



Portal

May 2024

Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe,
Senior Pastor
Rev. Haley Hansen,
Associate Pastor

ON MY MIND

The Unseen Need

About this time of year, I start to dream about summer. Mostly, I'm thinking about tomato plants and trips to see my children. Neil has plans for re-landscaping the front yard. We also are looking forward to getting our kayaks out once the weather is nice. As the song goes: Summertime! And the livin' is easy!

But that's not true for everyone. I recently attended a presentation on homelessness in the greater Lansing area and I learned that one of the most important shelter programs may have to close this summer.

Advent House Ministries in Lansing is the ONLY shelter in the area that is open on weekends. It is a low-barrier shelter, meaning people who are suffering from mental illness or substance abuse issues are not turned away. But they do so much more than simply shelter people in need.

For over 30 years, Advent House has helped people move from struggle to stability. They have adapted and evolved to meet the changing needs of the community. Advent House is dedicated to treating all people with compassion, dignity and understanding. They connect individuals and families with services and resources, including housing assistance, case management, and food assistance. Advent House is all about equipping and supporting people in a way that leads to long-term success.

Federal and State funds for programs like Advent House were plentiful in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. But now, funds are drying up. The shelter's finances are precarious, and it seems likely that the program will need to close during the summer months. I suppose this is better than closing during the winter months, but it is still a problem for our most vulnerable citizens, people for whom the livin' is never easy – summertime or wintertime.

The Peoples Church generously supports Advent House through our Community Engagement Ministry. But there is only so much we can do within our finite resources. We have many organizations that need financial support. And so I turn to you, the church.

So before we head to the lake this summer or take off on a well-deserved vacation, perhaps we could consider making a donation to Advent House Ministries? No one gift will save the day, but together, we can do amazing things! Just as many hands make light work, many small gifts make a big difference.

Yours in faith,

-Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe



The office is now using one calendar to schedule all events, replacing The Facilities Dude and Realm Calendars previously used.

FROM OUR ASSOCIATE PASTOR

For years, I rolled my eyes at the thought of owning an e-reader. I snobbishly maintained that people who owned e-readers actually didn't like reading all that much. Who in their right mind would dare call themselves a book worm while willingly abstaining from the musty aroma of old paper? What kind of a book enthusiast didn't actually love books themselves? I, on the other hand, was a genuine lover of the written word with piles of vintage paperbacks to prove it.

I started to change my tune a bit when my best friend Martha bought a Kindle for her honeymoon. She and her husband Greg were going to spend two weeks in Greece, and a Kindle meant not having to lug an extra 20 pounds of paper around Mykonos. Over time, other benefits came to light. Martha and I were in a book club together and she'd often get her eBooks from the library weeks before I ever got my hands on a physical copy. Martha always read more than me, but suddenly she was outpacing me by a book or two a month. All this made me curious enough to set aside some of my pretensions. So on Amazon Prime Day last July, I finally bit the bullet and bought a reduced-price Kindle Paperwhite.

Reader, I was an instant convert. The Kindle fit perfectly in my purse, which meant I could always read on the go. Library books popped up on my home screen in a matter of seconds. The battery took weeks and weeks to die. I was doom scrolling less and reading more books than ever before. Before I knew it, I was a full-blown evangelist. Anyone who dared ask me what I was reading lately could count on one hand the number of seconds it took for me to throw my Kindle in their hands and delightedly exclaim, "see how light it feels!"

I recently got lunch with a fellow clergy colleague. During our conversation we beleaguered the challenges of evangelism in today's church. "It's easy to invite other people over for dinner or to a basketball game because we're excited about those things," my colleague said. "The problem is we sort of look at church like it's a chore, like something we have to do."

I know I'm guilty of this. I'm sometimes a bit sheepish about my faith. When I tell people what I do for a living, I immediately start naming all the ways I'm "not like other Christians." I've become so worn down by fire-and-brimstone televangelists and Christian nationalists that I've lost some of the joy and excitement that comes with the life of faith. I've become so bogged down by the challenges of the church today that at times I've forgotten that the Good News is, indeed, good news worth sharing with people.

The truth is, the Good News has done more for me than any piece of technology ever could. I am a more empathetic, open hearted person because I believe with all that I am that God truly loves my neighbor as much as God loves me. My life is fuller because I believe the very best things in life are gifts that are never earned. My relationships are deeper because I'm part of a faith tradition that asks me to consider the needs of others above my own.

I hope you share your faith with the world because you're excited about it. I hope you share through the witness of your everyday life. I hope you talk about your faith because your relationship with Jesus means something to you. I hope you tell people about the ministry of this church because the work happening here makes you come alive. I hope you do all of this because you know that faith is a gift that can't help but be passed along.



Yours in Christ,
Rev. Haley Hansen

EARTH STEWARDSHIP

Ways to Save on Use of Energy that Protect the Environment

In this second part of our climate impact series of reflections, Earth Stewardship invites all of us to focus on the daily activities we engage in that involve use of energy. By looking at these activities there may be some small or big steps each of us can take to reduce the impacts we may be having on the environment.

A member of our Earth Stewardship committee received a report that highlighted “individual actions” that impact climate change. He shared his report with our earth stewardship committee. The report compiled its findings from several well-known climate and sustainability research studies.

The report offered several different steps we can take to reduce our energy consumption (footprint). Various constraints such as renting versus owning your home and available access to electric, gas, and solar sources of power can play a role in our capacity to save energy. But as is the case with other climate saving strategies, there’s always something we can do or do a little bit better to improve our climate. Here are just a few suggestions offered by the report:

- If you own your home, have an energy audit done and follow up on the recommendations. In our area, both BWL and Consumers Energy offer this service.
- Increase and/or improve the insulation in the walls, attic and crawl space of your home.
- Use less electricity from the fossil grid: unplug appliances with power strips; switch to LED lightbulbs; turn off lights when you leave a room.
- Purchase energy efficient appliances.
- Use an electric tea kettle to warm water.
- Decrease the use of gas as much as possible by converting to electric or induction stoves, and convert to an electric or heat pump dryer and water heater.
- Plant trees around your home to increase shade.
- Set summer thermostat at 75 degrees and winter thermostat at 67 degrees.

We will focus on transportation in the third part of our climate impact series.

CHURCH BY THE NUMBERS

Attendance					Budget			
Date	8:30 a.m.	10:30 a.m. online	10:30 a.m. in person	Total		YTD Actual	YTD Budget	above/(below) budget
03/03/24	36	118	139	293	as of 3/31			
03/10/24	11	147	159	317	Pledge	208,280	153,750	54,530
03/17/24	22	150	158	330	Other giving	22,836	28,750	(5,914)
03/24/24	17	158	195	370				
03/31/24	81	194	387	662	Total Stewardship	231,116	182,500	48,616

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Here is the latest from Children's CE at The Peoples Church!

● **KID PROM FUN!**: Kid prom 2024 was a lot of fun! We had about 35 people attend our tropical-themed event! We enjoyed dancing, desserts and snacks, and a photo frame craft. Mrs. Reed even taught us the Crocodile Rock dance!



● Family events like these are made possible thanks to the help of many of our church family. I'd like to specifically thank Elisha Smith for DJing, Liz Reed and Haley Hansen for all their help cleaning up, and Jennifer Hunter for her generous donations of decorations and the kids' craft. Thank you as well to Zack Matthews and his facility team for helping with set up.



● **SUNDAY SCHOOL**: In April, we implemented a new Sunday School name tag system for teachers and students. Lessons focused on Bible stories about sharing including Jesus choosing the 7, believers sharing Jesus' messages, and more. As part of the lessons, students played games, completed activity worksheets, and even did a sharing activity involving delicious s'mores trail mix! We continue to say the Lord's Prayer at the start of each lesson and are happy to see our Sunday School community continuing to grow!

● Please note, there will be no Sunday School on the following upcoming dates: May 12, May 28, June 23, July 7, July 14, August 4, August 18 and September 1.

● **CAROL CHOIR**: Carol Choir put on another great performance in April. Their final performance for this school year is in May. Then, they go on break for the summer.

● **VBS**: VBS 2024 is June 24-28 from 9-3 pm at The People's Church. I have scheduled a planetarium visit and for a naturalist and Impression 5 to come visit us. We will have crafts, mission projects, science experiments and more! Registration is \$75 (after May 1) and can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/VBS2024TPC>.

Peace and Blessings,
-Alexa Hayes-Murray, Children's Ed. Director

PEOPLES CHURCH YOUTH GROUP

Hello PCYG Students and Families!

Congratulations on a successful and fun cake auction! We were able to raise just under \$2,000 which was INCREDIBLE! This money is used to fund summer mission opportunities; stay tuned for details on our summer schedule.

In April we also celebrated the graduation of four incredible PCYG students- Haley Phillips, Cooper Mellor, Rhiannon Kewin, and Kailynn Guthaus. We are so excited for each of you as you step out on your next adventure! Know you always have a home here at The Peoples Church, and we are rooting for you! We couldn't be more proud of you, and we are excited to continue watching you grow.

This month we are wrapping up our school year calendar, and will be having our annual PCYG lock-in! I'm hoping for at least 3 hours of sleep this year...

If you know any students who may be interested in joining PCYG for the summer and upcoming school year, please reach out to me so I can get them connected. This is the time of year where 5th graders who will be entering 6th grade in the fall can start getting connected with PCYG!

Joyfully,
-Elisha Smith, Youth Director

PEOPLES CHURCH PRESCHOOL

Celebrating Month of the Young Child

The staff, children and families celebrated the Month of the Young Child in April. Individual weeks were dedicated to Families, Children and Staff Members. Among some of the activities were presenting families with special artwork created by the children; the teachers hosting families for special breakfasts and lunches with their child, the class and other families; playing together in the park; and even enjoying an Eclipse Party.

During the Children's week we listened to and created music for



Music Monday, tasted new things on Tasty

Tuesday, practiced cooperation on Work Together Wednesday, enjoyed a performance by the **Happendance dance troop** on Artsy Thursday, and celebrated Families again on Family Friday.

For Teacher Appreciation week, the teacher's classroom doors and outer walls were decorated with pictures and words of appreciation from children, families and co-workers. Families worked together to create individual gift baskets for each teacher. Preschool administrators provided gift cards and then a special lunch of salad-bar, soup, and desserts.



-Dana Johnson, Preschool Director

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

April has been a busy and exciting month for our Capital Campaign! Each week, I get an update on pledges and contributions from our Finance Administrator. Each and every gift is a demonstration of the faithfulness and generosity of this congregation! Your gifts also demonstrate faith in the vision of this historic church as a place where all God's children are welcome and have a place to grow in Christ.

You may have noticed the wonderful Capital Campaign thermometer in the Friendship Hall. This is the work of our own Dave Grummon who designed and built the whole thing. As gifts come in, we will update the thermometer. It's a fun way to track our progress. Thanks Dave!

April was also the month that the "Fun"raising Committee hosted their Soup-er Sunday. Emily Anderson and her team put on a wonderful event! More than 125 people dined on soup, salad, and dessert. There was lots of laughter as we enjoyed the historic photographs and articles that were displayed on the tables. Thank you, Emily and team, for reminding us how important fellowship is to the life of the church! I can't wait until we gather in a beautifully renovated Social Hall!

As we look to May, I want to thank you all for your steadfast support of our Capital Campaign. Every gift counts and everyone matters as we move forward, Faithful Generation to Generation!

-Nancy Danhof, Co-Chair of Capital Campaign Committee

SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Starting May 26, we will only have a 9:30 a.m. service held in the Sanctuary. There will not be an 8:30 a.m. Chapel service or 10:30 a.m. Sanctuary service for the summer.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Due to the generosity of The Peoples Church, Community Engagement has been able to make an annual donation to one of our international focus missions - FSIL Nursing School - for the last twenty years. This school was the first in Haiti to offer a baccalaureate curriculum in nursing. It's been ranked as the top nursing school in the country by the Ministry of Health, known for its high standards of nursing education. The school was founded in 2005 through a partnership between the Medical Benevolence Foundation (medical mission arm of the Presbytery), the Presbyterian Church and the Episcopal Diocese of Haiti. Community Engagement was first introduced to FSIL by former church member, Dr. Jerry Veldman, who was instrumental in establishing the school in 2004-05. Dr. Veldman made numerous trips to Haiti as a Board member in FSIL's early years, often met at the airport by an armed guard to ensure he arrived safely at the school. To date, more than 13 classes have graduated, totaling 250 students who have pursued a Bachelor's degree in nursing or an advanced degree to become a Family Nurse Practitioner FNP. Community Engagement is able to donate \$4,000.00 each year to FSIL, which covers a scholarship for 2 students. Those who receive scholarships are required to commit to two years of service in Haiti after graduation.

As many of you are aware, Haiti is experiencing extremely unstable times, yet an email communication from FSIL to Peoples Church has confirmed that "classes are still running. Campus is still a safe haven of learning for the students who are lucky enough to attend." The school is grateful for our dedication over the years, and stated it has been "truly transformational".

The Community Engagement Ministry has been blessed to receive \$86,000 in this year's budget (\$14,000 of which pays for the Wed. night Community Dinners) to give to those organizations who need our help. Because this money comes directly from pledges made by our congregation, we want to ensure you know how we're allocating this money. Thank you for your continued support!

Below are the financial contributions made by the CE Ministry so far in 2024:

Local

- Edgewood Village - \$3,500
- Advent House - \$2,000
- FAME (Fostering Academic and Mentoring Excellence – MSU) - \$1,500
- Women Helping Period - \$2,000
- Denominational Camp Scholarships - \$545 (\$2,000 budget)

National

- 2024 CROP Walk - \$500
- Re-Member – Volunteer Organization on Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in SD - \$2,000

International

- World Central Kitchen - \$5,000
- Nyaka Aids Orphanage – Uganda - \$5,000
- Haiti Nursing Foundation - \$4,000

If you have any questions about our recipients, please contact Kim Gools at kgools@yahoo.com.

THE READING PEOPLE

The Reading People will meet on May 16 at 1:30 P.M. in the Robertson Room to discuss *Firekeeper's Daughter*, by Angeline Boulley, the New York Times bestseller about a Native American teen who must root out the corruption in her community. Led by Sue Patterson, we will look at the book from many different viewpoints. We invite you to bring a sack lunch and join us at 1 for a time of fellowship.

TPC TALK N' TOUR

Mark your calendars! The next TPC Talk 'n Tour (TNT) will take place Sunday, June 2 after the 10:30 a.m. service in the Sanctuary. The tour will take about 45 minutes. Come and learn more about this beautiful church. All are welcome.

THE KNITTING PEOPLE

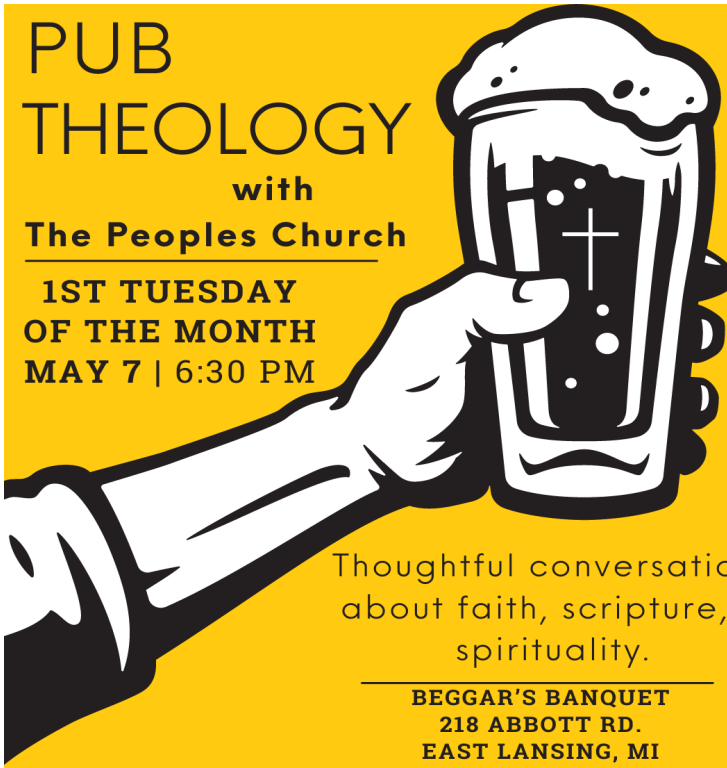
The Knitting People will meet on May 23 at noon for our spring luncheon, followed by knitting and crocheting our projects, and blessing our completed items. For more information, email Mary Anne at malarz@aol.com.

Welcome Back to In-Person Great Decisions
Topic: Climate Change in the Great Lakes Region
May 9, 4:30 - 6 p.m.

PUB THEOLOGY

with
The Peoples Church

**1ST TUESDAY
OF THE MONTH
MAY 7 | 6:30 PM**



Thoughtful conversations about faith, scripture, & spirituality.

**BEGGAR'S BANQUET
218 ABBOTT RD.
EAST LANSING, MI**

The Annual Book and Jewelry Sale

The annual book and jewelry sale will be held on Saturday, May 18 and Sunday, May 19. Book donations are now being accepted and can be dropped off in the stage area of the Social Hall any time prior to May 12. Jewelry donations may be dropped off year round!

Save the date! We invite you to come to our first post-Covid Great Decisions program on May 9, from 4:30 to 6 p.m., in the Robertson Room. In conjunction with the Peoples Church Earth Stewardship Committee, we are pleased to welcome our speaker, Omar Gates, a Climatologist for GLISA, the Great Lakes Integrated Sciences and Assessments Center at the University of Michigan. He will address the topic of Climate Change in the Great Lakes Region, with a focus on Michigan; this will be followed by a Q and A session. Please join us!



VBS 2024: Camp Firelight

Incoming kindergarteners through incoming 6th graders for the 2024-25 school year are welcome to attend our annual VBS camp from Monday, June 24-Friday, June 28, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Like last year, camp will take place at The Peoples Church.

We are planning for games, field trips, crafts, mission projects, and more! Approximately half of the day is VBS-related and the other half is summer camp fun.

"Whenever I'm afraid, I put my trust in you."
-Psalm 56:3

- **WHO:** Incoming kindergarteners through incoming 6th graders (2024-25 school year)
- **WHAT:** VBS/Summer Camp Fun
- **WHERE:** The People's Church in East Lansing
- **WHEN:** June 24-28, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
- **COST:** \$65 (March 1-April 30); \$75 (May 1-May 31)
- **CONTACT:** Alexa Hayes-Murray at ahayes-murray@thepeopleschurch.com or 616-755-8874