

July 20, 2022



MAYFLOWER WEEKLY

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## From The Pastor

Dear People of Mayflower,

We turn to the prophet Hosea this week. The prophet Hosea is different from most of the other prophets. He is neither an advisor to a king nor offers prophetic words to those in power. Instead, Hosea's personal life embodies God's redeeming love and this love is risky. This is a story of a God who never gives up on God's people, even after repeatedly making bad choices. You, or someone you know, are probably familiar with a similar situation. Hosea's prophetic voice reminds us of God's constant love, even amid tremendous difficulty. Derek Godman, a Methodist minister, describes it like this: "Who can describe caring for a parent who no longer recognizes them and even lashes out at them? Who can relate a story of setting boundaries and sticking to them, even while holding out hope for transformation?" Hosea reminds us that we are called to love, even when it is difficult. The prophet Hosea can teach us about this risky love.

Hosea is also unique because he is the first to employ the metaphor of marriage to describe the human-divine relationship. This metaphor, although very intimate, becomes problematic because the metaphor reflects an asymmetrical relationship where the man occupies the privileged position in society, and the woman becomes subservient to him. This metaphor aligns men with divinity and women with sinfulness. Hosea's marriage metaphor reflects the structure of society in ancient Israel, but it does not mean we need to carry these structures forward in our society. When we read these passages, we must be careful to make sure we don't use our biblical interpretations to justify oppression.

Reading and understanding the Bible is difficult but well worth the effort. As we read these ancient scriptures, we hear how people from the past understood God and their relationship with God. This helps us understand and articulate our relationship with God in our present context and helps us to grow in our faith. Join me this Sunday, as we try to grasp the risky love that is embodied in the book of Hosea.

Blessings,

Amy

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### **Planning for Mayflower's Future (Part 3 of 3)**

You should know that donating to Mayflower's endowment is an option if you wish the principal of your gift to exist in perpetuity. If you want to make such a gift, all you have to do is specify that you'd like it added to the Mayflower endowment.

This could be:

- a cash gift,
- a gift of appreciated stock,
- a bequest to Mayflower in your will,
- naming Mayflower as a beneficiary of an IRA or life insurance policy.

If you make such a gift, our Endowment Investment Committee will guard and invest your gift.

In the future, when we decide to spend endowment earnings, it will be with an eye toward Mayflower's long-term future, but the principal of your gift will remain permanently, helping Mayflower to seek justice, celebrate diversity, and protect God's creation for the long haul. As we all know, God is still speaking!

Steve Paulson, Moderator

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**Annual Meeting**

The Annual Meeting will be held Sunday, July 31 after the service. All are invited to attend. There will be a vote on a bylaw change (see below.)

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### **Bylaw Change for Annual Meeting**

Below is the Bylaw amendment that was approved by the Council on June 16 for presentation to the congregation (new language highlighted):

**Section 10, e.**, be changed to read: e. The Stewardship Committee, which will organize itself to provide Stewardship education, nominate elected officer candidates, recruit members as needed for appointment by the Church Council to the Core Ministry Committees, formulate stewardship and planned giving policies, **oversee public outreach activities**, and invite members and friends to make pledges, gifts and bequests in support of Church operations.

**JUSTIFICATION:** The Public Relations & Marketing Task Force has completed a 3-year cycle and our work as a Task Force should conclude. We recognize that on-going public outreach is important for Mayflower as we strive to grow and share information. Forming this subcommittee would create an avenue for continued work in this area.

This subcommittee would have no fewer than 3 members and would work independently of the Stewardship Committee and not necessarily be composed of any member already serving on the Stewardship Committee. They would work closely with staff. Furthermore, they would function like the Sanctuary and Welcome Aboard subcommittees, having no term limits. The Stewardship Committee would be responsible for recruiting members for appointment to the Public Outreach subcommittee. Subcommittee description and responsibilities will appear in the Procedures Manual.

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### **MAYFLOWER CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC Quarterly Meeting Minutes, April 24, 2022**

Rev. Amy Carter opened the meeting, in the sanctuary after the worship service, by leading singing of “Amen”, and prayer. Moderator Steve Paulson noted

changes to the printed agenda and asked for adoption of the previous minutes. Doug McClelland asked that the minutes be e-mailed to the congregation prior to future meetings. Carol Scovill moved that the minutes be approved; seconded and passed. Steve reviewed COVID protocols adopted by the Council in March.

**Treasurer's Report:** John Hauck announced that the congregation came through the pandemic OK financially. Costs are going up this year but reserves will help. The budget has a 5% deficit but income is where we expected at \$20,000/month and expenses are as expected. He urged the congregation to keep paying pledges due this year. Doug asked whether there was a treasurer-in-training, as needed by July. There is not, but the financial records are now in the cloud so the work could be done at home.

**Proposed bylaws amendment and vote:** Steve read the proposal, as recommended by the Council:

“Under Article V. Ministry, Section 9, add Creation Justice as a Core Ministry of Mayflower.

Section 9. The core Ministries of Mayflower Church are Worship, Mission and Outreach, Christian Education, Resources and Operations, and Stewardship, and Creation Justice.

Under Article V. Ministry, Section 10, add Creation Justice Committee and description.

f. The Creation Justice Committee, which will organize itself in a manner consistent with the Creation Justice Covenant of Mayflower Church. It will undertake this work through our worship, the life and practice of our church, the use of our building and land, and by taking action on behalf of God's creation in our church, our community, and the world.”

Susan Jurovich, Chair of the Creation Justice Task Force, was available for the presentation and for questions. John Staley moved that the congregation amend the bylaws as proposed to add Creation Justice as a Core Committee; seconded and passed.

**Core Committee Reports:** Stewardship – Ann Hanson announced that this year we have 83 pledges, totaling \$235,579 and also have non-pledgers who give generously. She emphasized the importance of volunteering for the church and urged the congregation to contact someone and ask if they are willing to serve on a committee. The committee will also work closely with the endowment committee.

Worship -Janet Devous said they are still fine-tuning the sound equipment and lighting. They will resume passing the offering plate but keep using packaged communion elements until supply is depleted. She reminded congregation of the pastoral survey to be completed soon.

Christian Education – Marlene Hauck referred to a busy year and noted that Kim Harris does an amazing job. The Trivia fundraiser totaled over \$1000 for the youth mission trip. Volunteers are needed for the May 20 Chili Cookoff.

Mission & Outreach – Arla Beal described the committee and its purpose to assist the congregation with mission opportunities. Offering for One Great Hour of Sharing totaled \$1092 and Strengthen the Church offering will be taken on June 5. Better response is needed for Food Donation Sundays; more than 75 coats were donated on Palm Sunday.

Resources & Operations – Gayle Zickuhr mentioned the work of Marjorie Fulton and Mike Devous going through the history of endowment funds and Tim Small, who fixed some siding and put a lock on the sound room. Safety training is planned. New signs have arrived and will be installed. Spring Cleaning is this Saturday.

Other Reports: Youth - Kim Harris, Director of Children, Youth and Families, described a very busy schedule. The youth are again willing to do home spring clean-up for donations to their mission trip – most people give \$25-50/hour. The mission trip in August to Seattle will focus on homeless teens, LGBTQ teens and indigenous tribes in the Seattle area. Confirmation Sunday is 6/5, Children's Book Club meets monthly, and a nursery attendant (a 2-hour paid position) is needed for Sundays.

Women of Mayflower - Ann Hall invited all to monthly meetings for food, business, learning and fun. She noted the WOM's generous donations, including half the costs for Mayflower campers. A diaper drive for Family Promise will occur during the month of May.

Marketing Task Force - Steve said they handle publicizing for the congregation and have developed a small banner and procedures for posting on the website and social media. In answer to Darryl Gehring's question, the advertisement in the newspaper has been discontinued due to the cost.

Creation Justice Task Force – Steve noted their presentation of today’s worship service and the Songbird Habitat at which volunteers are needed to work when the weather is better.

Mayflower Housing Projects – Noel Miner reported that in 1977 the first housing project began and it still thrives. There are 225 residents at Prairie Tower and Big Sky, consisting of elderly, handicapped and families who need subsidized housing. Recent building improvements include solar panels and central water heaters.

Endowment Investment Committee – Mike Devous described work to resurrect the endowment, as a sub-committee of R & O. They will handle the general endowment, which originated in 1974 and is up to \$45,000, and the Betty Bishop Scholarship, from 2015 and up to \$30,000. Investments are in the United Church Funds, averaging more than 5%. Suzn Gehring asked whether there are investments in fossil fuels; Mike will check.

Pastor’s Report: Amy noted that these reports represent the ministry and essence of Mayflower. She thanked the Chairs and the Officers. She quoted one of her mentors, Rev. Mike Piazza, about wearing bibs and then aprons, and asked that the congregation show up and support the work. Applause was given to the people who reported today.

New Business: Doug announced the coming retirement of the Conference Minister, Marc Stewart, in 3/23. Amy added that Mayflower will be hosting the Conference Annual Meeting the last weekend in September, which will honor Rev. Stewart.

Amy gave a closing prayer and Steve adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted, Sally Phillips, Clerk

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### **Office Schedule**

Jim will not be in the office on Monday, July 25. He will be working mostly remotely on Tuesday, July 26. You can contact him at [office@mayflowerofbillings.com](mailto:office@mayflowerofbillings.com).

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## **Songbird Habitat Maintenance**

1) Weeding is ALWAYS needed and can be done any day of the week - whenever it works with your schedule.

2) Thank you to two songbird habitat heroes: John Staley for threshing our nearly waist-high weeds and Huw Griffiths for being the best weed-eater ever!

We meet weekly, weather permitting, to do upkeep and development work. We will start our work at 6:30 pm every Wednesday.

We greatly appreciate your past work and hope you'll be willing to join us in our efforts this season, as your schedule allows.

Remember to bring gloves, weeding tool, shovel, rake and water.

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## **Online Giving**

Joyfully we are able to give knowing that our gifts will help others to see the blessed miracle of God's creative joy. We invite you to donate to Mayflower church, so that our ministry may continue. You can donate [here](#). Thank you for your support of Mayflower.



As we do each week, steadfast and righteous God, we come before you in prayer. Sometimes we come before you, sure of ourselves. Not in a way that is meant to be proud, but in the certainty of your presence in our lives and world. But at other times, we come uncertain about the circumstances in which we find



ourselves and the path we care to take. We ponder what you would have us do. Listen to the prayers of celebration and prayers of concern we offer to you this week.

We give thanks for people entering into the covenant of marriage. Bless all who are getting married this year that their promises may be strong.

We give thanks for people receiving news of their cancer-free status and that the treatment they endured has been successful. At the same time, give stamina to those who continue treatment for cancer.

We pray for those who are going into surgery and for the families who support them. Ease their fears as they place their trust in the doctors and nurses caring for their bodies.

We give thanks for those who are taking the opportunity to seek treatment for their addictions. Give them the strength to face their inner demons and provide them comfort and guidance as they progress in their treatment.

We pray for those who are mourning the loss of a loved one, especially when the death is sudden and unexpected. Surround them with your love, comfort them with your grace, and help them to experience the assurance of your presence. Be with the families left behind with puzzlement and distress. Ease their confusion.

Bless us, O Lord, with the gift of your grace, that we may always know you with our bodies, minds, hearts, and souls. Amen.

If you have Prayer Requests or Visitation Needs, please email or call them into the office. Please notify the office of any necessary removals from or changes to the current prayer list. Thanks.

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## CHURCH EVENTS

### **Wed., July 20**

6:30 PM -- Songbird Habitat Workday

7:00 PM -- Rimrock Taskforce Meeting

### **Thurs., July 21**

10:00 AM -- WOM at Salvation Army

11:00 AM -- Yellowstone Quilters Guild

5:30 PM -- Women's AA

7:00 PM -- Council Meeting

### **Sun., July 24**

10:00 AM – Worship

### **Mon., July 25**

Office is closed

### **Wed., July 27**

6:30 PM -- Songbird Habitat Workday

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## Gratitude Journal

Last week, from Sunday - Saturday, I had the opportunity to be a camp counselor at the



Montana Northern-Wyoming Conference's Youth camp at Mimanagish. What a blessing it was to be in these woods, surrounded by nature. As the week progressed, I found myself giving for the opportunity to learn many things at this camp. They learned how to create a supportive community, they experienced the joy of being in nature, they were given time for inner reflection and growth in their faith, and they created deep friendships. What precious gifts these children received. These learnings are unique to the church camp experience. I hope we can have some children and youth from Mayflower attend camp next year.



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