

On My Mind: The Power of Lent

In his famous work *Life Together*, German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer urged Christians to take confession seriously. For Bonhoeffer, it wasn't enough to acknowledge sin generally; one needed to be specific. He writes, "Jesus asked blind Bartimaeus, 'What do you want me to do for you?' Before confession, we must have a clear answer to this question."

Lent is a season for repentance, for reorienting our lives towards God and God's grace. It begins with Ash Wednesday, the day we face our mortality head on, recognizing that life is short and we ought not waste a moment. It is also a day when we join in a corporate prayer of confession, acknowledging all the ways we have sinned in thought, in word and in deed. But there isn't room in our liturgy for us to get specific. Maybe we need to spend some time in prayerful preparation, considering how each of us has specifically sinned. "What do you want me to do for you?" asks Jesus. Would you have a specific answer?

Taking responsibility is a hard thing to do. I recall hearing a politician say "Mistakes were made" in response to a direct question about his behavior. He didn't say HE had made mistakes, just that mistakes had happened...on their own. It reminded me of a story Anne Lamott tells about a favorite dog who emerged from the kitchen with her muzzle covered in frosting. Lamott writes, "Sadie looked at me with concern in her eyes, as if to say 'Come quick! Something has happened to the cupcakes!'"

Sometimes we stand before God with frosting on our faces, saying "Mistakes were made!"

If we are unwilling to be specific about our sins, then how can God's grace enter our lives? Grace is forgiveness. Grace is healing. Grace is mercy. Grace is the balm that soothes the soul and brings us joy. Yet Grace needs an entry point. That is what Bonhoeffer is trying to say. To know that God has forgiven you for your specific sins gives you a tangible experience of God's forgiveness for all your sins.

The beauty of Lent is that it offers us a season to reflect on our lives, draw nearer to God and let the light in. But the journey can only begin when we can answer Jesus' question: What do you want me to do for you?

- Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe, Senior Pastor



February Birthdays

*80 & over

2/01—Alice Crist

2/11—Eleanor Chapin

2/15—Thomas Wilbur

2/17—Ann Heisey

2/18—Roger Grove

2/19—Irene Cantlon

2/22—Shirley Noetzold

2/26—Merrilyn Vaughn Hoffman

2/27—Gary Wegenke

January Anniversaries

(not included in
January Portal)

1/11—Beth and Jon Lundy (30)

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

The Reading People

February 17, from 1:30-3 p.m. in the Robertson Room, The Reading People will be discussing *Finding Chika*, by Mitch Albom. Kirkus Review says, "The takeaway from this simple, moving memoir is that love has no boundaries and should not be hindered by ethnicity, religion, education, or money. A highly expressive, tender story about how "families are like pieces of art, they can be made from many materials." Join us for a lively discussion!

The Knitting People

The Knitting People will meet **Thursday, February 24, from 1-3 p.m. in the Robertson Room.** We invite you to join us as we knit and crochet baby blankets, prayer shawls, hats and mittens. Please bring completed items for blessing! New people are always welcome. Questions? Call Mary Anne at 517-214-1487.

Rebekah/Hannah Circle

Rebekah/Hannah Circle will meet for fellowship and conversation on **Wednesday, February 23rd** at noon. More details will be published in the February Bulletins.

Pictorial Directory

We are working on printing our new Peoples Church directories! If for any reason you do not want your information and picture included in the physical directory, please contact Beth Lundy at blundy@thepeopleschurch.com or 517-908-4452. If we do not hear from you before **February 14th**, you will be automatically included in our new directory. We will also include member information for those who were unable to get their picture taken.

TPC Talent Show

Our TPC Talent Show has been rescheduled for **May 1, 2022!**

Dorcas Circle

Dorcas Circle will meet in February on the **3rd Tuesday at 7 p.m.** Our February 15th Valentines meeting will include love sonnets and hot chocolate, along with fellowship and prayers. We look forward to meeting again after our two month hiatus!

The Peoples Forum; Sundays in the Robertson Room; 9:30-10:15 a.m.

The Peoples Forum will be postponed until **February 13th**, when we will resume the Forum with TV Broadcaster, Ann Emmerich.

She is excited to come and we are delighted to have her!



Children Learn Pro-Social Behavior in Many Ways

Dana Johnson – Director, Peoples Church Preschool



According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the classroom is a great place for children to learn about human relationships.

During active play children participate in experiences where one child may want to play with a toy that another child has, or a child may need help with something and another child can assist. Encouraging children to help one another and share materials lead them to being generous adults and open to accepting help when needed.

Because children are always watching and listening, they learn how to self-regulate by watching the behaviors of trusted adults and by practicing to label their own emotions and the emotions of others. Educators provide children with strategies to calm themselves when they are frustrated or angry. Through repetition, these skills build until the child has a number of strategies to draw from to achieve self-regulation.



From Our Kitchen to Yours

Recipe submitted by Todd Smith, TPC Hospitality Coordinator

Southwest Spice

- 3 Tablespoons, Dry Cilantro
- 3 Tablespoons, Dry Oregano
- 2 Tablespoons, Chili Powder
- 4 Teaspoons, Garlic Powder
- 2 Teaspoons, Cumin
- 2 Teaspoons, Black Pepper
- 2 Teaspoons, Paprika
- 1 Teaspoon, Salt
- 1 Teaspoon, Cayenne Pepper

Mix spices together in a bowl.

This spice blend can be used for lots of products: meat rubs, soups, spreads, and more!



CHILDREN'S EDUCATION OF THE PEOPLES CHURCH



How great was our Christmas pageant? Thank you to all the children, families and staff that helped us put on another virtual pageant!

Did you know that I was fortunate to recently spend some time in Florida? Can you believe that I even ran into a friend there? This is Beth Lundy, our Membership Coordinator. How neat was it that we were at Disney on the same day!

As fun as my vacation was, I was so excited to come back and see 'my' kids in Sunday School. But alas, classes are canceled until we feel it is safe to gather again. At this time, we plan to begin Sunday School again during the 10:30 a.m. service in February, but please check bulletins and the weekly email for updates.



In the meantime, I am making new videos with the Bible story, lesson and craft! If you haven't received a link to the google drive, or want to share it with your grandchildren or family, please email me at kmitchell@thepeopleschurch.com.

I can't wait to have the 3rd floor busy with Sunday School activity again. Until then, stay safe and let your children know they are missed and loved.

- **Kathi Mitchell**, Children's Christian Education Director, kmitchell@thepeopleschurch.com

February Campus Ministry:

THAT'S BIZZARE!

BALD GUYS & BEARS BLOODY TENT PEGS
SERMONS THAT KILL DONKEYS THAT TALK

A STUDY OF SOME REALLY WEIRD STORIES IN THE BIBLE
WEDNESDAY @ 6:30PM
DINNER & STUDY IN THE CAMPUS LOUNGE

All Are Welcome to Theology on Tap!

Theology on Tap

MONDAY FEBRUARY 28TH 7PM @ CRUNCHYS

Interested in conversation about faith, life, and what's happening in the world? Come join us!

Learning to Pray the Labyrinth Way

When we are children, we are taught how to pray: hands folded, eyes closed, head down, be quiet. This prayer posture continues to be the default *way to pray* when we gather in worship, pray at the end of meetings, or before a meal. Sometimes during the benediction when offering a blessing on your week, I wonder why so many people have their heads down! They must have been taught how to pray as kids, too. When I was in seminary, I encountered a spiritual practice that really brought prayer to life in a new way for me: the labyrinth. I have never been good at the sitting silent part of prayer. Often when I tried to pray, my thoughts would bounce to the lyrics of the last song I heard on the radio, or what I was going to eat for dinner. That did not seem like a very effective way to talk to my Creator. Perhaps prayer has been challenging for you, too?



Praying the labyrinth is a way to pray and move at the same time. A labyrinth is not a maze, there is one path in, and you take the same path out. It is self-paced, and can be done at the speed that feels right for you. While there are many options for guided labyrinth meditations, I was taught a very simple method. Before entering the labyrinth define a focus for your time. It might be a concern, need or question with which you may be wrestling. You may prefer to focus your thoughts on a larger theme: peace, gratitude, love, etc. Begin walking, and as you walk to the center talk to God, reflecting in your focus. Once in the center spend some time *releasing* or *letting go* of whatever it is that is holding you back, or if you are in a joy-filled frame of mind, spend this moment offering God praise. When ready, make the journey back down the same path back and exit. On the way out your focus might turn to what this has meant to you, what intentions it provokes, or actions you may want to take as a result.

I'd love for you to have the opportunity to enjoy our labyrinth - it is on the floor in Snyder Social Hall. So, every Wednesday evening in February from 5pm - 8pm you are invited to come and walk. I will have all the resources you need to participate and options for guided meditation, should you want to try it. Just bring yourself, an open mind, and bit of an adventurous spirit! Hope to see you!

- *Pastor Devon*



PCYG 
PEOPLES CHURCH YOUTH GROUP



Hello PCYG!

It's been a long month of not seeing your bright and shining face—I hope you are all staying safe and healthy!

We are planning to follow MSU's lead and resume PCYG on Sunday, February 6th. I can't wait to see you all! Please watch your emails and the FB page for details as we return to in-person. !

Sending you all lots of love, and looking forward to seeing you soon!

- *Elisha Smith, Youth Director, esmith@thepeopleschurch.com*

Earth Stewardship's Monthly Green Message

What You Need to Know About Recycling Plastics!

When it comes to plastics, several factors can affect an individual type's recyclability. Containers such as shampoo bottles, milk jugs and yogurt cups or similar food tubs are the easiest to recycle and are in highest demand by recycling centers and U.S. manufacturers.

The little digit surrounded by the recycling symbol found on each plastic container indicates that the bottle or container is recyclable. Those numbers represent the type of resin the piece of plastic is made of but don't always mean they *will* be recycled. The numbers still serve as a good rule of thumb to promote proper plastics recycling. In general, items labeled as No. 1 and No. 2 are in strongest demand, followed by No. 5, while other plastics are harder to recover and have weaker markets.

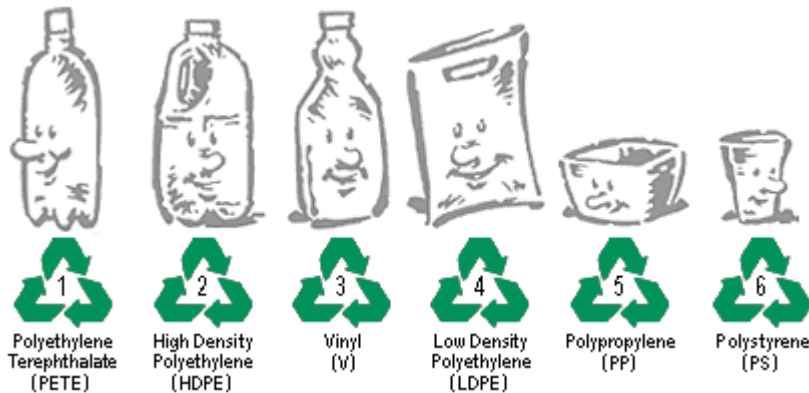
Typically, No. 1 plastics - including soft drink, juice and water bottles - are made from polyethylene terephthalate, or what is commonly referred to as PET. The containers are easily recycled back into bottles and are sometimes used to make carpet, luggage and polyester.

No. 2 plastics - typically high-density polyethylene, or HDPE - often include items such as laundry and shampoo bottles. They commonly are returned to the same use, but can also find their way into new trash containers, buckets and floor tiles.

Additionally, there is demand for polypropylene (PP) plastic, commonly known as No. 5 plastic. It often is used in yogurt and margarine tubs that are remade into other food containers.

It's important to know that some plastics that aren't suitable for curbside collection - including plastic grocery bags and film overwraps - are sometimes accepted at specific drop-off locations. Ask your local recycling provider what kinds of plastics it accepts!

More information on recycling in Michigan is available at RecyclingRaccoons.org.



February Sudoku Solution:

6	8	9	3	2	5	1	4	7
3	5	4	8	1	7	9	2	6
7	1	2	6	9	4	3	8	5
2	4	3	9	7	1	6	5	8
9	7	8	5	6	3	2	1	4
1	6	5	2	4	8	7	3	9
8	9	6	4	3	2	5	7	1
4	3	7	1	5	9	8	6	2
5	2	1	7	8	6	4	9	3

Sudoku Corner

Rules: Fill in the empty squares in this puzzle so that every row, column, and 3x3 section contain numbers 1 through 9 with no repeats.

Solution: The solution to this puzzle is located on the previous page.

Example of Solved Puzzle:

5	3			7					5	3	4	6	7	8	9	1	2	
6			1	9	5				6	7	2	1	9	5	3	4	8	
	9	8						6	1	9	8	3	4	2	5	6	7	
8				6				3	8	5	9	7	6	1	4	2	3	
4			8		3			1	4	2	6	8	5	3	7	9	1	
7				2				6	7	1	3	9	2	4	8	5	6	
	6						2	8	9	6	1	5	3	7	2	8	4	
			4	1	9			5	2	8	7	4	1	9	6	3	5	
				8				7	9	3	4	5	2	8	6	1	7	9

	8	9			5	1	4	
3			8	1	7			6
7	1		6		4	3	8	
	4	3	9					
9	7						1	4
					8	7	3	
	9	6	4		2		7	1
4			1	5	9			2
	2	1	7			4	9	

A Word of Thanks

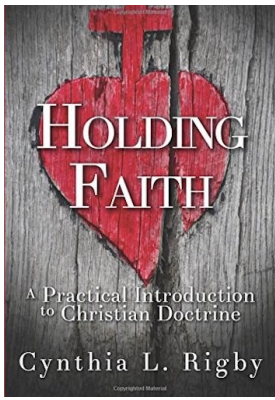
The Food Basket Program Coordinators offer their gratitude to the congregation of The People Church. Because of your support, the program was able to provide 25 families with a memorable Thanksgiving and Christmas season.

Your generosity did not end there, your continued support through 2021 allows us to serve 30 families during the Easter season of 2022.

We thank you for all the ways you have given to our community!

Looking Forward

Jewelry Sale Donations are accepted year round! Donations can be dropped off in the main office from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. We hope you will join us for this event, scheduled for May 21st and 22nd!



CHiCs (Connected Hearts in Christ) Women's Group is starting a new book in February. CHiCs meets on Thursday evenings from 7-8:30 p.m. both by zoom and in person. For more information about CHiCs and to join the group you may contact Beth Lundy at lundybb@comcast.net or 610-246-0029.


The new book we are reading and discussing each week starting in February is *Holding Faith: A Practical Introduction to Christian Doctrine* by Cynthia L. Rigby. Join us as we discover how various understandings of particular doctrines play out in relation to the way we live our lives.

The Community Lenten Devotional Needs YOU

We are putting together a Community Lenten Devotional booklet and we need your help. Each day of Lent will be assigned a short Bible passage and we want individuals to write a brief (one paragraph) reflection for the day. You can write about the passage or about Lent or your faith or something else that is on your mind. Pastor Devon and Pastor Shawnthea will add short prayers to each day's offering. Then we will take all the daily reflections and put them into a small booklet that you can use as your devotional for the season of Lent. We will also post the daily devotionals on our Facebook page.

This is a wonderful way to mark the season of Lent and get to know one another better. No special skills are required – just a willingness to write a short reflection before **February 16th**. So don't delay! Envelopes can be picked up in the office with a scripture and helpful hints for writing a reflection.

The next *Portal* deadline for the March issue is **February 15th**.
Submit content to epryce@thepeopleschurch.com


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THE PEOPLES CHURCH