



A Light in the Country

A light shining in a dark place
2 Peter 1:19

Greetings!

Why do you go to church? Or...why do you no longer go to church?

So many churches are lamenting that a group of people have not returned to worship after the pandemic shutdown. Often I hear "they just got out of the habit of attending." That makes me wonder, though, if any of us should be coming to worship simply out of habit. What actually brings us to church on Sunday? Is it habit, a sense of responsibility, or guilt? Is it the welcome, knowing that we are part of a family, or connecting with others? Is it the music, seeing the sun enhance the stained-glass windows, or a connection with generations before us who met God in this same space? Do you seek comfort, inspiration, or knowledge? Seriously, why do you come to church?

That question is paramount for those trying to figure out why some people have not returned to Sunday worship. Complicating their process of discovery is that the answer is unique for each person. Why did they attend previously? What would draw them back to church now? Perhaps instead of getting bogged down in trying to find an answer, churches should simply do what we are called to do: live out our faith. The New Testament book of I Peter is full of hope and encouragement in this regard. Peter tells us that Jesus has given us everything we need, and that we should endeavor to grow our faith with goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, mutual affection, and love. Peter goes on to say in verse 19, "We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts." Positive, engaging, welcoming people draw others. We have everything we need to attract others to church. Let's live our faith and let it be "as a light shining in a dark place."

Why do you come to church? Check out our "Meet the Member" feature each month to find out why that person comes to Mayfield. As for this humble pastor, I agree with David, "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord!'" (Psalm 122:1). Whatever brings you to church, we'll warmly welcome you.

Blessings,

Pastor Lauri

FRIDAY, MARCH 3, 3 TO 6 P.M.
WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

The church will be open for anyone who would like to stop by to pray or meditate. World Day of Prayer is celebrated each year on the first Friday of March throughout the world.



SATURDAY, MARCH 11
9 A.M. TO 3 P.M.

WOMEN'S RETREAT

There is still time to sign up for our women's retreat. We have a wonderful day planned and hope you can make it! See our Facebook page for more information, or contact Pastor Lauri.

SUNDAY, APRIL 2

PALM SUNDAY WORSHIP

Frances the donkey will make a return visit as the Sunday School kids enact the disciples' search for a donkey and Jesus' triumphant entry to Jerusalem.

THURSDAY, APRIL 6

MAUNDY THURSDAY

Communion will be celebrated as we remember the institution of this sacrament. Our Maundy Thursday service will include the events of Good Friday. (There will not be a service on Friday.)

SUNDAY, APRIL 9

EASTER

- 7:30 a.m. Outdoor Service
- 8:30 a.m. Brunch inside
- 10 a.m. Indoor Worship Service
- 11 a.m. Egg Hunt for kids

SATURDAY, MAY 6

TACOS AND TRIVIA

Save the date! The Bible Trivia Quiz Night is back. We'll start the evening off with tacos, then get down to the business of quizzing. Prepare to laugh and have loads of fun!

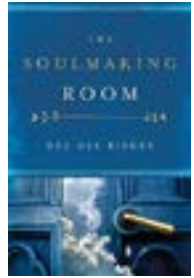
FEB. 22 - MARCH 29

WEDS, 7 TO 8 P.M., ZOOM

LENTEN STUDY 2023

Join the discussion! Contact Pastor Lauri for a copy of the schedule and discussion questions.

Ms. Risher takes a deep look at the story of the Shunammite woman in 2 Kings 4:8-37. Combining the Shunammite woman's experiences along with events from her own life, she evaluates her faith and urges us to do the same.



The Soulmaking Room by Dee Dee Risher (210 pages) is available in both eBook and paperback formats. It can be purchased from UpperRoomBooks.org or Amazon.com as well as other book sellers.

MEET the MEMBER!



Cliffton Hansen

For anyone who knows Cliffton, his fascination with Halloween is apparent. He has a large collection of t-shirts, seeks out Halloween stores and conventions, and participates in haunted house attractions.

Cliffton will again be working at The Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve in West Virginia during the summer. The Summit will be hosting the Boy Scouts' National Jamboree, which according to Cliffton is the Super Bowl of Scouting. Cliffton's favorite band is Grayscale and he has tickets already purchased for attending his 15th, 16th, and 17th concerts!

Cliffton is enrolled at Kishwaukee Community College, and serves our church as a Trustee. He enjoys being a part of Mayfield because of the people; he says it feels like a family. He also really enjoys the food at fellowship!

Easter Flowers

This year you will have the opportunity to order potted greenhouse flowers to decorate the sanctuary for Easter. Flowers may be in honor or memory of someone, or simply in celebration of Easter! Order forms will be available soon. contact Pastor Lauri with any questions.



Vacation Bible School planning has begun!

Interest surveys for adults and children are available at church. Please fill one out to help us plan. We are again partnering with First Congregational UCC in DeKalb, and our theme will be WATER. We will explore the story of Jonah! Contact Pastor Lauri for more details.

Work Day - March 18!

Volunteers needed! The church deep clean continues. The kitchen is the next area to be done. We will meet at 9 a.m. and work until noon. Contact Pastor Lauri for more information.

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/#/tithe/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!



Images provided by Lauri Allen

JAMMIN' FOR JAMS AND EMILY AKINYI OWALA

Every year since 2011, members and friends of Mayfield Church have given a scholarship to support a girl at Jane Adeny Memorial School for Girls (JAMS). In Kenya, even public high schools require families to pay fees and room & board, so high school is out of reach for many, especially girls. The mission of JAMS is to provide "education good enough for the richest, open to the poorest."

Last year, our current student, Emily Akinyi Owala started her high school education at JAMS. In the 2022 school year, she earned a B+ average. Her best grades are in physics and chemistry; she may turn out to be a scientist!

Emily began Form Two (sophomore year) at JAMS in January. During the month of March, we are asking for your donations to help provide Emily's second year of high school. A full scholarship is \$800. Scholarships to JAMS provide tuition, room & board, clothes, books, school supplies, toiletries, and routine medical care—everything students need to be successful.

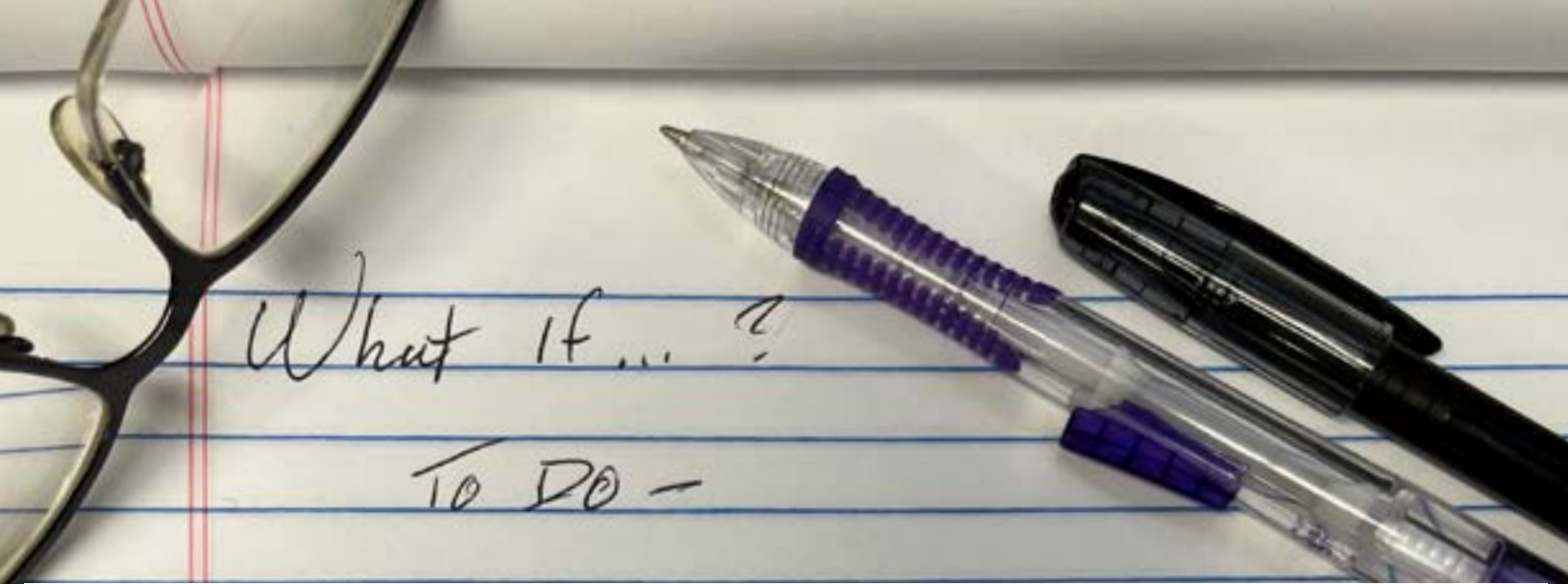
JAMS founders and directors, Teresa Wasonga and Andrew Otieno, will visit Mayfield on Sunday, March 12, to visit with the Sunday School, attend worship, and speak with the congregation after worship. Also, the theme of Sunday School March 5, 12, and 19 will be "Jammin' for JAMS;" the Sunday School will learn about Kenya, the importance of giving to others, and the difference education makes for young people in poverty.

To make a donation toward Emily's scholarship, please make out checks to "Mayfield Church" and put "JAMS" in the memo line or if giving cash write "JAMS" on your envelope.

To find out more about JAMS, please visit the website of Friends of JAMS, the Illinois organization that supports the school: www.jamskenya.org

Sincere thanks, asante sana, for your generosity!





What If.. Update!

In January we reported on the ideas and wishes received in our big purple What If box. In just two months, we have implemented or are planning TEN of them! See something on the list that you are passionate about? Contact Pastor Lauri or Sophia to volunteer your time and talents to make it happen.

Church/Worship

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

Community

- (Working on it!) Had a little library.
- (Summer-Partnering for Pollinators) Environmental workshops.
- 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.
- Host a rally or townhall.

Activities

- (Feb 19-Shrove Tuesday) Pancake breakfast, just for the congregation.
- (Mar 11-Women's Retreat) Bingo and games.
- (May 6-Tacos and Trivia) Burrito or taco day.
- Choir day.
- Carve jack-o-lanterns in October.
- 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.
- Went on a hike.

Fundraising

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

Fastest time!



The Great Pancake Race!



Shrove Tuesday... On a Sunday!



March CALENDAR

Month	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Feb/Mar	26	27	28	1	2	3	4
LENT	Sunday School 9a Worship 10a in person and FaceBook Live			Lent Study 7p ZOOM		World Day of Prayer 3-6p in person	
Mar	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
LENT	Confirmation 9a Sunday School 9a Worship 10a Communion in person and FaceBook Live			Lent Study 7pm ZOOM			Women's Retreat 9-3 in person
Mar	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
LENT	Sunday School 9a Worship 10a in person and FaceBook Live JAMS Mission Moment	Deacons 6pm	VBS Planning 6pm	Lent Study 7pm ZOOM	Council 6:30pm		Work Day 9-12 in person
Mar	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
LENT	Confirmation 9a Sunday School 9a Worship 10a in person and FaceBook Live			Lent Study 7pm ZOOM			
Mar/Apr	26	27	28	29	30	31	1
LENT	Sunday School 9a Worship 10a in person and FaceBook Live			Lent Study 7pm ZOOM			

Reports from Council meeting – February 2023

Council met on 2/20/23 - 11 members present, 1 absent

Pastor: Time and reimbursement report submitted. Music Copyright information updated. Lenten events include Ash Wednesday Service and Bible Study. Discussed events past and listed in this newsletter. Along with confirmation we will be celebrating graduation and new member Sunday.

Deacons: Decorating for Easter with live plants ordered from G&E Greenhouse in Elburn. Easter Sunday events include: 7:30 am (outdoor) Easter Sunrise Service; Brunch; 10 am (indoor) Church Service; and Easter Egg Hunt.

Trustees: Repairs continue around the church. Following up on water testing, Elevator maintenance, checking fire extinguishers, smoke detectors and contacting Exterminator to do a recheck.

Stewardship: Advisory group met on Jan 29, report presented to council. Initiatives to consider starting: Member Stewardship talks and return to passing collection plate during Sunday Service. Planning process for a Capital Campaign. Other ideas will be looked at by advisory group and council.

Treasurers: Accounts as of 1/20/23 - Savings: \$43,092.72; Checking: \$2878.18; CD: \$104,072.69.

Clerks: Yearbook Hub Data Report complete. Membership audit in process.

Moderator: Cleaning and snow removal and Facebook Live discussed; Discussion of changing date of annual meeting from January to October/November and creation of by-laws. Budget was approved with one abstaining vote. Approval of budget needs to come before the congregation for a vote along with approval of Final Financial Statement for 2022.

Missions: "One Great Hour of Sharing" and JAMS Mission Moment, March 12.

If you are interested in seeing the full Council Minutes, please contact Diane Hance, Clerk.

March Sermons and Scripture

March 5
Shouldn't, Couldn't but Would and Did
Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

March 12
Waiting for the Messiah
John 4:5-42

March 19
A Little Mud and A Lot of Mad
John 9:1-41

March 26
Dry Bones
Ezekiel 37:1-14

Remember that Daylight Savings Time begins on Sunday March 12. Spring forward!

Watch our services on Facebook LIVE! Here's how:

Facebook users:

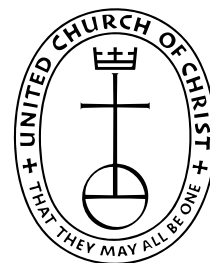
Go on-line to the Mayfield Church Facebook page. There are two Mayfield Church pages - you will need to be on the page titled "Mayfield Congregational Church - United Church of Christ".

You will see the Facebook Live service in the posts - so easy! The feed will start at 10 a.m. on Sunday.



If you want to watch Facebook Live but you do not have a Facebook account, go to: <https://www.facebook.com/live>.

You can search for our service using the keywords: Mayfield UCC, Sycamore, IL.



Contact Pastor Lauri

(815)757-5917 (cell)
PastorLauri@MayfieldChurchUCC.org

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

Follow us on Facebook:

Mayfield Congregational Church - United Church of Christ

Visit Mayfield:

28405 Church Road, Sycamore, IL 60178



Children's crafts.