

# Mayflower Congregational Church



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**Dr. Rick Martin**

Pastor

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# August & September

## Birthdays

### AUGUST

- 8/9 - Kim Finison
- 8/12 - Ryan Graham
- 8/20 - Jerry Fuller
- 8/21 - Sharon Graham
- 8/27 - Suzanne Mannino
- 8/26 - Sue Emrick



### SEPTEMBER

- 9/12 - Bill McHarris
- 9/12 - Kimberly Strong
- 9/20 - Terry Graham
- 9/21 - Mary Rutledge
- 9/25 - Laura Stebbins

## ANNIVERSARIES

### AUGUST

- 8/24 - Terry & Sharon Graham
- 8/27 - Bill & Rilla McHarris (55 years in 2015)
- 8/27 - Eugene & Shirley Potts
- 8/27 - Dick & Linda Williams

### SEPTEMBER

- 9/5 - Bob & Sue Mott
- 9/21 - Frank & Linda Wheeler
- 9/26 - Dick & Nancy McKay (61 years in 2015)



## From The Pastor's Desk

### Good Habits

Have you ever noticed that bad habits are easier to get into than good habits? I can slip into a bad habit without ever trying, almost by accident. No thought. No effort. No planning. But good habits! That's another story. Those take planning and effort and follow-through.

The Bible says going to church is a good habit. It is a good habit because there are positive results in your life and the lives of others.

Hebrews 10:25

*not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the [bad] habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.* [I added the "bad"].

Encouraging one another – that's a good, positive result, right? Just your act of attending worship service is encouraging; to yourself and others. It definitely encourages the pastor! AND if someone has brought a visitor, the pastor is even more energized. [Just a side thought here: who is responsible for reproducing baby lambs? The shepherds or the sheep? For example, if we want more children in our Sunday School program, whose responsibility is it? Staff or congregation? My thought is: If you want more people in church, bring them. Yes, I know. You have to ask 1000 to get one, but the one is worth it. Just my opinion.]

Now that we are back on our Fall/Winter schedule, continue with your good habit of attending church. More so *"as you see the day drawing near."* The day of the Lord's return, which is 2000 years closer than when this was written. Bring someone with you on occasion, it is worth the effort. Participate in some of the activities – your church experience will be more enjoyable if you participate. Stay with it, Sunday after Sunday, year after year, decade after decade – and you will be blessed and a blessing to many others.



# Obvious Answers Can Indeed Be Wrong

by William C. McHarris

In our fast-paced modern world we like to get our answers and solutions quick, like almost instantaneously. Unfortunately, our fast-paced world has also become a much more complicated world in which it is becoming more and more difficult to take into account all of the many interacting factors needed to find workable solutions to the complex problems facing us. Things are rarely black or white, right or wrong, and all sorts of subtle nuances need to be accounted for. During the next fifteen months we are all going to be forced to witness many “anti-demonstrations” of how to solve the world’s problems. For how much easier it is in political campaigns to utter truisms and bumper-sticker slogans than to attempt to employ subtle but necessarily tedious logic!

A favorite illustration of mine about how the most obvious solution to a puzzle can be completely wrong is the so-called “Monty Hall Problem.” This problem has been known to mathematicians and logicians for several hundred years, but it acquired its modern name from a silly little game played on the early television show, *Let’s Make a Deal*, hosted by Monty Hall. A “silly” little game that turned out to be remarkably subtle. It became (in)famous when Marilyn vos Savant wrote about it in her “Genius” column in *Parade* magazine in 1990. Some 10,000 readers, including almost 1,000 with Ph.D.’s and several dozen math professors, wrote in to castigate her, many calling her “stupid” and claiming she knew nothing about statistics!

I have to admit that my first — and second and third... — reaction, too, was that her solution was completely wrong. It was only after testing it with a simulation that involved several hundred plays rolling dice (a long evening session with in-laws at a fishing camp in Quebec!) that I became convinced that she was correct and that it was the “obviously correct” solution that was actually wrong.

Put simply, the problem is this: The contestant faces three closed doors. Behind one of the doors is a new sports car, behind each of the other two, a goat. The contestant has no idea of what is behind a given door. She chooses a door at random, hoping to win the sports car. Then the host does the following three things:

1. He opens a door that was not chosen by the contestant.
2. The door he opens concealed a goat.
3. He gives the contestant the chance to stick with her first choice or to switch to the other, still unopened door.



What's a poor contestant to do?! Will switching change, possibly improve her odds of winning the car?

Ninety-nine percent of us will declare that it makes no difference. After all, the odds were one in three for each door, and it's *obvious* that nothing's changed that. The odds should remain the same.

**Wrong! It turns out that switching doors will double her chances of winning!**

(You can now send your critical emails to me at [mcharris@chemistry.msu.edu](mailto:mcharris@chemistry.msu.edu).)

The "secret" is that this problem involves *conditional* probabilities — the host has the condition imposed on him that he cannot open a door at random but must open a door that concealed a goat. This imposes restrictions on the probabilities. Let's check the odds when the contestant initially selects Door #1. There were three possible distributions of car/goats. Consider the odds for each:

A. #1 car                      #2 goat                      #3 goat

In this case she wins the car if she sticks with Door #1.

B. #1 goat                      #2 car                      #3 goat

Here the host *must* open Door #3, so she wins if she switches.

C. #1 goat                      #2 goat                      #3 car

Similarly, the host must open Door #2, so she wins by switching.

See! She doubles her odds if she switches doors, which is completely counterintuitive to all our gut feelings. (The arguments are quite similar if she chooses Door #2 or #3 at first.)

For those of you who might be interested (?!), there is an extensive literature about this on the web, including an overly-lengthy article in Wikipedia.

The moral of the story? **Obvious answers can indeed be wrong.** This was an example based on a rather silly little game, but we meet up with examples just as silly — and subtle — every day in real life. So don't accept what people, especially people with vested interests, tell you without questioning their logic (if, indeed, there is any to be found). Instead, sit back, don't relax, and try to find any subtle or hidden conditions behind their offers. Don't let the obvious solution get your goat.

## **Do unto others...**

A man was driving his car, when he saw an old lady, stranded on the side of the road. He saw that she needed help. So he stopped his Pontiac near her Mercedes and got out.

He smiled, while he was approaching her, still she was worried, as nobody had stopped for hours. Moreover, he did not look safe, as his appearance was so poor and shabby. He could see, how frightened she was, so he tried to calm her: „I'm here to help you, don't worry. My name is Bryan Anderson“.

The tire was flat, so he had to crawl under the car. While changing the tire, he got dirty and his hands were hurt.

When the job was done, she asked how much she owed him for his help. Bryan smiled. He said: „If you really want to pay me back, the next time you see someone, who needs help, give that person the needed assistance. And think of me“.

At the same evening, the lady stopped by a small cafe. That place looked dingy. Then she saw a waitress, nearly eight months pregnant, wiping her wet hair with a towel. The waitress had a sweet friendly smile, although she had spent on her feet the whole day.

The lady wondered how someone, who has so little, can be so kind and giving to a stranger. Then she remembered Bryan. The lady had finished her meal and paid with a hundred dollar bill. The waitress went to get change and when she came back, the lady was gone. She left a note on the napkin: „You don't own me anything. Somebody once helped me, just like now I'm helping you. If you really want to pay me back, do not let this chain of love end with you“. The waitress found four more one hundred bills under the napkin.

That night the waitress came home earlier. She was thinking about the lady and the money she left. She was wondering, how the lady could know, how much she and her husband needed it, especially now, when the baby will soon arrive. She knew that her husband worried about that, so she was glad to tell him good news. Then she kissed him and whispered „Now everything will be all right. I love you, Bryan Anderson“.

## MUSICAL NOTES

On August 8th I had the privilege of playing the piano for Conley Snow's memorial service. One of the hymns that the Snow family requested to be sung was "Be Still My Soul," a favorite to many. I am one of those people that have loved that hymn through the years, in part because as a youngster taking piano lessons one of the first grown-up pieces I was given to accomplish was an arrangement of "Finlandia" (which is the hymn-tune for "Be Still My Soul") and partly because I find the combination of the words and the music to be so compatible. I have mentioned before that Rev. Bob Hundley once told me that a person often becomes attached to hymns through nostalgia, and this would be a prime example of that for me.

As I accompanied the hymn in Conley's service I couldn't help but remember playing it for my father-in-law's service in 1996. Glen Frye was the longest-living Methodist minister in the state of Michigan at that time and died just three months shy of turning one-hundred. He was a sprightly 5'4" tall, was deeply spiritual, delighted in life, and loved to sing hymns. I can still see him up in front of the congregation at the Bear Lake Community Church located between Grayling and Kalkaska where he preached for a number of summers in his later years, bellowing out "Be still, my soul—when change and tears are past, All safe and blessed we shall meet at last."

Dad Frye didn't believe in singing subdued-sounding hymns in a subdued fashion. He believed in approaching them with vim and enthusiasm just as he did with everything else in his life. I can't help but smile every time I think of him singing "Be Still My Soul." I know that he believed every word he sang in that hymn, and I delight in the memory of the zeal in which he approached singing it. "Be still my soul—thy best, thy heav'nly Friend thru thorny ways leads to a joyful end."

Barb Fuller





## Christian Education

Welcome back to the church year! I am excited to begin yet another year at Mayflower. We have had a few young faces over the summer, and I have lessons prepared for both large and small kids. Maggie and I will continue our independent study on the evolution of Christianity throughout the years.

In the spring, I mentioned my interest in offering an adult education class once a month or so – a lunch and learn opportunity for food, fellowship, and fundamentals. I would still like to do this, but I need to know what kind of interest there is. Please reach out to me directly and let me know if you would be interested in participating.

I am excited to find out what the Lord has in store for Mayflower this year. We can continue to learn and grow in our faith together.

Liz



## Two Angels

There were two angels living in heaven. One of them was always resting, and the other was constantly traveling from earth to God.

The resting angel asked the other:

– Why are you flying all the time from here to there?

– I am carrying the messages from people to God which start with these words: Dear God, help... And why are you resting all the time?

– Well, I have to carry the messages to God which start with these words: I thank you Lord...



Dates to remember in  
September...



- 9/4 Word of Life Taco  
Dinner 6-8 p.m.
- 9/7 Labor Day, office  
closed
- 9/12 Second Saturday  
Supper 5 p.m.
- 9/13 Rally Day, Wear a  
hat for Camp  
Meeting
- 9/15 Notes Deadline  
Trustees Meeting
- 9/20 Prudential Council
- 9/25 Game Night 6:30  
\$3 per person, \$5 couple



# September-2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Labor Day Office Closed			Handbells 4:00 p.m. Choir 5:50 p.m.	Word of Life Taco Dinner 6-8 p.m.	Second Saturday Supper 5 p.m.
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Rally Day and Picnic Wear a hat for our Camp Meeting Service		Newsletter item deadline Trustees 10:30 a.m.		Handbells 4:00 p.m. Choir 5:30 p.m.		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Prudential Council Noon				Handbells 4:00 p.m. Choir 5:30 p.m.	Game Night 6:30 p.m. \$5 per person \$5 per couple	
27	28	29	30			

