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People's Church

A Member Congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association

Volume 86, Issue 1

September 2024

Sunday Services—10:45 a.m.

The Zoom link for People's Church services is: <https://uuma.zoom.us/j/5527667326> or
By phone: 1-646-876-9923, ID: 552 766 7326

We will begin this church year with a series of services for all ages, gathering in The Commons and streaming via Zoom. Our Religious Education program for children and youth will begin on October 6.

September 8: "Water Service" — Rev. Rachel Lonberg

We begin our church program year with our annual water service celebrating the joy of community. Please bring water from somewhere meaningful to you to add to a common bowl as a symbol of our connections with one another and the wider world. If you are not able to attend the service in person and want to contribute water, please add water to the birdbath on the church grounds or reach out to Rev. Rachel to arrange for water pickup. The service will be followed by a potluck and water play. If you want to participate in these after-church activities, please bring a dish to share and clothes you can get wet in.



September 15: "Exploring our Values" — Diane Melvin & Rev. Rachel Lonberg

This summer, the General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association adopted a new statement of values. These values are Justice, Equity, Transformation, Pluralism, Interdependence, and Generosity with love at the center. (JETPIG is a handy mnemonic to help us remember.) In this service, we will kick-off a focus on these values that will continue throughout this year.



September 22: "Animal Blessing Service" — Diane Melvin & Rev. Rachel Lonberg

In this service, we will celebrate the joy that animals bring to our lives. We will bless our animal companions, remember our beloved pets who have died, and repent the ways our actions hurt animals and the natural world. Please bring your beloved stuffed animals, well-behaved pets, or pictures of the animals in your life. If you have animal allergies or would rather not be with animals, this is a good Sunday to participate via Zoom.



September 29: "UU Climate Justice Revival" — Rev. Rachel Lonberg & members of the Green Sanctuary Committee

Our congregation is joining with other UU congregations across the continent to imagine a flourishing, just future and be inspired to make our vision a reality. This service is part of a weekend-long program of activities – and you don't need to attend the Saturday workshop to find meaning and inspiration in this service.



Miss a Sunday sermon? Check out the video at: <https://tinyurl.com/Peoplesyoutube>



Dear ones,

Recently, I spoke with a People's person who received a tricky question from a coworker about our community. He wanted to learn how others answer this question. (Some of you might have seen part of

this in our People's Perpetual Coffee Hour Facebook group.) After I responded to him, I thought it might be worthwhile to share my answer to this question in the newsletter for everyone.

Is People's Church part of a Christian denomination?

The short answer is "no" -- People's Church is not part of a Christian denomination.

Here is the longer answer:

People's Church is part of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, which is not a denomination, technically, but lots of people call it one. (The difference has to do with church governance structures.) The UUA is the group of about 1,000 congregations that we partner with on things like training religious professionals, developing curriculum, and best practices for navigating a pandemic that would be very hard to do on our own. We also collaborate with other congregations – like for the upcoming UU Climate Justice Revival.

Both People's Church and the UUA are not Christian organizations, though we have Christian members. We include people with lots of different beliefs who choose to be together, united by shared values, principles, and promises. We do not all believe the same thing – or say that we believe the same thing—which makes us unusual in the American religious landscape.

To make this even more complicated (because that's just what we need, right?) both People's Church and the UUA used to be Christian, though we haven't been a Christian tradition for the last 100 years or so. Because of our Christian heritage many of the words we use (like church

and minister) and practices we have (gathering on Sunday mornings, our order of service) reflect this... and the words 'Unitarian' and 'Universalism' are both words for specific Christian beliefs about God, words we still claim even though those beliefs aren't what's most important to us now. Understandably, all of this can make us a little hard for a coworker to understand us.

I'm grateful that this People's person brought their question to me. One of the things that I know is true is that whenever someone comes to me with a question, a wondering, or a struggle there are several other people in a similar situation. If you have a question you don't know how to answer, an ethical quandary, a theological conundrum, or anything similar, please send it my way. We can talk it through – and, with your permission – it might become the topic of a future newsletter column or worship service.

Take good care, everyone,
Rev. Rachel

Save the Date: Piano Premiere Party **Saturday October 12, 7pm in The Commons**

Come join us for a night of music in celebration of our new piano. If you would like to perform, please contact Savannah Ramsey, our music director, at seramsey.music@gmail.com.

While there is no cost to attend this event, refreshments will be sold and donations collected to pay off the remaining balance of the piano's purchase price.



WOW!!! Thank you to the whole People's Church Community for helping us reach financial sustainability!

Last year we started out needing to cover a substantial deficit. So we got to work: we plowed the soil, planted the seeds, fertilized the garden, and pulled the weeds. Then a miracle happened! When all was said and done our year-end budget showed a SURPLUS!!

How did this happen? It happened because everyone involved with People's Church pitched in:

- you, our members, responded to two calls for increased pledges by exceeding our most optimistic hopes;
- our church administrator increased the rental income by more than 100%;

- our fundraising committees increased their revenues by more than a third;
- our staff and committees were able to hold their expenditures well below their proposed budgets while still fulfilling their missions.

The result of this community effort was a \$15,077 INCREASE in projected revenues, AND, a \$14,442 REDUCTION in budgeted expenditures. We were able to put money into our rainy day fund (the Palmer Fund) instead of drawing money out, for the first time since before the Covid pandemic. To every one of you a big THANK YOU! Pat yourselves on the back, take a breath of relief, and let's continue making this the best church community it can be.



Judge Charles J. Pratt Justice Center Dedication

Saturday September 7, 10am-noon with tours to follow



At the Justice Center, 330 Eleanor Street, Kalamazoo

Rev. Rachel Lonberg, our minister, is one of two clergy who will offer blessings at the new Kalamazoo County courthouse. People's people (and all residents of Kalamazoo County) are welcome to attend this ceremony, which will feature many local leaders, and tour the new building.

RE Registration and Volunteer Helper Forms

This year's RE curriculum is going to be World Religions! We know this is a very exciting and popular curriculum so to help with our planning, we're reaching out now to request your completion of our Religious Education Registration form!

You can access the form here: <https://forms.gle/9GbtjZyxANQMC76TA>

The form has been streamlined to be much quicker and easier this year, especially those who have filled out an RE registration form in the past!

Don't have a child or youth participating in RE this year? Our Religious Education Program is a cooperative effort: it depends on all People's people to share their time and energy. If you are willing to be contacted to potentially help with varying parts of RE, please fill out this form to let us know!!! <https://forms.gle/DMiUNHaNU5CzxkWRA>



People's Church Fine Art Sale & Holiday Bazaar Returns November 23rd!

SAVE the DATE! People's Church Fine Arts Sale & Holiday Bazaar will be held Saturday, November 23 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Time to get started! The Saturday before Thanksgiving, November 23rd, will be our Annual Bazaar, our biggest all-church fun(d)raiser. All members, visitors, and friends are welcome and needed in this all-hands-on-deck event.

The planning has begun and 25+ artists have already confirmed. Please invite your friends and neighbors to save the date and plan to join you to "shop local" for one-of-a-kind art gifts and our famous People's Specialties!

To help us get started, here are two ways you can get involved now:

Sign Up for Pasty-Making Sessions

Get to know other People's people and help make our famous pasties which are frozen and sold at the Bazaar. No experience needed! Someone who knows their way around the pasties will be on hand for every session and Chef Bob Friedel will lead the process once again. The first two sessions will be held **Sept. 13-14 and Sept. 20-21.**

There are three different opportunities to help during each pasty-making weekend. Chop vegetables on Friday afternoon, roll out dough and assemble pasties on Saturday morning, or wrap pasties for freezing on Saturday afternoon. Sign up for a shift online: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/508054BA9AC22A13-51022278-pasty#/>

More sessions to come in October!

Watch church communications for upcoming dates!

Prepare Items for People's Specialties

Bazaar patrons look forward every year to purchasing the handcrafted items and delicious jams, breads, cookies, and candies that People's people donate for our sale. RIGHT NOW is prime time for fresh produce. Please consider making extra of your favorite jams, salsa, relishes now for the Bazaar. Or get a head start on one of your favorite craft projects to donate.

Watch the Friday email and Facebook page in the coming weeks for more opportunities to help and signups to contribute!

Love crafting?

Did you know that our main source of revenue from the Holiday Bazaar comes from selling People's Specialty Items, the handmade crafts and food items People's people make and generously donate?

Please consider crafting items for us to sell at the Holiday Bazaar.

Not sure what to make? Consider one of these ideas:

Crochet or knit coasters or dishcloths. Weave friendship bracelets. Make necklaces or wall decorations from beach treasures. Craft ornaments from felt or fabric scraps. Create a sun-catcher mobile by stringing colorful beads. Upcycle clothing by adding embroidery. Make photo prints from your best nature photography. Any giftable craft items that you love to make...



People’s People Invited to LWVKA GOTV Postcard Party

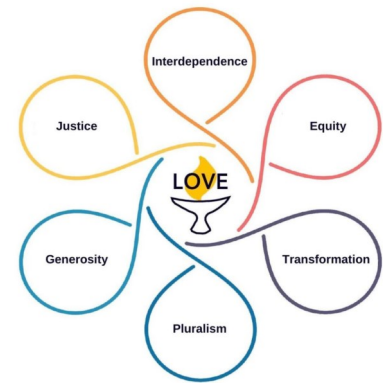
The League of Women Voters of Kalamazoo Area (LWVKA) is officially inviting People’s People and friends to join their Get Out the Vote postcard writing party on Thursday, September 26 at 4pm in Room LI here at church.



LWV of the Kalamazoo Area will provide postcards, address labels, GOTV messages and stamps. This is a strictly nonpartisan effort. Cards will go to local voters.

JET-PIG

There isn't a widely recognized poem or reading specifically crafted for the acronym JET-PIG as it relates to the values expressed in the six words now included in Article II of the Unitarian Universalist Association's bylaws. Justice, Equity, Transformation, Pluralism, Interdependence, and Generosity (JET-PIG). Challenge: create your own reading, music, poem, or reflection to embody the values expressed in JET-PIG.



Chalice Circles can enrich your connections

Around two years ago I joined a Chalice Circle, newly formed, of eight people whose ages spanned fifty years, three generations. We met monthly using a UUA booklet with lessons and a volunteer group leader. During our gatherings, we discussed topics and responded to cues, speaking our feelings from our own perspectives and experience, not responding directly to each other. Our age spread was a real advantage and offered us insights into our own times of life and our sharing proved helpful to young and old. Over time we bonded deeply, becoming close

friends, offering love, connection and support for each other. And after two years I announced that I was leaving the group.

We developed bonds among us which will last. And now I want to begin again with another cross-generational group as we open our hearts and share our deepest feelings. I want to get to know more people deeply as those bonds develop over time.

I hope that new Chalice Circle groups will form, a perfect environment for people in our community to really get to know each other through mindful sharing. It's been a very fulfilling experience for me and now I want to build deep bonds with others in our church community.

Martha Beverly

Chalice Circles

- ritual
- sharing
- deep listening
- reflection
- silence

Connection
 The energy that exists between people when they feel seen, heard & valued ...without judgment.

- Brene Brown

The Inner Work of Age

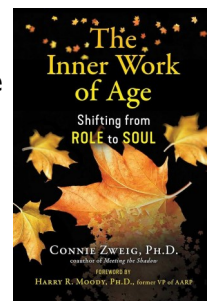
Book Study and Conversation: *The Inner Work of Age: Shifting from Role to Soul* by Connie Zweig

September 17, 1:30-3:00pm, on Zoom

Zoom link: <https://uuma.zoom.us/j/5527667326>

Join others in the church to talk about aging and living well. We will use *The Inner Work of Age: Shifting from Role to Soul* as our source for conversation. This book, which is rooted in Jungian psychology, offers guidance for getting past inner obstacles and becoming an Elder filled with vitality and purpose. This book is available in paperback, as an e-book, and as an audiobook. (If the cost of the book is a barrier to your participation, please reach out to Rev. Rachel.)

For the September session, we will read chapter twelve 'Moving Toward a Completed Life' If you have questions about this, please reach out to Rev. Rachel at 269-389-9721 or minister@peopleschurch.net



Sermon Seminar with Rev. Rachel

Beginning September 24

6:30-9pm, Room LI, 2nd and 4th Tuesdays through February 11 (no class in late November or late December)

The class, Rev. Rachel previously offered in the 2018-19 church year, is about writing sermons – and more. It is also a chance to learn about the purpose of Unitarian Universalist worship, get to know others in a more meaningful way, and learn the skill of theological reflection – how do we find meaning in our own experiences? People who complete the program will be invited to preach their sermon in a service, likely during Rev. Rachel's sabbatical. (Public preaching is not required of participants.)

This class will require some homework (writing, reading, and listening to sermons between sessions).

This class is limited to eight participants. Sign up here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/508054BA9AC22A13-50708154-sermon#/>

Childcare and transportation are available with advance notice.

If you have questions, please contact Rev. Rachel at 269-389-9721 or minister@peopleschurch.net



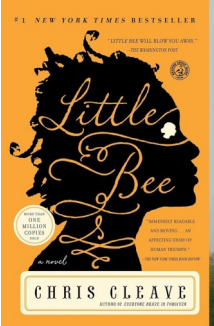
Afternoon Book Club

The Afternoon Book Club has been meeting on the first Monday of the month and will be confirming that schedule for the coming year. Newcomers are welcome. Please contact Marj Lightner at marjlightner56@gmail.com or Martha Beverly at marthabeverly@gmail.com if you need more information.

Evening Book Club—Newcomers Welcome!

"Little Bee" by Chris Cleve will be reviewed by Mary Gibson at our September meeting: 9/12, 6-7:30 p.m., at Lois Loeffler's home, 6536 Winddrift Ave. Kalamazoo MI 49009 (269) 372-0038.

Newcomers are welcome. We plan to meet on the 2nd Thursday of each month through this church year. You can find the schedule of books to be discussed on the church website.



Library Corner

These are a few of the pamphlets that are available on the Pamphlet Wall which is to the right of the Commons entrance and beneath the clock. Please peruse the titles and take the ones that appeal to you.



Unitarian
Universalist
Views on Sex

“Unitarian Universalist Views on Sex”

Firmly grounded in scientific evidence and with a commitment to social justice, Unitarian Universalism joyfully embraces human sexuality in all of its complexity.



“Environmental Justice”

A helpful introduction to environmental justice, this pamphlet lays the groundwork for anyone interested in this crucial work and provides examples of Unitarian Universalist organizing happening right now.



Environmental
Justice



UU Views of
Evil

“UU Views of Evil”

Unitarian Universalists reflect on evil, where it stems from in society and in the individual, and how to challenge its hold.

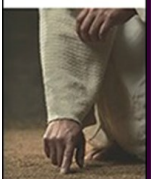


“UU Views of Jesus”

Six Unitarian Universalists share about their connections with Jesus, demonstrating the variety of views from across the faith.



UU Views of
Jesus



How to Check Out a Book from the Library



1. Open the front cover of the book.
2. Note the card in the pocket. Remove the card. Occasionally the card and pocket are inside the back cover of the book.
3. Print the full day's date in the left column of the card.
4. Print your name in the right column.
5. Add your email address and phone number. Use another line if necessary.
6. Locate the open wooden box which is on the window side of the far right bookshelf near the double doors to the Commons. A wire basket is above this shelf.
7. Place the book card in front of the right portion of the box.
8. To return the book, place it in the wire basket above the wooden box. Library committee members will replace the card and re-shelve the book.

World Religions

Our children and youth will be exploring many of the world's religious traditions this year in RE. Through wonderful story books and engaging activities, our K-6th graders will get to learn, compare and reflect on various faith traditions. Rituals, Gods/Goddesses, and how each religion encourages adherents to be good people will be contrasted with our Unitarian Universalist values and traditions.

Our 7-12th grade class will embark upon a new experience which includes visits to a variety of houses of worship throughout the area. *Crossing Paths* curriculum offered through 'Soul Matters' includes a unique perspective to help youth learn, experience and reflect on those learning experiences together throughout the coming year.

Exploring many of the world's religious traditions, I hope our youth will use opportunities to deepen their own faith journeys while building their UU identity in our faith tradition with their peers.

Looking forward to a meaningful year together!
Blessed Be, Diane Melvin Religious Education Director

RE Teacher Orientation 9/21-1-4pm rm 19

Save the date for this fun and informative time together to prepare RE teachers for the year.

Volunteer Opportunities Available

Are you interested in learning more about different **world religions**? Would you like to better get to know some of our wonderful children at People's?

Helping provide a child with the opportunity to learn, grow and connect at church is a rewarding experience. Through sharing engaging stories and fun activities, both adults and kids alike will come away with a deeper understanding of a variety of religious values, beliefs and practices.

Please let Diane know if you are able to help this year at re@peopleschurch.net.

World Religion Orientation for 7-12th grade

Sunday 9/15 after church

This orientation, designed for both youth and their parents/guardians, will provide an overview to our new World Religions program. Facilitators will go over the approach, weekly flow, faith traditions, skills as well as opportunities for family engagement.

With lunch and childcare provided for younger siblings, we look forward to seeing you at this meaningful opportunity to learn about this program to best make an informed decision about participation.

RSVP lunch & childcare to re@peopleschurch.net

Mystic Lake UU Middle School Retreat for 6-8th graders Oct. 18-20

Save the Date for Fun, Connection and Adventure with other UU youth from around the region!

More info and registration are here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1EapaXUXne6L7aaRfUaUI-D5XHJXGXdo2/view?usp=sharing>

Thank You Mary Kate!

We are so fortunate to have such dedicated commitment to our RE program at People's. Mary Kate Webster has done a phenomenal job coordinating and implementing our summer RE program for many years. She has taught all ages of children and youth in RE consistently for decades. She has served on the RE Committee for



several terms and coordinated our Specialty Classes for the past few years. She has consistently been involved with our annual curriculum preparation teams.

Our RE Program would not be the quality it is without her longstanding dedication to our kids and families at People's.

Volunteer Highlight



Come to the Climate Justice Revival!

By Cybelle Shattuck



When thinking about the climate crisis, I often feel like a deer in the headlights, paralyzed by dread as a terrible danger rushes toward me. I find that the best antidotes to climate anxiety and paralysis are being part of a community that shares my concerns and engaging in collective action. But there is another necessity: a vision of a just and joyful future. So often, it seems as if climate action is simply a way to make things slightly “less bad.” How different would it feel to be striving toward a beautiful, inclusive, sustainable future instead?

That is the goal of the nation-wide UU Climate Justice Revival, which we will participate in this September. People’s Church and the Unitarian Universalist Community Church will collaborate to reimagine what it would mean to shift from our Extractive Age toward a New Era of community care and wellbeing.

We will gather together to learn and reflect as a community. Facilitated discussions for adults and age-appropriate activities for children and youth will deepen our understandings about climate change, social inequities, community needs, personal strengths, and collective capacities. And the kids don’t have a monopoly on fun activities: the adults will get to create maps and use art (no talent required) to augment exploration of how the effects of climate change intersect with justice issues in our community.

This Revival is not just about seeing problems, it is about deepening our understanding so we can better identify ways to take meaningful action. We cannot transform the world by ourselves, however, we can discern what our congregations have to offer to address our community’s most pressing needs. And together, we can reflect on the diverse skills, experiences, knowledge, and innate gifts that individual members of our community can contribute to our combined efforts. No one person can do it all, but together we can envision what it would mean to transform our community into a place with a thriving ecosystem where all people are cared for.

Please come and participate in the climate justice discussion and celebration Sept. 28-29.

Saturday, 12:00-1:00 Potluck

1:00-5:00 Facilitated Discussions for Adults (in-person and virtual)

Revival Activities for Children and Youth (in-person)

Sunday, Multigenerational Worship Service



**Reimagine Together
From An Extractive
Age To A New Era**

Retrospective: Ann Terwilliger
September-October, Tuesday-Friday 10-4, Sunday Noon
Artist reception: Sunday September 22, at Noon

My life in art was transformed in 1973 when I enrolled in a design class at Mt. Mary College in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The teacher was a well-known artist and nun, Sister Mary Remy. She was recognized for her creative designs and joyful teaching. She taught design using silk screen printing on fabric as the medium.

We were taught in order to create designs, observation was the key, that everything in sight had the possibility to become a creative image, so our sketches evolved into remarkable designs. Organizing the designs on fabric created endless options. I was enthralled with the process and the seemingly limitless opportunities to experiment.

This fascination led me to explore printed, quilted, woven, and tapestry mediums bringing much joy to my life. My designs are sourced from the mountains, waterways, woods, and creatures I encounter while wandering, paddling, or digging in my own garden.

This exhibit brings together many of the creative approaches that I have explored over my years as an artist.



Film Discussion

Sept. 18th—we will be discussing "A Late Quartet" a 2013 film starring Philip Seymour Hoffman and Christopher Walken. DVDs are available at KPL.

The film discussion group generally meets on the 3rd Wednesday of the month, 3-4:30, on zoom. We choose movies on a monthly basis; check the weekly email for titles.

We welcome newcomers; and film suggestions. If you have questions, or want to get on the email list for updates/reminders, contact Pat Nelson, patnelson348@gmail.com; 269-716-3623.



UU THE VOTE 2024 **PHONEBANK**

Help reach out to Michigan voters before the November election!

RSVP: bit.ly/uutmiphonebank

For other phone banking and poll monitoring in MI contact nomijwtch@gmail.com



UU The Vote 2024 Phonebank

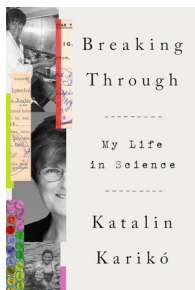
Sept. 10 & Oct. 29 7-9pm ET

Help reach out to Michigan voters before the November election!

RSVP: bit.ly/uutmiphonebank

For other phone banking and poll monitoring in MI con-

Study Group



The Study Group will be meeting on Monday September 9 at 7:30 p.m. via Zoom, to discuss: "Breaking Through: My Life in Science" by Katalyn Kariko. Dr. Kariko won the 2023 Nobel Prize in Medicine for her research that led to the mRNA vaccine for COVID. This memoir depicts how she overcame the challenges she faced during her career – including being denied tenure and having her lab taken away – and what philosophical and psychological resources helped her overcome those challenges. 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

Tim Bartik at tim.bartik@gmail.com.

Day	Date	Event	Time	Place
Sunday	Sept 1	Summer Service: George & Mary Hrbek	10:45am	Commons & Zoom
Tuesday	Sept 3	Building & Grounds	10:00am	At Church
		RE Committee Meeting	6:30pm	Rm 8
		Board Meeting	6:30pm	Rm 19
Saturday	Sept 7	RE Classroom Clean-Up	1:00pm	At Church
Sunday	Sept 8	Sunday Service: "Water Service"	10:45am	Commons & Zoom
		Me & White Supremacy Book Circle	12:30pm	L2
Monday	Sept 9	Study Group	7:30pm	Zoom
Tuesday	Sept 10	Building & Grounds	10:00am	At Church
Wednesday	Sept 11	Bazaar Steering Committee	6:30pm	Rm 19
Thursday	Sept 12	Bell Choir Rehearsal	5:30pm	Commons
		Evening Book Club	6:00pm	Home of Lois L
		Choir Rehearsal	7:00pm	Commons
Sunday	Sept 15	Sunday Service: "Exploring Our Values"	10:45am	Commons & Zoom
		Orientation for Parents & Youth	12:30pm	Rm 19
Monday	Sept 16	Green Sanctuary	4:00pm	Zoom
Tuesday	Sept 17	Building & Grounds	10:00am	At Church
		Library Committee	10:00pm	At Church
Wed	Sept 18	Film Discussion Group	3:00pm	Zoom
		Bell Choir Rehearsal	5:30pm	Commons
		Choir Rehearsal	7:00pm	Commons
Saturday	Sept 21	RE Teacher Orientation	1:00pm	Rm 19
		7th-12th Grade Sleep Over	6:00pm	At Church
Sunday	Sept 22	Sunday Service: Animal Blessing Service	10:45am	Commons & Zoom
		Art Wall Reception	12:30pm	Commons
Monday	Sept 23	NEWSLETTER DEADLINE		
Tuesday	Sept 24	Building & Grounds	10:00am	At Church
		Sermon Seminar	6:30pm	Rm 11
Wed	Sept 25	Finance Committee	2:30pm	Zoom
Thursday	Sept 26	LWVKA GOTV Postcard Party	4:00pm	Rm 11
		Bell Choir Rehearsal	5:30pm	Commons
		Choir Rehearsal	7:00pm	Commons
Saturday	Sept 28	Potluck & UU Climate Justice Revival	12:00pm	Commons
Sunday	Sept 22	Sunday Service: UU Climate Justice Revival	10:45am	Commons & Zoom

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."**