



ON MY MIND: TENDING A STRANGER'S GARDEN

2019 will go down as a year of transitions. My husband Neil and I sold our home of 11 years last December, and I moved into a small condo around the corner. It was painful to say goodbye to the home where we raised our children, but the worst part of selling our house was giving up our garden. The yard was finally in good shape with a designated herb garden and raised beds for growing vegetables. It took us years to amend the heavy Ohio soil and we were finally enjoying bumper crops of tomatoes and beans. It was hard to say goodbye and frankly I didn't know how I would adjust to a life without a garden.

The condo complex I moved into had a beautiful garden that ran the length of the building on the south side. There was a rolling green lawn dotted with benches, and along the edge of the grass, there were plots marked out with pavers and stones. I had asked the building manager if it was possible to get a garden plot, and was told the plots were jealously held by long term residents. "New residents have to be on a waiting list," the manager said. I resigned myself to a garden-less summer. Then a miracle happened. In February, I was walking by the condo manager's office and I overheard the chair of the garden committee fretting about the need for more gardeners. I poked my head in and said, "Are you really looking for more gardeners? I would love to have a garden plot." The woman perked up and said, "That's wonderful! A couple in the building recently had to give up gardening due to health reasons. There are three plots that need tending if you're interested." I said yes without a second thought. And that is how I ended up tending a stranger's garden last summer.

When you "inherit" a garden, you don't know what to expect. It was March before I got a good look at my new garden. The plots were barren and unpromising. There were a couple of old tools moldering in a pile, pieces of wire and tubing sticking out of the ground, and clumps of dead plants indicating where flowers once bloomed. It was quite a mess and I considered digging everything up so I could start fresh in the spring. But something told me to wait and see what might come up in time. What a surprise! There were star lilies and blue irises, white peonies and pink tea roses, as well as mint, bee balm and catnip. By the first of May, I could see what the garden had to offer and where I could make it my own. I noticed what needed to be thinned, what needed to be fertilized, and what needed to be pruned. I found the perfect place for tomatoes and thyme, basil and marigolds, tarragon and sage. I couldn't always tell if a plant was a weed or a flower, so I learned to be patient. And that is the key: that strange garden had wonderful gifts to offer—but I had to be patient in order to receive them.

Being the new pastor is like tending a stranger's garden: one has to be patient and pay attention. I've only just arrived at The Peoples Church and I can already see some of the gifts and graces in this community. The congregation is warm and welcoming, the staff is talented and helpful, and the building and grounds are remarkable. I am full of fresh ideas for worship, programming and ministry. I can't wait to share them... but first I need to take time to get to know you and see what is already growing here. Like last summer's garden, I need to be patient lest I miss something wonderful that is waiting to appear. In time, we will figure out what needs to be thinned, what needs to be fertilized, and what needs to be pruned. In time, we will discern what new seeds God has planted in our midst as we seek to be the body of Christ in this moment. It just takes a bit of patience.

The 18th century hymn, "We Plough the Fields and Scatter" speaks of God as the original gardener, the One who sends the snow in winter, the warmth to swell the grain, the breezes and the sunshine, and soft refreshing rain. Yes, we plough the fields and scatter the grain (or plant the bulbs and sew the beans), but the truth is all the bounty of the earth is a gift to us from God. Seen from this perspective, everyone tends a stranger's garden... and all of life is that garden. May we have the patience to discern what to thin, when to fertilize and where to prune. May we appreciate all the blessings we did not earn and the blossoms we did not plant. And may we lift our voices and sing together:

*We thank you, then, Creator, for all things bright and good,
The seed time and the harvest, our life, our health, and food;
No gifts have we to offer, for all your love imparts,
But that which you desire - our humble, thankful hearts.*

I give thanks to God for calling me to this community and I look forward to a long and fruitful ministry as your senior pastor.

May God's enduring love be with us all in this new season!

Dr. Monroe



BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

*80 & OVER

11/9 - Chester Lewis
11/11 - Gretchen Rosenbrook
11/14 - John Ferris
11/14 - Shelby Hollister
11/15 - Penelope Laggis
11/16 - Sal DiFranco
11/18 - Jean Draper
11/19 - Clifford Weil
11/26 - Jack Draper
11/26 - Noah Alonso
11/28 - Betty Pond
11/29 - Margaret Bates
11/29 - Kenneth Hanson

NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

11/5 - Daniel & Jennifer Rosa (25)
11/11 - Paul & Candy White (30)
11/29 - Drs. James & Barbara Markle (50)

If we missed you, please accept our apology. Contact the office to make sure we have your correct information on file.

PORTAL DEADLINE

The deadline for submissions to the December 2019 *Portal* is November 15. Submit content to Rachel Giddings at, rgiddings@thepeopleschurch.com.

The *Portal* is a monthly newsletter that is mailed each month to opt-in subscribers and also included in the Friday email.



EDGEWOOD VILLAGE PARTNERSHIP

SUPPORTED BY THE PEOPLES CHURCH OF EAST LANSING



You're invited to help the children at Edgewood Village enjoy a wonderful Christmas. On November 24 and December 1, a Christmas tree with gift ideas will be set up in Friendship Hall. Select one of the ornaments from the tree, purchase the item listed, and return the new, unwrapped gift by December 15.

When: Starting Sunday, November 24

Where: The Tree will be set-up in Friendship Hall
New Location this Year!!

Unwrapped gifts need to be returned by Sunday, December 15 and can be returned to the Christmas tree in Friendship Hall on Sunday mornings, or to the church office during the week.

We will wrap gifts on Tuesday, December 17. If you are interested in joining this fun part of the project, please sign up via the weekly church bulletin (a sign up form will be included in the Sunday bulletin starting on November 24). Wrappers are asked to bring their own scissors.

FROM OUR KITCHEN TO YOURS

RECIPES BY GERRI LYNN



Gerri Lynn Nichols, our talented Hospitality Coordinator, shares a recipe with us each month. Enjoy!

ROASTED ROOT VEGETABLES

INGREDIENTS:

1 1/4 lb turnips
1 1/4 lb parsnips
1 1/4 lb carrots
1 1/4 lb sweet potatoes
1 1/4 lb rutabagas
Your favorite Italian salad dressing

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F
Peel and cut vegetables into 1/2 inch pieces; divide between 2 roasting pans; pour Italian salad dressing over vegetables and toss to coat
Roast until vegetables are tender and golden, stirring occasionally, about 40 minutes.
Even better tasting the next day, just re-heat.
Can also be made ahead & frozen until ready to use.

Each Thanksgiving and Christmas, The Peoples Church members and friends have the opportunity to serve Edgewood Village residents by providing holiday food to 20 households. Participation is simple...

- Each church participant will receive, via email, a specific grocery shopping list on **November 13**. The email will include a general instruction sheet with delivery information.
- Each participant shops at the grocery store of her/his choice for one Edgewood household (plan to spend no more than \$65.00).
- Each participant delivers purchased groceries on **November 20**, between 5:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. to Edgewood Village Network Center. Edgewood Village Scholars then take the food to individual households within the village.

It's so simple, yet so appreciated by the recipients! If you are interested in providing a nutritious Thanksgiving food basket for an Edgewood Village neighbor, please email Barb Dunlap at bdunlap1953@gmail.com or call 517.285.0824 no later than **November 8**.

If you would like to provide a nutritious Christmas food basket for an Edgewood Village neighbor, please email Barb Dunlap at bdunlap1953@gmail.com or call 517.285.0824. For Christmas, the shopping list will be emailed on **December 11** with food drop off at Edgewood Village Network Center between 5:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. on **December 18**.



PRESCHOOL MADE A WISH...

by Dana Johnson, Director, Peoples Church Preschool



And it came true!

We feel blessed every day to be a part of The Peoples Church, but this month, especially, the Preschool administrators and teachers would like to express our heartfelt thanks for our newly updated work space.

Special Thanks go to:

The Peoples Church Building & Grounds Ministry
Pastor Drew Filkins
Andy Mayville

Peoples Church Preschool



IN REMEMBRANCE

The Peoples Church Preschool has recently lost two former long-time employees. Yvonne Hafner (a church member), who was director and also taught in the three and four year old classrooms, and Pam Mayle who taught in the three year old classroom.

Their dedication to the children and parents of the preschool program was unparalleled. As friends and co-workers, we would like to recognize the contributions they made to the preschool program.

PEOPLES FORUM

Join us each Sunday for interesting and informative "Voices of the Community" at 9:30 a.m. in the Robertson Room.

NOVEMBER 3

REV. DR. SHAWNTHEA MONROE

"My Journey"

NOVEMBER 10

CAROLINE JACOBS, EDGEWOOD COORD.

NOVEMBER 17

JACKSON TWESGYE, NYAKA MISSIONARY

NOVEMBER 24

GUILLERMO DELGADO, ARTIST ON EXHIBIT

DECEMBER 1

MATT REED, FEDERAL ATTORNEY

DECEMBER 8

CLARE LUZ

"Age Alive"

DECEMBER 15

PENNY SWARTZ

"Christmas Readings"

A SEASON OF HOPE

Save the date for the Women of Peoples Church Annual Advent Tea, *A Season of Hope*.

December 8

11:45 a.m. - 1:45 p.m.

Snider Social Hall

Featuring guest speaker

Ruelaine Stokes

"The Power of Story Telling"

Come experience *A Season of Hope* and enjoy lunch, music, and an inspirational speaker.

Tickets for this event go on sale November 3 and can be purchased through December 1, following the 10:30 a.m. worship service. Tickets are \$8 each or \$50 for a table of eight. You can also email Susan Nowicki to purchase tickets at susan.nowicki@att.net.



COUNCIL OF ELDERS UPDATE

by Jodi Cook, Chair, Council of Elders

The Council of Elders had their annual retreat on Saturday, October 19. This year, they met at our local mission focus, Edgewood Village, for some cleaning and fall garden projects. The Council welcomed all five nominated Elders who will be presented to the congregation for election at the Fall meeting on November 3. In total, 19 Council members and clergy gathered for fun, food and fellowship and worked toward the beautification of the facilities inside and outside at Edgewood.

Some Council members focused on cleaning the inside of the Village Network Center. This group cleaned the media center, refrigerator, and bathrooms. Many other hands worked outside to

build three raised flower beds, clear flower and vegetable plants from the garden, cover tilled land to prepare it for Spring sowing and organize and secure gardening rocks for next year. These tasks were the perfect integration of manual labor, leadership and organization which provided a preview of how well the group will work together next year.

When finished with their many projects, the group headed back to the church and enjoyed a potluck luncheon in the Robertson Room. They took time to introduce themselves and get to know one another. They also shared their personal interests and discussed plans for the church. **As a reminder, the Council of Elders meets the 4th Tuesday of each month and meetings are open to everyone.** For more information on the Council of Elders, please contact Jodi Cook at 517.282.2394.



KUDOS KORNER



DANA JOHNSON

Director of The Peoples Church Preschool

**25 Years
of Dedicated Service**

Q: What is your favorite part about your job?

A: Knowing that the program we provide makes a positive difference in the lives of children and their families. It is fulfilling to know that our team is guiding children to be good stewards of the earth, exhibit kindness, and will make important contributions to the world.

Q: What are your favorite hobbies?

A: I love to work on my mini farm raising goats, chickens and vegetables. I love hiking in the woods and sharing nature with my grandchildren. I am passionate about animal rights. I love watching movies and true crime shows, and shopping at craft shows. I love to watch Holt Rams football because my son, Nicky, is the quarterback.

Q: Tell us something unique about yourself.

A: I ran track and was a pom pom girl in high school. I had a career in advertising before I switched to early childhood education. I love the singing voices of Don Henley, Phil Collins, David Gray, Bono and Chris Martin. I have difficulty not adopting all the homeless dogs in the world. 80's music makes me happy.

MITTEN STATE RIVALRY TAILGATE

Saturday, November 16

Tailgate will start one hour prior to kickoff
in the Robertson Room.



**Join us for fellowship, food, fun, and to watch
a great rivalry game on the big screen!**

**Please r.s.v.p. by email to Mary West at:
mkwest1@comcast.net, or to Lori Barbieri
at: ljbarbieri@comcast.net.**

Sponsored by:



Women
of Peoples Church

PARIS TO PITTSBURGH SCREENING

On **November 3**, the Earth Stewardship Committee will be hosting a community conversation centered around climate change action and featuring a free screening of the film, *Paris to Pittsburgh* and a moderated discussion afterward. Join us at 7:00 p.m. in the Robertson Room.

WOMEN OF PEOPLES CHURCH BOARD MEETING

The Women of Peoples Church invite you to join them for their Board Meeting on **November 6**. We will be dining together at *Wednesday Night Live!* with the meeting to follow. The WPC Board meetings are open to all women of The Peoples Church.

GREAT DECISIONS

Great Decisions will meet again on **November 7**, with Dr. Manuel Chavez, MSU School of Journalism, to learn about the history and issues involved in European Populism and Immigration. We will meet in the Robertson Room from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Mass migration, and the problems associated with it, have directly abetted the rise of populist parties in Europe. Opposition to immigration was the prime driver of support for Brexit, it brought a far-right party to the German Bundestag for the first time since the 1950s, and propelled Marine Le Pen to win a third of the vote in the French presidential election. In addition to calling for stronger borders, however, these parties are invariably illiberal, anti-American, anti-NATO and pro-Kremlin, making their rise a matter of serious concern for the national security interests of the United States.

CHILDREN'S STORY TIME

The Library Committee will be hosting a Children's Story Time on **November 10** following the 10:30 a.m. worship service. Beth Lundy will be our reader. Parents are welcome.

THE PEOPLES CHURCH VISITATION TEAM

Members of The Peoples Church Visitation Team will meet on **November 14** and feature Rev. Dr. Shawntea Monroe, our guest speaker. The meeting takes place at 1:00 p.m. in the Robertson Room. If you are interested in joining this ministry or have any questions, call Pat Brogran at 517.337.1446 or Gretchen Rosenbrook at 517.332.5132.

DORCAS CIRCLE

The Dorcas Circle will meet **November 19** at 7:00 p.m. in the Robertson Room. The program will be "Share a Favorite Book." For more information, contact Katie Slabaugh at 313.410.1113.

DEBORAH CIRCLE

The Deborah Circle meets on the 3rd Wednesday of each month, in the Snider Social Hall, at 6:30 p.m. after the *WNL!* community meal. Join us on **November 20**; see you there!

DONATIONS OF SOCKS ARE NEEDED

Did you know the most requested item in homeless shelters and the least received item is socks? With winter fast approaching, we are again collecting donations for NEW packaged socks to benefit the City Rescue Mission (which serves the homeless population in the Greater Lansing area). Please place your donation of NEW socks of all sizes in the box located outside of the church office. This collection is ongoing throughout the winter months.

HOLIDAY WREATH & POINSETTIA SALE

Be sure to purchase a holiday wreath or poinsettia from the Women of Peoples Church. Purchases may be made between worship services or following the 10:30 a.m. worship service at the Welcome Desk. All sales benefit the ministries of the Women of Peoples Church which, in turn, benefit various nonprofit organizations in the Greater Lansing area.

REBEKAH/HANNAH CIRCLE

Save the date for our December program, *A Celebration of Christmas Music*, with guest artist Joe Kennedy, in the Robertson Room, **December 4**, at 1:00 p.m. All are welcome for this special program.

THE KNITTING PEOPLE

The Knitting People will not meet in November, but save the date for their next meeting on **December 5** (more details to come).

PEOPLES 101

Peoples 101 is a 30-minute informal discussion about The Peoples Church. Bring your questions and meet with a Pastor and Welcome Ministry Members in the Robertson Room. **New Members Classes** take place in the Centennial Room and last roughly an hour and a half. Child care is provided. This meeting explores the history, governance, mission and values of the church as well as programming and volunteer opportunities. Membership is also discussed, but there is never any obligation to join. For more information, call Diane Shafer at 517.388.0437 or email at dm-shafer2001@gmail.com. You can also call Robin Matheson at 517.290.3223 or email at matheso4@msu.edu.

SCHEDULE:

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| NOVEMBER 3 | Peoples 101 |
| DECEMBER 1 | Peoples 101 |
| JANUARY 5 | Peoples 101 |
| FEBRUARY 2 | Peoples 101 |
| MARCH 1 | Peoples 101 |
| APRIL 1 | New Members Class during WNL! |
| APRIL 5 | New Members Class |
| MAY 3 | Peoples 101 |
| JUNE 7 | Peoples 101 |
| JULY 8 | New Members Class during WNL! |
| JULY 12 | New Members Class |
| AUGUST 2 | Peoples 101 |

NOTICE:

**CHANGE IN FRIDAY EMAIL**

Please note, the weekly email that is sent each Friday to subscribers will be now be sent out each Thursday. If you currently do not receive our weekly email, sign-up on thepeopleschurch.com homepage.

NEW ART EXHIBIT: 'THE RAINMAKERS'



The Fine Arts Committee has installed a new and unique exhibit, "The Rainmakers," that both informs and inspires. It features the work of artist and teacher, Guillermo Delgado, and a variety of Community Engagement Students from the MSU Residential College in the Arts and Humanities. It also includes work by a number of incarcerated individuals from correctional facilities throughout Mid-Michigan. The display includes five acrylic paintings by Guillermo along with an array of ink drawings, water color portraits, and illustrated poetry—paper booklets known as 'zines—that were created by incarcerated youth and men. "The Rainmakers" is on display in the West Hall



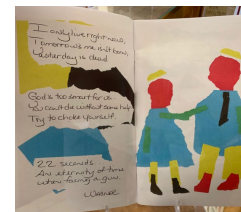
outside the Sanctuary, the Thompson case and the Kiosk located in the East Hall, adjacent to the Rotunda.

Guillermo is an Academic Specialist in Community and Socially Engaged Arts and Humanities at Michigan State University. He teaches art, poetry, contemplative practices (yoga, meditation) and community engagement courses. The exhibit grew out of the artist's *Prison Poetry & Zine Project*, which mounts poetry and art workshops in six different Michigan correctional facilities including the juvenile detention center in Lansing. The goal of the project is to help make incarcerated individuals feel more human again by providing a safe and encouraging venue for self-expression.

Guillermo's five oil paintings in the exhibit were inspired from his self-care and creative ritual of drawing and painting small mandellas at the end of the day, especially after teaching in correctional facilities. He teaches in prisons two to three times a week. "This artistic practice allows me to contemplate the lingering emotions, words and ideas in mindful and meaningful ways," he explains. "The paintings are meditations, a kind of map that allows me to re-center and begin to create order in a sometimes chaotic world."

As an interdisciplinary artist and educator, Guillermo strives to create safe, accessible and mindful learning opportunities wherever he goes. "I'm not saying art will save you," he says, "but as humans, we need hope to survive and excel. Art is hope, and hope allows us to imagine something better for our world."

You can learn more about "The Rainmakers" and Guillermo's work on the *Prison Poetry & Zine Project* when he comes to speak during the Peoples Forum in the Robertson Room on November 24, 2019 at 9:30 am. The exhibit will remain on display through January 16, 2020.



FAMILY FUN EVENT

by Kathi Mitchell, Children's Education Director

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our Harvest Festival! I hope everyone had fun—I sure did! There were lots of smiling faces, amazing pumpkin creations and fellowship between friends new and old. I hope you join us for our next family event—**Family Game Night, Saturday, November 23** from 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Bring your favorite board games, learn new games and enjoy a fun evening with your family and friends. Dinner will be provided. Please register on *Realm Connect* or RSVP to kmitchell@thepeopleschurch.com. I look forward to seeing you all and enjoying your company!



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NOVEMBER 23!
5:00 - 8:00 p.m.



WNL! PROGRAMMING

The WNL! community meal takes place in the Snider Social Hall downstairs. Join us!

NOVEMBER:

Adult programming follows the community meal and begins at 6:30 p.m. in the Robertson Room. Be sure to join us in November each Wednesday evening!

WEDNESDAY NIGHT LIVE! SCHEDULE

5:30 pm - Dinner

6:00 pm - Youth Choir (Youth Den)

6:30 pm - Adult Programming (Robertson Room)
Middle School Youth Group (Youth Den)
Yoga (Yellow Room, 3rd Floor)

~MENU~

NOVEMBER 6

Cabbage Soup ~ Crackers
Meatloaf
Macaroni & Cheese
Steamed Peas
Dinner Roll
Seasonal Fruit ~ Cupcake

NOVEMBER 13

Ham & Bean Soup ~ Crackers
Baked Chicken ~ Wild Rice
Steamed Carrots
Assorted Muffins
Peaches ~ Brownies

NOVEMBER 20

Cream of Chicken Soup
Pulled Pork Sandwiches
Potato Salad ~ Cole Slaw
Seasonal Fruit
Assorted Pies

YOUTH SUNDAY & ANNUAL CAKE AUCTION

November 10

The Peoples Church Youth Group will host both worship services on November 10 and hold their annual cake auction afterward.

BAKE a cake to donate, **BID** on a cake (or two), or do **BOTH!**

JOIN US!



200 W. Grand River Ave.
East Lansing, MI 4882

517.332.5073

ThePeoplesChurch.com

NOVEMBER 2019 PORTAL