

Texas Storm Relief

We will be taking donations during the month of March for the Salvation Army's relief efforts to help the state of Texas recover from the recent power grid failure which has caused widespread devastation.

Checks should be made payable to the church and may be combined with your pledge or contribution check or given separately. Cash donations are also welcome. We will continue to accept donations until the end of March. Thank you in advance for your generous donations!

If you have questions, please contact Roger Kennedy at 517/646-8861.

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**March
2021**



Rev. Mark McCormick
Pastor



It's happening in March...

3/7 - Communion

3/7 - Trustees - 7:00 p.m. on Zoom

3/14 - Daylight Savings Time begins

("Spring Forward" one hour)

3/15 - Deadline for April Mayflower Notes

3/17 - Prudential Council - 7:00 p.m. on Zoom

Exercise Class - Mon., Tue., Wed., Fri. -

4:30 p.m. on Zoom



BIRTHDAYS

3/8 - Jamie Keller

3/9 - Liz Tingley

3/12 - Clayton Hull

3/15 - Marissa Slater

3/18 - Gordon Wilson

3/20 - Lorraine Finison

3/22 - Ardath Scheffel (96)

3/22 - Donna Slater

3/23 - Gail Sawyer

3/28 - April Lakatos

3/28 - Shirley Potts

ANNIVERSARY

3/13 - Charles and Jan Fleck (40 years)

OUTREACH FOCUS

Texas Storm Relief

Mayflower Financial News

As we wrapped up the Mitten Tree project, a check for \$350 was given to Lewton School in early February. The Lansing Charter Academy already received \$350 in December. The remaining knitted items were divided between the schools. Thank you again, everyone, for your donations to this and all of the outreach projects we did during the last several months of 2020!

The following is a summary of our finances as of January 31, which is also the year-to-date for 2021:

| | |
|-----------|------------------|
| Income: | \$ 7,726.61 |
| Expenses: | <u>10,801.44</u> |
| | \$ - 3,074.83 |

Fund Balances:

| | |
|-------------|------------------|
| Checking: | \$ 9,515.70 |
| Savings: | 100,441.95 |
| Savings CD: | <u>22,626.39</u> |
| | \$132,584.04 |

Detailed financial reports are in the brochure rack in the lobby or can be emailed to you. Contact us if you have questions or want a copy.

—Linda Wheeler, Treasurer, and
Lorraine Finison, Financial Secretary



Pastor Mark's Musings

Hello, Mayflower family! It's March! Weather-wise, in Michigan, March brings promise and hope, but with trepidation, as the month of March has one of the widest ranges of temperature variation. It can range from nearly 20 degrees below zero to nearly 90 degrees (remember March 2012?!). These weather anomalies remind me of the ecclesial season of Lent. You may be aware that we are in the middle of my Lenten series called "Paradoxical Lent." Nature teaches us about the paradox of life. I remember the unusually warm stretch in March of 2012 when the temperature soared well into the eighties. It was wonderful! But what followed was dreadful! Later in the spring of that year, the temperature dropped to well below freezing, destroying nearly all the apple crop and much of the fruit industry suffered financial disaster.

During the season of Lent, my hope is to help us understand that the hope and promise of the gospel does not remove or separate us from the harsh realities of life. Jesus said, "The rain falls on the just and the unjust." That does not change our faith, but should do just the opposite. As we look at the life of Jesus, we see his faith that overcame the injustice, hatred, and law-keeping gatekeepers like the Pharisees. They failed to understand, in just one example, that doing good on the Sabbath was not law-breaking but law-fulfilling. The purpose of the Law as given by Moses, and often misunderstood, was to provide a framework for life and health and peace. Jesus came to fulfill that law when his courage, perseverance, and faith paved our path to life abundant, as he promised. It led to his death. A great paradox! A great truth! Our great hope! Thanks be to God!

Pastor Mark



Dear Mayflower Congregation,

One year later. . .

March 13, 2020 – much like other dates: 12/7/1941, 11/22/1963, and 9/11/2001, that will forever be etched in our minds and that have significantly impacted our lives. It was the day the world as we knew it came to a screeching halt.

I remember sitting in a church meeting early last March – when a very difficult decision was made to keep our congregation safe and protected from a new deadly, mysterious virus that was rapidly spreading. To do that, Mayflower Church closed its doors to in-person worship. It worked.

A year later, Mayflower has not only survived; it has flourished. Despite not being in physical contact, we remain in spiritual contact. Our faith remains strong and we continue to be inspired by our online worship services and the Engage series.

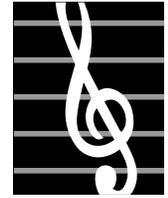
As I write this, I am sitting at my kitchen table and watching the falling snow, and I think of the first day of spring – March 20. Spring is always a time of rebirth, renewal, and growth. Spring brings hope, hope that as the vaccine becomes increasingly available, we will once again sit together in the pews of our beloved church.

2 Corinthians 5:17 So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new.

March 17 is the celebration of St. Patrick's Day. Whether or not you are Irish, I leave you with this blessing: A wish that every day for you will be happy from the start, may you always have good luck and a song in your heart.

With love,

Gail Sawyer



Music Notes from Barb Fuller

It seems as if we were just at the Transfiguration with Jesus on the mountaintop where he glowed with God's love, and his disciples heard the voice of God say, "This is my son, my chosen one; listen to him." Now we are in the middle of Lent and the mood has gone from elation to sadness. Jesus is in the desert where life is hard. He's hungry, alone, and thirsty. This is where he struggles forty days but is finally able to turn his back on the tempter and "walk in solidarity with broken, hungry, hurting people."

In her book Plenty Good Room: A Lenten Bible Study Based on African American Spirituals, Marilyn Thornton wrote: "Life contains its lonesome valleys; times when you hit bottom, when you go so low, you can go no lower, times when you feel as alone as alone can be, with no shoulder to cry on and no one to hold your hand. . . . Jesus, like all of humanity, had his 'lonesome valley' moments."

African-American slaves created many, many songs about suffering, and what little solace they could receive was in the understanding that even if they felt alone, Jesus was beside them. James H. Cone, founder of black liberation theology and author of The Cross and the Lynching Tree wrote, "In the mystery of God's revelation, black Christians believed that just knowing that Jesus went through an experience of suffering in a manner similar to theirs gave them faith that God was with them, even in suffering on lynching trees, just as God was present with Jesus in suffering on the cross."

In our hymnal is the song "Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley," which even in its simplicity, has a deep message.

"Jesus walked this lonesome valley, He had to walk it by Himself; O, nobody else could walk it for Him, He had to walk it by Himself."

We must walk this lonesome valley, We have to walk it by ourselves; O, nobody else can walk it for us, We have to walk it by ourselves.

You must go and stand your trial, You have to stand it by yourself, O, nobody else can stand it for you, You have to stand it by yourself."

As we approach Easter with the promise of life after our death here on earth, isn't it reassuring to know that until that day comes, we really aren't alone?