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People's Church

A Member Congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association

Volume 87, Issue 3

November 2025

Sunday Services—10:45 a.m.

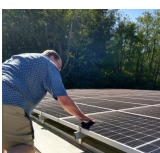
The Zoom link for People's Church services is: <https://uuma.zoom.us/j/5527667326> or
By phone: 1-646-876-9923, ID: 552 766 7326

November 2: "The Day of the Dead" - Stefania Malacrida

Nov 2 is the "Day of the Dead" in Italy, a festivity concomitant with Halloween and yet very different from its American equivalent. Thanks to the guidance of Rev. Rachel Lonberg and her Writing Sermon Class, I am glad to share my experience with you. There will be a ritual at the end. Please bring a picture (or pictures) of your departed loved one(s) in case you want to participate.



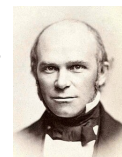
November 9: "A Question of Solar Power" - Rev. Rachel Lonberg & The Board of Trustees



This service will feature a (probably) brief congregational meeting about the proposal to purchase the solar panels on the roof of the church building (for more information on this proposal, see elsewhere in the newsletter), as well as music, meditation, reflection and (most) everything else you expect from a Sunday service at People's Church.

November 16: "Remembering Theodore Parker" - Rev. Rachel Lonberg

Theodore Parker was a Unitarian minister and a leading theologian and abolitionist in the middle of the 19th century. In this moment when our values are calling us to act in new and different ways, Rev. Rachel invites us to take a moment to learn (or re-learn) some of the stories of this good ancestor and reflect on how his example might inspire us now.



November 23: "(Almost) Everything I Need to Know about Beloved Community I Learned from The Muppets" - Rev. Rachel Lonberg



The creations of Jim Henson—including Sesame Street, The Muppets, and more—hold so many lessons about how to create community across difference. This service will feature some iconic music from The Muppets and Sesame Street. This service will be most meaningful if you have a basic knowledge of The Muppets and Sesame Street characters.

There are many books, DVDs, and more available at local public libraries. (Even if you know the basics, wouldn't it be fun to watch a Muppet movie again?)

November 30: "Hymn Sing"

Rev. Dr. Otis Moss III has said: "When the people sing together something happens that can't be replicated by singing alone..." We invite you to our hymn sing service; People's people will reflect on hymns and songs that have had special meaning to them over the years and then we will sing a few verses from each together. We also look forward to sharing new creations from our new virtual hymnal. Music connects us, expresses our emotions, lifts us up, and heals us. Come, sing a song with us.



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

Update from the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees met in October to review current projects and upcoming events at People's Church.

A congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, November 9, as part of the service, to vote on purchasing our solar panels. Members can fully participate in person or via Zoom. The Board called this meeting with the hope that the congregation will approve the purchase, reflecting our shared commitment to environmental sustainability.

The Board also reflected on what it means to be a church of justice—living our UU values through compassion, action, and a commitment to equity.



Helping on Sunday Mornings

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/20F0D4CA5AD2EA4FE3-58145378-church/5865393#/>

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#/>

Please join in for the Fine Art Sale & Holiday Bazaar! Saturday November 22nd 9:00 – 3:00

Our Annual Fine Art Sale and Holiday Bazaar is a signature event for our church and community. All our members, friends, and family members play a part in making it a success. The Bazaar supports our church budget, helps to fund our programs and service to others, and introduces us to the wider community. Here are ways you can help! **All links are available on our website at: <https://peopleschurch.net/news/peoples-church-fine-art-sale-holiday-bazaar-returns-november-22nd/>**

- 1. Plan to do your holiday shopping at the Bazaar!** It's hard to find a more interesting variety of gift items than you will find at our Bazaar. Bring your list and find the perfect choices right here from 31 local vendors. Shop local! See who our 2025 artists are [HERE](#). Also purchase tickets at the main desk to win one of our gorgeous raffle baskets brimming with a variety of contributed items from our artists.
- 2. Help promote the event!** Email the flyer ([HERE](#)) to your friends, colleagues, neighbors and family and invite them to join you at the event. RSVP to our Facebook event. Share the event and post to your social networks. Please take bazaar flyers from the sign-up table if you go to places where these can be posted. Take the cards with you to your workplace and community events to share. Call a friend. Your personal invitations work best.
- 3. Put out a yard sign on Sunday morning, November 16th.** Our yard signs have been one of the most effective ways to attract new customers, and due to your generous donations, we are thrilled that we have even more signs to display throughout the community this year. Get creative about placing the signs! If you don't have a space to display one, can you think of a friend, neighbor or favorite business owner who would be willing to post one on their property? If you live on a busy road, can you convince your next-door neighbors to each post a sign? Three signs in a row on neighboring properties really catches the eye! Sign out one (or a few) of the signs at church in November, and display them from November 16-22.
- 4. Make crafts or bake treats for Peoples Specialties.** The foyer will be beautifully arranged to sell your homemade items: crafts, breads, jams,

snack mixes, baked goods, candies, vegan and gluten-free foods, and our famous frozen pasties. (No frozen entrees will be sold this



year.) This is our main profit-making area, and every item sold here comes from your generous contributions of your home-made goods. Sign up at church or [HERE](#) with what you will make. Please drop off your food item contributions on Friday the 21st between 4 pm and 7 pm for pricing and arranging. Crafts can be dropped off to Eli at the main church office at any time.

5. Eager workers needed for Monday Madness.

Sign Up [HERE](#) to come on **Monday evening, November 17th from 6 - 7:30 pm** to help clear the Commons and Foyer of chairs and furniture and to begin to set up for the Bazaar. **Pizza will be served! Youth are welcome!**



- 6. Sign up to work a shift at the Bazaar on November 22nd.** Helpers will be needed as salespeople to staff Peoples' Specialties tables, and we need many hands for cleaning up at 3 PM. Please sign-up at the Bazaar table in the foyer or [Clean Up Crew Sign Up HERE](#), [Specialty Table Helpers Sign Up HERE](#).

- 7. Help host our guests.** Many people come to our Bazaar because they like the warm and friendly people. Please greet everyone and thank our vendors, too.



- 8. Grab lunch or coffee and pie at the Mini-café.** This year we will host a mini-café for our vendors and volunteers. Please note that the mini-café is NOT open to the general public. If you have volunteered to help with the Bazaar or contributed donated items, you are welcome to purchase your lunch or a treat and grab a beverage. Food will be served cafeteria style from the Kitchen, with food to be eaten in Room 9. (And we need folks to bake brownies or pumpkin pies to be served at the mini-café [Sign Up HERE to contribute your homemade brownies or pumpkin pies](#)). Since the mini-café will not be available to the public, please access it discreetly from the far hall to the rear of the church.



Questions? Please check with Elijah in the church office
Thank you for helping make this a huge success!

Special Congregational Meeting

November 9, as part of the Sunday Service

The Board of Trustees invites all People's Church members to a special congregational meeting to consider the question 'Shall the congregation spend up to \$38,000 to purchase the solar panels on the roof of the church building?'



This meeting will take place as a portion of the Sunday service on November 9 with members able to fully participate both in person and via Zoom. Voting on the final motion will happen via mail and electronic means for two weeks following the meeting.

Solar Panels Information Session

Saturday November 8, 11am-noon, in The Commons and Streaming Live on Zoom

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

This gathering is a chance for People's people to ask questions and learn more about the congregational meeting on November 9. There will be experts on the solar panels and their financing, our church parliamentarian, and members of the board of trustees on hand to answer questions and offer explanations. If you have questions but cannot attend this meeting, please reach out to Tom Hackley, church treasurer.

People's Church Solar Panels Frequently Asked Questions

- **What is the story behind our solar panels? How did we get here?**
 - At the initiation of the Green Sanctuary Committee, in December 2019 the People's Church Board entered into a contract with Helios Solar to purchase a solar system for the church. The purchase took the form of a power purchase agreement (PPA) whereby Helios Solar would install and own the system and People's Church would receive the generated electricity and gain credits from returning unused electricity back to the grid. Helios, as a for-profit company, benefitted from this arrangement because they could take advantage of tax credits that would not be available to the church, as a non-profit entity. There was no up-front cost to People's Church for this contract. People's Church pays Helios for the energy at a slightly lower rate than it does for energy from Consumers Energy and enjoys the benefit of knowing that more than 40% of our electricity comes directly from this renewable source. After 5 years, the church acquired the right to purchase the system from Helios at its depreciated value as set forth in the contract. The 5 years was over in December 2024, though we chose to defer the purchase option to a later date.
- **Why are we having a congregational meeting about this now?**
 - The board called this congregational meeting with the hope that the congregation will approve the purchase of the solar panels before the end of 2025, before the electricity rates we pay to Helios increase. We are having a congregational meeting to vote on this purchase because our bylaws require the congregation to vote on any non-budgeted expenditure that exceeds 5% of the total annual operating budget. This purchase is big enough that we need to make this decision together.
- **How much do the solar panels cost?**
 - \$37,408. This is the depreciated cost of our nearly six-year-old solar panels. An equivalent new system would cost around \$60,000 today.
- **What is the financial impact of purchasing the solar panels?**
 - In the first year, we will save \$3,750 in energy costs by no longer paying Helios for the energy produced on our roof. (This is assuming our energy usage holds steady.) Our savings will increase by about \$150 annually for the duration of the contract. In roughly ten years, our ener-

gy savings will equal the cost of the solar panels.

- **What is the financial impact of not purchasing the solar panels right now?**
 - At the present time the church is paying Helios \$0.1642 per kilowatt hour for the generated electricity. On January 1, 2026 the rate will rise to \$0.1708 according to the escalator schedule in the contract. The rate goes up by 4% each year. We can exercise the buyout on December 31 of any year through 2033 at continued depreciating prices.
- **Where will the money to pay for the solar panels come from?**
 - If the membership approves this purchase, anyone who wants to join in paying for the solar panels can give to the People's Church Building Fund. Church leaders anticipate that most of this purchase will be made with money from the Palmer Fund. The Palmer Fund is the church's unrestricted reserve fund. This is money given as unrestricted gifts to the church, surpluses from annual budgets, and the money earned by investing those funds. The current balance of the Palmer Fund is approximately \$250,000. The past generosity of People's people make this purchase possible.
- **What can we expect of the solar panels going forward? How long will they last?**
 - As a rule of thumb, solar panels are assumed to last 25 years, which is when they produce about 85% of their original output. However, newer technology is longer lasting, and the history of photovoltaics in widespread use is limited, so that rule of thumb may be outmoded for our system. This technology has been advancing at a steady pace over the last 2 decades, with efficiencies improving and prices decreasing. We expect around 19 more years of optimal energy production.
- **Our solar panels generate 40% of our electricity. Why not more?**
 - The size of our solar array was limited by state utility regulations. We signed our contract with Helios in 2019 in order to take advantage of full net metering rates. We are grandfathered into those rates. Given the changing costs, utility rates, regulations, and government incentives, the financial analysis for an expansion of our system will look quite different. In recent years, we have focused our efforts on making our building more energy efficient, decreasing our total energy consumption.
- **I've just read a lot about numbers and finances. What about ethics and morals? What does our Unitarian Universalist faith say about this?**
 - As Unitarian Universalists, one of our core values is interdependence. "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. We covenant to protect Earth and all beings from exploitation. We will create and nurture sustainable relationships of care and respect, mutuality and justice. We will work to repair harm and damaged relationships."
 - The installation of solar panels is one way to create more sustainable relationships with the world around us and mitigate some of the harm caused by fossil fuel emissions. The purchase of the solar panels will allow Helios to move forward with more solar projects in our community, increasing the amount of solar energy in our community, moving us all toward sustainability, care and mutuality. Purchasing the solar panels can be one way we live our values.
- **I have a question that isn't answered here. What should I do?**
 - We will have an info session on Saturday November 8 at 11am in the Commons and streaming on Zoom, featuring our church treasurer, parliamentarian, and board members. If your questions can't wait or that time doesn't work for you, contact Tom Hackley, who is both our church treasurer and someone who was a leader in the installation of the solar panels. He will be able to answer your questions or direct you to the right person.



Inquirers Series

These are classes for newcomers and anyone else who wants to know more about People's Church.

- Saturday November 8, 1-3pm: Telling our Stories – share some of your spiritual journey and learn a bit of the history of People's Church and Unitarian Universalism
- Saturday December 13, 1-3pm: How People's Church Works – go deeper into how the church works – religious education, Sunday services, governance, and a building tour
- Saturday January 10, 1-3pm: from Visitor to Member – learn about the meaning of membership and opportunities to get involved right away, including justice and environmental programs, chalice circles small group ministry, and caring for one another in the congregation.

All of these classes are preceded by a potluck lunch – bring something to share!

Please sign up to attend here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/508054BA9AC22A13-59803997-membership#/>

Childcare is available with advanced notice.

If you are interested in church membership or more information but cannot attend these sessions, please reach out to Rev. Rachel at minister@peopleschurch.net or 269-389-9721. Attending these classes is not required for membership.



Special Collection: Lincoln International Studies Elementary School



Sunday, November 16

People's Church has a long connection with Lincoln Elementary – as tutors and classroom helpers and supporting the school in other ways. We continue that relationship with Lincoln Elementary by supporting the school with a special collection, supplying much needed money that leaders of this school can use to meet the needs of students and their families.

Rev. Rachel on Vacation November 24-30

Rev. Rachel will be on vacation November 24-30, celebrating the Thanksgiving holiday with her family. If you need to reach her urgently, please call or text her on her cell phone at 269-389-9721.



Legacy or Planned Giving

While the annual pledge drive and other forms of giving provide for the annual operation of the church, a Legacy gift is put into a fund to be used by the Board of Trustees to ensure the continuing stability of our church home and its historic and emerging programs. Those funds may be used for major improvements and repairs to the building and grounds, to add to the sustaining endowment funds, or to ensure the survival of the church in difficult times.

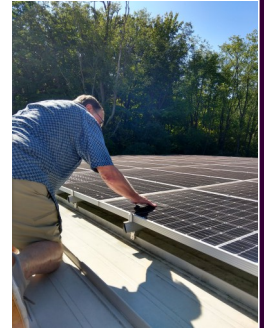
Read more here: <https://peopleschurch.net/news/legacy-giving/> or contact the church office!



People's Solar Photovoltaic System: How It Happened, What's Next



The Green Sanctuary Committee, responding to a suggestion from Tom Hackley, recommended in December 2019 that People's enter into a contract with Helios Solar to purchase a solar system for the church. Because of a tax credit that was available at the time, it was advantageous for Helios, a for-profit company, to install and own the system, while People's received the generated electricity and any credits earned from returning unused electricity to the grid. People's paid nothing up front. We pay Helios for electricity generated at a rate slightly lower than what we pay Consumers Energy. We get more than 40% of our electricity from this renewable source. The size of our solar system was limited by state utility regulations. The contract gives us the right to purchase the system from Helios at its depreciated value after December 2024. Solar panels generally last about 25 years before dropping to 85% of their original output, meaning that we can expect ours to be reasonably efficient through 2049.



We are paying Helios \$0.1645 per kilowatt hour for the generated electricity, with a 4% increase each year. This will bring the cost to \$0.1708 in January. Our present cost for electricity from Consumers is \$0.1876, while they credit us \$0.1518 for excess returned to the grid through net metering. We've been generating about 22,799 kilowatt hours per year, so that the anticipated invoices from Helios in 2026 will total \$3894. If we buy the system on December 31, 2025, it will cost \$37,408. We can purchase the system on December 31 of any year through 2033 at continued depreciating prices. Helios will maintain the system for an annual contract fee of \$250.



We moved quickly to install our system in 2019 to take advantage of the then full net metering rates. We are grandfathered into those rates; today's rates are tied to wholesale rates paid by the utility and would be much lower. Expanding our existing system would look much different financially. Because of the difference between what we pay for power we purchase from Consumers and what Consumers pays us for excess power we return to the grid, it may be worthwhile to add batteries within the next few years to minimize the amount of power we need to purchase.

The proposed purchase reinforces our commitment to move toward net zero carbon emissions at People's Church, which is consistent with our values. It will provide an 11% return on our money and free electricity after 10 years. By decreasing our carbon emissions, we'll improve the future for our grandchildren and for other living things on our planet.

Climate Conversations: Sustainable Holiday Shopping

Friday November 14th, 12:00-1:00pm

Jessica Thompson, Bee Joyful Shop Founder
Join us using this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84982011078>

Jessica Thompson, Bee Joyful Shop Owner - Join Jess Thompson, owner of Bee Joyful Shop—Michigan's 1st Zero Waste and Refillery, as she shares simple, meaningful ways to celebrate the holidays sustainably. With over 45 years of experience in sustainable living, Jess will guide you through creative alternatives to traditional gifting. Learn how to shop local, support small businesses, and explore eco-friendly options like handmade gifts, secondhand treasures, and experience-based presents that reduce waste and spread joy.



FRIDAY, NOVEMBER, 14 2025
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM | VIRTUAL

Climate Conversations

Sustainable Holiday Gifting

Jessica Thompson, Owner of Bee Joyful - Michigan's 1st Zero Waste and Refillery. With over 45 years of experience in sustainable living, Jess will guide you through creative alternatives to traditional gifting. Learn how to shop local, support small businesses, and explore eco-friendly options like handmade gifts, secondhand treasures, and experience-based presents that reduce waste and spread joy.



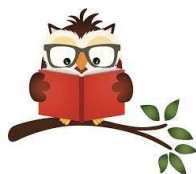
JESSICA THOMPSON
Bee Joyful Shop Founder

Kalamazoo
Climate
Crisis
Coalition



Join us using this link or
scan QR code:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84982011078>





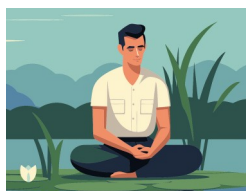
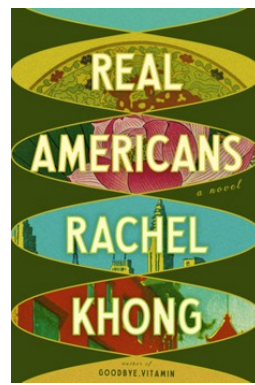
Evening Book Club—Newcomers Welcome!

"Real Americans" by Rachel Khong will be reviewed by Erin Hanley
November 13, 6-7:45.

We will continue to meet every 2nd Thursday (barring emergencies)
at the home of Lois Loeffler.

Newcomers are welcome. If you would like to get on the email list for updates and reminders, contact Pat Nelson, patnelson348@gmail.com, 269-716-3623.

This group leans toward quality fiction. The schedule for this church year is on the church website, under "Learning/Adult Programs"



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 the second Sunday of the month, about half an hour after the service ends and the conversation peppers 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.

Art Wall: Quilts by Maryellen Hains

Artist Reception TBD

Exhibit will be up through end of December

Artist Statement: In this show there are works from twenty plus years. I have been fortunate to travel widely over the years and many of my art works are inspired by the people, landscapes, history and myths of the cultures I visited. These quilts are part of several series including Amish, Guatemalan, Black and White, and Chintz. I tend to work in series because one idea leads to the next and by the time I am on my third piece, I am doing things I never could have thought of.



In Later Years



Finding Meaning and Spirit in Aging



BRUCE T. MARSHALL

In Later Years: Finding Meaning and Spirit in Aging by Bruce T. Marshall

Tuesday, November 18, 1:30-3pm on Zoom

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

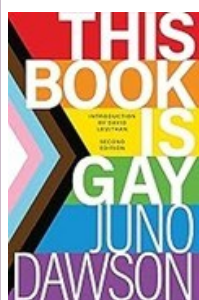
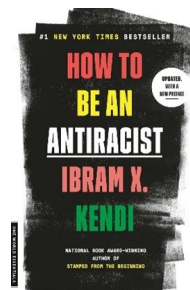
This book, by a Unitarian Universalist minister who is a chaplain at a retirement community, provides a jumping off point for conversations about aging with intentionality and care. For this session, we will read Chapter 8 on Legacy. All are welcome. (The discussion of this book will continue through February. The group will find new aging related topics to discuss after that.)

Library Corner

Though Banned Books Week has passed, it's always a good time to acquaint yourself with banned books, and People's Church Library has some on display for you to check-out.

How to Be an Antiracist, by Ibram X. Kendi — 305.8 Ke

At its core, racism is a powerful system that creates false hierarchies of human value; its warped logic extends beyond race, from the way we regard people of different ethnicities or skin colors to the way we treat people of different sexes, gender identities, and body types. Racism intersects with class and culture and geography and even changes the way we see and value ourselves. Kendi weaves an electrifying combination of ethics, history, law, and science with his own personal story of awakening to antiracism.

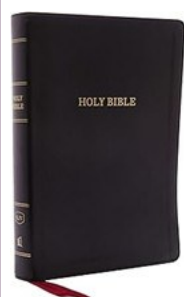
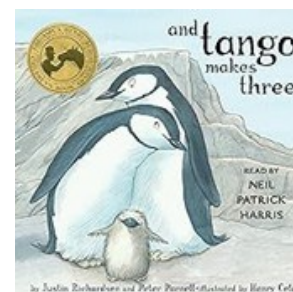


This Book Is Gay, by Juno Dawson — 306.76 Da

This candid, funny, and uncensored exploration of sexuality and what it's like to grow up LGBTQ also includes real stories from people across the gender and sexual spectrums, not to mention hilarious illustrations.

And Tango Makes Three, by Justin Richardson — J Ri K/I

This book fictionalizes the true story of two male penguins (Roy and Silo) who became partners and raised a penguin chick in the Central Park Zoo.

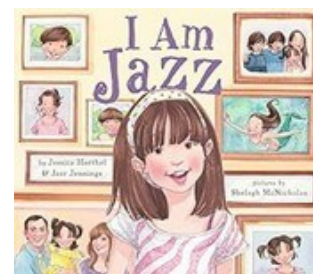


Holy Bible

People's Church Library has many different versions of the Bible with various features. Most can be found on the wall shelving under 220 Ho.

I am Jazz, by Jazz Jennings — RE 306.76 Je

From the time she was two years old, Jazz knew that she had a girl's brain in a boy's body. She loved pink and dressing up as a mermaid and didn't feel like herself in boys' clothing. This confused her family, until they took her to a doctor who said that Jazz was transgender and that she was born that way.



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

We Need One Another

In the midst of difficult times, we need each other more than ever. As situations in the world around us may feel scary and more unsure, deepening our connections with one another can provide invaluable mooring in the storm.

Time together at church can become a sanctuary and a respite. Whether we are gathering in worship, making pasties, caring for our building and gardens, or enjoying a potluck and Game Night, we are grounding together in community.

Meaningful opportunities for learning, growing, playing and loving together can provide a sliver of hope and comfort when things feel hard. The RE Committee is providing a variety of opportunities this year for People's people to gather together including monthly game night potlucks. We are not isolated and alone, we are a community that supports one another and we are stronger together!

I hope to see you at our next **Game Night and Potluck on Saturday November 29 from 5-8pm.**

May we lean into our sacred community when times feel hard.

Blessed Be, Diane Melvin, Religious Education Director



Adventure **W**onder & **E**xploration Labs

Our first AWE Labs were a great success! On the 4th Sunday of each month we are creating **A.W.E. Labs** for the 1st-6th graders to engage in.

To accompany our mindfulness curriculum we are providing opportunities for children to choose activities with a wide variety of rotating stations.

Our first AWE Labs included Zen Sand Gardens, Mindful apple eating exercise, making mindful glitter jars, writing Sokus, Yoga, Buddha Boards, finger labyrinths, making pinwheels, music and coloring.

Children report they loved rotating through the stations at their own individual pace and engaging in all the hands-on activities designed to practice the skills they are learning in their RE classes.



The annual **Mystic Lake UU Middle School Retreat** was a rousing success with 56 participants including 20 middle schoolers and parents from People's Church.

Archery, wagon ride, bog hike, animal adaptations, challenge course, carpet ball, fishing, campfire complete with skits and s'mores, UU youth worship and more were highlights of this fun weekend together in this beautiful place!

News about the families our Interfaith Resettlement Team is Helping



The families we are working with arrived after the President's STOP WORK ORDER January 21, 2025. This presidential executive order threw the entire resettlement process into chaos. Resettlement agencies throughout the country were told they would not be paid for their contracts to resettle newly arrived refugees and asylum seekers. Caseworkers were laid off and volunteer resettlement teams stepped in to fill the void that was created. Our Resettlement Team is helping three families that arrived in January.

Here is a brief update on the families:

The Nikzad Family of eight, mom and seven children ages 8-23 arrived January 20. This Afghan family has refugee status – they fled Afghanistan and went to Pakistan after the Taliban took over in August of 2021. Farida, the mom is learning English and gets to her English classes riding a bike that she taught herself to ride this spring. She is a very resourceful and determined woman who saved her family after her husband was killed fighting the Taliban. The oldest son, Rahme, is 23, is fluent in English, and has been working for Aunt Millie's Bakery since April, a job that was procured through the efforts of one of our resettlement team members. He has also learned to drive, with the help of Pat Van Slambroucke. The oldest daughter, Fatima, is 22 and since her arrival in the US has been able to get a new prosthetic leg with a digital knee - it's "high tech" and has to be charged every night! Through lots of physical therapy, Fatima has a goal of being able to walk without crutches. She's made an amazing amount of progress! Fatima wanted very much to continue her education and is enrolled at KVCC taking two courses this semester. Baktash, age 19 is a sophomore at Phoenix High School and rides his bike everywhere in town. He works part time at a Sushi Restaurant downtown and Pat is teaching him to drive as well. Two Maple Street middle schoolers, Karishma, (13), and Parweena, (11) are joining the middle school swim team in a couple of weeks. Parweena is a talented artist and she was given a scholarship at the Art Center this fall. The two youngest, Behista, (9) and Danish, (8) go to Spring Valley Elementary School and have made an excellent adjustment to their new home and they are learning English quickly.

The Ramadan Family of three, dad, Jalal, mom, Khetam and son Mohammad, age 14. The Ramadan's are Syrian, and have lived in Egypt the past 13 years when they fled the Syrian Civil War in 2012. They also have refugee status. Jalal and Khetam are learning English and attend ESL (English as a Second Language) classes two days a week at the Literacy Council. Jalal arrived with heart issues that have needed to be addressed medically. He is now almost ready to start a job, so our team is looking for a job for him that he can walk to or take a bus to. Khetam has been struggling with plantar fasciitis that makes it difficult to stand on her feet for very long and has finished a course of physical therapy and is ready to work. We are looking for a job for her as well. Mohammad is a freshman at Loy Norrix High School. He speaks fluent English and is interested on being on the school swim team. He learned to ride a bike this spring and enjoys working out with a buddy at the YMCA.

The Bwanzo Family

Nyota is a single mother of two boys: Lunda, age 2, and Asifiwe, age 9. In 2011, Nyota fled war in the Democratic Republic of Congo for a refugee camp in Zimbabwe.

Nyota has accomplished a lot since arriving in the United States in January 2025. She has learned to take the bus, pay her bills, and apply for jobs. Nyota was enthusiastically engaged in ESL classes when she first arrived, but is no longer able to attend due to her work schedule and a lack of child-care. Despite this, her English skills are improving. English is her 5th language!



Nyota is so proud of her job at the YMCA!

Day	Date	Event	Time	Place
Sunday	Nov 2	Sunday Service: "The Day of the Dead"	10:45am	Commons & Zoom
		Mindfulness Class	12:15pm	Room 9
Tuesday	Nov 4	Building & Grounds	10:00am	At Church
		Board Meeting	6:30pm	Room 19
Thursday	Nov 6	Bell Choir Rehearsal	6:00pm	Commons
		Choir Rehearsal	7:00pm	Commons
Saturday	Nov 8	Second Saturday @ Church	10:00am	At Church
		Congregational Meeting Info Session	11:00am	Commons & Zoom
		Second Saturday Potluck	12:00pm	At Church
		Inquirer's Class	1:00pm	Room 19
Sunday	Nov 9	Sunday Service: "A Question of Solar Power"	10:45am	Commons & Zoom
		Meditation Class	12:30pm	Room 9
Tuesday	Nov 11	Building & Grounds	10:00am	At Church
Thursday	Nov 13	Bell Choir Rehearsal	6:00pm	Commons
		Evening Book Club	6:00pm	Home of Lois L
		Choir Rehearsal	7:00pm	Commons
Sunday	Nov 16	Sunday Service: The Gods I Don't Believe in"	10:45am	Commons & Zoom
		Mindfulness Class	12:15pm	Room 9
Monday	Nov 17	Green Sanctuary	4:00pm	Zoom
Tuesday	Nov 18	Building & Grounds	10:00am	At Church
		Library Committee	10:00pm	At Church
		The Inner Work of Age	1:30pm	Zoom
Wednesday	Nov 19	Finance Committee	2:30pm	Zoom
Thursday	Nov 20	Bell Choir Rehearsal	6:00pm	Commons
		Choir Rehearsal	7:00pm	Commons
Saturday	Nov 22	FINE ART SALE & HOLIDAY BAZAAR!	9AM-3PM	AT CHURCH
Sunday	Nov 23	Sunday Service: "(Almost) Everything I Need to Know about Beloved Community I Learned from The Muppets"	10:45am	Commons & Zoom
Monday	Nov 24	NEWSLETTER DEADLINE		
Tuesday	Nov 25	Building & Grounds	10:00am	At Church
Saturday	Nov 29	Potluck & Game Night	5:00pm	Commons
Sunday	Nov 30	Sunday Service: "Hymn Sing"	10:45am	Commons & Zoom

The Full Calendar of Events can be viewed online at <https://peopleschurch.net/events-2/>

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."**