

Greetings, Mayflower Congregational Church,

I write to you, brothers and sisters in Christ, to give thanks for the time you allowed me to grow within your community. While this time was brief, the development of my heart was immense. I began to truly see myself as a Pastor, a gift I shall cherish. This confidence I have gained will no doubt produce many fruits in service to our Lord, and I thank you for it.

While I was only able to meet a portion of you in person, your online presence and encouragement has meant much to me and I look forward to a day when I can return to the church and visit all of you in person. The beautiful thing about Congregationalism is that while we may travel here or there, we are always connected through our tradition. So, while I say goodbye for now, this is rather just the beginning of my journey which includes all of you and will continue to include you as I walk the Congregational path.

There is a wonderful community at Mayflower full of love, hope, and peace. I pray that the Lord may bless you and keep you, may his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Church is a beacon of light for the world; continue to illuminate the darkness through spreading God's truth.

With love in Christ,
Jacob Richards

Mayflower Church Staff

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Rev. Mark McCormick
Pastor

February



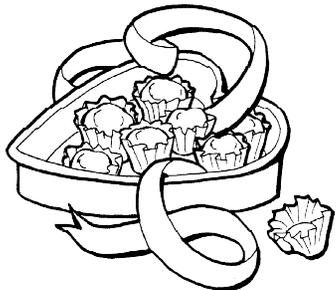
- 2/1 - Nancy McKay
- 2/9 - Lisa Jones
- 2/11 - Bob Z
- 2/21 - Carla Woodward
- 2/22 - Gwen Tisdale
- 2/24 - Martha Swan
- 2/26 - Candy Bywater



It's happening in February...

- 2/7 - Communion
- 2/14 - Trustees - 7:00 p.m. on Zoom
- 2/15 - Deadline for March Mayflower Notes
- 2/17 - Prudential Council - 7:00 p.m. on Zoom

**Exercise Class - Mon., Tue., Wed., Fri. -
4:30 p.m. on Zoom**

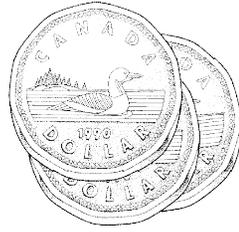


**All you need is love. But
a little chocolate now
and then doesn't hurt.**

Charles M. Schulz

Mitten Tree

We have wrapped up the Mitten Tree project. Your monetary gifts totaled \$700 (a record!) plus many knitted items. You may still bring in knitted items at any time. Thank you, Mayflower!



Mayflower Financial News

In early January, we sent a check for \$1300 to the Baby Boxes for Haiti project and a check for \$1100 to the Salvation Army (our Christmas Eve collection). It is such a thrill to have the congregation so generously support these deserving charities, especially in these difficult times.

We are winding up the Mitten Tree project, with \$700 donated. That amount will be divided between Lewton School and the Lansing Charter Academy so they will have funds to address the needs of their students. Thank you, everyone!

The following is a summary of our finances as of December 31:

Income:	\$ 11,847.55
Expenses:	<u>13,558.75</u>
	\$ - 1,711.20

YTD for Twelve Months:

Income:	\$120,916.15
Expenses:	<u>109,112.14</u>
	\$ 11,804.01

Fund Balances:

Checking:	\$ 12,868.08
Savings:	100,439.39
Savings CD:	<u>22,547.34</u>
	\$135,854.81

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

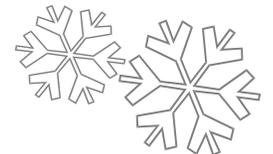
Pastor Mark's Musings

It's February! The word root is februum or februa, pertaining to the rite or instruments of purification. In the Northern hemisphere, these instruments were used in the preparation for the coming of Spring. My father used to say that when we get to the end of February, winter's back will have been broken. Whether that is true or not, by the time this month ends, our minds will be turning toward thoughts of the promise of Spring.

There are three things specifically I would like us to think about in February, among the many other things we will encounter during this month. First is the birthday of George Washington on Feb. 22. I challenge you to look up and read the 110 rules of civility written by our first president. You will find them at www.mountvernon.org. It will amaze you how eroded our national standards of decency and civil behavior have become, especially in the halls of Congress as well as the Presidency. Second is Black History Month. I find that our general populace as well as church members are woefully ignorant of the contributions and experiences of Black Americans through the years. A transforming book for me is "Knock at Midnight: Inspiration from the Great Sermons of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr." It was placed in my hands as a young minister and has served as a reminder of the courage and fortitude it takes to preach a gospel of love, and at the same time speaking truth to power, both of which Jesus consistently did. This book is a collection of sermons preached by Dr. King before he reached the age of 25 and is available on Amazon.com. Finally, I would like you to think about Ash Wednesday, which is Feb. 17. As Protestants, we often leave this day and its significance solely to the Catholics, but we at Mayflower, along with many Protestant churches, have revived this ancient Christian observance as we join with Christians, both Catholic and Protestant, around the world. Ash Wednesday begins to prepare our hearts and minds for Lent, the annual observance which precedes the most glorious celebration of all, Easter Sunday, which is April 4.

Keep the faith, live the faith, and share the faith!

Pastor Mark



Dear Mayflower Congregation,

It is with extreme joy, gratitude, and pride as your new Lay Leader, that I accept the gavel from Barb Fuller. Barb did an outstanding job as your Lay Leader in 2020. She has been a role model and mentor to me over the past year, as has Pastor Mark, Lorraine, and the Prudential Council. I welcome Tom Hacker as the Lay Leader-Elect/Trustee and Jerry Fuller as Trustee. Linda Wheeler will continue as Treasurer and Candy Bywater is starting a new term as Deacon.

There are a lot of exciting new changes happening inside the church. The Social Hall is getting a make-over. Pastor Mark has painted it and the room dividers have been removed, which makes the hall appear much more spacious. Thanks to generous donations, new chairs will be purchased for the social hall, automatic door openers for the women's and men's upstairs bathrooms will be installed, and another camera has been purchased that enhances online services.

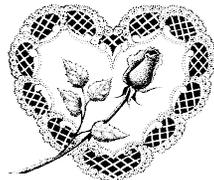
On February 14, Valentine's Day is recognized as a celebration of love. It is officially known as The Feast of St. Valentine and originated in the year 496 from a Roman festival. 1 John 4:7-8—*Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.*

To me, Mayflower Church exemplifies love, not for just one day, but every day of the year. I have never met a group of people more loving and more giving than the congregation at Mayflower. 2020 was a difficult, brutal year and there will continue to be many challenges in 2021. But together, we will weather the storm, because we love our God, our church, and one another.

For those of you who made a New Year's resolution to exercise more, please join us for our exercise class on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday at 4:30 p.m. on Zoom. Justin Stephens does an awesome job leading the group. Please contact him for more information.

With love,

Gail Sawyer



Music Notes from Barb Fuller

The other day I was out in our barn sweeping up the debris that had accumulated on the floor since the last time I swept in late summer – dead leaves, shards of walnut shells, bird droppings, etc. This past spring I had made up my mind to do that every so often when Jerry and I had spent so much time cleaning and reorganizing that space, and I have done it with the intent to let the critters know that we humans are still around and still lay the final claim to that area.

As I proceeded with my job, I found myself singing a jazzed-up version of “His Eye Is on the Sparrow” nearly at the top of my lungs. After a few moments I stopped and thought, “Geez, I’m singing that song with complete abandon, and it feels really good!” Needless to say, I continued singing loudly and even ended up doing a little jig with my poor dilapidated broom. It was then I decided that singing with abandon is healthy for my soul.

There are so many reasons to not sing with abandon these days, and yet that seems to me like the perfect reason TO sing with abandon. Oftentimes after my mom and I have had our daily phone conversations that inevitably end with a bit of singing, she will say, “At least we can still sing.” And to that I say, “Amen!”

Folks, you don't have to be a professional vocalist to sing with abandon. You don't even have to sing at the top of your voice. You do know that you can sing in almost a whisper and still get the same affect as long as you are singing with enthusiasm and gusto. If you are singing with words, you need to pronounce them crisply as if you wanted someone to understand them clearly (oh, that would be you, wouldn't it?).

Of course, you know that doing everything with abandon is not necessarily good, but singing with abandon to praise the Lord, singing with abandon to lift your spirits, and singing with abandon just to get you through to the completion of a difficult task are all good reasons. You really should try it.

I sing (with abandon) because I'm happy,

I sing (with abandon) because I'm free.

His eye is on the sparrow, and I know he watches me.

