

Asbury First NEWS SHEET

SEPTEMBER 2023

asburyfirst.org

*You're invited! Join us for upcoming
worship, fellowship, and fun.*

585-271-1050

Together In Ministry Kick-Off Sunday

Sunday, September 10, 11 am

It's time to dream again as a congregation! Join us for Together in Ministry Kick-Off Sunday on September 10 as we celebrate all that God has accomplished through us in the last several years and begin to dream together again about who God is calling us to be in the years ahead. Together in Ministry Sunday is our traditional kick-off for the programmatic year and an opportunity to come back to worship in person (or online), to invite a friend, to sign up for a small group, to volunteer for a new role (outreach, hospitality, administration, etc.), and, this year, to dream again! Come and share your dreams! We hope to see you then!



Where, oh where, has the (adult) Sunday School gone?

Sunday, September 10, 10 am, Fellowship Hall

Come on Sunday, September 10, at 10 am to the Adult Sunday School open house in Fellowship Hall [final date and location subject to change] and we'll tell you not only where they've gone but where they might be going AND plans for upcoming Adult Sunday School programs. For more information, contact Mike Mullin at mmullin@asburyfirst.org or at 585-271-1050 x105.



Children's Ministry Kick-Off and Open House

Sunday, September 10, 10 am, Education Wing

Children's Ministry will Kick-Off the Fall with an Open House on September 10 at 10 am. Come visit us on the second floor and see what's happening for children this school year. You can register your child for Sunday School, tour our classrooms and children's music room, and hopefully get to know some other parents. We will have a brochure and flyers with more detailed information. After touring our Open House you can take your children to a bounce house outside on the lawn while enjoying live music from the Melody Masters Band! For more information, contact Paula Dugan at pdugan@asburyfirst.org or at 585-271-1050 x111. We hope to see you there!



Live Music and Lunch

Sunday, September 10, 12 pm, Front Lawn

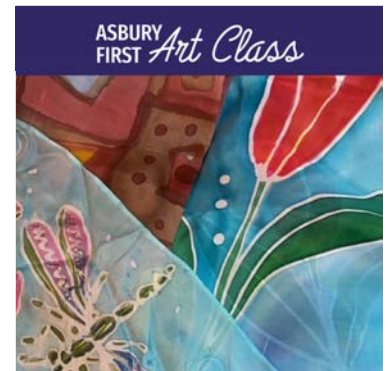
Join us in celebrating our traditional kick-off for the programmatic year with live music and lunch! After worship on Sunday, September 10, join us as we enjoy hot dogs and live music from the Melody Masters Big Band. It will be a swinging event and a great opportunity to come back together in ministry and fellowship. For more information, contact Paula Dugan at pdugan@asburyfirst.org or at 585-271-1050 x111. See you there!



Asbury Art Class – Silk Painting

Tuesdays, beginning September 5, 12:30–3 pm, Room 205

The Asbury Art Class will begin a new project starting on September 5. We are going to paint on silk scarves. This means the scarves will be stretched on frames and painted with your design. All materials – stretcher frames, silk scarves, paints, brushes, and designs will be provided. Cost will be assessed after class size is determined. Please email Linda Clemow at soulsourcstudio1@gmail.com for more information and to register.



Sanctuary Choir and Asbury Ringers Rehearsals Resume September 6

September is the time of year when Asbury First's music groups resume their weekly rehearsals. Sanctuary Choir will reconvene on Wednesday, September 6, beginning with a dessert social hour at 6:45 pm in the Gathering Center and continuing with rehearsal in Wesley Hall from 7:30–9 pm. New members are always welcome! If you are interested in joining, please get in touch with Dr. Carl Johengen at cjohengen@asburyfirst.org.

Likewise, the Asbury Ringers will have their first rehearsal of the new season on Wednesday, September 13, beginning at 7 pm. The Asbury Ringers have a few openings and are looking for enthusiastic musicians who can read music, are open to learning bell techniques, and can commit to our rehearsal and playing schedule. Rehearsals are Wednesday evenings from 7–8:30 pm. If you are interested, please contact Elizabeth Church at echurch@asburyfirst.org and we'll have you come visit to see if the choir is a fit for you!



1050 Driveway Change

Along with the driveway sealing and re-painting of the lines in our parking lot and driveways, the driveway next to 1050 now has 2-way access (like the 1010 driveway), and the parallel parking there has been eliminated. Please be careful as you use this driveway (in either direction) while everyone gets accustomed to this change.



AED/CPR Training

Thursday, September 7, 7 pm, 1040 Gathering Center
Monday, September 11, 7 pm, 1010 Red Room

Shock for Life instructors are coming to the Asbury First on September 7 and 11 for trainings using our AED systems. This will be an opportunity for our ushers, ministers, staff, and volunteers in the Community Outreach Center to be trained on the use of our AEDs and CPR training. People can attend either session and do not have to attend both. Questions? Please contact Deb Bullock-Smith at dbullocksmith@asburyfirst.org or by calling 585-271-1050.



As The Spirit Moves Us

Sundays, Beginning September 10, 9:45–10:45 am, Room LL
and Zoom (zoom.us/j/6174865464 PW Disciple)

As The Spirit Moves is a class founded on forming a welcoming community to study Biblical events through scripture as well as Christian-based literature. All are welcome, and every voice is heard as we become better together.

On Sunday, September 10, our class will begin by exploring the resurrection of Christ Jesus and the ways we can live a life leading us to resurrection. From there we will let the Spirit move us to continue to follow The Way. For more information about this class, please contact Mike Mullin at mmullin@asburyfirst.org or at 585-271-1050 x105.



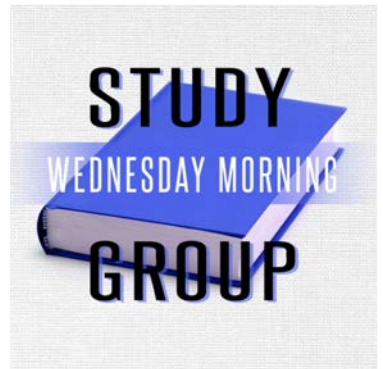
Wednesday Morning Study Group

Wednesdays, Beginning September 13, 10–11:30 am, 1010 Red Room and Zoom
(zoom.us/j/6174865464 PW Disciple)

All are invited to join this book discussion group as we meet in-person and on Zoom on Wednesday mornings. Some have been a part of this group for years, while others come and go depending on availability and the books that we are reading. This year, we will be reading: *A Pilgrimage to Eternity*; *Poverty, By America*; *The Gift of Years*; *The Flag, The Cross, and The Station Wagon*; and we will finish up with a few documentary films on *Discover Islam*.

On September 13, we will begin discussing chapters 1-3 from *A Pilgrimage to Eternity*. This book highlights a pilgrimage from Canterbury to Rome, and will invite us to consider our own pilgrimages of faith that we have encountered throughout our lives. At the end of our reading, we will even have the opportunity to plan a pilgrimage of our own—admittedly on a much smaller scale. We will begin our next book, *Poverty, By America*, at the start of Advent.

For more information, please contact Mike Mullin at mmullin@asburyfirst.org.



Welcome Our New Communications Assistant

Please join us in welcoming Ly Tran. She will be working with Sarah as our new Communications Assistant. Ly is currently a student at RIT studying Graphic Design. Originally from Vietnam, she has been a Rochester local for the past 11 years. She is an enthusiastic and talented designer and we are excited to have her join Asbury First. Ly can be contacted at ltran@asburyfirst.org or at 585-271-1050 x108.



The Discipleship Project

We are thrilled to announce year three of The Discipleship Project at Asbury First will officially begin this Fall! If you are looking for a small group focused on mutual support in faith, this might be the place for you!

Over the course of The Discipleship Project, we will move “From Dreaming to Doing” in thoughtful weekly discussions that are framed by the liturgical seasons in the life of the church. Groups work together to navigate the path of integrating inward and outward expressions of faith and action.

Groups are forming in September and will begin in October. If you are interested in participating in The Discipleship Project, please contact Rev. Rachel Ann Dupont at rdupont@asburyfirst.org or 585-271-1050 x113.



Children's Music Begins September 13

Children's Music begins Wednesday, September 13 and we'd love to have your children join us! We offer music fundamentals, exposure to handbells, chimes, and percussion, and opportunities to sing in church and be a part of a spring musical. There is a Wednesday evening Community meal in the Gathering Center from 5:30-6 pm to help make the evening more manageable for families. We meet in the Children's Music Room 201 upstairs in the Education Wing at the following times:

Hallelujah Kids (age 4-1st grade) meets from 5-5:30 pm

Wesley Singers & Ringers (2nd-5th grades) meets from 6-7 pm

Visit asburyfirst.org/news to register or look for registration forms at the Welcome Desk. For more information contact Holly Temming at htemming@asburyfirst.org or (585) 271-1050 x114.



New Fall Course — Let Freedom Read!

**Wednesdays, September 13, 20, 27, 6-7 pm,
Room 205 and on Zoom (zoom.us/j/8347173468 PW 200)**

Did you know that the *Bible* has been banned? What about *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Huckleberry Finn*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, and even *Goodnight Moon*? In 2022, there were 1,269 demands to censor library books and resources, up almost double from 2021, and nearly ten times from 2020. Of those, 90% were attempts to censor multiple books, targeting a record number of 2,571 unique titles. The majority were written by or about members of the LGBTQIA+ community or by and about Black people, Indigenous people, and people of color. What does it mean for a book to be censored or banned? Is this something we, as Christians, should care about? And if so, what could we even do? Come to our class in September, led by our newly formed Banned Book Team to find out. For more information, contact Mike Mullin at mmullin@asburyfirst.org.

- **Sept. 13** — Why should we care about challenged and banned books?
- **Sept. 20** — What are some books that have been challenged or banned?
- **Sept. 27** — Where do we go from here?



Rev. Rachel Dupont Moves to Half-Time Appointment

Beginning September 4, 2023, the Rev. Rachel Dupont, our Minister for Christian Formation and Director of the Discipleship Project, will move from a full-time to a half-time appointment at Asbury First. This move comes at Rachel's request as this fall she will be entering the University of Rochester's School of Medicine and Dentistry's program of Marriage and Family Therapy. As an ordained elder in the United Methodist Church, Rev. Dupont will attend this program, focused on family systems therapy, toward opportunities to provide healing leadership both within and outside congregations and ministries. This move is supported by Asbury First leadership and blessed by the Bishop, who holds all appointive authority at Asbury First. In addition to Sunday mornings, Rachel will normally be in the office on Mondays and Wednesdays and will focus primarily on empowering leaders for the Discipleship Project (our small groups ministry) and providing pastoral leadership for the Racial Equity Team.



Youth Musical: Godspell

Auditions: Wednesday, September 13, 6 pm, Sanctuary

Our Youth Musical this Fall will be *Godspell*! Auditions begin in September with show dates of November 10–12, 2023. After the incredible success of *The Sound of Music*, we cannot wait to put together another incredible musical experience. For more information, please contact Larry Dugan at ldugan@asburyfirst.org or by calling the church office at 585-271-1050.

Godspell is a musical composed by Stephen Schwartz with book by John-Michael Tebelak. The show is structured as a series of parables, primarily based on the Gospel of Matthew, interspersed with music mostly set to lyrics from traditional hymns, with the passion of Christ appearing briefly near the end.

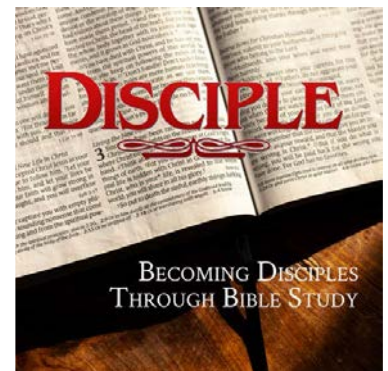


Disciple III Bible Studies

Fridays, Beginning September 15, 9:30-10:30 am, Zoom (zoom.us/j/6174865464 PW Disciple)
Tuesdays, Beginning September 19, 2:30-3:30 pm, Zoom (zoom.us/j/6174865464 PW Disciple)

The Disciple Bible Study series encourages participants to read portions of the Bible everyday, and offers a study guide to help focus our thoughts and questions. We gather together in community to share, reflect, and learn from one another on the readings from the week. This fall, we have two Disciple Bible Study groups that will both be meeting on Zoom.

Friday mornings will be led by Mike Mullin, and will be starting the second half of Disciple III which focuses on the Pauline Epistles. Tuesday afternoons will be led by Ruthellen Hoyle, and will be starting at the beginning of Disciple III, which focuses on the Old Testament prophets. Both groups are open to all. Please contact Mike Mullin with questions or for more information at mmullin@asburyfirst.org or at 585-271-1050 x105.



Welcome Our New Soprano Soloist

Asbury First is delighted to welcome **Gwen Paker** as our new soprano soloist/section leader. Gwen is an award-winning singer, equally at home on the operatic stage and in the concert hall. Gwen holds Master's and Bachelor's degrees in Voice Performance from the Eastman School of Music, as well as a Certificate in Arts Leadership. She won first prize in the 2022 Friends of Eastman Opera Competition, and won the voice department Concerto Competition in 2019. She made her professional debut starring as Gertrude Stein in Virgil Thompson's *The Mother of Us All* with the RPO, and starred in several Eastman Opera Theatre productions. Her passion for music extends beyond performance; she is a member of the voice faculty at the Hochstein School, and works as an arts administrator with Finger Lakes Opera. Gwen's first Sunday with us will be September 10. We are grateful to **Bess Phillips**, who returned to Asbury First during the summer to serve as interim soloist.



Allergy and EPI Pen Training

Tuesday, October 3, 7–8:30 pm, COC Red Room

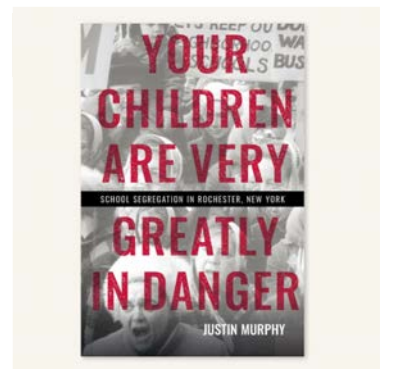
The Allergy Association will provide an informational session about allergies and using an EPI pen in the Red Room (in the Community Outreach Center) from 7 to 8:30 pm on October 3. This is helpful information and will benefit our volunteers, staff, and members in how they respond to a crisis. Visit asburyfirst.org/news to register online, or call the church office at 585-271-1050.



Asbury First Book Read: *Your Children Are Very Greatly in Danger*

Wednesdays, October 4, 11, 18, 25, 6–7 pm, 1040 Sanctuary and Zoom (zoom.us/j/6174865464 PW Disciple)

Many of us had the opportunity to read and discuss *400 Souls* together last year. Following that read, there was a clear call to continue these conversations with a focus on Rochester. With that in mind, we hope you will join us during the month of October as we read through *Your Children Are Very Greatly in Danger* by Justin Murphy. This book highlights the history and realities of our segregated school systems, and offers some ideas and suggestions about how we might advocate for change.



All are encouraged to read along with us, and to join in our public discussions on Wednesdays from 6–7 pm. On October 4, we will be joined by representatives from the Kairos Center for Religions, Rights & Social Justice and the NYS Poor People's Campaign, who will help set the stage on a national level for some of the disparities and challenges that we will encounter as we read through Murphy's book. Please contact Mike Mullin with questions or for more information at mmullin@asburyfirst.org.

Participants are encouraged to read the following before each gathering:

- October 4 – The Introduction
- October 11 – Chapters 1-3
- October 18 – Chapters 4-6
- October 19 – Chapters 7-8 and the Conclusion

CONTINUING CLASSES, GROUPS, AND EVENTS

Lectio Divina

Tuesdays, 8:30–9 am, Zoom (zoom.us/j/8347173468 PW 200)

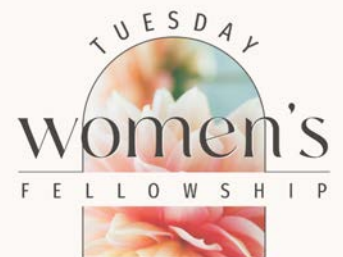
Lectio Divina is a contemplative practice on reading scripture. A passage of scripture is read, then there is silent meditation, then the passage is read again, then more silence, and then discussion. The silence is an opportunity to reflect upon what you experienced in the scripture. This half hour opens and closes with prayer. All are welcome. For more information please contact Rev. Kathy Thiel at kthiel@asburyfirst.org or at 585-271-1050 x106.



Tuesday Women's Fellowship

Tuesdays, 9:30-10:30 am, Zoom (zoom.us/j/8347173468 PW 200)

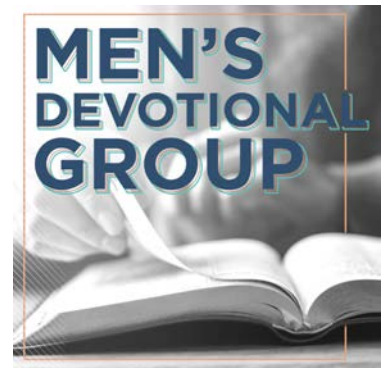
Looking for a way to stay connected to your Asbury First friends during the week? Want to meet new Asbury First friends? All women, all ages, are welcome to join the Tuesday Women's Fellowship via Zoom, 9:30–10:30 am each week. Bring your coffee or tea, and perhaps a treat, zoom in and enjoy an hour of devotion, sharing, and connection. If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Elizabeth Church, coordinator, at emchurch418@gmail.com. Hope to see you soon!



Men's Devotional Group

Wednesdays, 7 am, Zoom (zoom.us/j/8347173468 PW 200)

Men of all ages are welcome to join us on Wednesday mornings via Zoom as we discuss topics of faith, life, and more. Each week, a different member of the group leads us in a devotion for our time together. These can be instructional, reflective, conversational, etc. This is a wonderful group to make and build connections, and we hope that you will drop in to join us!



Prayer Shawl Ministry

4th Wednesday of the Month, 3–4:30 pm, Library

A prayer shawl is a simple shawl or a lap blanket knitted by members of our group. It is symbolic of an inclusive, unconditionally loving God. The knitting itself is very simple and we have “experts” on hand to help you if you are a beginner. The group meets monthly on the fourth Wednesday. Clergy and lay members of our church identify those who may benefit from our ministry and a shawl, and they're delivered by ministers or congregation members. Questions? Contact Meredith Pixley at meredithpixley@gmail.com.



CONTINUING CLASSES, GROUPS, AND EVENTS

Carvers of Hope

4th Wednesday of the Month, 6:30–8 pm, Education Wing

Carvers of Hope is a wood carving ministry that helps people who find themselves in the very difficult places of life. Its members carve handmade crosses as a reminder of the hope Jesus brought to us through the cross. All materials, wood, and carving tools are provided, as well as carving lessons. No prior skill is needed to carve crosses with this group. If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact John Smalt at jhsmalt@gmail.com.



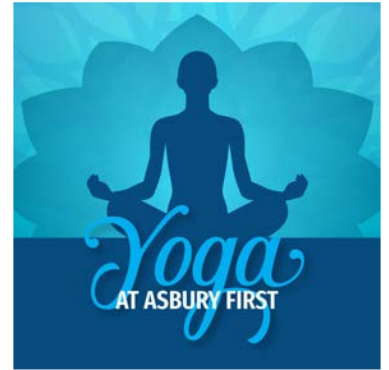
Yoga at Asbury First

Tuesdays, 3 pm, Gathering Center, \$10 pay at the door

Thursdays, 4 pm, Gathering Center, \$10 pay at the door

Gentle Yoga has returned to Asbury First each Tuesday at 3 pm and now Thursday at 4 pm. Each session will be gentle in nature, beginner-friendly, and inclusive to those in need of different supports. Join us for an hour of breathing, movement, and awareness, with meditation. Please wear loose-fitting clothing that is comfortable for a wide range of movement. A limited number of yoga mats and props (blocks, straps, etc.) will be available, but you are encouraged to bring your own.

The sessions will be run by Kelly Noyes, who is certified from the Kripalu School of Yoga and Health and is registered with Yoga Alliance (RYT 200). For more information, please contact Kelly at knoyes710@aol.com.





Dining & Caring Center

Open for hot meals, and shower and hair care services. Laundry services by appointment.

Hours:

- Breakfast served Wednesday–Friday, 7–9 am; Lunch served Sunday only, 12–1pm
- Hair Care services available the last Sunday of the month from 12–1 pm
- Shower services available Wednesday–Thursday from 7–9 am on a first-come, first-serve basis
- Laundry services available Wednesday–Thursday from 7–9 am by appointment (Appointments are made in-person the prior week and are on a first-come, first-serve basis)

Bike Repair Ministry

- R Community Bikes will provide basic bicycle repair and tune-ups on a first-come, first-serve basis at the garage behind the COC and playground.
- **Hours:** Thursdays, May–September, 7:30–11:30 am

Evarts UR Well Clinic

- **Hours:** Thursday evening from 6–8:30 pm
- **Appointments:** Schedule by calling the church office at 585-271-1050 or online at bit.ly/URWell-Appointment

Storehouse

- **Hours:** Monday–Thursday from 9 am–3 pm, as well as the third and fourth Saturday of the month from 9 am–12 pm.

- **Donations:** We are accepting donations in our new donation building (small brick building) located next to the COC at 1010 East Ave.

Grocery Bag Ministry

- The GBM has transitioned fully to operating in the Community Outreach Center. Join us on Saturday, August 19 at 8 am to help us pack groceries for those in need.

Community Garden

- The Community Garden Team is tending the garden, and their results are starting to sprout! They also have added two bee hives on the church roof to help with pollination, as well as a bird bath that also allows tired bees to stop for a drink of water.

If you are interested in volunteering in the Center you can do so by visiting asburyfirst.org/coc or by calling the Rev. Pat Dupont at (585) 271-1050 x136. For any other needs, call our full-time social worker, Robin Manley at 585-271-1050 x138.

COC Volunteer Orientation

Wednesday, September 20, 6:30–8 pm, COC Dining & Caring Center
Friday, September 23, 10–11:30 am, COC Dining & Caring Center

Are you as excited about the new Community Outreach Center (COC) as we are? Then come on over and learn about volunteering at the COC! All of our outreach programs depend on volunteer time, energy and labor. We would not be able to offer our neighborhood the same kind of hospitality, solidarity and compassion without our dedicated community of servant-leaders. Learn about ways we can help as a community, and important safety information. Questions? Contact the Rev. Pat Dupont at pdupont@asburyfirst.org or at 585-271-1050 x136.



Coffee Talk for Outreach

2nd Tuesday of the month, beginning Tuesday, October 10, 8–9 am, 1010 Dining & Caring Center

The Community Outreach Center has become a building full of love, ministry, and life. We are delighted to see the daily activity and how it is becoming a place for all for those who are hungry, in need of medical care, or are in need of basic clothing and goods for daily life. To show our progress and gratitude to donors and volunteers and to spark interest in our outreach, we are starting a breakfast tour each month: Coffee Talks for Outreach. This will be a targeted, small group who will get a peek at the center and get a sense of what it's like to be a part of our community. For more information, please contact Rev. Pat Dupont at pdupont@asburyfirst.org.



NEEDED ITEMS, SERVICES, AND FUNDRAISERS

UMCOR Support for Maui

Wind-driven wildfires on Maui prompted evacuations and caused significant loss of life and widespread damage. The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) awarded an emergency grant to the California-Pacific Annual Conference, which includes the Hawaiian UMC, to provide shelf-stable food, water, hygiene items, and tools to help survivors recover their belongings.

As first responders continue to provide initial aid, please join UMCOR in prayer and by making a gift to this and other disasters in the U.S. You can give by sending a check to the church office with the note "UMCOR Maui", or by visiting [asburyfirst.org/give-online](https://www.asburyfirst.org/give-online) with the note "UMCOR Maui". We will collect all donations and send them on to UMCOR for use in relief.



School Supply Drive for School 17

Drop off supplies Sundays from August 27–September 10.

When you are out and about shopping in the next few weeks, think about picking up some school supplies for our supply drive that supports School 17.

Items needed include: backpacks, 24-count pencils, colored pencils, erasers and eraser tops, ink pens (blue, black, and red), crayons, color-safe markers, highlighters, child-safe scissors, glue sticks, pencil boxes or pouches, index cards, sticky notes, solid-color folders with pockets, three-ring binders, composition books, graph paper, hand sanitizer, and tissues.

Many thanks to YOU for your support! For more information, please contact John Smalt at (585) 924-8624, or at jhsmalt@gmail.com.



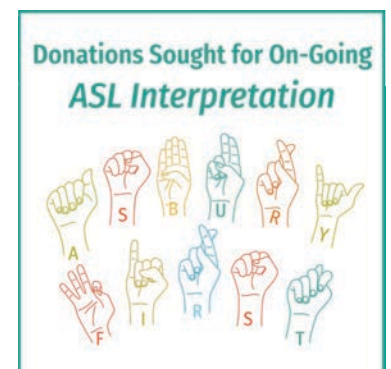
Acolytes and Crucifers Needed

Have you ever wanted to participate in worship — but without having to speak in front of people? You may have noticed that some weeks we have an acolyte, crucifer, and Christ candle that all help to lead our procession into worship and our recession out into the world. Each of these roles help to remind us that Christ goes before us—both in this space and beyond. We would love to have each of these roles fulfilled at every service. If you would like to volunteer to be an acolyte (the ones that light the candles), the crucifer (the one that carries the cross), or to carry our Christ candle, please contact Mike Mullin at mmullin@asburyfirst.org. We would love to have you join our team as we help spread and share the light of Christ!



Donations Sought for On-Going ASL Interpretation

You may have noticed that we have begun to have an ASL—American Sign Language—interpreter with us in the Meditation Chapel during the 11 am service. This is to fulfill our value of being open to all and it has made it possible for us to worship with deaf members of our community. We would like to maintain this service moving forward and need some financial support to make it possible. If you are willing to support this ongoing ministry, please consider a special donation with the note "ASL." Thank you in advance for your generosity.



NEEDED ITEMS, SERVICES, AND FUNDRAISERS

Have any extra veggies?

Our Asbury Community Garden is starting to burst with veggies! We've already started delivering produce to the Asbury First Dining & Caring Center, and made a monthly contribution to Keeping Our Promise neighbors. Next we will contribute to AME Zion's lunch program on Wednesdays. If you are a gardener and find yourself awash with more veggies than you can handle, we will be glad to take your extras and distribute them.

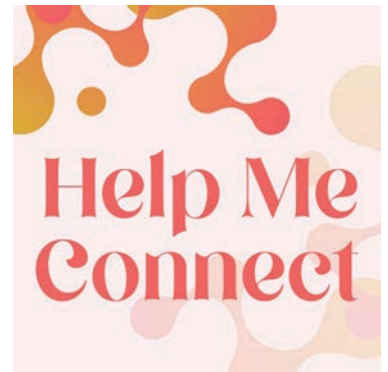
Just drop off donations to the garden behind 1010 before 10 am on Wednesdays only. If you don't find a gardener harvesting in the garden at that time, please leave your produce on the shady side of the big tan bin. It's at the edge of the garden closest to the playground. Thank you for your help!



Help Me Connect

Are you interested in taking the next step in your faith journey, finding your place in the life of Asbury First, or are just in need of a deeper connection? There is a place for you!

Scan the QR code, visit asburyfirst.org/help-me-connect, or call the office at 585-271-1050 to connect.



Stay up-to-date with events, links, and information with our online calendar, or call 585-271-1050.

asburyfirst.org/events

DEADLINE FOR OCTOBER ANNOUNCEMENTS: Monday, September 18

To submit an announcement, email communication@asburyfirst.org, call the church office at 585-271-1050, or fill out the online form at asburyfirst.org/bulletin-announcement.
If you'd like to receive regular paper communications, please call the church office at 585-271-1050.