

# MAYFLOWER

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

December 15, 2024 - 10:30am



**WE BELIEVE:** Faith is a journey, God is good, Jesus saves, and the Spirit leads us to faith, hope, and love as we honor the dignity of all God's people.

# **ORDER OF WORSHIP**

\*Indicates *please stand if you are able*.

Bolded text or music score indicates congregational response.

Please sign the friendship register located in your pew.

Prayer request cards may be placed in the offering and will be added to our prayer list.

***As you enter the sanctuary, we invite you to prepare your hearts for worship.***

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## **PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP**

*God of life, something in us leaps for joy when we sense you near.*

*Blessed are we, and blessed is the fruit of our hearts when we listen.*

*In the silence, and in the Word, speak to us. Come to us. Be born in us.*

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## **PRELUDE**

*Berceuse Paraphrase*  
by George Baker

Dr. Julia Brown

## **WELCOME AND PASSING OF THE PEACE\***

Rev. Ruth Bell Olsson

Greeting: The peace of Christ be with you.

**Response: And also with you.**

## **NEWS OF THE CHURCH**

Rachael Cooley

## **INTROIT**

*Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*  
Words: Charles Wesley; Music: John Stainer

Chancel Choir

Come, Thou long expected Jesus, born to set Thy people free;  
From our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in Thee.

## **CALL TO WORSHIP**

Rev. Dr. Bob Livingston

Leader: Sing aloud, O people, sing and shout!

**People: Rejoice with all your heart, O church!**

Leader: Set your feet firmly on the ground, open your mouth

**People: And sing! Sing to bless the LORD who is in your midst.**

Leader: Here is our song: a triumphant light against the long shadows.

**People: With joy, we sing!**

# PROCESSIONAL CAROL 83\*

*People, Look East*

BESANÇON

## LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH\*

Jenna and Kathy Wynsma

Leader: We pray that this Advent candle may shine in our hearts with joy.

People: **Even in the darkness we shine with joy, for the Light is coming.**

Leader: Even in the cold our hearts are warm with joy, for you are with us.

People: **Even amidst evil and cruelty we bear joy and not despair into the world. God, we open our hearts to your grace. Fill us with the light of your joy.**

[light candle while we sing]

Star - Child, earth - Child, go - be - tween of God,  
5 love Child, Christ Child, heav - en's light - ning rod,  
9 This year, this year, let the day ar - rive when  
13 Christ - mas comes for ev - ery - one, ev - ery - one a - live!

Words: Shirley Erena Murray; Music Carlton Young, © 1994 Hope Publishing Co, used by permission OneLicense #729334-A

## ADVENT PRAYER\* (spoken by all)

**God of Joy, we rejoice in your holy name and eagerly anticipate your incarnation among us. So we will shout aloud and sing for joy for you are in our midst! Amen.**

## GLORIA PATRI\*

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.**

## ANTHEM

*Night of Silence*  
by Daniel Kantor

Children and Youth Choir;  
Wesley Haddad, Oliver Melville,  
Becca Muza-Moons,  
Archie Samuel, small ensemble

Cold are the people, winter of life we tremble in shadows this cold,  
endless night frozen in the snow lie roses sleeping flowers that will echo the sunrise fire of  
hope is our only warmth weary, its flame will be dying soon.

Voice in the distance, call in the night on wind you enfold us you speak of the light gentle on the ear you  
whisper softly rumors of a dawn so embracing breathless love awaits darkened souls  
Soon will we know of the morning.

Silent night, holy night All is calm, all is bright 'Round yon Virgin,  
Mother and Child Holy infant, so tender and mild sleep in heavenly peace.

Spirit among us, shine like the star Your light that guides shepherds and kings from afar shimmer in the sky  
so empty, lonely rising in the warmth of your Son's love  
Star unknowing of night and day Spirit we wait for your loving Son.

Silent night, holy night shepherds quake, at the sight glories stream from heaven afar  
Heavenly hosts sing 'Alleluia' Christ the Savior is born.

## REFLECTIONS: SAYING YES TO GOD

**OLD TESTAMENT READING** Zephaniah 3:14-20 Ben Ruppert  
PEW BIBLE, PAGE 667

**REFLECTION 1** *Yes, Or No!* Rev. Dr. Livingston

**REFLECTION 2** *Mary Speaks*<sup>1</sup> Rev. Bell Olsson

**GOSPEL READING** Luke 1: 46-55 Quincy Stiffler  
PEW BIBLE, PAGE 726

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE** Rachael Cooley

**CAROL 97\*** *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice* IN DULCI JUBILO

**CALL TO OFFERING** Rev. Dr. Livingston

**OFFERTORY ANTHEM** *And the Glory from Messiah* Chancel Choir  
by George Friedrich Handel

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.  
(Isaiah 40:5)

## DOXOLOGY\*

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise him, all creatures here below;  
Praise him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

1. Adapted from Katerina Whitley, "Light to the Darkness: Lessons and Carols, Public and Private"

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION\***

Rev. Dr. Livingston

**CALL TO PRAYER** (sung by all)

ST. LOUIS

**O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray; cast out our sin and enter in,  
be born in us today. We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel**

**CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER**

Rev. Dr. Livingston

**LORD’S PRAYER**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.  
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.  
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

**ANTHEM**

*Christmastide*  
by Donald Fraser

Combined Choirs

Green and silver, red and gold, and a story born of old.  
Truth and love and hope abide this Christmastide.  
Holly, ivy, mistletoe, and the gently falling snow  
From a simple ox’s stall came the greatest gift of all.  
Children sing of peace and joy at the birth of one small boy.  
Let the bells ring loud and clear, ring out now for all to hear.  
Trumpets sound and voices raises in an endless stream of praise.  
Green and silver, red and gold, and a story born of old.  
Peace and love and hope abide this Christmastide.

**BENEDICTION\***

Rev. Bell Olsson

**You can prepare, but still it will come to you by surprise,  
crossing through your doorway, calling your name in greeting,  
turning like a child who quickens suddenly within you.  
It will astonish you how wide your heart will open in welcome  
for the joy that finds you so ready and still so unprepared.**

—Jan Richardson

**DISMISSAL\***

Rev. Bell Olsson

**Leader:** As we await our coming Savior, go in joy.  
**People:** **We wait in joy. Thanks be to God!**

**POSTLUDE**

*In Dulci Jubilo*  
Dale Wood

Dr. Julia Brown

# This Week at Mayflower

*\*Words in italics denote partnering organizations that meet at Mayflower.*

## Today, December 15

10:30am | Christmastide Worship Service

5pm | Elevate Christmas Party

## DECEMBER

**16** Men's Bible Study | 7:30am

Women's Bible Study | 9:30am

Women's Bible Study | 5pm

*Mahj in the Mitten\** | 6pm

**17** Breakfast Club | 6:30am

Deacon's Meeting | 9:30am

Needlepoint | 10am

*Embellish Concert\** | 7:30pm

**18** Midweek - Ring and Sing | 4pm

Mayflower Bells | 6pm

Advent Learning Series | 6pm

*Al-Anon\** | 7pm

Chancel Choir | 7:30pm

**19** *Women's City Club\** | 9:30am

Women's Bible Study | 10am

Next Step Christmas Tea | 1pm

*Boy Scouts\** | 6:30pm

**20** Men's Bible Study | 7am

**21** *GRYC Concert\** | 4pm

*GRYC Concert\** | 7pm

## THE LONGEST NIGHT: BLUE CHRISTMAS

**DECEMBER 22 | 5PM**

Come in the midst of grief, longing and despair and find comfort, community and hope. Join us in the atrium for a time of lament, contemplation and prayer.

**MAYFLOWER**  
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

2345 Robinson Rd. SE, GR, MI 49506  
616.459.6255 | [mayflowerchurch.org](http://mayflowerchurch.org)



# ADVENT LEARNING

*Mary the Mother of Jesus: Favor, Consent, and Action*

**WEDNESDAY | Dec. 18 | 6-7:30pm | SANCTUARY**



*Helen Bell and  
Rev. Ruth Bell Olsson*

Come study the life of Mary with **Helen Bell** and **Rev. Ruth Bell Olsson**. We will learn about her extraordinary path to becoming the mother of Jesus and how this changed the world.

We will livestream this on Facebook and post the recording on Thursday mornings.

THIS ADVENT/CHRISTMAS SEASON, WE INVITE YOU TO  
*Come*  
IN THE *Midst of...*

## **SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP | 10:30am**

**Dec. 15** | In the midst of grief bring JOY

**Dec. 22** | In the midst of apathy bring LOVE

**Dec. 29** | In the midst of change bring SONG

**Jan. 5** | Epiphany

## **CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP**

**4pm** | Family Service with Live Animals

**10pm** | Candlelight Service

# Thank You, Mark Webb and Welcome Back, Abby!



Mark Webb



Abby Brooks

Our heartfelt thanks to Mark Webb for stepping in to work with our children and youth this fall as Abby started a fulltime job teaching music in Forest Hills school district. Today is Mark's last day in this role. We welcome back Abby as Interim Children and Youth Choir Director for the remainder of the school year. What a great team!

## Cantata Potluck and Practice





# Year End Financial Update

THANK YOU to all who support our church with your time, talent & treasure! We are connected in community by faith. It takes every single person, and we are grateful for all of you!

## 2025 COMMITMENT CARDS

Thank you to all who have submitted your 2025 commitment to giving! If you haven't had a chance to fill out your form/card, please visit the welcome table or the church office for a hard copy. To submit it digitally, visit [mayflowerchurch.org/support](http://mayflowerchurch.org/support), or scan the QR code. Your financial commitments are needed to help determine the budget for the coming year! Our Treasurer, John Schneider, will present the 2025 budget to the congregation in the new year.



## 2024 YEAR-END GIVING

At the end of November, Mayflower's 2024 operating income statement shows a deficit (see chart below).

2024 has been a wonderful year of ministering to you and our surrounding community! Mayflower is reaching hundreds of lives through worship, music, Bible studies, hospitality, children's programming, social events, and outreach opportunities. **You are still able to make an impact on Mayflower's 2024 financial needs.**

If you would like your year-end gift to be reflected in your 2024 taxes, please deliver or mail in your contribution to the church office by Tuesday, Dec. 31. Please reach out to Mayflower Business Manager for more detailed information, Andy Ely, [andy@mayflowerchurch.org](mailto:andy@mayflowerchurch.org).

Mayflower Congregational Church	
Operating Income Statement	
NOV 24	
	2024
	NOV
	YTD
Income	1,003,266
Expense	1,091,005
Net Income	(87,739)

# Mayflower Advent Calendar

The season of **Advent** has started. To prepare our hearts for the miracle of Christmas, **Mayflower Advent Calendars are available** at the welcome table in the Atrium, the church office, or online at the QR code.

Each week during the season of Advent, the calendar will feature an outreach partner of Mayflower Congregational Church. As we await the miracle of Christ's birth, may we let the love of God inspire our actions each day! This week we focus on Upcycle Bikes ([upcyclebikes.org](http://upcyclebikes.org)).



# Announcements and Upcoming Events

Mayflower news and details on upcoming events. Visit [MayflowerChurch.org/events](http://MayflowerChurch.org/events) for more information.

## **POINSETTIA ORDERS DUE TODAY**

8" double stem red poinsettias will adorn the sanctuary through Christmas Eve. Dedicate one for \$20 to take home after the Christmas Eve Service. Order today, contact [office@mayflowerchurch.org](mailto:office@mayflowerchurch.org) or call 616.459.6255.

## **MAYFLOWER PRESCHOOL OPEN HOUSE** **JAN. 9 | 6:30PM**

If you or a family member or friend are considering preschool for a child next year, this is an opportunity to meet the fabulous teachers and see the engaging classrooms. Reach out to Missi or Erica at [mayflowerpreschool@outlook.com](mailto:mayflowerpreschool@outlook.com) or 616.459.7386 with questions.

## **EARLY ENROLLMENT MAYFLOWER** **PRESCHOOL | JAN. 10 | 8AM**

If you are a member of Mayflower Church, you are invited to enroll with current pre-school families on Jan. 10 through the website ([mayflowerpreschool.org](http://mayflowerpreschool.org)). Please reach out to Missi or Erica at [mayflowerpreschool@outlook.com](mailto:mayflowerpreschool@outlook.com) or 616.459.7386 with questions.

## **BAPTISM SUNDAY | JAN. 12 | 10:30AM**

Join us at morning worship as we celebrate the sacrament of baptism. Contact Rev. Bell Olsson if you are interested in being baptized ([ruth@mayflowerchurch.org](mailto:ruth@mayflowerchurch.org)).

## **PRESENTATION & BOOK DISCUSSION** **JAN. 16**

Matt Halteman, author, philosopher, and professor will present on his book, *Hungry Beautiful Animals: The Joyful Case for Going Vegan*.

## **CALVIN UNIVERSITY JANUARY SERIES** **JAN. 20-31 | 12:30PM**

We will livestream the Calvin January Series in the chapel. For a synopsis of each speaker, visit [calvin.edu/january-series/speakers](http://calvin.edu/january-series/speakers)

## **UPCYCLE EVENT: BIKES & BREWERY | JAN. 23**

Mark your calendar, more info coming soon!

## **ALL COMER'S CHOIR | JAN. 26 | 10:30AM**

Join the choir for a day! More information coming soon from Julia and Scott.

## **WORKSHOP | JAN. 26 | 12PM**

*How to Be a Faithful Friend: Caring for Others*, a workshop led by Rev. Dr. Bob Livingston, Rev. Ruth Bell Olsson, Betsy Willey, and the deacons will be Jan. 26. A light lunch will be provided.

## **CONFIRMATION MEETING | FEB. 9**

A Confirmation information meeting will be held on Sunday, Feb. 9 following the service. Students in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and older are invited. Reach out to Rachael Cooley with any questions.

## **NEW MEMBER CLASS**

Are you interested in becoming a member of Mayflower in the New Year? Please reach out to [office@mayflowerchurch.org](mailto:office@mayflowerchurch.org) to share your interest.

# Praises and Prayers

If you would like to receive prayer, or make note of someone to be added to the weekly Prayer List, please contact the church office to be included on the list (616.459.6255 or office@mayflowerchurch.org.) Prayer Cards are also in the pews and collected during Sunday morning services.

## PRAISE FOR THOSE WHO CELEBRATE

Prayers for **Chip George** as he recovers from surgery after falling off a ladder. (12/10)

## PRAY FOR OUR CHURCH FAMILY

**Ann Wells** is scheduled to have breast cancer surgery on Friday, Dec. 13. We pray for successful surgery and recovery. (12/10)

Pray for **Kyle Morrison** and his runners at Kalamazoo College as they mourn the sudden loss of their teammate. (12/10)

Please pray for Dr. **Michelle Halley** (pictured with her team below), daughter of **Dale and Ellen DeHaan**. She is on a medical team deployment to refugee camps in the Sudan. (12/10)



Please keep **Maris Rosema** in your prayers as she continues to have breathing difficulties. (12/4)

We pray for **Eric Britcher** as he is receiving treatment at Mary Free Bed outpatient. (11/19)

## PRAY FOR FRIENDS OF MAYFLOWER

Pray for **Scott Stayart**, friend of the McKelvey family, who is battling pneumonia. (12/4)

Prayers for **Sara Stainbrook**, a friend of Barbara Hohman's daughter Jennifer, who is experiencing health issues. (11/19)

## PRAY FOR THOSE WHO MOURN

**Ila Flo Barfuss's** cousin's husband, **Don Kosse**, who had earlier been on our prayer list, passed away on Dec. 8. (12/10)

Dale DeHaan notified us that **Jason Prince** passed away on Dec. 3. Jason is the son-in-law of Jay and Helen Smith, friends of many at Mayflower. (12/4)

## PRAY FOR THE WORLD

We pray for **Eden Ministries** serving vulnerable children in Doma, Zimbabwe.

Pray for **Energy for Mission** and **Pastor Marcel** doing peace work and faith restoration in Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo

We pray for peace on Earth.

We pray for **world leaders** to seek the flourishing of all people.

## ADVENT DEVOTIONALS AVAILABLE

We have devotionals for you and your family. For hard copies, come see us at the welcome table or the church office.



## ELECTRONIC GIVING OPTIONS



Scan the QR Code with your phone to give/pay directly through E-Zekiel: no sign-up required.

Download the app and create an account for future secure scan-and-go transactions.



### TEXT TO GIVE

On your phone, simply text the word: GIVE To: 6163446255 (no spaces) and then follow the prompts.

## WELCOME! We are so glad you joined us today!

**WELCOME!** If this is your first time worshipping with us, please stop by the Welcome Center in the narthex outside the sanctuary if you have questions about our church. You are invited to join us after the service for refreshments and fellowship in the atrium.

**HEARING ASSISTANCE** is available on the main floor by using the T-switch on your hearing aid. Handheld receivers with earphones are also available from the ushers.

**NURSERY** is available for children birth through 3 years. Please sign your child(ren) in prior to the service and receive a pager if needed.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL** for children age 4 through 5th grade meet during the service following the Children's Message in the lower-level Youth Rooms. Children are asked to bring their Bibles. We will share "highs and lows" from the week, play Bible trivia, sing, have a Bible story lesson, and engage in a related activity. Middle Schoolers are encouraged to join us in Sunday school as small group helpers - they earn "CIT Bucks"!

## MAYFLOWER CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

2345 Robinson Road SE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506  
616-459-6255 | [www.MayflowerChurch.org](http://www.MayflowerChurch.org)

Rev. Ruth Bell Olsson, Interim Senior Pastor

Dr. Julia Brown, Director of Music and Organist

Scott Bosscher, Chancel Choir Director | Melia Colwell, Children's Choir Accompanist

Rachael Cooley, Interim Executive Administrator | Murry Idema, Director of Congregational Care

Amy Dunham, Office Manager | Andy Ely, Business Manager

Mark Webb, Interim Children & Youth Music Director | Kristen Van Stee, Communications Coordinator

Jana DeShane and David Schellenberg, Facilities Team

# THE TRIUNE GOD

## 83

Eleanor Farjeon, 1881–1965

## People, Look East

French Traditional  
Harm. by Martin Shaw, 1885–1958

1. Peo - ple, look East. The time is near Of the  
2. Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare. One more  
3. Birds, though you long have ceased to build, Guard the  
4. Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim One more  
5. An - gels an - nounce with shouts of mirth Him who

crown - ing of the year. Make your house fair as you are  
seed is plant - ed there: Give up your strength the seed to  
nest that must be filled. E - ven the hour when wings are  
light the bowl shall brim, Shin - ing be - yond the frost - y  
brings new life to earth. Set ev - 'ry peak and val - ley

a - ble, Trim the hearth and set the  
nour - ish, That in course the flow'r may  
fro - zen He for fledg - ing time has  
weath - er, Bright as sun and moon to -  
hum - ming With the word, the Lord is

## THE TRIUNE GOD

Peo - ple look East and sing to -

ta - ble.  
flour - ish.  
cho - sen.  
geth - er.  
com - ing.

Peo - ple look East:

Peo - ple look

day:

Love the Guest is on the way.  
Love the Rose is on the way.  
Love the Bird is on the way.  
Love the Star is on the way.  
Love the Lord is on the way.  
East: Love is on the way.

God blessed creation and said it was good,  
 God and humanity living in unity.  
 In one moment . . . separation.  
 God promised blessings,  
 we did not hear.  
 The prophets spoke of God's blessings,  
 we did not hear.  
 And God still blesses,  
 and still we do not hear.  
 In one moment . . . reconciliation.  
 An angelic prophecy to a young woman,  
 heard in faith.  
 Shepherds in the fields  
 heard the heavenly host and followed a star.  
 The insignificant becomes a wonder:  
 the stable with animals,  
 the tiny manger,  
 the swaddling cloths,  
 the newborn Babe—  
 a Babe whose shining life brings blessing and hope.  
 And finally, we heard.  
 Let those who have ears, let them hear.  
 Amen.

## Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

97

German-Latin Carol, 14th C.

German Melody, 14th C.

Para. by John M. Neale, 1818-1866, alt.

1. Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice With heart and soul and  
 2. Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice With heart and soul and  
 3. Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice With heart and soul and

voice; Give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is  
 voice; Now ye hear of end - less bliss; Je - sus Christ was  
 voice; Now ye need not fear the grave: Je - sus Christ was

born to - day; Ox and ass be - fore Him bow, And He is in the  
 born for this! He has o - pened heav - en's door, And man is bless - ed  
 born to save! Calls you one and calls you all To gain His ev - er -

man - ger now. Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!  
 ev - er - more. Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!  
 last - ing hall. Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

Second verse: "And we are blessed evermore"

IN DULCI JUBILO

6.6.7.7.7.8.5.5