

# MAYFLOWER

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

December 22, 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**

*Holy One, Promise of Life, Mystery of light, your grace comes to us; your Word grows within us.*

*In the stillness of the morning we open our hearts to you, to receive your Word, to embrace your love, that your grace may be conceived in us and among us.*

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## **PRELUDE**

*Christmas Joy*  
by Albert Zabel

Mayflower Bells and Organ

## **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. Bell Olsson

Leader: The day of Jesus' birth is drawing near!

**People: May his birth bring peace to all, O God.**

Leader: The long night of waiting is almost over as we anticipate the dawning of your great light, O God.

**People: May the coming of the Christ Child, fill our homes and hearts with the radiance of your love.**

Leader: Be with us now, as infant, as spirit, as light!

**People: May the good news of Jesus' birth bring joy to all!**

**PROCESSIONAL CAROL 137\*** *Once in Royal David's City*

IRBY

Verse 1: Brennen Kartes; verses 2-5: ALL

**LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH\***

Leader: These candles we light shine with the light that comes into the world.

**People: Your presence and your love shine upon us.**

Leader: Like a child to be born, your light awaits, the light of life.

**People: Your presence and your love shine within us.**

Leader: May we await your coming in hope and joy, and prepare for your life among us in love.

**People: Your presence and your love shine out from us.**

Leader: May your love grow in us, shine upon the world, and bring life to all people.

**People: Come, O Christ, and shine in us with your grace!**

[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 love, as your Word came to Mary long ago, it comes to us now. You are present for us, and we have only to listen with our hearts to know your desire for us. We want to be open to your Word. We want to hear your promises. May it be for us according to your Word. 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**

*Christmas Lullaby*  
by John Rutter

Chancel Choir

Clear in the darkness a light shines in Bethlehem: Angels are singing, their sound fills the air.  
Wise men have journeyed to greet their Messiah; But only a mother and baby lie there.

Ave Maria: Hear the soft lullaby the angel hosts sing. Ave Maria, Maiden, and mother of Jesus our King.

Where are his courtiers, and who are his people? Why does he bear neither scepter nor crown?  
Shepherds his courtiers, the poor for his people, With peace as his scepter and love for his crown.

What though your treasures are not gold or incense? Lay them before him with hearts full of love.  
Praise to the Christ child, and praise to his mother Who bore us a Savior by grace from above.

## **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

Rachael Cooley

## **SCRIPTURE READING**

Luke 1:39-45  
PEW BIBLE, PAGE 724

Lisa Weaver

I John 4:7-12  
PEW BIBLE, PAGE 863

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God!**

## **SERMON**

*Come in the Midst of Apathy and Bring LOVE* Rev. Dr. Bob Livingston

## CAROL\*

UN FLAMBEAU



1 Love has come a light in the dark - ness! Love shines forth in the  
2 Love is born! Come, share in the won - der. Love is God now a -  
3 Love has come and nev - er will leave us! Love is life ev - er -



Beth - le - hem skies. See, all heav - en has come to pro - claim it; hear how their  
sleep in the hay. See the glow in the eyes of his moth - er; what is the  
last - ing and free. Love is Je - sus with - in and a - mong us. Love is the



song of joy a - ris - es; Love! Love! Born un - to you, a  
name her heart is say - ing? Love! Love! Love is the name she  
peace our hearts are seek - ing. Love! Love! Love is the gift of



Sav - ior! Love! Love! Glo - ry to God on high.  
whis - pers; Love! Love! Je - sus, Im - man - u - el.  
Christ - mas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

Words: Ken Bible; music: French carol; used by permission OneLicense #729334-A

## CALL TO OFFERING

Rev. Bell Olsson

## OFFERTORY ANTHEM

*What Can I Give Him?*  
by Gustav Holst/Helvey

Chancel Choir,  
Mayflower Bells and  
Karolin Ravens-Banik, flute

Text can be found in Hymnal ##115

## 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.**

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION\*

Rev. Bell Olsson



**CALL FOR 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. Bell Olsson

**SENDING CAROL 123\***

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

MENDELSSOHN

**BENEDICTION\***

Rev. Dr. Livingston

God is love. God is with us. God will never leave us.  
So, may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ  
the Love of God  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
be with us all now and forever. Amen.

**DISMISSAL\***

Rev. Dr. Livingston

Leader: As we await our coming Savior, go in love.

People: **We wait in love. Thanks be to God!**

**POSTLUDE**

*Fantasia on Greensleeves* Karolin Ravens-Banik, flute  
by Ralph Vaughan Williams

# THE LONGEST NIGHT: BLUE CHRISTMAS

**TONIGHT | 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)

# Looking Ahead

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

## Today, December 22

10:30am | Morning Worship

5pm | The Longest Night: Blue Christmas

5-6:30pm | Elevate at Skyzone

## DECEMBER

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

Women's Bible Study | 9:30am

Women's Bible Study | 5pm

**24** Office Open | 8am-12pm

Family Worship Service | 4pm

Candlelight Service | 10pm

**25** Christmas Day | Office Closed

**26** Office Closed

**27** Office Closed

**29** Morning Worship | 10:30am

**30** Office Open | 8am-3pm

**31** New Year's Eve | Office Closed

## JANUARY

**1** New Year's Day | Office Closed

**2** Office Open | 8am-3pm

**3** Office Open | 8am-3pm

**5** Morning Worship | 10:30am

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

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

## The following people purchased poinsettias to honor and remember loved ones:

**Helen Bell & Family**, in loving memory of Robert Holmes Bell

**Rachel Blair**, in loving memory of Etcyl Blair

**Elizabeth Bogo**, in dedication to her family - Holly, Martha, Charlie Bogo

**Eric Britcher**, in loving memory of his wife, Dorothy Britcher

**Dan & Linda Conway**, in loving memory of their parents Edward and Helen Conway and John and Agnes Hancock

**Jim & Sue Defoe**, in memory of Eleanor and Craig Defoe

**Barbara Hohman**, in loving memory of her husband, Russell Hohman

**John and Janyce Huff**, in celebration of Wade, Lilly, Kara, Ben, Iris & Andy

**Perii Hutchings**, in loving memory of Bob and Eileen Brown

**Shely & Tom Kester**, in loving memory of their parents Don & Shirley Gibbs and Gus & Yvonne Kester

**Jeff and Kim Peterson**, in celebration of their family

**Patricia Ruth**

**Patty Sienstra**, in loving memory of her husband, Dale Bensted

**Stiffler Family**, in loving memory of Richard and Thalia Stiffler

**Stiffler Family**, in loving memory of Frank and Lisa Yacopino

**Sue Stoddard** in honor of her sons, David and Mark

## With Thanks for the Special Christmas Decorations:

### **Portico Porch Pots:**

Given by Jean Smith in loving memory of her husband, Al Smith

### **Front and Portico Door Wreaths:**

Given by a Mayflower family

### **Atrium Pointsettias:**

Given by Barbara Gordon in loving memory of her husband, George Gordon

### **Advent Wreath Candles:**

Given by Shirley Mayer in loving memory of her husband, Bob Mayer

### **Parlor Christmas Tree and Crismon Decorations:**

Given and created by the women of Priscilla Circle

### **Narthex Christmas Tree and Angel Ornaments:**

Given and created by the women of the Mayflower Needlepoint Guild



## 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](https://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	
<b>Operating Income Statement</b>	
NOV 24	
	2024
	NOV
	YTD
Income	1,003,266
Expense	1,091,005
Net Income	(87,739)

## Senior Minister Search Committee Update

The next step in the Mayflower Senior Minister Search process is for the committee to gather important information from the congregation. A carefully-developed survey is currently being mailed to all Mayflower members, and your responses are requested by January 10, 2025. The survey should only take a few minutes to complete, and the information will be valuable in helping to shape their overall strategy. The mailing will include a link to the online survey option for those who prefer to respond online.

# Announcements and Upcoming Events

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

## **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

Praise for **Gary Wallin's** improved health. (12/18)

Praise for **Chip George** as he is recovering well from surgery after falling off a ladder. (12/10)

## PRAY FOR OUR CHURCH FAMILY

**Maris Rosema** is asking for prayers for her grandson and his family as he is recovering from a car accident. (12/17)

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)



NOTE: Prayers were last updated 12/19. Due to the holiday printing schedule, any newer prayer requests will be shared during the worship services.

## PRAY FOR FRIENDS OF MAYFLOWER

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

## 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)

## PRAY FOR THE WORLD

We pray for the families and friends of those injured or killed at the recent school shooting in Wisconsin.

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"!

## HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS

Dec. 24: OPEN 8am-12pm | Dec. 25-27: CLOSED | Dec. 30: OPEN 8am-3pm  
Dec. 31-Jan. 1: CLOSED | Jan. 2-3 : OPEN 8am-3pm

## 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

Abby Brooks, Interim Children & Youth Music Director | Kristen Van Stee, Communications Coordinator

Jana DeShane and David Schellenberg, Facilities Team



THE TRIUNE GOD

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Once in Royal David's City

Cecil F. Alexander, 1818-1895

Henry J. Gauntlett, 1805-1876

Harm. by Arthur Henry Mann, 1850-1929

1. Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y Stood a  
 2. He came down to earth from heav - en Who is  
 3. And through all His won - drous child - hood He would  
 4. Je - sus is our child - hood's pat - tern, Day by  
 5. And our eyes at last shall see Him, Through His

low - ly cat - tle shed, Where a moth - er laid her  
 God and Lord of all, And His shel - ter was a  
 hon - or and o - bey, Love and watch the low - ly  
 day like us He grew; He was lit - tle, weak, and  
 own re - deem - ing love; For that Child so dear and

ba - by In a man - ger for His bed. Mar - y  
 sta - ble, And His cra - dle was a stall. With the  
 maid - en In whose gen - tle arms He lay. Chris - tian  
 help - less, Tears and smiles like us He knew: And He  
 gen - tle Is our Lord in heav'n a - bove: And He

## THE TRIUNE GOD

was that moth - er mild, Je - sus  
poor, op - pressed, and low - ly, Lived on  
chil - dren all should be Kind, o -  
feels for all our sad - ness, And He -  
leads His chil - dren on To the

The first system of musical notation consists of a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is written in a simple, hymn-like style. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes. There are dashed lines under the notes for 'er mild,' and 'Kind, o -' in both staves, indicating phrasing or breath marks.

Christ her lit - tle Child.  
earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.  
be - dient, good as He.  
shares in all our glad - ness.  
place where He has gone.

The second system of musical notation continues the melody and accompaniment. It features similar phrasing marks as the first system, with dashed lines under 'Child.', 'He.', and 'gone.' in the treble staff, and under 'Child.', 'ho - ly.', and 'gone.' in the bass staff.

Dear God, come and speak to us, we pray. We see the great city, the place of great blessing before us. As we travel toward that city, we pray that we may know and see the Christ Child yet to be born. And yet, we know the Christ Child is already born—born in our hearts and souls. Be with us, O God, we pray. May the Christ find our best home in the city of our hearts. May we be blessed in His holy name. Amen.

THE TRIUNE GOD

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Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.

Felix Mendelssohn, 1809–1847

Arr. by William H. Cummings, 1831–1915

1. Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the  
 2. Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ the ev - er -  
 3. Hail the heav'n - born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of

new - born King; Peace on earth, and mer - cy mild,  
 last - ing Lord; Late in time, be - hold Him come,  
 right - eous - ness! Light and life to all He brings,

God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!" Joy - ful, all ye  
 Off - spring of the Vir - gin's womb. Veiled in flesh the  
 Ris'n with heal - ing in His wings. Mild He lays His

na - tions, rise, Join the tri - umph of the skies;  
 God - head see: Hail the in - car - nate De - i - ty,  
 glo - ry by, Born that man no more may die,

MENDELSSOHN  
 7.7.7 D

Second verse: "Pleased as man with us to dwell"

Third verse: "Born that we no more may die" and

"Born to raise all those on earth" or "Born to raise all children on earth"

## THE TRIUNE GOD

With the an-gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth-le-hem!"  
Pleased as man with men to dwell, Je - sus, our Em-man - u - el.  
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them sec-ond birth.

The first system of musical notation consists of a treble and bass staff. The treble staff contains a melody with lyrics underneath. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4.

Hark! the her-ald an-gels sing, "Glo-ry to the new-born King!" A-men.

Org. Ped.

The second system of musical notation continues the melody and accompaniment from the first system. It includes a double bar line and repeat signs at the end of the system. The instruction "Org. Ped." is written below the bass staff.

Christ Child, God Incarnate,  
Your glory shall shine forever and ever.  
You came that we, whom You created,  
would be reconciled to You and made whole.  
You came that we might have eternity in Your presence  
and may always live in Your love.  
With joyful hearts, we sing glory to Your name.

Rev. Wayne McLeod