

A Visible Faith

Although it is not part of the Protestant tradition, I have found great value in choosing a discipline to mark the season of Lent. Sometimes I give something up, like wine or chocolate. Sometimes I take something on, like writing letters or reading theology. A couple of years ago, I took on the discipline of wearing a clerical collar every day I worked.

The clerical collar was invented in the 19th century by a minister in the Church of Scotland (Presbyterian). Clergymen (and they were all men) had been dressing in a distinctive fashion since the end of the 18th century, but it was Rev. Donald Mcleod who created the first detachable collar. Soon, the clerical collar was being worn as a sign of ordination by Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists and Lutherans. Roman Catholic priests were late to the clerical collar party, but by 1884, all priests in the United States were required to wear them as “street dress.”

I did not own a clerical collar until 2002. It wasn't part of the Congregational tradition in which I was ordained. It was always an option but few people wore them. Then I became good friends with some Episcopal priests. One time, sitting around swapping stories, one of them said “You low church Protestants have it so easy! You don't wear the collar so no one ever bothers you!” I was a little taken aback. What did he mean? “You can hide your pastoral identity.”

He had a point. I was careful to guard my privacy when it came to my vocation. You don't want just ANYONE knowing you are a clergy person. Some people make all sorts of assumptions when they know you are a “woman of the cloth.”

So I wore a collar for 40 days...and boy did I learn a lot. When people first met me, they focused on the collar, not on me. The meaning of the collar was predetermined based on each person's experience with church. People asked me for money more often. Some treated me with suspicion, wondering what a woman was doing pretending to be a priest. Others avoided me. My favorite encounters were with people who had questions about scripture that had troubled them for years. (Why is Eve to blame for Adam eating the apple? Did she force it down his throat??)

Wearing a clerical collar, I could not hide my vocation or my Christianity. It was on display for all to see and to interpret. It also made me aware of my conduct, my actions, even my language. It was quite a Lenten journey.

So...how would your behavior change if other people could tell at a glance that you were a church-going Christian? Would it encourage you? Would it intimidate you? Would you feel the need to explain WHAT kind of Christian you are? Would it change your behavior? It's an interesting exercise, one that would make a perfect discipline to take on during Lent.

May your Lenten journey bring you closer to Jesus.

- Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe, Senior Pastor



March Birthdays

*80 & over

3/09—Rebecca Blair

3/09—Robert Ward

3/11—Susan Kropschot

3/18—Barbara McMillan

3/18—Suzanne Goodrich

3/21—Mary Grace Jackson

3/23—Margaret Metzger

3/24—Margaret Balesky

3/24—Mary Hill

3/25—David Ronk

3/25—Mary Winter

3/26—Joyce Aldrich

3/30—Marilyn Leppek

March Milestone Anniversaries

3/14—Robert Watson & Kim
Schramm (25)

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

Pictorial Directory

Unfortunately, we are not able to use the pictures from the last pictorial directory. However, you will be included in the directory even if you did not have a recent picture taken. If you do not want to be included in the directory, please contact Beth Lundy blundy@thepeopleschurch.com or call the church office at 517-908-4453.

Peoples 101

Would you like to know more about The Peoples Church or have questions you'd like to ask? Stop by Peoples 101 in the Robertson Room and meet with a Pastor and Welcome Ministry members for a 30 minute informal discussion on any of these dates:

- **March 6**
- **April 3**
- **May 1**
- **June 5**

New Members' Class

If you are interested in learning more about The Peoples Church and/or contemplating membership, this is the perfect class for you! Join a Pastor and Welcome Ministry members on **April 24 at 11:30 a.m. in the Centennial Room**. We will go over church history, governance and missions; discuss programs for children, youth, college students/young professionals and adults and talk about all of the ways you can get involved. This class runs approximately 90 minutes with an optional church tour. Please contact Robin Matheson (matheso4@msu.edu or 517-290-3223) to register.

Reminders!

The annual Jewelry/Book sale is slated for May: Jewelry Sale donations are **accepted all year round** and can be dropped off in the main church office.

Women of Peoples Church still has open positions! For more information about the mission of WPC, what positions are open, or to contact WPC, view our website:
thepeopleschurch.com/women-of-peoples-church

The Peoples Forum; Sundays in the Robertson Room; 9:30-10:15 a.m.



March 6th — Dana Johnson, *Director of The Peoples Church Preschool*

March 13th — Peter Sinclair, *Videographer, Wind101*

March 20th — Barbara Byrum, *Ingham County Clerk*

March 27th — Chuck McNeil

Confirmation Class

Calling all Middle Schoolers (and beyond) for Confirmation Class: Pastor Devon and Youth Director, Elisha Smith will be starting confirmation classes on **March 6th during Middle School youth group time, 5:30-6:30pm**. These classes will run **through May 15th**, when those interested will be confirmed during worship.

If you know a young person (6th grade & up) that may have interest in joining this class please let us know, esmith@thepeopleschurch.com or dherrell@thepeopleschurch.com. We want to make sure that all who are interested have the information. Thank you!

Dorcas Circle Event

The Dorcas Circle presents a program entitled "Introduction to The Senior Ambassador Program" for their March gathering on **March 15th at 7pm in the Robertson Room**. The **Senior Ambassadors Program** brings together Greater Lansing seniors and Michigan State University students to form mutually beneficial friendships. The goal is for senior 'hosts' and student 'ambassadors' to feel the warmth of human connection, to exchange wisdom and experience, and to learn from one another within the community. All Circles are welcome to attend and anyone who might be interested in learning more.



Peoples Church Preschool Curriculum

Dana Johnson – Director, Peoples Church Preschool

Peoples Church Preschool



Est. 1951 (517) 332-2885

The Preschool uses a NAEYC approved curriculum called Creative Curriculum. The foundation of this curriculum is that educators will provide learning experiences for children in five domains. These include: Cognitive, Language and Literacy, Physical, Social/Emotional and Creative.

Our teachers write weekly, original, comprehensive lesson plans to illustrate for families what their child does when in school. Some of the weekly experiences children get to participate in are in the areas of: social studies, spatial relationships, nature study, expressive and receptive language, conservation, creative expression and problem solving.

After creating the experiences for children, educators, allow the child to take the lead. From there the children are observed and their learning is documented for their Development Portfolio. The Portfolios purpose is to show the child's development over time. Portfolios are then shared with parents during Family conferences held in the fall and spring.

For this experience in a two-year-old classroom, the teacher has provided a large white sheet, small sections of tree, and a large bouquet of wilted flowers. The teacher has demonstrated that colors are found in nature and that by "squishing" the petals, color can be transferred to the sheet. In this experience, the children learn:

Conservation – reusing something that would be thrown away

Art - The patterns of color created

Science - The transfer of color from flower to sheet

Fine Motor (Small Muscle) Skills - to grip the tree slice.

Large Motor (Large Muscle) - to straddle the sheet

Technology - the use of a tool to create

Social Studies - Through cause and effect the child learns what they can do





CHILDREN'S EDUCATION OF THE PEOPLES CHURCH



Sunday School is back and we are enjoying each other's company as we learn our Bible lessons each week! We are just beginning our study of Lent in preparation for Easter. Our children have been good listeners and we've had some lively discussions!

Our Valentine's Day outreach project was a huge success! Thank you to everyone who donated treats and made cards. Our staff and several Sunday School families delivered treats to over 35 people. What a wonderful experience for everyone involved!

Mark your calendars! VBS is back June 13th-17th with Woldumar Nature Center all to ourselves. I can't wait to have the upstairs of the barn filled with songs, laughter and crazy dances as we experience Discovery on Adventure Island! Registration is now open, so look for that link in your Friday emails. As always, VBS can't happen without volunteers young and old! We need Counselors in Training (C.I.T.'s). Counselors and adult volunteers—please contact me if you can help us have a great week! A full week of VBS is \$85, available to children going into Kindergarten—5th grade, and scholarships are available.

- **Kathi Mitchell**, Children's Christian Education Director, kmitchell@thepeopleschurch.com

Lent

When I began college, I was placed in a "triple." That meant that instead of one roommate I had two. While most of my friends initially stayed in MI for undergrad I was headed to Ohio, and did not know a soul. I received word of this housing arrangement and quickly learned that I (a basketball player) was going to be living with one baton-twirler (for the marching band) and one very religious girl. Despite my initial eye-rolling at this arrangement, these gals became my good friends.

At that time, I was not particularly religious and did not expect to be. Then the season of Lent rolled around. I had never really participated in it before, and aside from the occasional Good Friday or Maundy Thursday service I only knew that Lent meant Catholics did not eat meat on Fridays. My roommate began to tell me about why Lent was important to her, and I thought I would join her on the "giving up" of something for this season. I decided it would be chocolate and I lasted about 24 hours. As I sat up in the early morning hours finishing up a paper, I noticed the chocolate kiss sitting on my desk. I began to think, "nobody is even going to know" ...and that chocolate was gone before I could resist. I couldn't even last a week! I have thought about this moment often as Lent rolls around and we enter the season of *giving things up, or adding something in*. The idea that what ran through my head as the most important part of this season was concern that others might know my failure now makes me chuckle. That's not what this season is about!

I wonder what traditions you have experienced during Lent? How serious do you take this time of intentional self-reflection and spiritual growth? Do you refrain from something and make space for a deeper prayer life? Do you add something and daily bless the life of another? Maybe, like me that freshman year of college, you are not even sure that Lent is a necessary thing. Wherever you find yourself, I hope you will consider digging a little deeper into your faith, spending a little more time in prayer, and making sure you are connecting with your community during this most transformative space in the liturgical year. Slowing down and tending to our spirits as we prepare for Christ's journey to the cross opens us up to experience all of it with a fresh perspective. My hope is that in these weeks leading up to Easter, we will learn more about ourselves, more about each other, and more about the God who loves us. May it be so.

- **Pastor Devon**



Submissions for the April *Portal* are due **March 15th!**
Send content to Elizabeth eprice@thepeopleschurch.com

LET'S TRY THIS AGAIN...

LET'S PLAY GAMES!

Family Game Day following worship
March 27th! Bring your favorite games!



JOIN US FOR PUB THEOLOGY

Tuesday March 29th
7pm
@ Crunchy's



PC Campus Ministry

Upcoming Activities

Wed. **March 2nd:** Dinner @ 6:30pm
Ash Wednesday Worship @ 7pm

Sunday **March 6th:** Lunch & Lounge following worship

Wed. **March 9th:** No MEETING/Spring Break

Sunday **March 13th:** Lunch & Lounge following worship

Wed. **March 16th:** Dinner & Bible Study @ 6:30pm

Sunday **March 20th:** Lunch & Lounge following worship

Wed. **March 23rd:** Dinner & Bible Study @ 6:30pm

Sunday **March 27th:** All-Church game day after worship

Wed. **March 30:** Dinner and Bible Study @ 6:30pm

Vacation Bible School Registration Open!

- June 13th-17th
- Limited to 100 Campers
- Register before May 1st for a discount!

Contact Kathi Mitchell to register: 517-908-4447



Earth Stewardship's Monthly Green Message

The Electric Vehicle Revolution

As recently as 2017, fully electric cars comprised just 1.4% of global sales. By 2021, they made up 8.6%, roughly a sixfold increase in just four years. And, in addition, there are “hybrid” (partially electrified) cars. Several people in our congregation own hybrid vehicles. Experts agree that the time is coming when electrified vehicles will displace gasoline powered ones. From an environmental standpoint this is a positive development since Internal combustion powered vehicles are one of the leading sources of air pollution and one of the biggest sources of greenhouse gases.



What are the advantages of Electric Vehicles? In a practical sense EV's are more powerful (i.e., quick and smooth acceleration), cleaner and much cheaper to maintain and drive. Since the vast majority of car trips are quite short, and almost every house and business in our country is already wired for electric power it will be relatively straightforward to keep most EV's charged up most of the time. Federal and state authorities are currently working on plans to make charging stations more widely available across the nation.

There are some downsides to EV's that need to be considered. The manufacture of large batteries to power these vehicles will require big quantities of lithium, copper and rare earth elements. Currently most of these elements come from foreign countries, usually mined by exploited laborers who are poor. But some elements needed for EV batteries are beginning to be mined in the United States. Idaho, for example, has a big deposit of cobalt that could be used to produce batteries and requisite parts for an electric drive train.

Of course, EV's do not use gasoline thereby saving owners considerable amounts of money given the wildly gyrating price of gasoline at the pump. Savings in this regard are somewhat reduced by the increased cost of household electricity, where monthly bills can increase by 40% to 50%

But all in all, EV's appear to be the wave of the future and will produce an overall positive effect on our environment.



Every **Wednesday through Lent** you are invited to walk the labyrinth in the **Snider Social Hall from 4-7 p.m.** Pastor Devon will have resources for you to participate and options for guided meditation. Just bring yourself, an open mind, and an adventurous spirit! We hope you will join us. Please contact the church office for more information about the labyrinth: 517-332-5073.



During Lent there are multiple ways for you to get involved and dig a little deeper in your faith journey. Join us on **March 2nd** as we celebrate **Ash Wednesday**. There are two ways for you to be participate. **Drive-thru Ashes** will be available from **8am - 2pm** via the drop off loop off of Albert (North side of our building). We will also have an **Ash Wednesday Service** at 7pm in the sanctuary. This service will be streamed on our YouTube channel.

Don't forget to pick up your copy of our **Community Lenten Devotional**, written by members of our congregation, this daily devotional will be our companion from Ash Wednesday to Easter. Pastor Devon invites you to a time of reflection focusing on this devotional each evening at **7pm on our Facebook page**.

The Fine Arts Committee invites you to view their latest exhibit, "This Re-birthing: Coming Alive Painting with Oils." The exhibit features the work of Sharon McAuley, a Michigan artist with an enthusiasm for oil painting, watercolor and experimental media. Her work is sparked by spirituality and nature and has been exhibited across Michigan and her commissioned pieces can be found throughout the U.S. and South America. In addition, she has also authored seven books featuring her art, music and writing that foster spiritual formation.



The exhibit is titled "This Re-birthing: Coming Alive Painting with Oils" and grew out of personal loss as well as the political, cultural and environmental crises afflicting our world. Eight months prior to the onset of the Covid pandemic, Sharon's husband, Frank passed away and in the intervening months she found herself seeking hope, renewed vitality and a re-emergence of life. That desire culminated in a creative explosion – she put down her brushes and began painting with her hands and discovered how healing and freeing that process was.

A palette knife for mixing colors, and paper towels to wipe her fingers became her only tools. In gloved hands—for protection against toxins in the paint—she applies the oil pigments directly onto stretched canvases, her whole self involved in what becomes a very immediate, personal expression. The finished result is amazing in its detail and movement. Many of the paintings in this exhibit are hand-applied oils including the title piece, "This Rebirthing: Coming Alive Painting With Oils."

The exhibit features 32 pieces from Sharon's collection and includes both brush-applied and hand-applied oil work. It was installed by members of the Fine Arts Committee: Suzanne Mills, Jan Reed, Susan Nowicki, Sue Patterson, Marcia Stockmeyer and Jan Angell, with the assistance of friends of the committee, Chase Lipscomb and Kelton Reed. The exhibit is now on display throughout the halls bordering the church Sanctuary. The Thomsen case across from the library contains samples of her books, including coloring books, which focus on meditation and self-awareness. Additional pieces can be found in the Kiosk adjacent to the church office. It will be on display through May 19. Pick up a catalog for the exhibit in the NW entrance of the church. Pieces in the exhibit are for sale. Contact the Church office for a price list and information about how to contact the artist.



Show
Us **YOUR
TALENT**

Peoples Church Talent Show

The long-awaited Peoples Church Talent Show is slated for **Sunday, May 1st at 11:30 a.m.!** Come enjoy some food, fellowship and entertainment down in the **Snider Social Hall.**

Talent of all kinds is encouraged: sing, dance, recite and/or show your light to your church family—all are welcome! If you have an act to share, please email Diane Shafer, Welcome Ministry Co-Chair, at dmschafer2001@gmail.com with the details by **April 24th.** Acts are limited to 5 minutes!

The next *Portal* deadline for the April issue is **April 15th.**
Submit content to eprice@thepeopleschurch.com