

Asbury First NEWS SHEET

APRIL 2025

asburyfirst.org

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

(585) 271-1050

My FAIR LADY

ASBURY FIRST COMMUNITY THEATRE PRESENTS:
MY FAIR LADY

FRIDAY, MAY 9 AT 7 PM

SATURDAY, MAY 10 AT 2 PM & 7 PM

Tickets are available now for "My Fair Lady," an
intergenerational musical extravaganza presented
by our very own Asbury First Community Theatre!

Roberts Wesleyan University Chorale in concert at Asbury First

Sunday, April 27, the **Roberts Wesleyan University Chorale** will join our 11 am
worship service and also perform a concert at 3:30 pm in the Sanctuary!

Directed by Dr. Adam Potter, the program, *Renewing Minds, Transforming
Hearts: Majesty and Mystery for Choir and Organ*, features organist Ryan Chan
and works by Parry, Howells, Dove, Shewan, MacMillan, Rutter, and Willcocks.

The concert is free and open to the public.



Celebrate Creation at Our Earth Day Event Saturday, April 26

Join us for a morning of inspiration and education at our **Earth Day Event in the Gathering Center, Saturday, April 26 from 9 am to noon!** Explore display tables and hear from local organizations dedicated to nature preservation, gardening, beekeeping, and more. Learn how you can care for creation and make a difference in our community. All are welcome—and bring a friend to share the joy of spring and sustainability! Call (585) 271-1050 to ask for a complete schedule.



Storehouse Geranium sale

Its that time of the year again! The Storehouse Geranium Sale has begun! By ordering geraniums, you're helping the Community Outreach Center to Do More Good. Please call (585) 271-1050 to place your order. **Orders must be received by Sunday, April 30.**

Pick up your geraniums on Saturday, May 17 from 9:30 am to 12 pm at the COC. Call the Church Office at (585) 271-1050 x117



Coming Home to Ourselves: A Journey of Faith, Healing, and Brotherhood

Join the **Asbury Men's Devotional Group** for our spring retreat at the Asbury Retreat campus on Silver Lake, NY, from **May 30 to June 1**. Our theme is "Coming Home to Ourselves: A Journey of Faith, Healing, and Brotherhood," with sessions on Identity, Healing, Surrender, Relationships, and Faith.

The cost is \$198, which includes 2 nights and 4 meals. Bring your own sleeping bag or rent linens for \$11. We'll meet for dinner Friday (details to follow) and leave by 9 am Sunday for those attending church at Asbury First.



May 3 is World Labyrinth Day

Those of us who have had the experience of walking Asbury First's labyrinth in Fellowship Hall know that it can be a wonderful way of centering and meditating. Unfortunately, our labyrinth cannot be open on Saturday, May 3 to observe World Labyrinth Day. However, there are other labyrinths in the greater Rochester area, should you want to join in the global observance. Call the Church Office at (585) 271-1050 to see a list of local labyrinths and how to access them.



Collaborative Makers Gathering

Hey sewers, knitters, and crafty creators!

Join us for the very first Collaborative Makers Gathering—a laid-back, open-house hangout on Saturday, May 17 from 1 to 4 pm in the Gathering Center. Swap ideas, get help on projects, spread out your work, and maybe score some new-to-you fabric or yarn. Bring your stash and let's get making!

Contact Rev. Kathy Thiel for details by call (585) 271-1050 x106



Social Concerns Sunday School

Sunday mornings, **April 25 through May 18, 9:45 - 10:45 am in Fellowship Hall**, Asbury First's newly formed Social Concerns Committee will lead 4 weeks of conversations following the general outline of The UMC Social Principles to highlight how Asbury First is working to respond to **Community of All Creation, The Economic Community, The Social Community, and The Political Community**.



Visitation and Pastoral Prayer

We want to be able to visit and pray with those who are in the hospital. If you know someone who is in the hospital and would like a pastoral call, or if you yourself are in the hospital or have a date for surgery, please call Rev. Kathy Thiel who will be most glad to be with you in that moment. Call Kathy at (585) 271-1050 x106.



Asbury Work Day at Habitat for Humanity

We are planning several work days for Asbury First people to do home construction with Rochester Habitat for Humanity in early July. No special skills are necessary. If you are interested or would like to learn more, contact Dave Kennedy at

DAKennedy@Frontiernet.net.



C.O.C. Chapel Challenge

Each month we collect different needed supplies for the ministries of the Community Outreach Center. **For the April COC Chapel Challenge, we will collect non-perishable food items for the Grocery Bag Ministry.** A list of specific needed items is available at asburyfirst.org/coc.

Please drop them off near the rail in the front of the Children's Chapel before or after services.

Thank you for caring for our neighbors!



Interfaith Service of Healing

All are invited to attend an Interfaith Service of Healing on **Saturday, April 26 at 6 pm in the Asbury First Sanctuary**. Join us for an evening of restoration and reflection. Local clergy will offer words of healing, accompanied by intervals of music, as we gather in memory of Sam Nordquist and in honor of all transgender lives.

The service will conclude with a candlelight vigil on the front lawn — a quiet moment to stand together in mourning, in reverence, and in solidarity.



World Religion Wednesdays

Wednesdays through May 21, 10 - 11:30 am in the Red Room (1010 East Ave), Asbury First's Wednesday Morning Group will take a look at various world religions throughout the Easter Season. Each week we will focus on a different world religion. Participants are invited to learn a bit about each religion before the class, or to just come ready to learn.

April 30: Zoroastrianism

May 7: Bahá'í

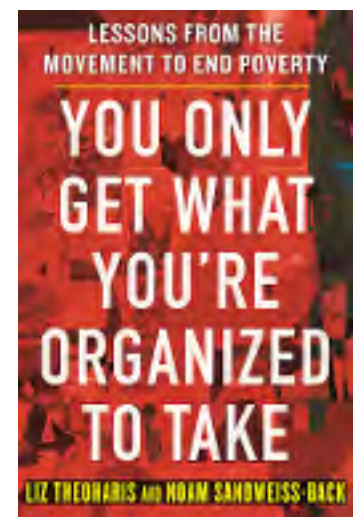
May 14: Jainism

May 21: Sikhism



You Only Get What You're Organized to Take: Lessons from the Movement to End Poverty

Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis and Noam Sandweiss-Back will hold a talk and organizing meeting **April 27, 2 - 4pm at Downtown United Presbyterian Church (121 N Fitzhugh Street)**. Their new book chronicles stories and learnings from some of the most significant anti-poverty struggles of the past 30 years. This book offers not only a powerful examination of the past, but a roadmap for how we ignite a new era of peace, love, and justice. There will be an opportunity to hear directly from the authors and engage in shared dialogue about conditions in Rochester, New York, and the country as a whole. We will also hear plans for the Survival Revival Organizing Tour — a bold new organizing drive among the poor.



WEDNESDAYS THROUGH MAY 14

6 – 7 pm in Wesley Hall

Join us each Wednesday in Lent for a special series of classes ranging from the history of your favorite hymn, to the problem of "truth", to writing your own obituary! Wednesdays, 6 - 7 pm, Wesley Hall (Lower Level of 1040)

Tentative Schedule:

April 16 - Lectio Divina with Rev. Kathy Thiel

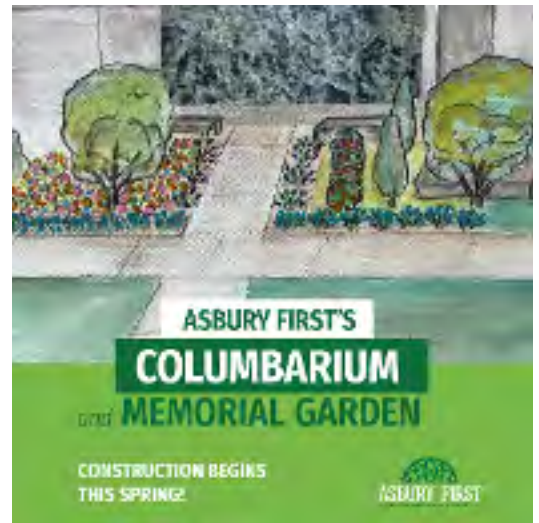
April 23, 30 – Hymnology

May 7, 14 – TBD



COMING SOON!

Asbury First's Columbarium and Memorial Garden will begin to take shape this spring after years of planning. The Memorial Garden will be a sacred place to pray, reflect and meditate. Niches can be reserved for yourself, a loved one or for those who may not be able to secure a spot in the future.



Community Outreach Center Entry Gardens

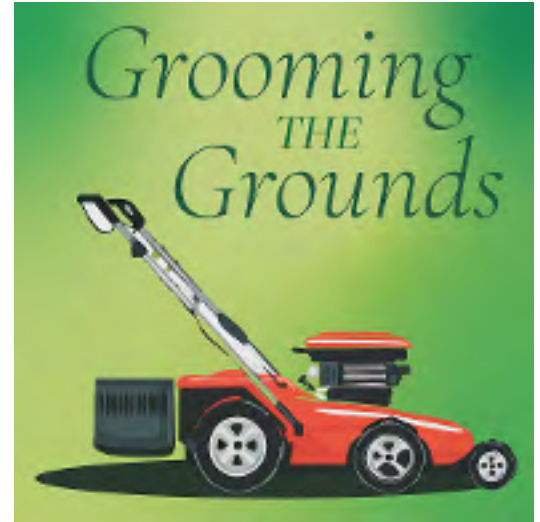
These landscaped gardens are a symbol of care, warm greetings, welcoming all to the Community Outreach Center.

If you have a green thumb and are interested in helping continually improve and maintain these entry gardens, please contact Bonnie Gregory at bonniegregory126@gmail.com



Grooming the Grounds

Asbury First is blessed to occupy beautiful grounds, including gardens, trees and lawns. We are inviting you to consider joining our “Grooming the Grounds” Team to mow and trim. If interested, please call (585) 271-1050 x123.



Morning Prayer

All are invited to a simple service of Morning Prayer every **Thursday from 9:30 to 10 am in the Meditation Chapel** (part of the Sanctuary). Come as you are, as frequently or infrequently as you are able.

Gathering for regular prayer can help us remain grounded in the presence, solidarity, compassion and love of God, in the midst of this unpredictable social climate.



Something is Abuzz!

We've been busy as bees getting ready for **Summer VBS**—and the excitement is building!

Dates: August 4–7

New this year: There's a buzz about an all-day option for even more fun, learning, and adventure! Stay tuned—more details coming soon!



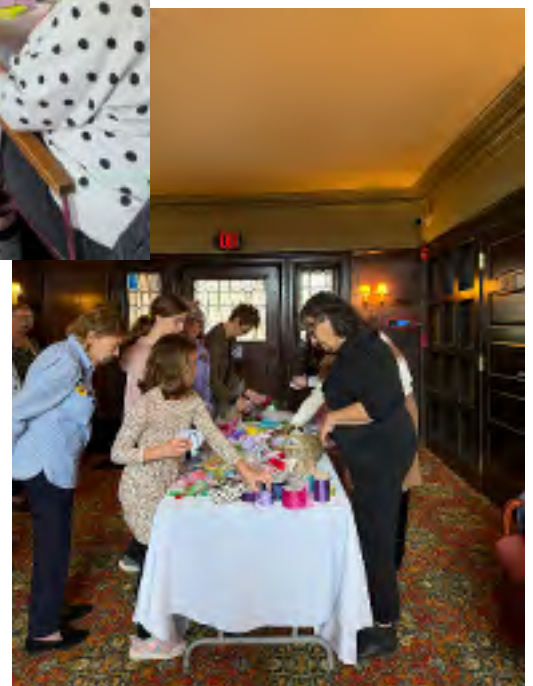
Easter "Bonnet" Making and High Tea Party



A jovial crew assembled a couple weeks before Easter to craft festive fascinators to wear on Easter Sunday...



... and a delicious High Tea was served to keep the creative juices flowing.



Wednesday Lenten walks through the Labyrinth



Our 11-course labyrinth, modeled after the famed design at Chartres Cathedral, offered a sacred space to journey inward, release burdens, and listen for God's presence – a great practice to help prepare our hearts for Easter.



Maundy Thursday Service

Worship began with communion and a candlelight re-enactment of Christ's last night...



...ending with the placement of the cross on the East Avenue lawn by our Christ-figure.



Easter Sunday Service



All three Easter Sunday services were well-attended this year — the joy of this season was on everyone's faces!



Easter Sunday Service – Music, Flowers, and Connection



Many congregants wore the flowery fascinators they'd crafted earlier in the season. All were treated to the music of the Asbury First Sanctuary choir as well as the Asbury Ringers and a wind ensemble. *A truly Happy Easter!*

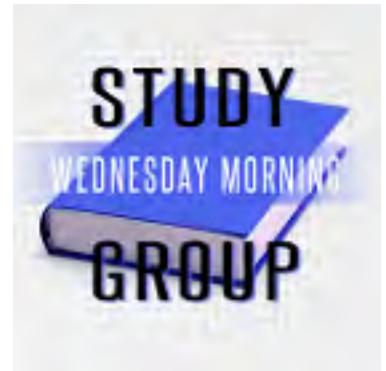


CONTINUING CLASSES, GROUPS, AND EVENTS

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. We will begin our next book on **March 5**, *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together*, by Heather McGhee. 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 — Watercolor Painting

(On Hiatus for the Summer but returning in the Fall)

Fridays, 12:30–3 pm, 1040 Room 205 (upper level, bell choir room)

Now meeting on Friday afternoons, the Asbury Art Class is exploring watercolor and card-making. Watercolor is a terrific medium for capturing the form and surprise of the natural world. Please email Linda Clemow at soulsourcestudio1@gmail.com for more information and to register.



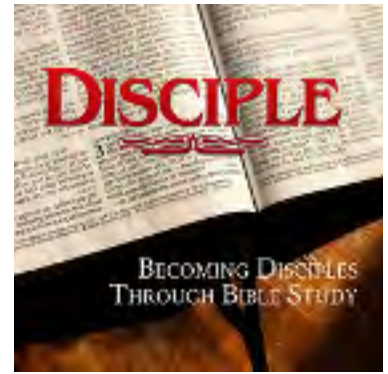
CONTINUING CLASSES, GROUPS, AND EVENTS

Disciple IV Bible Study

Tuesdays, 2:15 - 3:15 pm, Zoom (zoom.us/j/8347173468 PW 200)

Have you ever wondered what the Bible really says—and if it truly has any meaning for us in modern times? If so, then you're not alone. Most Christians have never really read the Bible, and many wonder if it's antiquated teachings truly transcend time. If you would like to grapple with these questions, then you are encouraged to join in the Disciple Bible Study.

Disciple IV spends the first half the year looking at the *Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament*, and the second half of the year focused on the Gospel of John and Revelation. The Disciple IV Bible study will be starting later this spring. Please contact Mike Mullin for more information or to sign-up contact mmullin@asburyfirst.org

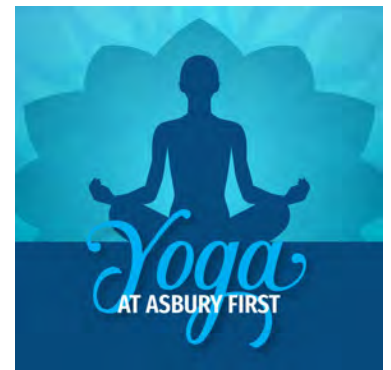


Yoga at Asbury First

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

Join us for our weekly sessions of Gentle Yoga. This gentle attention can help both to bring inner awareness to your body, as well as clarity and peace to the mind!

Classes are an hour long and open to participants at any level. \$10 at the door, you're encouraged to wear comfortable loose-fitting clothes, and to bring a towel and water with you.



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, and more. This is a wonderful group to make and build connections, and we hope that you will drop in to join us! or more information, please contact Mike Mullin at mmullin@asburyfirst.org.



CONTINUING CLASSES, GROUPS, AND EVENTS

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 jhsfalt@gmail.com.



LGBTQ+ Advocacy Meeting

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

Asbury First's LGBTQ+ Advocacy Group continues to hold meetings seeking new ways to support the LGBTQ+ community. Meetings are held in the Youth Room (in the lower level of the church). Anyone affiliated with LGBTQ+ community and allies are welcome to attend. We will be 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.



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.

For more information about this class, please contact Mike Mullin at mmullin@asburyfirst.org or at 585-271-1050 x105.





CELEBRATIONS AND CONCERNS

ALTAR FLOWERS

The flowers on the altars are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Ruth's father, Harry Howitt, by Ruth and David VanDerLinden; in loving memory of Donna V. Wright, Donna B. Steele, and Winthrop Steele by Martha, Andrew and Alex Hunt; and in loving memory of Rev. Dr. Theodore J. Weeden Sr. who served Asbury First as pastor from 1977-1995, given by his sister Judith and brother Richard, his children Scott, Ted, Mike, Brian, and Anne, and his grandchildren. And in loving memory of Shaun Michael Bohrer by Brian, Melissa and Charlie Bohrer.

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.

Our hearts and prayers are with Martha and Jeremy Tuke; Martha's mother, Sandra Kessler Woodward, who died on March 19.

Our hearts and prayers are with the family of Karen Masters, especially her husband, Bill and their son, Eric. Karen died Monday, April 21. A memorial service to celebrate her life will take place on Friday, May 2 at 11 am.

A memorial service to celebrate the life of Joan Phillips, who died on January 21 will be held on Friday, May 16 at 2 pm.

A memorial service to celebrate the life of Enid Graham-Raad, who died on November 7 will be held on Sunday, June 8 at 3 pm.

We want to be able to visit and pray with those who are in the hospital. If you know someone who is in the hospital and would like a pastoral call, or if you yourself are in the hospital or have a date for surgery, please call Rev. Kathy Thiel who will be most glad to be with you in that moment. (585) 271-1050 x106.

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

asburyfirst.org/events

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.