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People's Church

A Member Congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association

Volume 87, Issue 5

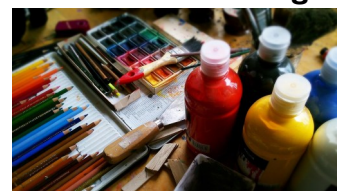
January 2026

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

January 4: "When Bad People Make Good Art" — Rev. Rachel Lonberg

Is it possible to separate the art from the artist? How do we navigate the ethical thicket that arises when we learn that art that is meaningful to us is made by people who have acted abhorrently? There are no simple answers, but Rev. Rachel will explore some guidelines that might help us live with integrity in a world where we are all fallible.



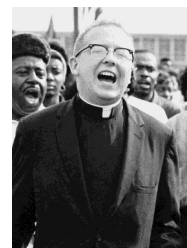
January 11: "Help, Care, Fear & Disability" — Rev. Rachel Lonberg



Rev. Rachel has been reading disability history and theory recently. She was struck by an idea from Jennifer Natalya Fink that our cultural ableism and fear of disability is, at its core, a fear of needing care. In our community, we know that we are interconnected and we try to care for each other. Can knowing disability history and disability theory help us better care for each other and receive care from each other? This service will include opportunities to sign up to be part of our caring teams.

January 18: "Remembering James Reeb" — Rev. Rachel Lonberg

On Martin Luther King Jr. weekend, we will remember the life of Unitarian Universalist Civil Rights martyr James Reeb. Reeb, a white Unitarian Universalist minister serving in Boston who went to Selma, Alabama in 1965 to support voting rights. While there, he was attacked by white supremacists and died. We will learn (or re-learn) his story reflect on how his example remains relevant today.



January 25: "Hymn Sing (Again)" — People's Church musicians

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. Note: This is a second attempt to hold a service originally planned for November 30, 2025 that was cancelled due to weather.



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



Dear People's people,

A few reminders and invitations to keep our congregational life running smoothly as the new year begins, or if you prefer a pun, some news UUs can use:

The Parking Lot: To save money, resources, and energy, **the portion of the church parking lot closest to 10th street is not being plowed this winter.** (Given the seasonal shift to Zoom attendance during the winter, this portion of the parking lot has been unused over the last few years in the coldest months of the year.) Be aware that this area of the parking lot might be extra icy and snowy – and park closer to the building. We're trying this out this year – let me know what you think.

Joys and sorrows etiquette: you all are generally great at our spoken joys and sorrows ritual. (Guests in our pulpit comment on it.) Here are a few reminders to keep things going smoothly:

Remember that *joys and sorrows is not confidential*. While we do not share this portion of our services on YouTube, your sharing is heard by a lot of people in The Commons and on Zoom. There is no expectation that people won't talk to you (or others) about what you shared. If you

want to participate in our ritual but don't want something to be widely known, dropping a stone without speaking is a great option.

Share about your life. Our ritual is best at holding personal joys and sorrows, not world-historical events – even when those are what is breaking our heart or filling us with joy.

Be careful about sharing about someone else's life. I always ask permission before sharing someone else's joy, sorrow, or milestone – I invite you to do the same. If you are sharing someone else's story, please do not share identifying details without their permission. Identifying details could be their full



name, role in our community, or anything else that would ensure that listeners could identify them. Our community is interconnected. Several times, People's people have learned about illnesses of coworkers and acquaintances from someone else sharing about it at joys and sorrows – well before the coworker or acquaintance had planned to share it widely. Saying 'my friend' or 'my neighbor' or a first name (if it's a common name) is a better option than sharing news that someone else might not want shared yet with everyone they know.

Membership: Signing a Bond of Union is the act that makes a person a member of People's Church – signing onto the promise that People's people have made since the 1890s. In most areas of our congregational life, we don't make a distinction between members and non-members – everyone's People's people! – but there are a few privileges and responsibilities that are only for members. These include voting in congregational meetings and serving in a few leadership positions. Most People's people become members sometime between a few months or a few years after beginning to attend the church, usually around the time that the church feels like 'theirs.' A few folks never become members for a variety of reasons. We trust everyone to make the decision that is right for them. If you are interested in signing a Bond of Union and becoming a member of the church, please talk to me. We typically have member recognition rituals during Sunday services to celebrate our newest members. We haven't had any in a while because our newest members haven't wanted public recognition. People are becoming church members steadily, even when we don't publicly celebrate them. (And what a gift it is that people don't have to receive public attention if they don't want to!)

Church funds: In mid-December when I write this note, **People's people have contributed \$23,304 toward the purchase of the solar panels.** Thank you all for your generosity! There's \$14,104 remaining toward the purchase price. The amount not donated by the end of the calendar year will come from the church's savings. By the beginning of 2026, we will be the owners of the so-

From the Minister Continued

lar panels on the roof of our church building. As of mid-December, the **People's Church resistance and resilience fund is currently out of money**. Over the past ten months, we have used this fund to meet the basic needs of folks most impacted by the policies of our federal government – including undocumented immigrants, asylees, and trans folks. We have helped many people navigate an impossible season and shown up as allies and accomplices with partner organizations in our community. I hope you feel proud of this good and important work.

If you have extra funds to share, we welcome your contributions to either of these projects.

History of the People's Church buildings:



In early 2026, I plan to preach a history of our church buildings. In addition to consulting our archives, I would love to talk to you. Do you have a story to share about the construction of our church buildings (or any of the major renovations?). I would love to hear your stories about our current building on 10th street or previous buildings at Park and Lovell or on South Park Street. (The latter was torn down in 1902, but perhaps you had a story handed down to you?) If you have a story to tell,



please send it my way or set up a time for us to meet.

Reimaging Communion: A church member with a Christian background asked me about the possibility of reimaging the Christian communion ritual. I would love to gather a small group of folks for whom communion is or has been a meaningful ritual for conversation about this. I think we could create something meaningful together. If you'd like to be part of this, please let me know. I'm excited for the possibilities that might emerge.

Building Rentals: Did you know that rooms in our church building are available to rent for events and meeting? We regularly host groups and organizations from our wider community in our church space for modest rental fees. **Please spread the word!** We can accommodate groups from a few to a few hundred at nearly any time except Sunday mornings. It is good for our church building to be used – the rental income supports our ministries and programs and people sometimes first learn about our congregation when they attend an event or meeting here hosted by a renter. Word-of-mouth is our best way to let people know that our building is available to them. If you (or someone you know) wants to host a gathering at People's Church, please contact Eli, our church administrator.

Wishing you the very best as you welcome the new year,
Rachel

Rev. Rachel away January 26 to February 2

Rev. Rachel will be away January 26 to February 2. She will be attending the Unitarian Universalist Ministers' Association Institute for the Learning Ministry in Albuquerque, New Mexico (and adding a few days of vacation to the end of the trip). This is a continuing education event that happens every three years – and this is the first time Rev. Rachel's schedule has allowed her to attend in person. You can learn more about this program here: <https://uuma.org/programs/uuma-institute/>

While she's away, Rev. Rachel will be away from email, but can be reachable by phone or text if you need her.



Inquirers Series

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

- **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 Offering Recipient: Black Lives Matter Mutual Aid



January 18, during the service

The BLM Mutual Aid is a sustained practice in collaborative community care and a step toward the accessible, equitable, and liberated world we want to realize. Established in 2020 during the Summer of Uprisings, this mutual aid effort provides resources Black families in Kalamazoo and Battle Creek.

We welcome funds from People's Church and other local community members interested in operating in solidarity. Resourcing the BLM Mutual Aid with monetary donations helps us to assure that we can respond to requests from families, and support emergency resource needs in our communities."

Second Saturday Potluck and programs

Saturday January 10, Room 19, noon-1pm

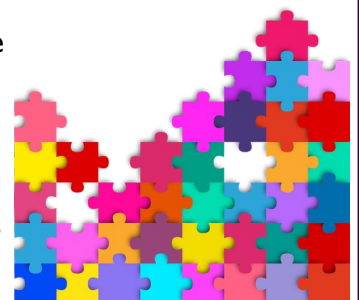
Come join a few People's people for lunch and conversation. Bring a dish to share. This meal is open to everyone.



Puzzle Exchange Overflowing!

Puzzle shelves are overflowing with neat puzzles, lots of 300 and 500 piece ones! Feel free to borrow a few to help entertain family members during the holiday season. Lots of hours of fun available. Space has been made on the shelves in the church library. Puzzles can be taken, returned, added & enjoyed at any time!

Make sure to check out the constantly changing supply of available puzzles on the Library shelves (next to the computer)





What's Happening with the Kalamazoo Climate Crisis Coalition (KCCC)?

Last spring the Federal Government cancelled an \$18.9 million grant to KCCC in partnership with the County, for rehabbing and energy efficiency retrofitting 300 homes in the older parts of Kalamazoo. The project also included training workers in the necessary trade skills, and creating four "Resilience Hubs" for relief and support of individuals during extreme weather and other emergencies.. KCCC had already rented office space, hired staff, formed partnerships with several non-profits and neighborhood associations, and begun to implement its program.

After taking stock and regrouping, the staff, board, and coordinating committee have gained new life and commitment to the mission. Since August, nearly 50% of KCCC's funding has been procured from foundations, the state, and individual donors (including a generous contribution from a special offering at People's Church). The funding will give KCCC a substantial opportunity to establish long term sustainability, and enough to provide housing upgrades for local family homes each year. While short of the 300 homes initially proposed, the plan is to demonstrate the viability of the program, and to continue fundraising.

At the present time, KCCC is starting work on the first local family home in partnership with Community Homeworks. This will provide safety and warmth to a family whose children often stay elsewhere because of the level of disrepair and cold in their home. 75 indoor air purifiers were distributed this fall helping reduce indoor air pollutants for local families. Two of the staff have received certification in energy auditing and will be able to develop specific plans to effectively improve the energy efficiency of homes in the core neighborhood homes. Other staff are providing outreach to neighborhoods and homeowners, and serving as an ambassador for a state initiative to support tax exempt orgs that are interested in solar and electric vehicle investments

The bottom line is five-fold:

- reduce utility costs for homeowners;
- improve air quality, both interior and exterior;
- reduce carbon emissions;
- train individuals for good jobs in the workforce; and
- provide a better quality of life for families

**Kalamazoo
Climate
Crisis
Coalition**

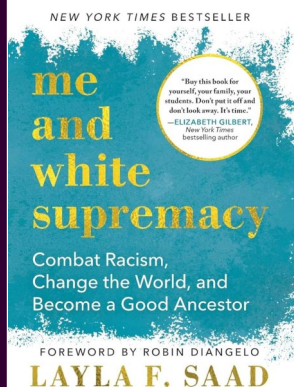


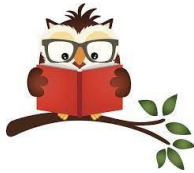
Dismantling White Supremacy from Within

Layla Saad offers her book, *Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the World, and Become a Good Ancestor* (2020) as a guide to people seeking to reduce the harm of their white privilege.

The book leads readers through a step-by-step reflection process that works well when done as a group.

If you are interested in participating in a reflection group that would meet once a month after church starting in February, or if you have questions, please contact Denise Hartsough at denise.hartsough@gmail.com.

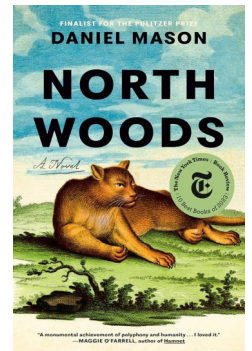




Evening Book Club—Newcomers Welcome!

"North Woods" by Daniel Mason will be reviewed by Nancy Stern at our next regular meeting, 1/8/26, 6p - 7:45p. 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. The remainder of this church year's schedule is posted on the church website, under the "Learning/Adult Programs" tab. This group leans toward quality fiction.



ERACCE Winter Workshops

• Understanding & Analyzing Systemic Racism

- January 14-16 & 21-23 - 1pm-4pm each day on Zoom

• Intro to Systemic Racism

- February 11 - 9am-4pm
- Location: Kalamazoo

• Online Organizing 101

- February 24-26 - 1pm-4pm each day on Zoom

Join Us! Register today at eracce.org/event-registration

Questions? Email eracce@eracce.org

ERACCE
Interfaith
and
Intergenerational
Community

WINTER WORKSHOPS

UNDERSTANDING & ANALYZING SYSTEMIC RACISM
Location: Zoom
1pm - 4pm each day
JANUARY 14-16 & 21-23

INTRO TO SYSTEMIC RACISM
Location: Kalamazoo
9am - 4pm
FEBRUARY 11

ONLINE ORGANIZING 101
Location: Zoom
1pm - 4pm each day
FEBRUARY 24- 26

JOIN US!

Register today at eracce.org/event-registration

Questions?
Email eracce@eracce.org



Yarn Lover's Unite

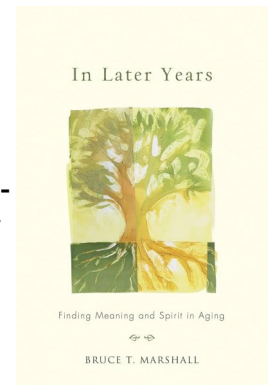
Fiber arts are fun and meditative and have been bringing groups together for centuries. They can include all sorts of activities, like crochet, knitting, weaving, spinning, embroidery, cross-stitch, etc. Do you enjoy any of these activities? Let's get together to celebrate our own creativity while creating a supportive community. Please join us the second Monday of the month in Room LI from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

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

Tuesday, January 20, 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 the small section on 'Spirit' and Chapter 9 on 'Letting Go.' 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

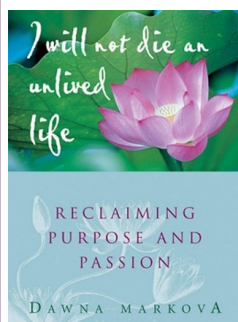
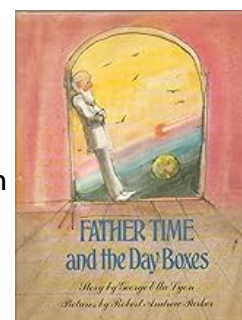


Wintering: the Power of Rest and Retreat in Difficult Times, by Katherine May — 818.603 Ma

The author, a secular mystic, provides a revelatory exploration of ways we can care for and repair ourselves when life knocks us down.

Father Time and the Day Boxes, by George Ella Lyon — J Ly

Text and illustrations describe how each day comes to us as Father Time tosses down one of the 365 packets he keeps safe in his vault in the clouds.



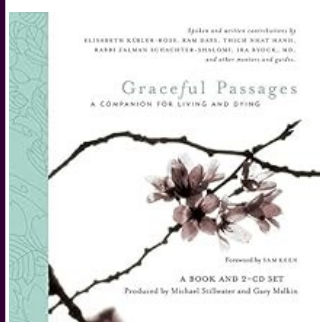
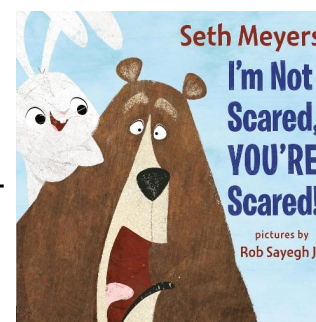
I Will Not Die an Unlived Life; Reclaiming Purpose and Passion, by Dawna Markova — 158.1 Ma

Poetic and inspiring, this book is a collection of stories with meaning. Following the author's own journey at making her life matter, she offers readers insight into how to:

- Find personal balance
- Reclaim passion and purpose in life
- Focus attention and awareness on the present moment

I'm Not Scared, YOU'RE Scared! by Seth Meyers — J Me

Equal parts hilarious and touching, this funny tale of adventure, bravery, and daring rescue will both inspire the adventurous spirit in all of us and make us laugh along the way.



Graceful Passages; a Companion for Living and Dying. Text compiled and written by Michael Stillwater. Music by Gary Malkin — 204.42 St

Through words and music, this set (book and 2 CDs) offers a renewal of faith to anyone struggling with grief. It addresses themes of letting go, closure, expressing love, forgiveness, appreciation of life, and continuity of spirit from different perspectives and faith traditions

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

Need To Cool Your Jets?

Feeling a little too revved up at church? Need to calm down a bit? Take a tip from our JET PIG, Bartlet, and head to our new “Cool Your Jets” Sensory Room (room 13).

Thanks to Special Education teacher, Becca Sparks, we have transformed our old archives room into a sensory room complete with materials and activities designed to help regulate our nervous systems.

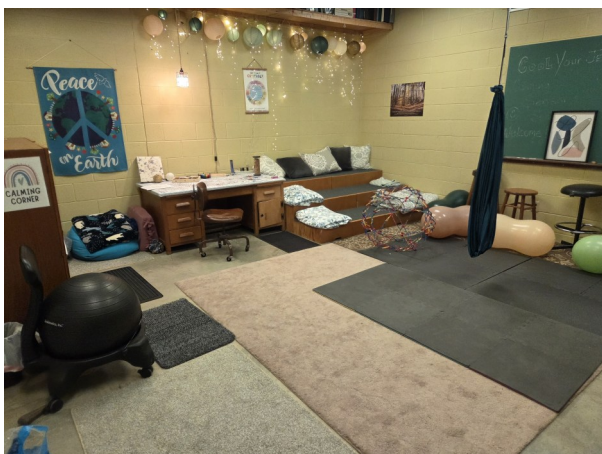
JET PIG is a mnemonic we use to help remember and name our UU Values of **J**ustice, **E**quity, **T**ransformation, **P**luralism, **I**nterdependence and **G**enerosity all based in **L**ove.

Sensory regulation tips and techniques are woven through our curriculum on mindfulness and meditation this year. It is more possible to be our best selves in the world when our bodies are calm & our nervous systems are well regulated.

As we are learning about how we can best reregulate ourselves when we become too revved up or overwhelmed, we now have some supports built in at church to help.

All ages are invited to pay a visit to our new “Cool Your Jets” sensory room to check it out!

Blessed Be, Diane Melvin, Religious Education Director



Children's Religious Education

1st Sundays - Specialty Classes - 1st—6th graders choose the activity in which they wish to participate. Choices vary monthly; they often include arts & crafts, interactive games, cooking/baking and large motor games and activities.

2nd & 3rd Sundays - Age based lessons on learning and practicing mindfulness and meditation. Captivating stories combined with meaningful discussions and engaging activities.

4th Sundays - Adventure, Wonder & Exploration (**AWE**) **Labs** for 1-6th graders - Children can rotate at their own pace through a variety of interactive stations designed to practice and hone their mindfulness skills.

RE Schedule for January 2026

Nursery Care Provided- Every Sunday 10:00-12:30

Preschool/Kindergarten

Jan 4 - Family and Love
Jan 11 - Anger and Forgiveness
Jan 18 - Compassion
Jan 25 - Listening

1st-6th Grades

Jan 4- Specialty Classes
Jan 11 - Anger and Forgiveness
Jan 18 - Compassion
Jan 25 - AWE Labs

7/8th Grade OWL

Jan 4 - Specialty Classes
Jan 11 - Healthy Relationships
Jan 18 - Social Media and Internet
Jan 25 - Bullying and Bystanders

9-12th Grade

Jan 4 - Youth Group Sunday
Jan 11 - Self Compassion
Jan 18 - Self Compassion vs. Self-Esteem
Jan 25 - Youth Group



RE Potluck & Game Night

Saturday January 24 5-8pm

Bring a dish to pass and your favorite game to share!

Childcare will be provided for the littles.



Parent's Night Out

Saturday January 31 4:00-8:00 PM

Drop your kids off with the child providers at church and we will feed them pizza and play with them while you get a night to yourself.

Donations accepted to offset costs of childcare and dinner. Look for a sign up which will be forthcoming in the foyer and in the Friday Email Blast



Safety & Medical Teams Are Recruiting!

People's Church is seeking volunteers to serve on the 2026 Safety and Medical teams. Each member could sign up for several Sundays (5 to 7) of their choice in 2026. If you are interested, please contact Gordon Bolar at gordon.bolar@wmich.edu for further information. Orientation and training will be provided.



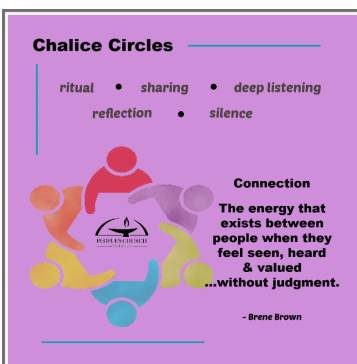
Chalice Circles

"People come to church longing for, yearning for, hoping for ... a sense of roots, place, belonging, sharing and caring. People come to a church with a search for community, not committee." — Glenn Turner

Chalice Circles are small group ministries that enrich our spiritual community. The practices of holding space and deep listening create mutual trust, and support personal and spiritual growth through sharing our experiences and bearing witness to the lives of others.

Interested in learning more? Check out our FAQ here: <https://peopleschurch.net/connection/small-group-ministry/>

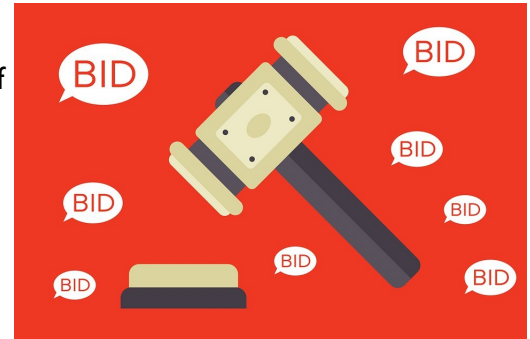
Opportunities to join a Circle are periodically available throughout the church year. **Sign up here** <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/508054BA9AC22A13-61339427-chalice#/> to get your name added to the list of folks interested in joining and/or leading a Chalice Circle!



Coming Soon: People's Church Silent Auction

The People's Church silent auction is returning in February with the bid sheets in the foyer outside of the Commons. We need volunteers to help make this happen. If you're interested, please reach out to Sharon Sauter (sssauter@gmail.com) or Donna Kaye (donnatwin2@att.net).

Now is the time to start thinking about what you may wish to donate. In the past People's people have donated a wide range of services, goods, and events for auction including homemade seasonal pies; a poetry brunch; an ice cream party; cooking lessons; dinner parties; game nights; boat rides; child care; a haircut; a home appraisal; tax preparation assistance; framed photographs; original art; plants; skilled (and unskilled) labor; a dairy tour; pet care; accommodation at a lake house, and so much more.



If you value it, someone else will too and they'll be willing to bid on it (with proceeds to benefit our church). Many of these activities also bring people closer together and work to build community. Join us as we build community one bid at a time by sharing our talents and treasures and raising money for the church.



In Memoriam: Bill Ginn

We celebrate the life and mourn the death of former People's Church member Bill Ginn, who died on November 18. Bill is the father of People's person Juli Ginn and the ex-husband of Kimberly Ginn. You can read his obituary here: <https://www.farleyestesdowdle.com/obituaries/william-ginn>

In addition to the funeral service on December 5, a gathering to remember Bill Ginn will be held at People's Church on Saturday January 17 at 1:00pm.

A Mindful Moment

"Formal Practice" in the mindfulness community means any intentional structured activity that strengthens our ability to be aware of the present moment, that soften our being, and/or that increases our capacity to experience things "just as they are". This can include various forms of meditation, compassion practice, body scan, and mindful yoga.



Sitting alongside Formal Practice, is "Informal Practice". This is simply the living of our life, internally and externally, in a Mindful manner.

Think of formal practice as "doing pushups" to get stronger, and informal practice as using that strength to carry our groceries. Using another physical analogy, probably not very many of us would attempt to run a marathon without first conditioning the body to that task. The brain/mind needs conditioning as well.

We meet the first and third Sundays at 12:30 in Room 9, the Buddha Room.

Carolyn / carolynheineman@aol.com / 269-547-7113 , Su / suacutler@gmail.com / 269-353-3654

Day	Date	Event	Time	Place
Sunday	Jan 4	Sunday Service: "When Bad People Make Good Art"	10:45am	Commons & Zoom
		Mindfulness Class	12:30pm	Room 9
Tuesday	Jan 6	Building & Grounds	10:00am	At Church
		Board Meeting	6:30pm	Room 19
Thursday	Jan 8	Bell Choir Rehearsal	6:00pm	Commons
		RE Committee Meeting	6:00pm	Room 19
		Evening Book Club	6:00pm	Home of Lois L
		Choir Rehearsal	7:00pm	Commons
Saturday	Jan 10	Second Saturday @ Church	10:00am	At Church
		Second Saturday Potluck	12:00pm	At Church
		Inquirer's Class	1:00pm	Room 19
Sunday	Jan 11	Sunday Service: "Help, Care, Fear & Disability"	10:45am	Commons & Zoom
Tuesday	Jan 13	Building & Grounds	10:00am	At Church
		Library Committee	10:00pm	At Church
		The Inner Work of Age	1:30pm	Zoom
Thursday	Jan 15	Bell Choir Rehearsal	6:00pm	Commons
		Choir Rehearsal	7:00pm	Commons
Saturday	Jan 17	Bill Ginn Memorial	1:00pm	Commons & Zoom
Sunday	Jan 18	Sunday Service: "Remembering James Reeb"	10:45am	Commons & Zoom
Monday	Jan 19	Green Sanctuary	4:00pm	Zoom
Tuesday	Jan 20	Building & Grounds	10:00am	At Church
		Library Committee	10:00pm	At Church
		The Inner Work of Age	1:30pm	Zoom
Thursday	Jan 15	Bell Choir Rehearsal	6:00pm	Commons
		Choir Rehearsal	7:00pm	Commons
Saturday	Jan 24	RE Potluck & Game Night	5-8pm	At Church
Sunday	Jan 25	Sunday Service: "Hymn Sing (Again)"	10:45am	Commons & Zoom
Monday	Jan 26	NEWSLETTER DEADLINE		
Tuesday	Jan 27	Building & Grounds	10:00am	At Church
Wednesday	Jan 28	Finance Committee	2:30pm	Zoom
Thursday	Jan 29	Bell Choir Rehearsal	6:00pm	Commons
		Choir Rehearsal	7:00pm	Commons
Saturday	Jan 31	Parents Night Out	4:00pm	At Church

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

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."**