

Church Profile

Describe buildings and property of your church:

The church and its connected education wing sit on a corner lot at the corner of Diamond Lake Road and Stevens Avenue (the frontage road of Interstate 35W). Solar panels on the roof generate 30% of the building's electricity. The sanctuary can accommodate a number of seating and worship configurations as all components (including the organ) are movable. The lower level houses a dining room and kitchen, youth room and two meeting rooms, and is accessible via an elevator. In addition to the sanctuary, the upper level has a chapel, fellowship room, four private staff offices, the main office, a work room and a Narthex (meeting) room. The two-story education wing has two private offices, a toddler-space, 12 class rooms, and houses the Creekside Montessori School (four classrooms, parent room, and office). The enclosed Garth (courtyard) provides secure play areas and houses Mayflower's Memorial Garden.

Describe three distinctive attributes of your community:

1. Quality of Life: The Twin Cities metro area has more arts and theater outside NYC than anywhere in the country, including the renowned Guthrie Theater, Children's Theatre Company, MN Orchestra, Penumbra Theater, Walker Art Center and Minneapolis Institute of Arts. With Minneapolis proclaimed America's Best Bike City by *Bicycling*, the metro area has an extensive city/regional parks and trails system for picnicking, hiking and bicycling plus waterways that include nearly 1,000 lakes and three major rivers for swimming, boating, and fishing. Professional sports teams include the Minnesota Vikings (now at home in a new football stadium), Minnesota Twins, and Minnesota Timberwolves (NBA) and Lynx (WNBA), all in downtown Minneapolis, plus soccer teams including the MN United in St Paul and the Aurora in Eagan. There is a growing light rail and rapid bus system. Numerous higher education systems, book publishing, and an active literary scene with award-winning authors add to the quality-of-life.

2. Diversified economy: The Twin Cities regional economy is stable, supported by diverse industries, including food, computers, printing and publishing, health care, medical instruments, arts and entertainment, education, and finance, among others. The regions' average household income is among the highest in the nation and its unemployment rate among the lowest. The region is home to headquarters of nearly three dozen "Fortune 1,000" corporations. Meanwhile the cost of living is more affordable than most cities of its caliber.

Source: Metropolitan Council, "Snapshot of the Region 2012." www.metrocouncil.org.

3. Engaged Community: The murder of George Floyd in the community spurred city-wide social justice action, which echoed around the globe. The teacher's strike in 2022 was another example of Minneapolis people standing up to power. This is a community that dreams of a better world and shows up for change. Metro area membership in civic, church, and school groups is high, with 37% of residents volunteering in 2015. Additionally, there is a history of corporate philanthropy, a large and active non-profit community, and faith-based collaborations that have supported issues such as education, housing, and affordable healthcare, among others.

Identify major trends you envision in your community during the next five years:

1. Racial Geography Shift: While Minnesota as a whole has some of the most extreme examples of racial and ethnic changes in the nation, the Twin Cities area has multiple times

more growth in people of color than all of the cities in the rest of the state combined. Inner ring suburbs are more diverse, along with city centers. English, Hmong, Somali, Spanish, and other languages are spoken in hospitals and in the public school system. There is an increasing number and visibility of Muslims in the state, specifically Somalis. In 2020 the first public call to prayer in the state occurred for Ramadan. This was broadcast from a mosque in the Cedar Riverside neighborhood of Minneapolis, which has one of the highest concentrations of Somalis in the country.

2. Jobs and Economy Inequities: The local economy is recovering from the pandemic, with the Twin Cities' overall unemployment rate at 1.8% (August 2022). The rate is higher for black Minnesotans (7.3) and Hispanic Minnesotans (3.2), but there has been significant improvement toward more equity between racial unemployment rates over the past decade.

Indicate the number of school districts from which members of your church are drawn:

one two X three or more

Identify major trends you envision in your church in the next five years

The Mayflower Church community has established itself as a progressive, spiritual, and theologically based voice for justice and change on a variety of social and environmental issues. During the next five years, Mayflower will continue to expand that identity by working towards creating a carbon-neutral church facility and by continuing progress on LGBTQ, economic, and social justice issues. Mayflower seeks to travel the Jesus path, reclaiming the theology and traditions of Christianity from a liberal perspective and spreading the progressive teachings of Christ. Mayflower will continue to approach faith-based organizing as an extension of personal and community spiritual practice. The congregation will work to become ever more inclusive and welcoming to all. Mayflower will seek opportunities to expand its hospitality for youth through age-specific and intergenerational activities. The congregation will seek to more fully embrace those with physical, chemical, and mental health concerns. Finally, Mayflower will explore how to slow down and carve out space for quiet contemplation and reflection in a society that is increasingly overwhelmed by the flow of information, consumerism, and an unrelenting pace of life.

Identify the three most important faith experiences or events in the history of your church and the year each took place:

In Mayflower's long history, a progression of events form three "faith threads":

1. The evolution towards greater inclusivity:

- Inclusive language hymnal adopted (1984).
- Emergence as an Open and Affirming congregation (1992).
- Mayflower Addiction Recovery Support (2004).
- The adoption of a non-discriminatory Marriage Policy whereby the clergy of Mayflower perform religious weddings for couples regardless of sexual preference and do not sign civil marriage licenses for anyone (2006).

- 250 new members in the 8 years preceding COVID.

2. The primacy of active faith-based social action and service to others:

- Adoption of the Mission Statement for Justice (2006).

- The construction of workforce housing for 30 families (Creekside Commons) on property adjacent to the church (2010).

- Mayflower Early Childhood Center founded, serving an economically diverse population (2010).

- Faith-based organizing on marriage equality, health care reform, immigration, ISAI AH, PICO, Prophetic Voices (ongoing).

- Environmental action including rooftop solar panels, with the goal of a carbon neutral facility by 2030.

- Befrienders, Heart to Heart, Community and Belonging.

- Sponsorship of an Open and Affirming Boy Scout Troop and Cub Scout Pack (Founded in 1929 and ongoing).

- Annual Youth work trips. International mission trips. (Ongoing)

3. The strong tradition of nurturing of the spiritual lives of individuals and the community:

- Groups within the church providing opportunities for spiritual reflection: Women's Spirituality (founded 18 years ago and ongoing), Learning Communities, Adult and Youth CE.

- Contemplation through silent meditation and chanting during worship services.

- Spirit-filled pilgrimages to Turkey, Israel and Palestine, Ghost Ranch, and Guatemala.

- Opportunities for walking meditation on Mayflower's Labyrinth.

- Nurture of an intentional prayer life through Prayerways and the Prayer Shawl Ministry.

- The Minnesota Conference UCC passed a resolution in 2022 created by Mayflower Earthwise folks on electrification to transition from fossil fuels to combat climate change.

- Mayflower is a member of ISAI AH, a faith-based community organization consisting of more than 100 churches from many faith traditions working for racial and economic equity in Minnesota.

- On the third Sunday of each month, Mayflower members send postcards to legislators on pending legislation of importance at the local, state, federal or global level.

- The Mayflower Immigration Team has led delegations to the border and frequently hosts events to advance discussions on the topic of immigration.

Describe the educational program of your church:

Identify the curriculum/a used in your church school and the person or committee responsible for selection of curriculum/a:

Mayflower church has historically had and continues to have strong, visionary, and progressive CE and youth programming. To continue this heritage, Mayflower Council is focusing on the future of CE/youth religious and spiritual formation at Mayflower. A committed 13-person committee is doing research on our current program and looking at other vital options in this postmodern time. The following is our current program:

Children and Youth Education:

Sunday Christian Education (Sunday School) is held on Sunday mornings during the school year from 9:45 - 10:45 AM, consistent with the overall church education hour. Adult volunteers, who are supported by professional staff, teach the grade level classrooms. The children and youth lead special Christmas worship services and an annual Youth Sunday service for the whole congregation.

High School students also meet Sunday mornings from 9:45 - 10:45. The youth plan and participate in special church-wide events and engage in several local service projects, including "A Night on the Street" in the spring. Each summer, Mayflower youth go on a mission / work trip and fundraise throughout the year to support their trip.

- Mayflower children in our Pre-K program use the Spark Curriculum, a bright, colorful, and interactive resource. A five-week unit of the Our Whole Lives program, developed for that age group, is run in odd-numbered program years, and an age-appropriate five-week unit on Death and Dying is run in even-numbered program years.
- Children in Grades 1 use the *Godly Play* curriculum.
- Grades 2 and 3 is a year focusing on learning about the old and new testaments of the Bible.
- Grades 4 and 5 explore spiritual practices. A five-week unit of the Our Whole Lives program, developed for that age group, is run in odd-numbered program years, and an age-appropriate five-week unit on Death and Dying is run in even-numbered program years.
- Grades 6 and 7 focus on living faith through works. They experience rural immersion and urban immersion weekends, and lead the congregational food drive in March.
- Our 8th grade children spend a year with the Our Whole Lives curriculum, which is a comprehensive and faith-based study of human sexuality.
- The high school youth use a blend of the Seasons of the Spirit curriculum, augmented with fellowship, current events and topical issues throughout the year. Additionally, throughout the year, children and youth focus on diversity, caring for our earth and social justice themes. We work to challenge bias, create belonging and change lives.

The selection of curricula and the selection of Bibles for study are overseen by the Director of Faith Formation and Youth (currently an Interim director) and the Faith Formation Support Team, referenced above. Additional input is sought from the Mayflower Clergy and from the Minnesota UCC Conference Children and Youth Leadership.

Indicate resources used for Confirmation and the person or committee responsible for the selection of these resources:

For Confirmation, Mayflower uses a 9-month curriculum specifically designed for Mayflower by its clergy and members. The program emphasizes Confirmation as an exploration of Christian faith and spiritual questions. The clergy and lay-leaders who teach Confirmation are responsible for the selection and organization of resources.

Are there educational opportunities for all ages?

Yes. In addition to the descriptions above, Mayflower offers Sunday morning childcare for children ages 5 and younger.

Does your church have a written Safe Church Policy?

X Yes No

Does your governing body or your search committee have a well-defined policy against discrimination?

X Yes No

Comment: The employee handbook contains separate provisions on equal employment opportunity, affirmative action and harassment, including a grievance procedure to address claims of discrimination.

Has your congregation participated in an ONA (Open and Affirming) study/discernment process?

X Yes No

Comment: Mayflower became an ONA congregation in 1992. In 2006, the congregation took the unprecedented step of refusing to sign civil wedding licenses until the state of Minnesota's definition of marriage provided equal marriage rights for all couples.

35. Is there a position description of the (Director of Faith Formation) role and responsibilities?

X Yes No

Does your church have a personnel policy covering this position?

X Yes No

Using this page, and one additional page if needed, write a statement that will help a candidate better understand the relationship of clergy and lay leadership in the life of your congregation.

Mayflower is a congregation with a strong tradition of lay leadership. At the same time, the congregation highly values strong prophetic leadership and faith-based organizing from the Team Lead Minister. In 2006, the congregation adopted the following mission statement: *To transform individuals into a catalyst for justice through communion with God, education and action.* This statement reflects the congregation's sense that the work of the church (lay and

pastoral) should be focused on transformation and social justice, while moving forward on the Jesus path.

In 2009, after a lengthy and inclusive process, the congregation decided to change its model of governance and the structure of the church's leadership. The purpose, in large part, was to better align the way the church conducted business with best practices for enabling church members to live out their calls and passions, invigorating the congregation and moving it towards a more nimble, mission-driven direction. The policy governance model clarifies the relationship between lay and pastoral leaders. The Church Council, consisting of nine lay members, provides the policy and visionary leadership for the congregation. The team lead minister is the link between the ministerial team and the Council, as well as the lead for the congregation's leadership team. The new associate minister would be a part of this leadership team and, while called by the congregation, would be accountable to the team lead minister for her/his performance and work. The leadership team also includes the business and operations administrator and the resource development coordinator. This team oversees all of the pastoral ministries and administrative activities of the congregation.

Ongoing lay committees and working groups perform the work of the congregation. They make decisions regarding their work, seeking guidance and support from ministerial staff, as well as resources from Council. In this way, leadership bubbles up from the grassroots of the congregation with a governance structure designed to empower this work, while also preserving some level of accountability through the ministerial team. Further, lay members play integral roles in maintaining the congregation's pastoral care web through various ongoing activities, such as Befrienders.

Work at Mayflower is, by design and temperament, collaborative and collegial. Members expect to have significant input on the congregation's work and direction and largely "self-start" projects and initiatives. In addition, the team lead minister's leadership style reflects this approach and the new associate minister should expect great leeway in performing her/his work. At the same time, the new associate minister must have a strong sense of their own interests, faith grounding and understanding of self. Working with such an active, involved, thoughtful group of congregants will require the new associate minister to be able both to support lay action and leadership and nudge them toward new goals, challenges, and deepened engagement with the Church's stated mission. This is a congregation with high demands, expectations and resources, as well as a deep reservoir of graciousness and humility. The right candidate will be energized, inspired, and challenged by walking the path with us.