

The Church Mouse



PEOPLES PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Manse Cat Monthly: Musings from Pastor Leia / her cat

Once upon a time, when I was a young and idealistic college student voting in my first election at the age of nineteen, there was one proposition that I felt particularly passionate about. The state courts in California had previously made marriage equality the law of the land: all couples could be legally wed, whether those couples consisted of a man and a woman, two women, or two men. However, in 2008, there was a proposition on the ballot to take that right away.

I was horrified! How could we TAKE AWAY the established right of a minority group? How could we limit our identity as human beings to a simple one-or-the-other system of men and women and make the love of two consenting adults illegal? How could I believe that God was anything but love? How could people get so caught up in hating other people who just wanted to live in peace with the partners they loved? Why couldn't two men or two women raise families with all the rights and legal benefits of anyone else? What ideal could possibly be so important that it could ignore the tragedies experienced by the LGBT community? How could we justify being a society that legally discriminated against a minority group? And after all...I was raised by two women and a man with no father in the picture--how could I have taken any other stance?

So I went to one of my friends, who happened to be serving as the president of our college's Gay-Straight Alliance, and I asked her what I could do to help. She looked surprised. Later, she made a comment about how I had "come out of the woodwork." When I asked her what she meant, she explained that since she knew I was a Christian, and since she knew I wanted to be a pastor, she just assumed that I condemned her "lifestyle."

That one little comment is forever burned into my mind.

It breaks my heart to know that when some people think of the church, they think of a closed-minded and exclusive social club that turns people away at the door.

It breaks my heart to know that the name of God is used to condemn anyone as not being good enough to deserve the love of Christ.

It breaks my heart to know that as a Christian pastor, there will always be people who see the cross around my neck and assume that I would judge them if they were open with me.

I made signs. I started conversations. I made phone calls.

June / July 2019

Volume 13, Issue 3

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Special points of interest:

- Triennium Fundraiser Activities and Photos
- VBS Information
- Introduction of Church Mouse

We are continually collecting:

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

Pastor Leia Continued

I attended a rally, shivering in the November cold, feeling the spit on my face from passengers in some of the cars that went by. Sure, many cars honked and many people yelled out their support, but what I remember most vividly is the feeling of wiping spit off of my face with the sleeve of my pink sweatshirt.

The proposition passed. Justice and equality did not win that day, not for the thousands of couples across the state whose rights had just been taken away; not for the thousands of people who were officially made second class citizens unworthy of the hundreds of legal rights conferred by a marriage license.

I felt ashamed. Ashamed at what my state had done. Ashamed that maybe I hadn't done enough. Ashamed that hatred had come in the name of the God whom I loved.

And so today, I wear rainbows because one of my most deeply-held beliefs is that if Christ would never turn anyone away, neither can the church, and neither should I.

I wear rainbows because I will never forget the feeling of wiping spit off of my face with my sleeve.

I wear rainbows because I have hope that humanity can do better.

Many of my friends and classmates and peers and I have been told that there is something wrong with us, that we are disgusting or broken or wrong or in some way not good enough—not good enough to preach the gospel, not good enough even to belong in the church, not good enough to be a part of the body of Christ. Many

people in my life have been really hurt by this rejection and some refuse any ties to organized religion at all. I get that. Under slightly different circumstances, I might very well have left, too.

So just in case you haven't heard it recently, you are not only "good enough" but you are a beloved child of God and precious in the sight of God.

Just in case you haven't heard it recently, the Jesus Christ who hung out with lepers and tax collectors and prostitutes and jerks and kids and

"Christ would welcome you with open arms. Yes. You."

poor people and people whom no "decent" people liked...that Jesus Christ would welcome you with open arms. Yes. You. He welcomed all people. That was like, his thing. Don't let anyone tell you otherwise.

Just in case you haven't heard it recently, the Holy Spirit hovers above your head and sustains your soul and she dreams of lighting a spark inside you—a spark of hope, of faith, of creativity, of language, of joy, of passion for justice.

This summer, we are embarking on a four-part series of adult education on the Second Sundays of the month: -"LGBTQIA 101," setting out some definitions of key terms plus a short history of the gay rights movement and the church's responses to it (May 12, with a makeup session on June 2)

-“What is Marriage?,”

considering what marriage looks like in the Bible and how it has been defined by the church and by secular laws over the centuries (June 9)

-“Does the Bible Condemn Homosexuality?,” looking at the key passages used to condemn LGBT persons and what those passages really say (July 14)

-“Rainbows and Representation,” discussing how LGBT persons are portrayed in the media and why it is important to tell their stories (August 11)

At the end of the series, we will write a statement together about our journey towards acceptance and submit it to the More Light Presbyterians Network in order to be put on a national registry of open and affirming churches. I hope that many of you will come and join the conversation!

Pastor Leia



Manse Cat - Gingersnap

Session Highlights for the Month of May

Pastor In April, we finished our Bible study Lenten series, and have just started a new series on The Chronicles of Narnia and their biblical themes. I am super excited to share some of my absolute favorite novels with the group! At church movie night we watched "Bend it Like Beckham" over an Indian rice pudding. This month, we are inaugurating our "Second Sundays Adult Ed" program. I continue to add new pamphlets to the Narthex shelves, post pictures of the adventures of Church Mouse to our church Facebook page, work on adding to our website, and look for ways to make our church more welcoming. Gingersnap is wearing her white flowered collar for the Easter season and was **thrilled** to receive a serving of soup in honor of Easter (apparently they make soup for cats and if Gingersnap's enthusiasm is any indication, apparently they are delicious).

Treasurer The checking and savings accounts at Chase Bank have been closed, and all funds have been transferred to Monroe Bank & Trust.

More Light Presbyterians On May 5, we presented the first of four sessions of Second Sundays adult ed centered around LGBTQIA issues. In May we are focusing on definitions of terms, a brief history, and a thought exercise about coming out. Future sessions will cover the meaning of marriage as understood historically and by the church, whether or not the Bible condemns homosexuality, and more.

Buildings & Grounds Held the first church cleanup day for the year, pulled bushes and raked leaves. Thanks to Jim and Joan Cullip, Chris Wetzler, Dave Butler, and Jo Lawver for your assistance. There is still a lot of work to do, and we are hoping for more to come out and do some work. Mowing has started and a sign-up sheet is in the Fellowship Hall.

Christian Education Youth Sunday went well with Boston Bashaw giving the Senior Message. Tacos for Triennium brought in \$580 leaving only \$186 to raise for Triennium. Mother's Day included poems read, gifts made, and flowers given out. Speaker at the Graduation Breakfast on June 2 will be Chad Lawver. Seniors will be honored during the worship service. In July, the VBS theme will be "To Mars and Beyond." Three of our younger youth will be attending Wonder Camp at Howell Nature Center at the end of August. They all received scholarships from the camp.

Fellowship In the interest of being more earth-friendly, we are in the process of doing away with plastic silverware and styrofoam plates and cups. When the current supply has been used up, we will be going to all paper plates, the china cups, and using the church's silverware. Also, from this point on when we have a potluck dinner, everyone will be asked to bring their own table settings. If you drink coffee or tea during coffee hour, please use the washable cups.

Membership Mary Elliott has sent several pictures to the Milan Eagle, and we are waiting to see what they published. The excursion to Parran's Greenhouse was held on May 10, and we were excited to share in the beauty of God's flowers that feeds our souls in different ways. Pentecost Sunday is June 9, and we are designating it as Spread the Flame day. Everyone is encouraged to invite a friend, neighbor or inactive member.

Mission and Outreach The Pentecost offering is from now until June 9.

Personnel Administrative Assistant Laura Kirchoff was gifted with flowers, a card, and a warm coffee cake for Administrative Professionals Day.

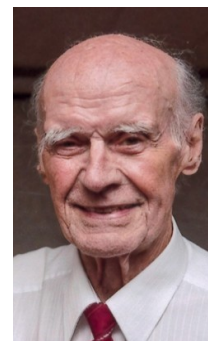
Stewardship Presbytery of Detroit is holding a series of seminars to help church leaders (you and I) develop a better understanding of how to devise strategies for help with God's work. This could be especially helpful for our Session, with our newly-stated goal of growing our Church, and developing new initiatives to bring in new members. Doris Campbell is one of the Coordinators for Presbytery, and both Steve Barney and Bob Elliott plan to attend the seminars.

Our Committee and the congregation mourn the loss of Jack Cranson, whose devotion to the church will be greatly missed. We are actively seeking other members of Peoples Presbyterian to join us on the Stewardship Committee.

PPC Women's Group Another delivery of hats has been taken to St. Joe's Oncology Unit, and three hats were given to a knitter's friend who is undergoing chemo. Currently, 89 hats have been donated in 2019.



The newsletter staff, along with all of Peoples, extends our condolences to the family of Jack Cranson, who passed away April 15, 2019. Jack was an integral part of the *Church Mouse Newsletter* staff, and was always ready to help in any way. He was a wonderful and caring man and he will be missed dearly.



Jack Cranson

Mission Committee



The Mission & Outreach Committee thanks the Vollinks and Bob Meyer for supplying desserts, and helping to serve the needy each month at Riverside Presbyterian Church in Ypsilanti.



When writing out checks for your donations to the church, please be sure to include the date, who the check is written to (i.e., PPC), the numeric amount, the written amount, and your signature.

The bank will charge the church \$15 for each check returned because one or more of these items are missing.

Also, it is helpful if you include on the memo line a description of where the funds should go if other than your regular pledge or contribution (i.e., flowers, youth fund, OGHS, etc).

Thank you for your help!



Words cannot express all that the Peoples Presbyterian Church congregation have done in the passing of Jack. Thank you for the food, cards, phone calls, visits, concerns, memorial money, beautiful church service, and just for being there for us. Jack so loved the church and his church family.

God bless you all,

The Family of Jack Cranson

C E Happenings

Tacos for Triennium

It was a fantastic Cinco de Mayo day for the Triennium group!

The taco meal which was organized, planned, and presented by Chad and Kristen Lawver proved to be fabulous!!

The donations received came to ... \$548!! Unbelievable!!!

We can't thank the congregation enough for their constant and very generous support for our high school youth.



PRESBYTERIAN YOUTH TRIENNium 2019
July 16-20, 2019 - Purdue University

Triennium Pancake Meal

Sunday, May 19 was the final fundraiser for our kids going to Triennium in July.

The kids needed \$187 more to reach their goal. They collected \$345.

The breakfast was fantastic and consisted of four different types of pancakes (regular, blueberry and

banana, strawberry and banana, and peach), scrambled eggs, sausage, and fresh fruit.

Carol Heeringa and Staci Bashaw went above and beyond for a great meal that everyone enjoyed.

Brooklyn Bashaw and Victoria Heeringa worked very hard manning the griddle for more pancakes.

"With God, all things are Possible!!!"

With great appreciation,
Bashaw Family
Heeringa Family
CE Committee



Easter Egg Hunt

Easter Sunday, April 21, 2019, the children of CE went on an Easter Egg hunt in the back yard of the manse and the church lounge.

Over one hundred eggs were stuffed with gold coins that the children used to select a service project.

There were two Easter Baskets, one for Books for Bikes and the other for a scholarship to Milan Parks and Rec for summer activities. The children put their coins in whichever basket they liked. The winner was Books for Bikes, and they will be given a check for \$25.

Triennium Fundraisers

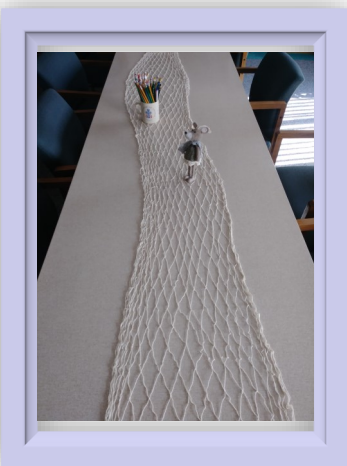


Earth Day: #trashtag



On Sunday, April 28, CE celebrated Earth Day, (I know we were a little late).

During Sunday School the children walked around the church, manse, and Paddock Elementary to pick up trash. By the time we ended, there was quite a bit of trash collected in that small area.



Have you met Church Mouse? The tiniest member of the Peoples family, Church Mouse loves to explore, sing, and make new friends. She has been found in the lounge, in Pastor Leia's office, in the music room, in Fellowship Hall, in the narthex, in the sanctuary, in the chapel...she really gets around! You can follow The Adventures of Church Mouse every Thursday afternoon in a new facebook post to find out what she'll discover next.



Rose London Scholarship



On Youth Sunday, both Boston Bashaw and Alex Vollink-Frand were presented with a Rose London Scholarship. This scholarship is given by the London family to high school seniors who are active members of Peoples and who will be advancing their education after graduation.

Thanks to the growth of the scholarship fund, both seniors were able to receive a \$2,500 scholarship.

Boston will attend Monroe Community College in the fall, eventually transferring to Michigan State University for Business.

Alex has will be attending Washtenaw Community College in the fall, eventually transferring to Ferris University for Welding Engineering.

Rose London was the daughter of Alice and Robert London and sister to Ken and Diane

London. She really enjoyed being a nurse at Motts Children's Hospital and loved children of all ages.

After a battle with brain cancer, Rose passed away on February 24, 1998, at the age of 43. She was a long-time member of Peoples Presbyterian Church. Rose was afraid that she would be forgotten, so this scholarship was created in her name.

Graduation Breakfast



Our high school seniors, Boston Bashaw and Alex Vollink-Frand, will be the honored guests at a Graduation Breakfast on June 2. It has been requested that Ellen, prepare, her "famous" biscuits and gravy for the occasion. The breakfast will be in the Fellowship Hall at 8:30 am. Everyone is welcome to join us to celebrate our graduates.

Boston will be graduating from Summerfield High School, and Alex from Saline High School.

We are very excited to announce that Chad Lawver will be our guest speaker at the Graduation Breakfast.

Chad is a 1993 graduate from Milan High School. He received his teaching degree from Eastern Michigan University. In 2001, he started his career as a Spanish teacher in the Milan Area Schools. Chad has coached track since 2007 for Milan, and has received several awards and honors for his effective and personable coaching abilities.

The seniors, Boston and Alex, will be honored during the worship service following the Graduation Breakfast.

Vacation Bible School



VBS is getting ready to launch "To Mars and Beyond" July 15 – 19.

Letters and registration forms will be available for all future astronauts. We will explore God's Universe and where God's power can take us.

We are always looking for volunteers if anyone is interested, just let Carole London or Lisa Pratt know.

You will start seeing signs around the city of Milan soon.



Immaculate Conception Church has invited you to also attend their VBS

August 5 - 8

6 - 8:15 pm. Their program is ROAR.

For details please call:

734 493-2030

Camp Wonder at Howell Nature Center



We are very excited that three of our young youth will be attending a week-long camp at Howell Nature Center. The camp is sponsored by the Presbyterian Church and is located in Howell, Michigan.

In late August, Reese Rupert, Camron Heeringa, and Ryan Heeringa will have the opportunity to enjoy all that Camp Wonder has to offer. They will be urged to become faithful caretakers of each other, as well as the world around them.

Through a scholarship program at Camp Wonder, Spirit of Alexandria Foundation, all three were given scholarships. Alexandria was a little girl who had a passion for nature and generosity which was evident with everyone around her. It was the family's hope that through their scholarship, more kids would be encouraged to experience a week of special Christian camp life at Camp Wonder.

Howell Nature Center is also the home of Michigan's largest wildlife rehabilitation clinic. It takes in approximately 4,000 wild animals per year from all over Michigan. The youth will be able to visit and learn all about the wildlife clinic. Being aware of their environment, and treating it with respect, are also stressed to the campers.

We send our best to these three lucky youth as they embark on a very memorable week at Camp Wonder.



June

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
Fellowship Hosted by: Membership						1
2 8:30 am Graduation Breakfast - FH 10 am Worship, Graduation Sunday, Communion, Green Tape Sunday, CE Adult Ed Make Up - LGBTQIA	3 7 pm Handbells	4	5 9 am Bible Study <i>The Horse and His Boy</i> ch 1-8	6	7 7 pm First Friday Movie Night <i>Pirates of the Caribbean</i>	8 St Cecilia at the Tower (SCA). to use church building all day.
9 10 am Worship: <u>Day of Pentecost</u> , Handbells, wear red, Bring a Friend to Church, Pentecost Offering Second Sundays: Adult Ed Following Worship - L <i>What is Marriage?</i>	10 6:30 pm Handbells Potluck Session Committee Monthly Reports due to Clerk	11	12 9 am Bible Study <i>The Horse and His Boy</i> ch 9-15 12 pm - Book Buddies lunch - L	13	14	15
16 10 am Worship, <u>Trinity Sunday</u> , Father's Day, CE Session Committee packets are ready for pick-up	17	18	19 9 am Bible Study <i>The Horse, His Boy, Their Conversions, and Their Communities</i> 6 pm CE Mtg - YR 7 pm Session mtg - L	20	21	22
23 10 am Worship, CE	24	25 12 pm Membership Mtg - L 7 pm Worship & Music	26 9 am Bible Study <i>The Horse and His Boy and the Story of the Exodus</i>	27 1-3 pm Hats for Cancer - L	28	29
30 10 am Worship, CE						



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
Fellowship Hosted by: Mission & Outreach	1	2	3 9 am Bible Study - L <i>The Magician's Nephew ch 1-7</i>	4 Independence Day Church office will be closed	5	6
7 10 am Worship, Communion, Green Tape Sunday , No CE	8	9 7 pm Worship & Music Mtg- L	10 9 am Bible Study - L <i>The Magician's Nephew ch 8-15</i>	11	12 7 pm Friday Movie Night <i>National Treasure</i>	13
14 10 am Worship, CE, -VBS Kick-off (during CE) Triennium Youth Commissioned Second Sundays: Adult Ed Following Worship - L <i>Does the Bible Condemn Homosexuality?</i>	15 Triennium Group from Pennsylvania stay overnight at church 6-8 pm VBS <i>Mission to Mars</i>	16 6-8 pm VBS <i>Mission to Mars</i>	17 9 am Bible Study - L <i>The Magician's Nephew/Genesis 1:1-2:4</i> 6-8 pm VBS <i>Mission to Mars</i>	18 6-8 pm VBS Mission to Mars	19 6-8 pm VBS <i>Mission to Mars</i>	20
21 10 am Worship, CE Church Mouse Newsletter articles due for August/September issue	22	23	24 9 am Bible Study - L <i>The Magician's Nephew/Genesis 2:5-24</i>	25 9:30 am Newsletter collating - L	26	27
28 10 am Worship, CE	29	30	31 No Bible Study			