



The Masthead

The Newsletter of Mayflower United Church of Christ

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Office Hours: 8:00-1:00 Tuesday-Friday

July 2026



Mayflower will be observing our nation's independence on Sunday, July 5th with an indoor picnic after our worship service. Traditional picnic fare will be served, including hot dogs, burgers, baked beans, potato salad, and possibly ice cream. If you would like to contribute anything, please inform Janice, Nancy, or Lou.

Music Director Search Team

Thank you to Priscilla, Betty, Glenn and of course Jay for working together to find our new music director. Our patience paid off and thanks to God for sending us Isabella.

- Marion Grant
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FINANCIAL CORNER AS OF 6/26/26

Operating Account Balance
\$16,710.55

Mortgage Account Balance
\$80,277.86

Designated Account Balance
\$53,370.55

PROGRESS OF MORTGAGE PAYOFF PLAN

Mortgage Loan Balance
\$92,141.32

Mortgage Account Balance
\$80,277.86

Amount needed to pay off loan
\$11,863.46

Drop-In Bible Study Resumes

Yes, back by popular demand: Drop-In Bible Study! The first session will be on Wednesday, July 8, in the Family Life Center from 10:45—12:00. We will then continue for five Wednesdays, at least through August 5. (On July 15 Council will meet in the Family Life Center, so we will meet in Pastor Aaron's office.) The scripture readings (or "lections") we will look at will be the two that Pastor Aaron has chosen for the following Sunday.

Now "Drop-In" means come when you can. Each study will stand on its own. Please, if and when you attend, bring a Bible and a pad of paper---or a journal! So do drop in (or like that quaint old restaurant on the Mohawk Trail in MA: The Dew Drop Inn). We'll be looking for you!

---Rev. Bev Duncan

Special Dates for July 2026

- Canada Day, *July 1, 2026*
- Independence Day, *July 4, 2026*

Bible Quiz



About 450 years before Jesus, Nehemiah heard that Jerusalem still lay in ruins after the Babylonian invasion. The news broke his heart. After days of prayer and mourning, he stepped forward to lead the effort to rebuild the city wall. Despite opposition, the people pressed on.

A well-known verse describes their progress: "So we built the wall. And all the wall was joined together to half its height, for the people had a mind to _____."

Choose the correct ending:

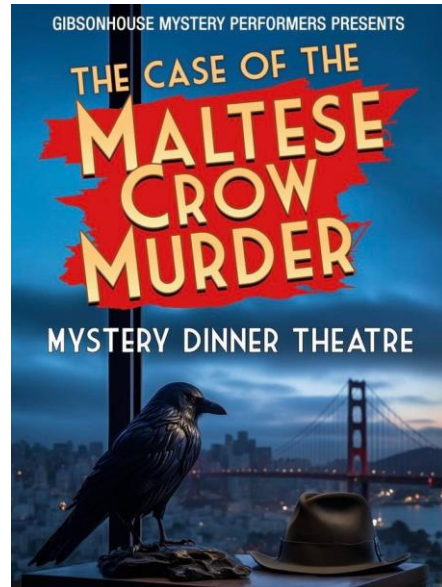
- A. be protected
- B. work
- C. serve
- D. live

Answer: B (Nehemiah 4:6, ESV)



What's your favorite board game?

Do you enjoy Rummikub, Yahtzee, or another favorite board game? Join us Wednesday, July 15, from 3–5 p.m. in Fellowship Hall for an afternoon of games and fun. We'll have Rummikub and Yahtzee available. You're welcome to bring a favorite game for others to try—like Mexican Train, Pokeno or Dominoes. Feel free to switch games throughout the afternoon—trying something new is part of the fun! Stay afterward for a potluck dinner—simple summer dishes are perfect!



Help Solve the Mystery!
Join us for *The Maltese Crow Murder Mystery*, an interactive production where we'll become amateur sleuths and work together to solve the case. The show will be held at the Marco Island Center for the Performing Arts on Saturday, August 8th, at 3 PM. Tickets are \$42.85.
Sign up on Sunday, July 5 or July 12. Carpooling from church is available.

Christian symbol



SHELL — A scallop shell, often shown pointing downward with three drops of water falling from it, is a Christian symbol of baptism and the washing away of sin. The three drops of water represent the Trinity: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

From the earliest centuries of the church, the shell was connected with baptism because it could be used to pour water over a person's head. In a time when many baptisms took place in rivers, lakes or outdoor settings, a simple shell served as a natural vessel, reminding believers that God uses humble, ordinary things to accomplish sacred purposes.

Today, the scallop shell continues to appear in baptismal fonts, church art and Christian design. It quietly proclaims the message of baptism: washed by grace, claimed by God and welcomed into the family of faith.

Freedom

Each one of us is born most free
And we alone can choose
To do what God would have us do,
To use what God would use.

Or, we are also free to seek
The proud and selfish way —
A life where other gods come first
To reign and hold full sway.

But when we follow where Christ leads,
We find that freedom's place
Is really in God's Will for us,
And we have chosen GRACE!

—Peggy Ferrell, *Prayers and Poems*

Our Awesome God

When our lives are focused on God,
awe and wonder lead us to worship,
filling our inner being with a fullness we
may never have thought possible. Awe
prepares the way for God's
transforming power within us. This
transformation of our inner attitudes
takes place as awe leads us into
wonder, admiration, reverence,
surrender and obedience before God.

—James Houston, *The Transforming Power of Prayer*

Calling All Readers!

It is time to read! Starting in September, Mayflower's Book Club meets the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm in the Family Life Center. Books are chosen by members who share their love of reading and encourage open exchange of opinions and ideas. The 2026/27 list contains a selection of fiction and non-fiction books with content representing other cultures, life experiences, and viewpoints—all chosen to encourage contemplation and discussion. Book Club is open to all—everyone is invited to join the conversation! Information is available on the Mayflower website, and the list with book descriptions is available on the table in the narthex. If you would like more information, contact Shirley Smith. Following is the list of books for the 2026/27 season:

9/8/26 The Correspondent (F) by Virginia Evans

10/6/26 The Color of Water (NF) by James McBride

11/3/26 The Red Tent (F) by Anita Diamant

12/1/26 Wayward Girls (F) by Susan Wiggs

January No meeting

2/2/27 Becoming Madame Secretary by Stephanie Dray

3/2/27 The Women by Kristen Hannah

4/6/27 The First Ladies by Marie Benedict

5/4/27 The River We Remember by William Kent Krueger



Ms. Janice Cressman
2900 County Barn Road
Naples, FL 341 12-5499

Dear Ms. Cressman & Members:

When a domestic violence survivor takes that first courageous step to leave the abuse, she often does so with nothing but fear in her heart, a child in her arms, and nowhere to go.

Because of you, that moment doesn't end in darkness. You made sure someone answered her call. You made sure she found a warm bed, a safe place, and voices that said, //You are not alone.."

Your compassion turns fear into hope. You helped her begin again through counseling, financial literacy, and the gentle rebuilding of trust in herself and others. Her child now laughs, plays, and grows in safety because of your generosity.

Thank you for being the light in someone's darkest hour. Your support changes lives in ways you may never fully see, but survivors like her feel it every single day.

With deepest gratitude Linda Oberhaus, Chief Executive Officer. Thank you for your gift of \$1,300.00 made on 5/27/202





MISSION MESSAGE:

Our mission spotlight will continue shining on Grace Place for Children and Families as we wrap up our Back Pack Project and prepare for the **“Back to School Bash Event”** taking place on the Grace Place Campus on July 18, Saturday from 9am to 12 pm.



We are **“CALLING ALL COOKIE BAKERS”** for each baker to please help in **preparing 48 cookies (or store bought is fine too)** for us to handout at the back to school bash. The families will really appreciate this special treat given with Mayflower Church loving kindness.

This is a great way to demonstrate a delicious example of how simple “acts of kindness” can make someone’s day.

Please bring cookies to church by Friday, July 17 so we may prepare each cookie in a baggie to be distributed on Saturday.

Here’s a timeline to summarize the details of the Grace Place activities for July:

1. **July 8th Wed. 1pm** -we are meeting at church in the Family Life Center to **assemble 48 back packs with all the school supplies** that we purchased through your generous donations. 24 back packs are designated for Kindergarten - 2nd grade; 12 back packs are for 3rd to 5th grade; and 12 are for Middle/High school students. Some members prepared their own back packs to donate, and **we thank you all for your loving support to help these students start school with all the necessary supplies they need.**

Please join us on July 8, Wednesday at 1pm if you would like to participate in stuffing the back packs 📁 📅

2. **July 18, Saturday 9am-12pm- Grace Place “Back to School Bash” event:**

- back pack distribution to children and families
- fun activities/games throughout the campus for all the families of Grace Place and Golden Gate Community
- **Mayflower Church will have a table area to handout our cookies to all the children and families**
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- **More details will be shared at church if you would like to attend the back to school bash and carpool over to Grace Place.**
- **Any questions please talk with Janice**

God’s Bonus Days



An author writing in *Guideposts* magazine calls those nostalgic moments of memory “God’s bonus days.” LaVerne Sexton recalled that in her family, life’s unexpected dividends — a summer rainbow, a blazing sunset, a gentle spring thaw — were invitations to set aside ordinary tasks and celebrate something special.

She remembered one breathtaking day from her childhood when the sky stretched wide and impossibly blue, as if it had no edges at all. Her father grabbed the fishing poles and called out, “Let’s play hooky, hon. It’s one of God’s bonus days.”

— Marion R. Vuilleumier, *Meditations by the*



Happy Summer To All!!

See our Thrivent Events for July 2026

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 enables our clients to take care of themselves and others.

Thrivent Member Network events are open to everyone, including non-clients. Check back often, as new events are always being added. We offer financial education workshops, keynote speaker events, socials, generosity projects and more. Check out our events page at www.thrivent.com/member-network/southeast/events. Here are some highlights for July:

JULY 14, 2026 | 12:30 PM & 8:30 PM ET

July Market and Economic Update presented by Thrivent

Are the current markets making you wonder how to best navigate your financial strategy? Join us for a livestream of Thrivent's Market and Economic Update, presented by Thrivent leaders. Don't miss the opportunity to hear Thrivent's perspective and what the latest trends may mean for you. Register below to attend the event or receive a recording. No products will be sold.

Available on-demand following the event.

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

JULY 18, 2026 | 12:00 PM ET

Thrivent Day at Six Flags Over Georgia | Atlanta, GA

Six Flags Over Georgia, 275 Riverside Pkwy, Austell, GA 30168

Join Thrivent for a fun and energetic day, featuring food, connection, and time to enjoy one of the region's premier amusement parks. Come connect with fellow Thrivent members and guests while enjoying a shared meal and learning a bit more about Thrivent before heading out to explore the park and all it has to offer. Space is limited — register early and invite your guests to join you for a fun day of connection and adventure!

RSVP: <https://bit.ly/6FlagsJuly>

No products will be sold at our events. For additional disclosures, see Thrivent.com/social.

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.

Want to know more about Thrivent? Call Thrivent Financial Associate David Contessa at (239) 300-5139.



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 Bob & Ellen Davis – Anniversary Potluck Supper 5pm	2	3 Church Office closed	4 
5 LaVerne Spotts – Birthday Indoor Picnic	6	7	8 “Drop-In Bible Study” 10:45 am	9	10 Birthdays – Alice Upshaw and Clark Trantham	11 Ladies Lunch at Lely Palms 12 pm
12	13 Bob Upshaw - Birthday	14 Bev Greenia - Birthday	15 Council Meeting 10am “Drop-In Bible Study” 10:45 am Game Day 3-5 pm Potluck Dinner to follow	16	17	18 Bob Welsh - Birthday
19	20 Leora Batson - Birthday	21	22 “Drop-In Bible Study” 10:45 am	23 LaVonne Peters - Birthday	24 Masthead Deadline 11 am	25 Dwight & Linda Eddy - Anniversary
26	27	28	29 “Drop-In Bible Study” 10:45 am	30	31	

