



Portal

October 2023

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

ON MY MIND

The first time I ever did “the wave” was in the old Metrodome stadium at a Minnesota Twins game. It was the summer of 1985 and my college boyfriend (a huge baseball fan) had agreed to take me to a game. During a slow inning, something started on the far side of the crowd. A rippling motion began to move across the stadium. As it moved, it grew larger as did the accompanying roar of the fans. It was The Wave. I watched as it drew closer and closer to where we were sitting, trying to anticipate exactly when it was my turn to jump up and throw my hands in the air and cheer. “Yeeaaaahhh!” How many times the wave circled the stadium that day, I could not say. I only know that it filled me with childlike joy! “Yeaaaahh!”

There is something exciting about being part of a big crowd doing the same thing. That’s one of the reasons people attend live sporting events – to be part of a communal experience. There is a powerful energy in a shared activity, like a flash mob or stadium of chanting sports fans. Your individual action or lone voice are joined by a host of others and the impact is magnified far beyond measure.

Yet someone has to start it. Some gutsy person has to stand up and begin the wave (Yeah!) hoping that others will join in. Someone has to turn and face the crowd and yell, “Go Green!” Someone has to go first... and trust that others will join them, magnifying the impact and making something amazing happen.

In 1907, a group of adult Sunday School students collected \$16.73 and gave it towards the building of a new church in East Lansing. Then came a gift in memory of Professor E. E. Bogue, that amounted to \$50. Gifts came in, piece by piece, and then in 1909, when the cornerstone of the new church was laid, they had collected \$17,079. And so began The Peoples Church!

October is our Stewardship campaign, when church leaders reach out to members and friends and ask you to make a gift of financial support for the 2024 budget. We use this money to keep the lights on, buy coffee for Sundays, tune the organ, pay the pastors, and wax the floors. We use this money to buy coats for children who live in poverty, stock the shelves of our local food pantry, and help a people in Maui dig out from the ashes. We use this money to support seminary students, feed our unhoused neighbors on a Wednesday night, and keep the playground neat and tidy. We express our faith in Jesus Christ by serving God in ways too numerous to count, and in doing so, we change the world! “Yeaaaaahhhhh!”

The Peoples Church is like a Good News wave, growing and blessing and serving and celebrating! Every person is invited to participate, to share their particular gifts and be part of God’s on-going work of reconciliation. I hope you’ll join me in supporting this amazing community and ministry!



Peace,
-Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe

FROM OUR ASSOCIATE PASTOR

I've come to the conclusion that one of the greatest expressions of love is a home-cooked meal. Over the years, countless people have offered me a place at their dinner tables. I take home more than leftovers from these acts of hospitality; it's rare that I leave a shared meal without a story and a renewed sense of levity and hope.

I remember these meals often in my day-to-day life. I think of my best friend Marion whenever I make a lentil salad or scrambled eggs. On hot and humid days, I reminisce about the Vietnamese cold noodle salad I ate with my friend Jane and her family my final week in Boston. When I taste tomato soup, I fondly remember my church in Massachusetts. Every time I smell fresh-baked bread, I'm transported back to my elementary cafeteria, where the school cook served homemade bread with every lunch (small town South Dakota had a few perks).

To share a meal with someone is to take part in one of the most ancient and necessary acts of hospitality. Sharing a table with another person reminds us that eating is about more than fueling our bodies. We dine with one another because we each have an innate need to connect, share and give and receive care.

I've thought about my fondness for shared meals a great deal as I've planned our semester with our college students. Our campus ministry currently meets twice a week: after church on Sundays for lunch and Thursday nights for dinner and a rotation of programming. Whether we tuck into delivery pizza, sandwiches or one of Vince Watson's wonderful home-cooked creations, these meals offer comfort and consistency amid an ever-changing student schedule.

We don't eat together because a student can't get a good meal at a dining hall. Rather, we eat together because our tradition tells us that we encounter Christ whenever we break bread with one another, whenever empty bellies are filled. We eat together because Christ embodied the Good News by sitting at dinner tables with all sorts of people. As New Testament scholar N. T. Wright puts it, "When Jesus himself wanted to explain to his disciples what his forthcoming death was all about, he didn't give them a theory, he gave them a meal."

We come to tables in search of nourishment for both our bodies and our spirits. My prayer is that these campus ministry meals offer students respite, growth and connection and remind them of the Good News of Jesus Christ. This church's continued support of campus ministry allows this ordinary act of grace to continue to occur each and every week. For that, I'm grateful.

Yours in Christ,
-Haley Hansen

EDGEWOOD VILLAGE HOLIDAY FOOD BASKET PROGRAM

The holidays are approaching, which gives the members of The Peoples Church a wonderful opportunity to provide direct help to the people of Edgewood Village. Around November 3, volunteerS will receive a shopping list for one family, and then shop for the items on the list. Volunteers should plan to spend no more than \$75 from their personal budget. The food from that list needs to be delivered to Edgewood Village Network Center in East Lansing on Saturday, November 18 between 11 a.m. and noon. Edgewood Village helpers will take the food to the individual families.

If you are able to help this important, ongoing ministry of providing Thanksgiving food for Edgewood families, please contact Katie Slabaugh by sending an email to kslab@hotmail.com, or by calling (313) 410-1113 by Monday, October 30. Watch out as well for upcoming information about the Christmas food basket distribution.

FROM OUR PASTOR EMERITUS

The new banners hanging in our sanctuary are the result of a convergence of ideas. The initial inspiration for the origami crane chains came from a photo shared by a friend of a friend. While origami cranes have long been associated with hope and healing during difficult times, more recently they have become symbols of peace. The colored ribbons used in the banners are meant to play off the colors in our beautiful stained glass window. But it became evident that the primary colors of yellow, red, and blue serve to create the secondary colors of orange, purple, and green, our ribbon colors. Indeed, an infinite variety of colors can be created by mixing various combinations of the color wheel together.

The novel written by Eleanor Coerr, *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes*, is based on the true story of a young Japanese girl diagnosed with leukemia as a result of the radiation from the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima. Sadako's friends tell her that a crane, the sacred bird of Japan, lives 100 years, and if a sick person folds 1,000 cranes they will become well. In the novel, Sadako does not reach her goal. But in real life, this young girl folded over 1,400 origami cranes before she died. The process of folding the cranes gave her hope.

I do not know how many members and friends of The Peoples Church participated in folding the cranes that went into the making of our new banners, nor can I adequately thank everyone who contributed to the process. But I can tell you that well over 1,400 cranes were created by willing hands — hands that fashioned these symbols of hope, healing, and peace. These symbolic cranes, hanging in unison with ribbons that signify unlimited potential for creativity and possibility, are the Worship Ministry's gift to the church. May these banners serve to uplift your spirits, give you hope, and bring you peace. Amen.

*-Rev. Penny Swartz, Pastor Emeritus
Chair of Worship Ministry*

STEWARDSHIP

"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again, rejoice!" Philippians 4:4

We've all heard the above verse so many times, but how often are we rejoicing when we give away our money? Do we love giving? And why do we give? Do we do it to fulfill our own needs, because we are fortunate and others are not? Paul believed we needed to rejoice in all things, perhaps most especially when sharing our treasure. When we give, we should do so with joy, not because it makes us feel good, but because it is a natural extension of worship! We give to others the gift of joy that we feel when we worship — we want to share the love of God and the spirit that flows through us. Our money is a resource that God has given us to continue God's work in the world, and for this reason we should rejoice in giving!

In the coming weeks, you will hear in worship how your tithes and offerings extend the work of God in the world. You will also receive a letter with more information about how you can give to The Peoples Church. As we enter this time, please prayerfully consider your gift of financial support. Your gift will be added to the gifts of others, and together we can show the good that God can do through us in the world. That is reason to rejoice!

-Kyle Dymond, Chair of Stewardship



WEDNESDAYS AT PEOPLES CHURCH

Join us every Wednesday
at 5:30 p.m.
in the Social Hall

Wednesdays @ Peoples Church is a community dinner followed by dance aerobics at 6 p.m. & a financial wellness class at 6:30 p.m.



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

SUNDAY SCHOOL: Students have been having fun in Sunday School learning about Genesis. Our activities included games, cookie decorating, and shaving cream painting. Over the summer, we ran one to two classes, but we plan to run three throughout the fall and winter!

We still need more Sunday School teachers! Sunday School is the culmination of work by many people, but especially of our volunteer Sunday School teachers who dedicate their time and energy one to two times a month to teach a lesson and lead activities. All materials, including a script, are provided! Please reach out to me at ahayes-murray@thepeopleschurch.com if you can help out with Sunday School, even if it's just once a month!

TRUNK OR TREAT: Trunk or Treat is coming up! Bring your young trick or treaters to our parking lot on Saturday, October 28 from 6-7 p.m. for costumes, treats, and fun! All are welcome! If you would like to volunteer your trunk or donate some treats to help with this event, please email me!



CHRISTMAS PAGEANT: This year's pageant is "The Reluctant Innkeeper." Rehearsals started in September when Carol Choir resumed. We look forward to putting on the pageant during the 10:30 service on Sunday, December 10. Our annual cookie party will follow the service. Thank you to all the parents who are helping to make the pageant a success!

Peace and Blessings,

-Alexa Hayes-Murray, Children's Education Director

PEOPLES CHURCH YOUTH GROUP

Hello PCYG Students and Families!

We've had a great start to the year full of fun activities and great conversations. It is a pleasure to work with each and every one of you, and I'm looking forward to the rest of the school year!

This month we have Youth Sunday on October 22! We will be preparing different parts of the service during PCYG over the month of October!

We are also taking a fall retreat to Upper Sandusky, Ohio at the end of the month, Friday, October 27 through Sunday, October 29. We will be camping (weather dependent), playing lots of games, spending time building community, and celebrating the beautiful fall (think pumpkin carving, smores, etc.)!

If you know of any youth interested in PCYG or in our retreat, reach out to me to get them connected! My email address is esmith@thepeopleschurch.com.

The photo above was taken on Sunday, September 24 during our minigolf outing!



Joyfully,

-Elisha Smith, Youth Director

HENRY & ANNABEL LARZELERE MEMORIAL LECTURE

The Peoples Church is hosting Kristin Kobes Du Mez for our annual Henry & Annabel Memorial Lecture on Sunday, November 12. Du Mez is a New York Times bestselling author and Professor of History and Gender Studies at Calvin University. She holds a PhD from the University of Notre Dame and her research focuses on the intersection of gender, religion, and politics. She has written for The New York Times, The Washington Post, NBC News, Religion News Service, and Christianity Today, and has been interviewed on NPR, CBS, and the BBC, among other outlets. Her most recent book is 'Jesus and John Wayne: How White Evangelicals Corrupted a Faith and Fractured a Nation.'



Kristin will begin her time with us by giving a brief presentation during the 10:30 a.m. worship service, and then will give her full lecture, 'Jesus and John Wayne and the Evangelical Reckoning,' at 1 p.m. This free event is open to anyone who would like to attend, and all are welcome.

The Henry and Annabel Larzelere Memorial Lecture Series was established in 2017 to honor Henry and Annabel Larzelere's interest in continuing education on topics of international interest and theological thought. Our desire is that these lectures will inspire and strengthen us to serve with compassionate love as we strive to build a more just and peaceful world.

THE READING PEOPLE

The Reading People will meet Thursday, October 19 at 1:30 p.m. (lunch at 1 p.m.) in The Robertson Room to discuss Kristin Kobes Du Mez's book 'Jesus and John Wayne: How White Evangelicals Corrupted a Faith and Fractured a Nation.' The book will be available for purchase at church, on Sundays during the month of October, courtesy of the Fischbach Library Committee. Please join us for food, conversation, and fellowship!

FINE ARTS COMMITTEE

The Fine Arts Committee of The Peoples Church is looking to recruit several new members. This active committee is dedicated to making The Peoples Church one of the leading supporters of the arts within our community. Its work has grown out of the great traditions of the Christian church as a patron of the arts. It reflects the church's belief that the arts exist at the heart of faith and contain within them the power and capacity to lift the human spirit.

Currently, the committee's primary focus is on developing and installing four major art exhibits in the church each year and coordinating an annual holiday music concert. The committee is made up of members of the congregation who wish to beautify and enrich our church through art. Duties include:

- Assisting with coordinating a minimum of four art exhibits annually;
- Attending four meetings each year to plan future exhibits, manage the Church's permanent art collection, develop new art and music-related projects, and consider new acquisitions. Meetings are usually held in the afternoon;
- Assisting in planning select music events, such as the annual MSU Holiday Brass Concert, which is organized in partnership with the MSU College of Music;
- Assisting in setting policy regarding acceptance of donated artwork and conservation of artwork in the Church's permanent collection.

To learn more about the Fine Arts Committee, visit www.thepeopleschurch.com/fine-arts. If you interested in joining the committee, contact Susan Nowicki, Chair, at sueskinowicki@gmail.com or (847) 651-0192.

2023 WOMEN'S RETREAT

The Peoples Church recently partnered with Eastminster Presbyterian Church for a women's retreat at St. Francis Retreat Center in DeWitt. Systematic theologian and Louisville Seminary professor Rev. Dr. Shannon Craigo-Snell served as facilitator, and the weekend's theme was "Serving God With Our Whole Selves." Together, the group dove into Christian history and theology in order to learn how to better integrate both hearts and minds when it comes to worshiping and serving God. In addition to the learning sessions, the retreat also included plenty of social time and rest. After a weekend of laughter and learning, attendees left with stronger bonds and new friendships.



THE PEOPLES
CHURCH

CAMPUS MINISTRY

SUNDAYS | 11:30 a.m. Lunch & Lounge
Free lunch & good company.

THURSDAYS | 5 p.m. Dinner & Activities

1st Thursdays: Bible Study
2nd Thursdays: Make Space
3rd Thursdays: Book Club
4th Thursdays: Faith & Film

WORSHIP AT THE PEOPLES CHURCH

TPC has many ways to engage your spirituality and grow in your faith.

SUNDAY WORSHIP: 8:30 & 10:30 a.m.

LECTIO DIVINA: Mondays, 6:15 p.m.

ENGAGING THE WORD (Bible Study):

Mondays at 11 a.m., & Wednesdays at 9 a.m.

TAIZE SERVICE: 4th Sundays of the Month, 6:30 p.m.

VOICES OF THE COMMUNITY

Sunday, November 5, we are delighted to host Ody Norkin, a generous local man who has provided seven ambulances filled with medical supplies to Ukraine. Ody has made several trips to the war-torn country in an effort to fulfill the needs of its citizens. He has quite a story to tell. To hear Ody's story, join us at 9:30 a.m. in the Robertson Room.

Choir Concert

Choral Connection
joined by
The Pottsmen Quartet

October 22
3 P.M.

The Knitting People

The Knitting People will meet Thursday, October 26 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. in the Robertson Room to bless completed baby blankets, prayer shawls, mittens, and hats. We invite you to come and work on your projects with fellow knitters and crocheters! We have yarn and needles available for those who are interested. For more information, email Mary Anne at malarz@aol.com.

NEWS FROM OUR DENOMINATIONS



THE
PEOPLES
CHURCH

Keep Up with Our Denominational News!

Subscribe to our denominations'
newsletters:

- www.umnews.org/en/
- michiganumc.org/subscribe/
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- www.michucc.org/news
- www.abc-usa.org/news/
- abcofmichigan.flocknote.com
- www.pcusa.org/blogs- newsletters/

Or follow our denominations on social media!

Michigan Conference Annual Meeting

Saturday, Oct. 28 | 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Plymouth UCC

4010 Kalamazoo Ave SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49508

Register at michucc.org

ABC-MI ANNUAL GATHERING

Great Lakes Christian College

Doty Center

6211 W Willow Hwy Lansing, 48917

OCT | 13-14 | 2023

Registration is open!

\$35 per person, includes snacks, meals, and session materials.

Individual and group registrations available.

Register by visiting abc-mi.org/AG2023



Guest speaker

**SCOT
MCKNIGHT**

