

The Grapevine

A PUBLICATION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF OKEMOS

From Pastor Lisa Schrott

Seeking the Living Christ

The tomb is empty! Alleluia and Amen! On Easter Sunday we celebrated the good news that Jesus defeated the bonds of death, inviting us to share in the gift of new life. During the season of Eastertide, the 50 days between Easter and Pentecost, we will be blessed with abundant opportunities to seek and experience the Living Christ here at PCO. You can learn more about these opportunities throughout the Grapevine. I invite and welcome you to join us this season as we:

Seek the Living Christ as We Work for Justice

- Gun Violence Prevention Summit. On Saturday, April 13, we will partner with First Presbyterian Church, Lansing and the Reach Out Christian Center Church to host a prayer service and community summit. The event is free and includes lunch.
- Equity and Access to Higher Education: The Examples of Berea College. On Sunday, April 14, Dr. Lyle Roelofs, Emeritus President, Berea College will share the unique story of Berea College.
- Creation Care Sunday. On Sunday, April 21 we will hear from MSU Professor of Religious Studies and Philosophy, Dr. Gretel van Wieren. She will preach in worship and present during the Adult Education Hour.
(For more information, see page 2)

Seek the Living Christ in Community

- Trivia Night with UKirk Presbyterian College Ministry. Have fun and make new friends as you share your arcane knowledge and support a good cause. Hosted by the PCO Mission Committee on Friday, April 5 at 7:00 p.m.
- Youth and Officers Get Together. Sunday, April 7 at 5:00-7:00 p.m. Middle School and Senior Youth welcome active Elders and Deacons to youth group for an evening of food, fellowship, faith, and fun.
- Kaleidoscope: A Collage Concert. Sunday, April 14 at 4:00 p.m. Come and enjoy an hour of beautiful music! Bring a friend! Enjoy handbells, organ, harp, flute, piano, cello, and violin in solo, duet, and trio settings.
- Dinner in My Home. Enjoy sharing a meal with friends, old and new? Join us on Sunday, April 21 at 5:00 p.m. as we gather in small groups to share a meal in someone's home. This event is for **anyone**: singles, couples, or families.

(For more information, see page 3)

Column cont. on page 4



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**Deadline for the May Grapevine is
Tuesday, April 23rd**

Seeking Christ as We Work for Justice



Adult Education on Sunday, April 14

Dr. Lyle D. Roelofs, Emeritus Professor of Berea College in Kentucky, is guest speaker during the Adult Education hour (11:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m.) His son Chris and daughter-in-law Anne Uitvlugt, and their two children are part of the PCO family. For more information about Dr. Roelofs and his presentation, see page 5.

Earth Care Sunday—April 21, 2024

The Green Team will be leading worship as PCO celebrates its commitment to being an Earth Care Congregation. We are honored to have Dr. Gretel Van Wieren preaching and leading our Adult Education time.

Dr. Van Wieren is Professor of Religious Studies and Philosophy at Michigan State University where her research and teaching explore the spiritual and moral dimensions of people's relationships to land. Her courses and research focus on the intersection of religion, ethics, and the environment.

Professor Van Wieren grew up on west Michigan's lakeshore and is an ordained minister in the Reformed Church in America, where she has worked on environmental issues for over twenty years. She received her M.Div. and Ph.D. from Yale University.

Her sermon will be based on Isaiah 55:12: "All the trees of the field shall clap their hands." At the 11:30 am Adult Education hour she will discuss Nature, Spirituality and the Interconnectedness of All Beings: Practicing Kinship with Creation. There will be opportunities for group dialogue and discussion.

Gun Violence Prevention Summit

Saturday, April 13, 2024
10:30 am - 3:30 pm
Registration begins at 10:00 am
Lunch provided free of charge

Reachout Christian Center
5628 Wise Rd. Lansing, MI 48911

Hosted by:
First Presbyterian Church, Lansing
Presbyterian Church of Okemos
Reachout Christian Center

Prayer Service
National & Local Speakers Addressing Gun Violence Prevention
Community Action Fair
Michigan Legislative Update

EARTH CARE SUNDAY

APRIL 21, 2024

WORSHIP 10AM
LED BY THE PCO GREEN TEAM

All the trees of the field
shall clap their hands.
Isaiah 55:12

DR. GRETEL VAN WIENEN
MSU PROFESSOR OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES
PREACHING & LEADING ADULT EDUCATION

ADULT EDUCATION



Dr. Gretel
Van Wieren

Seeking Christ in Community



TRIVIA NIGHT

APRIL 5TH
7:00PM

\$120 PER TABLE
(TEAMS OF 6)

SUPPORT UKIRK CAMPUS MINISTRY

FOR MORE INFORMATION: UKIRKMSU.ORG

Visit <https://www.ukirkmsu.org/trivia-night-and-silent-auction.html> or contact Kent Workman to register



PCO YOUTH GROUP INVITES YOU -
ACTIVELY SERVING ELDERNS AND DEACONS

**FOOD
FELLOWSHIP
FUN**

APRIL 7, 5-7PM IN FELLOWSHIP HALL

PLEASE RSVP: REBECCA@OKEMOSPRES.ORG

Music at PCO!

Join us for a concert at PCO on **Sunday, April 14 at 4:00 p.m.** The event will feature performances by handbells, organ, harp, flute, piano, cello, and violin in solo, duet, and trio settings.

The PCO Handbell Choir will combine with bell choirs from Edgewood United Church, and University Methodist Church under the direction of accomplished director and composer Brenda Austin. Other performances include Marlene Brewbaker on organ and piano, and Barbara Fretwell-Cooke on cello. The concert will bounce back and forth between the various pieces providing an entertaining collage of music.

The concert is free. A free will offering will be taken. Come and enjoy an hour of beautiful music!



Kaleidoscope

A Collage Concert

Dinner in My Home: April 21, 2024 5:00 p.m.

This popular event (formerly known as Dinner for 8) is back! If you are unfamiliar with it, members and PCO friends gather in small groups to share a meal in someone's home. The host provides the main dish and the guests provide the sides.

This event is for **anyone**: singles or couples. Do you have food allergies or restrictions? Let's accommodate them! Need a ride or have other physical limitations? Let us know and we can help you! We may want to have a kid friendly home. In case that is something you want, let us know!

Bottom line: if you like to eat and share conversation and friendship, signup! You can do that 2 ways: 1) find the form on the Fellowship Hall Kiosk, fill it out and drop it in the envelope (also on the Kiosk) or 2) signup on line at the PCO website.

Questions? Call or text Jerri (517-331-0250). There is much organizing to this event so the sooner you signup, the easier you make Jerri's life **but the absolute deadline for signing up is Sunday April 7th**. You should receive a phone call or email by April 14 with your home assignment.

Seeking Christ in Gratitude for our Past, Present & Future

Cont. from page 1

Seek the Living Christ in Gratitude for Our Past, Present and Future

- Journey to 2030. You have shared your dreams and visions, your hopes and your concerns. Now hear from the Journey to 2030 Visioning Team, who has worked to discern where God is calling PCO in our next chapter. They will present identity statements and goals during the Adult Education hour on the April 28.
- 60th Anniversary Diamond Jubilee May 4 -5. Saturday night we will celebrate with music, a meal catered by Mortons, a slide show of pictures through the years, and a time to share remembrances following dinner. **Reservations are required for dinner. If you made your reservation yet but plan to attend the dinner, contact the church office before Friday, April 5.** Sunday morning worship will feature liturgy that reflects the history of PCO and a time of fellowship following the service. Come celebrate with old friends and make some new ones too!

Pastor Lisa

Celebrate with Us!

*Presbyterian Church of Okemos
60th Diamond Jubilee
Anniversary*

*Catered Dinner & Program
Saturday, May 4 at 5:00 p.m.
\$12 per person*

*RSVP by April 5 for Dinner at
okemospres.org/anniversary*

*Seating will be assigned
Note any seating preference with RSVP*

*Worship Service
Sunday, May 5 at 10:00 a.m*

*All events at the church
2258 Bennett Rd, Okemos MI*



Youth Parents' Nights Out:

8:00 p.m. at Joe's on Jolly, 2360 Jolly Road in Okemos. on the 3rd Thursday of the following months:
April 18, May 16, June 20, August 15, September 19, October 17, November 15

What's Happening with Youth Group

- April 7: Youth Group with Elders and Deacons: 5pm-7pm April 14: Youth Group at 5:30-7:30 - Middle School 5:30-7pm, Senior High 6pm-7:30pm
- April 28: Youth Group 5-7pm, - Middle School 5-6:30pm, Senior High 5:30-7pm
- Senior High Youth Coffee Hour: New Location and Time starting April 3: 3-5pm at Chapelure
- Looking ahead:
- May 19: Pentecost, Youth Lead Worship
- May 24-26: Return to Family Camp? Check out the website <https://www.campskyline.org/family-camp> - and let Rebecca Mattern know if you are interested
- June 15, 2:00-5pm: Youth Serve Advent House Meal



The young and young at heart gathered together.

Opportunities to Support Youth & Youth Ministry

- * Sign up to provide food for youth here: <https://forms.gle/9ahicZZS6w7CdMeE8>
- * Join Rebecca and the Senior High youth at Chapelure coffee shop and bakery, 4750 Hagadorn Road, Ste. 10 in East Lansing. on Wednesdays from 3:00-5:00 p.m.! Bring your work, come hang out, pray for the youth.
- * Be intentional in prayer for our youth and youth ministry, including the Youth Council, Wednesdays 3-5pm.
- * Read with us! Brett Cone, Barbara Fretwell-Cooke, Roy Meland and Rebecca Mattern (the Youth Council adults) are reading *Sustainable Youth Ministry* by Mark DeVries and they welcome companions on the journey of learning to invest in youth ministry so that a sustainable plan can be implemented at PCO.

Adult Education in April

- April 7: Gun Safety and preparing for the Greater Lansing Gun Violence Summit:
Guns to Gardens: David Detrisac will share what he learned in his 6 week class through the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship
MI Laws: Ellen Hoekstra will update us on Firearm Safety laws in Michigan
PC(USA) Overture: Pastor Lisa Schrott will talk about an overture to our General Assembly as well as share information about the April 13 Summit.
- April 14: Dr. Lyle D. Roelofs will give a presentation "Equity and Access to Higher Education: the Example of Berea College." Dr. Roelofs served as the president of Berea College from 2012-2023 where his leadership initiatives included strategic planning and institutional advancement through exploration of the College's mission (<https://www.berea.edu/the-great-commitments>). In his time as president he strove to improve equity and access through diversity and sustainability initiatives.
Dr. Roelofs graduated from Calvin College with a Bachelor of Science degree with honors in physics and mathematics. He earned M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in physics, at the University of Maryland and has more than 35 years of experience in teaching and research. In addition to teaching positions throughout the country, he also served as provost, dean of faculty, and interim president at Colgate University.
Beyond Dr. Roelofs' professional interests, he enjoys reading, cooking, bird watching, gardening, knitting, camping, hiking, and running (including the occasional distance race). He is married to Laurie and they have a married son and three grandchildren in addition to son Chris, daughter-in-law Anne, and their two children who are part of the PCO family.
- April 21: Gretel Van Wieren (see page 2 for more info)
- April 28: Journey to 2030 Report

April Women's Connection

After time of fellowship and lunch on Sunday, April 28th, we will welcome Mary Anne Larzelere to speak of her life and faith journey. Mary Anne has been participating in our C&C classes for several years and is a surprise charter member of PCO! Preceding the following week's 60th Anniversary Diamond Jubilee Celebration, she will share stories of the early years of our church and being a member in her youth.

Please mark your calendars and invite friends. Questions: Shirley Rumminger 655-4123

Retiree Group

The Retirees will meet on **Monday, April 15** at noon in the PCO Fellowship Hall. Feel free to bring a snack or lunch. We will reminisce about the past years at PCO as we near the 60th anniversary. If you have photos to share, please bring them too.

Caregiver Support Group

Please join the group online on **Wednesday, April 24**, for a discussion of caregiving and its joys and concerns. We meet from **5:00—6:00 p.m.** on Zoom #517--329-2320. Password is hello. Whether you are providing care in the home, out of the home, for a friend or a relative, we welcome you!

Conversation and Contemplation

The C&C group meets every Wednesday on Zoom from 10:00-11:30am. We share updates, meditate, and pray each week. We also alternate weekly between reading and reflecting on scripture (Lectio Divina) with a book study, currently, *Learning to Walk in the Dark*. Please join us on Zoom 905-709-104. Password 48864.

April Women's Dinner Out

Our next Women's Dinner Out is scheduled for **Monday, April 1 at 5:30 p.m.** at Joe's on Jolly, 2360 Jolly Road, Okemos. If you plan to attend, please notify Candy Boldrey by Sunday, March 31. Her email address is *cbold67 at gmail dot com* (standard email setup) and phone number is (859) 421-0014.

April Birthday Cake Sunday

We will celebrate our April Birthdays on **Sunday, April 28**. If you or your child celebrate your birthday in April, please check the Birthday List on the kiosk in Fellowship Hall and add your name by Sunday, April 21, if it is not already on the list.



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.

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 April 7.**

Birthday Cake Sunday—Sundays following worship unless otherwise noted. This month will be on **April 28th.**

Women's Connection— 4th Sundays at **12:30 p.m.** in Room 108. This month will be on **April 28th .**

MONDAYS

Women's Dinner Out— **Monday, April 1** at Joe's on Jolly. See left column for more info.

Retirees — Monthly on Mondays at noon at PCO in warmer months. This month will be on **April 15**. See left column for more info

TUESDAYS

Men's Group — Weekly, 8:00 a.m. Zoom 813 7514 8286. **Hybrid** (*In-person and on Zoom*) this month is scheduled for **Tuesday, April 2.**

PCO Crafts Ministry— **1st** Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. in the Board Room. This month will be on Tuesday, **April 2nd.**

WEDNESDAYS

Conversation & Contemplation—Weekly, 10:00 a.m. Zoom 905-709-104

Caregiver Support Group - **4th** Wednesdays, **April 24th.** 5:00 p.m. on Zoom 517 329 2320; password is **hello**. See left column for more info

THURSDAYS

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

Youth Parents' Night Out—**3rd** Thursdays **8:00 p.m.** at Joe's on Jolly, 2360 Jolly Road in Okemos. This month will be on **April 18th.**



Celebrating 5 Years of Ministry

During our Sunday worship on March 10, 2024, the Personnel Committee recognized and celebrated the five year anniversary of Edward Ennen’s ministry as our sexton. We are grateful for Edward’s dedication, conscientiousness, and enthusiasm, which keeps our facility safe, secure and prepared for Sunday worship and special events. Edward always “goes the extra mile,” helping out where and when needed. He has touched many lives with his service, which is truly a ministry. If you have had not had a chance to thank Edward for his ministry with us at PCO yet, please take an opportunity to do so.



Feeding Neighbors Having Fun

A big shout out to the PCO Youth for the Youth Soup Bowl and Auction!! The youth raised \$1571 for the Greater Lansing Food Bank. This translates to 4713 meals. Way to go!! Thanks to all who supported the youth by making a donation for the soup lunch or by bidding on the bowls.



Missing Your Discussion List Emails?

Always subscribe to discussion lists using the email account where you will read the messages. Discussion list emails are often 'lost' due to ISP spam filtering that enforces matching of the sender (lists.okemospres.org) with the computer that PCO has authorized to send the message. If you configure automatic forwarding of email from your subscribed account to another account, the 'sending computer' is changed, and you 'break' this authentication. Your ISP may discard the forwarded message.

Questions? Contact *lira* at *okemospres dot org*. (standard email setup).

Sunday, May 19
Pentecost
Youth to Lead Worship

Update from Simbolei Academy

On February 17th Simbolei's Form Three (third year, oldest students) attended a county wide Mathematics competition and career day at a neighboring school. While other schools traveled in their buses, our students arrived in a hired taxi van. Many people had never heard of our school. Our students beat out all the other teams in the county (about 100 schools) including some considered "elite" public schools to win the top prize. They received a trophy and were celebrated with a special lunch at school that week. This is a huge accomplishment for a small unknown school.

Andrea Kaitany



Volunteer Opportunity: The Davies Project

For those who are interested in a fulfilling volunteer opportunity, the Davies Project might be just what you're looking for. The project is a wonderful way to help sick children and pregnant women in our community by driving them to much needed healthcare appointments. Otherwise, these families would need to rely on the bus to get them to and from their medical services. Taking a sick child to a bus stop and waiting is difficult in cold or rainy weather. Refugee families utilize this transportation help as well. Driving schedules vary and are flexible.

If this sounds interesting or you have questions, please check out the Davies Project website at www.theDaviesProject.org, to find out more details about this wonderful service. Their phone number is (517)582-3145.

PCO member Sky Tribell is a volunteer driver to whom you can also reach out with questions.

Public Policy Report—Ellen Hoekstra

While our attention may have been focused on national news, public policy continues to move ahead at the state level, including:

- A ballot proposal to restore “good time” to prisoners for good behavior during their incarceration is highly unlikely to make the November ballot. Its supporters have only 15,700 signatures and 356,958 are required.
- The Board of Canvassers has approved another ballot proposal, this one to shift permitting authority for large scale wind and solar projects back to local government from the state. Proponents state that if they cannot make the 356,958 signature threshold in time for the November election, they will try for a subsequent election.
- PA 233, which created the shift in permitting to the state mentioned above, faces challenges in drafting the regulation needed to implement it by November 29 .
- The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) will use a \$825,000 federal grant to expand local treatment options for youth involved in or at risk of being involved in the juvenile justice system. The focus is on prevention and intervention to reduce Michigan's current level of congregate care centers.
- MDHHS is investing \$10 million from opioid settlement funds in programs that focus on addressing racial disparities in healthcare. Despite recent overall decreases in Michigan's overdoses, Black residents are overdosing at a 2.7 times greater rate than white residents—based on preliminary January through June 2023 data.
- Legislation to prohibit open carry of firearms near polling places and drop boxes is unlikely to be finalized until after the upcoming special elections fill two open House seats. The bills, HB 4127-4128, were introduced by Rep. Penelope Tsernoglou of East Lansing and would create a 100 foot “open carry” ban near these sites.
- For the first time since the pandemic, college enrollment has increased but comes disproportionately from graduates in the state's wealthiest communities.
- The Michigan Senate, with bi-partisan support, passed legislation sponsored by Senator Sarah Anthony (Lansing) to cap payday loans at 36%, putting Michigan in line with 20 other states. Under current law, borrowers lent \$100 for two weeks would have to repay \$115 (391%), but under this bill, borrowers would be required to repay \$101.40.
- The Governor has appointed Jennifer DeLaCruz as the first director of the newly created Office of Community Violence Intervention Services. Late in 2023, \$7 million in violence intervention grants was awarded to community led organizations, including the Michigan Public Health Institute for an existing gun violence intervention program in Lansing. This program is called Advance Peace and focuses on reducing cyclical and retaliatory gun violence and plans to expand within Lansing and to East Lansing.

BOOK NOOK

By Ron Dorr

Diamond Jubilee Collection of Memories

To add to the Diamond Jubilee celebration of our church, I would like to encourage you to recall memories and share stories of your lives, experiences, and contributions associated with the Presbyterian Church of Okemos. Memories and material from the last decade, 2014-2024, added to those from the Jubilee (50th) celebration, would be most valuable.

How did the pandemic affect you? What difference did changes in technology (streaming, Zoom, and hybrid presentations), masking, social distancing, interfaith discussions, or new pastors make? How did you renew or replenish life since 2020?

Here are additional questions to stir memories from all 60 years. When and why did you come to PCO? What is your first memory of PCO? What did you expect when you came here? What did you find? Why did you stay? or leave? or both?

What are your favorite memories of your time at PCO?

What are your memories of the pastors, choir directors, organists, directors of Christian education, Sunday School teachers, other leaders, fellow pilgrims, friends, youth, or children at PCO? What have been your most significant activities, programs, encounters, or experiences associated with our church?

What has been your favorite place in the church? Why? What memories of, or associations with, other places (Okemos, Family Camp, mission trips, Presbytery, General Assembly, different faith communities) do you have?

What have been the memorable sermons, music, classes, weddings, funerals, session and committee meetings, or Biblical stories and verses that you heard or shared here? Take a particular experience (e.g., worship service, choir performance, mission activity, Sunday School class, women's connection, men's group, art session, or other small group) and explain what was special about that experience.

How have you experienced or encountered God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit at PCO? What have been the crucial elements of religious life that you have experienced here?

What have been your most memorable frustrations, pains, or sorrows associated with our church?

What have been the influences of PCO in your life or the life of your family? What was it like to grow up as a child or youth in this church?

How has the church changed in your years here? What did the church look like and feel like in 1964? in 1979? in 1994? in 2009? in 2024? Compare life at PCO today with that of 10, 20, 30, 40, or 50 years ago.

How have you changed or grown in your experience in our church? What have you gained here? What have you lost?

What has been the "soul," or core of PCO as you have known it? What is different about the Presbyterian Church of Okemos?

If you were writing a history of PCO, what would it include from your years here? If you knew years ago what you know now, what would you have believed or done differently here at PCO?

What is your vision of this church and its people for the next 10-50 years?

Recall a funny story about life at PCO. Ask any other question that is just as valuable, revealing, or significant. Answer your question in writing.

At a cabin fever class on January 26, 2014, attendees learned about the clear continuities in this church: strong Biblical preaching, inspiring music, devotion to family, commitment to education, expanding mission, and increasing small groups. More specific details included Howard Kehde's leadership in starting this church, Ron Byars's visits to people on the very first day that they had attended our church, Larry Farris's establishing the Board of Deacons, Mark Ramsey's courage in hosting a talk by Rev. Jane Spahr, Jazz Sundays during Rob Carlson's ministry, and Alice Townley's conversation and contemplation classes.

This year, we are welcoming any new contributions that you consider pertinent. We will place samples of material collected in 2014 on the table in the church library. They will vary each Sunday in April: poems, letters, photographs, journal entries, reports about mission trips, and personal stories. You can include new kinds of examples. **Please submit your material by April 28 to a member of the Writing Life Stories group: Eunice Creswell, Barbara or Ron Dorr, Jerri Gillett, Kathy Richardson, Nadine Roy, Fred Svoboda, or Kent Workman.**



The Good Shepherd statue has been a familiar sight to PCO attendees since the late 1970s.

Presbyterian Church of Okemos

2258 Bennett Road
Okemos, MI 48864
Phone: (517) 349-9536
www.okemospres.org

The Grapevine is a monthly newsletter of
The Presbyterian Church of Okemos

Sunday Worship 10:00 A.M.

Staff

REV. DR. LISA SCHROTT, PASTOR/HEAD OF STAFF

REBECCA MATTERN, INTERIM DIRECTOR OF FAITH

FORMATION

DR. MARLENE BREWBAKER, ORGANIST

WESTIN SORREL, CHOIR DIRECTOR

EDWARD ENNEN, SEXTON

ANNA THIEL, OFFICE MANAGER

GABRIELLE SHELTON, MEDIA SPECIALIST

Phone: 517-349-9536

<https://instagram.com/okemospres>

<https://www.facebook.com/OkemosPresbyterian/>

Website: <https://okemospres.org>

Email: office@okemospres.org

