be fully present in the moment we are actually living in.
4. 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.

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- Text "FARMCDC"
- to 53-555
- Scan QR Code

### Donate Now



More Information :



(810) 235-0016



[funding@flintasbury.org](mailto:funding@flintasbury.org)

The book does not ask readers to worship the founders. It asks us to wrestle honestly with the ideals they claimed.

That is precisely why it makes such a meaningful companion for this series.

As Christians, we believe truth is more than a slogan, a political strategy, or a social media weapon. In Scripture, truth is connected to faithfulness, integrity, justice, mercy, and trustworthiness. Truth shapes relationships. Truth shapes communities. Truth shapes whether people can live together at all. But when truth bends, trust breaks.

Over these six weeks, we will explore themes such as shared humanity, equality, dignity, liberty, and the common good. Along the way, we will ask difficult but important questions: What truths still hold us together? What happens when trust collapses? And what does it mean for followers of Jesus to live truthfully in a world filled with distortion, outrage, and fear?

You do not need to agree with every conclusion in the book to participate. In fact, thoughtful disagreement is part of the point. Our hope is not simply to revisit American history, but to reflect together on the moral and spiritual values necessary for any community to flourish. We hope you'll join us this summer for *Truth*.

Here is a suggested reading schedule:

| <u>Sunday's</u> | <u>Chapter(s)</u>                           |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------------|
| May 31          | We                                          |
| June 7          | Self-Evident Truths                         |
| June 14         | All Men & Created Equal                     |
| June 21         | Endowed by Their Creator                    |
| June 28         | Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness |
| July 5          | Common Ground & Going Forward               |

We'll have a few books available for purchase at \$11 each. Additional copies of the hardcover edition are available through Amazon for \$11.64. It appears that this book isn't available in paperback. It may be too new for this book to be available at the local library, but it's worth asking.

Our Book Club does not meet as a group. However, our weekly messages reference that week's chapters or themes. 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

Walter Isaacson. *The Greatest Sentence Ever Written*. NY: Simon & Schuster, 2025.

Years later, in college, three friends and I made a deal. Every Friday afternoon, we went to the library. We stayed there until all our assignments were finished for Monday. Sometimes we stayed until evening. But once the work was done...we were free.

We had discovered something important: focus creates freedom. There is sound science behind our discovery.

Researchers now tell us something many of us suspected long before studies confirmed it: human beings are not especially good at multitasking. What we often call “multitasking” is usually rapid task-switching. Our brains bounce from one demand to another, attempting to keep up with competing priorities. Every switch costs us something — attention, energy, clarity, and peace.

When I was in graduate school studying computer science, I worked on developing a new operating system. Ironically, my assignment involved coding part of the multitasking function. Most people imagine computers doing many things simultaneously. But that was before parallel processing, so computers handled one task at a time. Fortunately, the central processor switched tasks so quickly

that it created the illusion of simultaneous activity. Yet every switch required work. The system had to store the current context, load the next context, redirect attention, and repeat the process again and again.

Computers became incredibly fast at task-switching. Humans did not.

And yet modern life demands more switching from us than ever before. Notifications interrupt conversations. Headlines interrupt thoughts. Fear interrupts prayer. Breaking news interrupts rest. We move from text messages to emails, from social media to television, from one crisis to another, without ever fully processing what came before.

The average person is bombarded with more information in a single day than previous generations encountered in weeks. Much of that information arrives emotionally charged — urgent, angry, fearful, and designed to provoke an immediate reaction rather than thoughtful reflection. Even journalists whose full-time job is following current events admit they cannot keep up with the constant flood of developments. Before one crisis can be investigated, another one appears, demanding attention.

After awhile, the chaos begins shaping us.

Not because we agree with what is happening around us, but because constant fragmentation changes the human spirit. It becomes harder to think clearly, harder to listen carefully, harder to pray deeply, harder to love generously, and harder to remain hopeful. Perhaps most dangerously, it becomes harder to distinguish noise from truth. The world scatters.

This is not just a political problem or a technological problem. It is a moral and spiritual problem.

There is a difference between necessary responsibility and destructive fragmentation. Parents raising children understand this well. Nurses, teachers, caregivers, and pastors understand it too. Some responsibilities naturally overlap because life itself is complicated. The problem is not responsibility. The problem is becoming internally divided — pulled in so many directions that we lose the ability to become fully present anywhere.

Some moments require undivided attention. A grieving friend. A child sharing something important. Worship. Prayer. Communion. Discernment. Love. These moments cannot thrive under divided attention.

Perhaps the greatest danger of constant distraction is not

merely exhaustion. Perhaps the greater danger is spiritual unavailability.

Scripture consistently describes the Holy Spirit as a gift. And gifts must be received. Not forced. Not earned. Received. But receiving requires some degree of attentiveness. If our minds and hearts are endlessly fragmented, we may still hear noise all around us while missing the invitation hidden within it.

Which makes the story of Pentecost far more relevant than we often realize.

The story of Pentecost in Acts is one of the strangest and most beautiful moments in scripture. Luke tells us that the followers of Jesus were gathered together when suddenly a sound “like the blowing of a violent wind” filled the house. Then came what appeared to be “tongues of fire” resting on each person present. They began speaking in different languages as crowds from all over the known world gathered in amazement and confusion. Some were astonished. Others were skeptical. A few dismissed the entire scene by accusing the disciples of being drunk.

At first glance, Pentecost feels chaotic. Voices overlap. Languages collide. Fire appears. Crowds gather in confusion. It hardly resembles the quiet, orderly worship services many of us have come to expect in church.

But perhaps that is exactly the point.

Pentecost is not the Holy Spirit creating chaos. Pentecost is the Holy Spirit transforming chaos into shared understanding. The miracle is not simply that people spoke. The deeper miracle is that people understood one another. People from different regions, cultures, and languages suddenly found themselves hearing the same message clearly. In a world divided by geography, politics, economics, fear, and identity, the Holy Spirit gathered scattered people into a shared experience of grace.

Scripture consistently describes the Spirit this way.

In Genesis, creation begins in chaos. The earth is described as formless and empty while darkness covers the deep waters. Yet the Spirit of God hovers over the chaos, and from that disorder God begins creating rhythm, beauty, life, and order. The world scatters. The Spirit gathers. The Spirit creates. The Spirit restores. The Spirit brings life where fragmentation once ruled.

That same pattern appears again at Pentecost.

Before the Spirit creates harmony, the moment itself appears overwhelming and disorienting. From the outside, the scene looks noisy and confusing. Yet underneath the noise, God is forming a new community. The Spirit is gathering people who had been separately by language, fear, and suspicion into one body.

We are living in a fragmented age. Families struggle to listen to one another. Communities divide easily. Outrage has become a political strategy. Social media rewards reaction instead of reflection. Many of us consume so much noise every day that we no longer know how to sit quietly long enough to hear anything clearly. And yet the Holy Spirit still gathers.

The Spirit gathers our scattered attention. The Spirit gathers wounded communities. The Spirit gathers anxious hearts. The Spirit gathers people who have forgotten how to listen.

This is why scripture connects the Spirit with peace, wisdom, discernment, unity, and love. The work of the Spirit does not end in fragmentation. The Spirit brings reconciliation and restoration.

That does not mean the Spirit removes passion, energy, or conviction. And it certainly doesn't remove diversity. Pentecost itself is loud, emotional, and disruptive. But there is a difference between holy disruption and destructive chaos. One scatters people apart. The other gathers people together around truth, grace, and love.

The disciples were not multitasking their way into Pentecost. They were gathered together, waiting, praying, attentive, and open to receive what God was giving.

Perhaps that matters more than we realize.

Since the Holy Spirit is a gift, like all gifts, the Spirit must be received. Not forced. Not earned. Received. But receiving requires attentiveness. If our lives are endlessly fragmented, we may still hear the noise surrounding Pentecost while missing the invitation hidden within it.

Maybe that is why the Spirit so often speaks in moments of gathered attention — prayer, worship, silence, communion, listening, rest, and community. These are the moments when the noise begins to settle enough for truth to be heard again.

Pentecost reminds us that God gathers what the world scatters. Imagine what might happen if the church became one of the few remaining places in society where people were fully present.

Not perfect. Not uniform. Not always in agreement. But present. Listening deeply instead of reacting instantly. Learning to discern instead of simply consuming outrage. Refusing to let fear and fragmentation shape the human spirit.

That vision sits at the heart of Pentecost.

The miracle of Pentecost is not that everyone suddenly became the same. Different languages remained. Different cultures remained. Different perspectives remained. Yet somehow the Holy Spirit created understanding instead of division.

Human empires often demand sameness. The Holy Spirit creates unity without destroying uniqueness.

That truth continued throughout the life of the early church. The Apostle Paul later described the church as one body with many parts, empowered by the same Spirit but gifted in different ways. Diversity was not a problem for the early church to eliminate. Diversity became evidence of the Spirit's creative work among the people.

*Amazed and confused, they kept asking each other, "What does this mean?"*

Acts 2:1-13

The Holy Spirit consistently breaks down rigid barriers that human beings build to separate themselves from one another.

Years ago, one of my seminary professors shared a quote I have never forgotten: "The Holy Spirit is the force that removes the bolts holding down the pews." I have always loved that image because the Spirit does disrupt things.

The Spirit disrupts injustice. It disrupts racism. The Spirit disrupts oppression. Pentecost certainly disrupted things. But there is a difference between holy disruption and destructive chaos.

Destructive chaos scatters people apart.

Holy disruption gathers people toward deeper truth, deeper compassion, deeper courage, and deeper community.

When Jesus teaches us to love our enemies, welcome strangers, forgive freely, and care for those society overlooks. He is not asking us to violate the design of creation. He is teaching us how creation itself was meant to flourish. The Spirit does not fear diversity. The Spirit organizes diversity into community. The fruits of the Holy Spirit include diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Perhaps that is why Pentecost still feels so relevant today. We are surrounded by systems that profit from outrage, fear, division, and constant distraction. Entire industries compete for our attention because attention has become one of the world's most valuable resources. But the Spirit calls us toward another rhythm — one shaped by attentiveness, reconciliation, wisdom, compassion, and shared humanity.

Imagine a church where people gave one another their full attention. Imagine conversations where listening mattered more than winning. Imagine families reclaiming meals without screens. Imagine worship becoming a place where exhausted people could finally breathe again. Imagine communities where strangers are treated as neighbors instead of threats.

Imagine people learning once again how to sit quietly long enough to hear the voice of God beneath all the noise.

That kind of life may appear strange in a fragmented world. Then again, the first Pentecost looked strange too.

At the end of *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, John Mark Comer offers practical suggestions for slowing down and recovering healthier spiritual rhythms. That matters because rhythms are rarely formed accidentally. The patterns shaping our lives are usually the patterns we repeatedly practice.

Most of us cannot simply walk away from work, family responsibilities, technology, or the realities of modern life. Nor should we romanticize some imaginary past that never truly existed. The goal is not abandoning responsibility. The goal is learning how to live with greater attentiveness and less fragmentation. Perhaps that begins with small choices.

Turning off notifications for a period of time each day. Driving somewhere without constant noise in the background. Sharing a meal without screens. Praying before opening social media. Giving another person undivided attention during a conversation. Allowing silence to exist without immediately trying to fill it.

Practicing Sabbath rest.

Learning once again how to become fully present in the moment we are actually living. These practices may seem small, but small rhythms shape human lives over time.

The disciples did not multitask their way into Pentecost. They gathered together. They waited. They prayed. They became attentive enough to receive what God was giving.

Perhaps the same invitation still exists for us today.

The world around us constantly pulls our attention in a thousand different directions. Fear scatters. Outrage scatters. Anxiety scatters. Endless distraction scatters. But the Holy Spirit gathers. The Spirit gathers scattered hearts. The Spirit gathers divided communities. The Spirit gathers wounded people. The Spirit gathers our attention back toward truth, compassion, wisdom, and love.

Pentecost reminds us that God still gives the Spirit freely. The question is whether we are present enough to receive it. God gathers what the world scatters.

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](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 Connect - choose [Newsletters](#).

Pastor Tommy

Some content comes from John Mark Comer. *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*. Colorado Springs : WaterBrook, 2019. ISBN 9780525653097.



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**THE SOUTH FLINT  
SOUP KITCHEN  
PRESENTS**

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The crowds have gathered because word about Jesus is spreading quickly throughout Galilee. Some come hoping to be healed. Some are curious. Some are desperate. Some simply want to hear whether this teacher from Nazareth has anything meaningful to say to people struggling to survive under the crushing weight of empire, poverty, uncertainty, and religious division.

And Matthew remembers Jesus sitting down among them and beginning to teach.

What we now call the Sermon on the Mount was not originally delivered inside a church sanctuary. It was spoken outdoors to ordinary people carrying ordinary burdens. People worried about feeding their families. People living under taxation and political oppression.

People wondering who — or what — could be trusted. People trying to survive in systems that constantly demand more from them while offering very little in return. In some ways, this was the ultimate reality show, featuring ordinary people living close to the edge.

Families trying to survive. Communities struggling under competing pressures. Systems demanding allegiance. Religious voices competing for authority. People searching for hope while carrying anxiety about tomorrow. And Matthew is not simply preserving this moment as ancient history.

### **The audience is us.**

Those of us who hear our own lives reflected in the worries of we just talked about... those of us carrying anxiety about the future... those of us exhausted by the endless demand for more... those of us wondering if there is a better way to live...

### **Jesus is speaking to us.**

Then, in the middle of this sermon, Jesus says something that cuts directly to the heart of human anxiety: **"No one can serve two masters."**

Jesus isn't talking just about serving dictators, would-be kings, or bosses. But He is talking about whatever exerts control over us. And it's hard enough to serve two masters when both desire the same thing. But most of us know from experience that this is rarely the case. Conflicting loyalties eventually force difficult choices. Two competing voices eventually pull us in opposite directions.

And Jesus understood that human beings are always being shaped by whatever power, value, or promise commands our attention.

### **The world offers no shortage of competing masters.**

Consumerism tells us peace can be purchased. Celebrity culture tells us significance comes through recognition and influence. Political systems promise security if only the "right" people gain power. Wealth promises independence. Technology promises control. Endless advertising tells us fulfillment is always one step away — one

more purchase, one more achievement, one more upgrade, one more carefully constructed version of ourselves.

Meanwhile, the gap between the wealthy and the struggling continues to widen. More and more people feel trapped between rising costs, growing uncertainty, and systems that seem designed to keep people anxious enough to keep consuming.

The false promises never stop. And perhaps what makes these modern "gods" so dangerous is that they are rarely presented as evil. They are presented as salvation.

They promise comfort. Control. Security. Importance. Escape from fear.

But unlike the kingdom of God, these powers ultimately serve themselves. They always demand more than they give. That is why Jesus' warning matters so much: "You cannot serve both God and wealth."

Jesus is not condemning money itself, or even shopping for a new outfit. He is exposing the spiritual conflict hidden underneath our anxiety. Whatever we trust most eventually becomes the thing organizing our lives.

And that is why the next word Jesus speaks is so important: "Therefore..." In other words, Jesus directly connects worry to worship. The question beneath our anxiety is not simply: "How do I stop worrying?"

The deeper question is: "What or who am I trusting to save me?"

Because fear has a way of turning our hearts toward whatever appears strongest in the moment. Human nature clings to whatever seems capable of protecting us, providing for us, or giving us control over an uncertain future.

That is why Jesus speaks directly about food, clothing, and daily necessities. These are not shallow concerns. Like us, they know that the cost of food is rising faster than they can afford. Jesus is speaking to ordinary people living under political oppression and economic uncertainty. They understood instability far better than most of us do.

So when Jesus says, "Do not worry about your life..." He is not asking people to ignore reality. He is inviting them to trust that the kingdom of God offers something the false promises of this world never can: a life no longer ruled by fear.

Jesus points to the birds of the air and the flowers of the field, not because life is easy, but because creation itself still rests in God's care.

*Do not worry about tomorrow. It will have enough worries of its own. There is no need to add to the troubles each day brings.*

Matthew 6:25-34

And then Jesus gives the invitation that stands at the center of this entire passage: "Seek first the kingdom of God..." Not first consumption. Not first accumulation. Not first status. Not first fear.

### Seek first the kingdom.

Because whatever we seek first will eventually shape the kind of people we become.

And perhaps that is where simplicity begins. Not with owning less for the sake of owning less. Not with abandoning responsibility. Not with pretending the world is safe. Not with disengaging from society altogether.

Simplicity begins when we stop allowing fear and greed to organize our lives. It begins when we realize peace cannot be purchased. It begins when we stop measuring our worth by what we accumulate, control, consume, or display.

It begins when we discover that enough is not found in endless accumulation, but in learning to trust the God who already knows what we need.

The kingdom of God invites us into a different rhythm. A life where possessions no longer possess us. A life where anxiety no longer dictates every decision. A life where generosity becomes possible because fear loosens its grip. A life where we can enjoy what God provides without making those things our master.

And maybe this is the deeper freedom Jesus is offering: Not freedom from all uncertainty. But freedom from living as though fear gets the final word.

One voice says: Acquire more. Protect more. Fear more. Consume more. Control more. And another voice — quieter, steadier, deeper — says: "Seek first the kingdom of God."

Not because responsibilities disappear. Not because uncertainty vanishes. Not because life suddenly becomes easy. But because Jesus knows that whatever we place at the center of our lives will eventually shape who we become.

And perhaps that is the invitation before us this week. Not to abandon wisdom. Not to stop preparing responsibly. Not to disengage from the world around us. But to ask an honest question: What has become the organizing force of my life? Fear? Consumption? Accumulation? Control? Status? Anxiety about tomorrow? Or the kingdom of God?

Maybe simplicity begins there. Maybe simplicity is less about decluttering our homes and more about decluttering our hearts. Maybe it begins by refusing to let fear make every decision for us. Maybe it begins by learning to recognize the difference between what we truly need and what our culture constantly tells us we should want.

And maybe one of the most practical spiritual disciplines available to us is simply learning to say: "This is enough." Enough outrage for one day. Enough scrolling. Enough accumulation. Enough noise. This week, challenge yourself to take one simple step toward the kind of life Jesus describes.

Perhaps that means setting aside intentional quiet each day instead of immediately reaching for your phone. Perhaps it means resisting an unnecessary purchase. Perhaps it means practicing gratitude before anxiety takes over.

Perhaps it means creating space around the table for conversation instead of distraction. Perhaps it means giving something away as an act of trust rather than fear. Not because simplicity saves us. But because simplicity can help create room for us to hear the voice of the One who does.

And as you leave today, remember this: Jesus never promised a life free from uncertainty. But He did promise that fear does not have to become our master. Because eventually, we all serve something.

So seek first the kingdom of God. And trust that the God who sees the birds of the air and the flowers of the field sees you too.

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).

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](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 Connect - choose [Newsletters](#).

Pastor Tommy

Some content comes from John Mark Comer. *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*. Colorado Springs : WaterBrook, 2019. ISBN 9780525653097.

TACO TUESDAYS IN MAY!!

JOIN US AT FLINT ASBURY UMC



African Drum and Dance  
Parent Association presents

# Taco Tuesday Fundraiser

May 12, 19 & 26  
Noon to 6 PM

Asbury UMC, 1653 Davison Rd., Flint

Tacos, Tamales, Tostadas,  
Burritos, Nachos,  
Taco Salad, and Desserts

Prices  
start at \$2

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# TACO TUESDAYS

## FUNDRAISER EVENT



### MAIN ENTRÉES

*\*Your choice of seasoned Beef, Turkey, or Chicken\**



**Tacos** ..... \$2.00  
(Add Extra Meat ... +\$1.00)

**Walking Taco** ..... \$2.50

**Burrito** ..... \$3.00

Extra sauce, sour cream or jalapenos  
.....25 cents



**Taco Supreme**.....\$5

(Extra meat, sour cream, Jalapenos)



**Tamales** (When available)

Single Tamale ..... \$3.00

Half Dozen (6) .... \$15.00

Full Dozen (12) ... \$24.00



### SPECIALTY BOWLS & NACHOS

**Taco Salad Supreme** .... \$13.00

(\*Includes: Extra meat, chips, jalapeños, and sour cream)



**Taco Salad** ..... \$10.00

**Nachos Supreme** ..... \$6.00

(\*Meat & Toppings)



**Cheese Nachos** ..... \$3.00



### SWEET TREATS



**Pound Cake** ..... \$3.00

**Chocolate Chip Cookies:**

Single Cookie ..... \$2.00

Three (3) Cookies ..... \$5.00



### REFRESHMENTS



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**Pop / Soda** ..... \$1.25

**Iced Tea** ..... \$1.25

**Bottled Water** ..... \$1.00



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**JOIN US EVERY TUESDAY!**

**TIME: 12:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.**

**Drum and Dance**

**Asbury UMC, 1653 Davison RD, Flint, 48506**



Image via [Pexels](#)

*Asbury strives to connect our neighbors to God, to each other, to our shared earth and to each person's created purpose. Contact us today to learn more! (810) 235-0016*

## The Holistic Blueprint: A Comprehensive Guide to Achieving Your Best Self

The journey to look and feel exceptional involves more than just external aesthetics; it's about cultivating a lifestyle that brings out the best in you, both inside and out. Covering aspects from hair care to education, this [guide from Asbury](#) offers some actionable steps to help you present a version of yourself that exudes confidence and well-being. The goal is not just to polish the surface but to improve your life in a way that shines from within.

### Pay Attention to Haircare

Quality hair care is a staple for anyone wanting to look their best. High-grade products offer nourishment and protection that can make a substantial difference. Whether straight, curly, or somewhere in between, your hair serves as a [marker of health and vitality](#). A good hair day can be a significant mood booster, and that inner happiness often reflects outward, making you more appealing to the people around you.

### Prioritize Skin Protection

Sun protection is crucial for maintaining youthful, healthy skin. Implementing a daily sunscreen ritual doesn't have to be a laborious task. Many moisturizers now include SPF, streamlining the process. By making this a non-negotiable part of your daily regimen, you're taking proactive steps to [minimize sun damage](#), early signs of aging, and risks associated with prolonged sun exposure.

### Eat Smarter

What you put into your body is as essential as what you put on it. A well-rounded diet [free from processed foods](#) and added sugars can transform your physical appearance and mood. Good nutrition provides the building blocks for radiant skin, robust hair, and an energized body – each vital for looking and feeling your absolute best.

## Make Movement a Way of Life

An active lifestyle doesn't necessarily mean grueling hours at the gym. Purolabs notes that even [small changes can have significant benefits](#). Opt for walking over driving for short distances or choose the stairs instead of the elevator. Little actions can add up, and before you know it, you've incorporated more physical activity into your daily life, which will only serve to enhance your overall wellness.

## Attend to Your Dental Health

Never underestimate the power of a brilliant smile. Cleveland Clinic explains that good dental hygiene is [crucial for overall well-being](#), affecting not just oral health but also contributing to cardiovascular wellness. Regular check-ups, daily brushing, and flossing go a long way in maintaining a confident smile, which can be a cornerstone in building overall self-assurance.

## Organize Your Health Information

When you have all your information readily accessible, especially in a format as universal as a PDF, you can make more informed decisions about your health. If you want to create PDF files, plenty of online platforms can assist you in transforming your documents for easy sharing with healthcare providers. This organization can lead to better doctor-patient communication, more accurate diagnoses, and, ultimately, better health.

## Bolster Confidence Through Learning

Continuing education can significantly influence how you feel about yourself. Strengthening your skill set not only makes you more marketable in your profession but also boosts your self-esteem. Whether it's learning a new language or acquiring advanced knowledge in your field, there are many avenues to gain new competencies.

Also, these days, the flexibility of online learning platforms, such as those offering degrees in psychology, makes boosting your education easier than ever! When looking for programs that are accredited and offer specialties like organizational psychology, [consider this option](#).

## Cultivate Social Links

Social bonds are indispensable for mental and emotional health. Friendships and familial ties offer emotional support, [create a sense of belonging](#), and can even help in stressful situations. By actively maintaining and nurturing these relationships, you foster an environment that contributes positively to your emotional well-being.

The roadmap to a more confident and healthier you isn't merely about a curated set of practices but about constructing a lifestyle that inherently improves the quality of your life. The true essence of being your best self lies in harmonizing the physical, emotional, and intellectual aspects of well-being. This journey is a continuous process, and each positive step you take brings you closer to becoming the best version of yourself.

*(Submitted by Jason Lewis at [jason\\_lewis@strongwell.org](mailto:jason_lewis@strongwell.org))*

# Happy 15th Anniversary to ASBURY CDC



Here's to many more!