Asbury First NEWS SHEET

asburyfirst.org

FEBRUARY 2024 You're invited! Join us for upcoming worship, fellowship, and fun.

585-271-1050

Interim Senior Minister Announced

We are very pleased to announce that Bishop Héctor Burgos-Núñez has appointed the **Rev. Ted Anderson** to become our Interim Senior Minister effective March 1, 2024. Bishop Burgos made this appointment following consultations with his Cabinet, especially including our District Superintendent, the Rev. Suzanne Block, and with our Pastor Parish Relations Committee, Governance Board, and Transition Team. The appointment will continue through at least June 30, 2024.

Ted formally retired several years ago and is not interested in pursuing a permanent appointment to Asbury First. But for now, we could not be in better hands as we move into the next phase of our search.

To read more about why Ted is such an inspired choice to take on this role, visit **asburyfirst.org**

Please join us in welcoming Ted to the Asbury Family!



2024 Annual Church Conference Ballots Result

Last Sunday, January 28, we held our **Annual Church Conference**, presided over by Rev. Ted Anderson, to hear from our Governance Board, Finance Committee, Transition Team, and Dream Team, and to vote as a congregation on our candidates for ministry, Board membership, and on the proposed 2024 budget.

All ballots have been counted and our Board candidates were *overwhelmingly* approved! Our Board members are: Jonathan Carroll-Nellenback, Wendy Featherstone, Ike Jordan, Christy Lesher, Tim Mahan, Jim Quinn, and Cory Tylenda.

Thank you all for your input, your time, and for helping to shape the future of Asbury First.

Annual Church Conference 2024

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Older Adult Lenten Communion Services

Please join us for a time of Lenten worship followed by a time of fellowship with friends at one or more of the following times and locations:

- Thursday, February 22, 2 pm at The Highlands at Pittsford
- Monday, March 11, 2 pm at Linden Knoll
- Wednesday, March 13, 2:30 pm at St. Johns Meadows

All are welcome! Please call Barbara Eltinge with any questions at 585-737-8775

Pan-Methodist Ash Wednesday Service

Wednesday, February 14, 7pm, Sanctuary

Join us as we begin the holy season of Lent together with our Pan-Methodist siblings from around Rochester. Our congregation will join Baber African Methodist Episcopal Church, Memorial African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and New Bethel Christian Methodist Episcopal Church for a special combined service in the Asbury First sanctuary.

In-Person or Livestream

Exploring Faith Communities in Rochester: A Lenten Series with Guest Speakers from Other Religious Communities

Join us for this lively and engaging opportunity to learn a little about another religious community, right here in Rochester! Speakers will share about their community, give some background, and entertain your questions. Wednesday evenings at 6 pm in Fellowship Hall (1040, lower level) from February 21 through March 20.

- February 21st Assisi Institute Craig Bullock and Vicki Campanero
- February 28th Spiritus Christi Celie Katovitch
- March 6th Rochester Zen Center Truman Taylor
- March 13th Rochester Baha'i Center Cheryl Jones-Richter
- March 20th Psychic Medium and Shamanism Vicki Snyder-Young

Contact Kathy Thiel for more info at kthiel@asburyfirst.org

Community Outreach Center Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, February 14, Dining Room (Lower Level)

Free Breakfast: 7:00-9:00 a.m.

Ash Wednesday Service: 9:30 a.m.

Ash Wednesday is a Christian observance about acknowledging the shortcomings of humanity, particularly our corporate failings such as the unacceptable prevalence of poverty, wealth disparity, hunger, and homelessness in our communities.

This holy day is a chance to seek forgiveness, lament together the injustices that surround us, pray together for God to heal us and our world, and organize for change.

All are welcome to join us for a service of scripture, lament, song and receiving of ashes.









Housing Equity in Rochester Speaker Series

Sundays, 9:45 -10:45 am, February 25, March 3, and March 10

Fellowship Hall and Zoom: zoom.us/j/8347173468 PW 200

Housing availability, affordability, and security are hallmarks of a healthy community, but access to housing in the U.S. is not an equal playing field. Speakers Nick Coulter, Ryan Acuff and our own Stuart Mitchell will share their knowledge about Rochester's housing equity problems, the ways these issues impact us, and the ways in which we can seek justice in our community.

- February 25 Housing Equity (week 1) presentation by Nick Coulter
- March 3 Housing Equity (week 2) presentation by Ryan Acuff
- March 10 Housing Equity (week 3) presentation by Stuart Mitchell

Please contact Rachel Dupont with any questions at rdupont@asburyfirst.org

Asbury First Community Theatre presents: Barefoot in the Park

Join us as we follow a conservative young lawyer and his off-the-wall bride from marital harmony to comical discord in Neil Simon's hit play "Barefoot in the Park". Follow the link below to purchase tickets for either the regular show or the dinner theater performance, both of which are held in the Fellowship Hall, below the nave.

Purchase Tickets by visit our website: asburyfirst.org/barefoot-park/

Shows:

- Friday, February 9 Performance 7 pm
- Saturday, February 10 Dinner Theater Performance 6 pm

The Asbury First Library

Do you love perusing books? Do you love cozy places to sit? Would you love a quiet place to catch up with a friend after the service? The Asbury First library is a perfect place for all three of these activities, located just around the corner from the Gathering Center in the Education Wing.

Our library collection database is also all online! Click here to learn more

Red Cross Blood Drive at Asbury First!

The American Red Cross is experiencing an emergency blood shortage as the nation faces the lowest number of donors in 20 years. You can help! Next **Saturday, February 17, 8:30 am to 1 pm**, the American Red Cross will transform the Gathering Center into a blood donation center.

If you have any questions, feel free to call Ed Ristau, at 585-223-4356.

Please remember to bring your ID with you.



BLOOD DRIVE FEBRUARY 17





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Bluey Winter Mini-VBS

February 20-22 9 am-noon

Let's go on a "Curry Quest," or play in the "Rain", or make a "Duck Cake"...

If you are familiar with the great Australian cartoon about a family of dogs, you will understand what we're talking about! If not, come and find out all about what makes Bluey, the six-year-old Blue Heeler puppy so special!

Join us in the Education Wing (connected to the Gathering Center) on the 2nd floor.

All are welcome, and feel free to invite a friend!

Secure a niche in Asbury First's Columbarium

From the earliest days Christians have chosen to have their final resting place within the community of the church. Visit the Columbarium table in the Welcoming Hall January 28 after the 11 am service for information on how to secure a niche in Asbury First's Columbarium.

Please contact **Bob Schuman,** at 585-317-7947 robert@schumanonline.net or **Rev. Kathy Thiel**, at 585-271-1050 x106 kthiel@asburyfirst.org

Asbury First's first Same-Sex Wedding

In case you missed it, Saturday, January 13, Asbury First celebrated the wedding of Christopher Gold and Cory Tylenda, an important milestone as this was **Asbury First's first same-sex wedding**.

WHEC News 10 reported on this historic ceremony.

The Gold-Tylenda Wedding was truly an accomplishment due to the continued support and resolve of inclusiveness on behalf of all members of Asbury First..







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RON WILSON REMEMBERED

The essence of Asbury First, as articulated by Rev. Dr. Stephen Cady in his final sermon, can be summed up in four words: *"Love Leads To Life."* These four simple words transcend mere rhetoric, blossoming into a myriad of expressions through the acts of service and compassion that bind the community together.

Ronald Wilson, a cherished member of the Asbury First community, exemplified a life lived for love through his unwavering dedication to the Dining and Caring Center. His commitment to serving others was a testament to the transformative power of selflessness. Susan M Larson fondly remembers Ron's journey, stating, "As his health challenges grew, his gracious and grateful manner and resilience were inspiring. He was an amazing man that many of us were blessed to know."

In 2014, a stroke and heart attack significantly limited Ron's ability to continue his regular work as a staff member of the Asbury maintenance team. However, the Asbury community rallied around him, demonstrating the true meaning of solidarity. As a United States Marine



Corp veteran, Ron had already dedicated a significant portion of his life to service. In return, the community ensured that he received every benefit and service available, including safe housing at University Towers and a motorized wheelchair. These efforts collectively contributed to Ron's ability to maintain a high quality of independent living until his passing in December 2023.

Joann Middleton reminisces about Ron's infectious positivity and helpful spirit, recalling, "Ron was always so helpful, cheerful and positive." Despite his own struggles, Ron found joy in uplifting others. His compassion extended beyond his duties at the Dining & Caring Center, as he lovingly nicknamed Joann 'TinkerBell' and occasionally prepared an extra meal for her to take home.

Rev. Susan Shafer fondly reflects on Ron's enduring impact, noting, "*He always had a smile even when his life was full of challenges.*" Ron's ability to radiate joy, even in the face of adversity, left an indelible mark on those around him. His gift of Christ's hospitality welcomed others into his heart, creating a lasting legacy that continues to resonate within the Asbury First community.

In remembering Ron Wilson, the Asbury First community pays tribute to a man whose life embodied the principles of love, service, and resilience. His memory serves as a poignant reminder of the profound connections



forged through acts of kindness and the enduring impact of a life lived for others. Ron Wilson will forever be remembered with a smile in the hearts of those whose lives he touched.

Special thanks to Bob Peterson and George Albright for their help writing this article. They were the key members of the Asbury community that "rallied around Ron" and helped him in so many ways including: assurance of legal/medical/aide services, the acquisition of the motorized wheelchair, and the joyful move to University Towers.

SCRAPBOOK | JANUARY 2024

A collection of photos from the last couple weeks at Asbury First!



Rev. Dr. Stephen Cady's final service with Asbury First





A heart-felt send-off to the beloved Cady family.



SCRAPBOOK | JANUARY 2024

Tears and hugs in Fellowship Hall after the service.



SCRAPBOOK | JANUARY 2024

ASBURY FIRST COMMUNITY THEATRE



Joyce Britton as Corri Broat

This Weekend, don't miss Neil Simon's charmingly eccentric comedy Barefoot in the Park!

Friday, February 9, 7 pm Saturday, February 10, 6 pm (dinner theatre)

Judy Messenger as Ethel, Cori's Mom



David Behnk as Harry Pepper and the Telephone man Kim Ross as the Delivery Man

Friday and Saturday, Fellowship Hall was filled with laughter and joy as newlyweds Paul and Cori Bratter (played by Jeff Dugan and Joyce Britton) navigated their new life together, in a new comedically tiny (and leaky) apartment, with new eccentric neighbors, five exhausting floors up in 1960s New York City. This time capsule of a play, complete with period furniture (note the kraft-single colored walls!) had a sense of humor reminiscent of Simon's other big hit, The Odd Couple.!







PARK

CONTINUING CLASSES, GROUPS, AND EVENTS

Spiritual Perspectives Class

Sundays, Beginning October 1, 9–10:15 am, 1050 Teak Room

On Sunday, October 1, you are invited to join a new Sunday School class. We will meet in the Teak Room in the 1050 church office building from 9–10:15 am with a format focusing on weekly conversation about connections. Each week a different person will present a brief devotion, and through dialogue about the topic, we will discover the places we connect through sharing ideas and experiences.

While we recognize that there is always room for grace, and that life happens, we hope that you will commit to a three-month period of attending this class. This ensures some continuity and builds community and trust, and helps us get to know each other a little better.

If you have any questions, please contact the Rev. Kathy Thiel at 585-271-1050 x106, or kthiel@asburyfirst.org.

As The Spirit Moves Us

Sundays, 9:45–10:45 am, Room LL03 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 began 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.

Adult Sunday School Class

Sundays, 9:45–10:45 am, 1040 Fellowship Hall and Zoom (zoom.us/j/8347173468 PW 200)

- February 11 Youth Mission Trips Presentations
- February 18 Mike Mullin on the history of Ordination in The United Methodist Church
- February 25 Housing Equity (week 1) Nick Coulter
- March 3 Housing Equity (week 2) Ryan Acuff
- March 10 Housing Equity (week 3) Stuart Mitchell
- **March 17** David Strong to discuss his role as Church Administrator and Assistant Organist
- March 24 Ann Marie Stephan, CEO of Rochester Childfirst Network

All are welcome, contact Mike Mullin at **mmullin@asburyfirst.org** for more information.







CONTINUING CLASSES, GROUPS, AND EVENTS

Wednesday Morning Study Group

Wednesdays, 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.

Through the fall to Advent, we will read 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. 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.

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!

Asbury Art Class — Silk Painting

Tuesdays, 12:30–3 pm, 1040 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 soulsourcestudio1@gmail.com for more information and to register.









CONTINUING CLASSES, GROUPS, AND EVENTS

Disciple III Bible Studies

Tuesdays, 2–3:30 pm, Zoom (zoom.us/j/6174865464 PW Disciple) Fridays, 9:30-10:30 am, 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 guestions or for more information at mmullin@asburyfirst.org or at 585-271-1050 x105.

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.

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.

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.

LGBTQ+ Advocacy Meeting

3rd Sunday of the Month, Beginning October 15, 9:45 am, 1040 Youth Room (lower level)

Asbury First's LGBTQ+ Advocacy Group will be holding its first meeting of the season on Sunday, October 15 in the Youth Room (in the lower level of the church), as our church community celebrates National Coming Out Day. Anyone affiliated with LGBTQ+ community and allies are welcome to attend. We will be setting our agenda for the year, planning for events, outreach, and educational opportunities in our community. Youth and adults are welcome! For more information, please contact Deb Bullock-Smith at 585-271-1050 x117 or at dbullocksmith@asburyfirst.org.







CARVERS OF





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-served basis)

Bike Repair Ministry

- R Community Bikes will provide basic bicycle repair and tune-ups on a first-come, first-served basis at the garage behind the COC and playground.
- Hours: Returns in May 2024

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 Grocery Bag Ministry has transitioned fully to operating in the Community Outreach Center. Join us on Saturday, October 21 at 8 am to help us pack groceries for those in need.

Community Garden

 The Community Garden has provided bountiful amounts of fresh vegetables this Summer to food ministries such as the DCC, Grocery Bag Ministry, and AME Zion's food deliveries. All produce goes for this purpose, and is not available for individual harvesting. With Fall's approach, the garden is slowing down and will be put to bed over the Winter with first frosts. We welcome volunteers to help us over the Winter plan for next season.

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.

Help Us Read Tutors Needed

School is open and we are looking for tutors for the Help Me Read program at School 17 grades K-4. New Tutor Training/Orientation is scheduled for October 10 and 17 from 10–11:30 am. If you are interested in tutoring please contact John Smalt at jhsmalt@gmail.com or at 585-924-8624.

RETURNING TUTORS: Please call Ms. Linda at 585-766-8440 to schedule your start date. Thanks for your support!

Storehouse Items Needed

The Storehouse is in need of the following items for our neighbors:

- Bed-sized blankets (Twin, Full/Queen & King sizes)
- Bath & hand towels

We'd like to be able to give each family that shops with us, if needed, one blanket and one towel set. We serve 200-250 families/month. Your donations can be dropped off in the brick donation building outside of the Community Outreach Center (COC) or brought to the 1st floor reception desk in the COC Mon.-Thurs. from 9am-3pm and Fridays from 9am-12. Thanks for your ongoing generosity.

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!

Join the Livestream Team!

Are you interested in joining Asbury First's live streaming team? You will learn how to use our professional broadcast equipment and video production techniques. More importantly, you will support the digital ministry that helps us *Do More Good* in Rochester and around the world. Youth and adults are welcome. There will be training opportunities soon. Please contact David Berg at bergdm@gmail.com to learn more.











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.





ALTAR FLOWERS

The flowers on the altars are given to the glory of God and in gratitude of past and present church members.

If you would like to place flowers on the altar, please contact Jeanne Ristau at 585-223-4356, preferably two weeks ahead of requested date.

PRAYERS AND CONCERNS

We offer our prayers and concerns for all those who are ill at home, hospitalized, or in hospice care.

We offer our prayers and concerns for the friends and family of Jean Cook, who died on January 8. A memorial service to celebrate her life was held on February 3.

We offer our prayers and concerns for Cindy Malone after the death of her mother, Gail Gould, on January 8.

We offer our prayers and concerns for the friends and family of P.R. Anderson, who died on January 10. A memorial service will be held at Asbury First on Saturday, February 17 at 3 pm.

We offer our prayers and concerns for Susan and Matt Guffey after the death of Susan's father, Jon Patterson on January 11.

We offer our prayers and concerns for Claudia Nolan, whose grandfather, Bob Walker, died on January 15.

We offer our prayers and concerns for the family and friends of Helen (Betty) Galante, who died on January 24.

We offer our prayers and concerns for Timothy Johnson, after the death of his twin brother, Theodore Johnson, who died on February 4.

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

asburyfirst.org/events

DEADLINE FOR NOVEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS: Monday, January 15

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.