

MAYFLOWER

News

FEB | MAR 2021

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17 LENT BEGINS!



Join us as we
IMMERSE
ourselves in the Bible
LENTEN ALL-CHURCH STUDY

DAILY VIDEO & AUDIO recording options available.

FAMILY, YOUTH & CHILDREN'S GUIDES are an excellent way for young readers in your family to participate without becoming overwhelmed.

WEEKLY ZOOM DISCUSSIONS engage openly in group Zooms.

COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE designed for groups—more like a book club, less like a Bible study.

So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up. GALATIANS 6:9

MayflowerChurch.org/news/immerse or call the office for more information.

A LETTER FROM JONATHAN

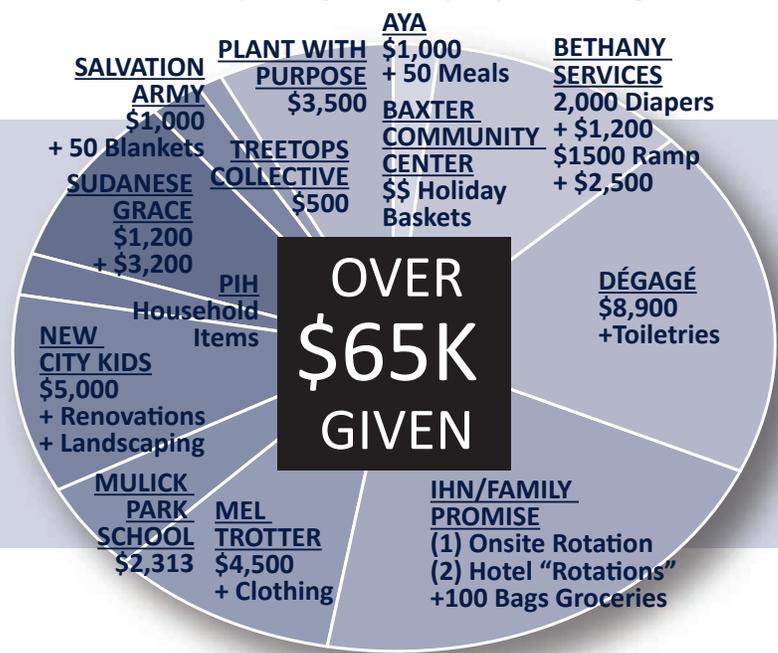
Dear Mayflower Members and Friends,

We are looking forward to Lent and a time of reflection and discernment. Ruth, Julia and I are in the process of planning a short, outdoor worship experience for Ash Wednesday on February 17 to launch this Lenten season. We will focus on the Stations of the Cross each of the six Sundays of Lent as we anticipate the celebration of Easter.

Traditionally, Lent is a season when individuals fast (or refrain from something they enjoy) in order to participate symbolically in Jesus' journey to the cross. If this is a spiritual practice of yours, I want to present an idea: a few years ago a Mayflower Bible study member decided to "give up" anger for Lent. I found this to be a wonderful concept. Considering the issues that separate us from God—things like anger, hatred, bitterness, holding grudges, etc.—the sacrifice of an attitude like anger actually can bring us closer to the Holy One. *(Continued on Page 4)*

– Mayflower Outreach 2020 –

As COVID-19 forced Mayflower to get creative to keep the heartbeat of our congregation strong, this beautiful outpouring went way beyond writing checks.



Critical Issues in the time of COVID were addressed:

Food Insecurity

Domestic Violence

SALVATION ARMY \$2,500 food pantry **SAFE HAVEN** \$6,500

HAND 2 HAND \$4,000

YWCA \$2,500

KIDS FOOD BASKET \$3,000

(Details on Page 4)

MAYFLOWER *Music*

YOUR MUSIC STAFF IS GRATEFUL FOR ALL OF YOU.

We hope to continue to feel enriched, inspired and connected in the next few months as we move from the manger to the cross.

CHAMBER MUSIC AT MAYFLOWER

Join us for a virtual concert on **Friday, April 16 at 7pm** as we celebrate Beethoven's 250th Anniversary with musicians of the Grand Rapids Symphony conducted by John Varineau

SAVE THE DATE!

The FREE livestream program includes Beethoven's Octet for Winds in E-flat, Op. 103

To enjoy this free concert, or for more information, please visit www.MayflowerChurch.org

We travelled through an Advent and Christmas season like no other, with many Mayflower families participating in our music projects with a gracious and generous spirit. We also had many Mayflower families who attentively listened to the music.

You can enjoy the many music videos on our church YouTube channel, and tune in each Sunday morning at 10:30 to our virtual worship service, where we focus on the weekly Lectionary lessons through word, song, and prayer.

Voices from our choirs will continue to rotate as cantors, and there will be occasional instrumental guests. Our hymnals are still available to anyone who wants one at home. We are grateful to be on this journey with you!

~ Dr. Julia Brown, Director of Music

ART SONG IN THE ATRIUM

During the season of Lent, we will be posting a series of new music videos featuring some of our soloists and our new piano in the atrium. This offering is a COVID version of our Music Meditations, combining beautiful music with thought-provoking readings. Stay tuned for more details!

Chapel and Christmas Youth Choirs

Thank you to all of the members who were able to join us for the Christmas services! Your contributions were inspiring and helped to create wonderful light in a difficult season for many.

Our next project will be focused towards Easter. Please stay tuned as we plan and prepare for an uplifting Easter season!

~ Josh Ledesma, Director of Youth Choirs

Children's, Cantus, Cherub, and Carol Choirs

Miss Abby will be working with the children in all of the choirs on the musical *The Lost Boy* at our winter season Midweek on Wednesdays either in person or online depending on the weather. The springtime musical at Mayflower brings an excitement that is a highlight of every year and 2021 will not be different!

Stay tuned to get your front row seat at this year's production of *The Lost Boy*.

~ Abby Brooks, Director of Children's Choirs

Christian Education

PEN PALS AT MAYFLOWER

Throughout the winter, students ages kindergarten through high school will be sending postcards to each other. These cards will be full of fun facts about each person and brighten mailboxes throughout our neighborhoods, creating new friendships in the New Year.

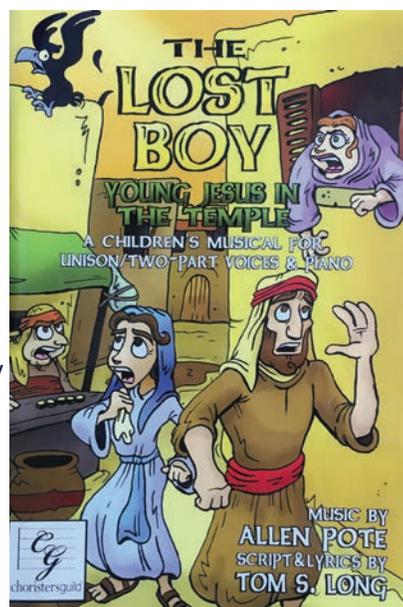
If your student has not received postcards to fill out and send to a pen pal, please contact the office.

HOME EDITIONS

As we enter into the season of Lent, the Home Edition packets will include games, crafts, and children's bulletins that will walk them through Jesus' journey from Ash Wednesday to Easter.

Home Edition is our bi-monthly Sunday School newsletter mailed to 4yr-old through 3rd-grade students.

If you are interested in receiving our Sunday School Home Edition, please contact Susan Orban at Susan@mayflowerchurch.org



PEEPS PRIZE!!

Wednesday, February 17

***PEEPS PRIZE is going Virtual!
a Mayflower favorite – from home –
during this Lenten season.***

Beginning on Ash Wednesday, Bible story ideas will be shared on the Mayflower Family Ministries Facebook and Instagram pages.

Every family is encouraged to make their own creative Bible Story box diorama with Peeps and more, fun, colorful Eastertime decorations.

Photos of each family's Peeps scene can be sent to Rachael@MayflowerChurch.org to be displayed on Mayflower's website, Facebook, and Instagram pages on **March 28th, Palm Sunday.**



CONFIRMATION UPDATE

We are aiming for Confirmation classes for 8th graders to begin after Spring Break with the hope to celebrate on Pentecost, May 24th.

Please contact Allison Houlihan to sign-up or for more information: Allison@MayflowerChurch.org.

MAYFLOWER NEEDLEPOINT GUILD

If you love to needlepoint, please join the NEW Mayflower Needlepoint Guild. The MNG is excited to stitch beautiful Angel ornaments to decorate our church in a new tradition this year.

Invite and share with your friends and neighbors!

The Angels are available in full kits online from artist, Joan Thomasson, at www.stitchinstuff.com.

We'll have occasional Stitch & Zoom dates, as well as in-person stitching times when possible.

For more information or to share your choice of Angel design to avoid duplicates, please email Andrea Koster at Andrea@MayflowerChurch.org.

SENIOR PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

Progress is being made on our search for a New Senior Pastor.

January 11, 2021 - The Mayflower Senior Minister Search Committee has been working alongside our search consultant, Vanderbloeman Search Group, and progress is being made:

- 24 individuals have indicated an interest in our job posting -- Vanderbloemen is screening, interviewing, and narrowing down potential candidates.
- On January 25, the Search Committee will meet in person, with our consultant to review 3-5 finalists for the Senior Minister position, including videos in which the candidates will introduce themselves, as well as a video of each of the candidates giving a sermon.
- Within 1 week, all of the finalists will be contacted and extensive interviews with the committee will be set up.
- All of the interviews of the finalists will be conducted within 2 weeks following the meeting on January 25th.
- Within 3 weeks, the final candidate will be invited to Grand Rapids for a visit.
- Within 4-6 weeks, a final decision will be made and an offer extended

Without any snags—that brings us to the beginning of March! This is a pretty aggressive schedule for moving forward, but one that has been suggested, encouraged, and endorsed by Vanderbloemen as experts in the process. Continue to pray for our committee; the time is coming quickly where we will need God's wisdom on our hearts to make this critical decision.

~ Blessings, Ginger Young, Search Committee Chairperson

FIND MORE DETAILS ONLINE:
mayflowerchurch.org/news/pastor-search-update

MAYFLOWER *Outreach*

Outreach in March will be “Filling the Pantry” for Safe Haven Ministries.

Safe Haven is a ministry focused on following Christ’s example, and motivated by our community needs, to prevent and end relationship abuse.

Safe Haven operates an emergency safe shelter which is available for individuals and families fleeing domestic abuse. During their stay residents receive ongoing case management and support.

The shelter operates a pantry for residents and at Mayflower we are committed to filling that pantry with the most needed items in the month of March.



Our website will have a link to the list posted in February.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ONLINE:
SafeHavenMinistries.org

OUTREACH DETAILS from Page 1

AYA – (formerly HQ: a drop-in center for homeless teens) **received \$1,000** plus ELEVATE Youth sponsored **Thanksgiving meals for 50 kids.**

BAXTER COMMUNITY CENTER – received **funds for Holiday baskets** for the families they serve.

BETHANY REFUGEE SERVICES – collected **over 2,000 diapers** with a Christmas Eve offering of **over \$1,200**; funded **\$1,500 for a ramp** for a quadriplegic refugee; sponsored numerous families with Christmas gifts including **49UP/69UP Group collective donation of \$2,500.**

DÉGAGÉ – received **\$8,900** including **Toiletries Drive** filling (2) 40 gallon bins for their efforts at addressing the needs of those experiencing homelessness.

IHN/FAMILY PROMISE – (1) onsite rotation (Feb 2020) and (2) sponsored “rotations” for clients in hotels (July/Oct 2020) ...**PLUS** a food drive of over **100 bags of groceries.**

MEL TROTTER – received **warm clothing items** from our congregation **plus \$4,500** (part of which was designated for their outreach with the new shower trailer).

MULICK PARK ELEMENTARY – incentive program to address absenteeism with online school was **funded for \$2,313.**

NEW CITY KIDS – site of our “Grand Rapids Mission Trip” this summer, **members worked on building renovations; PLUS \$5,000 scholarship** funding and 29UP Group landscaped grounds.

PIH-PARTNERS IN HOUSING – Mayflower storage unit **household items were donated** to support Bethany Christian Services youth transitioning out of foster care to independent living.

SUDANESE GRACE – Youth Car Wash raised over **\$1,200 for their new playground**, plus we **donated \$3,200** for their Deacon’s fund in order to meet the most pressing needs of their community members.

SALVATION ARMY – received **\$1,000 PLUS 50 throw blankets** for clients at Christmas

TREETOPS COLLECTIVE – received **\$500** for gift cards for Christmas needs for new Americans

PLANT WITH PURPOSE – a global initiative for sustainable development, **received \$3,500** for their community development fund.

FINANCE / STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

Help us complete the HOLD SERVE stewardship drive as **we urge every member to be accounted for** as Mayflower continues to serve our congregation and our community.



There are still several households that pledged in 2020 who we have not heard from. I am asking you to reach out and **pledge what you can today**, or simply let us know that you do need to take a sabbatical this year.

As of 1/20/21, we have received 200 pledges totaling \$716,000 which is 89% of our total Covid-19 reduced budget. We still have heard from only 46% of our membership. We are still \$84,000 short of a minimum budget so we still have work to do.

Thank you for your continued stewardship in treasure and faithful prayer. ~ *With gratitude, Ken Goodson, Chair*

A LETTER FROM JONATHAN

(continued from Page 1)

Another concept I have found helpful is to “add in” a practice instead of “giving something up.” This is what my family decided to do. We have been disturbed by the impact of the pandemic on the church budget—especially the reduction in the outreach giving—so our family has decided to increase our gift to Mayflower. I hope to set an example as the pastor to only ask of you what I am willing to do myself.

No matter how you personally decide to observe Lent, I pray that it brings you closer to this mysterious, wonderful, creative force that we call God. May you be blessed and comforted on your journey of faith and may you know that you are loved beyond measure.

~ *In Christ, Jonathan White, Interim Senior Pastor*

COVID TASK FORCE UPDATE

The Church Council and Executive Committee continues to weigh risk and seek viable means to safely allow small groups to use the building during the pandemic.

They are working to formalize a COVID Threshold Policy soon in hopes of opening the sanctuary for limited attendance.