



PEOPLES PRODDER

November Newsletter



November 2025

Dear Beloved Peoples Congregational United Church of Christ Community,

As we enter **November**, we find ourselves reflecting on a season of **gratitude** and **thanksgiving** amid the complex political climate that surrounds and permeates our lives. In a time when the struggles of being Black in America are magnified—whether through systemic injustice, economic disparities, or social unrest—our faith serves as both a refuge and a call to action. The challenges we face today are not new; history teaches us that our ancestors navigated similar trials with resilience and unwavering hope.

Scripture reminds us in **Ecclesiastes 3:1**, ***“For everything, there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.”*** We must recognize the importance of our collective awakening. As a community, we have lulled ourselves into a sense of complacency. Now, more than ever, it is time for us to rise—not only to confront the injustices of today but to reclaim the powerful legacy of **Black resilience** and **unity** that has propelled us through centuries of hardship.

Let us remember the words of **Hebrews 12:1**, where we are encouraged to ***“run with perseverance the race marked out for us.”*** This race is not just about survival but about thriving; it is a pathway toward justice, healing, and community upliftment. We face hardships, but our faith calls us to rise and respond with hope, love, and decisive action.

In this moment of reflection and recommitment, I will take a week away from daily duties for a retreat at [Bon Secours Retreat and Conference Center in Marriottsville, Maryland](#). It is not a vacation—not an escape from responsibilities—but a sacred time for rest, renewal, and reconnection with God. Bon Secours, a serene and transformative retreat center, offers a nurturing environment where one can step back from the clamor of everyday life and encounter the peace of God in nature and silence. This sacred space encourages introspection and revitalization, helping me to grow as a person and as your pastor. Jesus reminds us in **Mark 6:31**, ***“Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while.”*** This retreat is an opportunity not only to restore my spirit but also to reflect on how I can better serve our church community.

I look forward to returning with renewed energy and clarity, ready to continue our journey together as we lift each other and strive for justice, equality, and love in our world. Let us lean on our faith and our shared history as we move forward—waking up, standing together, and responding to the call of justice and love in our community.

With love and blessings,

Rev. Benjamin Ledell Bragg-Reynolds



MEMORANDUM

To: The Governing Body

From: Diana Haines Walton
Moderator

Subject: Gender Neutral Bathroom on Second Floor

I would like to share an important update regarding our church facility. The restroom formerly designated as the boys' restroom on the second level (near the classrooms) has now been converted into a **gender-neutral restroom**. This change reflects our continued commitment to fostering a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for everyone—especially our children.

To support this transition:

- Updated signage has been installed to clearly indicate the new designation.
- The restroom will be **reserved for youth use only**.
- For the time being, youth must be accompanied by an adult when using this restroom. This policy will be reviewed and adjusted as we all become more familiar with the updated space.

During the summer, after conferring with the Vacation Bible School, we converted the upstairs restroom into a gender-neutral or family restroom to better accommodate program needs. While a permanent renovation is not feasible at this time due to cost constraints, a temporary solution has been implemented:

- The restroom has been used by both male and female participants according to a designated schedule and under adult supervision.
- A partition was installed to conceal the urinals during use by female participants.
- This arrangement has also been adopted by NSP for their program.

We deeply appreciate your understanding and support as we strive to build a community where every individual feels seen, respected, and valued.

"Peoples Church FYI"

Prayer Meeting Dial-In

Wednesday Word Devotional Conference Call

605-475-5950 Access Code: 8964544#
Second and Fourth Wednesdays at 7:00 a.m.

Wednesday Noon Prayer Service

Call 518-992-1039, Access Code: 659959#
Prayer Service is every Wednesday at Noon.

Thursday Virtual Bible Study

Join Zoom Meeting: Click here to [join](#)
Dial-in# +1 301 715 8592 US
Meeting ID: 992 6852 3678 Password: 784420
Peoples Congregational United Church of Christ

Sunday Morning Praise and Worship Teleconference

Call-in-Number 720-740-9739 Access Code 4684874
The Line Opens at 6:55 a.m.

Virtual Adult Church School

Adult Church School Every Sunday from 8:00 a.m. - 9:15 a.m.

Join Zoom Meeting

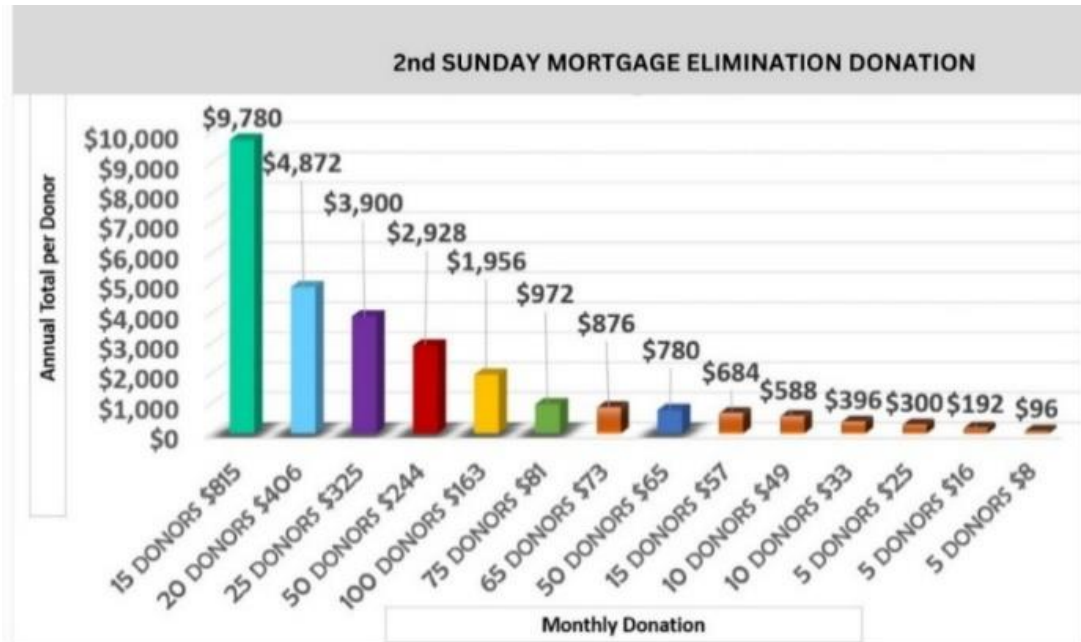
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88390857788?pwd=RmZoY2xqeTBIRVdTK09XWFY5cG9OQT09>

Meeting ID: 837 4429 8433 Passcode: 853640
Church School meets every 2nd, 3rd and 4th Sunday at 10:00 a.m. in the
Elmes Center Classrooms from September- June

Sermon By Phone

Available every Sunday at 12:00 p.m. Dial 1-202-318-5405





2nd SUNDAY MORTGAGE ELIMINATION DONATION

Please consider selecting one of the Monthly Donation Categories in the 2nd Sunday Mortgage Elimination Donation Graph above to create your recurring financial gifts either online or by postal mail.

Remember, these financial gifts are above and beyond your usual tithing and offering donations for our Beloved Church.

Of course, if you are unable to commit to the recommended donation amounts on the graph, all donations to the Capital Campaign Community of Faith are greatly needed and appreciated.

Select Peoples Church or REALM for Online Donations

Select Menu Option: Mortgage Elimination

[Complete the 2nd Sunday Mortgage Elimination Donation Form](#)

[DONATE at PeoplesChurch.org](http://DONATEatPeoplesChurch.org)

[DONATE on REALM](#)

Send questions or comments to CapitalCampaignPUCC@gmail.com

SPECIAL CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to Peoples Church! All individuals who participate in our Worship and Liturgical Services and/or Events may have their images appear on our Social Media Platforms, Live Streaming, or communication documents. By attending these Services and Events, you tacitly agree to having your image displayed.

Dear Peoples Church Members,

We want to ensure that you have the best possible communication with our Interim Minister to address any needs, concerns, or messages you may have. His email address is interimminister@peopleschurchucc.org. Please note that the Pastor's Sabbath is on Monday, a time dedicated to rest and reflection. If you need to contact the Pastor via email, we kindly ask that you keep in mind the following schedule: if you send an email on Sunday or Monday, please understand that the Pastor is not likely to respond until Tuesday, as these are his days of rest. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in respecting the Pastor's need for Sabbath rest. Your patience and consideration are highly valued as we seek to support our Pastor's well-being and continued service to the congregation. Should you have any urgent concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the Front Office. Thank you

A Call to Church Members

The theme for the Diaconate Retreat was "Mission Possible". The Diaconate Board is calling upon you to help extend God's grace and mercy to Peoples Congregational UCC as the new church year begins. We need new deacons to assist us as we serve in various capacities in the church.

Qualifications:

- A heart filled with God's love
- A willingness to serve
- At least one year of membership at Peoples Church with regular attendance
- A person of good character

Serving as a Deacon will help deepen your faith, strengthen relationships within our church family, and allow you to be an active part of God's work. Deacons provide ministerial support by assisting with the worship service, providing visitation for our sick and shut-in members, providing financial assistance to church and community members through the Deacon Fund Offering, welcoming new members, and assisting with the preparation of youth for church membership.

If there are any questions or if you are interested, please contact the Chair, Deacon Kenneth Parker (kenneth6101@comcast.net) or any member of the Diaconate Board soon. Your name might also be left in the church office. We look forward to welcoming you as we move forward together in this new church year, working together and supporting the ministry by showing that this Mission is Possible!

Peoples UCC Music Ministry Announcements

There are several opportunities for you to participate in the music ministry at Peoples:

We invite you to come and be a part of Peoples Congregational Choir. Rehearsals are on Saturdays from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

There are also opportunities to sing with Peoples Praise, our praise & worship team. Rehearsals are on Saturdays from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Instrumentalists are also welcome.

You can help grow the music ministry by bringing or inviting a friend or family member to church.

You don't sing or play a musical instrument? We are also looking for a few people with the desire to help by providing administrative support. If you are interested, please reach out to Lise Stevens at: music@peopleschurchucc.org.

Do you remember the Hebrew words for praise found in scripture? Here's a hint; The first letter of each word is:

Y - HANDS TO GOD

T - TO SPEAK THE SAME THING

S - A LOUD ADORATION OF WHAT GOD HAS DONE

T - TO SING PRAISE

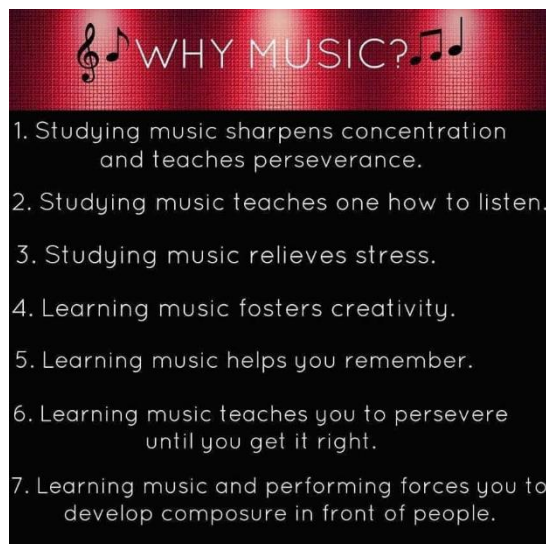
B - ACT OF KNEELING OR BOWING

H - TO BE CLAMOROUSLY FOOLISH BEFORE THE LORD

Z - TO SING SONGS OF PRAISE WITH INSTRUMENTS

How can we put these forms of praise into our Sunday worship experience? How do we put these forms of praise and worship into our daily lives?

Thank you for your continued support of the music ministry at Peoples. We welcome your comments and suggestions as we strive toward musical excellence to the greater glory of God.





In Memoriam



Thomas Pinder
Passed on January 10, 2025

Mary Elizabeth Rowe
Passed on January 26, 2025

Joan Stanley
Passed on July 13, 2025

Judith Rhodes
Passed on August 17, 2025

Jacqueline Jackson
Passed on February 23, 2025

Thomas Hammond
Passed on September 28, 2025

"**The Scholarship Committee** has begun accepting college book grant applications for church members attending undergraduate school (sophomores, juniors and seniors) and who will be registered for the Spring 2026 semester. Applications may be submitted directly online (<https://form.jotform.com/252994561596171>) . Please note, the due date for applications and any supporting documentation is Friday, December 5, 2025 by 5:00 pm EST. Thank you. "



Peoples UCC Community Coat Drive!

The Evangelism & Outreach, Women's Fellowship, and Usher Board are partnering up with Petworth area schools (Barnard Elementary & Roosevelt Senior High) and the Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, DCSO Beta Chapter to collect winter coats and outerwear for students and families from **Sunday, October 26, to Sunday, November 23, 2025**. Please contact Constance Harris of the Women's Fellowship to obtain more information about the number and coat sizes needed for Barnard Elementary. Please contact Lise Stevens for Roosevelt collections, as they are accepting donations of all sizes, especially for students and families. Contact Ms. Trudy Jones for DCSO Beta Chapter collections. The collection box for Barnard is located opposite the main sanctuary entrance, and the collection boxes for Roosevelt are located near the rear Atrium exit and coat rack. If you need assistance getting your donations to the church, please contact the church office so they can be picked up before the collection deadline. Thank you in advance for your generosity!

THE CANNABIS HAZE

Cannabis products are often used to help with pain and nausea. Over time, CBD—a compound found in cannabis—has also become popular in skin care and wellness routines. Both THC and CBD are active ingredients that come from the cannabis plant. Products differ based on how much THC they contain. Those with higher THC levels (above 3%) can cause stronger mind-altering effects and are more tightly regulated by federal law.

Using cannabis products with higher THC can sometimes make managing chronic health conditions more difficult for older adults.

Still, many seniors turn to cannabis, especially for pain relief. At first, they used CBD oils and gels on their skin, but now oral and inhaled products are also common. As more states allow medical cannabis, dispensaries are opening up and offering products with more THC. On the other hand, products with more CBD are generally easier to buy.

Studies show that cannabis use among people aged 65 and older has grown rapidly in recent years. Higher THC use is linked to several health conditions, including chronic lung disease (COPD), heart problems, diabetes, high blood pressure, cancer, and having multiple chronic illnesses. Older adults who are female, have higher incomes, advanced education, are married, and live in states where medical cannabis is legal are most likely to use these products. However, using cannabis products with more THC can make managing chronic diseases more complicated for seniors.

Experts currently recommend caution: for most people with non-cancer pain, the risks of cannabis use may outweigh the benefits—especially for those with substance use issues, serious mental illness, frailty, or a high risk of falling.

Products with the higher CBD content often referred to as hemp, contain nutrients like proteins, fatty acids, and minerals that support brain and skin health, reduce inflammation, and aid digestion. Many older adults use CBD for pain relief, relaxation, anxiety, and sleep—starting with topical oils and gels, and now also oral and inhaled products. CBD products are known for their calming effects and mental clarity, without the “buzz” of high-THC products and may help improve sleep and recovery.

CBD-infused drinks and hemp seed oils are also popular, especially in health-focused beauty products.

However, daily CBD use can cause side effects like dry mouth, drowsiness, and digestive issues. High doses may lead to anxiety, increased heart rate, dizziness, and fatigue.

Because of the opioid crisis, more people are looking for natural alternatives, but it’s important to know that newer cannabis plants with higher THC often have less CBD. With

no federal regulation, product quality and safety can vary, and we don’t yet know all the risks.

Cannabis can also interact with medications, so always talk to your physician or pharmacist before using these products.

In short: be careful and make informed choices.



Happy Birthday to:

HAPPY
Anniversary

<i>Vernandi Richardson</i>	<i>11/03</i>	<i>Sam & Cynthia Prather</i>	<i>11/01</i>
<i>Kimberly Sellers</i>	<i>11/07</i>	<i>Richard & Batina Washington</i>	<i>11/26</i>
<i>Geoffery Pierce</i>	<i>11/07</i>		
<i>Gail Tyus-Hill</i>	<i>11/08</i>		
<i>Susan Spurlark</i>	<i>11/17</i>		
<i>Sterling Evans</i>	<i>11/17</i>		
<i>Sterling Evans</i>	<i>11/18</i>		
<i>Ellen Sistare</i>	<i>11/19</i>		
<i>Cassandra Hardison</i>	<i>11/20</i>		
<i>Nadine Kearns</i>	<i>11/20</i>		
<i>Towanda Chew</i>	<i>11/23</i>		
<i>Marvin Tyus</i>	<i>11/24</i>		
<i>Nicole Clifton</i>	<i>11/24</i>		
<i>Evon Ervin</i>	<i>11/24</i>		
<i>Julien Kearns</i>	<i>11/25</i>		
<i>George Walker</i>	<i>11/25</i>		
<i>Milton Coleman</i>	<i>11/26</i>		
<i>Bradley Thomas</i>	<i>11/30</i>		

Bible Trivia



- 1. The bible is the most popular book ever written.**
 - a. True
 - b. False
- 2. What is the first book in the Bible?**
 - a. Job
 - b. Revelations
 - c. Genesis
 - d. Psalm
- 3. How many days did God take to create the world?**
 - a. 2
 - b. 6
 - c. 7
- 4. Who was the first man?**
 - a. Moses
 - b. Paul
 - c. Adam

**Peoples Congregational
United Church of Christ**

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Phone: 202.829.5511
Follow us on Twitter
@PeoplesCongUCC

We are on the Web!
www.peopleschurchucc.org



Love God & Love Neighbor

Prodder Guidelines



The Peoples Prodder is our Monthly Newsletter, which informs our community about recent announcements, updates, and information pertaining to the life of our congregation.

All announcements and flyers for the upcoming edition of the Prodder must be submitted by 12:00 Noon on the 20th of the prior month.

Announcements and flyers can be emailed to yhunter@peopleschurchucc.org.

Please do not mail information; electronic submissions are required.

Announcements should be a maximum of 90 words and informational about Peoples Church events or members and their families. All announcements may be edited, and submissions are subject to final approval by the Ministers.

Contact Information

Interim Minister

Rev. Benjamin Ledell Bragg-Reynolds
interimminister@peopleschurchucc.org

Church Moderator

Diana Haines Walton
moderator@peopleschurchucc.org

Administrative Staff

Operations Specialist
Yvette Hunter
yhunter@peopleschurchucc.org

Maintenance Staff

Towanda Chew
Sterling "Stan" Evans



CHANGE OF CONTACT INFORMATION

Have you moved? Do you have a new e-mail address? Has your contact information changed? If so, please fill out the form below and place it in the offering plate so that we may update your contact information. Thank-you!

Name(s) _____

Old Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

New Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Numbers: Home _____ Business _____

Food Pantry Food Drive



Children's Sabbath



Rev. A. Knighton Stanley Dedication





FALL COMMUNITY CALENDAR

***Saturday, October 18th 1:00 pm, the naming of the
Rev. Dr. A. Knighton Stanley Way Designation Act**

***Friends and Family Day, Sunday, October 19, 2025**



***Community Food Drive and Raffle, Saturday,
October 25, 2025 12:00-4:00 pm**

***Children's Sabbath, Sunday, October 26, 2025 10:00 am**



***Denyce Graves Foundation Concert, Saturday, November
15, 2025 4:00-5:30 pm**



Realm Registration



**Scan the QR Code: Peoples Realm
Sign-Up, Sign-in or Make a Donation**



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