

TIMES MAY CHANGE BUT GOD STAYS THE SAME



I'm not just imagining the winters of my childhood, am I? In Grand Rapids, where I grew up, I seem to recall having snow in November that would last until spring. More recently—and it might be true this year, too—I remember thinking that if any children found snow equipment under their Christmas trees, it was going to be sitting there for a while. I'm writing this on December 13, and the 10-day forecast is for above-freezing temperatures each day.

The weather-type of climate change isn't the only environmental shift we've seen over the last several decades; the church climate has also undergone significant changes. At about the same time that I was sledding headfirst into trees, most churches were being well-served by competent, albeit not flashy, pastors who would stay for seven or eight years, and then as a matter of course, take a call to another church. Members were faithful and loyal; they didn't expect every pastor to be a superstar in the pulpit, nor did they think that there was something wrong with a church that had stable membership.

All that has changed. Many church members have higher expectations for worship today than they did when all of us were younger. I can't tell you how many times I heard one of our saintly older members warble through an off-key, special music rendition of Great is Thy Faithfulness or How Great Thou Art, and we loved it every time—not because it was well-sung, but because the person singing it was well-loved.

I'm not sure if that same elderly saint would be asked to sing for today's congregation, and the pastor who doesn't pack a punch in the pulpit won't be tolerated for very long either. Competence in technology seems to be at least as important as competence in theology, and it almost goes without saying that a pastor today needs to possess a high Q-score—that hard-to-define quality that's guaranteed to draw people in.

I'm not suggesting that the church of our youth was perfect. Far from it; how many people did we marginalize because of their race, gender, marital status, or even the way they dressed? And why was mission only understood to mean places far away from the local church? Neither are today's expectations all bad—God deserves our best, and sermons shouldn't be something we throw together on Saturday night.

I guess what I'm observing is that change is a constant in the church, but God's purposes for the church stay the same. The church has been—and always will be—the place where people can encounter Jesus Christ. As long as that remains true, all these other things can—and many of them probably should—change with the times.

Quick updates: By the time you read this, our Senior Pastor opening will be listed in the Christian Century and on all our denominational websites, which means our search team will be reviewing candidate profiles (the first arrived on Dec. 7). The Council of Elders will have its first meeting with new chair, Jodi Cook, on January 22. Finally, our Congregational Meeting to review the budget will be during worship on January 27; there's still time to make a pledge! Please keep all of these things in your prayers.

Pastor Case



Happy New Year

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

*80 & OVER

1/3 - Helen Ward
1/6 - Peggy Sherman
1/8 - Susan Allis
1/10 - Daisey Hayes
1/11 - Dr. Charles Long
1/13 - Jane Harrison
1/19 - Robert Erbes
1/20 - William Dansby
1/24 - Fran Bradley
1/24 - Patricia Brogan
1/30 - Betty Weaver
1/30 - Jean Moore

If we missed you, please accept our apology. Contact the office to make sure we have your correct information on file.

TERRACYCLE UPCYCLING

by Dana Johnson, Director, Peoples Church Preschool



The Peoples Church Preschool proudly participates in the TerraCycle upcycling program. TerraCycle is an innovative recycling company that has become a global leader in recycling hard-to-recycle waste. TerraCycle reuses, upcycles, and recycles waste instead of it going to a landfill.

The preschool is asking for your support and your participation, too, by joining us in our Terracycle upcycling efforts by bringing in the items listed below instead of putting them in your trash, headed for a land fill.

Current list of items for collection:

- All personal care and beauty items (empty please)
- Any foil-lined energy bar wrapper
- Any toothpaste tube, bottle, or box
- All Go-Go Squeeze pouches
- All dog food bags
- All empty items from Pür
- Entenmann's Little Bites wrappers
- Empty Fabreeze Air Care containers



To donate these items, please leave them in the Preschool Office on the 2nd floor (NW Entrance stairwell) or take them directly to our Upcycling Center, which is in the hallway across from the 2nd floor kitchen. Items that the Preschool can no longer accept include juice box pouches and potato chip bags.



PORTAL DEADLINE:

The deadline for submissions to the February 2019 Portal is January 10. Submit content to Rachel Giddings at, rgiddings@thepeopleschurch.com.

The Portal is a monthly newsletter that is mailed each month to opt-in subscribers and also included in the Friday email.



Peoples Church Preschool



Est. 1951 (517) 332-2885

CONNECTED HEARTS IN CHRIST (CHICs) BIBLE STUDY

CHICs will start a brand a new study on the Book of Romans beginning **Thursday January 10, 2019**. We meet on Thursdays in the Robertson Room from 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. and all are welcome! This group had 8 members in the Fall and we'd love to see it grow. If you've been looking for a gathering to share faith and fellowship, CHICs might be the perfect answer. Contact Beth Lundy at lundybb@comcast.net with any questions.

DORCAS CIRCLE

Dorcas Circle will meet **Tuesday, January 15** at 7:00 p.m. in the Robertson Room. The program is "The Pine Ridge Reservation" presented by Loretta Johnston. For more information, contact Phyllis Gauden at 517.482.0930.

DEBORAH CIRCLE

Deborah Circle will meet **Wednesday, January 9** in the Fishbach Library. New people are always welcome to join us! Childcare is available during all monthly meetings. Please contact Jess Eysselinck at 646.244.2102 or jess@eysselinck.com for more information.

Future Meeting Dates for 2019:

February 13, March 13, April 10, May 8, and June 12.



The Peoples Church's Design Team and Caroline Jacobs, Edgewood Activity Director, met in November to discuss plans for the coming year. Guests were Tom Schaberg, Edgewood Village Board President and Dr. Keith Cammon, representative of the Okemos Presbyterian Church. Director Jacobs reviewed the program budget for the Village and shared a number of activities that are underway to evaluate current programs. The goal is to determine effectiveness of activities in terms of their outcomes, participation levels and who is being served and how often. Plans are underway to develop standard job descriptions and improve communication between staff and volunteers as well as publish an expanded monthly newsletter.

The Community Closet provides weather appropriate apparel through the Free Store, along with personal needs items. The priorities for the year are to support programs like the Free Store, activities that assist residents in accessing programs that aid health care, obtaining insurance and participating in cultural events and educational programs for all ages—such as tutoring, the Scholars' Program and English as a second language.

Special weekly programs are held on Thursday evenings from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. for Tower residents who are living alone. Volunteers are needed to assist with shared meals, to spend an evening with others playing bingo or other table games or participating in craft activities. To be a volunteer for Thursday night programs in the Tower, call Rebecca Taylor at 517.489.2850 or rebecca.taylor@kmgprestige.com.

Caroline is engaging with other neighborhood associations and programs as part of developing strategies to serve the larger East Lansing community. Partnerships like those with The Peoples Church are essential and are being recognized more and more.

PEOPLES FORUM



Join us each Sunday for interesting and informative "Voices of the Community" at 9:30 a.m. in the Robertson Room.

JANUARY 13

PARK DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT

David Pearson, Representative



JANUARY 20

SPEAKER TBD

JANUARY 27

SPEAKER TBD

Peoples Church Campus Ministry will meet twice weekly beginning January 6, 2019:

11:30 a.m. Sundays in Friendship Hall for FREE lunch for students and a different activity or discussion each week.

5:30 p.m. Thursdays in The Lounge (mezzanine level of the church) for homemade dinner and discussion based Bible Study.

For more information, contact Pastor Betsy at 517.332.6074 or eaho@the-peopleschurch.com. All students welcome!



WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE VACATION SPOT?

The Fine Arts Committee wants to know about your favorite vacation destinations. The Committee is planning a special exhibit for the summer, "My Favorite Vacation Spot," that will highlight our members' favorite places to travel. The committee is looking for photographs, (matted and framed) as well as purchased artwork that best capture the flavor of your treasured travel memories.

Submissions will be "juried" and must be received by July 1. If you are interested in contributing to the exhibit, or have questions, please contact Sue Mills at suemills@comcast.net or 517.332.5535 or Jan Reed at reed-jan7@gmail.com or 517.337.3222.



CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

There will be a congregational meeting held on January 27 during the 10:30 a.m. worship service to vote on the 2019 budget.



FROM OUR KITCHEN TO YOURS RECIPES BY GERRI LYNN



Gerri Lynn Nichols, our talented Hospitality Coordinator, shares a recipe with us each month. Enjoy!

SWEET POTATO AND CORN CHOWDER

INGREDIENTS:

- 12 ounces andouille, kielbasa or smoked pork sausage, halved lengthwise and cut into 1/2-inch slices
- 1 large onion, chopped (1 cup)
- 2 stalks celery, chopped (1 cup)
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic (6 cloves)
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 teaspoons ground cumin & 1 1/2 teaspoons chili powder
- 6 cups chicken broth
- 1 16 - ounce package frozen whole kernel corn or 3 cups fresh sweet corn kernels
- 2 cups 1/2-inch cubes peeled sweet potato (about 2 small)
- 12 ounces skinless, boneless chicken breast halves, cut into 3/4-inch pieces
- 1 cup whipping cream
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

DIRECTIONS:

In a 6-quart Dutch oven, brown sausage over medium heat for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add onion, celery and garlic. Cook and stir for 5 minutes. Stir in flour, cumin & chili powder. Cook and stir for 2 minutes more. Stir in chicken broth. Bring to a boil. Add corn, sweet potatoes, and chicken. Return to boiling; reduce heat. Simmer, covered, about 20 minutes or until sweet potatoes are tender. Stir in whipping cream and pepper; heat through. Makes 8 to 10 main-dish servings. Enjoy!



Come and enjoy lunch and fellowship; a great opportunity to meet new friends and catch up with familiar ones. No need to RSVP! The Welcome Ministry will have a section of tables reserved for The Peoples Church after the 10:30 a.m. worship on the following dates:

January 13: Beggar's Banquet - 218 Abbot Road, East Lansing

February 24: Dublin Square - 327 Abbot Road, East Lansing

March 24: Reno's East - 1310 Abbot Road, East Lansing

April 28: Coral Gables* - 2838 E Grand River Avenue, East Lansing

*At Coral Gables: must order the breakfast buffet.

THANK YOU!

Many thanks to all The Peoples Church members and friends who supported the Edgewood Village gift project. Whether you purchased an item, helped to wrap gifts or delivered the gifts, your time, treasure or talent was appreciated. Thanks to your generosity we were able to provide gifts for 66 children at Edgewood Village. Each of the gifts were wrapped and delivered with love to Edgewood Village on December 19th. Thank you, thank you!

WE HUNGER FOR YOUR TALENT!

The Peoples Church Talent Show and Empty Bowls fundraiser to fight hunger are happening on **February 3, 2019!** All ages and talents welcome! Sign-up for the Talent Show by January 27 by emailing Pastor Betsy at eaho@thepeopleschurch.com. Everyone should plan to join us for a chili lunch (with all the fixings), talent show, and Pottery guild bowl sale on February 3 following 10:30 a.m. worship! The Pottery Guild is generously donating bowls so all proceeds go to local hunger charities!

THE PEOPLES CHURCH AND MSU: SHARED HISTORY, SHARED FUTURE

January 20 is Campus Ministry Sunday! Pastor Betsy and the students and young adults of Peoples Church Campus Ministry will lead both worship services. Be sure to wander through Friendship Hall following the services to see how the connection between The Peoples Church and MSU has shaped the history and trajectory of both institutions. Our students will be on hand for conversation, we will have treats to share, a fun timeline and trivia display, and our Wall of Blessings fundraiser to help fund our spring break work trip with Habitat for Humanity in St. Lucie County, Florida! See you on January 20, 2019!

WPC ANNUAL JEWELRY SALE

The Women of Peoples Church annual jewelry sale will be held in May 2019. Stay tuned for more details to come soon, but in the meantime, bring in your donations of jewelry, scarves, purses, tote bags, and other accessories to the church office during normal business hours.

GRIEF RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUP



Pastor Betsy leads this covenant group through curriculum and discussion that moves participants toward closure of unresolved grief as a result of death, illness, divorce or other losses.

This group is an 8 week commitment, with consistent attendance appreciated. The group will meet on Thursdays, 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. January 24 - March 21, 2019 (no meeting on March 6). Space is limited, and registration is required by contacting Pastor Betsy.

Whether you are dealing with recent loss or loss from a long time ago, this group has something healing to offer you. Participants will need The Grief Recovery Handbook, available for \$15 at first meeting; checks payable to The Peoples Church.

PEOPLES 101

Interested in learning more about The Peoples Church? Contemplating Membership?

Peoples 101 is a 30-minute informal discussion about The Peoples Church. Bring your questions and meet with a Pastor and Welcome Ministry Members in the Robertson Room. New Members Classes take place in the Centennial Room and last roughly an hour and a half. Child care is provided.

This meeting explores the history, governance, mission and values of the church as well as programming and volunteer opportunities. Membership is also discussed, but there is never any obligation to join. For more information, call Diane Shafer at 517.388.0437 or email at dm-shafer2001@gmail.com. You can also call Robin Matheson at 517.290.3223 or email at matheso4@msu.edu.

SCHEDULE:

(Upcoming Peoples 101 or New Membership Classes dates and times)

January 6

Peoples 101

February 3

Peoples 101

March 3

Peoples 101

April 10

New Members Class during WNL!

April 7

New Members Class

May 5

Peoples 101

June 2

Peoples 101





MARRIAGE
Enrichment Retreat
March 1-3, 2019



Save the date for a Couple's Enrichment Retreat March 1-3, 2019. Whether you have been together for one month or sixty years, there are always things to work on and a need to get away.

Details are still being finalized, but if you are interested contact Pastor Drew at dfilkins@thepeopleschurch.com.



Winter Retreat February 8-10, 2019

For this year's Winter Retreat, the PCYG will be participating in Winter Fest at the United Church of Big Rapids. We will be gone over the weekend of February 8th. We will be skiing, snowboarding, making crafts and participating in a weekend mission-project with other progressive church youth programs throughout the state.

The cost to participate in this trip will be \$80, with ample scholarships available should you require it for ANY reason. We would never want the cost of an event to make it exclusionary to any of our PCYG students.

Contact Joe Kennedy with any questions at jkennedy@thepeopleschurch.com.

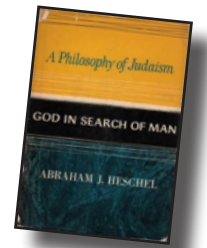


WNL! WINTER PROGRAMMING

The WNL! community meal takes place in the Snider Social Hall downstairs. Join us!

JANUARY:

In January, Pastor Drew will be leading a discussion from the iconic book, *God in Search of Man: A Philosophy of Judaism* by Abraham Joshua Heschel. In this work, Heschel articulates a belief in a personal God who sees humankind as partners in creation, forging a world filled with justice and compassion. Join us on Wednesdays at 6:30 pm in the Robertson Room.



FEBRUARY:



The Peoples Church is excited to welcome Dr. Suzanne McDonald, who has been studying and reflecting on the topic of dementia for 20 years. Her series, "Dealing Faithfully with Dementia," is for those who want to be faithful to God and Gospel, and also faithful to the very difficult realities of the disease, as they walk beside those with dementia and their caregivers. Join us the first two weeks in February at *Wednesday Night Live!* at 6:30 p.m. in the Robertson Room.



WEDNESDAY NIGHT LIVE! MENU

January 9

Winter Vegetable Soup ~ crackers
Herb Roasted Pork Loin
Mashed Potatoes & Gravy
Carrots ~ Assorted Breads
Baked Apples & Ice Cream

January 16

Beef Barley Soup ~ crackers
Baked Chicken ~ BBQ Chicken
Macaroni & Cheese Bake
Green Beans ~ Fresh Fruit ~ Cupcakes

January 23

Cream of Potato Soup ~ crackers
Baked Pasta ~ Italian Sausage
Mixed Greens Salad ~ Garlic Bread
Sliced Peaches ~ Brownies

January 30

Chicken Tortellini Soup ~ crackers
Burgers, Brats & Hot Dogs
Potato Salad ~ Pasta Salad
Fresh Vegetable Platter
Banana Split Bar

WEDNESDAY NIGHT LIVE! SCHEDULE

5:30 pm - Dinner

6:00 pm - Youth Choir (Youth Den)

6:30 pm - Adult Programming (Robertson Room)
Campus Ministry Bible Study (Robertson Room)
Middle School Youth Group (Youth Den)
Children's Programming (Preschool 2 Room, 2nd Floor)
Yoga (Yellow Room, 3rd Floor)

TALENT SHOW!

February 3, 2019

The Peoples Church Talent Show &
Empty Bowls fundraiser
All ages and talents welcome!

For more details and information
see inside on page 5 of this *Portal*.



JANUARY 2019 PORTAL

ThePeoplesChurch.com

517.332.5073

200 W. Grand River Ave.
East Lansing, MI 4882

