



The Church Mouse



PEOPLES PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Manse Cat Monthly: Musings from Pastor Leia / her cat

Confession time: I have not taken my Christmas decorations down yet.

December and January have gone by in a blur for me, packed tightly with extra services, writing new music, making the high holidays of Christmas and Epiphany special, setting up prayer stations, baking bread, sewing new stoles, attending tea parties and ordination services and meetings, wrapping and shipping packages, and frequently apologizing to the cat for standing her up for our evening cuddle appointments. (Don't feel sorry for her. She is a very thoroughly spoiled cat who just happens to have mastered the sad meow. Cute little con artist!)

Yes, even for pastors, it can be hard to really live in the moment during the holidays and appreciate all the spiritual nuances of the transitions between Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany.

The cycle of the Christian year, beginning with Advent and going from Pentecost into ordinary time until the cycle begins again, essentially squishes all thirty-three years of Jesus' life into one single year of church life: every year, Jesus is born and every year, Jesus dies. I just did the math, and if we condensed the events of Jesus' life into

365 days, Jesus would age at the rate of about three years every month. I don't often do math voluntarily, so please take a moment to appreciate those numbers.

This year, I wanted to slow Lent down a little bit so that we can really savor the joy of Easter. Lent used to be a time of fasting—less food, less flavorful food, more guilt, more prompting to confess our sins—and in some churches, it still is, but the early Reformers from Martin Luther into the next generations of leaders have not commemorated Lent with fasting. Our church tradition does not require us to “give something up” for Lent or to skip meals, although those can still be meaningful spiritual practices if we choose to take them on.

Holy Week—the week between Palm Sunday and Easter, when the plot thickens and the arrangements for Jesus' death fall into place—was once remembered with daily church services. Attendance at church for eight days straight is an awful lot to ask, though, with today's complicated schedules, but each day of Holy Week remembers an action-packed story that often gets lost for people

February/March 2019

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Special points of interest:

- Pastor Leia's message -Lent
- Activities photos

We are continually collecting:

- ◆ Pull Tabs
- ◆ Box Tops
- ◆ Plastic Caps & Lids

Pastor Leia Continued

who are only able to attend church on Sundays.

For the six Sundays in Lent this year, we will be going through each of the days of Holy Week, which means that we will celebrate Palm Sunday early by having it on the first Sunday, March 10th. The next Sunday will remember the events of the next day, the following Sunday will remember the events of the day after that, so that the last Sunday before Easter will remember the story of the crucifixion, the burial, and the silence of the tomb.

I know it might seem a little weird at first to be doing things on a different timeline, but I think that our close look at the days of Holy Week will give us a good opportunity to walk alongside Christ during his final days.

Along with our Holy Week series for Lent 2019, we will be having a time after services for adult education that loosely tie in to the themes of the morning. I'm still trying to arrange for some guest speakers, so stay tuned for more

details coming soon, but as we thematically approach the death of Jesus, it seems like as good a time as any to think about and plan for our own. What do you think might be said about you in your obituary? What do you want to happen to your body after you die? Have you had conversations about medical decisions and advance directives? Where should your stuff go? What should your funeral look like? What is a good

"What should your funeral look like? What is a good death?"

death? Funerals happen to be a particular passion of mine (yes, I have been told that I have weird passions) and I'm excited to share with you about why I feel passionate about something that seems so depressing. You don't have to come if you feel uncomfortable and you don't have to come to every class, but I hope to start a conversation within our church, our families, and our

community about death: the final and universal end to what it means to be alive.

I hope that the upcoming season of Lent is a meaningful one for us all and I hope that many of us can walk alongside each other as we accompany Jesus on his last few days.

Plans are still underway for a joint Ash Wednesday service with Saline Presbyterian *and their choir*, a Maundy Thursday supper, and the annual community Good Friday service, so please keep an eye out for further announcements. With bell choir practices, weekly Bible studies, various meetings, fellowship events, monthly movie nights, and more on top of Sunday services, our church is a pretty busy place most of the week!



Pastor Leia

Looking for a Volunteer Opportunity?

If you like working with children, a wonderful and worthwhile opportunity is waiting for you. Sue Barney is coordinating a project with a former colleague and 2nd grade Teacher at Paddock School, Molly Jeppesen. Molly would love to have some



adult volunteers to come in and just listen to her kids read. This is not a tutoring job, just a chance for kids to practice with someone who cares to listen. You do not need experience

or training. The time slot is in the morning from 11:00-12:00 any day of the week.

"Book Buddies" reading listeners will begin on Wednesday, February 6. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Sue Barney.

Session Highlights from January 16 Meeting

Pastor (Rev. Leia Battaglia) In December, we finished Adam Hamilton's "Faithful" in Bible Study, looking at the character of Joseph, and are about to start Rob Bell's "What We Talk About When We Talk About God." "The Princess Bride" this month for church movie night was a big hit. December was a very busy month, with a funeral, our first Longest Night service for the winter solstice, and, of course, Advent and Christmas Eve services. Altogether, I wrote ten new hymns and sung responses for the season and baked six different holiday breads for six communion meals with six different prayer stations. This month, I hope to start planning ahead through Lent and put together some materials for some adult ed programming on Sunday afternoons. Gingersnap seems to have recovered from the perceived trauma of living with a dog for a whole week while we pet-sat for a friend.

Clerk The Annual Church Statistical Report for 2018 was researched, compiled, completed, and submitted online to the PC-USA General Assembly office on January 16, 2019, one month prior to the February 16, 2019 deadline.

2018 Nominating Committee - Carole London read the names of those who will be nominated for election as Elders, Deacons, and 2019 Nominating Committee at the Annual Congregational Meeting.

PPC Women's Group For 2018, a total of 308 hats were delivered to St. Joe's Oncology Unit and to friends and family who are dealing with chemo. (The 2017 total was 223.) A PPC Women's Group check was sent to the Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Detroit in the amount of \$61.20, for the Birthday Offering, a PC-USA Women's mission offering. Donations were also made to the Presbytery's Second Mile Center in Detroit, the Ecumenical Center and International Residence in Ann Arbor, and Food Gatherers, in Ann Arbor.

An Advent Angel Tea on December 15 in the church fellowship hall was coordinated by Carolyn Wetzler. Fifty-six members and friends enjoyed an afternoon of delicious tea and refreshments. Eight hostesses set beautiful tables and furnished the refreshments. Many attendees brought angel figures to share on a display table, and each woman was given an angel ornament handmade by Carolyn.

Buildings and Grounds City sewer drain lines backed up again and flooded the boiler room, and also the hall near the kitchen/Fellowship Hall area, soaking the carpet. Eleven gallons of backed-up sewer water were vacuumed up from the halls. Remedial action is being taken, as well as contact with Milan's City DPW.

Christian Education C.E. is working on planning its Lenten Outreach project. Graduation Sunday and Youth Sunday planning are underway as well. Our two graduating seniors this year are Alex Vollink-Frand and Boston Bashaw. Vacation Bible School dates will be July 15-19; we will be going on a Mission to Mars.

Fellowship The annual PPC family Christmas party was held on December 7, 2018, in conjunction with our monthly Movie Night. About 50 people attended and enjoyed a dinner of spaghetti, garlic bread, salad, milk, tea and coffee. Stations were set up for making different kinds of hot chocolate. The kids (and kids-at-heart adults) watched the Disney movie "Frozen." There was a cookie decorating station, Pastor Leia did manicures, and some of the adults played card games. On December 15, 2018, Fellowship supplied a donut holes and chocolate milk snack for the children and adults involved in the Christmas Pageant rehearsal.

Worship and Music Communion was served at all Advent Sunday worship services. A new event, the Longest Night Service, held on the Winter Solstice, December 21 was well received. Pastor Leia is considering an adult education series regarding end of life issues, to take place following worship on some Sundays during Lent.

The Best Thing About Christmas

Everyone found out the answer to the question . . . "What is the BEST Thing about Christmas?" during this year's Christmas pageant.

The children acted out a variety of "good things about Christmas" that we enjoy each year - decorate, bake, family get togethers, sing carols, treat each other a little more special . . . but none of them was the BEST thing about Christmas.

Then, sure enough, Baby Jesus was brought in and declared the

BEST thing about Christmas.

There were 10 favorite Christmas songs and hymns enjoyed throughout the pageant, and it was narrated beautifully by Brooklyn Bashaw. She really made the story come alive!

Thanks to all the parents who assisted with the pageant and our congregation who were our gracious audience.



The kids always look forward to this special time when they can get into costume and act out the Christmas Story.

Thinking of You Cards

The children of CE made nine special Thinking of You cards to send to our many friends of the congregation who are not able to join us each Sunday for worship. Their messages were very sweet and thoughtful in each card they made. It is a good way to keep in

touch with those we do not see often. We send cards to some of the same people each time we do this project, and the kids actually get to know who they are and like to choose the same person to make a card for.

"Their messages were very sweet and thoughtful in each card they made."

PPC Time Capsule

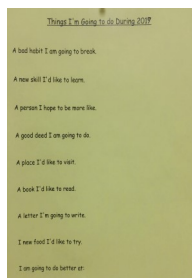
Just one more year . . . yes, our official Time Capsule that we started back in 2015 will be ready to be opened next January . . . in 2020!

In 2015, we filled out questionnaires predicting what we will be doing, things we wanted to accomplish in that 5-year time, dream of places we wanted to visit, books to read and even predict

what PPC will be like in the year 2020. For the kids, this was a huge leap of time. The kids who were in kindergarten, had to think about being in 5th grade.

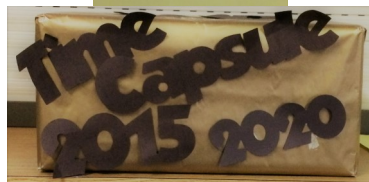
For some it even took them into college.

If you did not have a chance to fill out a questionnaire in 2015, we have them



available for you to use to make a one-year prediction. They will be next to the golden Time Capsule. Just fill one out, seal it in an envelope, put your name on it and slip it in the box.

Can't wait to see how I did over these last five years . . . !



Birthday Party for Jesus

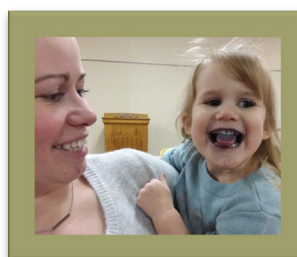
January 6th was Epiphany. We celebrated with a Birthday Party for Jesus. Gifts were bought by the congregation for baby Jesus. The gifts were all items that could be used for the church, paper plates, trash bags, and printer paper. We had cake and the children opened the presents.



Christmas Party Cookie Decorating



Decorating Cookies at the Christmas Party was fun for all!



The Christmas Spider

Christmas spider ornaments were created by the children and adults of Christian Education. They were handed out to the congregation on Christmas Eve.

The story of the Christmas spider was attached to the to the ornament.



Christmas Spider Ornaments

February

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
					1 7:00 pm First Friday Movie Night "Legally Blonde"	2
3 10 am Worship: , Communion, Green Tape Sunday , CE	4 7:00 pm Handbells	5 <i>What We Talk About When We Talk About God</i> ➔	6 9:00 am Bible Study - Lounge <i>ch 4 (With)</i> 7 pm Book worms	7	8	9
10 10 am Worship: Ordination of Deacons/Elders , CE 11:15 am Deacon/Elders Retreat Session Committee Monthly Reports due to Clerk	11 7:00 pm Handbells	12	13 9:00 am Bible Study - Lounge <i>ch 5 (For)</i>	14 1-3 pm Hats for Cancer - lounge	15	16
17 10 am Worship, CE Session Committee packets are ready for pick-up	18 7:00 pm Handbells	19	20 9:00 am Bible Study - Lounge <i>ch 6 (Ahead)</i> 6:00 pm CE Mtg- Youth Room 7:00 pm Session	21	22	23
24 10 am Worship: Handbells, CE	25 7:00 pm Handbells	26	27 9:00 am Bible Study - Lounge <i>ch 7 (So)</i>	28		

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
					1 7:00 pm First Friday Movie Night <i>New In Town</i>	2
3 10 am Worship: , Green Tape Sunday, CE Adult Ed Following Worship - Lounge	4 7:00 pm Handbells	5 <i>Life of the Beloved</i> 	6 Ash Wednesday 9:00 am Bible Study - Lounge <i>Prologue and "Being the Beloved"</i> Worship , details tbd	7	8	9
10 10 am Worship: 1st Sunday in Lent PALM SUNDAY, Communion, CE Adult Ed Following Worship - Lounge Session Committee Monthly Reports due to Clerk	7 7:00 pm Handbells	12 7:00 pm Worship & Music Mtg- lounge	13 9:00 am Bible Study - Lounge <i>Intro to part II and "Taken"</i>	14	15	16
17 10 am Worship, 2nd Sunday in Lent, Communion, CE Church Mouse Newsletter articles due for April/May issue Session Committee packets are ready for pick-up	18 7:00 pm Handbells	19	20 9:00 am Bible Study - Lounge <i>"Blessed"</i> 6:00 pm CE Mtg - Youth Room 7:00 pm Session Mtg - Lounge	21 9:30 am <i>Church Mouse</i> Newsletter collating - Lounge 1 - 3 Hats for Cancer - Lounge	22	23
24 10 am Worship, 3rd Sunday in Lent, Communion, Handbells, CE Adult Ed Following Worship - Lounge	25 7:00 pm Handbells	26	27 9:00 am Bible Study - lounge <i>"Broken"</i>	28	29	30 5:30 Progressive Dinner
31 10 am Worship, 4th Sunday in Lent, Communion, Handbells, CE Adult Ed Following Worship - Lounge						