

West Shore Unitarian Universalist Congregation

People's Voice

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JANUARY 2009

VOLUME 5 ISSUE 6

“THE LITTLE CONGREGATION THAT COULD” CHAPTER 10: MY FIRST MEMORY OF PEOPLE’S CHURCH

My first memories of UU were at the Hamlin Township Hall. There was a Native American presentation and we live close by so I talked Dan into going. It was a friendly place, nice people and no Apostles Creed! We attended several more times and then we learned the people had bought the museum. I went one day and somehow I got in, don't remember how, anyhow I started painting. I remember finding some of the dark blue paint and climbing up on the ledge above the PA system to touch up the edge that was dark blue. That was exciting! I also remember doing something to the kitchen like taking some wallpaper down or something. Whatever it was, folks were happy with the results. Next I started to paint the Nursery and then Kathy Sherlock (aka Kat Echinaw) showed up to help. Next she became the RE Director. We became good friends and remain so to this day. We finished the nursery together through laughter and some paint battles. Our faces got pretty funny looking.

October 25, 1998 I joined UU. I don't remember if it was called People's Church by then. I know some folks didn't like the word church. I remember Don Martz and I were partners in orientation for membership and Vail Weller had a strong lesson of some sort and it was so much fun. I wore my Full Buckskins outfit to the membership ceremony. I was emotional because I never thought I would ever join a church again.

I sang in the choir for awhile when Dave Kerlina was there, that was fun!

I don't remember when Dan and I did a Native American presentation but I do remember asking the congregation to join me while I sang and drummed and we danced in a circle around the perimeter of the sanctuary. It was an honor to share one of our traditions. Dan spoke of Eagle Feathers and what they mean to our people and we drummed and sang together.

Another memory is a few years ago we were social time hosts with Deb Barth. Dan and I dressed in Regalia and I made the Traditional Corn Soup. Deb made a huge Salad and we had French bread in lieu of Fry Bread. It was a hit except that our van window was broken by some kids in the back parking lot. Guess they thought we should have had Fry Bread!

I have so many memories of People's Church. The help received during the Strike at Great Lakes Castings and another time when we were really struggling to make it. When I had meningitis the people got together and organized meals to feed us when I got home. I was pretty out of it. I guess a six-day coma can do that to a person. The cards and calls and caring thoughts followed by “ACTION”, a key word for our church.

Sincerely, **Elizabeth Caldwell Bissell**

WHAT ARE YOUR VISIONS FOR PEOPLE’S CHURCH?

In March we will be celebrating our 15th birthday as a congregation. After eleven months of celebrating our history with memories shared by some who were there at the beginning, the questions for the 12th month are:

- 1) “WHAT DO WE WANT OUR CHURCH COMMUNITY TO BE IN THE FUTURE?”
- 2) “HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE THAT VISION?”

Your assignment, should you choose to accept it (and I certainly hope that you will), is to send an email or other communication addressing those two questions to adennison@att.net.

Some examples of church vision follow:

Universalist Unitarian Church of Peoria

“Our church embarked on a ‘*Vision Quest*’ in 2006. We began with a workshop open to all members and friends. Participants drafted vision statements in six areas:

- 1) Spiritual Development and Lifespan Religious Education Inspire spiritual growth, nourish curiosity, give guidance and support
- 2) Public Relations and Membership Project a positive image in larger community and a magnet for people and groups from a diversity of cultures, lifestyles, and

(Continued on page 6)

SUNDAY SERVICES — 11:00 A.M.

January 4 ~ Graceful Stories

by Reverend Catherine Harrington

This first Sunday of our New Year, I will share a collection of twelve stories of light compiled into this inspiring sermon written by Dr. Davidson Loehr.

January 11 ~ Finding Peace

by Reverend Catherine Harrington

When the insanity of the holidays comes to a screeching halt and a feeling of quiet and renewal at last prevails, how can we keep peace in our daily lives?

January 18 ~ *The Quest for Peace: Religious Stepping Stones*

by Reverend Catherine Harrington

The roots of peace and reconciliation can be traced in each of the world's great wisdom traditions. Ancient teachings from Taoism, Confucianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, and Christianity reveal the common insight that within each person is an inherent capacity for wholeness, peace, and love. Hindus call it, Self. Buddhists call it, Brahman. Christians call it, Christ. Taoist prefer, the Way. Jews refer to "the still small voice within," or Spirit.

January 25 ~ The Conversion of Paul

by Dr. Louis Yock

Today many Christians celebrate the conversion of St. Paul, one of Christianity's most revered and vilified leaders. When it comes to Paul, separating the fact (as best we can tell) from the fiction (as best we can tell) gives us insight to the earliest Christian communities and Christianity's first theologian.

Do you have an anniversary or other special date you'd like to commemorate?

A birthday you'd like to honor?

Would you like to see our sanctuary enhanced each Sunday with the beauty of flowers?

It will be a while before the landscape bursts into the Spring yellows of forsythia and daffodils but one can always bring some beauty indoors by providing flowers or plants for our Sunday services.

There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in Hospitality Hall.

Please choose a date to participate.



MUSINGS OF REVEREND CATHERINE HARRINGTON

Happy New Year!

This year brings with it many challenges but we have more reason than ever to dare to hope for a better America for all people. We have a new president who draws wisdom and strength from leaders who brought hope into the world, Martin Luther King, Abraham Lincoln, Mahatma Gandhi, and Unitarian, Theodore Parker, to just name a few. People's Church will be sharing some programs this year with the United Methodist Church. On January 31, I'll be doing a bread class at the Methodist Church and one of their talented members will be offering a knitting class at our church. Leaders from both churches are meeting regularly to plan exciting ways to promote interfaith dialogue in our community. Each month we hope to offer speakers and opportunities to interact and learn together. With the present economic woes, we hope to join forces with other churches to find practical ways to help those in need. Your thoughts and ideas are welcome!



I was honored with a visit from one of my restorative justice colleagues, Dr. Noah Salameh, just before Christmas. Noah is the Director of the Center for Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation in Bethlehem, Palestine. Noah was born in a refugee camp in Bethlehem and at age 17, he was arrested and put in an Israeli prison for 15 years. When he was released he got an undergraduate degree at Bethlehem University in English Literature and came to the United States to get a Masters in Peace Studies at Notre Dame. Later he returned to study at George Mason University for his Ph.D. and went home to create CCRR to help promote peace and dialogue between the Palestinian and Israeli people. His stories are disturbing and need to be heard by the world. I learned about the history of the Palestinian/Israel conflict and about the plight of the Palestinian people. The perspective was very different from what is portrayed in the media. This issue will be addressed in at least one sermon in February.

Noah was very impressed with our little church and with all of you that he had a chance to meet and speak with. He recognized that we have a unique opportunity in Ludington to work for peace from the bottom up, beginning with interfaith dialogue and by inviting everyone to the table. Even those people we don't agree with! This is exactly what our new president is working towards and this is how we will change the world, one person at a time in our little corner of the world. May it be so.

Peace, Shalom, Salom!

Cathy

RELIGIOUS ED NEWS JANUARY '09

January will see a major change in the Religious Ed classes for the children, as I will no longer be doing every class. For the time being the children will be studying Bible stories with the UU curriculum, "Timeless Themes." However, with the reactivation of the Children's RE Committee, different members of the congregation will be leading the classes.

I will still be very much involved and am eager to participate, but the Religious Ed committees, both adult and children's, have determined that my spending more time in adult RE will be beneficial. That said, you will find in this newsletter a schedule of the varied topics for January's Adult Religious Ed classes (ARE Class) to be held each Sunday at 2pm at the church.

Lou

JANUARY EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS

FRIDAY, JANUARY 2, 7 P.M. FABULOUS FIRST FRIDAY FILM FESTIVAL #60

A Keynote Address by Naomi Klein, Author of Shock Doctrine will be shown at People's Church on Friday, January 2nd, at 7:00 pm. Naomi Klein is a leading spokesman against what she calls "Disaster Capitalism..

In her address at the University of Chicago, she eloquently opposes construction of a memorial to the modern economist, Milton Freidman. Freidman is most directly responsible for current government policies of (1) privatization, (2) deregulation and (3) reduction of social spending. Don't miss the discussion that will follow the film. A \$2.00 donation will be requested to cover costs. Questions regarding the film may be directed to David Nixon at 843-4099.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 4, 12:30 P.M. INQUIRER'S GATHERING

Reverend Harrington will be offering newcomers a chance to learn more about People's Church and UU beliefs in a special meeting in her office on Sunday, January 4. All interested persons are welcome to join her after Social Hour for questions and conversation.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7 VESPERS SERVICE

6 P.M.—SOUP AND BREAD WILL BE SERVED

7 P.M. A MEDITATIVE SERVICE OF PRAYER, MUSIC AND COMMUNION

SATURDAY, JANUARY 17, 10 A.M. MEMBERSHIP CLASS

On Saturday, January 17, a membership class will be held at 10:00. Reverend Harrington and the co-chairs of the Membership Committee will meet with anyone interested in becoming a member of People's Church.

Please talk to Anne Pettigrew (845-6615) or Carol Farley (843-8077) if you would like to attend.

SUNDAYS AT 2 P.M. ARE CLASS (ADULT RELIGIOUS ED CLASS)

Beginning on January 4, and every Sunday following, there will be an Adult Religious Ed class held at the church at 2 p.m. The time of meeting will be evaluated as things get under way. Organized by Lou Yock, a variety of topics will be dealt with in various formats including forums and lectures. Each month's schedule will be published in that month's newsletter.

January 4

Understanding the Bible: Introduction

This ongoing series, led by Dr. Louis Yock, will deal with understanding the Bible in its historical and literary context. It will examine how it was composed, the motivations of those composing it, and the historical circumstances surrounding its composition. To begin, we will be using the book *Understanding the Bible: An Introduction for Skeptics, Seekers, and Religious Liberals* by John A. Buehrens.

January 11

Introduction to Baha'i: Dr. Gary Cools

For this month's interfaith dialogue we have the privilege of having with us Mr. Gary Cools, a representative from the Baha'i group that meets in Hamlin Township. Baha'i benchmark beliefs are that all religions are chapters in a progressive Book of God, each Messenger building and expanding upon the work of the previous Messenger, and teaching according to the capacity of the people at their time. Baha'i seek the elimination of all prejudices, and the development of first tolerance of our brotherhood and eventually the outright appreciation of the variety of cultures. This establishes the equality of men and women spiritually, and calls for religion and science to work for factual harmony and eventual agreement in all matters.

January 18

The Welcoming Congregation: Discussion

Our Board of Directors has voted to investigate and pursue our church becoming a "Welcoming Congregation." In our first discussion, we will investigate what this means as defined by the UUA, and what it means to us as a congregation.

January 25

Utilitarian Ethics

This class will examine the modern ethical system as developed by Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill. Is "the greatest amount of happiness for the greatest amount of people" simply a rule of thumb, or should societies be ordered by this dictum?

More events on Page 5

MORE JANUARY EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS

**SUNDAYS, 5-6:30 P.M.
TWO-BITS UNIVERSITY**

Two Bits University meets Sunday evenings at People's Church (5 – 6:30 PM) in a friendly relaxed venue, to watch and discuss an eclectic variety of inspiring, informative and often amusing short films and documentaries. Drop in any Sunday evening and "join the class"!

JANUARY 4 (*No class tonight*)

JANUARY 11 Our first "class" this year is a special inspiring motivational feature from the Spiritual Cinema Circle.

[You Can Heal Your Life](#)

Part feature narrative, part documentary, this film details the fascinating life story of Louise Hay, founder of Hay House. We are taken on an inner journey of doubt, realization and eventual healing, while also hearing from some of the most renowned leaders in a new thought field today.

JANUARY 18

And now for something a little different; the pilot for a "Brilliant But Canceled" 2004 TV series you should have seen but probably never got the chance.

[Wonderfalls](#) –

In a small gift shop adjacent to the magnificent Niagara Falls toils Jaye Tyler, a highly intelligent Ivy League grad whose parents have invested all their hopes and dreams in her. Much to their chagrin, all Jaye wants is to work as a clerk at the store, until unexplainable events---such as lifeless objects speaking to her in secret----remind her that she may actually be destined for an offbeat kind of greatness.

JANUARY 25 (

As novelist Marcel Proust said, "The of discovery is not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes." Tonight's three short Spiritual Cinema Circle films celebrate our personal perceptions.

"To Paint the Portrait of a Bird —

A beautiful short film that takes a famous French poem and brings it to life through the magical realm of film.

Shadow Ball—

Set in 1945, this compelling short film follows Patrick, a young white boy, as he runs away and finds solace at a "shadow ball" game being played by an African American baseball team.

West Bank Story—

Winner of the Academy Award for the best live action short, this film blends musical comedy and serious politics in its decryption of one crazy scenario for peace in the Middle East.

MORE VOLUNTEERISM UNCOVERED!

An acquaintance approached me and said she had been told about a sermon at People's Church which might be of interest to her. When she asked if the sermons were recorded, I was able to tell her that yes, they were, and I loaned her a copy. Until then I had not been curious about who fills up the tape shelf in the west hallway with tapes of each sermon. So I did some detective work.

Here's what I found: Each sermon is recorded on the sound equipment, this activity headed by Dave Hall. Then Diana Phelps takes the tape home, makes two copies, and places them on the hallway shelf where they are available for anyone to borrow. Diana has been doing this for so many years that the shelf is filled up and she has to be creative about making additional space. If you are so inclined, you might take a look and see if you can come up with a solution to the space problem.

Alice Dennison

DID YOU KNOW?

THAT THE PEOPLE'S VOICE IS POSTED
ON OUR WEBSITE

PEOPLESCHURCHUU@CHARTER.COM

AND YOU CAN DOWNLOAD AND PRINT ALL
OR PARTS OF IT ON YOUR OWN PRINTER.
THIS WOULD CUT DOWN ON PAPER COMING
INTO YOUR MAILBOX.... AND HAVING TO
SUBSEQUENTLY BE THROWN OUT.

IT'S A WIN WIN!

The Version Births

If you missed the Christmas pageant on December 14, Ron Johnson took many pictures which are on display at the church. The children made sweet, dancing angels and/or animals, the wise-people were suitably serious and even wise, the shepherds finally found their sheep, Joseph was right out of central casting and the virgin Mary was perfect for the part. The director should be questioned about why she gave different scripts to her two superb narrators... but it all turned out in the end.

Costuming was left to the actors who responded with perfection in every case.

Many thanks to Deb Dila for pulling it all together with setting, costumes, and perfect casting!

Let's hope this becomes an annual event.

faiths.

3) Social Action Strong and visible as a Unitarian Universalist force for social justice and the promise of a better world.

4) Facility and Land Give back to our own and larger community by 'opening our doors' to encourage growth of UU principles while nurturing and maintaining the natural integrity of our land and beauty of our building

5) Governance Achieve objectives and fulfill our needs by providing a sustainable governance structure that is effective, efficient, fair, and flexible.

6) Financials Fully fund our church operations through members' contributions and other predictable income, as well as generously funding our church programs and activities.

"Each year, committees collaborate to review our goals and develop short-term objectives for reaching them.

"Together we are making our vision a reality."

First Unitarian Church of San José:

A church with a vibrant congregational life that reflects a supportive, joyful, and diverse intergenerational community.

A church that offers a wide variety of opportunities for spiritual expression and personal growth through multiple worship services, not limited to Sundays, with an excellent music program, and a strong lifespan religious education program.

A church with a solid infrastructure that has effective administration, a comprehensive volunteer structure, a thoughtful visibility plan, and a program to broaden the financial base through an endowment and real estate investments.

A church that is a recognized leader in the community, Pacific Central District, and the UUA, especially in action for social justice, campus ministry, Spanish Speaking Ministries, and Small Group Ministry.

Check the internet for more UU congregation visions.

Also read Terry Murphy's *View from the Lake* (page 9) and the goals our Board of Trustees set for itself at their retreat:

NUMBER 3—"DEVELOP A VISION FOR PEOPLE'S CHURCH."

ITEM 1: Fair trade coffee, chocolate, cranberries and tea could have made great Christmas presents to yourselves and others, but why does it need to be Christmas anyway? Josh can help with special orders.

ITEM 2: Department of Peace Campaign.

Josh Swenson requested and the board agreed to

- 1) have a vote on a resolution to support the campaign for a Dept. of Peace at our next annual meeting,
- 2) vote also to request that the UUA take up the resolution, and
- 3) inform our congregation on what this means and have an open discussion on the pros and cons of this proposal.

If you would like to help, please contact Josh Swenson, 723-4395.

ITEM 3: Thanks for the help paying for the new energy efficient **window in Cathy's office**-- Dave Swanson for installing it, George and Brenda Reeber, Dave Nixon, Elisabeth and Dan Caldwell-Bissell, Chrissie and Dave Hall, and Kent and Peg Gage! Cathy says it's much warmer there now!

NEW IN THE CHURCH LIBRARY

"The Assault on Reason," by Al Gore

"Godless: The Church of Liberalism", by Ann Coulter

"Mercy on Trial: What It Means to Stop an Execution" by Austin Sarat

"Stone Diaries" (an amazing novel) by Carol Shield

"Shadow: Five Presidents and the Legacy of Watergate" by Bob Woodward

"Darfur": heartrending photos of genocide

"Against All Enemies: Inside America's War On Terror" by Richard Clarke

FROM THE LIBRARY LADY

"Although there is no limit on the time our books can be checked out, we find there are some which have been absent from the library for up to a year. Admittedly our recordkeeping system is inadequate, and we know that some of you read slowly and thoughtfully, but...



Please check your bookshelves and bedsides for any book you may have ultimately mistaken for your own, and quietly return it to the library. (Our name is stamped inside the back cover). No questions will be asked, no fines levied, and no public humiliation imposed."

Carolyn Beeker, Librarian

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF OUR CHALICE? OUR FLAMING CHALICE REPRESENTS A LIGHT OF HOPE.

These stories of how the flaming chalice became an important symbol for Unitarian Universalists can be found on the UUA website.

The chalice and the flame were brought together as a Unitarian symbol by an Austrian artist and political cartoonist Hans Deutsch, in 1941. Living in Paris during the 1930's Deutsch drew critical cartoons of Adolf Hitler. When the Nazis invaded Paris in 1940, he abandoned all he had and fled to the South of France, then to Spain, and finally, with an altered passport, into Portugal. There he met the Reverend Charles Joy, executive director of the Unitarian Service Committee (USC). The Service Committee was new, founded in Boston to assist Eastern Europeans, among them Unitarians as well as Jews, who needed to escape Nazi persecution. From his Lisbon headquarters, Joy oversaw a secret network of couriers and agents. Charles Joy felt that this new, unknown organization needed some visual image to represent Unitarianism to the world, especially when dealing with government agencies abroad. Deutsch was most impressed and soon was working for the USC. He later wrote to Joy:

"There is something that urges me to tell you... how much I admire your utter self denial [and] readiness to serve, to sacrifice all, your time, your health, your well being, to help, help, help. "I am not what you may actually call a believer. But, if your kind of life is the profession of your faith---as it is, I feel sure---then religion, ceasing to be magic and mysticism, becomes confession to practical philosophy and---what is more- -- to active, really useful social work. And this religion --- with or without a heading---is one to which even a 'godless' fellow like myself can say wholeheartedly, Yes!"

The flaming chalice combines two archetypes—a drinking vessel and a flame.

The second story begins with Martyr and courageous forerunner of the Reformation, Jan Hus, who was a Czech priest excommunicated and condemned by the Council of Constance for his extensive heretical writings and for challenging the corruption of the church. Hus was burned at the stake for defying authority, and believing that the holy practice of communion was in fact a symbol of Jesus' teachings that God loves everyone.

When Hus began offering the communion chalice to laity, including peasants, he was repeatedly warned and even locked out of his church. He gave all his knowledge, abilities and strength and finally his life to serving the just cause of the common people.

As a sacrificial fire, flame has been a central symbol for the world's oldest scriptures, the Vedic hymns of India. A flame can symbolize witness, sacrifice, testing, courage, and illumination.

When we light our chalice every Sunday morning as a symbol of our faith, we are committing ourselves in effect, to give our abilities, our knowledge, our strength and our hope to serve the greater good. Davidson Loehr writes:

And that flame, that light, is what we like to think we have to offer: more light, a different and better way of seeing things, even if it is often highly unorthodox. That, too, is in the style of that old priest whose life and death in some way we honor every time we look at the symbol of the flaming chalice. Because until it's been shared with others, there's no communion."

Nobody cares what Unitarians think. Nobody cares what Presbyterians busy themselves with inside their walls. The world only cares whether our religion has filled us up enough so that there is some overflow that might share light and sustenance with those outside our little walls. That's the "communion" the world needs from those who style ourselves religious."

LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

MARRIAGE MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP

You go to the dentist to prevent cavities.

You take your car to have the oil changed to keep your vehicle maintained and running smoothly.

**BUT WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO KEEP YOUR MARRIAGE MAINTAINED AND
RUNNING SMOOTHLY TO PREVENT A BREAKDOWN?**

Simply drive on over to our “Marriage Maintenance Workshop” located at the United Methodist Church of Ludington, 5810 Bryant Road in Ludington to have your marriage thoroughly cleaned, inspected, maintained and repaired, regardless of its age, history, or condition! Enjoy a “date night” with your spouse, one Friday night each month, including dinner and child care ~

COMPLETELY FREE OF CHARGE!

All workshops are held on Friday evenings, from 7-9 p.m. at the United Methodist Church of Ludington in the Fellowship Hall. Child care is provided by the church.

If you are able, kindly bring a dish to pass for dinner on each occasion: coffee, pop and table service will be provided.

To register, or for questions/concerns, contact Amy and Greg Patterson, 231-794-9747, amydesignstudio@yahoo.com

2009 DATES: January 9, February 6, March 6 (this date will be an outing with couples meeting for dinner at a local restaurant),

Regardless of your faith or religion....

Whether you've been married for 5 years or 50....

Whether your marriage is currently strong or whether it's suffering....

EVERYONE IS WELCOME! MAKE THE INVESTMENT IN YOUR MARRIAGE TODAY!

SUITCASES FROM A STATE HOSPITAL ATTIC

The Lives They Left Behind Opening January 9th For The Entire Month!

and

featuring West Michigan Community Mental Health System's Display

“Recovering the Light”

Special Event on January 16th: Guided Tours and Book Signing by co-author Darby Penney from 3:30—5:00 PM
Presentation by Darby Penney at 5:15 PM

Exhibit Location Ludington Area Center for the Arts 107 S. Harrison Street Ludington, Michigan

Hours Wednesday, Friday & Saturday (12:00 PM—6:00 PM) Thursday (12:00 PM—7:00 PM)
Sunday (12:00 PM— 4:00 PM) Special tours can be arranged.

Please call 231-843-5486 for more information. West Michigan Community Mental Health.

Terry Murphy's View from the Lake

Did you think I had disappeared? Well, no one has mentioned missing my column, so I wasn't too worried. That said, I did want to give you an overview of the board retreat held in late October.

We came out of the retreat with eight action items – likely too many to accomplish this year, but at least they give us a set of goals to work against and tweak and evaluate ourselves against. The items stem from a full session of discussion about the things that we want for the church; what we think the congregation wants (and you'll have opportunities to let us know if we're on the right track); and what can help us be more effective day-to-day and in crisis situations (as we reflected on last summer's tragedy at the UU in Knoxville, Tennessee.

HERE ARE THE EIGHT ITEMS; THEY ARE NOT IN PRIORITY ORDER:

1. Develop, document, and communicate emergency decision-making.
2. Accept the finance committee's recommendations on the following:
 - Maintain current investment strategy for endowment fund, but discuss and explore other options with the committee
 - When the endowment fund reaches \$100,000, consider eliminating current practice of contributing \$5,000 annually to the fund from the church operating budget; allocate half of additional bequests to endowment; if People's Church ever disbands, \$70K back to original benefactors of endowment fund. Re-evaluate this strategy as needed.
3. Develop a vision for People's Church
4. Consider forming a Development Committee to broaden the scope of financial support for the church, versus the current Stewardship model of an annual campaign.
5. Consider starting a study group for socially responsible investing.
6. Improve board effectiveness; specifically, measuring our progress quarterly against the action item of the board retreat; measuring our work against the mission and vision of the church; reserving more time for creativity.
7. Church policies:
 - Communicate new policy process
 - Communicate new process for creating and recording policy
 - Decide policies/procedures which need to be addressed
 - Review bylaws
8. Line of Authority/How the church is organized
 - Set discussion aside for the time being.

Some of these action items may seem timely and relevant to you; some may not at all. But they reflect the board's experiences and discussions over the past year grappling with both large and small issues. And, though I can't speak for the board, they reflect my belief that the church's ability to continue to grow and thrive will only be strengthened by a solid vision that we as a congregation create together and a strong base of policies and procedures that free us to focus on the issues and activities that inspire us.

The board represents the members of People's Church. So we invite your thoughts, questions, and input on these items or any other issues you see as important to the church.

Terry Murphy (msperch@charter.net)

Board President

CLASSIFIED SECTION, HELP WANTED!

Office Volunteers—4 hours needed,
regular or occasional

Once-a-month:
prepare People's voice for mailing

Sunday morning greeters

Social Chair

SYNOPSIS OF DECEMBER BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Members Present: Ken Fisher, Dave Hall, Terry Murphy, Christine Reed-Fast, Dave Rodwell, Mary Wickwire

Minister: Cathy Harrington

Guests: Ed Dennison, Kent Gage

The Board discussed the recommendation of the Finance Committee concerning a Policy Position Regarding Gifts and Special Projects. The recommendation was approved as presented. Since this represents a church policy, the full text of the recommendation will be posted and members are encouraged to comment on the policy prior to the January meeting.

Board members are working on different issues related to the use of the church by an external organization. Both policy issues and physical changes to the church are under consideration.

The Board is interested in submitting a letter of intent for a Chalice Lighter's grant. Items under consideration are improvements to the nursery area and financing for the Religious Education program.

Cathy Harrington reported that interviews are being conducted for the Church Administrator position. Several excellent candidates have been interviewed, and a decision will be made as soon as possible.

David Hall reported that there are no major concerns about budget issues at this time.

The purpose and decision-making process concerning the Dottie Hall Fund were discussed. This Fund is designed to help congregation members who have immediate needs. Decisions for use of this fund are made by the minister, the treasurer, and a member of the Committee on Ministry.

The next meeting is scheduled for
Wednesday, January 14, 2009.

A Christian said to a UU minister, "I hear you don't believe in life after death." The UU minister responded, "We believe in life *before* death."

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At a UU discussion group: "Yeah, we have a problem thinking we're better than everybody. If only we could get rid of our arrogance, we'd be perfect."

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Asked if he was really a clergyman, the Rev. Robert Fulghum said: "I am a minister in a religious community, the Unitarian Universalist Association. And our motto is, "We don't ever leave well enough alone."

Notice of Proposed Policy Re: Gifts to People's Church

In keeping with the Board's new process for developing church policies, this provides members an opportunity for comment on the following proposed policy for accepting gifts to People's Church. This proposed policy will also be posted at the church for comment. At a future board meeting, the board will consider any comments on this proposed policies, do a second reading of the proposed policy, and move toward adoption of the policy.


Proposed Policy Regarding Gifts to People's Church

Gifts to People's Church are appreciated and encouraged. The Board of Trustees or its designee is empowered to accept or reject gifts of any value on behalf of the Church. Gifts with a value of greater than \$500 shall require Board prior consideration. The Board reserves the right to determine how any gift shall be used. If an individual or group wishes to pursue a special project, which includes fund-raising or soliciting donations, permission must first be received from the Board of Trustees. In considering such requests, the Board shall consider the size and scope of the proposed project, the impact on the church budget, the potential impact on pledging income, and the total number of special projects to be undertaken.

For your reference, following is the procedure for creating and recording policy, which was approved by the board in September 2008:

1. Any member or friend of the church or any committee may suggest policy to the board.
2. A written statement of the policy is created and discussed. No official vote of approval is taken at this time. "Straw" votes may be taken within the board to measure consensus. Creating the written statement and discussion may take one or more board meetings. When a written statement is created and read into the minutes, this becomes the first reading of the policy.
3. The first draft of the written policy statement is posted so that members and friends of People's Church can comment. The board will provide time at a board meeting for comments prior to the second reading of the policy.
4. The second reading of the policy statement is done at a following board meeting. It may or may not be considered at the next board meeting. This gives time for board membership to consider the implications of the policy statement and to make changes to the statement. The board members discuss the final version of the policy statement and vote to approve or disapprove the policy statement.
5. Policies that are still under consideration will be included in the board agenda as carryover items until resolved.
6. The board secretary then sends the approved version of the policy statement to the church administrator for dissemination as follows:
 - a) Added to the church policies and procedures manual
 - b) Added to the computer files
 - c) Emailed to committee chairs and the newsletter editor.

JANUARY 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Happy New Year! 	2	3
4 9:30 a.m. —Choir Practice 11:00 a.m.—Church Service & RE 12:30 p.m. - Inquirer's Meeting 2:00 p.m.—ARE 7:30 p.m. - Zen Meditation	5	6	7 6:00 p.m. Soup Supper 7:00 p.m. Peace Vespers	8 10 a.m. Recorder Practice 7:30 p.m. Zen Meditation	9	10
11 9:30 a.m. —Choir Practice 11:00 a.m.—Church Service & RE 2:00 p.m.—ARE 5-6:30 p.m. —Two Bits U 7:30 p.m. - Zen Meditation	12	13 4:30 p.m. Adult RE	14 4 p.m. Membership 7 p.m. Board Meeting	15 10 a.m. Recorder Practice 7:30 p.m. Zen Meditation	16	17 10:00 a.m. Membership Class
18 9:30 a.m. —Choir Practice 11:00 a.m.—Church Service & RE 2:00 p.m.—ARE 5-6:30 p.m. —Two Bits U 7:30 p.m. - Zen Meditation PEOPLE'S VOICE DEADLINE	19	20 7 p.m. COM	21	22 10 a.m. Recorder Practice 7:30 p.m. Zen Meditation	23	24
25 9:30 a.m. —Choir Practice 11:00 a.m.—Church Service & RE 2:00 p.m.—ARE 5-6:30 p.m. —Two Bits U 7:30 p.m. - Zen Meditation SPLIT-THE-PLATE SUNDAY	26	27	28	29 10 a.m. Recorder Practice 7:30 p.m. Zen Meditation	30	31 7:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. Buddhist Retreat

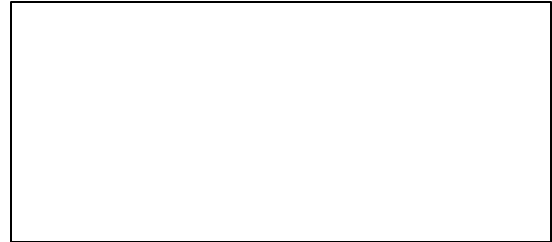
Date	Hospitality Hosts	Flowers	Sanctuary Keepers	Ushers
1/4	Jennifer Branning Marilyn and Ron Steiner	Anne	Anne	Anne and Norm Pettigrew
1/11	Julia Chambers Didi and Lynn Hoepfinger	Alice	Alice	Alice and Ed Dennison
1/18	Carolyn Beeker Carol Farley		Carmine	Carol and Dave Rodwell
1/25	Jeannene Hall Carmine Killey and Dave Nixon		Carol	Priscilla Tait and Ken Fisher

REGULAR MEETING TIMES
SUNDAYS @ 5:00 P.M.—2-BITS U
SUNDAYS @ 7:30 P.M.—ZEN MEDITATION
SECOND TUESDAY 4:30 P.M.—ADULT RE
THIRD TUESDAY @ 7 P.M.—COM
FIRST WEDNESDAY @ 6 P.M.—SOUP SUPPER
FIRST WEDNESDAY @ 7:00 P.M.—PEACE VESPERS
SECOND WEDNESDAY @ 4 P.M.—MEMBERSHIP
SECOND WEDNESDAY @ 7 P.M.—BOARD MEETING
THURSDAYS @ 10 A.M.—RECORDER PRACTICE
THURSDAYS @ 7:30 P.M.—ZEN MEDITATION
LAST SATURDAY @ 7:30 A.M. TO 12:30 P.M. - BUDDHIST RETREAT
 JANUARY DATES AT A GLANCE
2—FABULOUS FIRST FRIDAY FILM FESTIVAL
4—INQUIRER'S MEETING
7—PEACE VESPERS
18—NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
25—SPLIT-THE-PLATE SUNDAY



People's Church

West Shore Unitarian
Universalist Congregation
115 West Loomis Street
Ludington, Michigan 49431



If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter,
please check box and return this sheet to the church.

People's Church Covenant

We, the members and friends of People's Church, covenant to create and sustain an intergenerational religious community built on trust, respect, and understanding. Guided by our mission, we covenant to embrace diversity, encourage one another to participate fully in congregational life and to grow and learn together in faith and love.

We covenant to maintain open and honest communication and handle all disagreements with courtesy, fairness, and forgiveness. We promise to listen to one another, assume good intentions, identify common goals, and value the gifts brought by all.

In support of our shared ministry, we covenant to live our Unitarian Universalist principles in our local and world communities, and to give generously of our spiritual gifts and material resources.

MINISTER

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“ Love is the spirit of this church, and service is it's law ”