ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Volume 3 Issue 25

JUNE 25, 2023

Voices (Climate Change)



Greta Thunberg recently held her last protest as a high school student. Starting in 2018, each Friday the teen would skip school to raise awareness that our climate is changing due to human exploitation of the earth's resources.

Greta's Friday protests were replayed by millions of young people around the world.

Children, youth, and adults from 160 countries joined in for perhaps the largest organized protest against climate change before or since, three days before Greta was invited to speak at the U.N. Climate Action Summit.

At the summit, Greta told policymakers, "I shouldn't be up here. I should be back in school on the other side of the ocean. You are failing us. But the young people are starting to understand your betrayal. The eyes of all future generations are upon you." Page 7

EVERYONE

HAVE

A

WONDERFUL WEEKEND!



Oneness (Finding the Way)



"Well, I guess it's over!" the man said, exasperated and out of breath. "But there's still time on the clock. We can't give up now!" she responded with winded enthusiasm. That's the problem with time. It has limits. When I think about it, it is consistent with almost everything we know about life.

Not everything has limits. Scientists tell us that the universe continues to expand even though the belief is that all energy that ever existed is already out there. The vast majority of us stand in awe. We don't understand it and can't explain it.

In an interview about his son Max after winning a national competition for solving Rubik's cubes, Schwan Park said. He looked like a kid who

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Oneness (Finding the Way)

who found his tribe." On ABC's World News the other night, Max's father noted that once you find your tribe of people you connect with, the sky's the limit." Max Parker is autistic and recently set a new world record by solving a Rubik's cube in just over 3 seconds.

Who is your tribe? First, a tribe extends beyond biological connections. The common ingredient is a mutual love for one another and a desire to do things together. An identity merges out of a tribe, even if no name is chosen to represent it.

Several years ago, a group living a couple blocks from Asbury found a common purpose in what they wanted their community to be like. They called their tribe the "Peace Mob." I miss their enthusiasm and energy.

Schwan Park is on to something. When we're part of a tribe, our connections resemble our ever-expanding universe. Whatever limits may still be limited, they're out there waiting to be discovered. How does this happen, and how can we all be part of a tribe that goes beyond expected limits and enjoys recordsetting accomplishments?

...cont from page 1

What better source for the answer than the One who created the ever-expanding universe.

"Let Us make humankind in Our image after Our likeness!" said God. "God and I are One," said Jesus. Hmmm? Meanwhile, the Spirit hovered upon the surface of the water. "Is it possible?" Tasmin thought to herself.

As her novel nears the end, things start jelling for the main character of Angela Hunt's novel, Daughter of Cana. While Tasmin is an imaginary character in a fictional book, her story is also a mirror for anyone hoping to find a tribe they belong to.

I am the way, the truth and the life... Now that you know me, you know God ...

John 14:6-7

The only spoiler alert necessary as we finish our companion book for this series is the specific details of characters that aren't spelled out in scripture. Yet, every thought, action, and reaction we read reveals our struggles with imagining how an already massive universe keeps expanding. And how we can be a part of the expansion rather than a victim of downsizing. In other words, don't we all prefer abundance over scarcity?

On the night that Jesus was arrested, He gave us all a summary glimpse of what was to come. Everything pointed to what followed but, like an everexpanding universe, it is too much for us to wrap our heads around.

Follow the logic as Jesus laid it out at supper with His friends. First, notice the venue. They are gathered together for a meal. They are a tribe that chooses to spend time together and work together.

Second, Jesus uses an ordinary custom to teach the secret of abundance. Similar to today, it was customary to wash up before a meal. The feet of Jesus and His followers carried layers of dust and dirt from each road and pathway they traversed. And custom-mandated clean feet and hands at the supper table.

Hospitality customs included the host providing water and, in the case of wealthier hosts, a servant to wash the feet of quests. Jesus and His tribe weren't well off. So Jesus washed the feet of each friend, one by one. They were flabbergasted. Jesus was their teacher, leader, and longawaited Savior. Messiahs don't wash feet, do they?

Oneness (Finding the Way) cont. from pg 2

Later, during His toast, Jesus shares the secret to an ever expanding universe and reveals the secret to abundance. Love God and love each other. And what does love look like? Love looks like a tribe of persons that matter to each other. They share a common connection. In this case, Jesus is talking about a tribe we call Christianity.

But Christianity is too much like the universe. The name represents hundreds of millions of diverse people and thoughts about what it means to say this is who I am. The name itself conjures both positive and negative images.

Nevertheless, this is a starting point. Our shared connection with other Christians is we believe that Jesus Christ is God. And Jesus makes it abundantly clear that if you know Him, you know God. Most importantly, if you love Him, you do as He teaches you.

Love is the key that opens the door to God's abundance. Find Jesus and you will find your tribe. Find your tribe and do as Jesus teaches and your community will flourish. You can join us each Sunday in person or online by clicking the button on our <u>website's</u> homepage - <u>Click here to watch</u>. This button takes you to our <u>YouTube channel</u>. You can find more information about us on our website at <u>FlintAsbury.org</u>.

A reminder that we publish this newsletter that we call the Circuit Rider each week. You can request this publication by email. Send a request to connect@FlintAsbury.org or let us know when you send a message through our website. We post an archive of past editions on our website under the tab, Connect - choose Newsletters.

Pastor Tommy

Our series was inspired by and relies on content provided by Angela Hunt. *Daughter of Cana*. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2020

John Branch. "Children of the Cube." © New York Times, August 15, 2018. Retrieved

from: *link*

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IN OUR PRAYERS

Kevin Croom Jose Trejo Sylvia Pittman JoAn Kirby Jonathon Misner



FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE

Dean Lamoreaux

Nancy Elston

Norma Buzzard



PASTOR BOOK CLUB NEWS



OUR WEDNESDAY BOOK CLUB

WILL BE TAKING A BREAK

FOR THE MONTHS OF

JULY AND AUGUST. STAY TUNE

FOR UPDATES ON THE

START DATE HERE IN OUR

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER.

EVERYONE ENJOY YOUR SUMMER!!

Our Asbury member Nancy Elston is now at Willowbrook Manor on Beecher Rd. Please keep her in your prayers.



COMING UP THIS WEEK JUNE 26 - JULY 2



June 26 Mon 2:00pm Staff Meeting

6:00pm Worship Team

June 27 Tues 10:00am-12:30pm

Food Distribution

3:00pm CDC Board Meeting

June 28 Wed 11am-12N Food Giveaway at

South Flint Soup Kitchen

12Noon Pastor Book Club

Jun 29 Thu

Jun 30 Fri

July 1 Sat

July 2 Sun 10:30am New Beginnings

Contemporary Worship

(We are live on <u>Facebook</u> and our newly launched <u>YouTube channel</u>. You can find these links along with more information about us on our website at <u>FlintAsbury.org</u>.)

Upcoming Worship Series "Water into Wine"



Book Club News



The very first Easter marked the beginning of a new era in human history. God chose to live among humans, and,

as a result, life

South Flint Soup Kitchen

would never be the same.

ANGELA HUNT

We begin a new worship series called Water into Wine in

Asbury Staff

Rev. Dr. Tommy McDoniel Pastor & Exec Dir Office Manager Connie Portillo Sulvia Pittman Empowerment Arts Jim Craig Board & Leadership Chair Exec Chef & Dir Opers Kevin Croom Mike Sampson Farms Manager South Campus Bldg Mgr Finance Director Kim Sims Connections Supry Terrance Williams Arts Center Mgr Katelin Maylum Sr Prog Mgr Local Foods

According to scripture, Mary, the mother of Jesus, attended a wedding in Cana. The guest list was apparently quite long and included Jesus and other friends of the family, relatives, and friends of friends. Weddings lasted multiple days, and the groom was expected to provide ample food and wine for all guests to have their fill. And this wedding was no different. But a problem was brewing.

The Gospels are full of stories void of detail. Rather than a fictional novel where an author takes us through every twist and turn, building characters with dialogue and description, the bible leaves us hungry for more.

Page 6

the spirit of new beginnings. Our companion book was written by best-selling author Angela Hunt. This book is a part of her *Ierusalem Road* series that takes readers on a tour of the many characters found in scripture and a few that didn't get mentioned.

Although Hunt's book is fictional, her attention to details in scripture challenges our knowledge of the Bible. With each character, we meet the questions that percolate inside us. What parts of her description are likely genuine,

Leadership in Worship & Service

Tony & Mirium Anthony & Jim Jonathon & Terrance Yasheah & Mirium Cyndi Christine & Norma

Welcome Team Ushers Production Team Nursery Worship Leader Cafe

and which are made up? Was Thomas really like that? Did Thomas have a twin sister?

Allow our author's creativity to ignite your creativity in exploring the stories of Jesus. Here's what the publisher says about the book:

> Thomas and Tasmin, twin siblings hired to oversee a wedding feast in Cana, worry when the host runs out of wine . . . until a guest tells Tasmin to have the servants fill the pitchers by the gate with water from the cistern. Reluctantly, she obeys and is amazed when rainwater becomes the finest wine ever tasted in Cana.

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Upcoming Worship Series—"Water into Wine" ...cont from pg 5

Who is the twin brother of Thomas, or is she his sister? Who else was in the room when Jesus washed the feet of His closest allies? Who prepared the meals? What did they eat?

Beginning the first Sunday after Easter, join us as we explore possible answers to questions left hanging from Nazareth to Jerusalem. We start with a story of Jesus as a young boy gone missing as His family returned home from celebrating Passover in Jerusalem.

We won't dive into every story, but all of the tales add to a greater familiarity and a deeper understanding of the Gospels.

We won't allow best-selling author and theologian Angela Hunt to fill in some of the details behind the stories. Each week, after reading the story as told by Angela's creative imagination and gift for storytelling, we will dig into what scripture actually tells us. And we will imagine and share our own versions, as we find ourselves immersed in the stories of Jesus.

In a book from her *Jerusalem Road* series, *Daughter of Cana*, Angela follows Jesus from Nazareth to Cana, Capernaum, and Jerusalem. Along the road to Jerusalem, we will meet other characters, some only mentioned by name or reference, nevertheless, witnesses of God living among us.

You are invited to join us on Wednesdays at Noon to dig deeper into each week's message. You can purchase Angela Hunt's book, look for it at the library, contact our office for a copy, or pick up a copy before or after worship on Sunday.

I pray that you will join us each Sunday morning at 10:30 am. We share our weekly episodes on our **YouTube channel**. We go live at 10:30 am. You can find these links along with more information about us, or join our live broadcast on our **website** at **FlintAsbury.org**.

Pastor Tommy

Angela Hunt. Daughter of Cana. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2020.

The Cop28 UN climate talks are scheduled later this year in Dubai, hosted by a country whose economy depends on oil and gas production. The head of UAE's national oil company, Adnoc, will chair the talks. His company has plans underway for a massive expansion of its fossil fuel production capacity.

Meanwhile, greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise, reaching a new high in 2022. And the most visible fallout is an increase in extreme weather. Droughts, fires, floods, and violent weather are now a regular feature on the evening news. Even the least knowledgeable about the subject can sense that something is wrong.

Greta Thunberg, along with numerous scientists and environmental activists, have challenged world leaders entrusted to take action to set a direction of phasing out the use of fossil fuels altogether. Otherwise, we may soon reach a point where extreme measures are insufficient. The poorest among us already suffer the most from inaction, and "We are still rushing towards the cliff," Greta warns.

When we choose to be fearless and hold up a mirror that exposes greed and hypocrisy, the world will respond violently. We can anticipate pushback that feels like a crippling attack, from name calling to childish tweets. When we stand up to power, we can expect an unpleasant reaction.

According to a study published by Global Witness, the deaths of environmental activists from unnatural causes are rising rapidly. Over the past ten years, an environmental activist was murdered every two days, usually in smaller, poorer countries, where exploitation of natural resources promises economic benefit.

We read in Matthew that the whole city of Jerusalem was thrown into an uproar when Jesus arrived. Can you imagine a similar scene today? I can picture breaking news interrupting regularly scheduled programming and thousands glued to their iPhones wondering whether the reserve was activated just in case. Jesus' picture and soundbites are on repeat to convince the public to consume more media coverage. And, of course, to patronize the advertisers paying for the cost of coverage. It would be a media extravaganza.

And just when His followers thought that it might be wise to bring it down a notch, Jesus took the volume to full power. He goes into the Temple courts and seals His fate with those who have benefited from the exploitation of the poor. All around Him, I can hear angry voices, "This man must be stopped," shouted anyone caught in the crosshairs of

Jesus' divine view of injustice.

Matthew tells us that Jesus went into the Temple and drove out all those buying and selling livestock. He overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the stools of those who sold pigeons.

Can you imagine the scene that day in the Temple courts? Loose change bouncing along the stone floors? Businessmen get out of His way, wondering if he is armed, whether the member of His gang are itching for a fight, and knowing that they want to go home that day. They must have wondered when the Temple police would arrest Jesus. I bet it was loud and upsetting to a lot of people.

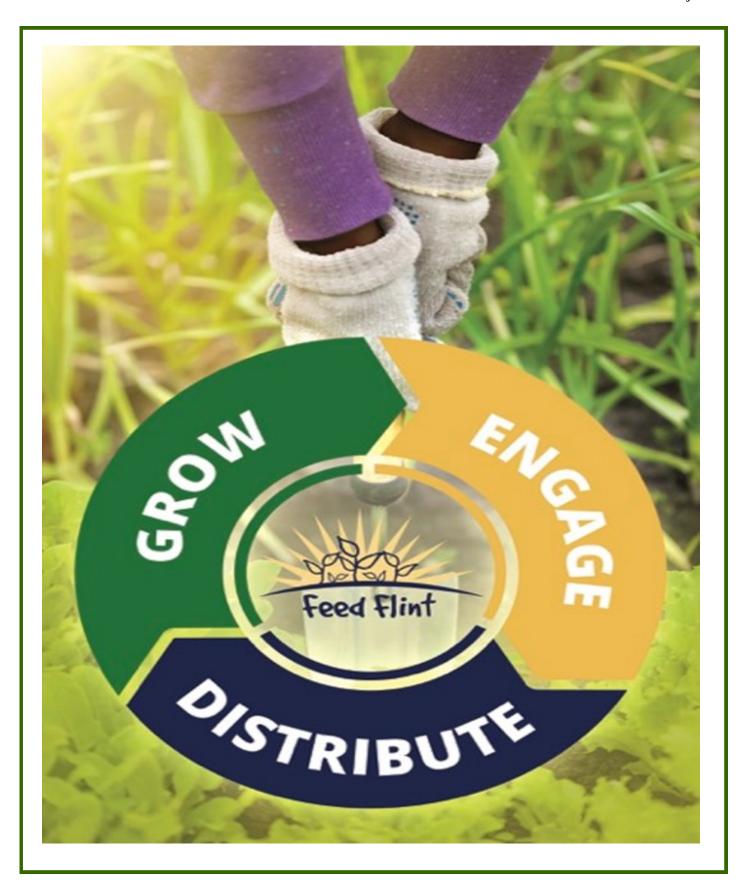
Jesus went into the Temple and drove out those buying and selling. He overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the stools of those selling pigeons.

Matthew 21:12

It must have been the lead news story, given that the whole city was in uproar. No wonder.

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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

South Flint Soup Kitchen



Bottled Water Drive

ALL SUMMER LONG!

Our clients need bottled water for cooking, going with sack lunches, to bathe and brush their teeth with, and more!

Donations are acepted Monday-Friday 9:30am-Noon at South Flint Soup Kitchen, 3410 Fenton Road (3 blocks north of Atherton Road) Flint, MI 48507

Questions? Call 810-239-3427 or email southflintsoupkitchen@gmail.com

To donate: www.mightycause.com/feedflint





ASBURY FARM FRESH - TRY OUR WEEKLY VEGGIE BOX FOR \$10.00 -

SIGN UP FOR A FREE ASBURY FARMS ACCOUNT TODAY

AND

Receive a \$15 credit on your account for your first purchase

CREATE YOUR OWN VEGGIE BOX

Select what goes in your box from each week's harvest. Get \$5 off your next order when you fill your box with \$15 of produce.

WANT US TO DECIDE FOR YOU?

Choose Veggie Box Subscription and we will fill your order with a variety of each week's harvest. Pay when you pick up your box. A \$15 VALUE FOR \$10.

* CONVENIENT PICKUP AT ASBURY OR AT THE SOUTH FLINT SOUP KITCHEN *

When Thomas impulsively decides to follow the teacher from Nazareth, he and Tasmin argue. The twins have been together since the womb, and Tasmin can't accept losing her brother to some magician-prophet. But, aided by Jude, younger brother to Jesus of Nazareth, she decides to follow the Nazarene's group and do whatever she must to mend the fractured relationship and bring her brother home.

Angela Hunt has published over 100 books, selling nearly 5 million copies worldwide. Angela, a New York Times bestselling author, received the Times Book Club Lifetime Achievement Award in 2006. She has a Ph.D. in biblical studies in theology and is well-versed in biblical text. Angela can be found online at www.angelahuntbooks.com.

If you prefer to avoid groups or live too far away, I encourage you to join us via Zoom for our Wednesday gatherings. Alternatively, you can call in by phone, be heard, and hear what others say by calling (929) 436-2866 -- enter the meeting ID, 282 039 5568#.

We are a diverse group and are delighted when new people join us. I hope that you will join in on our discussion.

You can contact our office with questions, by phone or simply type your question or enter a prayer request on our website's homepage — FlintAsbury.org.

Pastor Tommy

Angela Hunt. *Daughter of Cana*. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2020.

"Ways to Give to South Flint Soup Kitchen"

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 Cash App \$SFSK48507

Donations can be dropped off Monday-Friday 9:30am-Noon. 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.

Visit our Ebay store! Our handle is southflint84
We have old school Beanie Babies (tags still attached!) and
vintage graded baseball cards currently. Look back frequently
for the addition of new items!

Refer people!!

Questions??? Call 810-239-3427

or email southflintsoupkitchen@gmail.com

JUNE GIVEAWAY QUALIFICATIONS

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South Flint Soup Kitchen

ANGEL CLOSET PROCEDURES

YOU MUST BRING PROOF OF INCOME WITH YOUR NAME AND THE DATE (FROM THIS YEAR ONLY) CLEARLY LISTED ON THE PROOF.

CLIENTS QUALIFY FOR FREE ANGEL CLOSET SERVICES IF THEY MEET THE FOLLOWING:

HOUSEHOLD SIZE ANNUAL INCOME:

1 - \$17.667

2 - \$23,803

3 - \$29,939

4 - \$36,075

IF YOU DON'T MEET THESE
REQUIREMENTS OR HAVE A PROOF
PRESENT, THERE WILL BE A SMALL
ADMINISTRATION FEE OF \$5.

QUESTIONS??? CALL 810-239-3427

Jesus knew that what He was doing would attract attention. A lot of attention and attention that would not end well in terms of His safety. But Jesus knew something else that we sort of know but don't always know in a way that affects our actions. Jesus trusted in God, and He trusted that God was always on the side of justice.

Jesus taught His followers about divine justice and why exploiting is wrong. Jesus taught that benefiting from systems that exploit the poor, or anyone else, is not a part of the Kingdom that Jesus presides over. So Jesus turned over the tables, both literally and metaphorically.

The merchants sitting at the tables participated in systems that exploited the poor. Still, Jesus knew that the power behind the systems was watching others do the works that filled their pockets. In their case, holding onto power by claiming a religious exemption. "You hypocrites!" said Jesus. "You clean the outside of your cup and plate while the inside is full of what you have gotten by violence and selfishness."

By the end of the day, the authorities knew what had to be done. Rather than enact positive change, they would silence Jesus.

When you and I turnover tables. When we let our voices be heard that we want real solutions that reduce the harm we're doing to our earth. When we challenge the systems that benefit us because they cause harm. Our children notice and thank us, but those who benefit from unjust systems will also take notice. And the tweets will begin, but they will be only one weapon in the arsenal of the powerful. Some will go to great lengths to stop us. And some of the violence will come from people who claim to know us.

The powerful seldom wait for the voices challenging them to quit on their own. They respond with force because their power depends on silencing voices challenging their prosperity.

Scientists estimate that without drastically reducing greenhouse gas emissions, our earth will soon reach a tipping point. And it may be too late. In the meantime, the damage disproportionately affects the poorest among us. But there is no doubt that we're all negatively impacted.

Each of us has a voice. Some of us use our voices through speeches. Others are writers. Many of us can project pleasing melodies and harmonies. Many of us paint, carve, or build, while others research, investigate or construct policy.

God hears our voices as praises of thanksgiving.

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 *FlintAsbury.org*.

A reminder that we publish this newsletter that we call the Circuit Rider each week. You can request this publication by email. Send a request to connect@FlintAsbury.org or let us know when you send a message through our website. We post an archive of past editions on our website under the tab, Connect - choose Newsletters.

Pastor Tommy

Our series was inspired by and relies on content provided by Angela Hunt. Daughter of Cana. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2020. Betsy Reed. "Greta Thunberg: not phasing out fossil fuels is 'death sentence' for world's poor." © The Guardian, June 14, 2023. Retrieved from: link

Nicole Hassenstab. "The Cost of Environmental Activism." © American University, October 28, 2022. Retrieved from: <u>link</u>





FAQs: How Church Communities Can Support Senior Members

Many houses of worship have been able to commute their traditional inperson services to live stream services, ensuring that members have access to the essentials of faith, love, and compassion during these difficult times. Still, in making this transition, many senior church members may feel left behind, and other members may begin to worry about their health and safety. That's why it can be so helpful for church leaders to keep FAQ sheets handy like this one from Asbury so that they can help those who need it most.

Q1: What options do we have to ensure our senior brothers and sisters are fed?

Nourishment is vital for health and wellness and churches can use these invaluable resources to help seniors get the food they need without risking a trip to the store:

Find Local Grocery Delivery Services

Produce Box Subscriptions

Help Seniors Find Food Assistance_

Q2: How can we help our older generations avoid feeling isolated and alone?

Socializing at church can provide a different kind of nourishment for older adults, and thankfully there are safe ways to fill in the gaps left by online services.

7 Virtual Tools to Keep Seniors Connected

Does Medicare Cover Mental Health Services Like Therapy?

Q3: How can we support seniors who have experienced a loss due?

There's no question that older populations have been more impacted by coronavirus, and these resources can be so helpful for providing support to seniors who are grieving a loss.

Individual Support Through Pathways Counseling

Online Grief Support Groups

Help Them Facilitate a Downsize by Selling Their Home

Q4: How can we care for seniors who have been diagnosed with coronavirus?

Finding out that senior church members are suffering due to COVID-19 can be disheartening, even after the worst days of the pandemic, but there are also ways that communities can safely help these folks in need.

How to Care for Someone with COVID-19

Gift Ideas to Help Those in Isolation

Consider Giving Them a Meal Delivery Subscription

Church communities are so much like our families. It makes sense to want to honor and care for your golden members. With any hope, you will find the information and resources in this FAQ sheet helpful for assisting these senior family members during this unprecedented time of need.

Photo Credit: Pixabay

Asbury envisions a community in love with God, with each other and with our neighbor, evidenced by the transformation of ourselves and our neighborhood. Contact us today to learn more! (810) 235-0016

Article written by Jason Lewis



Clarkston United Methodist
Church's Love in Action group was
with us for the week of June 5, 2023
making some much needed building
repairs! This included: repairing a
burnt down fence on our property,
painting walls, painting our logo on
the wall, yard work, new flooring and
shelves in our conference room, clean
up of our attic, repair of our chair lift
to be used as a DIY conveyor belt for
food bags, and so much more!











Words cannot express how grateful we are for their love and support! Thank you SO much Clarkston United Methodist Church!!

*** ANGEL CLOSET: We are pretty well stocked, but could use larger sized shoes for men and women (sizes 10+), personal hygiene products (shampoo, conditioner, razors, diapers, toilet paper, etc.), and men's jeans. Please keep in mind that we do not accept clothing with holes, stains, or unlaundered donations.

We are still in need of bottled water!!

All items must be clean and hand out ready.

If you are in doubt, please call us before making the trip: 810-239-3427.

We accept donations Monday-Friday, 9:30am-Noon, special appointments available upon request.