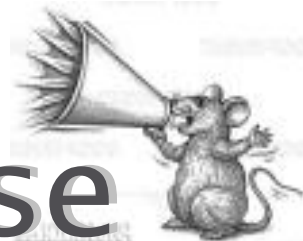


The Church Mouse



Peoples Presbyterian Church, Milan, MI



It's worth the work.

By Pastor Kelly Boubel Shriver

Special points of interest:

- Chicken Broil was a success, Pg. 2
- Pentecost is June 8, Pg. 3
- Bible Study Summer Schedule, Pg. 4
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When I was in junior high and high school, my parents and I had a deal. If I wanted to go to camp, I would be responsible for paying half of the cost. I loved going to camp, it was always the highlight of my summer. What I didn't love was paying the piper. In order to pay for my half of the cost, I would work in the yard for my mom. All summer long I'd weed and plant, mow and rake, prune and dig. Each hour of work ticking off a little more of my "camp debt," as my parents so delightfully called it. I hated yard work, and I made sure my mom knew it.

Year after year she would promise me: you'll love working in the garden when it's your own yard. When you have your own house, you will long to get out into the dirt and work. "Yeah, right," I'd think.

This past weekend John and I dug out some old bushes and replanted a few areas around the manse yard. Lilacs, lavender, peony, and hydrangea in the front; hostas and hydrangea in the back. I mowed the lawn. Enoch sprinkled wildflower seeds. John and the boys planted the vegetable garden. Moses "watered" everything (he mostly sprayed us with the hose).

And here's the truth: I still hated doing the yard work. I picked out the plants, I can imagine what it will look like, it is, in a sense, my own yard. But all the same, mom was wrong. I just do not enjoy working in the yard. I would rather write a sermon, read a book, go on a run, cook dinner, do just about anything other than yard work. And

yet...even without the "camp debt," I still do it.

I wonder sometimes if that's a bit what being a Christian feels like, in certain seasons of our lives. We go to church, we pray before dinner, we might even make it to Bible Study once in a blue moon...but it just doesn't feel like something we love. It feels like an obligation. I know, at least for me, there have been seasons of my life just like this: being a Christian was a chore, plain and simple.

But why work in the garden? Why sweep the floor and do the dishes? Why vacuum or clean the bathroom or do whatever chore you hate the most? Why go to church when it feels like an obligation?

Because that work matters. It pays off.

Those bushes in the front yard? They will bloom soon. And when they bloom, they will provide a home and food for bees and butterflies. They will provide beauty to our yard and neighborhood. They will even provide some delightful, dried lavender blossoms that will smell beautiful in our home.

We invest our time and energy into things that will pay off. Into our work and chores, into our family and home, into our faith and community. Because, in the end, the bushes bloom. Our lives will bear fruit. It's worth the work, because it pays off.

Another Fantastic Chicken Broil!

By Carol Vollink, Mission and Outreach Co-Chair



The Chicken Broil was a GREAT SUCCESS!!! Thanks to everyone for all of the hard work. A special THANK YOU to Von Thompson, Ellen Bell, and Chris Thompson along with his Sous Chef for making this happen. Special thanks also to: Gary & Audrey Brown; Cindy Thompson; Sharon Thompson; Steve & Sue Barney; Dave Butler; Jeremy Bell, Roman & Katie Bell; Carole & Ken London; Cindy Marsh; Jo Lawver; Jenny Bell; Alex Vollink-Frand; Dale & Janice Losee and all the other exceptional helpers; and all of the wonderful dessert makers. What a PPC Team!

Over 110 meals were served, including 17 take-out meals.

Again this year, the proceeds from the Chicken Dinner will help support Veteran Projects. This year part of the funds will be given to the **Dundee Military Moms of Michigan** to use with their on-going "**Support the Troops**" programs. Many packages are sent to active troops throughout the year, as well as various other ways they support veterans in need. Be sure to see the thank you note and picture, located on the table in the Narthex, of many of the "heroes" who, along with their families, are giving so much.

The rest of the proceeds will be sent to the **Washtenaw County VVA-310**. The Vietnam Veterans of America is an organization dedicated to the continuing care of Veterans. Supporting our nation's current Service members, they have shipped over 2,500 "Care Packages" around the world in the past seven years. This is part of their "**Support Our Troops Campaign**" and is just one example of the wonderful things they do.

The congregation of Peoples Presbyterian Church sincerely thank past and present veterans and their families.

Please keep all of our veterans and their families in your prayers.



Continuing to Make a Difference in the Lives of Our Community Youth: the Pentecost Offering, June 8

By Carol Vollink, Mission and Outreach Co-Chair

The Pentecost Offering makes it possible for our congregation to take an active part in bringing healing and wholeness to children at risk, as well as other programs for children and youth.

Our church keeps 40% of the offering for local ministries that serve children and youth.

The General Assembly uses the remaining 60% for:

- 1) ministries with youth and young adults (25%);
- 2) young adult volunteer opportunities (25%); and
- 3) child advocacy initiatives developed on such issues as child soldiers, child trafficking, child sexual abuse, bullying, and violent video games.

From last year's PPC's Pentecost offering:

- † \$150 was given to the Milan Police Dept. to be used at Symons Elementary to help implement the D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program offered to our fifth graders.
- † \$186 was given to Kathy Falkner at Milan High School to help with the school's peer mediation class. She also co-facilitates Project Straight Talk -- a peer led group of students who work together in the school community to help their friends manage risk associated with healthy decision making.
- † \$505.26 was sent to Presbytery.

On Sunday, June 8, the Pentecost offering will be received and dedicated along with the regular offering. There are special Pentecost Offering envelopes in the pews, or simply write "Pentecost Offering" on your check's memo line. Thank you for making a difference!



Buildings and Grounds Report

By Jack Cranson, Buildings and Grounds Committee Chair

- ✓ Installed railing on back and front porches at manse.
- ✓ Repaired leaky faucets in rest room by Fellowship Hall.
- ✓ Changed water filters (coffee and refrigerator).
- ✓ Reviewing bids on snow damage at church (interior and exterior).
- ✓ Replaced several light bulbs.
- ✓ Repaired south-west door.
- ✓ Repaired front east door (thanks Jim Cullip and Dick Bancroft).



Stewardship: Electronic Giving can really help us!

By Steve Barney, Stewardship Committee Chair

For this month's article from Stewardship, we thought we would give you an update/snapshot of how we're doing with our income versus expenditures so far this year, for operations and programs at the church.

The average giving through April has been about \$13,200 per month. (This doesn't include earnings on various accounts or contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing). This does include the miscellaneous giving that accounts for flowers, Aid in Milan, and other pass through items that do not directly "support" the church operations.

The disbursements per month have averaged about \$11,600 for budgeted items for general fund expenses (items like salaries, utility payments, insurance, etc.). When we add in the Deacon and the Christian Education expenses, the average goes up to approximately \$12,000 per month in expenses.

This shows that we are doing well in meeting our budgetary commitments thus far through April. That said, we are approaching the time of year where we have historically seen less offering money coming in (as people travel during the Spring and Summer months and attendance drops), and we start to show a deficit with income versus our expenses on a monthly basis.

This is one of the reasons that members who choose electronic giving can really help us meet our financial commitments throughout the year. With this type of giving, we have a steady stream of income coming into the church's account on a monthly basis, and it is better balanced against the monthly expenses. So, please consider the option of giving electronically. If you are interested in doing so, information on how to do that is available on the table in Narthex, or please contact one of the Stewardship Committee members, Pastor Kelly or Michele in the office.

Stewardship wants to thank you for your continued generous contributions of money, time and talent to Peoples. Our Ministry and Mission are only made possible through those gifts!



 **Electronic Giving**
A convenient, consistent way to help our church grow

Bible Study: Happy Wednesday!

By Pastor Kelly Boubel Shriver

For the Spring and early Summer, we will be studying, what else? The Bible! Each week we're going to look at a different question about the Bible:



- ? How did these 66 separate books come to be "The Bible." Why not other books?
- ? Why do we have two testaments? What's the difference?
- ? How is reading the Bible in English on my smartphone different from reading it in Hebrew on a scroll?
- ? Why do the different Gospel stories sometimes contradict one another?
- ? What about all the different kinds of writing? Poetry, law, stories, history, letters, songs? How do I read it all?
- ? What about those Bible verses that have hurt people? How do we read those?

Because the Spring and Summer are busy seasons, our schedule is a bit haphazard. But please mark your calendar and join us for one or all sessions! You can drop in any time.

June 4, 11, 25
July 2



There's no "homework" or readings, just come join us Wednesday mornings in the Lounge at 9:00.

Happy Wednesday!

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS from May 21, 2014

By Nancy Kuzniar, Clerk of Session



Moses Thomas Shriver was baptized during worship on Sunday, March 30 by Rev. Chris and Rev. Sarah Hooker, friends of the Shriver family.

Nancy Kuzniar, Clerk of Session, attended an annual meeting of Presbytery Clerks, where PPC's official Minutes Register was reviewed and approved without exception.

Financial: Net Non-committed money on March 31 was \$23,290.32, and on April 30 was \$20,172.85.

2014 General Assembly in Detroit On June 15, we will welcome several guests from the General Assembly, who will worship with us and will share a potluck lunch before returning to Detroit.

Mission and Outreach: Proceeds from the 2014 Thompson/Bell Chicken Broil on May, 23 will be donated to a local Vietnam Veterans group. Volunteers are needed for the Riverside homeless meal project in Ypsilanti on Wed. May, 28, June 25, July 23 and Aug. 27. The Pentecost offering will be collected on Sunday, June 8, with bulletin inserts on June 1 and 8, which describe what the Pentecost funds do. Total for the OGHs offering was \$1,857.98. Funds from Mission collections have been donated to: Aid In Milan, in the form of Kroger gift cards; Milan High School "Project Straight Talk;" \$500 to the Milan Police Dept. for the D.A.R.E. program; Milan Beautification Committee to sponsor a flower barrel in downtown Milan; \$1,000 to assist with the purchase of materials for the Mercy House (Week of Service) as part of the Presbyterian "Cluster" of Washtenaw County churches.

Trader Joe's Presbyterian

by Becca Messman, Associate Pastor at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Herndon, Virginia



People have a lot to say about their favorite grocery stores. And why not? It's the place that everyone goes once a week (or far more than that) to find food for their family. My favorite is Trader Joe's, a quirky, small-by-design chain of grocery stores that is clearly not trying to be any of its competitors. And I have thought to myself on numerous occasions, "Church could learn a lot from Trader Joe's. And if there were a Trader Joe's Presbyterian, I think I would go there."

Good at small. Trader Joe's is fine with being small. That gives them in-roads into many locations where big stores couldn't fit. They don't sell everything, so if you are out of Diet Coke or jumbo packs of paper towels, you are out of luck there. But what you do find is very good. And there, you will never have to go to aisle 14 or choose from sixteen different types of peanut butter, because they don't have them. They can do small and inexpensive because they stock their own brands. And they share enough samples (sometimes a visit to Trader Joe's can even count as having dinner) that you try new things and find delight by tasting for goodness rather than by relying on name recognition or price as the primary drivers of a purchase. They don't have PA systems, but use bells to communicate.

There are places where Presbyterian Churches can fit where megachurches do not. Small churches can be weak and vacant, or they can be a source of meaningful connection and community that is the primary hunger of our generation. I think the Presbyterian brand of theology is hard to find elsewhere. We are trying to be a church where there is substance, context, spiritual food that can feed someone for a lifetime, neither "intelligence on ice nor ignorance on fire." There is nuance and scholarship. There are people leaving, but there are people coming as well. And we sure love our bells.

Innovative. Trader Joe's is always switching things up. They are seasonal. You won't find Pumpkin Spice Scones in March. Some items that I loved in the past are gone and are not coming back. And if a customer tries to demand that it be brought back, the staff in their whimsical Hawaiian shirts says, "Yes, I loved that too! But I have learned to enjoy what it is when it's here and know that the next thing will be just as good."

We would do better as a church if we leaned into our seasonality. Weddings, funerals, baptisms, Christmas, Easter. Those are our wide-open doors when the world comes in. We should be ready and have samples to offer the curious and hungry gathered ones. I have found that sometimes those tiring seasons require extra intentionality: Do we have toilet paper in the bathrooms? Do we remember to say 'Welcome' in the flurry of announcements? Also, for resurrection to happen, something has to pass away. When the energy for a program has dwindled and folks are only involved out of a sense of duty, it is time to let it pass away and see what

new life comes as a result.

Fearless Flyer. Trader Joe's doesn't do coupons or sales. They have boundless energy for their own newsletter called the "Fearless Flyer." What I would ordinarily pass over because, "It's *their* newsletter?" I stop for a moment and examine because they are so excited about it. "It's here!" they say. It's also short and to the point. "Here is why you'll like cherry juice!"

I would love for church newsletters to read with the same whimsy and fearless fun of the Flyer. I, however, am often guilty of writing up the things that *need* energy rather than feed the energy of the congregation. It's good to invite volunteers to participate, but we should also tell about what we *just accomplished* together and let that excitement fuel the next thing. That's our good news to share. And some of the joys of church are niche, like cherry juice, and require some reintroduction. Imagine: "Here's why we eat so many pancakes!" (Cue Lent history blurb.) "Why are we waving these sticks?" (Cue Palm Sunday niche tradition that many visitors find odd.) Plus, I love thinking that the word "fearless" might be attached to any of our communications.

Rock the robe. So, the Hawaiian shirts at Trader Joe's speak of their history of sourcing foods from all over the globe, especially the tropics. They were also the sartorial preference of the original Trader Joe. They communicate vacation and relaxation.

If pastors in your church wear albs, stoles, Hawaiian shirts, hipster plaid, or Genevan gowns, why? Why does the choir wear their white triangle stoles? I know that my unflattering black gown conveys higher education and the *function* I am serving in the church service, but many people don't know that. They might think I have a dark and bleak sense of fashion, or a desire to hide pajamas with a hoity toity pastor uniform. What should people wear at church? Dress codes for most every area of life have changed dramatically over the years. If soccer outfits or jeans are just as acceptable as suits and ties, we should say that and why. If "Sunday best" means suits and dresses, we might give visitors a heads up and a rationale so that we are not being exclusive unintentionally.

Not about shopping. I write this not to suggest more consumerism, church-shopping or copying the culture around us. But I am suggesting that we become fearless in our faithfulness, and like Jesus, we should employ the images of our everyday lives in teaching. He talked about fishing to fishermen, farming to gardeners, stonework to builders. He was at the well. And, if he were ministering today, I bet he'd have shown up at Trader Joe's.

But more than anything, we have to know the bread of life, the cup of salvation, that graceful table that welcomes people from North and South and East and West. It is what my hungry soul longs for more, far more, than pumpkin scones.

Christian Education: The more the merrier!

By Carole London, Christian Education Committee Chair



Mother's Day was celebrated by presenting all the women in the church with a colorful carnation as a thank you for all their nurturing and support throughout the past year. The children made some adorable necklaces and special cards for their Moms.

Youth Sunday is June 1. The youth are involved in many parts of the worship service. The Genesis Bells will be playing "Will the Circle Be Unbroken" and the children are going to sing "Love Grows." All the people who participate in the various Christian Education activities and programs will be recognized and given a special angel pin with a card that reads, "I thank God for you." We have two college graduates: Justin Fugate and Adam Lawver will each receive nice pens with the inscription, "All things are possible with God." There will be a family potluck following the service organized by the Fellowship Committee. The Christian Education Committee thanks everyone for their constant support and interest in the children of the congregation all year long.



Genesis Bells will be treated to an ice cream social during C.E. class time on June 22. The children have played every month this year and brought many smiles to our faces and warmth to our hearts. Thank you to their fearless leader, Monique Rae, and all the parents who make sure their children are present when they perform. We are looking forward to the fall when they will resume their performances.



Workshop of Wonders

Vacation Bible School is July 14 - 18, 2014

Come and join us! Bring a friend!



Vacation Bible School will be July 14 - 18, with the kick-off on Sunday, July 13. The theme is "**Workshop of Wonders.**" This year we are excited to include a science component. Stay tuned for further details!


We are recruiting teachers and other positions for this exciting week of activity. If you are interested, there is a spot for you! Simply contact Carole London and let her know.

We have some very creative ideas for publicity this year. There will be colorful VBS flyers in the Narthex soon. Feel free to take some for grandchildren, neighbors, friends, etc . . .The more the merrier!!





June 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9 am Choir Practice 10 am Worship: Communion, Youth Sunday, C.E. Potluck Lunch during fellowship. Everyone is welcome.	2 6:45 pm T.O.P.S.	3	4 9 am Bible Study 7 pm Handbells 7 pm Bookworms	5	6	7
8 8:45 am Deacons Meeting 9 am Choir Practice 10 am Worship: Day of Pentecost, offering received and dedicated, Handbells, C.E. Session Committee Monthly Reports are due to the Clerk.	9 6:45 pm T.O.P.S.	10 7 pm Worship and Music Committee Meeting	11 9 am Bible Study	12	13	14
15 9 am Choir Practice 10 am Worship: Father's Day, C.E. Session Committee Packets will be ready for pick-up.	16 6:45 pm T.O.P.S.	17	18 No Bible Study 7 pm Session Meeting	19 1 to 3 pm PPC Hats for Cancer Project 	20	21
22 9 am Choir Practice 10 am Worship, C.E. Church Mouse Newsletter articles are due for the July/August Issue.	23 6:45 pm T.O.P.S.	24	25 9 am Bible Study	26	27	28
29 9 am Choir Practice 10 am Worship, C.E.	30 6:45 pm T.O.P.S.	<div style="border: 2px solid black; padding: 10px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <p>June Fellowship Hour is hosted by: Stewardship</p> </div>				

Peoples Presbyterian Church

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