

Mayflower Congregational Church



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Dr. Rick Martin

Pastor

Missions and Holiday Happenings

Due to your overwhelming generosity we were able to fill 47 shoeboxes for Samaritan's Purses Christmas Child Project. This is a new record for our congregation, thank you!

As we continue our mission outreach and holiday giving here are some Mayflower happenings that you will want to be aware of. The mitten tree is up this week for your donations of mittens, scarves, gloves and hats to be given to Lewton School (student's ages 10, 11, and 12). If you wish, shopping will be done for you.

Our traditional Christmas Eve Service will take place at 7:00 p.m. This will once again be a wonderful service of words, reflections and inspirational music. The offering will once again go to the Salvation Army. There will be a reception and time of fellowship immediately following the service in the Social Hall. Please bring a favorite snack to share.

Poinsettias in honor or memory of someone or an event are again available to enhance the sanctuary. The cost is \$10, order deadline is December 13th. Please contact Cozette to sign up.

Please plan to participate as much as possible as we celebrate Jesus's birth.

REJOICE!!!



Music Notes



Have you ever heard the saying, "It's the journey, not the destination"? Regarding Advent and Christmas Eve here at Mayflower I believe I can say it is both the journey as well as the destination.

We begin Advent by already having our Mitten Tree erected and ready to receive scarves and hats and mittens that are either hand-made or purchased for needy children in our community. Having been an elementary school teacher I can't tell you how many times I dove into our box filled with those goodies that had been donated to my school by a well-meaning organization such as ours. This is a wonderful outreach we provide to keep children safe from frost bite.

Since Sunday, November 29th officially marks the beginning of Advent the choir will celebrate by singing a Renaissance-sounding piece called "Advent of Our King." You will want to be there to see a few little tricks we have up our sleeves.

There is nothing like helping to decorate the church to put you into the holiday spirit. On Thursday, December 3rd at 7:00 P.M. we will be doing just that. It generally takes about an hour to dress the holiday trees in the sanctuary and fellowship hall and put up festive wreaths around the building. It is also great fun.

On Sunday, December 6th the choir will be singing Felix Mendelssohn's "There Shall A Star Come Out Of Jacob" during the worship service. This piece has long been an Advent favorite of many.

The choir will be stepping aside Sunday, December 13th so that some of our adults (shall I call them that?) will have the opportunity to perform a holiday play for you. You won't want to miss that, either.

Sunday, December 20th will be the day the choir sings a beautiful arrangement of "The First Noel" during our worship service. I believe it will leave you inspired and anxious to hear more.

That leads us up to our always-special Christmas Eve service where you will be able to enter our front doors from the sidewalk beautifully lit by luminaries and have your spirit filled with the warmth of Christmas scripture, holiday hymns, lovely handbell and choral music, as well as a message of the Good News from Pastor Rick. And lest I forget, a holiday reception is being planned for after the service where we ask anyone who is able to bring a little holiday sweet that can be shared with all of us hungry church-goers.

What is there not to love about the Advent journey we are about to embark on here at Mayflower? And here is the secret – the more you participate in it, the more meaningful the destination will be for you and for the rest of us. Please join us as we anticipate and celebrate with not only our Mayflower family but with millions of other Christians the lowly birth of Jesus Christ.

Barb

From The Pastor's Desk

This is the first Christmas article I wrote for the Mayflower Notes (2009). It is still relevant for today.

I am sure Christmas brings many different thoughts to each of us. Among them are good memories, bad memories, happy memories, sad memories; some memories we hope we won't forget, others we wish we could. Christmas brings busy times, crowded times, party times, family times, school events, family events, church events and community events. Plus the whole expense of Christmas, but we'll not get into that here.

No wonder we are worn out come January 1st! There are a lot of "extras" going on during this time of the year – some of it we love and some of it we endure. All in the name of the celebration of the birth of Christ. However, two millenniums ago, the birth of Christ went unnoticed by all but a few.

Luke 2:10-14 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased."

Even today, in the midst of all the busyness of Christmas, the birth of Christ may go unnoticed. The reason for the season is not presents, food, partying, family get-togethers and special events. Jesus is the reason for the season! It is in honor of His birth – thus God's visual demonstration of His love for us while we (mankind) were yet sinners and enemies of God. We see God's love *wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger*; to live as a man, to die as a sacrificial lamb, to be *for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord*.

In the midst of all the fun and celebration and traditions of Christmas, as your pastor I encourage you to also make time to reflect upon the reason for our celebration. Take time to read the Christmas story (the real one) in Matthew 1:18-25 and Luke 2:1-20. Makes plans to attend Mayflower's

(Pastor Rick continued)

service and other special Christmas events around town, in addition to our Advent Sunday services. It is good to remember God's gift of love *wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger* along with all the fun and traditions of the season. As we hear Santa shouting, "Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night" we can also remember that Jesus is the Reason for the Season.

My prayer for you is that you will have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Mayflower Financial News

We had another successful 2nd Saturday Supper with a total of 104 meals being served in Nov. The Fall Thrift Sale raised \$1,643.

A brief summary of our finances as of October 31, 2015:

Income:	\$ 5,842.62
Expenses:	8,684.51
	- \$ 2,841.89

YTD for Ten Months

Income:	\$ 85,243.19
Expenses:	75,022.54
	\$ 10,220.65

Fund Balances:

Checking:	\$ 11,221.60
Bequest Funds Savings	19,013.44
Memorial Fund CD	5,496.18
CD Savings	22,311.76
	\$ 58,042.98

A more detailed report is available in the brochure rack near the church office.

Linda Wheeler
Treasurer





Dates to remember in
December...

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 12/4 | Word of Life Taco Dinner
Adults \$7 Kids \$5 |
| 12/6 | Second Sunday of Advent |
| 12/8 | Trustees Meeting 10:30 am |
| 12/12 | Second Saturday Supper 5
pm |
| 12/13 | Last day to order poinset-
tias |
| 12/15 | Deadline for Mayflower
Notes |
| 12/20 | Prudential Council 12 pm |
| 12/24 | Christmas Eve Service 7pm |
| 12/25 & 25 | Office Closed |
| 12/25 | Christmas Day |



December



Birthdays

12/8 - Carleen Brammell

12/9 - Mike Graham

12/22 - Remington Graham

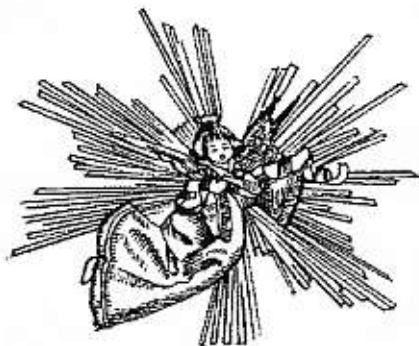
12-25 - Darrell Watson

Head Ushers

Lois Ries

Outreach Focus

Mitten Tree



Active Prayer

by

Wm. C. McHarris

How much do you remember about your childhood Sunday school? If you're like most of us, not much. However, now and then something that caught your fancy stands out, one of the few unfaded snapshots in the album of your memory. Such was the following little tale I remember from a forgotten teacher from long years ago:

Two little girls were running to make it to school before the bell. The first one gasped, "Let's stop and pray that we'll make it on time." To which the other replied, "No, let's pray while we're still running."

A simple but profound lesson, worthy of having been remembered. We need to be active in our prayers. Very little comes for free in this world — think how dull our lives would be if we never had to work to obtain anything! The same applies to prayer. We may pray for our church to increase, but that is unlikely to happen unless we actively work to recruit new members. We may pray for peace, but it is unlikely to occur if we don't work with vigilance to make it happen.

Positive things, things we so desire to have — peace — actually require far more effort than knee-jerk reactions — such as war. An excellent musical illustration of this is Gustave Holst's large orchestral suite, *The Planets*. Here "Venus, the Bringer of Peace," although soft and subdued, is represented by interesting, ever-changing polyphony, while "Mars, the Bringer of War," is simple fortissimo bombast. After hearing "Mars" a few times one becomes bored, whereas "Venus" becomes more interesting with each hearing.

Another, more down-to-earth example, has to do with preparing oneself for learning. When Michigan State University built its then new high-rise dorms, they included a battery of classrooms so that students would not have to travel outside the buildings on cold, wintry days.

(Continued Bill McHarris)

During my early years at MSU, I taught a number of general chemistry courses in these dormitory classrooms. And for at least three years I taught the same course, one section in the Chemistry Building, the next section in one of the dorms. The results were intriguing: Students who took the course in the Chemistry Building did better on the common exams than did the students who took the class in the dormitory classrooms. This, despite vigorous efforts to make the lectures identical, including identical demonstrations. (And I remember vividly how much effort it took to transport the chemicals and equipment to the dorms!) Other professors related similar experiences; although we didn't conduct detailed, controlled experiments, a major contributing factor seemed to emerge: The students who had to dress and prepare themselves to travel to the Chemistry Building were more receptive to the lectures than were those who popped out of bed and rushed, half-dressed down the hall to the dorm lectures. Active learning!

Be it prayer or learning — or achieving — we need to be active. Success is an active, not a passive attribute. At Mayflower we have been relatively successful simply because as a whole we have been more active than most congregations. But let us not forget: We need to pray — and work! — for success.

