

The Grapevine

A PUBLICATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF OKEMOS

From Pastor Lisa Schrott



*Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. --
Galatians 6:2*

Look Around, Look Within is the theme of the 2023 Mental Health Month. Initiated by Mental Health America (mhanational.org) in 1949, the month of May is designated for recognizing the importance of caring for our mental health. It's a time to share information, stories, and resources.



In 2018, the 223rd General Assembly of the PC(USA) adopted a Presbyterian Mental Health Initiative. This initiative established a new churchwide mental health network, policy documents, and a grants program to local churches. Congregations are encouraged to use the month of May to reduce the stigma associated with prioritizing mental health and seeking treatment.

Pastor Rebekah and I invite you to **Look Around, Look Within** as we explore various topics related to mental health this month. On Wednesdays, May 10, 17, 24 and 31 we will send congregation-wide emails addressing aspects related to mental health. These emails will include links for you to obtain more information and resources.

On **Tuesday, May 23 from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.** in Fellowship Hall, we will offer training related to suicide awareness. Using *LivingWorks Start*, participants will learn to recognize when someone is thinking about suicide and connect them to help and support. This program utilizes simulations, so technique can be practiced. The training is open to anyone 14 years of age and older. We will hold another training in September for those unable to attend this class.

We will also be forming a task force to investigate ways we as a congregation can better address the mental health needs of the congregation and the community. If you are interested in being part of this of this group, please reach out to Pastor Lisa at *pastorlisa at okemospres dot org* (standard email setup) or Pastor Rebekah at *randerson at okemospres dot org* (standard email setup).

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(can also be viewed online at <https://okemospres.org/calendar>)

Adult Christian Education & Fellowship

Password for Zoom meetings unless otherwise noted is 48864.

Days and times subject to change. Please watch Friday e-Announcements for changes, particularly as we head into the summer months.

SUNDAYS

Adult Education—Weekly, 11:30 a.m., in the **Temple Room or Fellowship Hall** & on Zoom 434 304 558 (*check the Sunday bulletin for topics. Enjoy a time of fellowship after worship when no adult ed is scheduled*)

Writing Life's Stories – 1st Sundays, **2:00 p.m.**, Zoom 848 6124 7191— **next meeting is Sunday, May 7.**

Birthday Cake Sunday—3rd Sundays following worship unless otherwise noted. This month will be on **May 21**

Women's Connection—3rd Sunday in May, **12:30 p.m.** in person in Room 108—**next meeting is May 21.**

MONDAYS

Retirees – 4th Mondays —**12:00 noon at PCO** - **Next meeting is May 22.** *This meeting will be in-person.*

Women's Supper Out— **Monday, May 8 5:30 p.m.** Cask & Co. located at 3415 E. Saginaw, East Lansing.

TUESDAYS

Men's Group – Weekly, 8:00 a.m. Zoom 813 7514 8286. *Tentative hybrid meetings are first Tuesdays.*

PCO Crafts Ministry— Moved to **3rd** Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m., Board Room—**next meeting is May 16**

Artists Circle—4th Tuesdays at 1:00 p.m., in Fellowship Hall and on Zoom 860 4044 3015. Next meeting is May 23

WEDNESDAYS

Conversation & Contemplation—Weekly, 10:00 a.m. on Zoom 905 709 104. *In person with Zoom option on May 31*

Caregiver Support Group - 4th Wednesdays 5:00 p.m. Next Meeting is **May 24** on Zoom 517 329 2320; password is **hello**

THURSDAYS

Bible Study – Weekly, 9:30 a.m. Zoom <https://msu.zoom.us/j/5147440526>



Women's Dinner Out— scheduled for Monday, May 8 at 5:30 p.m. at Cask & Co. located at 3415 E. Saginaw, East Lansing. We will need to make reservations ahead of time. Their policy states that the maximum number of people per reservation is twelve. Consequently, it will be important to call or email Candy Boldrey no later than Friday, May 5, so we will have an exact count. Her email address is *cbold67 at gmail dot com* (standard email setup) and her phone number is (859)421-0014.

Women's Connection—will meet Sunday, May 21 (*third instead of our regular fourth Sunday*). Please plan now to join us for this final meeting of the program year. After enjoying lunch together, Siri Rainone will speak on her life and faith journey. Siri is one of our newly-installed elders, and this is an opportunity to get to know her. All women are welcome and encouraged to invite new members. Questions: Shirley Rumminger 655-4123 or *srumminger at yahoo dot com* (standard email setup).

Retirees in May—will meet at the church on May 22 at noon. Please bring a lawn chair and drink, snack or lunch if you wish. We will meet in the grass circle. (In case of inclement weather we will meet in Fellowship Hall.) What changes have you seen in your lifetime and how have they affected your life? Come join us for this discussion.

Caregiver Support Group— Is there someone in your life that depends on you in new ways? Are things different for you than they used to be? Would you like the support of others who are experiencing similar feelings? Join us on the fourth Wednesday at 5:00 pm for an open discussion. We meet on Zoom # 517-329-2320; password hello.

Conversation & Contemplation—Please join us on Wednesday mornings at 10:00 am for a spiritual journey. Group members offer prayer, meditation, lectio divina, and book study. We are currently reading Howard Thurman's book, *The Inner Journey* and have a book discussion on alternate weeks. We meet on Zoom # 905-709-104. We will meet in person on May 31 with a zoom option..

Birthday Cake Sunday—will be celebrated on Sunday, May 21. Happy Birthday, Dear Loyal Taurus and Dear Curious Gemini!

Life at PCO in Pictures

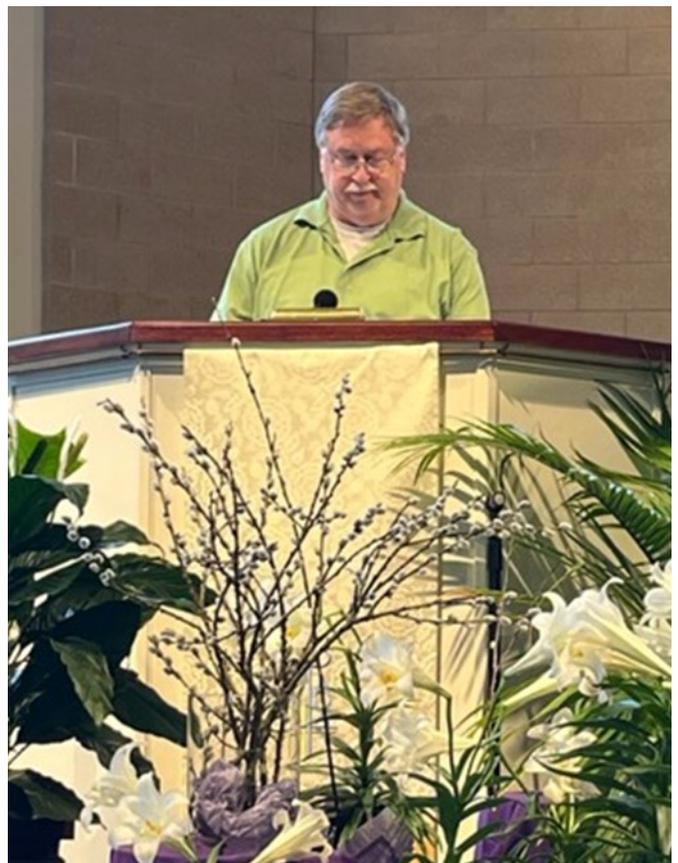
April saw the PCO congregation celebrate Christ's Resurrection at Easter, engage in a battle of minds during the UKirk Trivia Night, and dedicate the church's solar panels. Further reaffirming the church's status as an Earth Care Congregation of the PC(USA) the Green Team led the entire worship service on Creation Care Sunday.



Above—Continuing a beloved tradition, the congregation joined the Chancel Choir in singing the 'Hallelujah Chorus' from Handel's Messiah at the conclusion of the Easter morning worship service on April 9.

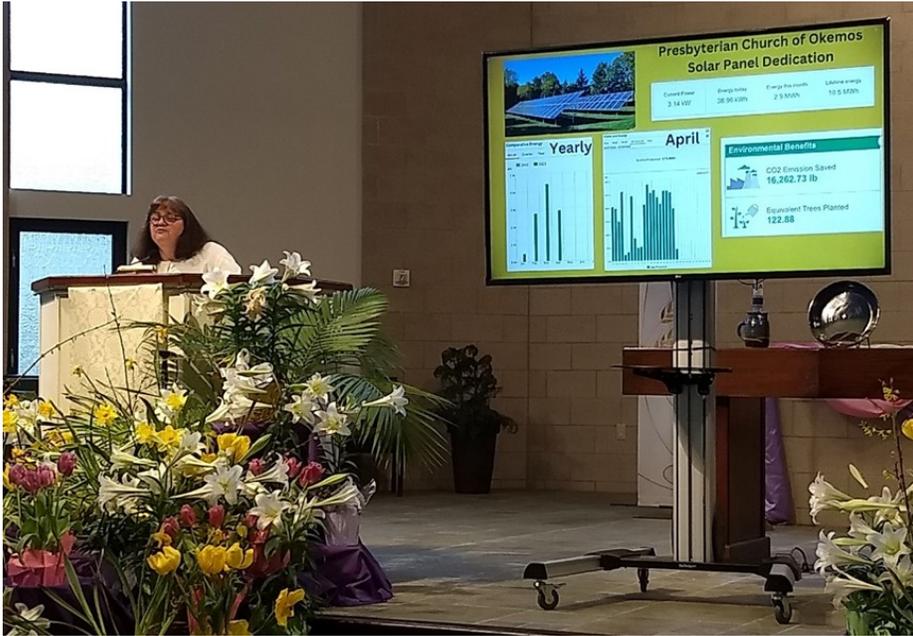


Congratulations to the 'Spring Chickens' from PCO. The team won first place at the UKirk Trivia Night on April 14. L to R—Kathi Cook, David Cook, Mike Mooney, Kent Workman and Judi Harris.



Brian McWilliams of the PCO Green Team preached about 'Building Foundations' on Creation Care Sunday on April 23.

Life at PCO in Pictures cont.



Tracking PCO's Power Production

Inclement weather on Sunday, April 16 caused the solar panel dedication to be held indoors. Above, Pastor Lisa Schrott informs church members and friends of the benefits already being seen from the church's solar panels. For an explanation of the graphics on the screen, visit <https://monitoringpublic.solaredge.com/solaredge-web/p/site/public?name=PCO#/dashboard>.

The SolarEdge website shows up-to-the-minute information and allows the viewer to adjust data to display in daily, weekly, monthly, yearly or billing cycles. The website also tracks the environmental benefits such as CO₂ emissions saved and the equivalent number of trees planted.

Grant Received for Green Project

PCO is pleased to announce that Meridian Township has awarded the church a \$2000 grant for a Native Landscape Enhancement Plan Project. The project will use funds from the township's Green Grant Program to hire a registered landscape architect.

The architect will design a comprehensive plan for the church grounds that will develop the grounds as a cohesive space. The space will provide important support for both humans and wildlife through the dedication of carefully planned native landscape enhancements. Features of the plan are expected to include native plant additions to the church's existing bio-swales, rain garden and solar panel area.

The plan is also expected to provide a framework for managing invasive species.



PCO appreciates the township's help in this undertaking and is grateful to be part of a community that is supportive of green initiatives.

Save These Dates

These fun and/or informative events may be of interest to you and your fellow PCO parishioners.

Celebration for PCO Choir Director Colleen Chester and 2023 Choir Scholarship Students
Sunday, May 7, 2023
Following Worship

Church Spring Clean Up
Saturday, May 13, 2023
9:00 a.m.—12 noon
Come for an hour or the entire morning!
Contact Dave Rumminger or watch Friday Announcements for more info.

Parish Life Out on the Town Event
Women's Professional Football Game
Saturday, May 13, 2023
7:00 p.m.—Okemos High School.
PCO member Kent Workman's niece, Sarah Workman, plays for one of the teams. Tickets will cost about \$10 and be available at the gate.

Suicide Awareness Training
Tuesday, May 23
7:00—8:30 p.m.
In Fellowship Hall
Ages 14 and older.



Sunday, May 14

Opportunity to Serve

As the summer months approach and people take time away, AV/Live-stream Operators are needed for Sunday services. No experience is necessary. Ages Youth-Adults are welcome, and training is provided. Contact the church office for more information.

Preparing for Simbolei Mission Trip

On June 25, five people from PCO will head to Iten, Kenya to volunteer at Simbolei Girls' Preparatory Academy and nearby primary schools. Pastor Rebekah Anderson, Ellen Hoekstra, Cathy McCarthy, and Jill and Tom Schaberg will join a handful of other volunteers and have the thrill of meeting the students at Simbolei, the fulfillment of a long-time dream for former PCO members Andrea and Richard Kaitany.

If you would like to support this effort, please keep the volunteers in your prayers. If you'd also like to donate items needed by the students, a collection will begin in May. Andrea would like Prang 8-tile watercolor kits as well as Crayola crayons, markers, and colored pencils. And yes, the brand matters, both for quality and to ensure that every girl works with the same uniform materials. If you are one of the members who has sponsored a student and would like to send her a small gift, please add it to the donation bin with the student's name on it. Gifts should be school-related (like a pen or calendar) and be lightweight so that volunteers can add them to their suitcases.

*Healthy Snack Drive
for Edgewood Village
After School Program*



The Mission Committee is collecting individually wrapped snacks through May 14, 2023. A bin in the coatroom has been labeled for your drop off. Thank you!

Policy Report from Mission Committee Ellen Hoekstra

Following a two week spring break, the legislature returned to the State Capitol on April 11. Priorities this spring include the state budget as well as completion of certain policy items, such as the firearm safety legislation. Items of note include:

- Firearm safety bills—Senate bills covering safe storage and requiring background checks for owners of long guns as well as pistols have passed both houses and been signed into law. The legislation regarding Extreme Risk Protection Orders (ERPO) took a little longer while due process issues were resolved but now is headed to the Governor's desk. One of our local legislators, Rep. Brixie, sponsored one of the ERPO bills.
- Good news in terms of substance abuse disorders is that deaths from overdoses (including alcohol) in the Lansing area have fallen for the first time since 2017. Further reductions could occur given USDA's approval of the over the counter sale of Narcan/naloxone. Churches and other community organizations may now be more willing to keep a supply on hand to be used if needed.
- The MI Kids Now Loan repayment program will offer student loan debt relief to behavioral health providers in under-served areas, with a priority for applicants who are serving children.
- A new state psychiatric hospital will be built on the existing Hawthorn Center site in Northville. The new hospital will serve both adults and youth with separate living and program spaces for each.
- Governor Whitmer has signed SB 12 to remove a provision that prevented 3rd grade students from being promoted to 4th grade if they did not meet specific reading benchmarks.
- A provision in a supplemental budget bill allocated \$10.8 million for Community Violence Intervention programs. From that amount, \$8 million will go to communities to support already existing statewide programs being done by private community organizations; \$2 million toward initiatives to address injuries and fatalities related to misuse of guns, including distributing trigger locks and gun safety boxes to households with children and outreach materials and services and materials on suicide prevention; and \$800,000 to create the Office of Community Violence Intervention Services.
- April was Fair Housing Month. Earlier this year, the Governor signed an executive order to help reach the goals of the state's first Statewide Housing plan, including making homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring, as well as weatherizing and improving energy efficiency in 15,000 homes.
- The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services has expanded dental benefits for adults on Medicaid and increased rates for dental providers. Newly added services include sealants, root canals, crowns, and care to maintain healthy gums.

(Dear Readers—The following book review is an example of the type of article that may be included in the future, online newsletter referenced by Pastor Lisa in the February Grapevine. The book and topic, while not directly tied to the Presbyterian Church of Okemos, or the PC(USA) at large, may be of interest to a number of members and friends.)

Unsettled: What Climate Science Tells Us, What It Doesn't, and Why It Matters

by Steven E. Koonin, pub. Ben Bella Books, copyright 2021

Book Review by Frank Hatfield

This book's thesis is that critical issues in climate science are unsettled because atmospheric conditions are influenced by multiple interactive factors that are not fully understood and by natural cycles from which anthropogenic effects are difficult to distinguish. The author is a physicist with impeccable credentials who served in the Obama administration's Department of Energy.

Climate is a statistical concept based on weather data spanning decades. Therefore, an extraordinary weather event or season is not evidence of change in climate, although persistence over years is. Data, like all history, invite diverse interpretations. Koonin is critical of interpretations aimed to persuade rather than enlighten such as the amusing 1982 proclamation by the former Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Program: "[Inaction will cause] . . . by the turn of the century [2000], an ecological catastrophe which will witness devastation as complete, as irreversible as any nuclear holocaust." In contrast, Koonin, neither "denier" nor doomsayer, presents reasoned but oppositely biased arguments and supporting data.

The complexity of climate science originates in data. Consider, for example, these unsettling statistics:

- Over the past 60 years, there was no upward trend in record high temperatures.
- Global warming is an average that reflects less severe record cold temperatures.
- The annual count of all U. S. tornadoes (1954-2014) shows no long-term trend,

while the annual count of only severe U. S. tornadoes for the same period shows a 40% decrease.

- The global average rise in sea level since 1880 is 0.07 inch per year. The rate accelerated to 0.13 inch per year from 1993 to 2010, correlating with global warming, but that rate is almost the same as the rate from 1920 to 1950, a period of lower carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions.

Koonin explains how atmospheric CO₂ contributes to global warming, particularly because it dissipates slowly over centuries so that emissions from oxidation of carbon accumulate, tripling atmospheric concentration from 1960 to 2019, a period of accelerated warming. According to the U. N.'s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the Paris Agreement to limit global warming to 2.7 degrees Fahrenheit would require total cessation of CO₂ emissions by 2050. Koonin believes that is impossible due to resistance to necessarily severe economic and behavioral disruptions, burgeoning global population, and increasing energy demands by developing countries.

The impact of CO₂ emissions on global warming is forecast by computer models that incorporate numerous interactive parameters. The Coupled Model Intercomparison Project 6 compared predictions of warming by 26 models to observed data over the 20th century. The divergence of predictions was about the same as total warming, and all models failed to replicate the warming rate from 1910 to 1940, which was about the same as that from 1970 when CO₂ emissions were considerably higher. Predictions this inaccurate do not justify harmfully disruptive programs and regulation.

As well as questioning predictions, Koonin is skeptical of dire speculations regarding economic impact. One of several counter examples is from the IPCC report: "Data available since 1961 show the per capital supply of vegetable oil and meat has more than doubled and the supply of food calories per capita has increased by about one third." Grain production also increased, and from the 1970s to 2016 inflation-adjusted prices declined.

Humankind has adapted to climates ranging from icy arctic to steaming tropic, and individuals, communities, and nations continue adapting to a changing climate. For example, weather-related death rates are about eighty times less than they were a century ago, largely due to improvements in storm tracking and warning, flood control, building codes, and medical care. Koonin advocates reliance on adaptation while CO₂ emissions are stabilized incrementally, informed by advancements in climate science. Helping poorer countries develop resources and stable institutions that facilitate adaptation may be more cost-effective than drastically limiting CO₂ emissions.

Unsettled is meant to inform the thoughtful public; a background in science is not assumed. Its iconoclastic arguments are sometimes indirect but always clearly worded. Supporting data typically are illustrated by graphs, unfortunately in gray scale. This is a good read for moderating prophecies of impending catastrophe.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
	5:45pm - Handbell Choir	8am - Men's Group @ 5:30pm - Middle School 7pm - Green Team	10am - Conversation and 10am - Staff Meeting 5:30pm - Worship and 7pm - Parish Life @ https://	9:30am - Bible Study - 7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal		
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
10am - Worship Service 11:15am - Celebration for 11:30am - Sunday School 2pm - Writing Life's 5pm - High School Youth	8am - Men's Group @ 5:30pm - Middle School 6pm - Administration	10am - Conversation and 10am - Staff Meeting 6pm - Mission Committee 7:30pm - CECY	9:30am - Bible Study - 7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal	9am - Outdoor Spring		
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
10am - Worship Service 11:30am - Sunday Adult 11:30am - Sunday School 5pm - High School Youth 6pm - Catron Recital	8am - Men's Group @ 5:30pm - Middle School 6pm - PCO Crafts 7pm - Deacons @ https://	10am - Conversation and 10am - Staff Meeting 7pm - Session @ https://	9:30am - Bible Study - 7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal	1pm - Hansen Recital		
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
10am - Worship Service 11am - Birthdays 11:30am - Sunday Adult 11:30am - Sunday School 12:30pm - Book Club 12:30pm - Women's 2pm - Reserved - 5pm - High School Youth	8am - Men's Group @ 1pm - Artist Circle @ 5:30pm - Middle School 7pm - Suicide Awareness	10am - Conversation and 10am - Staff Meeting 5pm - Caregiver Support 6:30pm - Personnel	9:30am - Bible Study - 7:30pm - Choir Rehearsal			
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
10am - Worship Service 11:30am - Sunday Adult 11:30am - Sunday School 5pm - High School Youth	8am - Men's Group @ 5:30pm - Middle School	10am - C & C Hybrid 10am - Staff Meeting				

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