

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### **Outdoor Services**

With an only recently re-opened sanctuary worship space, we were forced to be creative with our “embodied” congregational worship experiences. This last year we have had several “first ever” outdoor services. On a windy Sunday in September, our class of 2020 confirmands were confirmed on the front steps of the church. In November we had the traditional Thanksgiving service outside—complete with a pilgrim family--and we were able to showcase the Mel Trotter shower trailer that we helped purchase. Christmas brought our incredible live nativity which was attended by over 400 people from Mayflower and our community. In February we marked the beginning of Lent with Imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday. This past Easter we enjoyed a beautiful morning on the front lawn with worship, a shared Eucharist, and the return of the coffee reception!

### **Outreach**

The pandemic did not slow down outreach at Mayflower! We have continued to “host” 3 IHN rotations each year—not in our church this past year—but through our funding of the housing of families in hotels through the Family Promise program. We have been able to support

programs for people experiencing homelessness through Mel Trotter and Degage; we funded the YWCA and Safe Haven's efforts to curb domestic violence, and we have fed thousands of families through our partnerships with Salvation Army, Kids Food Basket and Hand to Hand.

Already in 2021, we have supported the building of a children's cottage with Eden Ministries in Zimbabwe, provided a much needed retinal imager for Oasis of Hope medical clinic, helped families secure permanent housing through Habitat for Humanity, and we have funded a summer learning program for at-risk kids being served by Baxter Community Center. We also committed to programs for teens experiencing mental health challenges at AYA and St. John's home. The generosity of this church continues in marvelous ways to serve and bless others.

### **Congregational Events, Congregational Care, and Christian Education**

Congregational Events and the 29 and Up group hosted both an Advent Alive event and an Easter egg hunt. 49Up and 69Up joined forces for Zoom events, and now are reconvening in person for late spring and summer.

Ladies of the church gathered under the portico throughout the year to connect during monthly "Ladies Night Out."

Bible Studies continued to meet throughout the year whether in-person or via Zoom with studies for women on Monday mornings and evenings, and Thursday mornings, and for men throughout the week.

Midweek remained a mainstay throughout this year. Miss Abby provided musical education for the children and they were involved in the Christmas and Spring musicals. Crafts, games and dinner rounded off each Wednesday night. Many families were involved.

The Christian Education team stayed connected to the children and the families in the church through creative means this year. Yard signs kicked off the season paired with Conversation jars for each household.

During the winter a Pen Pal Program emerged, joining our youngest and oldest members together through cards and letters. The CE team provided weekly video lessons this year in place of live Children's sermons. These lessons were enjoyed on all of Mayflower's social media sites and continued to teach and grow the hearts of the children.

Beginning in September 2020 thru May 2021 all children 4 year old - 3rd grade received a bi monthly Home Edition Sunday School packet.

The packets included a faith based Bible lesson and well as a craft to go along with the lesson. They also were sent interactive Advent and Lenten devotions.

The card team has been busy sending cards to those on the prayer list and the Friendly visitor team has also been busy—although it has been phone calls and not visits because of the pandemic.

## **Elevate**

Our Elevate middle school and high school youth groups kicked off the school year in September by enjoying “Sunday Suppers” outdoors. We were able to meet weekly until the weather turned cold in November. Forced to get creative, we went sledding, enjoyed s’mores over a parking lot campfire, offered a series of drive-thru dinners and treats and met like most groups, over zoom. When case numbers dropped, it allowed us to meet indoors in the chapel and we finished out our year just as we had started- sharing dinner, games, laughter and a connection.

## **Music**

Mayflower’s Music Department had several priorities during our shut-down in 2020:

- Continuing to reach and inspire our members
  - By providing the highest quality music for our worship services, meaningful music that complemented and expanded the theme and message of the day. We distributed hymnals to our members so they could more easily engage while watching the streamed services
- Continue to engage our staff, paid section leaders and volunteers
  - Without the possibility of choir rehearsals, and with singing considered a “super spreader”, we engaged our paid section leaders, one at a time, and later, duos, trios and quartets, to be cantors, leading our sung music each week. When it was possible to sing in larger groups (outdoor services), we were able to include our volunteers as well.
- Continue to provide opportunities for all ages
  - Often outdoors, sometimes on zoom, periodically substituting singing for playing instruments like ukulele and Handbells. Children and Youth participated in Amahl and starred in The Lost Boy
- Continue to connect to other music organizations in the broader community
  - With guest musicians from our symphony and beyond, playing on Sunday mornings, our Mayflower Music videos,

virtual concerts (Beethoven) and providing accompaniment for large projects such as our Christmas Cantata. We also collaborated with the Grand Rapids Choir of Men and Boys (Amahl and Art Song project)

In addition to the priorities listed above, we used this time to broaden the scope and range of our reach, beyond West Michigan

- Mayflower now has a YouTube channel, with subscribers from Mayflower and beyond and frequently added videos
- Our streamed services are frequently watched by people who do not live in the area
- Our virtual Amahl in December 2020 and Children's Musical in April 2021 touched on all our priorities: reaching our members, engaging staff, volunteers, people of all ages, and connecting with other music organizations.

## **Communications**

This past year we have flexibly adapted to the challenging Covid-19 world to communicate to our congregation and community as openly and transparently as possible the process and progress of sharing God's guidance, spirit, and message while dealing with the governmental limitations posed by the pandemic. We maintained our Sunday worship online expanding to full-service production from clip-

edited sermon postings. Weekly Wednesday News emails were sent to over 630 addresses. Worship Bulletin previews were also emailed on Fridays to the same list. The [MayflowerChurch.org](http://MayflowerChurch.org) website is continually updated in a constant mode of staying current with schedule, events, Council updates, and more to share as much information with freshly designed themes to grow engagement while cross-referencing material from the Wednesday News. Facebook, and Instagram social media postings. A bi-monthly printed and mailed News was also developed to share the material with duplicity providing a timely update to those without online capability. This upcoming year we look forward to maintaining an effective mode of consistency while adapting to the ever-changing mode of information.