

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Welcome to the Asbury Community

Meet the Heroes Who Deliver Water in Flint

by Tim Galloway

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FLINT, Michigan—A large white, blue and orange box truck weaves its way across Flint's eastside. Inside a trio of workers is crowded into the cockpit of the truck, its hazard lights continually blinking, the rear latch clacking and clanking with each delivery of bottled water.

Making his way up the sidewalk, William Harris slings a case of water onto his shoulder. Harris has been aiding the water crisis for over a year, starting as a volunteer at Greater Holy Temple in May of 2016. Months later, he found himself on a delivery crew.

"I don't look at it as a service, as getting paid. I look at it as a positive enforcement in my community," he says, hanging onto the truck rear door latch. Harris is sometimes overwhelmed by the conditions he witnesses while on the job, but he remains focused on building rapport with families on his route.

"We'll keep doing it until it doesn't need to happen anymore," Alan Lee says as he half hangs out the window and half

hangs on the steering wheel. The seemingly stoic driver is the pragmatist of the small crew. If anything, Lee is irritated that water delivery is a necessity. Not that the delivery in itself is annoying, but rather the need for it. "It's mostly annoying that you've gotta go and deliver water," he quips, "more annoying than anything."

This is part of a massive, ongoing effort by Flint area churches to deliver water once a week to 3,500 families.

Harris and Lee are part of the crew headed by Kevin Croom, who back at Asbury United Methodist Church, sits behind a desk in his small office, going through expense receipts for fuel, food, and water. Croom heads the single largest distribution center for teams committed to delivering clean, safe water to Flint residents who are unable to pick it up themselves.

The water delivery program—officially called Access and Functional Needs—is in addition to other ongoing programs in

response to the Flint water crisis, such as CORE and Community Help Centers which provide a variety of services.

Flint churches including Asbury United Methodist—where Croom is the site manager and neighborhood coordinator who ensures eastside and southside families are delivered water—stepped up to ensure ongoing water delivery after the state of Michigan stopped delivery in September.

The state still provides the actual bottled water, but not the delivery of it. Instead, that burden was taken on by Asbury along with Second Chance Church, Veterans of NOW (the only non-church participating), Greater Holy Temple, Salem Lutheran, Shiloh Missionary Baptist, Prince of Peace, Calvary United Methodist, and NOW Ministries.

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Things That Go Bump in the Night

Monsters and things that go bump in the night is a universal description of things that cause us to be afraid. I came across an old Scottish prayer as I searched the internet:

*From ghoulies and ghosties
And long-legged beasties
And things that go bump in the night,
Good Lord, deliver us!*

Let's be honest. We often use our memories of the past to interpret the present. Perceived reality, valid or not, is our reality. Nevertheless, discipleship requires us to answer this question: *Are we willing, in the face of great obstacles, to trust God enough to risk everything?*

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That night all the members of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, "If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this wilderness! Why is the Lord bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn't it be better for us to go back to Egypt?"

Numbers 14:1-3

Special points of interest:

> **Neighborhood Connection** is delivering bottled water. Call the City of Flint at 810-410-1138 for information. This service is for persons who are disabled and/or unable to receive water in any other way.

> A **Special Community Christmas Concert** will be held at Asbury on **Thursday, December 14 at 6 pm** featuring adult & youth choirs from the Flint School of Performing Arts.

> Asbury will be holding a **Town Hall Meeting on Sunday, December 10th at 2:30pm** in the Fellowship Hall.

> Please pick up your 2018 Offering Envelopes that are in the Asbury Café. If you don't see yours, call the church office.

> A **Special Church Conference** will be held on **Sunday, December 17, 2017 at 12Noon** in the Fellowship Hall.

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Things That Go Bump in the Night ...continued from Page 1

Of course, one problem is disagreement over what the promised land of discipleship looks like. If I like, or I prefer to settle for, what I have, the land that I am already standing on, why risk it all for a land that I perceive to already be forsaken? What if I am too tired and outnumbered and I believe that I am incapable?

Here are a few of the giants that face us here at Asbury?

- We are struggling to make ends meet - to balance our budget.
- Our neighborhood continues to decline physically, economically, and in terms of the number of residents.
- We are divided in our willingness to make the changes necessary to flourish and even on whether it is possible.

How we respond to these giants will determine our relevancy to the people that we are called to be witnesses of God's love in Jesus Christ. To respond in faith, we must be able to center ourselves on the love of God in Christ, and His vision for us, such that we

can envision the reality that Christ has for us. We must first move beyond our fear of our perceived reality. That is, the reality that there are giants standing in our way that we cannot possibly overcome.

These obstacles are giant in our perception of the difficulty they represent, relative to our capacity and ability to overcome them. Instead of living in fear, or in complacency, another giant, we must live as a "sent" people. We are sent out through the power of God's love and provision.

Instead of living individually or as a group living for our own collective self-interest, we must find unity through a common, envisioned reality. Otherwise, how can we give effective witness?

We can choose, individually or collectively, to stand at the edge of the Promised Land, but we cannot stand at the edge for long. Our time on this earth is short. We are here only for a little while. Eternal life and joy in this life are ours in the Promised Land for Jesus' disciples, but we must cross into this land, acknowledging our inadequacies, vulnerabili-

ties, and fears, but not giving into them. We must trust God with our lives and our resources. In one case, we are focused on ourselves, with the other, we are focused on God.

Pastor Tommy

Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had explored the land, tore their clothes and said to the entire Israelite assembly, "The land we passed through and explored is exceedingly good. If the Lord is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us...the Lord is with us. Do not be afraid..."
Numbers 14:5-9

Meet the Heroes Who Deliver Water in Flint

Croom's team includes 12 who deliver water to the 4th and 7th Wards as well as at least part of the 8th and 9th Wards. A former U.S. Navy submariner with culinary training, Croom was hired by Pastor Tommy McDoniel more than a year ago to serve as site coordinator.

Each household can get four cases of water a week (or 16 cases a month). When the state was delivering the water, about 2,700 homes were on the delivery list. The churches stepped in to deliver water when the state stopped delivery in September—and its distribution list grew to 3,500 families because the state also reduced the number of neighborhood water pick-up sites.

The state of Michigan donates the water to the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan, which

delivers the water to all of the church sites. The United Way helped equip the churches to take on the water delivery mission with \$40,000 initial investment. The state of Michigan also continues to pay \$20,000 a month to help fund delivery and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation donates another \$10,000.

That \$30,000 is distributed by the United Way of Genesee County—but it comes nowhere near the actual cost of the program. It takes a lot of volunteer effort, workers from the Department of Labor, and others stepping up to help—such as \$75,000 grants from the Ruth Mott Foundation to both Greater Holy Temple and Asbury United Methodist—to keep it going month after month

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Flint resident Kevin Croom sits behind his desk at Asbury United Methodist Church while on hold with Gordon Food Service. In addition to being the site coordinator for water deliveries, Croom is also the executive chef and

Meet the Heroes Who Deliver Water in Flint...*continued from Page 2*



William Harris, 31, of Flint, slides two cases of water off the back of his team's delivery truck on Flint's eastside. The team from Asbury United Methodist deliver water to 60 to 70 homes on their route.

"We are going through this month by month, like the churches are. Our grind is continuing to find continual crisis response funds. Every day, we find partners that are really empathetic with the situation we are in," said Jamie Gaskin, CEO of the United Way of Genesee County which helps coordinate the effort.

Gaskin, who lives in Flint and has a young son, says it will be a "scary moment" when the state no longer provides funding for bottled water.

The entire community stepped up and came together to serve one another when

the water crisis hit, said Gaskin, who noted that the water distribution and delivery systems were set up in less than two weeks—a monumental task

that took intense perseverance and community commitment.

"(It takes a) human investment to go the extra mile every single day. The churches and nonprofits have been really working hard in a sincere way," Gaskin said.

Each crew consists of a myriad of people and personalities, covering Flint from corner to corner. One commonality they all share is that this, at every turn, is neighbors helping neighbors. They all are Flint residents.

Croom's delivery team embodies that sense of community. As the truck slowly moves up the street, team member Shadae Johnson walks from house to house, gently rapping on storm doors with her clipboard. Johnson, who began in December of last year, patiently waits on the doorstep for an answer. "I'm able to help others. Some of these people are real grateful. It makes me happy to see them happy."

For more information or to get help, go to **FlintCares.org**.

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ASBURY UMW FAMILY CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON!

UMW will be hosting a family Christmas luncheon at Asbury UMC on Saturday, December 9th at 12Noon. It will be potluck style. You may call in your items to Norma Natrass at 810-235-1116 by Wednesday, December 6th. Please also indicate the number of people that will be coming with you. Hope to see a lot of you here!!

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Join us on Thursday, December 14 at 6 pm for a special concert featuring children, youth and adults choirs from the Flint School of Performing Arts. Enjoy special selections by Sylvia Pittman, Chair of the Vocal Arts Department at the Flint Institute of Music.



In Our Prayers

Curtis Young	Austin & Mary Suffle
Rachel Bastine	Shirley Craig
Norma Buzzard	Christopher Lewis
Merle Supernaw	Sarah Tanner
Barbara McIvor	Elizabeth Wright
Jonathon Misner	Judy Tanner
Nancy Auger	Mary Lyons
Pam Brotemarkle	

FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE

Sharon George	Shirley Moose
Elaine Lamoreaux	Carman Misner
Mary Nations	



Prayer is at the heart of our beliefs

Simply Christmas

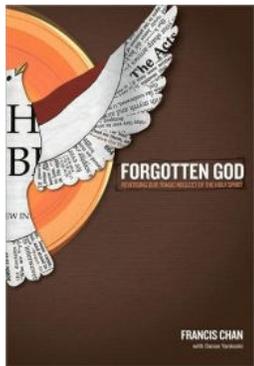
Work for the peace and prosperity of the city where I sent you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, for its welfare will determine your welfare.

Jeremiah 29:7

We hope that you will join us on Sunday mornings as we ring in the excitement of Christmas anticipation. Does Christmas excite you? Bring your excitement. Do you have a sense of dread. Bring your anxieties

Book Club News

Our next book will take us on a journey of a different nature as we focus our attention on the Holy Spirit. Our guide will be pastor, author and church planter Francis Chan, founder of Cornerstone Church in Simi Valley, California. He is also the founder of Eternity Bible College and sits on the board of Children's Hunger Fund. Recently, Francis is planting churches in the San Francisco area and recently launched a country-wide discipleship movement called Multiply with David



Platt. Francis and his wife Lisa live in Northern California with their five children.

Francis writes "as Jesus ascended into

Leadership in Worship & Service

Welcome Team	Tony, Mirium, Christine
Children's Time	Pastor Tommy
Candle Lighting	Karen
Ushers	Anthony, Jim
Production Team	Jim
Nursery	Norma
Worship Leaders	Karen
Coffee Hour	Cyndi

Asbury Staff

Rev. Dr. Tommy McDaniel	Pastor
Mark Vorenkamp	Children & Youth

with you. For some, Christmas is about gift-giving and receiving. Bring your expectations with you. For others, Christmas is confusing, at least as far as church is concerned. Bring your confusion with you. Come as you are and together we will simplify Christmas and experience this celebration together.

Christmas just keeps getting more complicated. More commercial. We can identify with Charlie Brown's struggle to

heaven, He promised to send the Holy Spirit—the Helper—so that we could be true and living witnesses for Christ. Unfortunately, today's church has admired the gift but neglected to open it." Pastor Chan contends that we've ignored the Spirit for far too long, and we are reaping the disastrous results.

You do not have to read the book to attend, but it does help with the discussion and what you receive back from it. Used copies of this book are available from the office for \$7.

Our goal is to continue to widen our circle and so we hope that you will join in on our discussion. We meet each Tuesday at Noon. Come join us for a light lunch, fellowship and discussion. Our food selections have been fantastic and we always have plenty to share. We are always on the lookout for our next book, video lesson or topic. Your participation and suggestions are greatly appreciated.

Asbury Café

Plan to meet outside the sanctuary each Sunday after the first service for coffee, tea, snacks, conversation and so on. The music will start when it is time to wrap up and head in for 2nd service.

hold onto some of the Christmas spirit and understand his frustration with his friends. Even his dog, Snoopy, has gone commercial. Can we have a modern-day Christmas, complete with decorations, and even take in a cyber-Monday sale without completely losing the true spirit of Christmas? There is good news. The answer is yes. The true meaning of Christmas is alive in each of us but we need each other. We need friends who are real and authentic. We need the One who whose coming we celebrate.

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How can you think of saying, "Friend, let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye," when you can't see past the log in your own eye? Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend's eye.

Luke 6:42



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

ASBURY WILL BE HOLDING A TOWN HALL MEETING ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2017 AT 2:30PM IN THE ASBURY FELLOWSHIP HALL.

SPECIAL CHURCH CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17TH AT 12N

Simply Christmas ... *continued from page 4*

We have all heard the slogans encouraging us to support local businesses by going to them first before we jump online or look at big box chain stores. While there is a lot of wisdom in doing so it is hard to resist the discounted prices offered by Amazon and other large retailers. While it may be a stretch to think that God had in mind buying local when speaking through the prophet Jeremiah to command the people of the covenant to “work for the peace and propensity of the city where I sent you” there is a clear connection. The people were in exile. They were in a place that they would rather not be. Nevertheless God reminded them that the city where you are planted will determine your welfare.

But thinking of others does not need to be expensive. Jesus was born into a family who struggled to make end meet. Jesus experienced homelessness. He knew what it was like to rely on the generosity of others. Jesus was one of us. Yet He was God. He had a choice and He chose to hang out in the poor neighborhoods with people like us. And Jesus teaches us that heaven can exist right here. The Kingdom of God is not some far off place for the rich and famous. It is for us.

Whatever we have is enough. This Christmas, why not give only what you have rather than borrow against the

future. Simply your Christmas by giving yourself. By sharing the gifts that God has given you with others. Jesus promises that you will always get more than you give. It depends on what you are looking for. The treasures that we cherish the most are the relationships. Come join us and build relationships that make a difference.

Dec 2 Think Local

Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help... Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken...

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Whether we are talking about sports or neighborhood improvement more gets accomplished when we work together. Think local is more than a slogan and it is more than where we shop. Nevertheless, in this time of giving and spending, think about the people you can bless with the shopping that you already do.

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Coming up this week

Neighborhood Deliveries/Water/Food

Dec 4 Mon

Dec 5 Tues 12N Pastor Book Club

Dec 6 Wed 6:00pm Beginners Bible Study

Dec 7 Thurs 6:30pm Choir Practice

Dec 8 Fri

Dec 9 Sat 12N UMW Christmas Lunch

Dec 10 Sun 9:00am Traditional
Worship

10:00am Connect Break

10:30am Contemporary

Worship

12:00 N Café Closes

Last Week for Worship

Attendance 45 Offering \$ 588.75

Look for announcements scrolling on the our screen prior to the start of worship.

Email announcements by the Friday
before to:

FlintAsburyUMC@gmail.com

Ways to Connect

Donate –You can give online at FlintAsbury.org/donate

Music Ministry –We are looking for vocalists and musicians.

Community Gardening – The Asbury Farm needs volunteers.

Pantry - We need food items, including meats, paper products; personal items diapers, and financial support.

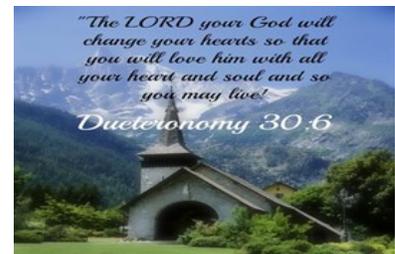
Social Media allows us to tell others about the work that God is doing. All of us can

help enhance our presence in the social media by posting on our Facebook and utilizing our website for blogging.

Housing - the Asbury House offers local college students a way to use their gifts and passions together with their faith in building a better neighborhood.

Women’s Circles - The women of Asbury meet regularly in small groups.

Pastor’s Book Club meets each Tuesday at 12Noon for fellowship, food and learning.



Prayer is at the heart of our beliefs

Welcome to the Asbury Community

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Neighborhood Connection



We envision a community in love with God, each other, and our neighbors evidenced by the transformation of ourselves and our neighborhood. We are a center for worship & spiritual growth, a center for connections and a center for health & wellness.

Our goal is a revitalized community where every resident can use their talents and passions

for the common good, where children grow into citizens who contribute to building and maintaining a vibrant neighborhood, and all residents are able to enjoy safety, good health, a culture that fosters life long learning and satisfying lives.

We believe that such an ambitious goal can never be attained without God's grace and abundance and Christ calls each of us to be disciples willing to share our witness through words and acts.

Simply Christmasa new worship series *cont. from page 5*

There are many people who own small businesses, their own families counting on increased Christmas-season sales in order to have a happy holiday themselves. When you're considering the gifts that you need to buy for family members, consider buying them from people instead of corporations, using this holiday not only to bless your own family but also to bless another family. Some examples include food from local farmers and art from local artists.

Dec 9 Spend Less

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy any where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Matthew 6:19-21

Who doesn't like to open a gift under the tree with our name on it? But whether it is a new iPhone or socks the stuff that we buy for each other just doesn't last. It also doesn't really satisfy us for very long. The iPhone X comes out and our existing phone seems out of date. Our favorite pair of socks

wears out. We were created for more than socks and phones and Jesus Christ wants us to experience the joy that comes in knowing our Creator as a friend.

Dec 16 Give More

Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full—pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap.

Luke 6:38

We enjoy being around generous people. There is something special about an aunt who always has kind words or a hug just when we need it. Material generosity can be a veil for someone who craves attention and hasn't learned that love is not about the gifts we open. Love is about giving more of ourselves so that we can build authentic friendships that withstand the times when we don't have a way to give anything more than our love. Christmas is a time when we remember the gift that God gave to the world. The most precious gift of all. God gave Himself.

Dec 24 Extend Grace

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall

receive mercy.

Matthew 5:7

Many of us will be spending time this Christmas with members of our family that we don't see too many other times during the year. Sometimes this includes people we would rather not be spending our time with. The bible is clear about how we are to handle people with regard to grace. So, instead of just handing over the card containing the gift card and giving a halfhearted "Merry Christmas," why not give a more worthwhile gift that God has given to each of us. Grace.

Dec 24 Christmas Eve

Don't be afraid! I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people.

Luke 2:10

Be sure to join us on Christmas Eve for a special celebration. The true meaning of Christmas is quite simple. God loves us so much and each one of us is special in God's sight.

Let us thank God for the greatest gift of all time. A gift that will last forever.

Rev Tommy