



Portal

DECEMBER 2022

Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe
Senior Pastor

ON MY MIND: CHRISTMAS COMES ONCE AGAIN

Around this time of year, Neil and I get into an ~~argument~~ discussion about when to put up the Christmas tree. Despite being a pastor committed to the preservation of the season of Advent, as soon as the Thanksgiving dishes are cleared, I'm ready to deck the halls. Luckily, we are hosting two Christmas parties early in December, so the tree will be up at our house before the first Advent candle is lit.

One of my favorite parts of decorating is unpacking all the ornaments, most of which we won't even put on the tree. (There simply isn't room.) Many ornaments remind me of people who have died. There are three "baby's first Christmas" ornaments engraved with the names of our children, gifts from Neil's parents, who are both gone. There is a sweet snowman ornament made by a cousin who died in her 50s. There are delicate snowflakes, crocheted by my Grandmother Ruby.

Other ornaments remind me of a particular place and time. There was the Christmas in Connecticut when we lived in a parsonage built in 1840 with floors so uneven that the tree fell down - twice. (See cracked silver balls for reference.) There was the Christmas in our first house. (Hallmark ornament "home for the holidays" circa 2000.) There was the Christmas when my mom helped us make ornaments with string, glue and glitter (as seen in *Ladies Home Journal*, December, 1970). That's the beautiful thing about Christmas: it is a still-point in time. December 25th comes around once a year and, with it, the memories and emotions of Christmases past.

Long before Halloween became a popular holiday, it was the custom to tell ghost stories at Christmastime. The winter solstice was thought to create a thin place between this world and the next, giving spirits a chance to return to earth. This was especially popular in the Victorian era. Why do you think Marley visits Ebenezer Scrooge on Christmas Eve? While I've never been visited by the ghost of Christmas past during this season, I have picked up an old ornament and suddenly been reminded of a loved one who has died. I see them as they were, I remember all the ways they blessed my life, and I am full of love.

That's the power of Christmas. It's a season of hope, peace and joy – but the greatest of these is love. The love we have shared with others is a reminder of the great love God shares with each and every one of us in Jesus Christ.

May God bless you in this Advent and Christmas season with good memories and great love!

- Merry Christmas,

Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe

Preschool Classroom Communities

In the Preschool we try to make most of our values short and sweet so that they are easy to remember. Every year, the children in each classroom learn about their classroom responsibilities. Where age-appropriate, these are: Respect for Self, Respect for Others, and Respect for our Classroom and all that is in it. This philosophy works well by playing into young children's desire to respect their classrooms by being helpful and making meaningful and positive contributions.

The Preschool's curriculum breaks down daily events into two categories: Routines and Experiences. The Experiences are the child-led, adult-facilitated daily content of the lesson plans. The Routines are the events that take place almost every day: the predictable events that follow each classroom's daily schedule so that children know what to expect. One thing the children expect is to have an important role in facilitating the day's routines.

Helping to take care of the classroom is a part of every day's routine. It makes children feel powerful and important members of the group. In these photos, a group of four-year-olds help fold washcloths; a three-year-old helps her teacher take grapes off the vine in preparation for nutrition break; and a group of children builds a block fence to assist in watching over Muir the hedgehog, while their teacher cleans his cage.

-Dana Johnson

**CHILDREN'S MINISTRY**

What a busy time we've had in the Children's Education department! Our youngest Sunday School class continues to grow while our older children have been rehearsing our Christmas Pageant. We are so excited to be able to present an in person performance of "Out Standing in Their Field" on December 11th. We hope you will attend and support our cast!

We have just two more Sunday School classes left this year and look forward to our Christmas Party on December 18th. We will have treats, games & gifts! I hope your children will come and celebrate the season before our Christmas break.

With our growing Sunday School attendance comes a need for more classes and teachers. Please contact me at kmitchell@thepeopleschurch.com if you want to give it a try! No experience is necessary and all the materials and lessons are prepared for you. If you would rather just be a pair of helping hands to assist, that would be great, too! We welcome all the help and support we can get! Thank you!

-Kathi Mitchell

Out Standing in Their Field



2022 CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

December 11th

During the 10:30 a.m. Service

We hope you will attend and support our wonderful cast!



ADULT GROUPS



ACHE
ADULTS CONNECTING &
HAVING EVENTS

Our young adult group is meeting on **December 5th**, event TBD. For more information about ACHE, please reach out to Elisha Smith at esmith@thepeopleschurch.com.

PUB THEOLOGY



Pub Theology will gather on **December 12th, 6:30 p.m.** at Crunchy's to engage in conversation about faith, life, and what is happening in the world.

PCYG



Sunday, December 4th

Youth are having lunch after 10:30 worship.

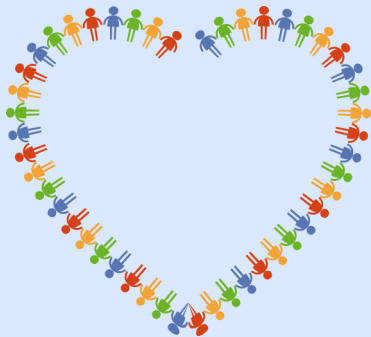
Sunday, December 11th

Christmas party in the Youth Den from 6 to 9 p.m.



If you have any questions regarding the Peoples Church Youth Group or upcoming events, please contact Elisha Smith at esmith@thepeopleschurch.com.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Our community doors have been wide open this year welcoming not only anticipated refugees, but also those fleeing Afghanistan and Ukraine. Many of the latter arrived with the clothes on their backs and are now in need of winter shoes and boots. We respond, first by a gift from the Community Engagement Committee to Refugee Services, and second by collection of Meijer and Target gift cards from our congregation. The donation box will be at the Welcome Desk during Sunday services, and otherwise in the office, until Sunday Dec 18th. Many thanks!

NOTICE FROM THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE

The Library Committee would like to remind everyone that, due to limited space, we do not accept donations for the used book sale until April. Please hold your donations until then. Thank you!

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Looking for a hands-on volunteer opportunity? The Peoples Church and All Saints Episcopal Church, in coordination with Christian Services, operate a Personal Needs Closet. Supply pick-ups are every Saturday, and we are looking for volunteers to help distribute these goods at All Saints on alternate Saturdays from 8:45-11:00 a.m. We would like to make a schedule for the first few months of 2023. If you may be interested, call Mimi Burpee at 517-881-6437, or email mimburpee@gmail.com.

Thank you!

THANK YOU!

Southside Kitchen Volunteers: A mighty and bountiful thank you to all of our loving, friendly, interactive, and faithful volunteers serving at the Southside Kitchen on the 3rd Tuesday of each month. Sharing with the hungry people in our community is a gift that each of you have given so willingly.

Prayer Chain Warriors: You give your hearts, love, compassion, prayers and peace everyday to so many of our loved ones. The work you are doing is helping so many.

-Blessings and love, *Jan Perron*

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

(80 & over)

James Close

Gary Coopes

Gene Cornelius

Joan Dailey

Faye Dragosh

Betty Moore

James Nord

Beverly Oetzel

Rich Patterson

Denny Rosenbrook

Irene Seahawk

Harold Weaver

Doris Weil

Mary West



EARTH STEWARDSHIP

ENGAGING IN A MORE SUSTAINABLE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY SEASON

Those traveling or hosting for the holidays can take some actions to make this a more sustainable Christmas celebration. Some of the steps may be more easily done than others. But if we all follow at least a few of the steps, we can work toward making this a “most sustainable” holiday season.

For those traveling, consider driving at a lesser rate of speed. Whenever possible, drive at 55 miles per hour. Of course, any speed driven under the posted speed limit helps reduce the use of fossil fuel.

If you are caught in the dilemma of using a plastic tree versus cut or live, and want to make the Christmas tree tradition more ecofriendly, go for an artistic one made of wood. Enjoy the creativity of the artisans and the simplicity of a “tree” that is natural, easy care, and long-lasting.

Those hosting Christmas gatherings this year may want to consider replacing your older Christmas tree strings of lights with new LED lighting. This will result in instant and long-term energy savings.

When it comes to exchanging gifts, consider using and reusing gift bags rather than wrapping paper. While it might be fun to rip and tear into a wrapped present, the fancy paper itself is most likely to be laminated with plastic, foil, glitter, or other non-paper materials that contaminate a recycle bin. The short fibers in tissue paper make it unrecyclable too.

Consider giving Fair Trade presents. Buying Fair Trade provides the creators—farmers, laborers, and artisans—fair prices and stable incomes, reduces poverty, betters working conditions, and promotes environmentally sustainable practices. It’s a just and good deal for all!

Give presence, not just presents. Give an adventure, an experience that can be shared, talked about, and remembered long after the usual “stuff” has been covered over in the landfill.

Focus on reducing holiday food waste, which is a key driver of climate change according to the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC). The CEC says that once food waste ends up in a landfill, it creates methane, a greenhouse gas that is 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide. In fact, if global food waste were measured as a country, it would be the world’s third worst emitter of greenhouse gases according to the CEC. Send leftovers home with guests after a gathering. Take your own takeout container when you meet friends for a dinner out. Composting at home is always a good idea.

The Earth Stewardship Committee wishes everyone a safe and sustainable Christmas season!

Welcome New Members!



Jill Bartz



David Stowe



Alexa Hayes-Murray



Paulette Lovell



Mark & Jean Lyon



Judy Hardies



Christine Bilfinger

2022 Advent Celebration

Sunday, December 11th, 2022

11:45 to 1:00 p.m.

Snider Social Hall



Join the Women of Peoples Church for a special gathering celebrating Advent! We will enjoy a delicious brunch, fellowship, music and more.

Our featured speaker will be The Peoples Church's beloved Mary West, who will speak on the topic: *A Word to the Wise*. Her presentation will focus on "practical wisdom," primarily wisdom that comes with age. Mary spoke on this subject at a meeting of the Lansing Woman's Club last January, where she received rave reviews.

All ages are welcome to join us for this wonderful event. **Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children 10 to 18, and free for children under 10. We will be taking reservations through December 4th, following the 10:30 a.m. church service.** Watch for the reservation table set up near the Welcome Desk. Please contact Susan Nowicki, Event Chair, at susan.nowick@att.net or 847-651-0192 for more information or with questions.



UPCOMING MUSIC

MUSIC SUNDAY

Music Sunday will be **December 4th during the 10:30 worship service**. The sanctuary choir will be performing Vivaldi's *Gloria* with orchestra. Please join us as we lift our voices in song!

MSU HOLIDAY BRASS CONCERT

The Fine Arts Committee is pleased to invite you to attend the MSU Holiday Brass Concert on **Tuesday, December 6th at 7:00 p.m.** in the Sanctuary. This holiday tradition returns after a three-year hiatus due to Covid. It features the top brass students in the Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior and Graduate classes at Michigan State University, as well as members of the faculty. Following performances by each of the individual classes, all the musicians join together to close out the concert with rousing renditions of familiar Christmas songs.

During intermission, attendees are invited to join friends in Friendship Hall for refreshments provided by the Fine Arts Committee.

Bring the family and invite your friends. The MSU Holiday Brass Concert is free and open to the public. It is a wonderful way to kick off the Christmas Season!

TELLING THE STORY: CHRISTMAS ORATORIOS BY BACH & SAINT-SAËNS

Find inspiration this holiday season through the uplifting sound of the MSU Choral Union, University Chorale, and State Singers as they join forces with the MSU Symphony Orchestra in two gems of the season: selections from J. S. Bach's Christmas Oratorio and Camille Saint-Saëns' work of the same name, written as an homage to the Baroque master. David Rayl, conductor.

This event is **Saturday, December 10, 8:00 p.m.** at Cobb Great Hall, in the Wharton Center for Performing Arts. Tickets can be purchased through the [Wharton Center website](#).

EDGEWOOD VILLAGE

Our Edgewood Village partnership continues to give us abundant opportunities to serve residents be blessed by their presence in our lives. Thanks to all who have volunteered this year in a great variety of ways! As mentors, drivers, tutors, gardeners, board members, contributors of Thanksgiving baskets and Christmas gifts, donors of school supplies and after school snacks, and supporters of the scholars program; we are making a positive difference in the lives of children and families. We look forward to being involved with the Edgewood Village community in 2023 in current and new ways, as needs are known. We are grateful for your prayers, your generosity, and your kindness. May we continue to work together to bring health and wholeness to all!



HOLIDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Saturday, December 24th:

Christmas Eve services at 6 & 9 p.m. in the Sanctuary. The 6 p.m. service features a performance from Carol Choir and is available over YouTube Livestream.

Sunday, December 25th:

No 8:30 or 10:30 service. Merry Christmas!

Sunday, January 1st:

Our normal 10:30 service will resume on New Year's Day.



DECEMBER TAIZE SERVICE

This month's Taizé Service is on
December 18th
at 6:30 p.m. in the Chapel

Services consist of repetitive and meditative singing, prayer, Scripture, and silence. It is a powerful, quiet, contemplative worship experience. This service is inter-denominational and all are welcome.

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ThePeoplesChurch.com

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