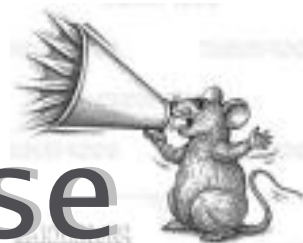


The Church Mouse



Peoples Presbyterian Church, Milan, MI



Special points of interest:

- PPC's Christmas Party, Pg. 3
- Aid in Milan will be having a Recognition Reception, Pg. 4
- Jesus' Birthday Party Wish List, Pg. 5
- Invitation to the One Voice Gospel Choir Concert, Pg. 9

Inside this issue:

Mission and Outreach Report	2
Stewardship Report	3
Session Highlights	3
Buildings and Grounds Report	4
Christian Education Report	6
December Calendar	7
January Calendar	8



What matters, to me...

By Pastor Kelly Boubel Shriver

I don't really know when it happened, but apparently I've become something of a Grinch in the past few years. When the snow first started to fall in November, my first thought wasn't of running outside to joyfully catch the first few flakes. Nor was it to light a fire and sit staring out my front window as the white danced past. Nope. My first thought was, "oh for Pete's sake! Driving up 23 is going to be a mess tomorrow." Yep. Somewhere in the past few years I became a real grownup, one of those folks who sees the snow as a pain in the neck, rather than the arrival of seasonal wonder.

I think the same is true in some other holiday related spheres. The red cups at Starbucks are just red cups. I don't care about Gingerbread Lattes. And honestly, the thought of walking into the mall this time of year gives me hives. I'd rather sit at home, alone, in my sweatpants, reading.

Like I said, apparently I've become something of a Grinch.

However, before you think there's no hope for me, or that I've gone off the Christmas deep end and I'll never be joyful again, don't worry too much! I promise you, I'm not too far-gone. This year, I've started to notice that as much as the trappings of this season might be wearing me down a bit, smaller aspects have started to bring me great joy.

The other night, I was putting Enoch to bed. I was exhausted and just ready to turn off the lights and leave him to his own devices, when he turned and asked me to rub his back and sing him a song. Ok. So, I sat down on his bed, in the dark, and asked him which song he'd like me to sing. The answer was

immediate: "The snow song, mom." And so, I started into the first quiet verse of "In the Bleak Midwinter." Enoch hummed along with me as I sang my way through the 4 verses to the end.

Or, take another example from a few weeks ago. As we gathered for Communion Sunday, I stood behind the table and began to pray the Great Prayer of Thanksgiving. At one point, I sneaked a peek out toward the congregation (just to make sure everyone was awake! Kidding.) When I glanced at the first row, I saw Moses, sitting on John's lap, with his little hands outstretched, just like mine, joining me in the Great Prayer. He held his tiny hands out there until the last amen. Sweet boy.

I found great joy in explaining the 12 Days of Christmas to Enoch two nights ago. And just yesterday Moses "helped" me wrap up a gift for a friend and mail it at the post office.

What I'm starting to discover is that maybe, just maybe I'm not the Christmas Grinch I had feared. I think what I'm starting to see is that this season, for me, has become more about passing along the stories and songs of our faith to my kids...not about the glitter and sights of the commercial season around us. What matters, to me, is that God came to be among us, in the bread, in the wine, in the water, in a baby. I want my children to know that story. I want you all to know that story. I want to know that story! And when I think about what I really want for Christmas, that's it: I want to know that God came to earth, to be among us, in a song, in a story, in a prayer, and that God is still present with us, today.

Mission and Outreach: PPC volunteers keep making a difference in the world around us!

By Carol Vollink, Mission and Outreach Co-Chair

The RIVERSIDE DINNER PROGRAM, open to those in need, continues to be held at First Presbyterian Church of Ypsilanti every Wednesday evening. Here's what's happening:

*Wednesday, October 23, Sandy Hayes and Jo Lawver served meals at Riverside.

*Sunday, November 23, PPC volunteers put together gifts of warm socks and candy canes, with an encouraging message, and finished with festive ribbon. These gifts will be given out on December 3.

*Wednesday, November 26 (the night before Thanksgiving): Sue and Steve Barney will take home-baked goods and help serve meals. They will be assisted by Don Proctor and Stephanie Duncan.

*Wednesday, December 3, Sue Barney will deliver the sock presents (mentioned above) to Riverside. These gifts will be given to about 50 people attending the meal that day.

*Wednesday, December 24 (Christmas Eve): John and Lynn Bulmer will help to serve the meal at Riverside. As the dessert, they will give gift bags of Christmas cookies. Cookie donations will be made by Carol Vollink, Sharon Thompson, Helen Barnes, Cindi Thompson, and Sue Barney.

Lord,

Thank you for all
my Blessings!



Please look for the 2015 Riverside Community Meal sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall. Everyone who has done this has found that helping the volunteers from other Presbyterian churches is an enjoyable, enriching experience. Why not give it a try?

Thanksgiving Boxes for Aid in Milan

By Carol Vollink, Mission and Outreach Co-Chair

On Sunday, November 23, many volunteers helped to pack the ten Thanksgiving boxes that PPC has donated to Aid in Milan for families in need. Jo Lawver and the Christian Education Youth decorated the boxes beautifully. \$100 in cash was given to AIM for turkeys to go with the boxes of food, and gift cards were also donated. Thanks so much to everyone who used their talents, gave food and/or money, packed boxes, and delivered the boxes to AIM (Sue & Steve Barney). Thank you everyone for your generosity.



PPC Christmas Adopted Families

By Carol Vollink, Mission and Outreach Co-Chair

The Giving Tree is located in the Fellowship Hall with ornaments showing needed items. We would like to request that all donations be at church by Sunday, Dec. 14. Thank you, Gabrielle LaFuente, for using your artistic talents to make a sign. John & Lynn Bulmer will deliver the gifts to AIM on Monday, Dec. 15.



Thank you!



Stewardship: Thank you to all!

By Steve Barney, Stewardship Committee Chair



The Stewardship Committee would like to thank all of you for your generous donations and pledges during our annual pledge drive, and our "Rebuilding Our Walls" building pledge drive. As of today we have received \$92,250 in pledges towards our goal of \$100,000 for our 2015 operations at the church, and \$51,920 towards our goal of \$75,000 for our building campaign. If you have not turned in your pledges yet, please turn them in as soon as you can, as we need to finalize these drives (especially the annual pledge campaign so we can plan our 2015 programs and operations). Again, thank you so much for your generous gifts.



Stewardship Appreciation Dinner Mark your calendars and plan to attend the Stewardship Appreciation Spaghetti Dinner on Friday, December 12 at 5:30. This dinner will be held in conjunction with the church Christmas Party planned for that evening from 5 to 9 pm, so it should be a really fun evening for all. There is a sign-up sheet in the Fellowship Hall for the dinner, so please add your name to the list if you plan to attend.



SESSION HIGHLIGHTS from November 19, 2014

By Nancy Kuzniar, Clerk of Session



New Members: During worship on November 9, Sharon Thompson was baptized, and she and Mary Huber were accepted into Active church membership.

Election of Corporate Officers: Jim Cullip - Corporation President, Ken London - Corporate Treasurer, and Nancy Kuzniar - Clerk of Session/Corporate Secretary, were all elected for one-year terms beginning January 1, 2015.

The **2015 Operating Budget** was approved in the amount of \$146,642.43.

On Saturday, November 8, Rev. Shriver, Doris Campbell and Steve & Sue Barney attended the **Great Lakes Gathering of NEXT Church**, at First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor. Keynote speaker was The Rev. Mihee Kim-Kort. Rev. Kim-Kort was a guest preacher at Peoples the next day, November 9.

A Christmas decorating party: will be held at the church on **Saturday, November 29** at 6:30 in the evening. Dessert and hot chocolate will be served after the decorating is completed.

Poinsettias: The church sanctuary will be decorated with live poinsettias again this Christmas. Cost is \$12 each. Donation slips will be available in the pew pockets and there will be a sign-up sheet in the Fellowship Hall. Deadline for ordering is Monday, December 15. Checks should be made out to PPC with "Poinsettias" written on the memo line, or cash in an envelope marked "Poinsettias."

Outreach: Sue Barney and Rev. Shriver have met with the principal of **Paddock Elementary School**. He had several intriguing ideas of ways our church could support the K-2 students in our community. More information will follow!



Buildings and Grounds Report

By Richard Brown, Buildings and Grounds Committee

The main circulating pump and motor assembly in the boiler room (approved at the October Session meeting) was installed November 4. This completes the update and repair of the pump system.

For those who understand electricity, the new main pump draws only 5.7 amps. By contrast, the pump just removed was drawing 17 amps!! Since this motor runs 24/7 during the heating season, the impact to the church energy bill should be measurable. The two "assist" pumps also draw fewer amps, and now only run when the boiler burner is on. Prior, these pumps also ran 24/7 (and 365 if we didn't turn them off manually).

We have made great strides with these two pump replacement projects.

- Fully automated and 100% off when the outside temperature is above 60 F.
- No maintenance.
- No couplers to replace.
- No vibration and very quiet.
- Energy savings
- Replacement of high limit switch on each boiler and electrical troubleshooting.
- Replacement of the combination temperature / pressure gauge on each boiler.
- Required CSD1 inspection of the boilers.



The following chores also have been completed:

- ✓ Air filters changed in the air handlers.
- ✓ Sanctuary air handler "controller timer" clock set back one hour (end of DST).
- ✓ Parking lot light timer clock reset (end of DST). The "on" time has also changed to 5pm.
- ✓ The Narthex clock was adjusted for the time change.
- ✓ Outside lights repaired. (Loose connection in the feed to the timer).
- ✓ Fellowship Hall thermostat - Battery changed, time adjusted, day of week set, programmed to set the temp to 62 F at 6a/12p/6p/10p each day except Sunday. Users of the room can override (turn up the temp) as they like. However, at the times noted, the thermostat will turn the temp back down. The Sunday program is similar except turns the temp up to 68 F at 9a and down to 62 F at 1p.



Tribute for former Aid in Milan Director

Aid in Milan will hold a Recognition Reception on Wednesday December 3. This will include a special tribute for Nina Pemberton, who passed away last year. You will recall that Nina was the former Director of Aid in Milan. Sue Barney, Carol Vollink, and Jo Lawver will represent PPC at the event.



Time for a Birthday Party, Cake included!

By Carole London, Christian Education Committee Chair



A special Birthday Party for Jesus will be held after the worship service on December 21, complete with a birthday cake. There is a wish list below, for items needed around the church. This list will also be posted in the Fellowship Hall. Please wrap your gift and the children will be glad to do the unwrapping during the party!

Jesus' Birthday Party Gift Wish List!

- Rolls of plastic table coverings in lively fun colors
- Rolls of plastic table coverings (white)
- Dish soap
- Dish Towels
- Brillo pads
- Sponges to wash dishes
- Liquid hand sanitizer
- Bleach
- Air Fresheners (Spray Can)
- Tissues, small box size for the pews, and large boxes such as Kleenex
- Paper Towels
- Small snack size plates and dinner size heavy paper plates
- Napkins
- Plastic forks
- Paper or plastic juice glasses, 5 oz. size
- Storage bags, zip top in quart and gallon sizes
- Light bulbs, energy savers, equal to 60 watt or 90 watt
- Hot Chocolate, one cup size packets
- Coffee stir stix
- Ground coffee, regular and decaffeinated
- Coffee filters, 12 cup (coffee machine make is BUNN)
- 100% juice drinks, not the corn syrup variety
- Batteries: 9 volt, D size, Double AA and Triple AAA
- Leaf Bags, large paper bags
- Garbage bags, 33 gallon and 35 gallon sizes, also Tall kitchen trash bags
- Diaper wipes
- Disinfectant wipes, such as Lysol or Clorox
- 8.5x11 or 8.5x14 copy paper, not less than 20 lb stock, in any color, to be used for Memorial Bulletins, Weekly Announcement page in the Bulletin or for Christian Education

Christian Education Report: Come for the pageant, stay for the food!

By Carole London, Christian Education Committee Chair

The children did a great job of decorating all 10 boxes for the Thanksgiving Mission Project, which was providing Thanksgiving Meals for the needy to Aid in Milan, under the direction of Jo Lawver.

Thanksgiving pumpkin prayer centerpieces were made to use at everyone's Thanksgiving gathering. The simple, but powerful, prayer is:

"Dear God, Bless the food before us, the family and friends beside us, and the love between us. We thank you God. Amen."

To finish the season, a "Gratefulness Mix" was created, placed in a bag with a ribbon and a card attached that explained the purpose of each item used. The children made a mix to take home and one to give away. We all have so much to be thankful for!

Our next activity will be making a CHRISTMAS ORNAMENT that will be handed out PPC's Christmas Eve Service. Please join us and see what the children made!



"Gratefulness" Mix!

Bugles: Shaped like a cornucopia or Horn of Plenty, a symbol of our nation's abundance.

Pretzels: Arms folded in thanks and prayer, a freedom sought by those before us.

Candy corn and Popcorn: Food was so scarce that the Pilgrims survived with only a few kernels of corn a day. Thank God we have enough food.

Nuts and Seeds: Thank God for the promise of a future harvest.

Dried fruits: By God's grace, we have harvest gifts to last us all winter.

M&M's: Many Memories of those who came before us to guide us into a blessed future.

Hershey's Kisses: We thank God for all the love of family and friends that sweeten our lives.



"It is not Happy people who are Thankful, it is Thankful people who are Happy!"



The annual Christmas Pageant is December 14 right after the worship service. The children are writing a special reading that will be performed, and they will also be participating in other parts of the worship service. A family potluck will follow the pageant - come join us!

Thanks to all who collected the aluminum pull tabs over the past year. The last huge bag of tabs was picked up by Rachel Flint and will be delivered to the Ann Arbor Ronald McDonald House this week, before the big University of Michigan vs. Ohio State football game on Saturday, November 29. Watch for Bulletin Announcements on who won the competition. Go Blue!



*Merry Christmas to All
and to All a Healthy and Joyous New Year!*

From Carole London and all of the wonderful volunteers on the Christian Education Committee



December 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 6:45 pm T.O.P.S.	2	3 7pm Bookworms	4 7 pm Handbell Practice	5	6
7 9 am Choir Practice 10 am Worship: 2nd Sunday of Advent, Handbells, C.E. Collecting for PPC Christmas Adopted Families.	8 6:45 pm T.O.P.S.	9 3 pm Homecoming Meeting	10	11 7 pm Handbell Practice	12 5 - 9pm PPC Stewardship Spaghetti Dinner and Christmas Party	13
14 8:45 am Deacons Meeting 9 am Choir Practice 9 am Sunday Morning Cartoons 10 am Worship: 3rd Sunday of Advent, Genesis Bells, C.E. Christmas Pageant 11 am Family Potluck, Everyone Welcome!	15 6:45 pm T.O.P.S.	16	17	18 7 pm Handbell Practice	19	20
21 9 am Choir Practice 10 am Worship: 4th Sunday of Advent, Handbells, C.E. 11 am Jesus' Birthday Party	22 6:45 pm T.O.P.S. 7 pm Handbell Practice	23	24 7 pm Handbell Concert, Candlelight Worship Service, Communion, Nursery will be available if needed	25 Church Office closed.	26 Church Office closed.	27
28 10 am Worship: Service of Lessons and Carols	29 6:45 pm T.O.P.S.	30	31 Church Office closed.	December Fellowship Hour is hosted by: Membership		



January 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
January Fellowship Hour is hosted by: Mission and Outreach				1 Church Office closed.	2 Church Office closed.	3
4 9 am Choir Practice 10 am Worship: Epiphany Celebration, Communion, C.E.	5 6:45 pm T.O.P.S.	6	7 9 am Bible Study	8 7 pm Handbell Practice and Potluck	9	10
11 8:45 am Deacons Meeting 9 am Choir Practice 10 am Worship: Baptism of the Lord, Genesis Bells, C.E. Session Monthly Reports are due to Clerk. Session Annual Reports are due to the Church Office Administrator.	12 3 pm Calendar Planning Meeting 6:45 pm T.O.P.S.	13 7 pm Worship and Music Meeting	14 9 am Bible Study	15 1-3 pm PPC Hats for Cancer Project 7 pm Handbell Practice	16	17
18 9 am Choir Practice 10 am Worship, C.E. Session Committee Packets are ready for pick-up Session Committee Annual Reports are available in the Narthex.	19 6:45 pm T.O.P.S.	20	21 9 am Bible Study 7 pm Session Meeting	22 7 pm Handbell Practice	23	24
25 9 am Choir Practice 10 am Worship, Handbells, C.E. 11 am Annual Congregation Meeting and Potluck. Church Mouse Newsletter Articles are due for the February Issue	26 6:45 pm T.O.P.S.	27	28 9 am Bible Study	29 9:30 am Church Mouse Collating 7 pm Handbell Practice	30	31 

It's
ALL
About

JOY!

SATURDAY DECEMBER 13
7pm

One Voice Gospel Choir
IN CONCERT

celebrating our 25th
year...all year long!

St Paul United Church of Christ
122 West Michigan Ave Saline

Donations Joyfully Accepted; Desserts and Coffee After Concert
Questions? (734) 845-1985 or www.onevoicegospelchoir.org



Peoples Presbyterian Church

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Office Hours: Mon. & Wed. 9 am - 1pm; Thurs. 9am - 4pm



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