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Volume 84, Issue 4

December 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

December 4 Music service

Join People's musicians for our winter music service celebrating jazz.



December 11 You Are More Than Just Your Gifts: An All Ages Encanto Service



This service, led by Rev. Rachel and People's Church youth, will feature themes and music from the movie *Encanto* (prepare to sing about a certain someone we don't talk about). While this service is designed for people of all ages, we imagine it will be more meaningful for people who have seen the movie. *Encanto* is available from the local library or is streaming on Disney Plus.

December 18 Dark of Winter: A Solstice Service Lonberg

As the longest night of the year approaches, we will praise the darkness and the invitation to quiet, stillness, coziness, and contemplation that this season brings.

Rev. Rachel



Saturday, December 24, 5pm Christmas Eve Service Rev. Rachel Lonberg



Join us to celebrate the Christmas story and hope for the rebirth of love and peace in our world with music, poetry, and candlelight.

Sunday, December 25 There is no service this day.

Administrator Time Off

Melissa will be off starting on Sunday December 25th and will be returning to work on Tuesday January 3rd. The newsletter deadline for January has been set for Monday December 19th so that the January newsletter can be completed by the 23rd. Please keep this in mind, especially with the holidays, and make sure to get your content in before it's too late! Wishing you all safe and happy holidays!



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From the Minister



Dear People's people,

'Tis the season for gifts, wishes, and rest.

The gift of body donation:

After the service on Sunday October 30 about end of life planning, a few People's people reached out to me for more information about the body donation program at WMed, the Western Michigan University Homer Stryker School of medicine. If you donate your body to WMed after you die, it will be used in medical education and medical research. The idea of one's body helping others learn is appealing to many People's people. If this is something you would like to do, please visit <https://med.wmich.edu/bodydonation> to learn more. As you consider this possibility, there are a few important things to remember. First, if this is something you would like to do, you need to complete the paperwork in advance and have plans in place before you die. Second, if you make this choice, it is good to have a backup plan. There are a few reasons why your body might not be accepted at the time of your death (including your cause of death or weight when you die) or the circumstances of your death could make body donation very complicated (if you die a significant distance from Kalamazoo).

Wishes for church programs and activities:

Have you ever wanted something to happen at People's Church? We're introducing a new tool called the 'I wish somebody would...' board. This is a place to share your ideas for the church and share if you have the capacity to help make something happen. People will share their ideas. Once three people have said they are willing to help make it happen, I will connect them and help them get started. To make this project as accessible as possible, we will have this board both as a physical object in the church foyer and online here: <https://padlet.com/PeoplesChurch/lvo4v0pcvh14ck70>. I am excited to see your ideas and to have a central place to store them. Several times in the last year multiple people have said

they are interested in the same project, but by the second time someone told me, I had forgotten who the first person was. I hope this will allow your good ideas to flourish and help connect people with the capacities to make it happen.

Rest for our director of religious education:

On January 1, Diane Melvin, our religious education director, will begin a six-month sabbatical. She; Laura Bultman, our religious education assistant; and our excellent religious education committee have made plans to make sure the most vital parts of our religious education program are carried forward in her absence. As they work to work to fill the Diane-shaped hole in our church life, I invite everyone to pitch in. Maybe you have a special talent or skill you can share with our children during a specialty class? Maybe you could help prepare a meal or do the dishes or prepare materials for classes? Maybe you have an idea for a fun event for all ages? If you want to volunteer to help, please reach out to Laura Bultman, who will be the administrative head of the religious education program during Diane's absence at re_assist@peopleschurch.net.

I am excited for this sabbatical both for Diane and for our church. After years of pandemic-era pivoting, Diane is near burn out. A time of deep rest and relaxation will allow her to replenish her spirit. I am also excited for the gifts that a replenished Diane will bring to us all upon her return. During her last sabbatical, Diane expanded her mindfulness and meditation practice. Upon her return, she created the mindfulness and meditation group that has met regularly for years. She also brought these practices to congregational worship, especially during the pandemic. Her encouragement to slow my pace, connect with my deepest values, and lead with curiosity and compassion, has made me a better human. I know that is true for others. Diane plans to continue some of this learning and practices during her upcoming sabbatical. I trust that it will be good for her and all of us.

Take good care,
Rachel

People's Church is now collecting cans & bottles!



We are excited to announce a new partnership between People's Church and BLM Mealtrain Kzoo/BC! Please help support their wonderful work by bringing in your clean cans and bottles on or under the table that has been set up in the downstairs lobby of the church (behind the welcome desk).

The Kalamazoo/Battle Creek BLM Meal Train began in the spring of 2020 as an effort to make sure Black organizers and families were fed during the biggest racial justice uprisings of our lifetimes. What began in 2020 as an urgent mutual-aid effort morphed into a more sustained and sustaining network of care centering food. All along they have prioritized BIPOC organizers and families, safety, dignity, and care.

Christmas Caroling

Sunday, December 18, 2pm

Come sing a song with us! Meet in the parking lot at church to get organized before bringing holiday cheer to People's people. This year, as a COVID precaution, we will be singing to people from outside on their doorsteps. Everyone is welcome regardless of age or singing ability! Dress festively and for the weather! Questions? Please contact Rev. Rachel (269-389-9721 / minister@peopleschurch.net), David Greenquist (269-569-5442 / davidgreenquistmrc@yahoo.com), or Rick Johnson (269-598-8317, paywala@aol.com). If you would like carolers to come to you, let Rev. Rachel know. We might not be able to visit you this year, but you will be at the top of our list for next year.



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.

Thank You for a Very Successful – though Snowy – Bazaar!



2022 make take the record in our legacy of dramatic weather for our Bazaar. Fortunately, the worst was over on Friday and our artists, People's people, and customers showed up and the day resulted in a wonderful success.

People's Specialties – led by Lori Rupe, Sandy Steele, Donna McClurken, Colleen VanSlambrouck, Kat Westphal and Carolyn Heineman – achieved its **best ever** result at \$6500.

We had almost nothing left to sell, despite the enormous output of our signature specialties from Martha Beverly and the apprentice Limpa Bread Makers, Bob Friedel and all the teams of Pasty Makers, Jeff Strom and the all-ages Ginger Cookie Bakers, Lori and the Bean Soup Mix Assemblers, Donna McClurken and the Cranberry Chutney Cannery, and so many delectable baked goods, frozen entrees, candies, jams, and gluten-free items. As well as the beautiful array of contributed handmade specialties including Carolyn's earrings, Judy's cross stitch designs, Julie's knitted washcloths, Cory's woven pieces, artwork from collections left by Dave Curl and John Walker, and more. This event requires the talents and time and contributions of our whole church community.



Special thanks to our Publicity Team and volunteers led by Rick Johnson who got the word out near and far; to Emily Sipsma and Rochelle for managing the vendor participants; to Rev. Rachel and her gracious teams of greeters; to Dolores Strom and her capable



teams of cashiers; to Gary Leadley, Catherine Niessink and the B&G crew for preparing our building and set up; to Monday Madness volunteers who moved a mountain of furniture and ate pizza in an hour's time; to all the dozens of volunteers who prepared and staffed our laden tables of Specialties; to Barb and the finance team for all their counting; and to all the folks – children, youth and the rest - who answered the call and accomplished the clean-up with vacuums and brooms in hand and reassembled the Commons and all in one hour flat! And to ALL who came and shopped!



Thanks especially to our Backbone Team who made it possible – to Keenan for making our building shine, to Savannah for the best play list ever for this event, to Diana for keeping the numbers straight; to Rev. Rachel for guiding and supporting the work of our Bazaar Steering Committee; and to Melissa – MVP for 2022 – who managed it all with creativity, skill and helpful enthusiasm day after day, and aced it on her first Bazaar as our church administrator.



With the addition of artists' table fees, and the subtraction of expenses for pasty and other supplies and printing costs, we expect to net about \$8,500 to support People's Church. This event also supported the beautiful work of 20 local artists in our community and assisted many people in buying local this year. It was wonderful work that we accomplished together. Thank you, Everyone.





Thanks to all who were able to increase the pace of their pledge payments. We are feeling solid again and expect to do well through the end of the calendar year.

People's people ARE generous people!

NEW PIANO SEARCH!

The piano in the Commons is on its last legs. After a professional assessment this fall, the board agreed that we should replace the nearly 100 year old instrument. Jennifer Drake is keeping an ear out for a possible replacement piano that fits our budget.

The estimated cost for a suitable replacement with better sound quality, playability, and life expectancy is \$10,000-15,000. The music committee will be planning a fundraising event for early 2023. Individuals are also welcome to make an earmarked donation toward the new piano fund. The gift of a donation to this fund would be a lovely gesture if you know someone who loves the music at Peoples Church.



Special Collection: Sunday December 11th **Ministry with Community**

MINISTRY WITH
COMMUNITY
rebuilding lives

The upcoming December Special Collection will be held on December 11th to benefit Ministry with Community. Ministry with Community is one of our traditional yearly recipients. MWC is a daytime shelter and resource center in downtown Kalamazoo. They are open 365 days a year to anyone who needs their services, including those experiencing homelessness, poverty,

substance use disorder, and other crises. The following services are available 7 days a week: daytime shelter, breakfast and lunch, showers, laundry, personal hygiene items, lockers, phone access, receive and send mail, computer access, photo copy and fax access. In addition, social work and peer support services including crisis intervention, recovery support, employment assistance, housing assistance, and partner agency outreach are also provided. Our own Kelly Henderson, Executive Director of Ministry with Community will speak briefly at our Sunday Service.

Green Spot — Buy Local This Holiday Season



By Sue Salvat
As the holidays approach, please consider lowering your impact on the environment while supporting local businesses and craftspeople by purchasing from area holiday bazaars.

If you were not able to attend the People's Church event, or still have things to buy, you could try the Kalamazoo Nature Center (KNC) sale. The nature center will hold theirs on Saturday, December 3, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.



You can also check out the Kalamazoo Farmers Market, Saturdays from 8:00am-12:00pm through December 17th for gifts of food and crafts . You can check out their current vendors here: <http://pfcmarkets.com/current-vendors/>

Buying local supports our community and requires no shipping and handling, lessening our environmental impact. I hope you'll be able to attend at least one area event!

People's People at Work

The October 1 workday, under the combined sponsorship of Buildings & Grounds and Green Sanctuary, was a spectacular success. The weather was perfect. Lots of people



showed up and had a great time working together. We accomplished an amazing amount of work. And then we enjoyed lunch together. Here's some of what our 19 volunteers did:
Spray-washed the outside walls. They're actually white, not green!
Applied 5 gallons of

sealant to the front portion of the old roof (more to be done)

Weeded, thinned, mowed, trimmed and edged the lawn and plantings (always more of that to be done)



A big thank you to all our helpers: Allan Hunt, Catherine Niessink, Connie Ferguson, Cybelle Shattuck, Dan Bair, David

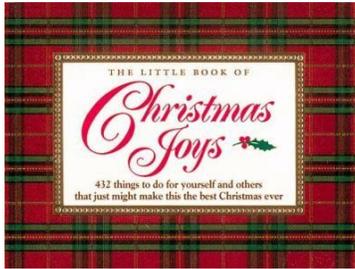
Smallcombe, Dolores Strom, Donna McClurkan, Gary Heckman, Gary Leadley, George Hrbek, Greg Feldmeier, Kimberly Ginn, Mike Leonard, Rick Johnson, Rochelle Habeck Hunt, Roger Loeffler, Steve Ferguson, Tom Hackley



We plan to do this again next spring. Don't miss the fun!

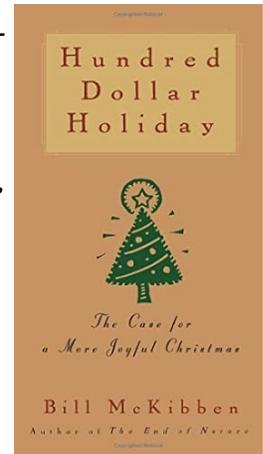
Library Corner

People's Library, in both adult and children's (RE) sections, contains several holiday books. Usually they're shelved in 296, 299, and 394 but many are on display for you to check out.



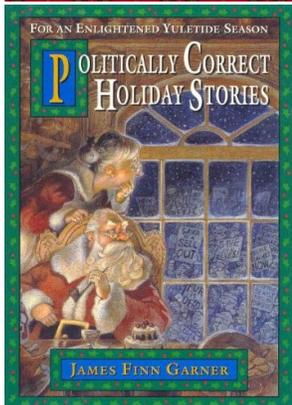
The Little Book of Christmas Joys; 432 Things to Do for Yourself & Others That Just Might Make This the Best Christmas Ever, by H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

Hundred Dollar Holiday; the Case for a More Joyful Christmas, by Bill McKibben. Christmas shouldn't be a time to "get through". This is as much a why-to book as a how-to

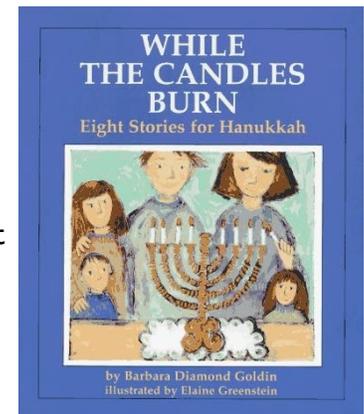


book.

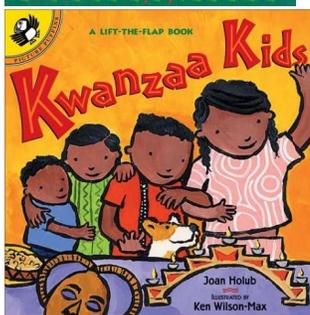
Politically Correct Holiday Stories for an Enlightened Yuletide Season, by James Finn Gardner. Scrooge in a condo?? Frosty faces climate change!



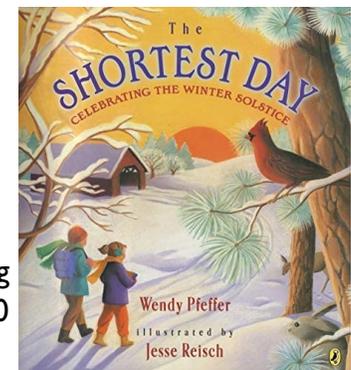
While the Candles Burn; Eight Stories for Hanukkah, by Barbara Diamond Goldin. Original and traditional stories reflect the significance of Hanukkah.



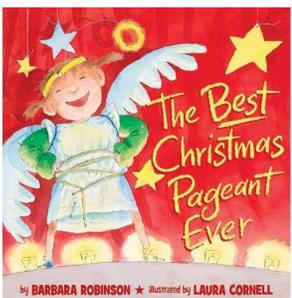
Kwanzaa Kids; a Lift-the-Flap Book, by Joan Holub. The seven principles of Kwanzaa are illustrated one day at a time.



The Shortest Day: Celebrating the Winter Solstice, by Wendy Pfeffer. Solstice activities complement the celebrations of several cultures.



The Best Christmas Pageant Ever, by Barbara Robinson. The Herdman family thought that the Wise Men should have brought pizza and the baby should have been called Bill.



Many other fun holidays can be discovered by Googling "December holidays". I just learned that December 10 is Dewey Decimal System Day. Yay! Remember, 296, 299 and 394 for books about holidays.

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

DRE Sabbatical Plans & Needs

We are so fortunate to have a solid leadership team of RE volunteers to help maintain our RE program this winter/spring. With RE Assistant Laura Bultman, at the helm surrounded by a capable group of volunteer leaders, I am confident our program offerings will continue smoothly.

Some of what I do will be covered by these leaders such as providing a **Welcoming Presence, Overseeing volunteers & finding subs, and Assisting kids** who are struggling to participate on any given Sunday.

Of the hundreds of people who make up our congregation, about a dozen are stepping up to fill these leadership roles in my absence. Yet, there are so many roles on a Sunday morning to keep the wheels turning smoothly and **many hands lighten the load.**

Wondering how you can help? We need **willing volunteers** to help with smaller roles and vital jobs. When someone contacts you to help serve as an RE Greeter, a Specialty Class leader, or a class sub, **PLEASE SAY YES!**

When you come to church, take a look around to see if there is anyone you don't recognize or know very well. We've had lots of folks join us during the pandemic and these newer/newish folks are seeking their way "in,"

Instead of asking if people are new (and risk being wrong), I ask whether we have yet met to break the ice. There are so many warm and kind people in our congregation, though sometimes it can be challenging to look beyond our friends to greet those not in our immediate circles,

Please introduce yourself to someone you don't yet know. I often find it interesting to ask how people found out about People's Church or UUism.

Without our pre-pandemic rituals of coffee hour and 2nd Sunday lunches, it is more challenging for newer folks to meet and get to know others.

I am confident that our congregation will rise to fill the Diane sized hole over the next six months and be ever the richer and healthier for it. May this time be a gift for all of us perhaps in ways not yet imagined!
Blessed Be, Diane Melvin, Religious Education Director

Mystic Lake UU Middle School Retreat Success

Ten People's people gathered with 20 people from other UU churches across Michigan to revive this popular weekend event. This is often the first time our youth meet other UU youth and experience a youth worship.

Four of our People's youth volunteered to help plan and lead the worship with the theme of "Stronger Together." They choose and acted out a story and tied the them into the challenge course activities the YMCA camp staff led them through where they had to communicate clearly and work together to solve the challenges before them.

It was a meaningful and fun weekend with these kids who lost so many rites of passage to the pandemic over the past few years. I was so proud of our People's youth at this event and the sacred community that was created by all participants. This weekend was a vital component of rebuilding our youth program which has been decimated by the pandemic. Special thanks to Jen Rice for helping me transport and chaperone the youth.





Mindfulness and Meditation Group

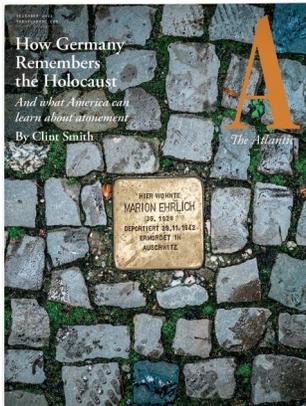
**First Thursdays of Oct., Nov., & Dec
6:30-7:30 pm in Room 19 (In person only)**

All are invited to join in this hour of practicing mindfulness and meditation together to remind ourselves of how we most aspire to live our lives. Opportunities to practice and share together enrich our lives, touch our hearts and feed our souls. Contact Diane Melvin at re@peopleschurch.net with questions.

Discussion Group

Saturday 12/3, 10:30-12, Room 8 Masks optional

In December our topic will be an article from this month's "Atlantic" magazine titled, "Monuments to the Unthinkable. American still can't figure out how to memorialize the sins of our history. What can we learn from Germany?"



Jeannine Willicker will lead the discussion. She can share some personal impressions from a recent trip to Germany. Anyone welcome to any meeting, held 1st Saturdays of each month during the church year. To join the email list and get reminders and background readings, contact Pat Nelson (patnelson348@gmail.com)



Film Discussion

Continues to meet on the 4th Tuesday of the month. On a month-to-month basis, participants volunteer to suggest 3 films; everyone votes and highest vote-getter becomes the movie to be reviewed.. Everyone watches the film in advance and we meet on Zoom for the discussion.



Watch the weekly email for announcements of films to vote on, and which has been selected. Or. contact Pat Nelson, patnelson348@gmail.com, to get on the email list and/or for additional information. Newcomers are welcome. If you like to discuss films,

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.

Ongoing needs for Refugees at the Free Clothing & toy Store, at Congregation of Moses



Thanks to all of you who have made donations to assist our Refugee friends. There continue to be needs as there are new arrivals & cold weather is here. These are items we're needing:

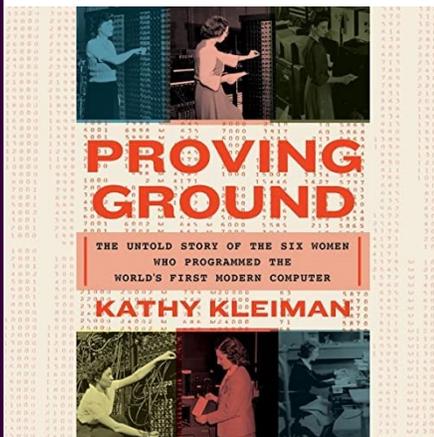
- Winter clothing, including coats, gloves & boots, especially items for children, small/med men's.
- Nice blankets & large pieces of fabric for making garments.
- Personal care items, laundry & dish soap & paper products.
- Toys

Items can be dropped off at Congregation of Moses, 2501 Stadium Dr, M-F 9-1:00. You are always welcome to visit the store. Any questions, please contact Colleen VanSlambrouck 269-341-0573

Study Group

The Study Group will be meeting on Monday December 12 at 7:30, via Zoom, to discuss "Proving Ground: The Untold Story of the Six Women Who Programmed the World's First Modern Computer", by Kathy Kleiman. Kleiman is an internet attorney who has for many years been researching the story of the six women who programmed the first modern computer, the ENIAC, at the University of Pennsylvania towards the end of World War II.

The Study Group meets monthly to discuss a wide variety of books dealing with issues in philosophy, religion, science, history, and current affairs. New members are welcome! For more information, or to get the Zoom address for the meeting, contact Kay Spade at jkspade@charter.net.

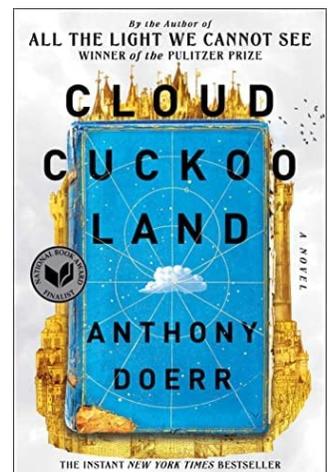


Evening Book Club

Thursday, December 8th, 6-7:30

Continues on the 2nd Thursday of the month, 6-7:30 p.m., in person (masks optional) at the home of Lois Loeffler (very near church). Newcomers are welcome. This church year's schedule of books is on the church main web page; click on the title "Afternoon and Evening Book Clubs" under "Announcements". For more information and/or to get on the email list for reminders, contact Pat Nelson, patnelson348@gmail.com

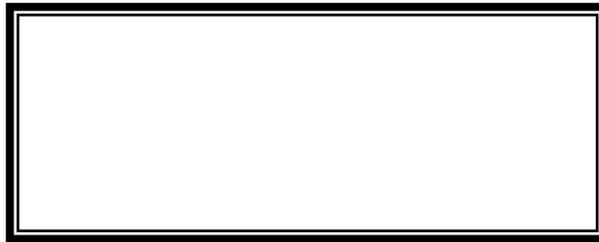
December meeting 12/8: Cloud Cuckoo Land by Anthony Doerr, reviewed by Marijo Steenstra



Day	Date	Event	Time	Place
Thursday	December 1	Mindfulness Meditation	6:30pm	Room 19
		Choir Rehearsal	7:00pm	Commons
Saturday	December 3	High School Youth Sleepover	6:00pm	At Church
Sunday	December 4	Sunday Service: Music Service	10:45am	Commons and Zoom
Tuesday	December 6	Building & Grounds	10:00am	At Church
Wednesday	December 7	Bell Choir Rehearsal	5:30pm	Commons
Thursday	December 8	Evening Book Club	6:00pm	Zoom
		Choir Rehearsal	7:00pm	Commons
Sunday	December 11	Sunday Service: You Are More Than Just Your Gifts: An All Ages <i>Encanto</i> Service	10:45am	Commons and Zoom
Tuesday	December 13	Building & Grounds	10:00am	At Church
		UUA Common Read	6:15pm	Zoom
Wednesday	December 14	Bell Choir Rehearsal	5:30pm	Commons
Thursday	December 15	Choir Rehearsal	7:00pm	Commons
Sunday	December 18	Sunday Service: Dark of Winter: A Solstice Service	10:45am	Commons and Zoom
		Christmas Caroling	2:00pm	Meet at Church
Monday	December 19	NEWSLETTER DEADLINE		
		Green Sanctuary Meeting	4:00pm	Outside at church or Zoom
Tuesday	December 20	Building & Grounds	10:00am	At Church
		Library Committee	10:00am	At Church
Wednesday	December 21	Bell Choir Rehearsal	5:30pm	Commons
		RE Committee Meeting	6:30pm	At Church
Thursday	December 22	Choir Rehearsal	7:00pm	Commons
Saturday	December 24	Christmas Eve Service	5:00pm	Commons and Zoom
Sunday	December 25	NO SERVICE TODAY		
Sun-Sat	December 25-31	OFFICE CLOSED FOR HOLIDAYS		

People's Church
News & Views
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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."**