

The Grapevine

A PUBLICATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF OKEMOS

From Pastor Lisa Schrott

Celebrating God's Ministry and Mission in Okemos

Mark your calendars for **Saturday, May 4** and **Sunday May 5, 2024** as PCO marks our **60th anniversary** as a chartered congregation. Saturday night will feature a dinner and entertainment. The Sunday worship service will feature former PCO pastors. Please spread the word to family and friends, especially those who might not be in the Okemos area any longer. We would love to have them join us!

If you would like to be part of the planning committee for this celebration, please reach out. We need both people who enjoy the big picture planning, as well as those who are detail oriented. This should be a fun committee to serve on (not that all of our committees are not fun!)

*As members of The Presbyterian Church of Okemos,
We believe that in life, in death, and life beyond death,
We belong to God.*

*The Church exists to invite everyone to join the lifelong journey of faith that is
life in Jesus Christ.*

Recognize those words? They are the beginning of the mission statement for PCO. As part of our celebration of our almost 60 years of ministry, we will also look at how God is calling us to the *lifelong journey of faith that is life in Jesus Christ* in 2024 and beyond. In late summer we will begin a visioning process to explore ways we are called to live out our mission of worship, study, service, building a network of caring relationships, and offering welcome, healing, justice and peace to all in the name of Jesus Christ. There will be opportunities early this fall for the congregation to provide input to this process through in person and Zoom meetings, as well as surveys.

Stay tuned for more details. And please include PCO and its mission and vision in your prayers.



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

Continuing the Conversation: Video Devotionals Coming this Summer to PCO.

Our summer sermon series is titled *Belonging: Building Community* and we want to extend the message beyond Sunday mornings.

Beginning the week of June 11, the pastors will be recording a short video that provides ways for you to continue to engage with the Sunday scripture. On Wednesday of each week, we will email a link to the video, which will be on our church's YouTube channel. We invite you to engage these videos and to share them with your friends and family.

And we invite you to consider taking a turn in sharing your perspective on the Sunday scripture. If you are interested in recording a devotional, please reach out to Pastor Lisa. If you provide the content, we can take care of the technology!



Watch the upcoming mid-week devotionals on your smartphone, tablet or computer.

PCO Task Force on Gun Violence

Many in the congregation felt powerless against the rising tide of gun violence, and a concern for our children who are participating in active shooter drills at school. Thus, in the fall of 2022, the PCO Adult Ed Committee held five sessions on Gun Violence. These included hosting speaker Katie See from Greater Lansing Moms Demand Action, videos, General Assembly reports and biblical background. Apart from active shooters, firearms are linked to domestic and sexual violence as well as suicide. Following considerable discussion, we formed a Task Force on Gun Violence to explore what PCO members can learn and do. Unfortunately, no local model existed as no congregation in the Great Lakes Presbytery has a similar initiative despite many mass shootings including one at Oxford Schools and more recently at MSU. The Task Force members include some outside of PCO.

To date, we have explored information from gun control advocacy organizations and reviewed books and videos. Also, local Representative Julie Brixie updated us on state legislation, and Rev. Jimmie Hawkins of the PCUSA Office of Public Witness and the Presbyterian Ministry at the UN spoke on federal gun legislation. The Task Force learned how to advocate with elected officials. We contacted federal and state legislators to learn about existing laws and proposed bills relating to expanded background checks, safe storage, and extreme risk protection. Ellen Hoekstra keeps us informed on current and proposed Michigan bills. Also, Task Force members and other PCO members and clergy have participated in press conferences and a day at the Capitol focused on gun violence.

On May 22, Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed gun violence prevention bills establishing extreme risk protection orders in Michigan, ensuring police officers, health care professionals, and family members concerned about someone who may harm themselves or others can seek a court order to temporarily confiscate their firearms. The Task Force will soon survey PCO members to assess which areas the Task Force should focus on in the coming months. The Task Force reports to the Adult Education Committee.

Ewen Todd



Clothing Collection for Boys

The Judson Love Clothing Center is in need of new and gently used sweatpants and jeans for boys....sizes 4T to adult. As you are spring cleaning if you have these items that you wish to donate or would like to purchase new, there will be a bin in the coatroom from **June 19—29**. Your generosity is needed and greatly appreciated. Thank you so much as we help others as Jesus would want us to do.

Any questions, please contact Jayne Zuhlke at 734-474-2853 or *jazuhlke at comcast dot net* (standard email setup).

Opportunities to Serve

Summer often means travel, and travel sometimes means the church needs YOU to fill in for fellow church members who are away. Whether you're an old hand at something or would like to try something new, PCO welcomes your talent and enthusiasm to keep the church running and welcoming. See the list of opportunities to help out below.

Musicians: If you would like to share your musical gifts with us this summer, please contact Marlene Brewbaker (*her contact info is in the church directory and on the website*) or the church office. Both instrumentalists and vocalists are welcome.

Flowers for the Sanctuary: If your garden is blooming, you might consider bringing in some of your flowers to beautify our sanctuary on Sunday mornings. You do not need to bring a large bouquet, nor arrange them like a professional florist. God's creativity shines through in all His creation, including our backyard blooms. Sign-up on the church [website](#).

Dishwashers: We need some folks to help with running the dishwasher after social time at church! We are using 'real' plates and cups so we aren't using paper or Styrofoam! This task can be done at a time of your choosing during the week, not necessarily on Sunday. Training and assistance will be provided, and directions will be posted.

Please consider helping with this so we can continue to care for the environment. Contact Dorinda VanKempen at *dorindavankempen at hotmail dot com* (standard email setup) or text her at 517-388-1625 if for more info.

Snacks & Coffee for fellowship: Sign-up sheets for the next three months are now on the kiosk. During the summer, people take more time to linger over coffee and enjoy fellowship. And everyone enjoys visiting the snack table! Please consider helping with the coffee and/or providing snacks. We welcome it to be however you desire, homemade or purchased, variety or very simple. Volunteers are greatly appreciated!

Questions: Shirley Rumminger 655-4123 or *srumming at yahoo dot com* (standard email setup)

Setting Off for Simbolei

On **June 17**, five people from PCO will head to Iten, Kenya to volunteer at Simbolei Girls' Preparatory Academy and nearby primary schools. They are Pastor Rebekah Anderson, Ellen Hoekstra, Cathy McCarthy, and Jill and Tom Schaberg. **Please keep them in prayer.**

If you'd also like to donate items for Simbolei students, a bin is in the coatroom. Andrea would like Prang 8-tile watercolor kits as well as Crayola crayons, markers, and colored pencils. The brand matters, both for quality and to ensure that every girl works with the same uniform materials.

If you have 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.

Simbolei Academy is the fulfillment of a long-time dream for former PCO members Richard and Andrea Kaitany, and is one of the international missions supported in by PCO.

Save The Date!

Sunday, June 4

**Final Day of Sunday School
Children and Youth
2022-23 School Year
11:30 a.m.**

**Parish Life: Out on the Town
Carillon Concert and Tour
Beaumont Tower at MSU
3:00 p.m.**

PCO attendee Laurie Harkema is one of the Assistant Carillonists at MSU. She has graciously agreed to play a 30-minute concert for members of PCO and other churches. You may want to bring a lawn chair. Afterwards, she will give a tour of the tower and the carillon. (*There are 73 steps to the playing cabin room, but there is a stop and the carillon office partway up.*)

Parking is free on the campus on the weekends except for the ramp on Grand River Avenue.



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 person & 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, June 4.**

Birthday Cake Sunday—3rd Sundays following worship unless otherwise noted. This month will be on **June 18**

Women's Connection—*On hiatus for the summer. See you in September!*

MONDAYS

Retirees— 4th Mondays —**12:00 noon at PCO** - **Next meeting is June 26.** *This meeting will be in-person.*

Women's Dinner Out— **Monday, June 12 5:30 p.m.** Tavern 109, 115 East Grand River, Williamston.

TUESDAYS

Men's Group— Weekly, 8:00 a.m. Zoom 813 7514 8286. *Tentative hybrid meetings are first Tuesdays— June 6.*

PCO Crafts Ministry— 3rd Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m., Board Room—**next meeting is June 20**

Artists Circle—4th Tuesdays at 1:00 p.m., in Fellowship Hall and on Zoom 860 4044 3015. **Next scheduled meeting is June 24.**

WEDNESDAYS

Conversation & Contemplation—Weekly, 10:00 a.m. on Zoom 905 709 104. ***In person with Zoom option on June 28.***

Caregiver Support Group - 4th Wednesdays 5:00 p.m. Next Meeting is **June 28** on Zoom 517 329 2320; password is **hello**

THURSDAYS

Bible Study— Weekly, 9:30 a.m.

Zoom <https://msu.zoom.us/j/5147440526>

Retirees in Summer

The Retiree Group will meet on Monday, June 26, on the church lawn at noon. Please bring a lawn chair and a lunch, snack or beverage if you wish. We will continue our discussion on changes we have seen over our lifetime and how they have affected us. **This will be our last meeting until Monday, September 25.** Remember, you don't have to be retired to join us!

Conversation & Contemplation

Our meetings are on Wednesday from 10-11:30 a.m. You can join us on Zoom #905-709-104. We added an "In-Person" option on the last Wednesday of each month. June 28 will be a hybrid meeting. We plan to complete our book study and continue with meditation, scripture reading, prayer and Lectio Divina throughout June. We will not meet during July and August but will resume meeting on Wednesday, September 6.

Caregivers Support Group

The Caregiver Support Group will meet on June 28 at 5:00pm on Zoom (#517-329-2320 hello). This is an open discussion for those who are helping care for a loved one. Resources are shared, suggestions and ideas are made and support is given as we come together during this hour. We will continue meeting on zoom over the summer on July 26 and August 23.

Birthday Cake Sunday

In June, we will celebrate Birthday Cake Sunday on Sunday, June 18. If you celebrate your birthday in June, please check the June Birthday List posted on the kiosk in Fellowship Hall and add your name by Sunday, June 11th if it is not there. Happy Birthday, Dear Inquisitive Geminis and Dear Compassionate Cancers!

Advent House Reminder

In the same way we restock our cabinets at home, Advent House needs to regularly restock its personal care items. PCO has a bin in the coat room for collecting this kind of thing. These can be dropped off at church on Sunday mornings or during office hours. Thanks!





SPECIAL THANKS TO THE 19 VOLUNTEERS WHO GAVE OF THEIR TIME ON SATURDAY, MAY 13, TO HELP CLEAN AREAS AROUND THE BUILDING.

The tasks of the morning were to clear areas around the entry doors in preparation for new landscaping that will help to maintain an attractive welcoming site. It is very impressive to see the outcome of their hard work.

THANKS TO: Jeff Arbour, Edward Ennen, Bill Given, Jennifer Gordon, Frank Hatfield, Mary Lou Hatfield, Owen Locke, Scott Locke, Rich Martin, Brian McWilliams, Lucas Meland, Roy Meland, Lydia Morgan, Doug Paterson, Tom Schaberg, Lisa Schrott, Wayne Scott, Gary Sturk, and Jayne Zuhlke.



SPECIAL THANKS to Mary Lou Hatfield and Lydia Morgan who spent many hours helping to coordinate the tasks and to Edward Ennen who donated extra time to ensure the clean-up went smoothly.

Dave Rumminger
Administration Committee



BOOK NOOK

By Ron Dorr

Commencement Speakers at Michigan State University, May, 2023

Dr. Anthony Fauci and Dr. Yvette Efevbera

Two speeches stood out among the eight that I heard at three commencement ceremonies at Michigan State University this spring.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, a national adviser on infectious diseases to U. S. presidents, spoke to Ph. D. candidates on May 5. Dr. Yvette Efevbera, adviser on gender equality and child marriages at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, spoke to B. A. candidates at James Madison College on May 6. Like every other speaker at the ceremonies, they complimented graduates and undergraduates for their resilience, compassion, and achievements during the international pandemic and the local shootings at MSU. Both ventured beyond the past four years. Both speeches were brief, engaging, and filled with several lessons.

“Expect the unexpected” was Fauci’s first lesson. The quick arrival of variants of the coronavirus as well as the first vaccines surprised and humbled health experts. Graduates’ careers, Fauci said, would also be filled with disappointment as well as success. Learn “to step outside your comfort zone.” Amid divisiveness, our differences should not contribute to attacks and hatred, Fauci went on. Engage in respectful civil discourse. Advance “the common good with uncommon will.” Despite division, there is much joy in life, Fauci concluded. Find and cultivate the sources of joy in your lives. You have so many things to be grateful for and joyful about.

Fauci’s own life, quiet authority, and public service in the AIDs crisis of the 1980s and the COVID crisis of the 2020s are quite impressive to many.

Dr. Efevbera, a first-generation Nigerian-American, graduated from James Madison College 14 years ago. She could not remember the speaker or speech from her commencement. But Efevbera knew how many of the graduates were feeling. For those who did not know what they were going to do right now, what they wanted to be as adults, or how their lives would turn out, she offered four lessons she has learned. Seize the opportunity, build community, dream big, and hold on to your core values.

She illustrated each lesson with examples from four transitions in her own life. Her graduate work at Harvard University challenged her, stoked her confidence, gave her new skills. She put those skills in action in Malawi, where she found her passion working with marginalized women and youth. Back in Washington, D. C., she engaged her friends from Madison College and MSU to build her sense of Spartan community.

Dr. Paul Farmer, her mentor in her Ph. D. work at Harvard, told her to think big in applying for her job at the Gates Foundation. Advise the Foundation how it could improve its current work. There Efevbera promoted adolescent health and gender issues, gaining \$100 million in investment for new projects.

Finally, she advised graduates to cultivate their core values, as she would be doing in the future in combatting child marriages. Don’t give up “what you believe in; stop, reflect, remember your values, and make a change.” “Ride the waves of transition.” At the convocation for all MSU undergraduates, Prof. Lisa Cook stressed education, community, and hope. Student speaker Elyse Bader caught the ambiguity in “Spartans will”: “will” is both a noun and a verb. At the Madison ceremony, Prof. Mark Largent added humor to a serious occasion. Prof. Sejuti Das Gupta reminded candidates of the enduring questions that Madisonians examined from their first year on. Dr. Anthony Fauci, 82, and Dr. Yvette Efevbera, 35, however, reminded me that commencements can be small occasions for large purposes.



Dr. Yvette Efevbera addressed B.A. candidates at MSU’s James Madison College last month.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
10am - Worship Service 11:30am - Sunday Adult 11:30am - Sunday School 2pm - Writing Life's 3pm - Parish Life Out on 5pm - High School Youth	5:45pm - Handbell Choir 5	8am - Men's Group @ 9am - Adult Ed Room 108 5:30pm - Middle School 6	10am - Conversation and 10am - Staff Meeting 5:30pm - Worship and 7pm - Parish Life @ https://www.facebook.com/parishlife/ : 7	9:30am - Bible Study - 8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
10am - Worship Service 11:30am - Sunday Adult 11:30am - Sunday School 5pm - High School Youth	5:45pm - Handbell Choir 5:45pm - Handbell Choir	8am - Men's Group @ 5:30pm - Middle School 6pm - Administration 7:30pm - Communication 13	10am - Conversation and 10am - Staff Meeting 6pm - Mission Committee 7:30pm - CECY 14	9:30am - Bible Study - 15		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
10am - Worship Service 11am - Birthdays 11:30am - Sunday Adult 11:30am - Sunday School 5pm - High School Youth	5:45pm - Handbell Choir 5:45pm - Handbell Choir	8am - Men's Group @ 5:30pm - Middle School 6pm - PCO Crafts 7pm - Deacons @ https://www.facebook.com/parishlife/ : 20	10am - Conversation and 10am - Staff Meeting 7pm - Session @ https://www.facebook.com/parishlife/ : 21	9:30am - Bible Study - 22		
25	26	27	28	29	30	1
10am - Worship Service 11:30am - Sunday Adult 11:30am - Sunday School 5pm - High School Youth	5:45pm - Handbell Choir 5:45pm - Handbell Choir	8am - Men's Group @ 5:30pm - Middle School 27	10am - Conversation and 10am - Staff Meeting 5pm - Caregiver Support 28	9:30am - Bible Study - 29		

Presbyterian Church of Okemos

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The Grapevine is a monthly newsletter of
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Sunday Worship 10:00 A.M.

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