From The Pastor

Dear People of Mayflower,

Christmas is almost here! We are busy preparing for both Christmas eve services and for worship on December 26th.

On Christmas eve we will have two services. The first worship service will be at 4 pm. This service will include a children's moment, a shorter Christmas reflection, and special music sung by Dan and Chloe Jurovich. Michelle and John Odermott will lead us in our Advent Candle lighting liturgy.

The second service will be at 8 pm. This worship service will feature music from the choir and other vocal groups and soloists. David and Leslie Roche will lead
In both services, we will light candles at the end and sing the beautiful hymn, "Silent Night."

Then on December 26th, we will worship at our usual Sunday time at 10 am. This worship service will feature a skit titled, "A Conversation Between Santa and Jesus." written by Rev. M.E. Proctor. Greg Todd and Ken Crouch will be sharing that skit with us. We will also spend some time singing Christmas carols and enjoy the beautiful music of Pat Burg's singing and Ginny's piano music.
I hope you will join us.

I will send out the links to each of the services separately.

Blessings,
Amy

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**Christmas Eve Services**

We will offer two Christmas Eve services, one at 4 pm and another at 8 pm. Join us as we welcome the Christ child!
**Christmas Eve Service I**
Time: Dec 24, 2021 04:00 PM Mountain Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

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**Christmas Eve Service II**
Time: Dec 24, 2021 08:00 PM Mountain Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

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**Christmas Fund**

The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas “Thank You” gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees.

United Church of Christ congregations and members have blessed the Christmas Fund with their generosity for many years. This year, your care and compassion will be especially appreciated by those servants of the church who are facing a time of need.

You can make checks out to Mayflower with Christmas Fund in the memo. There are special envelopes in the narthex. You can also donate online [here](#). Thank you!
Youth Overnight Retreat

Join in the holiday fun and come to our Older Youth Annual Overnight Retreat and Christmas Party!! We will spend all evening going around town and participating in various activities including pizza eating, gingerbread house building, gift exchange, escape room, laser tag, ice skating, indoor paintball, rage room and teen friendly sip and paint! This event is for all youth 6th-12th grade on Wednesday, Dec. 22, 6 pm - Thursday, December 23, 6 am. Please a $5 unisex wrapped gift.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Hannah Roche graduated from Montana State University in Bozeman in 2020 and taught elementary for a year in Havre. Working her way through school at Target, she is back at Target in Billings.

Ryan Roche graduated from MUD Northern in 2020, studied for a year at NDSU in Athletic Training. He is now at the University of Montana working on his MA in Athletic Training.

Cassie Wagner graduated from Montana State University in Bozeman in 2021 with a degree in Human Development and Family Service. In preparation for
her MA she is working in a Family Care Center.

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**Christmas Office Hours**

The office will be closed on Friday, December 24th and Monday, December 27th.

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**A Virtual Mission Trip**

**Resilience and Innovation in the Face of Climate Change: A Virtual Pilgrimage to Bangladesh.**

Learn about how the people along the coastlines of Bangladesh are responding to the challenges of climate change, rising ocean levels, salination of land, frequent natural disasters, and consequent disruptions and displacement.

Pilgrimage participants will engage with the Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh (CCDB) to learn about their climate resilient agricultural practices, alternative skills training, and women’s initiatives for social and economic development through a series of presentations, reflections, and conversations. This virtual pilgrimage is a collaboration between CCDB and Global Ministries and will take place during **January 25 - 28, 2022 for a cost of $25.**

[Click here](#) for more information about the schedule and registration. Sign up today and invite others to join in this pilgrimage of listening, learning, sharing, and walking in solidarity with our siblings in Bangladesh!

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**Book Study Begins January 9th**

Join us in a discussion/study of Cynthia Rylant’s book, “God Got A Dog,” a comforting collection of poetry. Through her poetry we will explore the way we think about God and our relationship with God. We have scheduled 3 sessions,
in which we will enjoy the poetry and share our thoughts. If you are unable to come to all of them, join us when you can. There is no expectation of “homework” or preparation ahead of meeting, unless there is a particular poem you would like to share.

Online Giving

Joyfully we are able to give knowing that our gifts will help others to see the blessed miracle of God’s creative joy. We invite you to donate to Mayflower church, so that our ministry may continue. You can donate here. Thank you for your support of Mayflower.

Prayers

God, who always welcomes us home - tonight is a long night. We pray together with heavy prayer concerns. We pray with concern for friends diagnosed with cancer. and for neighbors who have passed away from Covid-19.

We pray for the safety of people who are experiencing trauma, especially the trauma that comes from extreme weather and climate
We pray for the people of Afghanistan, as food shortages continue to create deep hunger.

We pray for the people of Charity Baptist Church after a devastating fire.

We pray for all who are experiencing difficulties this season and ask for your calming influence on our lives.

God, we need you in the messy middles, in the grieving places, in our traumas and devastations.

O come, Emmanuel. Pour out your spirit on this world. Where there is suffering, loneliness, poverty, abuse, addiction, depression - be there. Wrap your arms around these hurting places and carry us to your promised day. Amen.

If you have Prayer Requests or Visitation Needs, please email or call them into the office. Please notify the office of any necessary removals from or changes to the current prayer list. Thanks.
Wed., Dec. 22
6:00 PM -- Youth Overnight Retreat

Thurs., Dec. 23
5:30 PM -- Women's AA

Fri., Dec. 24
Christmas Eve (Office is Closed)
4:00 PM -- Christmas Eve Service
8:00 PM -- Christmas Eve Service

Sat., Dec. 25
Christmas Day

Sun., Dec. 26
First Sunday after Christmas
10:00 AM -- Worship

Mon., Dec. 27
Office is closed
Gratitude Journal

Last Sunday I preached about finding ways to create sanctuary (a safe and protected space) for each other. Today I invite you to give thanks for the people, places, and activities that give you a sense of sanctuary. I offer this invitation because the holidays can be a particularly painful time for people who have experienced loss. Take a moment to give thanks for the places and people who are like sanctuaries for you. Below is a link to a poem about grief, written by Rev. Sarah Are Speed for you to ponder as you make your way through this season. I hope, in acknowledging our grief we can create a sanctuary moment.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gZKQx_eUsHoYbQPOTrCdFPJkB3W9GGl9MBUm8lm81ug/edit?usp=sharing

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