



## The Masthead

The Newsletter of Mayflower United Church of Christ

2900 County Barn Road, Naples, FL 34112

(239) 775-0055 [www.mayflowernaples.com](http://www.mayflowernaples.com) [Mayflowernaples@outlook.com](mailto:Mayflowernaples@outlook.com)

Office Hours: 9:00-1:00 Monday-Friday

September 2025

### Honoring the Gift of Work



The Bible affirms both the value and dignity of work. From the beginning, God placed Adam in the garden “to work it and keep it” (Genesis 2:15, ESV). In the fourth commandment, we are reminded not only to observe the Sabbath, but also to labor diligently throughout the week: “Six days you shall labor, and do all your work” (Exodus 20:9, ESV).

Work is more than a routine obligation; it is an opportunity to engage our God-given abilities in meaningful ways. Whether using our hands, minds, or hearts, we reflect the image of our

Creator—bringing order, care, and creativity into the world.

Our labor allows us to contribute to the common good, find personal fulfillment, and practice faithful stewardship of the talents and strengths God has entrusted to us. As Paul writes, “We are God’s fellow workers” (1 Corinthians 3:9, ESV).

On this Labor Day, may we take time to recognize the blessing of work and celebrate those who serve, build, teach, lead, and labor with purpose and care.

—Author unknown

### Special Dates

- Labor Day, *September 1, 2025*
- National Grandparents Day, *September 7, 2025*
- Patriot Day, *September 11, 2025*
- National Grandparents Day, *September 7, 2025*
- Hispanic Heritage Month, *September 15-October 15, 2025*
- First Day of Autumn, *September 22, 2025*

## A Prayer for Autumn's Arrival

Lord of all seasons,  
As the leaves change and the days  
grow cooler,  
help me embrace the rhythm of your  
creation.  
Teach me to let go of what I no longer  
need  
and to trust your timing in every part of  
life.

## Seasons of Change, Signs of Grace



“While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease” (Genesis 8:22, NASB).

As autumn begins, we watch the world transform before our eyes. Leaves change color, the air turns crisp, and a new rhythm settles in. In these seasonal shifts, we are reminded of God’s faithful hand over all of creation.

Genesis 8:22 assures us that the cycles of nature—seedtime and harvest,

Thank you for the beauty of autumn—for crisp mornings, golden trees, and the promise of harvest.

May this season deepen my gratitude, renew my spirit, and draw me closer to your heart.  
In Jesus’ name,  
Amen.

summer and winter—are part of God’s ongoing promise. Each season speaks of His order, care, and presence. Autumn, in particular, invites reflection. Just as the trees release their leaves, we are called to let go of what no longer serves us and make space for renewal. This season also marks a return to routines—school schedules, church programs, and community events. As we step into new responsibilities or revisit familiar ones, may we do so with gratitude and trust. God is not only present in the harvest but in the quiet letting go.

Let this autumn be a time to embrace God’s steady rhythm, find beauty in change, and rest in His faithful promises that never cease—even as the world around us shifts.

## The Power of Prayer Warriors

Prayer warriors are spiritual soldiers—men and women who faithfully lift others in prayer, often behind the scenes.

Though their work may go unnoticed by the world, it is deeply valued by God. Their intercession can strengthen the weary, comfort the grieving, and open doors for God's will to be done.

In Scripture, we are urged to "pray one for another" (James 5:16, KJV), reminding us that healing and restoration often come through the

prayers of the faithful. A prayer warrior stands in the gap, bringing needs before the Lord with boldness and persistence.

The Apostle Paul recognized the power of prayer, often asking others to pray for him as he shared the gospel. In the same way, prayer warriors today uphold churches, pastors, families, and communities.

Their prayers may be silent, but their impact is mighty. Never underestimate the difference a praying heart ca

## Christian Symbol



**BURNING BUSH** — In Exodus 3, God speaks to Moses from a bush that is burning but not consumed. When Moses

asks what he should say if the Egyptians questions who sent him to lead the Israelites out of slavery, God states, "I AM WHO I AM." Centuries later, when people wonder who Jesus is, his answers hint at his divinity: "I AM the light of the world; I AM the good shepherd; I AM the bread of life" and, perhaps most profoundly, "Before Abraham was, I AM" (John 8:58). On Pentecost, God's Holy Spirit comes upon the apostles as fire. Thus the burning bush is a powerful symbol of God's presence echoed through time.

## Take Courage: Trusting the One Who Overcomes

A young woman was deeply troubled by the suffering she saw in the world, as well as by struggles within her own family and friendships. Unsure of how to help or where to begin, she turned to her pastor for guidance. He responded with a heartfelt letter. A portion of it read:

"Life is difficult. It is sometimes like a mindless boot camp. We seem to be rehearsing for something that is beyond our present knowing. We come from a beginning that we cannot remember, and we move toward a destiny that we cannot see. Only imagination, faith and a friend here or there give us the strength to go on.

When Jesus said that we would always have trouble in this world, he added an encouraging word that we should never forget: *'Take courage; I have overcome the world.'*

I cannot fix you. You cannot fix you. Do not put your ultimate faith in me, or in

yourself, or in any human being. Trust the Lord of the Harvest. He will fix you when he comes."

— *Excerpted from a letter by Dr. Thomas Lane Butts*

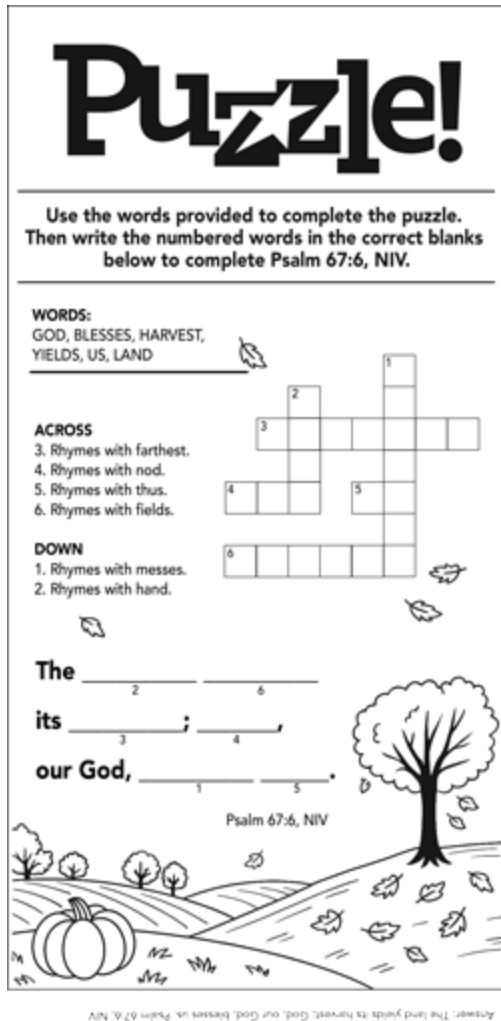


**Believe it or not, Mayflower's elves are getting ready for our Kris Kringle Fair! It will be held on the first Saturday in November, the 1<sup>st</sup> from 9-1. In preparation, we are readying our raffle baskets and tickets. The tickets will be going into the mail around the middle of September, so you will have plenty of time to get them in the mail to return by October 24<sup>th</sup>. Your donation will be \$30 for 25 tickets. All you need to do is to legibly write your name and phone number on the back and return them to the office by mail, by the offering plate on Sunday, or in person. We'll put them in our special box and notify you if you are a winner!**



**Mayflower's Activities Team is looking for ideas to add sparks to our Kris Kringle Fair! Crafts? Decorations? Something new???**

**See Lou, Janice, Candi, Ginger, Nancy, Linda, or Alice with your ideas!**



## More than Reading, 'Riting and 'Rithmetic

You may recall that many followers of Jesus called him "Rabbi." In essence, the word means teacher. Clearly the word describes the brilliant Nazarene who was constantly teaching his listeners about God and God's expectations of humans.

In a secular society, it is of paramount importance that the teachings of Christ be proclaimed and affirmed wherever

possible. In the early days of our country, it was customary for public schools to teach reading, writing and arithmetic as well as Christian principles. Subjects being taught were presented in a setting of morality, religion and character development.

The reading book compiled by William H. McGuffey in 1836 focused on such themes as self-denial, temperance, obedience, and warned against laziness, profanity, stealing and vanity.

In our time, however, when it is difficult to focus on God and spiritual matters in public schools, our churches and families have a great responsibility. Sunday school attendance, not only for children but for adults as well, must be of primary importance. Prayer, as well as discussion of social issues from a Christian point of view, must be practiced in the home and church. We must learn and teach about Christ.

"Learn from me," Jesus said. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matthew 11:29 NRSV). Where shall we learn of him or from him if not in our churches and homes?



**“Wonderful words of thanks from the  
Guadalupe Center”**

Dear Mayflower Congregation,

Thank you for **“Thinking Outside the  
Backpack”** ❤️

Because of your kindness and belief in what’s possible, you are helping turn school-day excitement into a future filled with endless possibilities for every child we serve.

Your generous gift of \$150.00 on August 18, 2025 fuels more than just classrooms, it sparks hope, ignites curiosity, and builds a community where every student is encouraged to dream bigger and reach higher. Education is not the finish line; it’s the starting block for a journey filled with opportunity and growth.

Each year, more than 2,000 students

benefit from our nationally recognized programs—from early learning to college completion—equipping them to thrive in school, career, and life.

With your partnership, we’re creating safe, inspiring spaces where students discover their strengths, overcome challenges, and imagine a brighter tomorrow. Your gift empowers teachers, fuels programs, and helps break down barriers so every child has access to the education they deserve.

Thank you for standing with us and investing in a future where education opens doors and dreams take flight.

Always,

Dawn Montecalvo  
President  
Guadalupe Center  
509 Hope Circle  
Immokalee, FL 34142

**Dear Mayflower Missions Team,**

It was such a pleasure meeting two members of your Missions Team as I visited your church to pick up your generous school supply donations for the Guadalupe Center.

Thank you again not only for your incredible donation but for the kindness, care, and thoughtfulness behind it.

Your generosity reflects the heart of your entire congregation, and I am so grateful for all that you do for our community.

Your spirit of service reminds me of this verse:

“And do not forget to do good and share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.” Hebrews 13:16

Thank you for being such a shining example of that truth through all you do. I feel truly blessed to have met you both and look forward to staying in touch.

Your work will touch the lives of many

With Heartfelt Gratitude,

Wendy Wagner

Community & Volunteer Engagement Coordinator





### **Announcements from the Immokalee Fair Housing Alliance:**

**More information can be found in the Narthex about the Impact Report and highlights about their progress.**

Dear Church Family,

We write with deep gratitude for your generous support of the Immokalee Fair Housing Alliance. Thanks to your prayers, contributions, and encouragement, the first 16 families have already moved into their new homes in our first completed building. These families now have safe, affordable housing—and the stability and dignity that comes with it.

With two more buildings underway and our community center set to break ground soon, the future for Immokalee families is brighter than ever. Our newest apartment building—the second to be constructed, is dedicated to providing transitional housing, painted in purple to honor the courage, resilience, and strength of survivors. It's more than just a shelter; it's a caring, supportive environment that empowers families to recover, access essential resources, and work towards lasting stability. By joining together in this meaningful initiative, Immokalee Fair Housing Alliance and the Shelter for Abused

Women & Children are helping to bring hope and home to some of the most vulnerable individuals in Immokalee.

**Building for the Future:** Plans are in motion for the next building phase, which includes building 4 and 5, a second playground, a soccer field and community garden, creating shared spaces where families can connect, grow and thrive.

Thanks to the generosity and dedication of so many supporters, together we have made extraordinary strides in providing safe and affordable housing for Immokalee's hardworking farmworkers and low-income families. This is a testament to the power of perseverance, the strength of a united community, and the incredible progress we've made to provide stability, hope, and opportunity for families working their way out of poverty.

We would love the opportunity to thank your congregation directly and show the impact of their faith in action. Please let us know if you would like to schedule a tour or arrange a time for us to visit your church

With heartfelt gratitude and thanks for walking alongside us.

Dr Arol Buntzman, Chairman & CEO

Carleton Cleveland, Board of Directors, Development Chair

Tammy Richelieu,  
Chief Development Officer





**Thrivent Online Events in September 2025**

**are all about your future and those you care about most!**

**Don't miss out on this presentation.**

SEPTEMBER 16, 2025 | 6:30 PM – 7:30 PM ET

SEPTEMBER 17, 2025 | 12:30 PM- 1:30 PM ET

SEPTEMBER 18, 2025 | 7:30 PM- 8:30 PM ET

SEPTEMBER 23, 2025 | 1:00 PM- 2:00 PM ET

**Estate Preservation for the Next Generation**

Our team is committed to helping you plan for your future—and the future of those that you care most about. Better prepare yourself for the “what-ifs” in life by joining us as we address:

- Essential estate preservation documents you should have.
- What is the purpose of a will?
- Estate taxes and annual gifting limits.

- What is the probate process?
- Advantages of naming beneficiaries on your accounts.
- The Secure Act 2.0 and how it impacts your family.
- Concerns about how to protect your assets.
- Long-term care: Costs and options.
- Effects of income taxation upon death.

RSVP: <https://bit.ly/EstateNextGen>

At Thrivent, we believe money is a tool, not a goal. We've inspired generations to make financial choices guided by their Christian values. We provide the expertise and support that enable our clients to take care of themselves and others.

We help Christians find financial clarity, enabling lives full of meaning and gratitude. All are welcome to attend our free virtual events. Feel free to share these events with your friends and family.

**For More Info: Call Thrivent Financial Associate David Contessa at (239) 300-5139.**



PLEASE JOIN US!

# CURTAINS UP FOR A CAUSE

an evening with  
**PAUL TODD**

for the benefit of **SUNLIGHT HOME**

**OCTOBER 10, 2025**

**5:30 PM**




ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST CATHOLIC CHURCH  
625 111TH AVE N., NAPLES, FL 34108



**TICKETS  
SPONSORSHIPS  
MORE DETAILS**

<https://sunlighthouse.org/events/>



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 	2 <b>Peggy Littlejohn - Birthday</b>  WM – Eagle Lakes Park  Book Club 7pm	3 <b>Robin &amp; Jean Dick - Anniversary</b>  Potluck Dinner 5pm	4	5	6
7	8	9  WM – Sugden Park	10	11 	12  Prayer Meeting 10am	13  Ladies Lunch at Lely Palms 12pm
14	15	16  WM – Botanical Gardens ??	17  Council Meeting 10am	18	19  <b>Janice Cressman - Birthday</b>	20
21  <b>Jane Thompson - Birthday</b>	22 	23 <b>Alan &amp; Leora Batson – Anniversary</b>  WM – Baker Park	24 <b>Marlin &amp; Marilyn Dise – Anniversary</b>  Masthead Deadline	25	26  Prayer Meeting 10am	27
28	29	30  WM – Greenway Park				