



Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe

Senior Pastor

ON MY MIND: Hope as an Act of Imagination

What gets me through the long, dark months of January, February, March and April is a vivid imagination. I look out at the gray, dull landscape and imagine what COULD be, what WILL be. Casually turning the pages of seed catalogs, I consider the potential of heritage vs. hybrid tomatoes, and wonder if purple carrots are worth the effort. In my dream garden, there is room for watermelons, cucumbers, and squash plants. In the garden of my imagination, there is no blight, no late May freeze, and no marauding deer. Even though I know the real garden will fall short of the dream, it still gives me hope to imagine what might be. As the saying goes, “Shoot for the moon and, if you miss, you will still land among the stars.”

For the last 18 months, The Peoples Church has been involved in its own exercise of imagination. As many of you know, we’ve had a team actively discerning and exploring the possibility of taking on some major capital improvements. There are three areas of focus in the church: Snider Social Hall, the sanctuary, and the pipe organ. The pipe organ is a well-defined project, but the social hall and the sanctuary provide us with an opportunity to dream big and imagine what the Peoples Church should and could be in the future.

In March, we held two listening sessions where people pondered questions posed by the architects from Elevate Studio. We considered things like, “How could a renovated social hall support youth ministry?” “What technology would enhance our worship life?” “If we had a bigger chancel space, how would we use it?” It was an exciting conversation, full of hopes and dreams for the future of the church. All the ideas were shared with the architects who are now creating preliminary designs for the social hall and the sanctuary. Once we have these drawings, we plan to share them with the whole congregation as part of a series of conversations about these potential capital projects. Everyone will have a chance to ask questions, get a clear sense of the scope, scale and cost of the work, and imagine how this might transform the church. This will lead to a congregational meeting and vote on whether we feel called by God to take on the first project (Snider Social Hall). The exact dates and times for these meetings depends on when the architect comes back with the drawings. It is an exciting time to be the church!

But the part of this process that has brought me the most joy is dreaming about the fourth area of focus – an external outreach project. From the beginning of our conversations about capital improvements, we’ve been clear that we do not want to simply take care of ourselves. What has always defined Peoples Church is our commitment to care for others. So, in addition to imagining how we might improve our facility, we’ve spent time dreaming about how we could make the greater Lansing community a better place. After careful, considered conversations, we have identified the project that we feel will have the greatest impact. Want to know more? It will be part of our series of presentations once we get the architectural renderings!

It is fun to imagine what might be possible – in my garden and at Peoples Church. The truth is we likely won’t achieve everything we dream of, but it is in the dreaming that hope takes shape. My prayer is that God will lead us boldly forward to serve in Christ’s name.

Yours faithfully,
-Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe

FROM THE ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Greetings siblings in Christ!

I'm the Rev. Haley Hansen, and I'm thrilled to be the new associate pastor here at Peoples! I'm eager to get to know you and your gifts and discover where God is calling us together.

I was born and raised on a farm in rural South Dakota, which means I spent my formative years memorizing pop country lyrics and biking down gravel roads. I first heard the Good News of Jesus Christ at a tiny United Methodist church, and I instantly fell in love with church life: the stories, the songs and post-service snacks. It was a long time, though, before I even considered professional ministry. My first love was writing. For my undergraduate degree I studied journalism and English literature at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, and I spent five years working as a newspaper reporter. As a journalist, I witnessed the highs and lows of humanity and covered everything from pig shows at the Wisconsin State Fair to Aretha Franklin's funeral procession.

During my time as a reporter, I began to wrestle with a growing sense of call. I felt disillusioned by the industry and couldn't quite shake the sense that God was pulling me elsewhere. While I initially dismissed my call as a quarter-life crisis, I realized I could no longer keep God at bay and enrolled in Boston University's School of Theology in the fall of 2019. Three years later, I was commissioned as a provisional elder in the United Methodist Church.

In a sense, this new appointment at Peoples is a bit of a homecoming for me. By the grace of God, I wandered into this church on a Sunday morning shortly after I moved to the area to work for the Lansing State Journal. I had a long list of churches I wanted to visit, but as I sat in McCune Chapel, I knew I needed to return to that sacred space. In addition to being a member and volunteer at Peoples, I also had the privilege of serving as your intern during the summer of 2020. During that time, I helped lead socially distanced youth group, offered pastoral care over the phone and updated the church website.

As someone who has both sat in the pews and preached from the pulpit, I truly cannot imagine a better place to do God's work. I am excited about dreaming up new ways of being in ministry with all of you, especially our college students and young adults. I'm looking forward to meeting you all, and I'd love to grab coffee, take a walk, or connect with you however suits you best. You can reach me via email at hhansen@thepeopleschurch.com, or by calling the church office.

God is doing great things in this place. I'm grateful to be a part of it.

Yours in Christ,
-Rev. Haley



Every Wednesday
at 5:30 p.m.
in the Social Hall

Wednesdays @ Peoples Church is a community dinner
followed by programming. All are welcome!



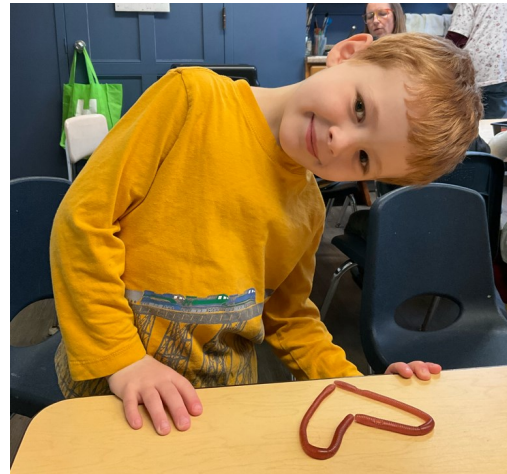
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Southside Community Kitchen was founded in 1987 in response to the rapidly growing number of homeless and hungry people in Lansing. Since it opened, the Southside Community Kitchen has provided more than 300,000 nourishing meals to people in need in a caring, dignified environment. The Peoples Church helped found the Southside Community Kitchen and, through our Community Engagement Ministry, we continue to support them financially and through volunteer recruitment to this day.

But the Southside Community Kitchen is facing new financial challenges. General food costs have gone up 30%. In addition, outside funding sources have dried up just as the Greater Lansing Food Bank has begun charging organizations 50% of the cost of food. At the same time that costs are increasing, the number of people seeking meals has gone up by 75% because of a change in food stamp eligibility.

Although they are seeking additional funding through new grants, that will take some time. Right now, The Southside Community Kitchen is hoping the greater Lansing community can help bridge the financial gap so they can continue the ministry of providing well-balanced, nutritious meals during the summer months.

PEOPLES CHURCH PRESCHOOL



In April the children in the Preschool celebrated many things, among them, Earth Day, April 22. Because Earth Day falls on a Saturday, classroom educators chose to provide experiences for the children to celebrate Earth Day throughout the week. Activities included locating and picking up trash (the children do the locating and the teacher does the collecting), a renewal of being kind and gentle to all living things, and the starting of spring plantings. The plantings will be transferred outside to our Outdoor Classroom as soon as the weather is warm enough. Each year most classes start with sunflowers as well as a variety of native plants and vegetables for our classroom education animals, and herbs for the sensory garden. We are also mindful not to disturb the leaves and debris from all that gather around our corner garden until our Outdoor Classroom Make-over Day on Saturday, June 3. This is because this fall debris may contain many creatures that are still finishing their winter in that habitat and we don't want to disturb them.

-Dana Johnson



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Hello Peoples Church Members and Attendees!

I am Alexa Hayes-Murray, and I am so happy to officially be part of the Christian Ed Department at The Peoples Church! I am taking over for our beloved Kathi Mitchell. We will miss her very much, but don't worry... she is the director of VBS this summer since I will be on maternity leave, and she plans to come back and teach Sunday School every now and then.

A little about me: I have a 6-year old daughter named Hadley, and a 4-year old son named Callahan. Our third child is due May 25! My family has been attending The Peoples Church since 2016 when our daughter was born. I have been a Holt, Michigan native almost my entire life, and I graduated from MSU in 2012. Since then I have been teaching primarily freshman English. I currently teach at Holt High School.

Now enough about me! Here are a few things to note about Children's CE:

***VBS registration is open!** This year our Vacation Bible School will be at the church, June 19-23, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. We are planning a super fun week with half day VBS, half day summer camp and plenty of fun and adventures. We need adult and teenager volunteers to help make VBS a success! Please email vbs@thepeopleschurch.com for more information. This once a year event is important not just for the Bible lessons kids learn and mission projects they complete, but also the experiences they have and the friendships they form! Please help us make this week a success!

***Sunday School Updates:** We had a few weeks off from Sunday School in March/April due to holidays, but classes resumed on Sunday, April 16 and will continue throughout the summer. We plan to run 2 classes instead of 4 starting in June due to families being busier over the summer. If you would like to volunteer as a Sunday School teacher, we would love to have you! Please email ahayes-murray@thepeopleschurch.com if you're interested!

I am enjoying my new role in the church and am excited to bring in new ideas for outreach projects as well as Sunday School activities. Please feel free to reach out to me if you ever have ideas or feedback on anything related to Children's CE.

Peace and blessings,
-Alexa

PEOPLES CHURCH YOUTH GROUP

Hello PCYG students and families!

We had an amazing month full of great activities and successful fundraisers! Thanks to your hard work and the generosity of our congregation, we made nearly \$2,000 at our annual Cake Auction! Wow! I am so thankful to be surrounded by such loving and supportive individuals. I am so looking forward to the great work we will do in Chicago this July. If you haven't marked your calendars, remember to put down July 23 — 28 for our mission trip! Students going into 9th-12th grades are invited to attend!

As the school year nears its end, keep watching your email and the Facebook page for updates! We are moving the lock-in date due to prom conflicts. A new date has not yet been selected. ALL PCYG FRIENDS AND FAMILY are invited to join us for an end of the year picnic Sunday, May 28 in Snider Social Hall following the 10:30 a.m. service. Our PCYG students will be preparing a meal with our awesome events coordinator, Vince, and are excited to join with you to celebrate the end of a great year!

If you have any questions, please reach out to me by emailing esmith@thepeopleschurch.com.

-Elisha Smith

FINE ARTS COMMITTEE

The Fine Arts Committee has announced its latest exhibit, “Wild Florescence” by Lansing-area artist Michelle Word. It is now on display throughout the halls bordering the church Sanctuary, the Thomsen case across from the library and the kiosk in the Rotunda.

The unique display features a collection of collage, a technique that creates assemblages of materials and different media that are formed into multi-dimensional artwork. The term collage derives from the French term *papiers collés* (or *décollage*), used to describe techniques of pasting paper cut-outs onto various surfaces. It was first used as an artist’s technique in the early twentieth century.

In explaining her work the artist notes that, “Collage pushes the additive and subtractive aspects of the artistic process – it is additive as elements are glued onto the surface and, conversely, subtractive as they are removed to leave behind a residue, scratched into or destroyed.” She goes on, “Collage provides a sense of touch, both through surface implications and the physical construction process. With the combination of collage and assemblage, painting and drawing, and additional mixed media, I am able to explore contrasts such as gestural and controlled, familiar and unknown, material and illusion, natural and artificial.”

A native of Kentucky, Michelle currently serves as the Director of Education at the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum. She came to the MSU Broad in 2014 after serving as outreach/programming coordinator and a faculty member in MSU’s Department of Art, Art History, and Design for nine years. There she regularly taught lecture and studio courses on the creative process, drawing, painting, and the collaged aesthetic. She holds a BA in studio art and art history from DePauw University and an MFA in painting from MSU.

Michelle took a unique approach to creating this exhibit, in that some pieces were completed works, while other pieces on display, including the items in the Thompson Case and Kiosk, were all created on site. Interestingly, she did not assign names to individual pieces, rather she named them as groupings. For example, the larger pieces in the hall are collectively called “With Love, from the Plantsman.” The pieces in the Thompson Case are named “Ghost Garden,” and the collection displayed in the Kiosk is called “Glass House of Floribunda.”

This colorful and imaginative exhibit will be on display through **June 8**. Pick up a catalog for the exhibit in the NW entrance of the church. To learn more about Michelle’s work visit her website www.michelleword.com. The exhibit was curated by Sue Patterson. It was installed by the artist along with the assistance of The Fine Arts Committee including Susan Nowicki, Chair, and members Mary Liechty, Sue Patterson, Suzanne Mills as well as friends of the committee Chance Lipscomb and Kelton Reedy.



‘With Love, from the Plantsman,’ located outside the Sanctuary.





SUMMER WORSHIP
at
The Peoples Church
One service at 9:30 AM
In the Sanctuary

Memorial Day Weekend through
Labor Day Weekend

  **All are welcome**



Pub Theology

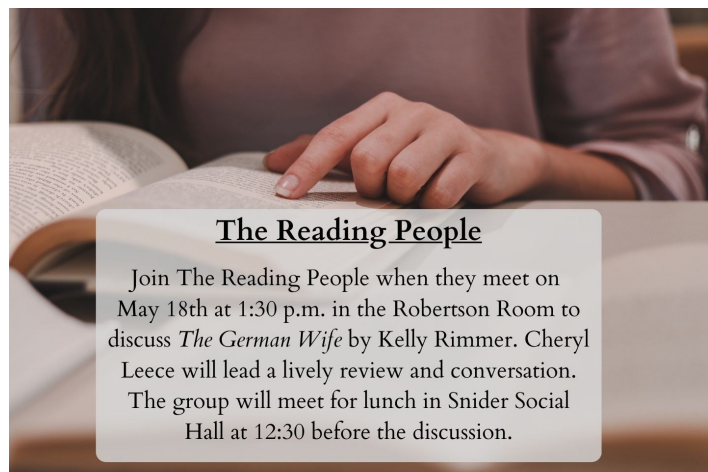
MAY 11 • 6:30 PM • CRUNCHY'S

Engage in conversation about faith, life,
and what is happening in the world.



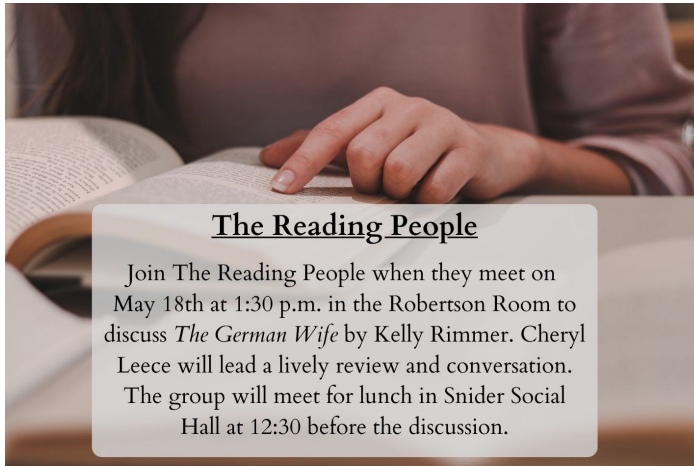

The Knitting People

We will celebrate a year of great knitting and crocheting as we gather for a salad luncheon at 12 p.m. on Thursday, May 25 at the home of Mary Anne Larzelere; RSVP by emailing malarz@aol.com. Bring your projects for blessing and sharing and we will enjoy a time of good fellowship.

The Reading People

Join The Reading People when they meet on May 18th at 1:30 p.m. in the Robertson Room to discuss *The German Wife* by Kelly Rimmer. Cheryl Leece will lead a lively review and conversation. The group will meet for lunch in Snider Social Hall at 12:30 before the discussion.




VBS AT THE PEOPLES CHURCH

HERO HOTLINE
COKEBURY'S
Called Together to Serve God!

Scan the QR Code to register!

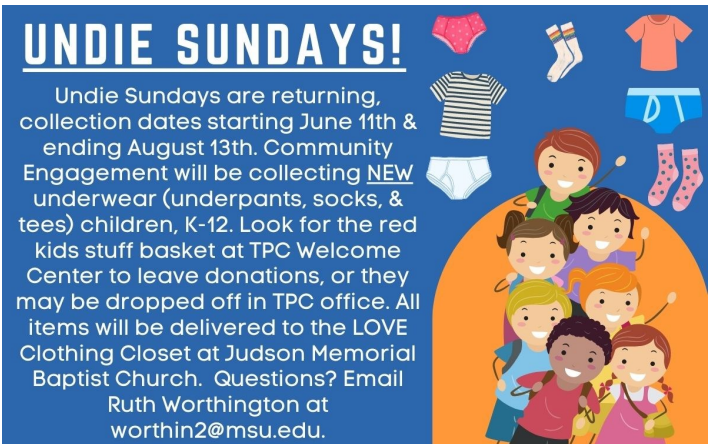
JUNE 19-23
9 A.M.-3 P.M.

COST: \$75, WITH \$10 OFF REGISTRATIONS BEFORE MAY 25

HALF DAY OF VBS & HALF DAY SUMMER CAMP ACTIVITIES!



If you would like to submit an article for the June Portal, please email adroscha@thepeopleschurch.com by May 15.



UNDIE SUNDAYS!

Undie Sundays are returning, collection dates starting June 11th & ending August 13th. Community Engagement will be collecting **NEW** underwear (underpants, socks, & tees) children, K-12. Look for the red kids stuff basket at TPC Welcome Center to leave donations, or they may be dropped off in TPC office. All items will be delivered to the LOVE Clothing Closet at Judson Memorial Baptist Church. Questions? Email Ruth Worthington at worthin2@msu.edu.



EARTH STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

The term **Circular Economy** is appearing in the news more often. What does it mean? How does it affect future manufacturing and the use of natural resources? Answer: It is an economy based on the reuse and regeneration of materials and products that are designed to be manufactured in a sustainable way and have an extended life-cycle. The purpose of a circular economy is to address climate change, conservation of natural resources, waste disposal, and pollution.

Our current economic system is linear. It harvests and mines materials from the Earth, makes products from them, and eventually throws those products away as waste. A circular economy reduces material use, is less resource intensive and recaptures “waste” as a resource to manufacture new materials and products. Waste becomes the new raw material; the life cycle of materials and products are extended; fossil fuels are reduced. A true circular economy is zero waste.

The 5R's of the circular economy are **Rethink, Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle**. Recycling plastic grocery bags into pellets to make durable outdoor decking and furniture is a current example of product reuse. Modular electrical devices are designed to make them easier to repair rather than disposing of them in the land fill. Here are further industry and retail examples:

Coca-Cola's Universal Bottle is a reusable plastic (PET) bottle which can be used across multiple soda brands in Latin America, soon destined for other international locations.

The outdoor clothing company, Patagonia, is a long-standing proponent of product take-back, repair, reuse and conscious consumption.

Burger King just began trial usage of reusable containers for sandwiches and drinks at selected restaurants in the United States and abroad. Customers are charged a deposit, which is returned when cups and boxes are returned to in-restaurant collection points.

French Paper Company in Niles, Michigan makes craft papers from recycled fiber using 100% renewable electricity generated by an on-site, emission-free hydroelectric plant.

The nutrient-rich material byproduct (digestate) of MSU's anaerobic food and animal waste digester becomes compost and fertilizer for campus farms.

Going forward, more investment in science, manufacturing processes and technical skills will be needed to create a fully functioning circular economy. In Michigan, the annual material salvage and reuse market generates more than \$80 Million in sales and employs nearly 3.5% of the state's workforce, per the “Structural Material Reuse and Recycling Market Study” undertaken by the MSU's Center for Community and Economic Development. The June 2020 White Paper can be found at domicology.edu.msu.



VOICES OF THE COMMUNITY

Sunday, May 7, 9:30 a.m.
In the Robertson Room

Speaker: Dr. Carol Beals, retired rheumatologist
Topic: Treatment for Osteoarthritis

Don't forget to follow
The Peoples Church of
East Lansing on
Facebook and Instagram!

Annual Used Book Sale & Jewelry Sale

Sat., May 20, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Sun., May 21, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

In The Peoples Church,
Snider Social Hall.

Organized by Women of Peoples Church

Book donations accepted until Monday, May 15,
and jewelry donations accepted year-round.

