



A Light in the Country

Light in a messenger's eyes brings joy to the heart
Proverbs 15:30

Happy New Year! We stand at the precipice of so many opportunities! What will 2023 hold for us? It is exciting to contemplate, knowing that God wants good things for us.

I like to reorient myself each January, to remind myself of what I should be basing my goals on. For Mayfield Church, our Constitution: Article II – PURPOSE says:

The avowed purpose of this Church shall be to worship God, to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to celebrate the Sacraments, to realize Christian fellowship and unity with the Church and the Church universal, to render loving service toward humanity, and to strive for righteousness, justice, and peace.

The directive “to render loving service toward humanity” stood out to me. And I know exactly why. It goes right along with something that I’ve been pushed to consider. Recently I’ve been getting nudges from the Spirit about the value of genuinely seeing other people. First a kind woman explained to me that she operates a one-woman “I See You” campaign – purposefully speaking to individuals directly, expressing a compliment or word of encouragement; she wants them to know that they matter to someone. Then I heard about a Christmas tree covered in mirror ornaments; the theme was “I See You” and you matter. Most recently I pulled a book off my shelf and to my surprise I found an entire chapter on “truly being seen” as a basic human need.

In Luke 7:36-50, we read of Jesus eating at a Pharisee’s home. Somehow a sinful woman, uninvited, came into the Pharisee’s house and sat down beside Jesus. She washed his feet and wept. The righteous men at the table ignore her, and are appalled that Jesus allows the woman to minister to him in this way. There must have been some murmuring going on because Jesus then decides to use this as a teachable moment. Jesus asks his disciple, “do you see this woman?” Oh, what a convicting question! Not do you see what she is, or what she is doing. But do you see this woman. Seeing as Jesus sees means seeing beyond stereotypes, or labels, or emotions, or condemnation. Seeing as Jesus sees requires some action on our part; it might even require us to change!

“I See You” will be a recurring theme this month at Mayfield. I encourage you to reach out and let others know that you see them, you value them, you care about them – that you see them. Talk to people at church, mail or text a note, call someone you haven’t spoken with recently. Branch out and try it in the community. Solomon had it right when he said, “light in a messenger’s eyes brings joy to the heart.” When we actually see others, when there is a light connecting us, joy comes into their heart at being seen. Let’s do what our Constitution says our purpose is and render a little loving service toward humanity.

Blessings, Pastor Lauri

SATURDAYS, 8 A.M., ZOOM BREAKFAST WITH THE PASTOR ... IT'S BACK!

January can be a dreary, lonely month. Stay in touch with your Mayfield family by joining Pastor Lauri for breakfast on Saturday mornings in January! Just grab your coffee and computer/phone and join in the 8 a.m. Zoom conversation. It may be too cold or icy or snowy to get out, but we can share an informal social hour on Zoom. A starter topic will be provided each week but hey, this is about staying in touch so there will be lots of room for general conversation. An email invitation with the Zoom link will be sent out each Thursday morning.

SUNDAY, JAN. 1, 9 A.M. SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR THE KIDS

Epiphany traditions and blessings.

SUNDAY, JAN. 1, 10 A.M. NEW YEARS DAY SERVICE

Start the new year with faith, possibilities, and communion!

SUNDAY, JAN 8. FOLLOWING WORSHIP ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

In accordance with Section IX, Subsection 2. Congregational Business Meetings, the Annual Congregational Meeting of the Church will be held on the second Sunday of January. All members are encouraged to attend. An in-person quorum of 15% is required for voting. The proposed slate of new officers will be presented and voted on. Attendance is a responsibility of being a member of Mayfield. We look forward to seeing you there!

WONSEOK LEE

Welcome to Wonseok Lee, Mayfield's new permanent part-time Music Director! He has extensive experience and is also a student at NIU, working on his Master of Music degree. Wonseok attended a small church in South Korea and looks forward to being a part of Mayfield.

CONFIRMATION CLASS

We have completed part one of our confirmation journey. The class, their sponsors, and Pastor Lauri explored God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit and what we believe about God and the Bible. Next up is a comparison of Christianity to other religions. Please continue to pray for our teens as they take a deeper look at their faith.

MEET THE MEMBER!



Sophia Varcados

I asked Sophia to be our first "Meet the Member". She is a new member and our newsletter designer.

Sophia loves tigers, ukuleles and nature. Her favorite colors are orange and black, and she enjoys quesadillas. As a child, she traveled across the United States several times in a VW camper. She grew up along the California coast, and she loves the prairie and farmlands.

Sophia is grateful for the community she has found at Mayfield Church. One of her favorite events in 2022 was the bible trivia pursuit night, as well as watching "It's a Wonderful Life". She is looking forward to helping around the church with events and upkeep of any manner.

She hopes others will join her on summer afternoons to paint and draw the views and beauty that surround Mayfield Church.

What If?

During November 2022 there was a large purple What If? box in the Narthex. The congregation was invited to drop ideas, dreams, and suggestions for Mayfield into the box. There were a lot of really great submissions, and the results are listed below. If you are willing to take on one of them and coordinate making it happen, please let Pastor Lauri know; we will support you. Some ideas, like the member feature, are happening immediately - look for the first member feature in this issue of the newsletter!

Church/Worship

- Did a member feature.
- The congregation doubles by 2024.
- We shared joys and concerns at prayer time in worship.
- When we think of each other we acted on it (a note, a call, a quick visit.)
- Combined Face Book pages.
- Started a least coin offering and pick a different cause each month or year.
- We had the equipment and expertise to provide a quality video of the services for persons at home.
- Provide YouTube recordings so people could watch at other times than 10 a.m. on Sunday.
- Have 20 kids at the Wednesdays in the Waystation in 2023.

Community

- Volunteer with the trash squirrels.
- Table at the DeKalb Farmers Market.
- Cultural craft day.
- Connect with Hope Baptist Church and/or North Ave Church in Sycamore to learn and branch out to non-white Christian folks in the area.
- Environmental workshops
- Host a rally or town hall.
- Had a little library.



Activities

- Choir day.
- Carve jack-o-lanterns in October.
- Burrito or taco day.
- Pancake breakfast, just for the congregation.
- Ornament workshop.
- Tent camping.
- Bread dough ornaments.
- Have a book club.
- Had outings (seeing a play, movie, museum).
- Take home crafts.
- Secret Santa.
- Had yoga.
- Be more social, have more fun together.
- Brought back pancake breakfast
- Bingo and games.
- Went on a hike.

Fundraising

- Brownie cooking fundraiser.
- Had a native plant sale in 2023 to raise money and bring people here.
- Bingo fundraiser.
- Sell homemade dog biscuits.
- Do a capital campaign.
- Rummage sale fundraiser.
- Made a product to sell.



Wild Blue Ukulele Orchestra plays at Mayfield.



CHRISTMAS EVE at MAYFIELD



Christmas Eve service, with friends, family and guest musicians!

TOYS FOR TOTS VOLUNTEERS



Church members and friends wrapped gifts.

SUNDAY SCHOOL DURING ADVENT



Children at Mayfield learn about the Tree of Jesse.

The “M” Word

And what is the “M” word, you ask? Well, money of course! It is what keeps our insurance paid, lights on, staff employed, repairs made. It is the mundane but crucial day-to-day necessity of keeping Mayfield’s doors open. We encourage and appreciate your donations!

As always, you can drop an offering in the white box in the Narthex, mail a check to the church (28405 Church Rd, Sycamore IL 60178) or make an electronic donation via your bank or the tithe.ly app.

How much should I be giving?

You should be giving an amount that feels right when you discuss it with God.

I’m barely getting by and don’t have much extra.

Give what you can but do not put your health or living accommodations in jeopardy. Jesus pointed out that the widow’s few pennies (Mark 12:42-44) showed great faith.

I prefer to share my charitable donations with several organizations.

Good for you! Most of us do. But make giving to Mayfield’s general operating fund a priority so that we can continue to be a presence in the community.

I volunteer my time; that’s enough.

No, it’s really not. We sincerely thank you for the time and talents you offer, but you also need to consider financial support.

What is a tithe?

10% of your income. Some feel this is 10% of gross income, others think it should be 10% of take-home pay; it’s a personal decision.

Should I tithe?

The Bible says yes: “Be sure to set aside a tenth of all that your fields produce each year” (Deut. 14:22), and “bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it” (Malachi 3:10).

Let’s get personal. Does the pastor tithe?

Yes, Pastor Lauri leads by example. She contributes 10% of her income back to Mayfield using the tithe.ly app with a convenient monthly automatic bank transfer.

Does my support matter?

Yes, yes, yes! Whatever amount you give makes an enormous difference and together we are Mayfield strong!

Donating to Mayfield.

Do you lie awake at 2 a.m. and wonder how many ways there are to donate to Mayfield Congregational United Church of Christ?

Let us help you count them!

1. Drop a donation in the white lattice box in the narthex.
2. Mail a check to:
Mayfield Congregational Church
28405 Church Road, Sycamore IL 60178
3. Use your bank’s on-line banking option.
4. Make an electronic contribution through **Tithe.ly**. (while there are many on-line options available, several council members have tested this one).



Go to: tithe.ly/give_new/www/#/tithely/give and log in or set up an account. Search for “Mayfield Congregational” and choose our church. You will be taken to a transaction screen. Fill in the amount you would like to donate. Just to the right is a drop down list so that you may tell us what kind of contribution you are making (general, OCWM, etc.); there is a notes section at the bottom where you can be more specific if necessary. Should you wish to set up a recurring donation, check that box. Scroll down and enter your credit card or bank account information (please consider covering the processing fees). Complete your transaction and the money is electronically deposited into Mayfield’s bank account. By returning to Tithe.ly’s home page, you can view previous donation activity.

Thanks for your generous giving!



Nativity scene at Mayfield

January CALENDAR

Month	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
January	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Sunday School 9a Worship 10a in person + ZOOM Communion			Bible Study 7p ZOOM			Breakfast w/Pastor 8a ZOOM
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	Sunday School 9a Confirmation 9a Worship 10a in person + ZOOM Annual Meeting	Deacons 6pm		Bible Study 7p ZOOM			Breakfast w/Pastor 8a ZOOM
		16	17	18	19	20	21
	Sunday School 9a Worship 10a in person + ZOOM			Bible Study 7p ZOOM	Council 6:30p		Breakfast w/Pastor 8a ZOOM
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	Sunday School 9a Confirmation 9a Worship 10a in person + ZOOM			Bible Study 7p ZOOM			Breakfast w/Pastor 8a ZOOM
	29	30	31	1	2	3	4
Jan/Feb	Sunday School 9a Worship 10a in person + ZOOM			Bible Study 7p ZOOM			

Reports from Council meeting – December 2022

Guest: Nominating Committee presented recommendations for new officers for the positions of Moderator, Clerk, and Deacon at the January 2023 Congregational Meeting. The positions of Christian Education, Stewardship, and Trustee remain open; options to fill/cover were discussed.

Trustees: Garage door opener and kitchen faucet in the parsonage need to be replaced; waiting on handyman to install. Garbage pick up service has begun.

Treasurer: at Dec 19, there is a year-to-date net shortfall of approximately \$9,800 (money is taken from savings when necessary); this includes several non budgeted repair bills and is less of a deficit than was projected. The UCC 5 for 5 giving to date was discussed versus the budgeted amount of \$3600. A motion was made and passed to send in only what members have donated plus the income from restricted funds designated for missions. Billy will be on vacation until January 4th; in his absence, a Deacon and a Trustee will count receipts together and make bank deposits through December 31 so that the 2022 books will reflect accurate giving.

Moderator: reminded Council members that 2022 reports and budgets are due ASAP for the Annual Congregational Meeting on Jan 8. Reviewed weather closing procedures. Discussed COVID-flu-RSV conditions in our area and what precautions we should take. A motion was made and passed to bring to the congregation a recommendation to change the church's fiscal year end and annual meeting date.

Pastor: : time report submitted; 58 pastoral contacts. Vacation time was requested and granted for Mon, February 6th through Sun, February 12th. Ways to reach out to inactive members was discussed. Plowing/salting arrangements were reviewed; zoom meetings were encouraged for other than Sunday mornings. Results of the November 'What If...?' poll were shared.

Deacons: a permanent part-time Music Director has been hired and will start on January 1, 2023. Communion service continues to be assessed.

Christian Ed: no report.

Mission: no report.

January Sermons and Scripture

January 1: Walk with Me

Isaiah 63:7-9

January 8: Say What?!

Psalms 29

January 15: The Unanswered Question

John 1:29-42

January 22: The Power of Light

Isaiah 9:1-4

January 29: Requirements

Micah 6:1-8

Children's craft for advent.

Donations Received: January 1 through December 19, 2022

	General	UCC 5 for 5	Memorial Donations	JAMS	Invmet Inc
YTD:	\$45,926	\$2,584	\$826	\$170	\$1,749

General donations are used for paid staff, building expenses, supplies, etc.

UCC 5for5 includes support for five denominational offerings.

Memorial Donations are new, added to previous restricted funds.

JAMS is the Jane Adeny Memorial School for girls in Kenya.

Invmt Inc is interest and dividends.



a just
world
for all
ucc.org



Contact Pastor Lauri

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You can also find her at 10 a.m.
worship at Mayfield or on Zoom.

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28405 Church Road, Sycamore, IL 60178



Angel ornament made by child at Mayfield.