

# Mayflower Notes...



## Mayflower Congregational Church

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December

2011

Children's Pageant

December 18th, 10:30 a.m.

Christmas Eve Service

Refreshments following the service

7:00 p.m.

Dr. Rick Martin

Pastor

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*Dates to remember in  
December..*

December 10

*Second Saturday Supper*

December 11

*Last Day to order  
Christmas Poinsettias*

December 15

*Deadline for Mayflower  
Notes*

December 18

*Children's Christmas Play*

December 24

*Service of Lessons and  
Carols 7 p.m.*

December 25

*Christmas Day - No  
Mayflower Service*

*Antioch Service 10:30 a.m.*

December 31

*New Year's Eve*



## *From the Pastor's Desk*

Luke 2:11

... for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

What a wonderful time of the year is Christmas! Although very busy, the events and people and the music and even television shows and commercial are all attempting to be positive and celebratory. People are thinking about other people, helping other people, volunteering at special events – it is a great time of the year. Even though I understand that everyone is not literally celebrating the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, nor using this time to prepare their hearts for His coming, yet I am amazed that the largest celebration on the planet each year is around Jesus' birth. This thought makes me smile.

At Mayflower Congregational Church, we put a lot of effort into our **Christmas Eve service** to celebrate the birth of Jesus. It is a traditional celebration involving many with our bell ringers, vocal choir and scriptural reading surrounding His birth. It is a privilege to be able to share the birth of Jesus through music and song and scripture readings with people from our church and community and even different parts of the State. It is a wonderful service that will touch your hearts and stir your soul as we remember together that Jesus is the Reason for the Season. It is a long standing Mayflower Church tradition that I hope you will participate in again this year – or for the first time, if you haven't already. It is also a great service to bring someone with you.

After much consideration and because Christmas Day falls on Sunday this year, we will not be having a Sunday service on the 25<sup>th</sup>. My hope and prayer for you is that you will have a safe, enjoyable and Merry Christmas this year; experiencing the joy of the season and celebrating the birth of our Lord.



## LAY LEADER'S MISSIVE

Let me add my voice to Pastor Rick's in expressing my gratitude to all of you – the Mayflower Family for all of your support of our recent projects. It is gratifying to know you are so supportive. Please continue in that spirit of giving as the nominating committee attempts to fill three vacancies on our boards before January's annual meeting.

Upon reflecting on the holiday season; and stretching my plagiarizing skills I would like to share the following story:

### The Cherokee Indian Youth's Rite of Passage

His father takes him into the forest, blindfolds him and leaves him alone. He is required to sit on a stump the whole night and not remove the blindfold until the rays of the morning sun shine through it. Once he survives the night, he is a MAN.

He cannot tell the other boys of this experience, because each lad must come into manhood on his own.

The boy is naturally terrified. He can hear all kinds of noises. Wild beasts must surely be all around him. Maybe even some human might do him harm. The wind blew the grass and the earth, and shook his stump, but he sat stoically, never removing the blindfold. It would be the only way he could become a man!

Finally, after a horrific night the sun appeared and he removed his blindfold.

It was then that he discovered his father sitting on the stump next to him. He had been at watch the entire night, protecting his son from harm

We, too, are never alone. Even when we don't know it, God is watching over us, sitting on the stump beside us.

When trouble comes, all we have to do is reach out to Him.

Just because you can't see God, doesn't mean He is not there.

“For we walk by faith, not by sight.”

May we all have an expectant Advent, a Blessed Christmas and a productive New Year!!

As Ever,  
Rog



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## The Elephant Rope

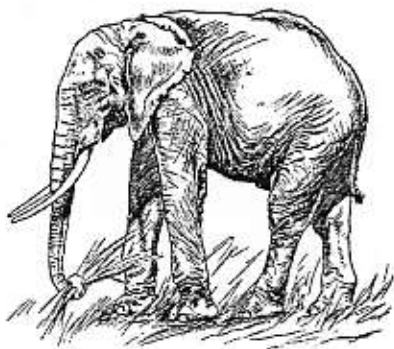
As a man was passing the elephants, he suddenly stopped, confused by the fact that these huge creatures were being held by only a small rope tied to their front leg. No chains, no cages. It was obvious that the elephants could, at anytime, break away from their bonds but for some reason, they did not.

He saw a trainer nearby and asked why these animals just stood there and made no attempt to get away. "Well," trainer said, "when they are very young and much smaller we use the same size rope to tie them and, at that age, it's enough to hold them. As they grow up, they are conditioned to believe they cannot break away. They believe the rope can still hold them, so they never try to break free."

The man was amazed. These animals could at any time break free from their bonds but because they believed they couldn't, they were stuck right where they were.

Like the elephants, how many of us go through life hanging onto a belief that we cannot do something, simply because we failed at it once before?

Failure is part of learning; we should never give up the struggle in life.



## Thrift Sale

Thanks to all who donated items for the thrift sale and/or worked in setting up, selling, and cleaning up! Proceeds (\$1500 so far) have gone toward the sanctuary air conditioning capital campaign and we are thrilled to learn that the air conditioning cost has now been covered (once the remaining pledges are paid, that is). How wonderful is that?

We are planning another sale for next March or April by request of several people, so start saving up your items now! One way to do it is to have a box or bag in a closet or a corner of your basement or garage, and as you see things you don't need or want any more, put them in the box or bag. Then you'll be all set when the time comes!

Lorraine



### **The season of Advent is upon us once again!**

The kids have been working hard on their fall art project. We hope to unveil it in early 2012. Confirmation classes are going well for Morgan and Maggie, while the younger children are studying the major events of the Bible beginning with the story of Creation.

Christmas pageant practice has begun, and the pageant will be held on Sunday, December 18th. Please join us for a very special service. This year's pageant will be somewhat smaller than our last few, but hopefully will be very enjoyable!

We had a special guest speaker in November. Susan Schweinfurth visited with the kids and showed them her Braille writer and other tools she uses to help her live independently. The kids were fascinated with all that Susan had to show them!

I look forward to a busy and spiritual Christmas season.

## Mindful Music and other Thoughts

Although this month is officially termed “the holidays,” it may not be completely warm and fuzzy for everyone. J God, through the words of Paul reminds us of some coping skills we can use.

Ephesians Chapter 6, at verse 10 gives us great verses, beginning with “Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty powers. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes.” Don’t think that the devil idea isn’t a serious reality. It is any nastiness, rudeness, disrespect, gossip, emotional, verbal or physical cruelty, and other illegal and immoral attitudes and actions. It is our own negative feelings and responses or those of others. It may be on the highway or in a banquet hall.

It is to remind us that we have a stronger power with us, and to arm ourselves accordingly. We are to be kind and forgiving in Christ, but we are more than conquerors.

These ideas seem to be opposite and require our constant prayer and discretion in Christ. Are we meek or are we strong? We are both, amazingly, through the wisdom and power of the Holy Spirit.

“Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place...the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

A great memory verse is found in Joshua 1:9: “Be strong and courageous, do not be terrified, do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God is with you, wherever you go.”

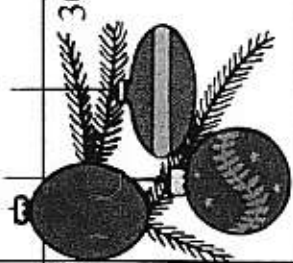
We all fall short, we are going to make wrong moves, and we need Christ with whom to ask forgiveness and to put us back on track. The journey is also called “The Narrow Way.” Eph 18: “And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests...” Pray for strength, protection, and wisdom. God bless us on our journey.

Chrisann

Please join us in worship as we present works to honor Advent and Christmas. Selections include “E’en so, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come,” “How Far is it to Bethlehem,”

“The Holly and the Ivy,” “T’was in the Moon of Wintertime,” and much more.

# December 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Handbells 6:00 pm Choir 7:30 pm	2	3
				8 Handbells 6:00 pm Choir 7:30 pm	9	10 Second Saturday Supper 5 pm
				15 Handbells 6:00 pm Choir 7:30 pm Trustees 5 pm Deadline for January Notes	16	17
				22 Handbells 6:00 pm Choir 7:30 pm	23	24 Lessons and Carols 7 pm Reception following
				29	30 	31 New Year's Eve
				7		
				14		
				21		
				28		
				5 No Women's Bible Study	6	
				12 No Women's Bible Study	13	
				19 No Women's Bible Study	20	
				26 No Women's Bible Study	27	
				4 Communion		
				11 Last Day to order Poinsettias		
				18 Children's Pageant Prudential Council 12 pm		
				25 Christmas Day no Mayflower service Antioch Service 10:30 am		

