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People's Church

A Member Congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association

Volume 86, Issue 12

August 2025

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

Summer Services

Summer services will once again be reflections from People's People. Each service will include a ten-minute reflection from a speaker followed by discussion in small groups. Summer services will be multiplatform, taking place both in the Commons and over Zoom. Services begin at 10:45.



August 3: "This Interdependent Life: Rituals for Resilience" — Donna McClurkan

In June 2024, the Seven Principles were replaced with language describing Unitarian Universalism through a set of shared values, all centered around love. The UU value, Interdependence, states: *We honor the interdependent web of all existence. With reverence for the great web of life and with humility, we acknowledge our place in it.*



My reflection explores living deeply into that value in the context of these turbulent times. This exploration was informed by the wisdom of two elders: **Joanna Macy**, was an environmental activist, author and scholar of Buddhism, general systems theory and deep ecology, and **Francis Weller**, a retired psychotherapist, writer and soul activist. He has introduced the healing work of ritual to thousands of people.

August 10: "Summer Service"—Stefania Malacrida

August 17: "Summer Service"—Gordon Bolar

This service will feature a reading of the Ten-Minute Play: "Mokie's Dark Ride" by Gordon Bolar. Actors include Julie Schneeberger and Matthew Morris McCormick. The play examines the role of a mother and motherhood itself in an unconventional way.

August 24: "Summer Service"—Wendy Fritz

Traditional Chinese Medicine flows largely from the traditions of Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. It is rooted in the notion that all things are interconnected, and that the flow of the body is a microcosm of the outer world. At its root is the concept of yin and yang—the two opposing forces from which all life flows and from which life reflects back to. Come explore with me some of the basic precepts of this 3000+ year old practice and how that idea of interconnectedness continues to reflect and guide the modern world we inhabit.

August 31: "Summer Service"—TBD

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

Our annual poetry service was held on March 30, 2025 and what a treat it was to hear People's people and friends share their poems on the theme, Poetry of Predicament. A special creative exercise for those in attendance was an invitation to contribute to a community poem during a timed "free write" by making a list of things they love. Whew - we love a lot of things! We collected all those contributions from which Elizabeth Bullmer assembled a gorgeous community poem incorporating lines from every one of the sixty-one submissions. We - the poetry service planning team - hope you love it!

- Don Miller, Leeanne Seaver, Elizabeth (Eli) Bullmer, and Donna McClurkan



People's People Love: Community Poem 2025

~written by congregants, assembled by Elizabeth Bullmer

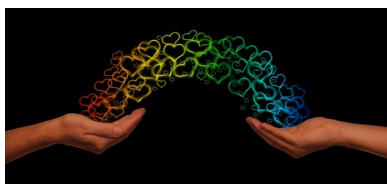
I love chicken enchiladas & tamales; family; warm tea in my belly; fresh bread; clean sheets; my new comforter; soft light & crawling into bed at night; sleep; dreams that linger; quiet days at home; complete silence; warm laundry; being alone.

I love tomatoes from the garden & oranges in winter; BBQ chicken; family dinner; white cake & reunions; unpredictable weather; early morning at my bird feeder; anything with fur, scales or feathers; tree frogs; farmer's markets; fresh asparagus; reading a good book; going out for breakfast; gluten-free muffins & rhubarb pie.



I love generous people; patience; forgiveness & laugh lines; solitary moments; sitting quietly; holding hands; sharing; full custody; swordfish with black olives & onions; truffles; a new hobby.
I love understanding; Persian food; voices in harmony; sweat & solidarity; listening to Dad tell a story; remembering those who walked before me; wind in my hair; eating great dessert; goat cheese; cream-filled pastries; curiosity; courage & honesty; fountain pens; a new word; memories.

I love cinnamon; dates & Key lime pie; ice cream on a warm day; French fries; lattes & pistachios; green gumdrops; snowdrops; Aha! moments & being alive; I love the cowlick in my sweetheart's hair; when my grown children grin; finding joy; listening; wonder; new beginnings & seeing a child win; cookies; my grandson's smile; a baby's laugh; watching children play; hugs; love stories; late night calls & the first conversation of the day.



I love simple beauty; meditating; spiral stairways; safe space; sunflowers & spearmint; smiling at strangers; taste of black licorice on my tongue; the first snow; shoveling; family pictures & crocuses; smell of fresh popcorn; puppy breath; Grandmother's biscuits; honey; laughing together; texture; dark chocolate; love itself & morning coffee.

I love gut-wrenching laughs; vulnerability; feeling physically strong; feeling free to share; my new apartment; long soaks in the tub.

I love common awareness & unplanned days; my beloved; tender touch;
walks at Asylum Lake; myself for all my failings & friends who I trust;
roasted root vegetables; Indian & Thai food; burn of spice on my tongue;
feeling full of life; sunsets & crystals; sacrifice; justice for everyone.



I love a quiet evening; stillness of morning; dancing & dancing & dancing;
running with wild abandon; searching for the Big Dipper; all the seasons;
thunderstorms; baba ghanoush; black raspberries & Hunan Gardens.
I love the gifts of the universe; opportunity; crunching lemon drops; creativity;
connecting with nature; taking deep breaths; bonfires; holding community;
the smell of fall leaves; lavender; daffodils & lilacs; trillium; tulips & goofy pansies;
sound of waves on the beach; chickens talking to themselves; native plants; chicka-
dees.

I love adventure movies; sighing; gratitude; lying in the sun; live bands & comfortable shoes;
being in the moment; new experience; beach sand; fishing; Netflix & The Moody Blues.
I love working with my hands; spoken truths; good government; cooperation;
sunshine on water & Lake Michigan; a completed task; physical labor;
volunteering; appreciation; taking action together. I love napping & cuddling & rainy days;
my old red wagon; escalators; bridges to nowhere; over-specific play-lists;
humming; fuzz balls; fireworks; lip-syncing to Chappell Roan; magic & Jesus.



I love singing in a choir; new crafts; The Kingston Trio & Sting; jigsaw puzzles;
cars & The Gypsy Kings; poetry; art; spirit animals; building things;
the bursting of bubbles; trampolines; woodpeckers; seagulls & hearing Darryl sing;
I love hellebore; paddle boarding; soft tee-shirts; baking; camping;
making it through greenlights; squirrels & ferns unfurling in early spring.

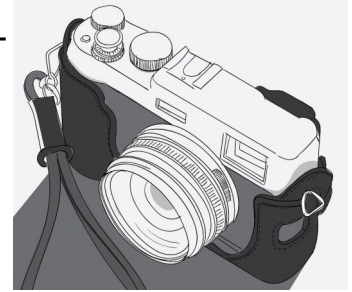
I love the hour before dawn & day-long trips; distant train whistles; a cardinal's song;
weeding; planting bulbs; dirt under my feet; smell of earth after rain; the Pacific air;
swimming; swelling buds on a maple; fruit; the full moon; flannel & flickering fire.
I love my Goldendoodle's endless joy; travel & discovery; Harry Connick, Jr. & British TV; watching cats
sleep; Depression glassware; forests; waterfalls & Ocean City.



I love angels; wet dog noses; animal tracks in snow; warm water; Easter
baskets;
good ideas & Pinot Grigio; Brandenburg Concertos; sharing with friends;
Yeats;
Braham's German Requiem; Dua Lipa; tricycles; vibrations & squeaky gates.
I love Biebl's Ave Maria; Christmas lights; Bach; watering plants; musicals;
knitting socks;
this beautiful, fragile planet & People's Church; sailing; cedar swamps & all kinds of rocks.

Photos At Church

Do you enjoy taking pictures? Do you have an eye for great photo opportunities? People's Church has a nice camera but we are in need of a few volunteers who are willing to go around on certain Sundays and take photos of People's People and activities happening. This is not something that would be needed every Sunday but if you are interested in potentially helping out with capturing memories, please reach out to Eli in the office!



Summer Religious Education

Fun summer Religious Education experiences for children happen during the Sunday morning worship service. Activities include stories, crafts, games, science experiments, nature walks, and plenty of fun. All ages are welcome from tots to teens. Any grown-ups who are willing to help please contact Mary Kate Webster, tomandmarykate@gmail.com. Kids can meet in Room 9 (the Buddha Room) at 10:45 on Sundays. Nursery available in Room 10 for babies and toddlers.

Meditation Class with Dave Wurtsmith

Do you suffer from intrusive thoughts? Would you like to cultivate some peace of mind? Ever wished that voice in your head would just shut up for a minute so you can think? Well unfortunately there is no cure for that, it's just the human condition; but there IS a way you can at least *become aware* of your mind's tendency to get stuck in recursive loops, and how to break out of those loops when you notice them. It's called mindfulness meditation, and our own Dave

Wurtsmith would be happy to teach you how it's done.

On Sundays, about half an hour after the service ends and the conversation peters out, Dave and any students who would like to join him will be meeting in Room 9 (The Buddha Room) for a class which will teach the basics of mindfulness meditation practice.



We need your help!



Our Religious Education Program is a cooperative effort: it works because People's people share their time and energy. Any contribution, big or small, is always deeply appreciated!

Scan the QR code to
access our RE
volunteer sign-up
form!



WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Our Religious Education Program is a cooperative effort: it works because People's people share their time and energy. Any contribution, big or small, is always deeply appreciated!

Scan the QR code or click the link to access our RE volunteer sign-up form! <https://forms.gle/FIxbgoVxHUsK5aj9>

IT IS EASY BEING GREEN **DO YOU HAVE A PASSION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE SOLUTIONS, OR GARDENING?**

YOU CAN BE ONE OF PEOPLE'S GREEN PEOPLE!

The Green Sanctuary Committee is looking for new members and new ideas. We meet monthly, usually on Zoom, to plan programs and activities and share insights and information. Our purpose is to encourage a sustainable lifestyle for People's Church members as individuals and as a faith community. Here are some of the things we've done recently. Some are behind the scenes and others are more obvious. There's lots of variety!

- Initiated a Net-Zero Task Force to find carbon reduction solutions such as our solar photovoltaic system, insulating the original part of the building, and fixing many less obvious energy-wasting elements of the church. Then we monitored the resultant savings of carbon emissions and dollars.
- Established People's rain garden for on-site stormwater management
- Hosted a 3-part, "With Respect to the Land" speaker/film series in winter/spring 2025
- Hosted Hope for Creation's Harvest of Unity event
- Hosted a UU Climate Justice Revival event, working with UUC
- Held a Climate Café
- Participated in the Kalamazoo Climate Crisis Coalition
- Wrote Green Spot articles for News & Views and periodic articles for Friday emails



During the coming year, we'd like to continue many of these activities, as well as participate in **worship services** as opportunities arise, broaden our **work with community groups**, conduct a **roadside cleanup** on 10th Street, and help with a **grounds clean-up day**. We hope to review our practices throughout the church to look for ways to **increase sustainability**. Also, in the years since People's Church was certified under the UUA's Green Sanctuary program, that program has evolved. We aim to become certified in the new version, **Green Sanctuary 2030**.

We would welcome your involvement as a committee member or working on a project. If you'd like to explore this, please contact Connie Ferguson, Tom Hackley, Allan Hunt, Sue Salvat, or Cybelle Shattuck, or just contact the office and let Eli know.

Nature Therapy Opportunity!

Our rain garden is in its second season. Native gardens take 3 years to establish. So what does that mean? We will tend the garden more closely this and next year. Years following, the maintenance time will be much less.



Join in for some very informal education about native-to-Michigan plants as we work on the rain garden. Over this season we'll pull weeds, observe plant growth, learn about the Chelsea Chop. We will regularly take deep cleansing breaths and work on creating a border around the garden so our mowers have an easier time of it.

Drop in on any 3rd Saturday of the month (the 4th Saturday will be our rain date). 9:30-11:30
 Bring your favorite garden tools and gloves and dig in!

In Later Years



Finding Meaning and Spirit in Aging
— —
BRUCE T. MARSHALL

New Book Group on Aging

In Later Years: Finding Meaning and Spirit in Aging by Bruce T. Marshall
Tuesday, August 19, 1:30-3pm on Zoom

Link: <https://uuma.zoom.us/j/5527667326>

This book, by a Unitarian Universalist minister who is a chaplain at a retirement community, will provide a jumping off point for conversations about topics such as change, legacy and memory.

For this session, we will read Chapter 5 on Exemplars.



Afternoon Book Club

This group continues at maximum participation. Contact Martha Beverly (marthabeverly@gmail.com) if you'd like to get on a waiting list. During the summer, a meeting will be scheduled to set the calendar for the upcoming year.

Evening Book Club—Newcomers Welcome!

Planning Meeting for 2025/2026 year 8/14, 6-7:45

Newcomers are welcome -- with or without suggestions for books to be reviewed in the upcoming year. This group leans toward quality fiction.

We meet at the home of Lois Loeffler, near church, at Winddrift Ave., 269-372-0038.

If you'd like to get on the group email for updates/reminders, contact Pat Nelson (patnelson348@gmail.com; 269-716-3623). She or Lois could also answer other questions; including if a book you may have in mind has already been reviewed by the group.



Avatar Legends Game

If you ever fantasized about riding Appa or dreamed of taking down the Fire Lord with Aang and the gang, then this is your lucky day. People's own Dave Wurtsmith is recruiting players for a short



Avatar Legends campaign (with the possibility of turning into something longer). No previous roleplaying experience is necessary but snacks are welcome, pregenerated character sheets and pencils will be provided and gameplay explained when we meet after service in Room LI on the first and third Sundays of each month. This event is designed with late teens to young adults in mind, but exceptions may be made for enthusiastic fans of Avatar: The Last Airbender and The Legend of Korra of any age. Contact Dave at dave.wurtsmith@gmail.com if

you're interested, or just show up at the first session on Sunday, August 3rd. Flameo, hotman!

Library Corner

WHAT YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW ABOUT PEOPLES' LIBRARY.....Part 2

1. Donations to the library are skimmed or read by library committee members for consideration according to the Selection Policy (below) and guesstimates of the reading preferences of church members. The books that are not chosen for inclusion in the library can be returned to the donor or saved for the White Elephant sale. Remainders from the sale are donated to Kalamazoo Public Library Friends or to a used book sale.
2. Titles recommended in emails from inSpirit: the UUA Book and Gift Shop or the shop's catalog are largely the source of most library purchases. Other titles might be spotted in a library or noticed in reviews. In many cases the book is borrowed from a local library or ordered through MeLCat so it can be examined more closely. Recommendations from church members are also welcome. The Library Committee purchases only adult titles; the RE collection is under the supervision of Diane Melvin, RE Director.
3. When books are purchased for the library, they are ordered from a used book website like Thriftbooks, Alibri, or AbeBooks. If only new copies are available, books are ordered from inSpirit or purchased from This Is a Bookstore, a local bookstore. Previously, books were ordered from Amazon in an attempt to save money. Seeking "very good" copies from used book sites or utilizing the UU website or a local store has not made a noticeable financial difference. This Is a Bookstore provides a small discount.



People's Church Library Selection Policy **Adopted October 20, 1998**

Our primary need is for new, up-to-date books on contemporary trends in Unitarian Universalism and other religions, current social issues, and other thinking of our day.

We will include books and other materials that deal with Unitarian Universalism, Humanism, Buddhism, Naturalism, Paganism, and other religious materials by and about UU ministers and lay members; materials dealing with contemporary issues such as ethical dilemmas and social justice, spiritual and philosophical issues, and personal and church health and growth.

The Library Committee will evaluate donated books according to our policy. Those found to be compatible will be added; others will be donated to Kalamazoo Public Library Friends or to a used book sale. Ordinarily we will not add fiction or duplicate copies to the collection.

All members of the Library Committee are volunteers although some have had library backgrounds. Members are Susan Stafford, Marijo Steenstra, Nancy Stern, and Lois Loeffler.

A new section of books is in the development stage. This is the PP or People's People section which will contain books written by People's members, past or present. Examples: Bill Beverly's Dodgers, Beth Bullmer's Skipping Stones on the River Styx, and Michael Pritchard's Moments with Millie. If you have written a book or know of a church member who has written a book and would like to donate a copy, please let the committee know by sending an email to loisloeffler@gmail.com.

Cultivating Spiritual Resilience

As I celebrate turning 60 years old this month, I cannot recall a more reprehensible political climate than the season we are living through right now, and I remember watching Nixon's resignation speech on my 9th birthday after the Watergate Scandal.

How do we cultivate the spiritual maturity to skillfully navigate such times? How do we help our children and youth develop the skills and practices necessary to mindfully live in this world?

Our religious education curriculum this year is focused on cultivating spiritual resilience through mindfulness and meditation for all ages.

Through engaging stories, hands-on activities and a variety of spiritual practices, children, youth and adults will have opportunities to learn and grow and practice mindful living.

Listening in and compassionately being present to all that arises in our bodies, hearts and minds helps us to be fully present to all that exists. This can help us to metabolize the challenges and trauma that can accumulate from living under oppressive systems.

Consistent engagement in these practices can help all of us cultivate minds that can see the world with greater nuance and wisdom as well as more compassionate hearts.

Stay tuned for opportunities to register for these new classes over the next couple of months.

May we all find ways to offer ourselves and others as much space and grace as we can each day as we are living in these difficult times.

May it be so and Blesseed Be, *Diane Melvin*
Director of Religious Education



Summer RE with Children

Mary Kate Webster continues to lead our Summer RE Sundays for preschoolers to teens, introducing kids to captivating books, fun games, and imaginative crafts. She has exciting plans for this month. Build spoon catapults to launch mini marshmallows! Try a top secret edible science experiment!

Our Summer RE program boasts great volunteers. In August, we'll be meditating with Dave Wurtsmith and crafting with Chris Semelbauer.

Thank you also to Becca Sparks, Maggie Wilson, Jen Docsa-Kohler, Rowan Jakobah, and Joe Tourtois for sharing our summer activities.

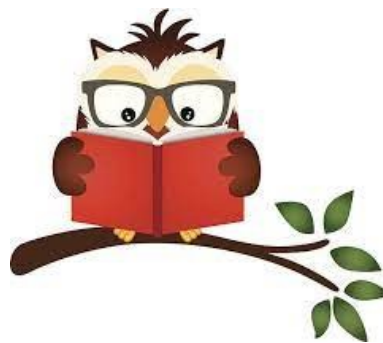
We meet in Room 9 at 10:45, but we'll probably be outside at pick-up time. Snack is provided, so please let us know of any food allergies when you drop off your munchkins. Before 10:45, kids have supervised play in Room 12. Nursery is available in Room 10 for babies and toddlers.

Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education (OWL)

All 7th & 8th graders are invited to participate in our upcoming OWL class which will take place during our regular religious education time slot this church program year.

A collaborative project by the Unitarian Universalist Association and the United Church of Christ, OWL is the Crowning Jewel of religious education program. Participants learn about sex education steeped in our UU values of consent, respect, responsibility, & open, honest communication in a positive affirming environment.

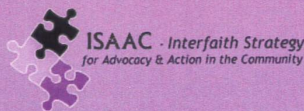
Our trained facilitators include Rowan Jakobah, Missy Howse-Kurtz, Ben Jones and Pam Wadsworth. If you would like your 7 or 8th grader to participate and you do not receive a letter in the mail by mid-August, please email me at re@peopleschurch.net.



Support Social Justice!

Join ISAAC for its fundraiser that is also fun! Let's have a large contingent of People's people at the

Walk/Run/Roll on Saturday, September 6 at Spring Valley Park. This year's theme is *Justice on the Move: Rally Resist, Reform*. Activities and tabling begin at 2:30pm.



BELOVED COMMUNITY WALK/RUN/ROLL

Justice on the Move: Rally, Resist, Reform

September 6, 2025

2:30pm

Spring Valley Park

- **Open To All Ages 0-100+**
- **Wheelchair, Walker, Stroller, Bike Friendly**
- **Choose your own movement, pace & distance**
- **Register by August 22 for the lowest costs!**

**Childcare
Provided**

**Music,
Singing,
Dancing
and Food!**

**Community,
Civic and
Faith
Vendors**

**Unity,
Fellowship,
Faith, Hope,
Wellness**

To Register: -Go to runsignup.com
-Click "Find a Race"
-Type in: **ISAAC** & click enter

Or

**Scan the
QR Code**



People's Church is a founding member of ISAAC (Interfaith Strategy for Advocacy & Action in the Community), an organizing network of more than 30 congregations and organizations working together for social justice in Kalamazoo County.

By signing up and participating, you support ISAAC's work on anti-racism, housing, and gun violence reduction. You also gain the opportunity to meet, walk and talk with community members from various congregations.

Register and pay at runsignup.com (click Find a Race; type in ISAAC and hit enter or click here: <https://runsignup.com/Race/MI/Kalamazoo/ISAACWalkRunRollJusticeOn-TheMoveRallyResistReform>). Fees range from \$10-25, depending on age. Be sure to include your size for the Walk/Run/Roll t-shirt. If you are at church, please also add your name to the list of participants on the ISAAC poster

so we can see our numbers grow!

Rochelle Habeck & Denise Hartsough

Art Wall

The Traveling Hen House Exhibition

Artist: Brian Walters

Brian Walters is a Kalamazoo native who started painting with acrylics in 2003 at the age of 46. His work is best described as eclectic and quirky. It runs the gambit from being silly and fun to dark and serious.

"Art is very much a part of who I am."

This exhibit includes several themes which focus on: Social Justice, Airstream Trailers, Footwear Collection, Chickens in Famous Paintings, and more.



A/V & Zoom

We are calling for more volunteers to be trained on our A/V and Zoom set up! If this is something that you are interested in and willing to learn, please reach out to Elijah at office@peopleschurch.net or sign up for a training spot here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0D4CA5AD2EA4FE3-56632225-summer#/>



While running A/V can seem overwhelming, it is all set up to be as user friendly as possible! Our existing AV team will help train you to make sure you feel comfortable! **Curious what it's like? Sign up for a training shift to see what it's like to be 'in the A/V booth' during a service!**

Sunday Morning Coffee Helpers

Coffee on Sunday mornings after service is a beloved tradition here at People's Church but it doesn't happen by magic. We're looking for additional volunteers to help make this happen every week! Please sign up here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/508054BA9AC22A13-45217221-coffee> if you're interested in learning the ropes and joining the rotation of folks who make the coffee & clean up afterwards!



Sunday Morning Greeters



Do you like to smile at people and say hello? Do you like to meet new people at church? Come join the greeters in making every person's first moment at church a warm one. One of the key pieces of hospitality on Sunday mornings is greeting people as they come in the front door, making sure they feel welcome.

Ideally, we would like to have two people available to greet each Sunday. This would give greeters an opportunity to better know their partner for the day and to provide two people to connect with visitors or personally show them where to find orders of service, coat racks, coffee, and help them feel at home at People's. Ideal times for greeting are from 10:10 am to 10:50 am.

Please consider signing up below to help make People's the warm and inclusive community we all know and enjoy. Or talk to the greeter on Sunday to learn what they love about being a greeter.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/508054ba9ac22a13-health#/>

Day	Date	Event	Time	Place
Sunday	August 3	Summer Service	10:45am	Commons & Zoom
		Avatar Legends	12:15pm	Room LI
Tuesday	August 4	Building & Grounds	10:00am	At Church
Wednesday	August 5	RE Classroom Set Up	5:00pm	At Church
Sunday	August 10	Summer Service	10:45am	Commons & Zoom
		Meditation Class	12:15pm	Room 9 (Buddha Room)
Tuesday	August 12	Building & Grounds	10:00am	At Church
Saturday	August 16	Rain Garden Work Day	9:30am	Church Grounds
Sunday	August 17	Summer Service	10:45am	Commons & Zoom
Monday	August 18	Green Sanctuary	4:00pm	Zoom
Tuesday	August 19	Building & Grounds	10:00am	At Church
		Library Committee	10:00pm	At Church
		Book Group on Aging	1:30pm	Zoom
Sunday	August 24	Summer Service	10:45am	Commons & Zoom
Monday	August 25	NEWSLETTER DEADLINE		
Tuesday	August 26	Building & Grounds	10:00am	At Church
Wednesday	August 27	Finance Committee	2:30pm	Zoom
Sunday	August 31	Summer Service	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."**