

Minutes of the Congregational Meeting
People's Church of Kalamazoo
Date: May 19, 2019

The Annual Meeting of the People's Church of Kalamazoo was called to order by President Zoe Valette on Sunday, May 19, 2019 at 12:33 p.m. Carolyn Heineman reported that 80 members were present. A quorum was present.

The agenda was approved as amended. A motion to enable the Board to appoint a Constitution Revision Committee will be introduced after the approval of the budget.

The minutes of the Annual Meeting held May 20, 2018 were approved as presented.

President Zoe Valette gave the President's Report. The reports of officers and committees are included in the meeting packet.

On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Deb Wickman presented the slate for the Board of Trustees: Karen Friedel, Denise Hartsough, and Susan Moerdyk. She then presented the slate for the Nominating Committee: Joe Hampel and Gary Leadley. Both slates were elected.

Allan Hunt reported on the state of the Stewardship Campaign.

The Treasurer Sue Glenn presented the 2019-20 Budget on behalf of the Finance Committee. The budget was approved as presented.

President Zoe Valette presented the motion: The Board of Trustees recommends that the voting body of the congregation authorize the appointment of the Constitution Revision Committee. Barb Davis has agreed to serve as parliamentarian. Those interested in the committee may see Zoe Valette or Elizabeth Warner. The motion was approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:07 pm

Stephanie Measzros, Secretary

Minister's Report -- 2020

Dear People's people,

I write to you from the midst of pandemic. This spring, the COVID-19 virus and efforts to slow its spread has kept us separate physically from each other and taught us to be church working toward Beloved Community in radically different ways. We have figured out Zoom Cloud Meetings and now gather virtually for worship, meetings, chalice circles, book clubs, story times, and more. A team of People's people make sure everyone in the church who is interested, receives a check-in call weekly. There are so many cards being sent to People's people. People's people have generously contributed to the minister's discretionary fund to support members of our community who are financially impacted by the virus and shelter-at-home orders. Staff and volunteers now work from home while the church building is closed. This will be a season of church life that we won't forget. Thank you for the creativity, flexibility, and patience that you have brought to these challenging days.

The mission of this congregation is to become a beloved community embracing and serving our diverse world. It is your generosity with your time, talent, and money, that makes it possible for us to catch glimpses of Beloved Community. Over the past year, we have done some powerful work together in person and virtually to make our aspirations real and align our values with our actions.

We grow Beloved Community in our programs for children and youth. Over and over again, we hear from our children and teens that church is their safe space, the community where they can be who they really are. Kids who are bullied at school for being different are not bullied at People's Church. Teens who are exploring their gender identity often ask People's people to use a new pronoun or a new name first – and as we address them as they want us to address them, our children let us help them find their truth, knowing that we will love them however they identify. This has continued as some of our children and youth programming has moved online.

I have had the joy of working with the youth group this year. They are my teachers in how they create community. They welcome and support each other with such ease it almost seems like a reflex, inviting others into the circle, throwing dances

for the whole church, and planning meaningful worship. I know it isn't a reflex, it is a skill that they have learned in our community, taking some of what we have taught them, adding their own practices, and growing Beloved Community. Your generosity, whether it is teaching or volunteering in our religious education program or your financial support of the church, makes this possible.

Here, we believe that there is no such thing as other people's children – we care for children that we are not connected to by family or church affiliation. We do this in so many ways – tutoring at Lincoln, the work of ISAAC, and more. I want to tell you one powerful story about this.

Almost four years ago, we welcomed the Altyara family to Kalamazoo. They are refugees from Syria. Dozens of church folks and others, in partnership with Bethany Christian Services, worked to connect them with housing, jobs, healthcare, schooling, employment and everything else they needed to start a life here. The Altyaras are doing well and require very little from us, though we can take pride in their successes.

As we and other congregations worked to support refugee families, leaders realized we needed a way to better coordinate all the people trying to help and share the resources each group had discovered. The Kalamazoo Refugee Resource Collaborative was born. As this new organization got off the ground, People's Church served as its fiscal sponsor, which allowed it to receive a grant before it obtained nonprofit status. Now, the KRRC is also doing well and requires very little from us, though we can take pride in their successes. Last summer they held a summer school program for refugee children to provide academic and social support. This happened in our building. The KRRC recently received a grant from the Kalamazoo Community Foundation to support the second summer of this important program, which will go forward if it is safe to gather this summer. This took a lot of work by many people within and outside our congregation. People's Church acted at critical moments with administrative support and free classroom space. The board, treasurer and finance leadership said, "yes, we can make fiscal sponsorship happen," and then did the work to figure it out. The facilities and administration leadership said, "yes, people can use our space in the summer." Your generosity makes this possible.

In this season of physical separation, we are learning that we are more than our gathering space; we are more than our building. Over the past year, our green sanctuary leaders and other People's people have encouraged us make sure our building aligns with our values. They have asked us to directly face at the climate crisis and take steps to mitigate our personal and collective impact on the climate. We have had services about climate change and many chances to learn. Our green sanctuary leaders gathered information about innovative financing for solar panels that involves no upfront costs and the opportunity to purchase the panels in five years at a depreciated value. Your board signed a contract to make this happen last fall and we will have solar panels installed on the roof of the newer section of our building once it is safe to do so. These solar panels should provide about 40% of our electricity needs. That is amazing. The work continues. Green Sanctuary leaders will be asking us to join the Kalamazoo Climate Crisis Coalition when it is safe for us to gather for a congregational meeting. There are other exciting plans in the works to make our building and our lives more carbon neutral.

Because of the generosity of church members and friends and the priorities set by your leadership, all of our church employees now earn at least \$12 per hour for their work here – and all of them earn minimum fair compensation for our church size and location, as determined by the Unitarian Universalist Association. In this time of pandemic, People's Church is committed to paying church employees even if the closure of the building prevents them from working. You all should feel proud of this commitment to generosity and care for church employees in the midst of a pandemic beyond their control. I am especially grateful to our team of finance leaders who put together or application for the Payroll Protection Program, through which the federal government will extent the church a forgivable loan to cover two months of payroll and benefits costs.

You are generous. You take care of each other, this institution, and the world. I consider it one of the greatest gifts of my life that I get to do this work alongside you.

In these times when we are acutely aware of our interconnection and the fragility of the systems on which we depend, there are a few things I know for sure. Whatever happens, we will need other another. We will need each other's support. We will need each other's wisdom. We will need to borrow hope,

resilience, and persistence from one another on the days that our supplies are low.

Being People's Church is both a theological claim and a practical reality. This church exists because of generations who have built it to what it is, who have given their time, talent and money to this community, who have done the works of love which none of us can accomplish alone. It will continue to exist because each of us chooses to take on this mantle and carry it forward.

In these challenging days, we can feel proud of all that we have done in the 2019-2020 church year. I look ahead in this time of uncertainty, trusting that we will continue to be people of love, people of hope, and people of change. I trust that we will continue to grow the Beloved Community.

Take good care of yourselves. Take good care of each other.

-Rev. Rachel Lonberg
April 15, 2020

Annual Report to the Congregation
by Diane Melvin, Director of Religious Education
April 10, 2020

This has been the most unusual year of the nineteen years I've served as DRE at People's Church. The fall began in much the usual way with a great RE kickoff and a full slate of religious education activities. Our curriculum theme this year was Unitarian Universalism for our Kindergarten through 6th graders. Using our UU principles as a basis, they explored our UU values and learned about many significant UU's throughout history. The preschool children participated in Chalice Children where they explored our UU symbols, practices, values and our church home.

Our 7/8th grade class was participating in Our Whole Lives sexuality education class but that has ended due to the fact that the authors of that curriculum do not want it used in a Zoom format. Therefore we may pick up where we left off with that group when we are able to gather in person again ... perhaps in the fall.

The 9/10th graders were enjoying the Coming of Age class which was newly revised. Facilitators continue to meet weekly on Zoom with these youth to help guide them as they work to discern and articulate their credo statements. I have mailed 16 packets with their Coming of Age Journals and notes so they can continue to work on their faith statements while they are sheltered at home. We are in the process of figuring out the best way to have them proceed at this point. We are sad that this amazing program was interrupted with the COVID19 quarantine.

The 11/12th grade class completed the high school Our Whole Lives sexuality education program in the winter. They had just begun Living in UUville, which is a role play gaming curriculum prior to the quarantine; since this is a harder program to adapt to an online format, we haven't yet gone there. I had a 9-12th grade Youth Group Zoom meeting to help connect these youth and am in the process of figuring out how to best proceed with these youth.

Our Young Adult UU Conference in January was extremely successful with over 40 participants. It was well run with a solid planning team and excellent follow through by these young adults. It is heartwarming to me to see so many People's Church RE grads participating in this annual event as this was not the case for many years. I'm planning to set up a Young Adult Zoom session to help connect and support this age group during the global pandemic.

We currently have six Chalice Circles for adults meeting monthly and all of them are now up and running on Zoom so that folks can continue to meet during this time of being homebound. We also have a wide variety of other adult education and enrichment activities including book groups, discussion group, study group, Talking Pots cooking group and more ways to help folks connect with one another for spiritual growth, development and service. Most of these classes and groups have been moved to Zoom if they are able.

I continue to lead twice monthly Mindfulness Meditation classes which have now been occurring on Zoom. I have also added a monthly Lojong Study Group which is also meeting on Zoom now.

The Religious Education Committee has done a wonderful job helping to run a vibrant and healthy religious education program for all ages at People's Church. They manage many behind the scenes tasks as well as several popular programs such as the elementary sleepover and the ever popular monthly Specialty Classes. Currently they are working on setting up a pen pal program to help our children connect with one another while quarantined.

Our youth group organized an amazing all church dance in January for which there was widespread attendance and very positive responses. People's Church youth continue to be active on the Heartland Area Youth Steering Committee helping to organize youth conferences in our region. We have had youth attend the Midwest Youth Leadership school for each of the past three years and had another planning to attend this year. People's Church youth are renowned throughout the region and the nation as active and engaged leaders in Unitarian Universalism. As a congregation, we are nurturing and raising amazing young UU leaders in a world that is hungry for leadership with integrity.

In June of 2021, the Unitarian Universalist General Assembly is scheduled to be held in Milwaukee, WI. I am hoping to take a group of youth and adult sponsors to attend this annual meeting. We have fifteen people committed to attend so far. One challenge of these times of quarantine is missing out on all of the great fundraising plans the youth had organized for this spring. We will be somewhat behind in our trip fundraising efforts now.

Prior to the outbreak of COVID19, all was going very well with religious education opportunities at People's Church. Since this outbreak last month, everything has changed. We are working to adapt accordingly. We are trying to figure out the most essential needs at this time and meet them. We are working to offer comfort, support and connection in new and different ways to help folks cope with the rapidly changing landscape in both the larger world and in our own lives.

Currently I am working with Reverend Rachel to provide a story and meditation for the weekly Zoom church services as well as reaching out to provide pastoral care to families in need.

In times of crisis and change, our deepest values rise in importance and all that is unnecessary falls away. This is true in this time as well. We are cherishing our health, our families, friends and loved ones. All of us who have safe homes in which to shelter are incredibly blessed. Many of us are on the front lines working to keep people safe, healthy and fed. Many are staying home while working, raising the children, making masks and making do in such surreal times.

If ever there was a time to have an active religious community and healthy spiritual practices to help us cope with challenges, this is that time. May our church community provide a respite in the storm, a safe harbor to refill our coffers in times of tribulation and meaningful connections with one another to help buoy our spirits when they are flagging.

2020 TREASURER'S ANNUAL REPORT

This is turning out to be a very unusual year indeed. After two years of budget surplus we started 2019-20 in the same strong financial way. But when the coronavirus hit, things went South. As of the end of April, our revenues are 98 percent of budget, while our expenses are only 92 percent of budget, resulting in a \$25 thousand dollar operating surplus year to date. We still have a surplus in operating funds, but it is not clear if that will last thru June 30.

Collections – Our Second Sunday Special Collections did well again, resulting in about \$1,000 for each of the social justice organizations to which they were contributed during the year.

Fund Raising- Our fall Bazaar was so successful that we netted more than our total budget for Fund Raisers even though the Silent Auction had to be cancelled due to the coronavirus crisis.

Building Use Fees - Our building usage by outside groups held strong until the closing of the church in March. We have a good group of regular renters with others appearing occasionally.

Endowments – The Investment (nee Endowment) Committee initiated a number of changes during the year after being fully staffed and with new leadership. A significant change was implemented with an investment payout policy that is built upon market gains in the Church investment holdings, rather than a fixed percentage payout. The result was a transfer of about \$108 thousand in investment appreciation from 2019. We continue to rely upon Sanford Financial Services and Raymond James for investment services and advice.

Other - In March, we secured a \$41 thousand Payroll Protection Program loan from the Small Business Administration as part of the CARES Act from the Federal government. This loan will enable us to continue to pay our staff for two months and the loan will subsequently be forgiven, provided we spend at least 75 percent of the money on payroll. This should make it possible for us to experience the third year in a row with an operating budget surplus.

In addition, the real estate loan that financed the expansion of the Church building in 2011 is being extended. Given the current situation, the Board voted to extend the remaining \$200,000 balance on the same terms. This will give us the opportunity to adjust to whatever the future will bring without depending upon future revenues or liquidating our deflated investments. This places the Church under no additional obligations, but we will continue to pay interest monthly at 4.1 percent per annum (about \$700 per month).

Given all the uncertainties this spring, the Board decided not to recommend a new budget for 2020-21, but rather to roll over last year's budget on a month-to-month basis until the Church can once again have a "face to face" Annual Meeting with debate and discussion.

In summary, People's Church continues to be in very solid financial condition.

Submitted by Allan Hunt, Treasurer

Art Wall Annual Report, 2019-2020

Gay Walker

The Art Wall Committee consists of two groups: **Exhibitions** and **Receptions**

Exhibitions: The Art Wall space is organized, curated, managed, and hung by Gay Walker and David Smallcombe, with assistance from others.

Receptions: Lois Loeffler has coordinated receptions with her committee. An artist reception is scheduled after church on a Sunday during the exhibit period (dates chosen when there is no conflict with other events). There is a budget of \$40 per reception to purchase simple refreshments. Committee members plan, purchase food, set-up, and clean up for each event.

Purpose: To engage the congregation and others who use the Commons, with a variety of interesting and stimulating art exhibits in different mediums. The work may be for sale. The committee looks for original work from professionals, skilled amateurs, and emerging artists, which can be hung on the wall or stand on the floor. When possible, priority is given to People's members and their friends. The committee is always open to suggestions and requests.

Schedule for 2019-2020 (each exhibit hangs for two months, 6 exhibits a year)

September/October 2019

Accidental Drawings by Michael Dunn, poetry for each piece by local poets and Marsha Meyer
Reception included a poetry reading as artwork was projected on large screen.

November/December 2019

Susanne Siegel Paintings, also available during Holiday Sale

January/February 2020

Syrian Refugee Art collected by Tom Holmes

Reception included Middle Eastern food and Powerpoint by Tom about Parts Work shown in some of the artwork.

March/April 2020

Photosynthesis exhibit of works by 20 Kalamazoo artists collected by Linda Rzoska

Pandemic closed the church in March, with exhibits scheduled when church reopens

May-August

Dave Curl, *Finale*, photographs for a silent bid auction with all proceeds going to the church

September/October

Tamara Hirzel, nature prints

November/December

Collage, Collaborative Exhibit with Sally Padley and others
also available during Holiday Sale

Submitted May 2, 2020

Report of the Bylaws Committee

May 3, 2020

The Bylaws Committee is composed of nine members: Barb Davis, Robert Hardin, Shari Harris, Denise Hartsough, Carolyn Heineman, Brian Lewis, Marj Lightner, Mary Kate Webster, and Diane Worden.

The committee has been meeting as a whole at least once and usually twice a month since July, as well as working in small groups at other times. Since March, we have been meeting via Zoom. The committee members have focused on honoring everyone's individual opinions on the various topics as we strive toward consensus in updating and revising each article of the People's Church Bylaws, which was last done in 2010. A draft of the committee's revisions will be presented to the congregation in various ways for their input, most likely in the fall of 2020, and a final draft will then be offered for a ratification vote by the congregation.

Submitted by Shari Harris, Chair

**People's Church
Finance Committee Annual Report
2019-20**

The primary area of work of the Finance Committee in the Fall of 2019 was the proposal of Solar Panels for the building. The Building & Grounds Committee was approached by Helios Solar Panels, a local contractor. Helios was offering a program that both parties would benefit from. People's Church would see a reduction of about 40% of the electric costs and the opportunity to purchase the system at a future date at a depreciation amount, and Helios would benefit from a federal tax credit for energy related investments. Several months of communications and discussion resulted in the BOT signing a contract with Helios Solar Panels to install, service, and monitor the performance of the system. The installation is scheduled for early Spring 2020.

The annual Holiday Bazaar in November 2019 resulted in record attendance and record income for People's Church. People's Church, after all expenses paid netted about \$19,000.

The new format of presentation of the Church financial statements was adopted by the BOT and has made the understanding and decision making process much less confusing as was the goal. Goal achieved.

Transfers from the endowment funds that were formerly done at the end of the fiscal year has resulted in better and clearer understanding of our income stream. However, the Finance Committee continues to struggle to maintain the current level of pledges and the hopes of increasing income has been daunting. The general economy has improved however many of People's church contributors have difficulty in meeting pledged amounts or have not pledged or given on a regular basis.

Reserve funds was again a widely discussed topic and the committee continues work on a system for estimation, planning, and budgeting. A proposal is currently before the BOT for accessing investment income.

Then came Covid19 and the financial impact to People's Church has been significant. People's Church immediately took advantage of the PPP (Payroll Protection Program) and was award approximately \$40,000 which will be sufficient for fiscal year 2019-20.

The Finance Committee believes that People's Church is still on a strong financial foundation however, the magnitude and the uncertainty of the Covid19 pandemic could seriously impact People's Church if the current situation is prolonged.

John R. Steele, Chair
Finance Committee

Green Sanctuary Committee

Annual Report 2019-2020

Members active during year: Allan Hunt, Bob Swicker, Connie Ferguson, Cybelle Shattuck, Gary Heckman, Marj Lightner, Sue Salvat, Tom Hackley **Others helping with projects:** Bob Friedel (Styrofoam recycling), Gary Leadley, Donna McClurkan (Net-Zero task force), Rachel Bair (KVCC Food Innovation Center tour)

Chairperson: The Committee does not have formal officers; we all share responsibility for the committee.

- Main contact for Church, meeting facilitator: Connie Ferguson
- Note taker, publicity: Cybelle Shattuck, assisted by Allan Hunt
- Net-Zero project: Tom Hackley, Gary Heckman, Cybelle Shattuck, Allan Hunt

Purpose of the Committee:

The Green Sanctuary Committee encourages a sustainable life style for People's Church members as individuals and as a faith community.

Accomplishments for the 2019-20 Year:

- Wrote Green Spot articles for most monthly issues of *News & Views*; Tom Hackley started a weekly Climate Corner in the "Friday Flash" emails.
- Held a July BBQ and grounds clean-up work party. (Thanks go to grill-master Bob Friedel.)
- Offered tour of KVCC's Food Innovation Center led by Rachel Bair.
- Cancelled October roadside cleanup on 10th St. due to lack of trash; hope to schedule one this spring.
- Continued quarterly collection of Styrofoam to be delivered to Cooper Twp. on their collection days.
- With Net-Zero Task Force, arranged for installation of solar panels on church addition, developed implementation plan for Net-Zero.
- Assisted with planning and presentation of Nov. 17 Sunday service on climate change.
- Co-sponsored Bronson Park 2020 Earth Day Festival planned for April 18, 2020. May be rescheduled.
- Participated in Hope for Creation (Cybelle Shattuck).
- Presented an environmental forum series after church on Jan. 26 and Feb. 23; exploring holding event originally scheduled for March 22 online and possibly adding additional events.
- Working with Aesthetics Committee on Land Management Plan map display.
- Working with Memorial Garden volunteers on potential accessible path and on invasive species.
- Recommended that People's Church join the Kalamazoo Climate Crisis Coalition. To be voted on at Annual Meeting.

Future Plans: (UUA's Green Sanctuary program is based on activities in four areas: worship and celebration, education, environmental justice and sustainable living.)

- Participate in worship as opportunities arise. (worship)
- Write monthly Green Spot and weekly Climate Corner articles. (education)
- Host speakers, films or other events during the year focusing on environmental themes. (education)
- Work with community organizations on environmental issues. (environmental justice)
- Monitor implementation of land management plan. (sustainable living)
- Conduct fall and spring roadside cleanups on 10th St., as needed. (sustainable living)
- Work to adjust our practices to minimize use of materials and energy and create less pollution and waste. (sustainable living)

INVESTMENT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT - 2020

HIGHLIGHTS:

The name of the “ Endowment Committee” was changed to the “Investment Committee”, to more accurately reflect its duties and responsibilities, since the committee manages the Reserve Fund, Endowments and the Palmer Unrestricted Fund (which is not strictly an endowment).

As of 2020 the members of the committee are Greg Feldmeier (chair), Jeff VanderStraaten, and Russ Curcuru.

All Funds are invested through Sanford Financial Services by Scott Williams.

The Committee recommended to the Board of Trustees, and the Board approved that the total of the Endowment Funds and the Palmer Fund be maintained at \$500,000. Any excess above that would be available for distribution at the end of the calendar year. When future gifts or bequests are received, the holdings will be increased by the amount bequeathed.

Distributions from all investments shall be made at the end of the calendar year, so that the money may be included in the next year’s budget or otherwise allocated by the Board of Trustees

RESERVE FUND:

“For emergencies and unanticipated improvement needs, to be invested to preserve the real purchasing power of the fund.” As per People’s Church By-laws

It was recommended by the committee and approved by the Board, to maintain the fund at \$50,000 and that any excess be moved to the Palmer Fund.

The fund is being held in short term, interest-bearing securities, thus maintaining the real purchasing power of the fund.

Balance as of 12/31/2019 : \$81,646

Moved to Money Market Fund for distribution by the Board: \$31,134

Current value as of 4/1/2020: \$49,082

ENDOWMENT FUNDS:

1. PERPETUAL PLEDGE FUND:

“Funds that have been given or bequeathed with the express purpose of providing a permanent annual financial pledge to support People’s Church, with an annual payout of 5%.” As per People’s Church By-laws

Balance as of 12/31/2019: \$165,096

2019 5% distribution: \$8,254

2. COMMUNITY SERVICE AND OUTREACH FUND:

“Funds that shall only be used to further the Church’s mission of supporting individual service to and within the larger community.” As per People’s Church By-laws

Balance as of 12/31/2019: \$67,539

2019 5% distribution: \$3,377

3. MEMORIAL FUNDS:

“Funds that are given to the Church in memory of others, but not with the intent of creating a perpetual pledge. This shall include donations to the Memorial Garden Fund.”
As per People’s Church By-laws

Balance as of 12/31/2019: \$17,205

2019 5% distribution: \$860

PALMER UNRESTRICTED FUND:

“May be used for any purpose to further the work of the Church.” As per People’s Church By-laws

Balance as of 12/31/2019: \$312,874

2019 5% distribution: \$15,674

(by special action of the Annual Meeting, 2018)

NOTE:

We are holding \$108,884 in cash (Money Market Funds) for determination of its distribution by the Board.

It is the unanimous recommendation of the Investment Committee and the Treasurer that the Board apply those monies to pay down the loan on the addition, that is now approximately \$200,000

Total of all holdings after the \$108,884 distribution: \$605,215

On a very positive note, we have already received \$125,000 in gifts for the Endowment Funds this year (Not accounted for in this report). Therefore, next year the base for the Endowment Funds and the Palmer Fund will be increased from \$500,000 to \$625,000!

Library Committee

Annual Report 2019-2020

The Library Committee of People's Church, comprised of Kay Spade, Susan Stafford, Nancy Stern, Cory Zann, and chairperson Lois Loeffler maintains and guides the church's library collection. The committee inspects donated books and magazines and retains those which are deemed suitable for the church library, based on the library's selection policy which is displayed above the library's computer. New adult titles, often recommended in the UUA Bookstore website, are discussed and sometimes examined by committee members before purchase. All library books, both RE (children's) and Main Library (adult) titles are catalogued in LibraryThing, a free online service.

Development of the library collection will continue to include new adult non-fiction titles on topics of interest, according to the selection policy. Discussions about donations to the magazine take/leave area and its upkeep are ongoing. A procedure to address communication with church members and friends and encourage timely return of checked-out books continues to be discussed and tweaked.

Specific goals for 2020-2021 include making a concerted effort to withdraw books that are outdated, irrelevant, or in poor condition and then initiating an inventory of adult library books. Judicious replacement of lost/ruined books will follow. Protecting the library's hardbacks by covering the dust jackets with plastic covers will continue and accelerate. Instructive signs near the library area will be developed and placed. Instructions for checking out and returning books will appear in a Library Corner column in the church newsletter as well as other topics, in addition to the further highlighting of new or seasonal titles. Marketing strategies will be developed in order to make the library collection more accessible, relevant and appealing to church friends and members, thus boosting circulation of library materials.

***draft* Membership Connections Committee**

Annual Report

September 2019 - April 2020

Committee members: Ann Feldmeier, Rick Johnson, Lois Loeffler, Brian Schneeberger, Julie Schneeberger, Marti Peters-Sparling and Susan Stafford.
Staff Liaison: Chris Schleuder

Committee Responsibilities and Activities

Information and Welcome Desk:

Volunteers and committee members staff the Visitor Desk in the entry and the upstairs Information Desk volunteers provide a welcoming smile, name-tags for visitors and any other information needed. Completion of the visitor information white card is encouraged.

Volunteers include new faces as well as experienced people: Sharon Caron, Connie Ferguson, Linda Gentry-Bennett, Kay Spade, Karen Tinklenberg, Sharon Harris, Linda Coppens, Cory Zann, Sandy Steele, Brian Schneeberger, Lori Rupe and Lois Loeffler.

The use of an online only volunteer sign-up process to improve communication was continued and improved this year.

xx adult visitors counted by desk staff. This may include some double-counting between the two desks – entry and upstairs.

xx visitors completed information cards. This information is entered onto the Visitor Information Data sheet. If the visitor so indicates, a member of the committee emails or calls with an invitation to attend an Orientation event.

Desk staff also recorded providing assistance to **xx** others; probably underestimated.

Commons Area Information

Brochures and pamphlets were ordered and stocked for the visitor/ information desks and the information display racks (new plexiglas case improves visibility and appearance).

Orientation and Membership Events

Three Orientation events were planned and presented by committee members with assistance from Rev. Rachel and representatives from the Board, RE & Stewardship. The number of people invited has expanded with suggestions from Reverend Rachel and identification of possible families from RE staff. Event evaluations have been positive.

Attendance: **XX**

Three Bond of Union Signing and Welcoming New Members ceremonies events were planned and presented. New Members: **XX**

First Friends

Committee members contact (email) new members and offer the opportunity to be paired with long-time members who have volunteered to serve as mentors, “First Friends”. The goal is to form a relationship; with the First Friend making introductions, answering questions, describing the many activities available and invitations to attend some of the PC events. All new members were contacted.

Committee Fair

Members attended and presented information about the responsibilities and activities of the committee. Volunteer opportunities were explained.

Connection offerings/support of

Chalice Circles

- Completion of a one-time training for Chalice Circle facilitators by Christina Cusumano, Diane Melvin and Pat Nelson. Ongoing support sessions were planned for the facilitators.
- Chalice Circles are continuing via Zoom.
- A 6th Circle was started this Spring and a 7th is projected for the Fall.

Book Clubs

- The afternoon club continues via Zoom. It may start adding members in the Fall.
- The evening book club, new this church year, now has 8 regular participants and is also continuing with Zoom. It plans to publicize for new members in the future.

Extended Families/Kinship - one group continues to stay in touch, with novel methods of communicating at this time.

Discussion Group- continues via Zoom the 1st and 3rd Saturdays.

Family Events

Potlucks

- Scheduled the year's five potlucks and coordinated with People's Church committees who hosted.
- Gluten-free table and better labeling of foods for people with allergies has been implemented.

Holiday Party

- The December activity was not well attended and will not be repeated in 2020.

Gift Collection

- There was good participation for the collection of Lincoln School gifts for the children's "store". Fleece blankets for car seats were also made for Bronson's Children's Hospital.

2020-2021 Projects:

- Adding a short presentation about membership with the use of Orientation videos, Bond of Union statement and a UUA Assembly delegates explanation within the OWL classes for the teens (Brian Lewis).
- Future Family Events (in place of the Holiday Party) have been discussed and will be planned with increased coordination with other PC groups.
- Continue to increase numbers of people who are aware of and who attend Orientation Events.
- Recruitment of new committee members.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Stafford, Membership / Connections Committee Secretary



Catherine Niessink Tue, May 12, 11:09 AM (5 days ago)

to office

Chris - Here is the Memorial Garden Report if you want it - Catherine

Memorial Garden Committee Annual Report 2019-2020

The Memorial Garden Committee is tasked with the upkeep of and decisions about the garden. Since we have planted a lot of trees in the past few years we are noticing that the garden is becoming rather 'full' of trees. So we have decided that we cannot put in any more trees. Since we have no more space in the garden we are suggesting that families put a plaque on the Memorial Walls or possibly we can find places for benches. If someone wishes to put a plaque on the wall they should contact the church administrator.

Marj Lightner has organized all of our records in one place, so they are more immediately accessible. We also were fortunate to have members of the Green Sanctuary, as part of their planned work, ask Julia and Maya Kirkwood to map the trees on the church grounds, including all of the trees present in the Memorial Garden. This will assist us in future planning. The Green Sanctuary committee is working on a plan (with input from the Memorial Garden Committee and Building & Grounds) to install a sign which will contain the map and tree lists.

Last summer we contacted the local tri-county invasives working group (CISMA) and they treated the black swallowwort that is in the Garden last summer. This will be an ongoing issue for several years, as swallowwort is very difficult to eradicate. We hired a local man, Randy Counterman of Native Landscapes, who was recommended by the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy, to remove the buckthorn, autumn olive and other invasives in various areas in the garden. He has cut back a lot of the buckthorn, autumn olive, and so forth, and painted the stumps with herbicide. He then came back and did that again, just to make sure that the shrubs had been killed. He has been working all summer and thru the winter and is now in the process of chipping the larger cuttings and burning (with permit from Oshtemo since he is licensed to work with fires) the smaller pieces.

We met each Tuesday morning during the spring, summer and fall and

worked on various projects in the garden and some of us assisted the Building & Grounds work around the church grounds. We kept an eye on all of the trees we planted in the last couple of years to see if they needed watering.

As well as working on weeding the mound in the memorial garden, some of us helped weed the beds in front of and back of the church, and helped plant annuals to supplement the perennials we had planted in previous years. We helped the Building & Grounds committee with the front planting maintenance and the labyrinth upkeep. The Building and Grounds Committee will be taking care of most of the mowing in the garden this year.

If you want to join us, we work every Tuesday morning on some aspect of the garden or the grounds—at least when the weather is good. Otherwise, we work inside with the Building & Grounds Group.

We'd love to have you.

Members: Jean Bright, Andrea Huff, Rick Johnson, Marj Lightner & Catherine Niessink, Chair

Submitted by Catherine Niessink

Nominating Committee Annual Report 2019-2020

The Nominating Committee for the 2019-2020 church year consisted of Sonja Dean, Joe Hampel, Gary Leadley, Roger Loeffler, Don Miller (Board Representative), Tim Sparling, and Deb Wickman.

The nominating committee developed a slate of candidates for the People's Church Board of Trustees and for the Nominating Committee for the upcoming church year. The committee followed the procedures as outlined in the church bylaws and candidates were presented to the congregation through published photos and biographies.

Our Board nominees are Daniel Bair, Donna McClurkan, and Marti Peters-Sparling. We thank them for their willingness to serve on our church board.

Our Nominating Committee nominees are Patrick Murray and Pat Van Slambrouck.

Pending election of new members at 2020 Annual Meeting, the Nominating Committee for the 2020-2021 church year will be composed of Sonja Dean (2021), Tim Sparling (2021), Joe Hampel (2022), Gary Leadley (2022), Patrick Murray (2023), Pat Van Slambrouck (2023), and a past Board of Trustees member who will be appointed by the Board of Trustees.

Roger Loeffler, Don Miller, and Deb Wickman have completed their Nominating Committee Service.

We thank this year's committee for its successful work.

We appreciate the opportunity to serve People's Church and our fellow members.

Sincerely,

Deb Wickman, for the Nominating Committee

Social Justice Coordinating Committee

Annual Report 2019-2020

Committee Members: Rochelle Habeck-Hunt, Rick Johnson, Ann Feldmeier (chair), Nicky Leigh, Donna Ross and Julie Schneeburger

The Social Justice Coordinating Committee's (SJCC) purpose is to identify to the entire congregation and the community that social justice activities are a vital aspect of our Church life and to provide a social justice structure and process for members of the congregation to use in creating and joining community service and social service projects. Additionally, to provide an avenue for new members, who bring to People's Church an interest in social problems, the opportunity for participation within the church in social justice activities.

The Social Justice Coordinating Committee (SJCC) has been involved with a variety of community service and social action activities over the course of the past church year.

Second Sunday Special Collections:

Non-profit organizations that received contributions from People's People this year:

RECIPIENT ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT
Lincoln School	\$1,295
Douglas Community Association	\$1,200
Kalamazoo Climate Crisis Coalition	\$1,169
Ministry with Community	
Open Doors	\$1,119
UUA	\$1,496
Keystone Vets Transitional Housing	\$1,013
YMCA and YWCA	unknowable
Community Organizations for Coronavirus Response	unknowable
Food Providers for Coronavirus Response	unknowable

To complete the 2019-2020 Special Collections, there will be a June collection for organizations who provide food assistance to our community.

The SJCC usually sponsors two special food collections for Loaves and Fishes as well as collection boxes in the foyer. This year we had one collection in January but had to cancel the June collection due to the coronavirus closure of the church building and suspension of services in the church. Personal care items are collected for Ministry with Community, baby blankets for Bronson Hospital newborns to go home with, as well as Christmas gifts for Lincoln students to choose and give to their family members.

SJCC Church Service:

The SJCC initiated and planned with Rev. Rachel a third annual social justice themed church service that took place on January 19th. The name and theme of the service was *I am Willing*. Using Bryan Stevenson's Four Steps to Change the World: 1. Get close in proximity to the issues in order to understand the problem, 2. Change the Narrative – perspectives need to evolve in order to create freedom, 3. Stay hopeful – hopelessness is the enemy of justice, and 4. Be willing to do uncomfortable things. Small group conversations were held with these questions guiding the conversation: 1. How are you getting close to people and allowing them to get close to you? 2. How are you changing the narratives you carry? 3. How are you staying hopeful? Songs were social justice oriented; *I am Willing by Holly Near* and *Everybody In* by Peter Mayer. The SJCC plans to continue sponsoring and planning a social justice themed service each church year.

Events, Initiatives and Partnerships this church year:

Housing Summer Enrichment Program for Refugee children: The Kalamazoo Refugee Resource Collaborative needed a place to hold its pilot summer enrichment program and People's Church agreed to host the program over the summer. The generosity of the church made it possible to run this much needed pilot program.

Initiated a plan to have monitors placed in the church entryway and foyer: after Board action and policy review and compliance this project was able to move forward and the monitors were purchased by a church donor and mounted by members of the Building and Grounds Committee.

Hosted a Strategy Planning Meeting/Session inspired by the WOW results that indicated that social justice was a primary value of our congregation. The title of the session was "Giving Life to the Shape of Justice". Approximately fifteen church members attended the planning session.

We planned and hosted a family-oriented Holiday Party in partnership with the Membership/Connections Committee. The activities offered at the party included holiday singing, crafts, cookie decorating, story-telling, bingo, and blanket making. Members of the congregation were asked to donate a gift or gifts for children and/or adults for Lincoln School students who will select gifts for their family members. Attendance was very low this year and the committee has decided that we will probably not hold this event next year.

Made efforts to continue our new partnership with Open Doors. Volunteers have expressed interest in mentoring and GED tutoring. Nicky Leigh has continued to work with the Literacy Council to facilitate training at some point for volunteer GED tutors.

Updated the Social Justice at People's Church brochure and the Kiosk

Update from Committee's reporting to SJCC:

Lincoln School Project: The People's Church partnership with the Lincoln School Project continues our volunteer involvement in mentoring and reading programs under the guidance of Jeme Baker. People's Church continues to do this project in partnership with Kalamazoo Communities in Schools. Seven members of People's Church have been involved in a variety of mentoring roles this school year. The congregation contributed \$1,295 at the September special collection. Additionally, gifts were collected before Christmas for Lincoln students to select to give to their family members for Christmas.

ISAAC: Our church continues to support ISAAC social action and fundraising activities through the ISAAC

CORE team. Church membership dues for ISAAC of \$1,000 are allocated from the SJCC budget annually. Many People's Church members attended ISAAC's Issues Convention on October 29th and along with the other attendees (200) chose Anti-Racism and Gun Violence as ISAAC's focus for the next two years along with Affordable Housing and Group Violence Intervention. Committees working on these issues continue to meet via Zoom video conferences during the "Stay at Home" Coronavirus measures.

Center for Transformation: People's members continue to participate in the weekly community re-entry meetings with parolees through the Center for Transformation and develop helping relationships with the parolees.

Refugee Resettlement: Launched in the spring of 2016, People's Church organized a Refugee Resettlement Committee with nine Core Team Leaders and an additional 20+ People's people along with volunteers from the community to resettle a Syrian refugee family that arrived in June. We co-sponsored the Altyara family of 7 from Homs, Syria, with Bethany Christian Services. Nearly \$10,000 was donated to help with expenses of resettling the family. After nearly four years the resettlement team is pleased to report that the family is making great progress in their new life in America.

Other social action and community service programs at People's include Green Sanctuary, working for environmental justice, ARAOMC (Anti-Racism Anti-Oppression Multicultural Committee) now known as Dismantling Racism at People's Church, and monthly meal contributions to homeless shelters by Talking Pots.

Future Goals:

The committee looks forward to working with all pertinent church committees to plan together for implementing the congregation's WOW priorities focusing on social justice.

We also want to align some of our activities with UUA, such as Climate Justice Month.

Report of Sunday Services Committee, May 3, 2020

The Sunday Services Committee had a successful year. Our service support services went smoothly, both in the summer and the regular church year. We successfully adapted to zoom services.

Members this year were Tim Bartik (Chair), Beth Bullmer, Laura MacLellan,, Chris Measzros, Julie Schneeberger, Cybelle Shattuck, Bob Davis and Sally Padley.

Cylise Snow stepped off the committee this year. Julie Schneeberger will be stepping off the committee after this year. We greatly appreciate Cylise and Julie's service.

We added Becki Moffett-Moore as a member mid-year. The virus and the move to zoom service prevented her from doing job-shadowing and starting to be a service moderator. She will begin this summer.

We would prefer to have the committee at 9 members. This implies the need to recruit at least one additional member next year. In addition, given normal turnover in committee members, we may need to recruit 2 or 3 additional members next year.

As of this writing, we have almost finished setting up the schedule for summer services. Our theme is "We're All in This Together", which reflects the current pandemic, the climate crisis, and our 7th principle. As in past summers, the summer theme is designed to provide some unifying theme to the summer while also being broad enough to incorporate many perspectives from presenters.

Report submitted by Tim Bartik, Sunday Services Committee chair