

Mayflower Congregational Church

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**December
2016**

Dr. Rick Martin
Pastor

December



Birthdays

BIRTHDAYS

12/8 - Carleen Brammell

12/9 - Mike Graham

12/22 - Remington Graham

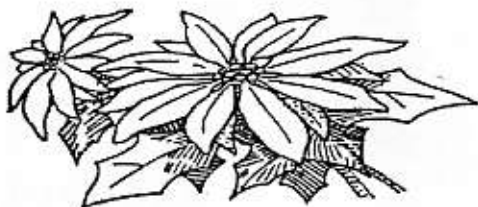
12/25 - Darrell Watson

ANNIVERSARIES

NONE

Head Usher

Lois Ries



Outreach Focus

The Mitten Tree

From The Pastor's Desk
Dr. Rick Martin

Happy Birthday Jesus!

Who doesn't like getting presents? A few years ago, our family went to drawing names for the adults and getting presents for the kids. I tried to get them to have it 'kids and grandpa', but I was overruled. Bummer. Everyone likes getting presents. With the birth of Jesus (and His life, death, resurrection), God was giving humanity the best present of all – salvation; the forgiveness of our sins and eternal life with Him.

We all have received presents from people more based on because they had to instead of wanted to. We all have received presents from people just because they loved and cared about us also. Which were the best presents? The plate with the twins baby footprints hangs on my living room wall, while many, many expensive gifts from years gone by have been forgotten about. The gifts given out of love are the best gifts.

Luke 2:11

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

God's gift of His Son, Jesus, ranks among the best. Given, not because humanity had an eternal need that they themselves could not meet. Given, not because humanity deserved it, or earned it, or could afford it, or God drew their name out of the secret Santa hat. God gave His very best present to YOU because of His great LOVE for you. Not as an afterthought, but decided before the foundation of the world. A love that is not comprehensible and truly unconditional. You cannot even imagine how much God loves you.

When you see a picture of Jesus in the manger, it is a picture of God's present to you. God gave YOU His very best because of His very great love for YOU. Merry Christmas.

John 3:16

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.



Mayflower Financial News

Our October Second Saturday Supper was well attended, with a net profit of \$745.68.

The following is a brief summary of our finances as of October 31, 2016:

Income:	\$ 9,843.81
Expenses:	<u>6,156.35</u>
	\$ 3,687.46

YTD for Ten Months:

Income:	\$ 82,049.36
Expenses:	<u>58,481.69</u>
	\$ 23,567.67

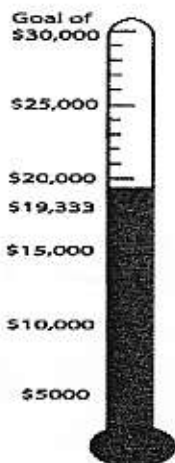
Fund Balances:

Checking:	\$ 12,730.49
Bequest Funds Savings:	26,018.71
Heat Fund Savings:	18,333.91
Memorial Fund CD:	5,498.35
Savings CD:	<u>22,315.05</u>
	\$ 84,896.51

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

— Linda Wheeler, Treasurer





Mayflower Heat Fund

Our goal is to be able to pay for new heating in the inevitable event that our old machines suddenly give up. Our fund is looking better and better. Thank you!

Operation Christmas Child

Our small church delivered 26 shoeboxes this year for the Operation Christmas Child project.

Lorraine is contributing the following information from her local church in Coopersville. It is amazing!

Because of the generosity of donors across the United States, the Operation Christmas Child project of Samaritan's Purse collected more than 8.7 million shoebox gifts last year—filled with fun toys, school supplies and hygiene items—for children in need around the world. Combined with shoebox gifts collected from partnering countries, the ministry sent more than 11.2 million shoebox gifts to children in more than 100 countries.



Pageant

The annual Christmas pageant will happen on December 11th this year. Plan to attend and enjoy another of Liz's masterpieces.

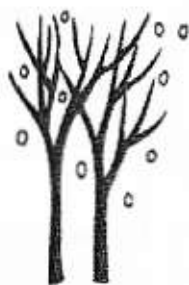
Christmas Eve Service

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 12th. Please contact Sue or Lorraine to sign up.

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



Lay Leaders Message

Fall finely arrived, and winter is not far behind. The trees are losing their leaves as they do every year and in the spring the miracle of life begins again. We have the miracle of a new life at our house. A baby arrived and she is adorable. The miracle of birth. If anyone does not believe in miracles, look around you. I am sure you will find some in your everyday life.

It's the circle of life as the Disney movie says. With the world the way it is today, we will need a miracle to get through. We need to pray loudly so God can hear us over the din of wars. It's too bad that the people that start these wars don't get together and fight just amongst themselves.

On a lighter note, I have this pumpkin eating squirrel that can hardly waddle through the grass. He sits in the yard in my flowers where the pumpkins are on display and eats like a little pig. Now the miracle is how he can get back up that tree with that big belly.


Christian Education

As I sit in my living room wearing shorts, it is hard to feel in the Christmas spirit. By the time you read this, I am sure the cold weather will have descended and we will all feel a lot more like Christmas!

Please remember our lunch and learn for Sunday, December 4th. We had a great discussion in November and I have decided to share some of that information with you to give you a glimpse of how we do things!

In November, we discussed the story of Mary and Martha, found in Luke 10 verses 38-42. Basically, the verses tell the story of the visit of Jesus to the home of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. Martha, as the eldest sister, is working hard to ensure everything is perfect and food is prepared. She is annoyed to see her younger sister, Mary, sitting at the feet of Jesus and intently listening, rather than helping. So Martha decides to share her aggravation and asks Jesus to scold Mary for not helping. Jesus gently rebukes Martha, telling her that Mary is doing the thing of worth by worshipping.

We talked about how Martha must have felt betrayed by the lack of support - after all, she expected Jesus to remind Mary of the roles of women and send her lazy sister hopping back to the kitchen! Instead, Jesus said, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about many things, but only a few things are necessary, really only one, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her."



There were a couple of topics of discussion regarding this passage. First we talked about how Martha had allowed pride to overtake an activity she had begun with the best of intentions. She worked to be a perfect hostess, and allowed her arrogance regarding her service to poison her acts. She began focusing on what Mary wasn't doing and letting it damage the gift of hospitality she had offered. She intended to shame Mary in front of everyone and instead was shamed herself. We all have times where we allow our acts of service to become more about making ourselves look good, rather than consideration from the heart of those who we intend to serve. This story reminds us of the sneaky ways pride can undermine our good faith efforts.

The second important thing to take from this story is the importance of worship. Jesus said Mary was doing the "good part" by sitting and worshipping. Service is important, but nothing is more important than listening to God and worshipping Him. Jesus is cautioning us not to allow our service to overtake the need to hear what we need to hear and remember what God has done for us. It is also a reminder we have all been gifted with different talents which we use in different ways, and we should work together, using those talents, to achieve His goals for us.

Our lively discussion (and sympathy for Martha!) made this an interesting and engaging lesson. I hope you can join us in the busy month of December to find something to discuss.

Music Notes From Barb Fuller

As we wind our way through Advent there is a familiar and beautiful hymn that comes to mind – “Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming” also known as “Es ist ein Ros entsprungen”. It is thought that the beginnings of this hymn can be traced back to the late 16th century in a manuscript that was found in St. Alban’s Carthusian monastery in Trier in the original German. It has always struck me that using the word “rose” to depict Jesus is such a lovely and peaceful way to do so.

Lo, how a Rose e’er blooming from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse’s lineage coming, as those of old have sung.

It came, a flow’ret bright, amid the cold of winter, when half spent was the night.

Isaiah ‘twas foretold it, the Rose I have in mind,
With Mary we behold it, the Virgin Mother kind,

To show God’s love aright, she bore to men a Savior, when half spent was the night.

Theodore Baker (1851 – 1934) gave us the most commonly sung translation of the stanzas we find in the Pilgrim Hymnal. The third stanza, which can be found in the United Methodist hymnal is based on one written in German by Friedrich Layritz (1808 – 1859) and translated by Harried Reynolds Kraugh in 1875.

O Flower, whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air,
Dispel with glorious splendor the darkness everywhere;

True man, yet very God, from Sin and death now save us, and share our every load.

As we continue our journey through Advent the choir will be singing several more pieces that refer to Christ as the “rose”. I hope they will bring you the joy and the peace that “Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming has brought me through the years.



What's happening in December...



- | | |
|-------|--------------------------------------|
| 12/10 | Second Saturday Supper
5 p.m. |
| 12/11 | Last day to orde
Poinsettias |
| 12/15 | Deadline for Mayflower
Notes |
| 12/18 | Prudential Council
noon |
| 12/24 | Christmas Eve Service
7 p.m. |
| 12/25 | Christmas Day - no
church service |
| 12/30 | Church office closed |



December-2016

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				Handbells 1 3:45 Choir 5:00	2	3
4	5	6	7	Handbells 8 3:45 Choir 5:00	9	10 Second Saturday Supper 5:00
Poinsettia deadline Pageant 11	12	13 Trustees 10 am	14	15 Newsletter deadline	16	17 Choir 10:00
18 Prudential Council Noon	19	20	21	22 Handbells 3:45 Choir 5:00	23 Church Office closed	24 Christmas Eve Service 7:00 pm
25 Christmas Day No service	26	27	28	29	30 Office closed	31

