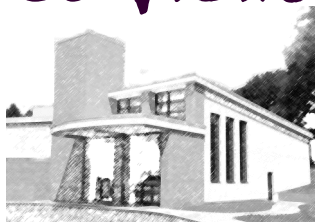


News & Views



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M-Th 9:00am-4:00pm

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People's Church

A Member Congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association

Reverend Dr. Pam Allen-Thompson, Minister

pam.allenthompson@gmail.com cell 941-889-8728

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NOTES FROM THE TRANSITION TEAM

Happy New Year to all ~ this month marks the launch of much of our formal transition process, in which we all work together on tasks recommended by the UUA and guided by our Interim Minister Pam, to prepare ourselves for a new settled minister in fall 2015.

The role of the Transition Team in this process is to work in partnership with the Minister, the Board, the Staff, and the Congregation to:

1. Educate the church, including ourselves, on how organizational structure and roles need to change to best meet our mission as we continue to grow.
2. Help prepare the congregation for change and support the congregation through the change process.
3. Support the staff through the change process.



So, the Transition Team focuses on HOW we are doing during this time, being approachable by members and staff to help address feelings and needs related to the change process. (In contrast, the Board addresses the WHAT tasks, and therefore your questions about the search process, for example.) The Transition Team is an extension of our existing Committee on Ministry, which has always worked with the minister to address the ministry needs of the church, with a few tasks and members added at this time for the work of the transition period. The members are: Tim Bartik, Rochelle Habeck-Hunt, Mary Lewis, Don Miller, Anna Shade, Bob Wallis and Reverend Pam.

Please mark **Sunday, January 26th** on your calendar for the first of four monthly after-church meetings on the Transition Process, immediately after church at 12:15 in the Commons and conclude at 1:30 (or as long as you are able to stay). Light lunch fare will be provided to eat as we meet. The theme is *The Present: Defining Who and How We Are Now*. We will begin with a briefing from the Board, updating us on developments in preparation for the search process. The meeting will be a very participatory process seeking input to help describe our congregation and how we function, as we understand it. This will be useful to the Board and Search Committee as they seek to describe us to the UUA and future candidates. We will also learn how we see ourselves!

Please keep in touch and feel free to contact any of us as we all help our beloved People's Church to move forward into its next chapter of "awesome-ness".

Tim Bartik 381-9648, bartik@upjohn.org ; Rochelle Habeck-Hunt 372-2033, habeck@chartermi.net ; Mary Lewis 372-2336, MAGLEWIS@aol.com; Don Miller 349-5084, donbuilds@aol.com ; Anna Shade 372-9847, anna.shade@gmail.com ; Bob Wallis 344-5202, bwallis55@gmail.com

Find an electronic version of this newsletter at peopleschurch.net.

Pam's Peace



What's new regarding shifts in Sunday programming? I put out some feelers in last month's newsletter for people to imagine other options for Sunday mornings, in the hope that we could create a space for conversations that invite exploration. After all, the minister you call may have a different style than Jill or I have, or a different approach to putting a worship service together. Some ministers do not work with a committee, but most do.

A couple of your responses were about things you don't want to see changed, and a few leaned in the direction of adding more elements to the service, while others suggested elements to retire. All this, and we hadn't even set a date for the conversation yet! The enthusiasm to talk about the possibilities, though, is invigorating. This topic will likely be part of the larger conversation about transition that will begin in January, aptly led by the Transition Team, Board of Trustees, and myself. Dates are already being posted. I hope you can make time for most or all of those conversations.

Shifting to the heart message, I want to share a poem I wrote the first time I roamed the hills of Medford Oregon. May it spark a happy beginning for the new year.

*All the years soft and turbulent brought us this moment. They have been right.
No room for wrong as the clouds unveil the stars, so ageless so piercing so forever.
The dark skies hold precious light mysterious and majestic
Reaching ever forward ever deeper ever real.
Finally finally finally a return to real, the child the lover the savior the saved
Waiting for right.
Believing knowing doing.*

REV. PAM



Sunday Services—10:45 a.m.

JANUARY SUNDAYS

January 05 *Hitting the Refresh Button*, Rev. Pam and Gay Walker
What makes for a good start in the new year?

January 12 *Our Amazing Youth and Young Adults*, Rev. Pam and Dyrk Hamilton
What are the depression babies and the boomers learning from today's generation?

January 19 *Mandela and Martin*, Rev. Pam and Sally Padley
When we think about justice, how far are we willing to go? What stops us short?

January 26 Guest Speaker, Rochelle Habeck Hunt


BOARD PRESIDENT, Sue Caulfield

Dear People's People, on behalf of the board of trustees, I am providing important updates. As was noted in my December *News and Views* article, the Board contracted with Jeff Susor to consult with People's People regarding our continuing support of the building addition. Jeff was scheduled to meet with People's People on December 16, 2013 and when we know more about that conversation, we will share it with everyone. We are all benefiting from the addition to our church and I trust that together we will determine how to best support paying off our debt.

I also noted in my December article that we would be providing you with a timeline of important dates. Please know that the timeline is in process, as it is a combined effort of the Board, the transition team and Rev. Pam. As I noted in the December article, the Board is now meeting twice a month. For example, in January, the Board will look at personnel policy and in February, the entire church policy handbook. At our "supplemental" meeting in December, we had a robust conversation about policy related to membership, based on the strong work of the membership committee, chaired by Anna Shade.

In February, the membership committee will bring recommended policy changes to the Board for action. Meanwhile, the Board, the Transition Team, Rev. Pam and other church leaders will be in retreat on January 18 with our Ministerial Settlement Representative, Naná Kratochvil. Naná will help us better understand how to engage ourselves in the ministerial search process. There will be opportunities to let everyone know about the process and seek input, beginning with an all-church meeting after the service on January 26, 2014. Please plan to stay after church that day and be part of that important conversation. At a minimum, we will be discussing the process of forming our minister search committee.

The newsletter article from the Transition Team highlights the role they will engage in with the congregation. Similarly, your Board of Trustees will work in partnership with the Minister, the Transition Team, the Staff and the Congregation to:

1. Review and revise church policies so as to promote up-to-date, consistent, reliable and accessible information about church practices.
2. Provide time lines and work plans to the congregation throughout the interim process, with an emphasis on transparency and common understanding.
3. Arrange congregational meetings and retreats to facilitate the necessary work of the church.

I share with you these words from Judy Brown's poem, "Fire," the closing words at our last Board meeting:

*What makes a fire burn is space between the logs, a breathing space.
 Too much of a good thing, too many logs packed in too tight can douse the flames
 almost as surely as a pail of water would.
 So building fires requires attention to the spaces in between, as much as to the wood.*

*When we are able to build open spaces in the same way
 we have learned to pile on the logs,
 then we can come to see how it is fuel, and absence of the fuel together,
 that make fire possible.*

*We only need to lay a log lightly from time to time.
 A fire grows simply because the space is there, with openings in which the flame
 that knows just how it wants to burn can find its way.*

We are the fuel that keeps alive the flame of our chalice. Together, let us continue to do our best work in service to each other. In peace and standing on the side of love, *Sue Caulfield*

Young Adult UU Conference

January 17-19th at People's Church

All young adults 18-35 are invited to participate in this weekend conference filled with workshops, music, sacred space, coffeehouse/talent show, laughter and friendship. Meet UU young adults from around the state and the region.

The cost of \$25-45 (sliding scale) includes your registration and meals for the weekend.

Bring your sleeping bag, sled and musical instruments if you've got 'em. Check it out on Facebook "Kalamazoo Con" at <http://tinyurl.com/lhqtrl7>.

You can register online at <http://tinyurl.com/lmvtb8q>

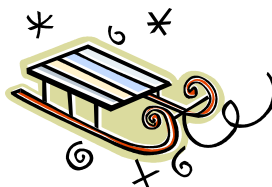
Questions? Contact Fernando Ospina at faospina@gmail.com or 352-328-4964.



Guest at Your Table

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee works with partners around the world to help those in need as a voice for human rights and social justice issues.

Now is the time to return what you've collected. Please write a check made out to UUSC for the total amount and return to Diane Melvin's mailbox by January 12.



NEW

Chalice Sparx UU Camp

July 10-15, 2013

Camp Ronora in Watervliet, Michigan will be the location for the first year of this new UU family camp. All ages and family configurations are invited to participate in this fun week designed to bring UU's together for workshops, worship, campfires, swimming, great food and camaraderie with UU's from around the Midwest.

Check it out at chalicesparx.org and on facebook!



New Chalice Circle Starting

2nd Sundays January - April 1-3pm

Anyone interested in joining this new small group ministry circle is welcome to participate. These circles are designed to help people get to know one another better by creating sacred space for deep listening and sharing by fostering trust and openness.

If you are interesting in participating, please let Diane Melvin know at 375-3262 or re@peopleschurch.net.

YRUU Youth Group

Youth Sleep Over January 10 at 6pm

Instead of having a youth group meeting on the first Sunday in January, all 9-12th graders are invited to a sleep over at church on Friday January 10. Plan to come Friday night at 6:00pm through Saturday at noon.

For more information contact Wendy Dawson at 549-5084 or wmdawson40@gmail.com.

Specialty Classes - January 5

If your child is interested in sledding, please bring their outdoor snow clothes and a sled to share.



Membership Matters

By Anna Shade

Please take a moment to welcome our New Members who joined People's Church on December 8. You'll find

pictures of these folks on the South Kiosk in the foyer.

Andrew Alm

Brooke Feltner-Beebe

Dyrk Hamilton

Anisah Haynes

Nicky Leigh

Mark & Nancy Mitchell

Tim Sparling & Marti Peters-Sparling

Erik & Ally Pye

Ted Schering

Ben Jones & Jana Watson

And if you are new to People's Church or have been contemplating joining, our Winter Membership Path will consist of the following events:

- Sharing Our Faith Journeys – Sunday, 1/19
- Connections Dinner – Friday, 2/7
- Membership Orientation – Sunday, 2/16
- Membership Recognition Sunday – Sunday 3/9

Sign-Up sheets will be at both information desks starting on Sunday January 5.

Please let me know if you have any questions or if you are thinking about joining People's Church in the Winter Membership Path (anna.shade@gmail.com). Looking forward to a great 2014 at People's!

In Fellowship, *Anna Shade*



BOXING DAY – SUNDAY DECEMBER 29

December 29 is our traditional Boxing Day at People's Church, when we do a service project for a local organization. This year we will collect classroom supplies for the teachers at Lincoln School. Please consider bringing any (or all!) of the following items which will be packaged and taken to Lincoln school after Christmas break:

- Pencils, Markers, Crayons, Kleenex
- Notebook paper, Composition books, Scotch tape
- Hand sanitizer (disinfectant, but not anti-bacterial products)
- Anything else you think might be used in the classroom

In case you will not be in church on the 29th, a big box will be available in the Foyer for your donations any time through Boxing Day. Thank you for your generosity!

JANUARY SPECIAL COLLECTION

The special collection on January 12 will benefit *The Recovery Institute of Southwest Michigan*, an independent nonprofit organization located at 1020 S. Westnedge. The At the *Recovery Institute*, recipients of services for mental health and/or substance abuse can pool their resources to advance their wellness and recovery. The Institute is funded in part by Kalamazoo Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, but our contributions are also greatly needed.



As a peer-run, peer-delivered organization, most of the staff and all board members are people in recovery from mental health and or substance abuse. Volunteers meet with other peers in the community (KCMHSAS Access Center, Borgess, and Recovery Institute). They offer support and information about services that empower individuals and encourage personal responsibility, and advocacy services to help people navigate the mental health system.

Recovery classes and activities address topics related to health, budgeting, crisis planning, strength-based learning, higher education, recreation, leisure, creativity, computer instruction, and community education. The Power Group provides public education by speaking at churches, colleges, and elsewhere, sharing their recovery. ArtWorks offers a weekly art group and participates in the monthly art hop where the members' art work is displayed for sale.

They give hope where there is little or none by spreading the word that recovery is not merely a matter of surviving one's illness, but rather a dynamic and active movement that brings about a meaningful change in lifestyle and habits. Recovery is transformational.

New Challenge Grant An Opportunity for Congregations To Get Involved in Campaign to Raise Michigan's Minimum Wage

The Michigan Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Network (MUUSJN), started in 2002, recently was awarded by the UU Funding Program a \$6,000 challenge grant "to organize a campaign to raise Michigan's minimum wage. UU congregations can get involved in three ways:

AWARENESS - UU congregations are challenged to invite their members to read "Behind the Kitchen Doors" (Saru Jayaraman). This book tells the stories of restaurant workers who struggle to live on the lowest wages in America. Click this link to see a UU Service Committee Behind the Kitchen Doors study guide: http://thewelcometable.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/BehindTheKitchenDoor_6_05_2013.pdf Community forums on raising the minimum wage will be planned for UUs and the public in the Southfield, Flint and Kalamazoo areas.

SUPPORT THE CAMPAIGN - Through this grant, the first \$6,000 in donations to MUUSJN will be matched by the UUA. This is the perfect time for individuals to pay their dues to MUUSJN (\$25 regular; \$40 family; \$50 Silver; or \$100 Gold) or for congregations to share a plate with MUUSJN. For more information, go to: www.uujustice.org.

GET READY TO CONTACT YOUR STATE LEGISLATORS - Get on MUUSJN's email list (by emailing Randy Block at randyblock@yahoo.com) to receive information about when and how to contact your state legislators. Michigan UUs will be urging their legislators to raise the minimum wage to \$10/hour. For more information, call 248-549-5170.



Getting to Know People's People,

By Ardyce Curl



Kimberly Ginn grew up a Lutheran, attended a parochial school of that denomination, and also attended Baptist and Catholic Churches.

"After a friend told me about the writings of Jane Roberts, (author, psychic and spiritual medium)

when I was in my twenties, my spiritual enthusiasm took off," Kimberly said. "Things began to click and I felt I understood more of why humans are on this planet."

Kimberly finds religious wisdom from a variety of sources such as Lau Tzu author of *Tao Te Ching*; Thich Nhat Hahn, Vietnamese Zen Buddhist monk; Peter Mayer, folk singer and songwriter; and Unity's *Daily Word*.

"Most of all I find wisdom from the natural world," Kimberly said. "I see evidence and assurance of what I call Divine Order in the Universe when I appreciate the night sky, a body of water, a tree, plant or insect."

Kimberly found People's in the Yellow pages. "That's how we (Kimberly and former husband Bill) found all three Unitarian churches we've attended since 1991," she said. "We left the others because of job relocations. Our church home has long been our main social, religious and entertainment hub."

She was looking for kinship with other Unitarians, spiritual development and a deeper understanding of what it means to be a Unitarian.

"Jill's thought-provoking services were a bonus," Kimberly said. "And I've admired the way People's People have come together with Rev. Pam to progress as a congregation following Jill's departure."

Kimberly and Juli consider the church community their extended family. "Many People's people supported us through my recent divorce," Kimberly said. "They're helping my daughter and me develop personally, and we enjoy being a part of the congregation's growth. Juli has received innumerable benefits from OWL, her teachers and the steady guidance of Diane Melvin."

It's important to Kimberly a church offer balance to a busy life and give connection with like-minded others. Sunday services recharge her desire to live in right relations.

"Often I walk away with insight to go back in the world to fight the good fight," she said. "And always I go away having connected with a caring member of our church community."

Kimberly has helped RE by providing food, organizing meals for a weekend youth conference, chaperoning, helping with specialty classes and the Peace and Nature Camp. She has assisted during People's concert series selling CD's and helping with refreshments, co-taught the curriculum *Cakes for the Queen of Heaven* with three other women, mowed lawn, picked weeds, helped in the kitchen, been a greeter and usher and played instruments for Sunday services and the "Friday Night Sing-Along."

"I enjoy being a ready and able volunteer for last minute needs that pop up for services and events," she said.

(Kimberly, 51, is contemplating a second career after being a stay-at-home Mom and volunteer many years. She brought an Electronics Recycling Program to the Gull Lake School System, established a Storm Retention Pond Rehabilitation project in her neighborhood, and currently works part time as Resource Center Assistant at the Kellogg Bird Sanctuary and volunteers at the Civic Theater. She has a daughter Julianna, 15, and a son James, 29)*

*A community drop box for electronic devices is located in the volunteer office area of People's.

Smallcombe Jewelry Celebration

Did Santa bring you a piece of David Smallcombe's handcrafted jewelry? Or are you already a proud owner of one of his pendants, or a pair of earrings? Here's your chance to show it off! In January, David Smallcombe will have photography displayed on the *ArtWall* exhibiting his designs from over the years. If you own some of his jewelry please wear it to help celebrate his opening reception after church on **Sunday, January 12.**

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OUR APPRECIATION

Heart felt Thank-You's to **Kristi Montgomery** for our January Newsletter, and Anna Shade for posting it on our website.

Thanks to the Choir, Bell Ringers, and many other musicians for the Winter Concert and the Christmas Eve Service that included our neighbors from the UU Community Church of Southwest Michigan. Thanks to the many generous hands who provide refreshments or help with set-up and clean-up.

Thanks to those who shovel snow and give of themselves behind-the-scenes.
Thanks to Religious Education Director Diane Melvin for the wonderful intergenerational service.

!!! ALERT !!! We Need You for Our Communications Team!

We need at least five people to help us significantly strengthen our internal practices **especially a Point Person** who can see the big-picture needs and work collaboratively with volunteers who take on different tasks. If you might be interested, see Rev Pam. She estimates the Point Person to work 6 to 10 hrs per month

Check out our Calendar of Events online at
peopleschurch.net/calendar-of-events!