



1758 North Tenth St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49009
Phone: 269-375-3262
Fax: 269-375-3270

office@peopleschurch.net

Inside this issue:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| From the Minister | 2 |
| Bazaar Announcement | 3 |
| In Person Service Information | 3 |
| SJCC Updates | 4 |
| Green Spot | 5 |
| Inquirer's Series | 6 |
| Congregational Conversation #3 | 6 |
| Library Corner | 7 |
| Religious Education | 8 |
| Calendar | 11 |



People's Church

A Member Congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association

Volume 83, Issue 12

August 2022

Sunday Services—10:45 a.m.

For information on attending in-person services, please see page 3. The Zoom link for People's Church services is: <https://uuma.zoom.us/j/5527667326>

By phone: 1-646-876-9923, ID: 552 766 7326

Summer Services

This year, as we emerge from two years of pandemic, our broad theme for summer services is "Reclaiming, Reweaving, Redefining, Recovering, Rebuilding." People's People will speak on this theme in a variety of ways.



Each service will include a ten-minute reflection from a speaker followed by group discussion. This summer, our services will be multiplatform, taking place both over Zoom and in the Commons. We will be experimenting with ways to facilitate discussion in a mixed group.

Summer services began June 19 and are held in the Commons and over Zoom at 10:45am.

Our summer schedule is as follows:

- August 7: Rick Johnson
- August 14: Gordon Bolar
- August 21: Rachel Lonberg
- August 28: Donna McClurkan
- September 4: Savannah Ramsey

Celebrating Denise Valette

August 7, following the service, at the main entrance to the church

After 16 years of loyal service as our church custodian, Denise Valette has resigned. She has found fulltime work doing what she loves best, caring for infants. We will have cupcakes, lemonade, and a box for cards. Please come!

You are also welcome to send cards to the church for Denise.



From the Minister



Dear ones,
Summer greetings to you all!
I write this newsletter
column while on study leave.
Study leave is work time
when I am released from
'regular' work to study, plan,
and learn. I always try to
take at least two weeks of
study leave every summer,

to start to pull plans together for the coming
year.

While my study leave was interrupted this year
by an unexpected daycare closure, I have found
some time to read. Here is my summer work
reading list so far:

*Incantations for Rest: Poems, Meditations, and Other
Magic* by Atena O. Danner and *Shelter in This
Place: Meditations on 2020*, edited by Meg Riley.

Every year, the Unitarian Universalist
Association publishes a new entry in the InSpirit
series. These are usually small books of poems
and meditations. These are the entries for the
last two years. You will be hearing words from
these books in upcoming services.

*Take What You Need: Life Lessons After Losing
Everything* by Jen Crow. This is a memoir by a
UU minister friend of mine who lost (nearly)
everything in a house fire. It's a powerful book
about living through loss.

*Transforming Conflict: The Blessings of
Congregational Turmoil* by Terasa Cooley. This
book offers advice and strategy about engaging
conflict in healthy and life-giving ways. A lot of it
was review from other sources (I have done a
lot of learning about conflict.) but it was put
together in a good way.

An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States

by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz. This book taught me a
lot and is helping me rethink the American history
that I have been taught.

*Ancient Stories for Modern Times: 50 Short Wisdom
Tales for All Ages* retold by Faye Mogensen. I'm
always looking for good folktales and other good
wisdom stories for inclusion in Sunday services.
There are some gems in this collection.

Perhaps you're looking for fiction to read this
summer? Here are some of my favorite fiction
that I've read for pleasure in 2022:

Dread Nation by Justina Ireland. The
reconstruction era of US history, but with
zombies.

Crossroads by Jonathan Franzen. The story of a
pastor and his family in suburban Chicago in the
1970s.

The Overstory by Richard Powers. An epic novel of
interlocking narratives about people and trees.

Rosaline Palmer Takes the Cake and *A Lady for a
Duke* by Alexis Hall. Romance novels have been
one of my sources of pleasure in recent years – I
pick them up when I need to read a book with a
happy ending. Hall is my favorite romance writer
right now. The first book takes place at a lightly
fictionalized *Great British Bake Off*; the second is a
Regency era romance with a transgender heroine.
Horse by Geraldine Brooks. Another novel with
interlocking narratives in the antebellum south
and the modern day, centered on a horse and
paintings of the horse.

The Future Home of the Living God by Louise
Erdrich. A dystopian story about a fertility crisis
told from the perspective of a Native young adult
who is pregnant when the book begins.

Happy reading, everyone!
Rachel

Fine Art Sale & Holiday Bazaar Returning!

People's Church Fine Art Sale & Holiday Bazaar Returns November 19th!

On **Saturday, November 19th from 9:00 to 3:00** – following COVID guidelines in force at that time – we will resume our signature event inside the church building. Please save the date and tell all your friends, neighbors, and family. We expect a wonderful variety of more than 20 popular and unique local artists and vendors.

With your help, we will also feature a bigger than ever selection of People's Specialties foods and handmade goods. Watch for opportunities to sign up for pasta making sessions with Bob Friedel and baking workshops with Martha Beverly to make her secret Swedish Limpa bread.



More workshops and more details to follow. Please take advantage of all the fresh produce now to make jams, salsas, and such, which always sell out. If you are a crafter, please consider making items to donate for our handmade goods tables. Signups for providing baked goods, frozen entrees and volunteer jobs will be coming in early fall. There will be no café or white elephant this year, to provide more space and social distancing; masks expected.



Information about Attending Sunday Services in Person

People's Church is now offering in-person attendance at Sunday services. We are becoming a church that connects on Sundays in multiple ways—and we know some People's people watch services later in the week on YouTube.

What can you expect if you attend services in-person?

If you are planning to come, but develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19, please stay home and participate in the service via Zoom. When you enter the church building, you will be greeted by health screeners, who will remind you that we expect people to be masked for their whole time in the church building, be as vaccinated as it is possible to be, have no symptoms consistent with COVID-19, and tell the church if you develop COVID-19 within three days after attending. **(If you would like to volunteer as a health screener/greeter (NO MEDICAL EXPERIENCE NEEDED!), please reach out to Marti Peters-Sparling at martijpeters@yahoo.com.)**



So far, this process has gone well, with people remaining well-masked for the duration of their time in the building and no known COVID exposures. Thank you to everyone for your care for this community, your flexibility, and patience as we find new ways to be together.



"Charlie's P.L.A.C.E." - Pursuing Leadership and Community Engagement – is the recipient of a financial award from our Community Service and Outreach endowed fund.

Mr. Charles Parker directs the work and has been a guiding light for Kalamazoo's youth on the Northside for the past 50 years. As a young man, Coach Parker discovered the redemptive powers of athletics and offered these activities as an avenue of success for youth needing guidance and direction in life. He initiated programs at Lincoln School, through the greater Kalamazoo YMCA, including parent memberships to center these activities in the life of the whole family; founded the Kalamazoo Black Achievers Program; and coached a multitude of sports in the Kalamazoo Public Schools. His teaching and coaching environment has always stressed fair play, humility, leadership, and a sense of community pride.



In 2013, with the help of his large family, Parker created Charlie's PLACE to help preserve and expand Parker's many sport, academic and social youth activities. With the eventual goal of having a physical space of its own, these programs are held at various community locations, such as the

Douglas Community Center. Some of these current offerings are thriving all-age boys' and girls' basketball leagues, a judo self-defense association, a popular annual Mother Son Dance, a safe Halloween event, and a series of classes offering pre-college or basic skills courses. All this impressive work is done by volunteers (except paid referees), who consider it a privilege to be part of this civic-minded association. Expenses are funded by donations.



Charles Parker has another goal in his efforts to uplift young people - to stimulate parental involvement in the lives of their children (or grandchildren). Gym bleachers filled with enthusiastic family members cheering encouragement to their children constitute a successful event to Charles – not who wins the game. It is the support and pride that parents feel and display that matters so much to him.

Our financial help is appreciated because it bonds together our common desire to benefit our community's children. For that reason, Mr. Parker is especially grateful for our gift. We would be welcome to attend an upcoming lively basketball game at the Douglas Community Center, anytime this summer! Opportunities to volunteer and donate personally to the important work of Charlie's

PLACE can be found at their website

www.kzoocharliesplace.com .

The Community Service and Outreach Fund was established by an endowment of now deceased members Dr. George and Virginia Hoeksema to further the church's mission by supporting individual and collective service and social responsibility efforts in the broader community.



Green Spot—Bike and Build



On July 3rd we hosted folks from [Bike and Build](#)! Twenty young adults joined this group at a variety of life stages: on break from school, in between jobs, or just for an adventure as they decide what comes next.



They got started early on the 4th heading to South Bend after bike safety checks, a daily route review, and a group huddle and cheer. Their joy-filled spirits and team-minded energy was inspiring with everyone sharing in the tasks to keep them moving forward, literally.



Starting in Pennsylvania, they are biking across the northern part of the U.S. to raise awareness about the lack of affordable housing, stopping a bit longer in some communities to join work projects with local housing-focused organizations in their communities. After biking in the heat all day, they were so grateful for all the couches and spaces available for resting and of course, the showers!

A hearty meal cooked, prepared, purchased, and/or provided by the generosity of our church members started the evening off well. Several of us ate with the group and enjoyed their presentation about the mission and work of the Bike and Build program that highlighted what they've learned along with the excitement and exhaustion of such a journey.

Follow the group on their blog:
Nus2022.wixsite.com/blog



Inquirers Series

Sundays 12:30-1:30pm, begins June 5 with sessions held every other week through September



Visitors, newcomers, members, and anyone who wants more information about People's Church are invited to participate in the Inquirers Series. The Inquirers Series meets at

12:30pm on Sundays outside, under the manta ray tent on the east side of the church building, weather permitting. (Rain location: Room 19) A light lunch will be provided and childcare is available with one week's notice. The Inquirers series is nine conversations that offer a general introduction to our congregation and Unitarian Universalism. Each session is stand-alone; you are welcome to participate in as many as you're able to attend and interested in. Here are the sessions:

- August 14: Tour of Building and Grounds
- August 28: Small Group Connections
- September 14: Pastoral Care and Chalice Circles
- September 28: Membership 101

For more information about this class, or to request childcare, please contact Rev. Rachel at minister@peopleschurch.net or 269-389-9721. It is helpful for our lunch planning if you register for the sessions that you plan to attend here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/508054BA9AC22A13-inquirers> or by contacting Rev. Rachel.

Discussion Group on Vacation

An organizational meeting is planned for the 3rd Saturday in September (9/17), 10:30 - 12:00 p.m. Everyone welcome!

If you would like more information, contact Pat Nelson (patnelson348@gmail.com or 269-716-32623). And/or check the September newsletter.



Congregational Conversation #3

In person: Sunday, September 18 at 12:30pm, with a "half-potluck" – please bring a side dish or dessert to share
Online: Monday, September 19 at 7pm

For our third congregational conversation, we will not be using the fishbowl format, but will have small group conversations using questions developed by the Unitarian Universalist Association's Article II Study Commission (this is the group that is exploring revising and rewriting the section of the UUA bylaws that includes the principles and sources.)

The questions for our conversation are:

- What is essential to you about being a Unitarian Universalist?
- What language helps you describe the heart of Unitarian Universalism to other people?
- What is missing from our current covenants or faith language?
- What must we do now to pave the way for the future Unitarian Universalism we imagine?

Please think about these questions before the conversations and come to listen and share. Please sign up here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/508054BA9AC22A13-congregational>



A/V for Sunday Services

We are calling for more volunteers to be trained on our A/V and Zoom set up! We want to be able to continue to have our services available to those who prefer to watch via Zoom as well as making sure the sound and lights are able to be run in the Commons.



If this is something that you are interested in and willing to learn, please sign up for a training shift (or two!). <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0d4ca5ad2ea4fe3-peoples2> While the set up can seem overwhelming, it is all set up to be as user friendly as possible!

Library Corner

Books recently added to the Main Church Library

Currently on display. Found later between bookends on shelving top or by call # on shelves

200.89 Ha - *The Darkness Divine: a Loving Challenge to My Faith* Harper, Kristen L

248.8 Ma - *Don't Take My Grief Away: What to Do When You Lose a Loved One* Manning, Doug

289.1092 La - *Stubborn Grace: Faith, Mental Illness, and Demanding a Blessing* Landis, Kate

304.2 Go - *The Book of Hope: A Survival Guide for Trying Times* Goodall, Jane

305.8 Ke - *Stamped from the Beginning: the Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America* Kendi, Ibram X.

362.29 Ke - *Restored to Sanity; Essays on the Twelve Steps* by UUs Ken

Books recently added to the RE (children's) Library

Currently on display. Found later between bookends on shelving top or by call# on shelves.

(J books are fiction and found after numbered books in RE shelving)



RE 179.9 Gr - *Goodness Gracious: a Gratitude Book for Children* Green, Kathleen A.

RE 305.8 Ka - *I Color Myself Different* Kaepernick, Colin

RE 508.794 Wa - *John Muir: Wilderness Protector* Wadsworth, Ginger

J Al - *Slog's Dad* Almond, David

J Br - *All That Is Needed* Brown, Mark

J Ke - *Antiracist Baby* Kendi, Ibram X.

Questions/ comments are welcomed. Please contact Lois Loeffler, chair of the Library Committee, at loisloeffler@gmail.com.

Afternoon Book Club

Thursday, August 18, 2:30 - 4:00 p.m.

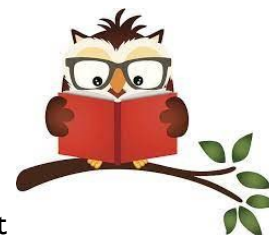


The Afternoon Book Group will meet at 2:30 on Thursday, August 18 to select the books to be read during the coming church year. We will meet at the Friendship Village

Clubhouse. Bring two or three suggestions and check to ensure they come in several formats (book, large print, ebook, audiobook, etc.) Contact Marj Lightner, marjlightner56@gmail.com, for more information or directions.

Evening Book Club

Planning for this upcoming year's book selections is in process. If you are interested in suggesting a title (s), or want to register preferences for meeting day/ time, or for Zoom or in-person meetings, contact Pat Nelson



(patnelson348@gmail.com) (269-716-3623).

Kindness and Justice for All: RE in 2022-2023

Every year during the summer, my assistant and I compile the binders of RE curriculum that we will be using in the fall. We've always had a schedule of rotating topics (Unitarian Universalism, World Religions, Peace and Justice, etc.) that we set up so that by the time a child graduates from the program they will have experienced a variety of different ideas, faiths, religions, and spiritual practices. They will have the basics of UU values, principles, rituals, and songs so they can feel at home in any UU congregation. This is one of our primary RE goals.

Then.... Covid. Covid which separated us from each other, decimated our youth program, and took away our habit of attending church. Covid, which prevented children from learning how to be together and kept them from forming connections to other people their age.

So now, we find our goals have become much more granular in the face of all we have lost. Our goal now is simply to build back the program from the ground up and provide a space where children will feel safe, loved, heard, seen, acknowledged, and valued.

Two things happened that really brought this curriculum path into focus. First, we noticed how during Peace and Nature Camp the kids loved just being together and hanging out anywhere they could with any free minute. Laura, the camp director, stressed about this to the team asking if she should have planned more or longer activities. Teresa, our wise elementary counselor, said "Look at them. They want to be together. They're building relationships. This is what they need." She was right.

Second, we remembered how difficult it had been for the kids to be in RE class, follow the traditional lesson format, and truly benefit from the curriculum. They were struggling just to stay with the group to say nothing of actually participating in a meaningful way.

So we've thrown out our traditional curriculums (not literally - they're still there for when we are ready for them) and are taking our program down to simple principles: how are we kind in all we do? How do we learn together? How do we build a fair and peaceful world?

Our curriculum this year is called Justice for All and it starts with several lessons on working together, building a community, and dealing with conflict. It's our template for how to be in right relations with each other. Once

we've covered those topics, we'll delve into taking care of the earth and its animals, and standing up to injustice.

We want children to feel loved, heard, and valued. But we also want them to be loving, to listen, and to value others. We want them to feel safe but also to be brave in the face of injustice. We want them, as St. Francis of Assisi said, "to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand and to be loved as to love."

Of course we can't do this alone. We're creating fun and meaningful curriculum: we'd love to have your family join us each week. We're planning more specialty classes and maker days: we'd love to see people of different generations creating and engaging together. We've been apart for so long, but we can rebuild and you can be part of that. We can make our church and RE program a place we all want to be.

If we can do these things, if we can give children this toolbox of courage, kindness, and resilience, I truly believe that our children can bring light to darkness.

For there is always light, if only we're brave enough to see it. If only we're brave enough to be it. ~ Amanda Gorman

Blessed Be, Diane Melvin, Religious Education Director



RE in August!

Our summer program focuses our UU principles and how we use them to make the world a better place. Each week, we will have a story, craft, and game, and then we will finish with playground time. We look forward to some UU fun!

August 7: We work for a fair and peaceful world

August 14: We care for the Earth

August 21: We build the Beloved Community

August 28: Free from racism and oppression

September 4: Wrap up!



Invitation to People's Music Groups

Have you ever wanted to sing with our choir or ring bells with us? You can! We are always accepting new members.

Contact Savannah at music@peopleschurch.net for more details.



Car Needed for Resettled Family

Our first Afghan family - Fariba Hussaini and her three children Hania 15, Mahdis 10, and Mohammad Saleh 7, who arrived in mid-November, will soon be in need of a car. Fariba has been working very hard to learn English and has made great progress. She has passed her written driver's permit test (learning the rules and laws of driving in the U.S. and taking the test in her native language). She is in the process of learning to drive. As a single mother, she is a very strong woman, and remarkably committed to making a new life in the U.S. and providing for her family. A very tall order! We all know how dependent we are on having reliable transportation to get to our jobs, shop for food and other necessities, manage to get to school conferences and pick up sick kids and a myriad of other places to go to.



Having a car is the key to independence! The Interfaith Afghan Resettlement Team is looking for a suitable vehicle for the family. That would be a 5 passenger small car that gets good mileage. If you have a reliable car that you might be willing to donate or sell to her (we'll need to loan her the money, as she has not been working yet) please contact Ann Feldmeier at 269-720-1649.

Please also consider passing the word to your family and friendship groups that we are looking for a car for her. When People's Church resettled the AlTayara family, refugees from the Syrian War, a member of our church came forward to provide a van that they were no longer driving. We are hoping someone will come forward with a similar offer - it does not have to be a gift, but it does need to be under \$5,000, hopefully less expensive.

Meal Train: Help support one of our families during a very challenging time.

Like so many others, Zoe and her family are struggling to keep up with life in general. In addition to parenting young children, Zoe is going through long-term treatment of a large tumor in her right shoulder and back.



It causes a great deal of pain and makes it difficult to take care of everyday tasks, and the medications have side effects that include fatigue, brain fog, and arthritis-like pain in her hands and feet. Knowing that they have one night a week where they don't have to think about and prepare dinner would be a great help.

Please go to <https://www.mealtrain.com/trains/1d8qdz> to read more and to help!

Lincoln School's Kid's Closet Needs

We have received a request from the Communities in Schools Kids Closet for donations of clothing and shoes. They need boys and girls sweaters and shoes. The sizes needed are boys tennis shoes are size 3, 4, & 5 and girls tennis shoes sizes 1, & 5. Also woman sweatshirts or sweaters size L & XL. If you wish to donate any of these needed items, please bring them to church to Rev. Rachel's office.

Alternately, donations of Walmart Gift Cards are very welcome so that Joseph, the CIS Lincoln representative, can purchase the needed clothing items and shoes.

Kalamazoo County Judicial Candidates - Racial Equity

About Group

The Equity Collective created this document and our goal is to bring more transparency and awareness about candidates on the ballot for the upcoming elections in Kalamazoo County. The Equity Collective has a focus on racial equity and we aim to educate voters on where the incumbents stand on racial equity. The understanding of how systems of oppression affect marginalized communities and communities as a whole is essential for an elected official to properly serve their constituents. This is why the Equity Collective conducted research on local candidates running in the 2022 primary and general election, so that we may inform voters on which candidates have a racial equity lens.



The Incumbent Voting Record Review

This incumbent voting record review is currently for incumbents running for Kalamazoo County Commission. This review covers past voting history in the last and current term. Here are the categories for the voting record history: Housing, Public Safety & Public Health, and Public Support. We hope this information being presented helps voters make well informed decisions.

Please go to <http://peopleschurch.net/uncategorized/racial-equity-scorecard-for-kalamazoo-county-commission/> to view the entire document.

Kalamazoo County Judicial Candidates - Anti-Racism and Equity Responses

Questions sent to Judicial Candidates:

How long have you been/were you a practicing attorney? What is/are your field(s) of law? Share any systemic disparities you are aware of in the Criminal Legal System

Share example(s) of how and why you have implemented or advocated for any anti racist and equitable policies/procedures/ initiatives in your role as an attorney/judge? What were the outcomes?

What anti-racist and equitable policies/ procedures/initiatives do you plan/commit to doing in your newly elected judicial seat/future work?

Answers given have been copied and pasted verbatim.

The Equity Collective Organizations are non-partisan and are NOT endorsing any candidate. We are only providing Candidates' answers as information.

Please click <http://peopleschurch.net/uncategorized/racial-equity-scorecard-for-kalamazoo-county-commission/> to view the answers to all 3 questions.

Jewel Heart Instructors Present: Silent Meditation

Saturday August 20th 9:30am-12:00pm at People's Church

Meditation is an essential tool that helps develop peace and joy, as well as, the power to deeply understand wisdom. This meditation session is open to all experience levels and offered according to Tibetan Buddhist tradition. Silence will be enjoyed throughout the morning. Free of Charge—All Welcome! To register, email westmi@jewelheart.org or call 734-223-0660



| Day | Date | Event | Time | Place |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|---|---------|------------------------------|
| Tuesday | August 2 | Building & Grounds | 10:00am | At church |
| Saturday | August 6 | Discussion Group | 10:30am | Zoom—Contact Pat N. for link |
| Sunday | August 7 | Summer Service: Rick Johnson | 10:45am | Commons and Zoom |
| | | Celebrating Denise | 12:30pm | In front of church |
| Tuesday August 9— Friday August 12 | | CHURCH CLOSED FOR FLOOR CLEANING | | |
| Sunday | August 14 | Summer Service: Gordon Bolar | 10:45am | Commons and Zoom |
| | | Inquirer’s Series: Tour of Building and Grounds | 12:30pm | At Church—TBD |
| Tuesday | August 16 | Building & Grounds | 10:00am | At church |
| | | Library Committee | 10:00am | At Church |
| Wednesday | August 17 | Bazaar Planning Meeting | 6:30pm | TBD |
| Thursday | August 18 | Afternoon Book Club | 2:30pm | Friendship Village |
| Saturday | August 20 | Jewel Heart Meditation | 9:00am | Room 9 |
| Sunday | August 21 | Summer Service: Rachel Lonberg | 10:45am | Commons and Zoom |
| Monday | August 22 | September Newsletter Deadline | | |
| Tuesday | August 23 | Building & Grounds | 10:00am | At Church |
| | | Facing Life, Facing Death | 1:30pm | Zoom |
| Sunday | August 28 | Summer Service: Donna McClurkan | 10:45am | Commons and Zoom |
| | | Inquirer’s Series: Small Group Connections | 12:30pm | At Church—TBD |
| Tuesday | August 30 | Building & Grounds | 10:00am | At Church |

People's Church
News & Views
1758 N. 10th St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49009

Check us out on the web!
www.peopleschurch.net



People's Church Mission Statement

**"People's Church: A beloved community
embracing and serving our diverse world."**