

Mayflower Notes...



Mayflower Congregational Church

2901 W. Mt. Hope, Lansing, MI 48911

Telephone: 517-484-3139

Fax: 484-0525

Web site: www.mayflowerchurch.com

e-mail: info@mayflowerchurch.com



**March
2010**

Dr. Rick Martin

Pastor

Pastor's NOTES article for March 2010

By Pastor Rick Martin

Great Things He Has Done.

I like to listen to stories. I enjoy hearing of what God has done. I think the stories of what God has done should be shared over and over. I never get tired of hearing them. However, among all the stories of old, there should be some recent stories as well; as God's goodness is ongoing towards us. It is refreshing to hear of what God has done – more refreshing to hear of what God is doing.

The prophet Joel said, ***“Do not fear, O land, rejoice and be glad, for the LORD has done great things.”*** (Joel 2:21). God is doing great things around Mayflower Congregational Church. He continues to bless us with wonderful services every Sunday. Through internet technology, He has allowed us to share these services with our church family who misses a service and/or people anywhere who have internet access. As a congregation, we have raised and given thousands of dollars to help people in Lansing and abroad. Many of our church family use their gifts and abilities to bring blessing to others - music ministry, children's ministry, and events throughout the year on our church calendar. Truly God has done and is doing great things for and through Mayflower Congregational Church. We are blessed.

Let me ask you a personal question; are you satisfied with your involvement in the Kingdom of God? While everyone cannot (and should not) be involved in everything, there is personal satisfaction in participating in the things of God. The Apostle Paul said to Archippus, **“Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it.”** (Colossians 4:17). Not “be involved in everything” but participating in what God has gifted you. Got gifts, abilities and talents? Got time and energy? Are you using them for God in some way? Fortunately, Mayflower Congregational Church has many areas of participation available. My advice is: pray about it, find an interest, get involved.

Contin-

(Pastor Rick's message cont.)

A Note of Importance: not everyone has musical talent or is good with children or has administrative abilities or is computer savvy. Plus, we all cannot do what we used to do when we were younger (you under 40 will understand this in time). However, we can still be involved. For example, praying for our church families' needs regularly is being involved. Bringing your children to Sunday school is being involved. Supporting missions is being involved. Peeling potatoes for the 2nd Saturday suppers is being involved. Inviting your neighbors, family and friends (and enemies) to church is being involved. You get the idea.

God has done great things for Mayflower Church over the years. One reason is because He has a wonderful church family to use and to bless. Thank you for being an important part of the Mayflower family.



After Church Coffee

As one of its efforts to improve communication within the church, the Prudential Council is requesting that anyone interested in providing "treats" for after-chrch coffee to please contact Blanche Samohovetz in order to schedule those events. She can be reached through the office or at 321-4712.

Thank you! we continue to look forward to "yummy" get-togethers.



Looking for Something to Give Up or Do For Lent?

Mayflower has 4 military people on its Prayer List at the present time. The Prudential Council would like to ask you to consider giving something to its service people for Lent. They are collecting paper back books, stationery, pens, envelopes, hard candy, gum, tissues/ toiletries/toilet paper (brand names preferred), games, playing cards and CDs. We hope you can help us support our military people in their endeavors.



March is here, and the end of winter is in sight!

Our Sunday School has been very busy! We made Valentines for patients at the VA Hospital, and we baked cookies on Valentine's Day and studied the parable of the wise and foolish versions. Mrs. Mac taught us the song "Give me oil in my lamp, keep me burning". I just found myself singing "Give me gas for my Ford, keep me trucking for the Lord, Give me gas for my Ford, I pray!" The kids "gas my Ford" every week - it is a real pleasure to work for them!

Have a wonderful month!

Liz Canfield



Trustees Meetings

The Trustees will be meetings on the second Thursday evening at 7:00 each month. Please mark this on your calendar!

Music Ministry

February will have a special emphasis on missions; we will focus on global issues and needs, and on our place in the world. We will feature songs and hymns from many cultures, and songs that emphasize our connection to the greater world around us. The adult and children's choirs will combine on an anthem, "Prayer of the Children" on February 7.

Beginning Bells has returned at 5:00 pm on Fridays. We welcome new ringers; we will teach you what you need to know. We have two new ringers at this point and they are doing very well in learning this new skill!

Lent will begin February 17. The Adult choir has a beautiful new setting of Agnus Dei (Lamb of God), which uses thoughtful, modern harmony and concludes with a low, gentle ending. Another piece, City Called Heaven, has a slow, gospel swing and uses the text "I'm trying to make it, make Heaven my Home."

The children's choir is meeting after church each week; they are learning pieces for Easter and other occasions.

The Mayflower Ringers will play for service at the Grandhaven Manor Alzheimer wing on January 31 at 3:00 pm. We have a new ringer, which gives us eight ringers; it is a great start to the New Year!



March is here, and the end of winter is in sight!

Our Sunday School has been very busy! We made Valentines for patients at the VA Hospital, and we baked cookies on Valentine's Day and studied the parable of the wise and foolish versions. Mrs. Mac taught us the song "Give me oil in my lamp, keep me burning". I just found myself singing "Give me gas for my Ford, keep me trucking for the Lord, Give me gas for my Ford, I pray!" The kids "gas my Ford" every week - it is a real pleasure to work for them!

Have a wonderful month!

Liz Canfield



Lay Leader's Message

As I write this, we are looking forward to our own modest version of Mardi Gras – our Fat Tuesday pancake supper marking the last day before Lent. Traditionally, our pancakes would be using up all the butter, sugar, and eggs in the house in preparation for fasting during Lent. Like the larger public celebrations of Mardi Gras, we have “one last party” before the solemn days of prayer and penance leading up to a joyous Easter. Of course we are also planning a corned-beef-and-cabbage dinner to honor St. Patrick’s birthday in March, but as those who have lived in cities with large Irish populations already know, St. Patrick’s birthday is usually exempt from fasting. Anyway, we don’t take Lent as seriously as our forefathers, but we still recognize it, and Easter comes as all the more happy and wonderful. The choirs have already begun to practice Easter music, which I personally love the best of the whole year.

Our Missions month will be ending as this newsletter comes out. We will have raised money for mission outreach at our pancake and corned-beef dinners, and members of the congregation have also responded individually to help Haiti in particular. Maybe this is part of our Lenten self-denial.

Other events this past month – which the Trustees may report in fuller detail – have included the installation of new countertops in the kitchen and the installation of programmable thermostats in the lobby and office area. The kitchen is now almost all new: paint, wallpaper, and countertops new this fall and winter; and the stove, refrigerator, and table all replaced very recently. Chrisann Lowe and her intrepid team of fixer-uppers have their eyes on the exterior of the building for their next project!

The official first day of spring is coming soon. In the meantime: “One kind word can warm three winter months” (Japanese proverb).

Rilla McHarris



Stewardship Minute Message

A CHANNEL OR TERMINAL

There are the principles of receiving and giving. We must get in order to give and live at all, and we must give in order to live abundantly and to help others live. If we consume all of our time, possessions, and energy on ourselves we become empty, spiritually dead, unhappy, friendless people.

The need to give and share can be illustrated by the two different seas located in Palestine. One sea is fresh with many fish in it. On its banks, flowers bloom and bushes grow. From its waters the birds and animals drink. People swim in it and enjoy water activities. Nearby communities enjoy the waterfront. The river Jordan flows into the sea with clear water from the mountain streams. The same river Jordan flows into another sea, which has no fish or plant life. There is no water activity and no homes are built on its bank. The water has become stagnant with no birds or animals willing to drink from it. Water consumed from this sea would likely result in sickness or death.

What makes the difference between these two neighboring seas? The same Jordan River flows into both, and there is no difference in the soil or countryside. The difference is that the Sea of Galilee, which was first described above, acts as a channel, taking in the water and then directing it out again. The taking and giving are equal whereas the second sea described, the Dead Sea, keeps everything it takes in and shares nothing. Every drop it gets it keeps. Because the Sea of Galilee allows water to flow through it, it lives. The Dead Sea keeps everything, and it is dead.

Just as there are these two different seas, there are two kinds of people. The terminal people, who share nothing and serve no one, will end life unhappy, empty, and stagnant. Those willing to love, give, share, and serve others will continue to be refreshed and renewed.

Individuals who act like a channel of God's love and gifts put self aside. God's people come to terms with self-denial (Luke 9:23). Unselfish people generously share and put others first. Jesus said in John 7:38, "Whoever believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." God refills serving people with more love, time, gifts, and abilities to share with others. Second Corinthians 9:8 reads, "And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work".

Fifteen Things God Won't Ask

by Bill Greer, Chicken Soup for the Veteran's Soul

God won't ask what kind of car you drove, but will ask how many people you drove who didn't have transportation.

God won't ask about the fancy clothes you had in your closet, but will ask how many of those clothes helped the needy.

God won't ask the square footage of your house, but will ask how many people you welcomed into your home.

God won't ask about your social status, but will ask what kind of class you displayed.

God won't ask how many material possessions you had, but will ask if they dictated your life.

God won't ask what your highest salary was, but will ask if you compromised your character to obtain that salary.

God won't ask how much overtime you worked, but will ask if you worked overtime for your family and loved ones.

God won't ask how many promotions you received, but will ask how you promoted others.

God won't ask what your job title was, but will ask if you did your job to the best of your ability.

God won't ask what you did to help yourself, but will ask what you did to help others.

God won't ask how many friends you had, but will ask how many people to whom you were a true friend.

God won't ask what you did to protect your rights, but will ask what you did to protect the rights of others.

God won't ask in what neighborhood you lived, but will ask how you treated your neighbors.

God won't ask about the color of your skin, but will ask about the content of your character.

God won't ask how many times your deeds matched your words, but will ask how many times they didn't.