



People's Church is a Member Congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association.



# News & Views

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## Sunday Services—10:45 a.m.

### May 12 “The True Self” Jill McAllister

We'll wrap up our theme of *World Religions* this year with a 3-part sermon series focusing on the basic levels of our 'necessary relatedness.' Using the definition of religion as a human process of aiming to live in right relations, we'll first consider the wisdom and teachings of world traditions in reference to “the self.” This means exploring questions such as what makes us individuals, what does it mean to be honest or authentic, how is the self related to others and to Life? A few small topics for a Sunday morning! I hope you'll join us.



### May 19 “The Vehicle for Our Growth” Jill McAllister

The second in a series of sermons on teachings of world religions, this morning we'll focus on the nature of our relations to others—humans and all living things. In general, these teachings cover the ethical precepts of religion traditions, which arise from needs for harmony and peace. What are the right actions, and who is to decide? Are there universal moral standards, or is morality contextual? How do we know when we are living in right relations?



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**158th Annual Meeting**  
**Sunday, May 19th**  
**12:15 p.m.**



Join us after the service on Sunday, May 19th for the People's Church Annual Meeting. At this meeting, we will go over what was accomplished this past year, talk about plans for the future, elect new members of the Board of Trustees and Nominating Committee, and finalize the annual budget. All People's members are needed and encouraged to attend. Lunch and childcare will be provided. Please mark your calendar and help be part of the decisions that move us forward.

To receive an electronic version of this newsletter, please email [office@peopleschurch.net](mailto:office@peopleschurch.net), with the word 'subscribe' in the subject box. An electronic version can also be found on our website at [www.peopleschurch.net](http://www.peopleschurch.net).

## Between Us



Have you ever had an experience of being “called?” A feeling or a sense that there was something you needed to do, a direction you needed to go, an understanding you needed to work toward? “Calling” is an old metaphor, perhaps even an ancient concept, of what motivates humans to grow, to change, to deepen their knowledge or wisdom or skills. Sometimes it simply comes as an invitation to “wake up,” as the first warm breeze of spring always does. Sometimes it comes after years of struggle, as a clear understanding of what you must do—a commitment you must finally make, a situation you must finally leave, a truth you must finally embrace. Sometimes it comes as a surprise; other times it makes perfect sense. Sometimes it is both—a surprise, which makes perfect sense!

After long Michigan winters, spring makes me remember again what it feels like to be called. While a few weeks ago there was still snow and ice coming down, this morning the sun on my skin is hot, and the warmth rises from the ground around me. If I stand still long enough I can literally see the buds unfolding on the trees—yesterday the branches were bare and today they are not! And if that is not obvious enough, the spring peepers are calling blatantly—wake up, wake up! See that life is coming forth again—and remember, though the forms of each flower and frog and person may be recognizable in some

ways, each is also completely new, completely unique, a new expression of Life.

The ministry is often referred to as a calling. Congregations “call” a minister, and ministers accept the call. Twenty-six years ago, at the age of twenty-nine, I felt the call to ministry; twenty-one years ago I answered a call to my first settlement; and fifteen years ago I answered a call from People’s Church. Now I have been called again—to a new ministry, and at the same time simply another step on the journey I began at age twenty-nine—the journey of a religious life committed to learning and growth through service. At this stage in that calling, once again something is waiting to be born, and I’m ready to discover what it will be. We are in this together, for the future is waiting to be born at People’s church too, and within many of you, and the warm wind is starting to call and the world is inviting each of us to wake up and take the next steps, and we are taking them. We must keep in mind that the birth process cannot really be described as “comfortable” for anybody! Intense is probably a better word. But life-giving it most certainly is.

I’m grateful for our companionship in this process, on this part of the journey. It will include much joy mixed with sadness. (I’m getting my supply of tissues ready, because crying really works for me.) But the journey is bigger than all of us, and holds more than we can imagine. Let’s keep walking.

See you Sunday—*Jill*

### WORDS FOR REFLECTION

“Bless the fingers, for they are as darting as fire.  
 Bless the little hairs of the body, for they are softer than grass.  
 Bless the hips for they are cunning beyond all other machinery.  
 Bless the mouth for it is the describer.  
 Bless the tongue for it is the maker of words.  
 Bless the eyes, for they are the gifts of the angels, for they tell the truth.  
 Bless the shoulders for they are a strength and a shelter.  
 Bless the thumb for when working it has godly grip.  
 Bless the feet for their knuckles and their modesty.  
 Bless the spine for it is the whole story.”

—*Mary Oliver*

## Getting to Know Each Other

### Notes on the Ministerial Transition

Sue Caulfield, Board President



This week warrants a shorter letter, though not for lack of events! On Monday, April 22nd, your Interim Minister Task-Force received eight applications for the position of Interim Minister at People's Church. After lengthy discussion, the list was reduced to four and on Saturday, April 28th, the task-force telephone interviewed all four of them. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes and provided both the task-force and the interviewees lots of information about the other. By the time you read this message, the task-force will have conducted Skype interviews as well (Skype is over the computer and allows the parties to see, as well as hear each other).

Friday, May 3rd, at noon, is when offers are made in this first round of hiring interim ministers. If all goes well, the task-force will be able to announce our new interim minister at next Sunday's service. Should the task-force and an applicant not come to agreement on being called to People's Church, there will be a second round opportunity the week of May 6, 2013. However, please note that your task-force is quite optimistic, as we have great applicants and those applicants see People's Church as a great place to spend the next couple of years.

Should we secure our Interim Minister this week, the Board will begin the process of creating the Interim Ministry Team, the group that will work closely with the Interim Minister. More news about that as it develops.

In the meanwhile, as we learn about new people who might join us in our shared ministry, let us remember to continue to reach out to each other, to get to know each other and to know that, together, we are People's Church.

## Mindfulness Meditation Retreat

### Saturday, May 18th

from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Everyone is welcome to come for the entire 3 hours, or if you're a beginner and are concerned about the length of time, consider coming for only the first hour. No registration, no fee. We will meet in Room 19. Some meditation cushions and yoga mats are provided, but usually not enough for everyone, so bring your own if you have them. Dress in layers, as we may be doing some walking meditation outside, weather permitting. Contact Carolyn Heineman for more information. 269-547-7113.



## Chalice Circle Leader Orientation

### Saturday, June 1, 9am-1pm

Save the date if you are interested in becoming part of a chalice circle, and would be willing to be trained as a facilitator. Chalice circles are small groups of 7-8 people, who meet on a regular basis, to discover and share the life experiences which have shaped us. The format is structured, and the process becomes a shared discipline. Chalice circles have been loved by many People's people for several years. If you have questions, contact Diane Melvin or Jill McAllister.

## Annual Committee Reports

### Due Friday, May 3rd

It's that time of year again when the church needs to collect committee reports from all the committees for the Annual Meeting. **Reports should include names of members and chairs, the purpose of the committee, what the committee has done this year, and future goals.** Reports are due no later than **Friday, May 3.** Thanks so much!



## Social Justice Coordinating Committee Update

### The Center for Transformation

On Sunday, May 12 there will be a special collection for "The Center for Transformation." This is a locally based prisoner reentry program which



supports recent parolees as they reestablish themselves in society after lengthy prison confinements. It is a faith based, non-

profit organization which offers weekly group support sessions where mentors from area churches meet with parolees. These voluntary sessions last about an hour and are held every Tuesday at the First Baptist Church in downtown Kalamazoo. From these meetings individual mentors and parolees may establish a closer relationship with each other. As a result, further contact occurs at other times during the week where help and support is offered by the mentors.

For a number of years, People's Church members Molly Fairbanks, George McCrea and Rick Johnson have been active participants. Under the guidance of this organization, each has mentored individual parolees, and they also have worked together as a team to help provide a smoother transition back into society. It's never boring and could involve doing anything from teaching a 40-year-old how to drive a car to transporting an injured parolee to a medical appointment in Grand Rapids to hosting a get acquainted lunch with a few parolees just before the Tuesday support group meeting. Probably, the most important service offered requires no skills or cash—it is just taking the time to listen to the frustrations (and occasionally the joys) involved in coping with life

on parole. Good mentoring is simply taking an interest in someone else—accepting them for who they are—and then helping them become the people they want to be. It is very rewarding work.

Although The CFT has an involved board of directors and a cooperative partnership with KPEP and Open Doors, there is an increasing need for a director who will recruit, train and coordinate more mentoring activity. CFT is presently writing grants and seeking support from various churches for this very purpose.

If interested, please come to one of the following CFT meetings. The large support group sessions are held every Tuesday (1:00-2:00 PM) at the First Baptist Church, 315 West Michigan Ave. Kalamazoo, MI. On the first Tuesday of each month there is a "Welcome Home Pot Luck" luncheon with much good fellowship followed by a shortened meeting. Please come, or talk to Molly, George or Rick for more information.



**\*Loaves & Fishes special need for the month of May is low or no salt vegetables.**



### Where Has the Audio of the Services Been?

Typically, you can find the latest audio of services on the church website at: [www.peopleschurch.net/audio\\_archive.html](http://www.peopleschurch.net/audio_archive.html) or subscribe to it on iTunes. Unfortunately, the computer that records the sermons has crashed and so the last several services were not recorded. The Audio/Visual Committee is working on the issue and will hopefully have audio of services available again soon!



## Green Spot

By Ken Dahlberg

### Green Burials

Earth Day reminded me again of its great cycles—the seasons, monthly tides, daily rotations—and the interwoven life-cycles of its inhabitants: birth, growth, reproduction, decline, and death and their accompanying reality: all eat—and all are food.

Sadly, we live in a death-denying culture where too many people postpone until too late the making of wills, power of attorneys, etc. Even less thought or family discussion is given to burials and funerals—and whether or not we wish to interlace our bodies back into the earth - feeding and enriching soil microorganisms, themselves the source of life for multiple organisms, plants, and trees.

Historically, most cultures and religions buried their dead within a few days, holding funeral ceremonies later to sanctify, give respect, and remember their life.

The Civil War changed all that. Far-distant family wanted to view their lost loved-one before burial. Formaldehyde made this possible and led to its common usage.

Today, there is a revival of natural/green burials—the most climate—and Earth-friendly option.

- Conventional burials use the most energy: that embedded in concrete vaults and caskets, plus the energy to fertilize, water, and mow the cemetery grass for decades, while risking leakage of the toxic formaldehyde used to preserve the body for viewing.
- Cremation uses less energy and produces fewer green house gasses, but emits toxic mercury emissions from dental fillings.
- Green burials use the least energy with their simple shrouds or biodegradable caskets and no formaldehyde. They can also be much less expensive—starting around \$2000, while the average conventional burial costs around \$8,000.

Currently, there are few nearby green burial options. However, in the next several years, the Kalamazoo Na-

ture Center plans to develop a green burial area.

For a copy of the more detailed report I prepared for the Green Sanctuary Committee or to indicate your interest in meeting to learn more about green burials, please contact Cybelle or Connie. We also hope to discuss what our congregation might do internally, and possibly externally, to encourage green burial sites in SW Michigan.

### City Commission Meeting

Join People's people and many others at the City Commission Meeting, **Monday, May 6, 7 p.m.** to speak against an EPA plan to bury PCB's in the Edison neighborhood.

### Beloved Conversations

Following our April weekend session with Meadville Lombard Theological School Professor Dr. Mark Hicks, fourteen people from People's and UUC of SW MI will now meet for 8 two-hour sessions working with his curriculum "*Beloved Conversations: Meditations on Race and Ethnicity.*" Carolyn Heineman and Jill McAllister will facilitate.



Here is the schedule for the sessions:

- Friday, May 3, 7-9 p.m.
- Friday, May 17, 7-9 p.m.
- Wednesday, May 29, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- Friday, May 31, 7-9 p.m.
- Wednesday, June 5, 5:30-9:30 p.m.  
(2 sessions)
- Friday, June 7, 7-9 p.m.
- Friday, June 14, 7-9 p.m.

## GRATITUDE

Thank you to so many of you who stayed to enjoy the Religious Education (RE) Volunteer Appreciation Party on 4/29 as there were about 150 folks present. I am so grateful to the work of the RE Committee for the fabulous lunch and their hard work all year long.

I am also extremely grateful for the many hours that RE teachers dedicate to our children and youth at People's Church. Because we added three new RE age groupings of classes, we had a total of 40 RE Teachers this year. The strength and health of this vibrant and growing program depends on these faithful volunteers.

This year the RE Committee painted and sewed world religion prayer flags for each of the teachers as a thank you gift. I must give credit to Emily Cutler who sewed almost all of the prayer flags. They turned out beautifully and I hope will be enjoyed. Thank you Emily!!

It is with sadness as I watch the RE Committee Chair, Anna Shade, move on to other leadership roles in the church. What an outstanding leader she has been! It has been such a gift for me to work so closely with her on the committee the past few years! Her beautiful spirit brings such richness to our church community. Thank you Anna!

It definitely takes a village to run a strong religious education program and we are so fortunate to have so many active villagers. Of our 230 members, over 120 people volunteered RE this past year. Wow, what a gift. To all 120 of you: THANK YOU for saying YES when someone asked you to help! We really appreciate everyone's contributions whether large or small!

Blessed Be, Diane Melvin  
Director of Religious Education

### 2012-13 RE Committee Members

Anna Shade, Chair, Mackenzie Hatfield-Johnson, Denise Valette, Amy Dunfee, Meghan Grabemeyer, Megan Reynolds, Dawn Chamberlain and Pat Nelson

**THANK YOU!!**

## YRUU to go to GA

We were fortunate to receive a \$1,000 youth group grant from the UUA to help send our teens to the UU General Assembly in Louisville, KY this June!

People's Church people have been generously purchasing baked goods to help fund this trip as well. Thank you for your support to help make this trip happen!



## Peace and Nature Camp

Peace and Nature Camp is a one-week day-camp at People's Church that runs **M-F, June 24-28, 9am - 4pm** and is open to all children ages 6-12 years old.

The cost of camp is \$110 per camper if registered by May 26<sup>th</sup>. After that, the fee is \$120 and final registration is June 9<sup>th</sup>. Scholarships are available if registered by May 26<sup>th</sup>. Be sure and register early because camp fills up fast!

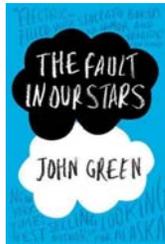
If you have any questions, are interested in helping with camp or would like to make a donation to the scholarship fund please contact me at 623-2932 or [birdman@mei.net](mailto:birdman@mei.net). See you at camp!

Thank You, Jeff Kirkwood,  
Peace and Nature Camp Director

## Book Group

### Wednesday, May 8, 1:30 p.m.

The book for May is John Green's The Fault in Our Stars a novel about life, death, cancer and love. Pat Nelson will lead the discussion at Donna Treloar's condo in Parkview Hills. Call Donna for directions. The book for June is The Gathering by Anne Enright. Newcomers are always welcome.



## The Study Group

### Monday, May 13, 7:30 p.m.

The Study Group will be discussing Meditations by Marcus Aurelius (translated by Gregory Hays) at its next meeting, Monday, May 13, at 7:30 p.m. at The Fountains at Bronson Place. Newcomers are welcome. Please contact Tim Bartik for more information.

## \$MONEY MATTERS\$

The annual **Service Auction** was held at People's Church on Saturday, April 27. This fund raiser also raises a great deal of fun, and this year was no exception. Plus, by trading our services and pooling our resources, we raised over \$15,000 for People's Church! This is a critical part of our annual income. Special thanks to Jeme Baker and her very capable crew for a great time! And thanks to those who donated items and services and to all who came to bid and enjoy the evening.

Meanwhile, we have now completed three-quarters of the church fiscal year (July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013). Our operating income and operating expenses are each six percent below budget, which means we are just barely in deficit (\$631) for the year to date. But our pledge income has now fallen below budget by nearly \$8,000 year to date, so it is time to get your pledge payments up to date with only two calendar months of the year remaining. If you have any questions, please contact Treasurer Allan Hunt, Assistant Treasurer Barb Davis, or Database Manager Dana Kubinski.

## Peace Pizzazz

The 5th Annual Peace Pizzazz is shaping up to be a lot of fun.

**Theme: Harmony: In Tune with One Another**  
**Saturday, May 18, 2013**  
**1:30 - 4:00 p.m.**

**Bronson Park, Kalamazoo, Michigan**

What's Peace Pizzazz? Peace Pizzazz is a children's festival celebrating art, music and other expressions of positive behavior as learned through peace education. This unique festival aligns well with our sixth Unitarian Universalist Principle to "Build a fair and peaceful world." Peace Pizzazz includes displays of children's art as well as music and dance performances. All children are invited to enjoy the craft activities, peace tattoos, bubble blowing and the 3:30 pm parade around the Bronson Park by everyone who attends led by the famous Peace Mama puppet.



**Peace Mama**

Our very own Roasted Peanuts will perform that day and People's Church and the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Southwest Michigan will also have a booth at Peace Pizzazz.

This year Peace Pizzazz is featuring the book Have You Filled a Bucket Today? by Michigan author Carol McCloud. This book provides good opportunities for discussion about "treating others the way you want to be treated."

We encourage all People's elementary-aged kids and families to come join the fun and help us promote more peace in the world by participating in Peace Pizzazz.

Day	Date	Event	Time	Place
Monday	May 6	Facing Life, Facing Death Financial Affairs Committee	12:00p.m. 7:15p.m.	Room L1 Room 18
Tuesday	May 7	<i>Oshtemo Township Voting</i> Building & Grounds Work Group Talking Pots	All Day 9:30a.m. 3:30p.m.	Rooms L1 & L2 Meet at Church Kitchen
Wednesday	May 8	Book Group Board Meeting	1:30p.m. 6:30p.m.	Donna Grath's Home Room L1
Thursday	May 9	Bell Choir Choir Rehearsal Young Adult Group	6:15p.m. 7:15p.m. 8:00p.m.	Room 9 Commons Park Trades Center, #208
Sunday	May 12	Meditation Session K-1st Grade O.W.L. Hospitality / Coffee and Refreshments Sunday Service <i>Special Collection for Center for Transformation</i> Sunday Lunch provided by Library Committee Scrabble Roasted Peanuts (children's music group)	9:00a.m. 9:00a.m. 10:00a.m. 10:45a.m. 12:15p.m. 12:30p.m. 12:30p.m.	Room 2 Room 19 Foyer Commons Commons Room 8 Room 9
Monday	May 13	Newsletter Deadline Membership Committee The Study Group	12:00p.m. 4:30p.m. 7:30p.m.	news@peopleschurch.net Room 18 Fountains at Bronson Place
Tuesday	May 14	Building & Grounds Work Group	9:30a.m.	Meet at Church
Thursday	May 16	Religious Education Committee Bell Choir Choir Rehearsal	6:00p.m. 6:15p.m. 7:15p.m.	Room 8 Room 9 Commons
Friday	May 17	Newsletter Mailing Beloved Conversations	9:00a.m. 7:00p.m.	Room 8 Room 19
Saturday	May 18	Mindfulness Retreat The Discussion Group	9:00a.m. 10:00a.m.	Room 19 Room L2
Sunday	May 19	Meditation Session O.W.L. Sexuality Education Class—K/1st Hospitality / Coffee and Refreshments Sunday Service Annual Meeting Roasted Peanuts (children's music group) Website Content Input Meeting	9:00a.m. 9:00a.m. 10:00a.m. 10:45a.m. 12:15p.m. 12:30p.m. 1-5p.m.	Room 2 Room 19 Foyer Commons Commons Room 9 Room 19

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### Missing Blue Hooded Sweatshirt

A blue, zip-up, kids 'hoodie' was taken from the coat area on Sunday, April 28. It had a bronze zipper with fleece inside. A smaller one the same color was left behind. If you think you might have accidentally taken it, please call Noah Fry.



### Newsletter Folders Needed

The newsletter mailing group is in need of one or two more people to help fold and sticker the newsletters every other Friday at 9:00 AM at the church. If you can spare 2 hours on a Friday, we'd love to have you. Please call Ellie Killinger or just show up, if you'd like to help.

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## People's Church Mission Statement

**“People's Church is a welcoming religious community drawing on wisdom and inspiration from many sources to discover and live out our highest values.”**

