


Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church

A Welcoming Congregation 



Welcome! You have found an oasis of liberal religious and spiritual exploration serving the Grosse Pointes and the surrounding east side communities.

Reverend Dr. Alexander Riegel, Minister

June 2015

Upcoming Services

June 7, 2015

10:30 AM

The Spiritual Foundations of Social Justice

Dr. Alexander Riegel

Joe Buttiglieri, Worship Associate

One subplot to the rise of the theory of evolution is the eradication of a universal human norm; genuine differences between us humans seem to be biologically determined. Given this, is it reasonable universally to apply the same ethics? (This is the essential meaning of William Blake's oft quoted phrase, "One Law for the Lion and Ox is Oppression.") If not, what does this say for our long cherished notions such as equality, culpability, and justice, etc.? More to the point; how do we ground social justice in an era when the application of a universal ethical norm is suspect?

June 14, 2015

10:30 AM

Flower Communion

Dr. Alexander Riegel

Janet Weber, Worship Associate

Flower Communion was created by Norbert Capek (1870 - 1942), who founded the Unitarian Church in Czechoslovakia. He introduced this special service to that church on June 4, 1923. Later, his wife, Maya Capek, introduced the ceremony to our congregations in the United States (Cambridge, MA, 1940). This Sunday we will honor that tradition and Dr. Riegel will deliver a homily on the power of natural beauty to bring us to spiritual awareness. [You are encouraged to bring a flower to share with the congregation.] We will also recognize our new members and enjoy our annual church picnic.

June 21, 2015

10:30 AM

'I am he as you are he as you are me and we are all together':

Interpersonal Relationships and the Developing Self

Dr. Alexander Riegel

Tonya Wells, Worship Associate

Daniel Siegel received his medical degree from Harvard University and completed his postgraduate medical education at UCLA with training in pediatrics and child, adolescent, and adult psychiatry. He is a prolific writer on how attachment experiences influence emotions, behavior, and personal narrative. We will consider his work from the perspective of personal power and the ethic of relationship. We are at one and the same time one another's

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masters and masterpieces.

June 28, 2015

10:30 AM

Beggarly Heart: The Wisdom and Poetry of Rabindranath Tagore

Cynthia Luce

Anne Roberts, Worship Associate

Rabindranath Tagore was a Bengali intellectual, poet, and spiritual figure whose wisdom was incredibly deep and expansive. He was the first non-European to win the Nobel Prize in Literature for his poems. We will consider his wisdom through his poems; apt material for our summer reflections.

Child, how happy you are sitting in the dust, playing with a broken twig all the morning.

I smile at your play with that little bit of a broken twig.

In my frail canoe I struggle to cross the sea of desire and forget that I, too, am playing a game.

Comments from Dr. Alexander Riegel

Previews of Coming Attractions



Our congregational vote is behind us and now we get to look forward to doing ministry together for the foreseeable future. With that in mind I want to begin a conversation about where I suggest we begin to put some of our efforts next Fall. As I think about this, the first thing that becomes readily apparent, given the finite resources that churches have, is that our efforts must have a twofold purpose. First, they must lend themselves toward achieving the mission of the congregation. Second, they must lead to growth. (Growth is not paramount in and of itself but I do see it as an indicator of the vitality of the congregation's mission.)

Our very capable Director of Religious Education, Julie Artis and I have been having increasing conversations throughout the year regarding how to strengthen an already strong and stable children's religious education program. We have some very good ideas in this regard. As a result, I believe that children's religious education will become an even stronger growth edge at GPUC. Given that, where else does it make sense to put our efforts? There are two areas where I think GPUC could benefit from more intentionality and greater effort.

First, we are going to restructure and reinvigorate our adult religious education program. We are moving to a model in which the program will be run by a committee (hopefully nine people) with a clear division of labor, supported by the Adult Enrichment Assistant. I have successfully introduced this model in two of my previous congregations. It is somewhat demanding but bears great fruit and reward for the people who support it. If you have interest in possibly working on adult education at GPUC, please send me an email in that regard (drriegel@gpuc.us). I hope to have a couple of meetings before the end of June, when people scattered to the four corners for the summer months.

Second, while we already have an Interweave Committee that works on behalf of the LGBT community, we need to expand our social justice efforts. Additional areas of focus could/should be women's rights and race relations. Added to our current commitment to the LGBT community, this would give us three areas of focus for our social justice work. As with the adult religious education program, I envision a committee (again, hopefully nine people) with a clear division of labor along these three areas of focus. Likewise, if you have an interest in social justice at GPUC, please send me an email in that regard (drriegel@gpuc.us). [As a side note, I will be preaching on social justice June 7. This will not be a PR campaign to expand our social justice efforts but it will lay out my thinking on the principles by which social justice should be done.]

I will conclude by reiterating how humbling and motivating it is to have been called to minister to this incredible congregation! I look forward to what awaits us. I think our potential is tremendous...

Namaste,

Alex

Report of the Annual Meeting

The GPUC Annual Meeting was held on Sunday May 17. Over 110 members were in attendance.

The first order of business was the vote to call the Rev. Dr. Alexander Riegel as our Settled Minister. 130 votes were cast and over 99% were in favor. Rev. Alex joined us later in the meeting to wholeheartedly accept our call.

The highlight of the Treasurer's report was that pledges for 2015-16 were up 18%. This is a tremendous commitment from the congregation and an excellent indicator of the strength of our community.

The congregation voted to allocate \$40,000 for much needed parking lot repaving.

New Officers and Board Members for 2015 - 16 were approved unanimously by the congregation.

Officers:

Robin Ramsay	President
Ed Marck	Vice President
Ann Helm	Secretary
Laura Bartell	Treasurer

Trustees:

Jenevieve Lilly
Suzanne Ross
Christy Winder
Chris Vadino
Jud Cole

Leadership Development Committee

Karen Webb
Jeff Marotzke
Scott Sendra
Sabrina Biernat
Kathy Konwiak

Auditor:

Mark O'Keefe

Committee on Ministry:

Cynthia Luce
Veronica Smith
Lynn Baker-Hunter
Wally Friesen

Mark Franchett, our outgoing President, thanked the members of the congregation who give so much of themselves and for the help and support he received during his term. Our community is strong and moving forward with great optimism.

We are grateful to Mark and all of those in leadership for their service and dedication this past year.

Announcements

Spring Grounds Cleanup Thanks

Sunday, April 26 was a beautiful spring day. A couple hours of that sunny Sunday were shared by about two dozen GPUC'ers tending to the church grounds. They were supported by several Chalice Circle participants who donated time, money, food and water to keep us going. Thank you to Carmen and Mike Kelly, Wendy Biernat, Karin Garrett, Sarah Neely, Miranda and Olivia Barba, Susan Hartz, Debbie Connelly, Ray Scott, Cindi Arfken, Carol Ghesquiere, Bill Rehahn, Christy Winder and several others (who pitched in but did not have time to sign in). Thanks also to all the Chalice Circlers who made the cleanup a service project. A very big thank you to Susan Hartz who has volunteered to manage and maintain the beautiful circle garden.

Russell Chavey, for the Grounds Committee

Heartfelt Gratitude to My Church Family

Beginning last May, our mail-slot brimmed, first with get-well wishes, and then with condolences and tributes to my late husband, the one and only Bob Dupuis. The love and support extended to us by this congregation and its staff have given me courage and comfort throughout this past year, which has somehow melted into a blur of business affairs, doctors' appointments, and increasingly fleeting weeks.

The rush of time and lack of energy have prevented me from being able to thank you each with the personal note that all of your kindnesses have deserved. Please forgive this universal (catholic with a lower-case c, as Bob might say) message.

Now my weeks are filled with GPUC activities--the writing group, WITTY (widows and widowers in their transition years), the Resale Shop's Clearance Corner, and, of course, Sunday mornings. I am so lucky to know that transportation, advice, a sympathetic ear, and all kinds of other help are always just a phone call away.

Please believe me that each card, tribute, smile, hug, ride, and pat on the shoulder was, and continues to be, deeply appreciated.

Thank you, one and all,
Jean

GPUC Annual Picnic - Sunday June 14

Come enjoy food and fellowship with the GPUC congregation on June 14th following the service. Hot dogs, water, and juice provided, please bring a dish to share. We hope to see you there!

Alliance Annual Potluck

The Alliance annual June pot-luck salad luncheon will be held in the Annex on **Tuesday, June 9th at 11:30 am**. At this time we thank all the volunteers both church and non-church members who contribute to the success of GPUC Resale. We especially appreciate the many non-church members, some of whom have worked for many years, for their help and dedication. In addition to the luncheon a representative from the Grosse Pointe Library will be present to discuss new books both fiction and non-fiction available for your summer reading. Please call Shirley Reeves for reservations and your food contribution. All members, friends and guests are welcome.

Notes from the Office

Pledge Reminder

The fiscal year will end on June 30; if your pledge is not yet complete we ask that you please send us payment by June 30. Your support of the church makes it possible to continue our active programs and maintain our beautiful facility. The new Church Fiscal Year begins on July 1, 2015.

Summer Office Hours

The office will be open 9am - 3pm, Thursdays & Fridays beginning the week of June 22nd through Friday, August 14. On Monday, August 17 regular office hours resume. Voicemail is available 24/7.

Lost and Found:

Please check the "Lost and Found" box in the cloak room and the kitchen for any items you may have left at the church. Unclaimed items will go to the Resale Shop on June 24.

Refrigerator Clean Out

The refrigerator in the coffee kitchen needs to be emptied of all food for the summer. Committees, please remove any food items left in the fridge, freezer, custodian's room and cupboards. All remaining food items will be disposed of at the end of June.

Ink & Toner Cartridge Recycling - The ink and toner cartridge recycling program continues through the summer. Please bring your empty ink and toner cartridges to the office; they are recycled at Staples for store credit. We have received over \$300 in recycling credits this church year thanks to this recycling program. Thank you!

Notice from the Treasurer

The 2014-2015 church year comes to a close on Tuesday, June 30. The last date checks will printed in this fiscal year is Thursday, June 25, 2015. Any receipts that pertain to the current church year must be submitted to the church office no later than Wednesday, June 24, 2015. Please contact Jean Ritok, Treasurer at 313-673-4342 or jeanritok@gmail.com if you have questions. Thank you. -- Jean Ritok, Treasurer

WHAT IS SLOW ROLL?

Slow Roll is a group bicycle ride that meets every Monday night in Detroit and has expanded into a Global network of community rides. Each week we meet at different venues and take a unique route throughout the city, including all the major and minor neighborhoods that we are so proud of.

Slow Roll is for everyone; all ages, all skill levels and every type of bike is welcome. Our slow pace keeps the group safe and gives riders a unique perspective of our great city and its neighborhoods. This is a fun and diverse event. For more information on the Slow Roll or to register go to www.slowroll.bike. Anyone interested in joining a GPUC contingent for the Monday night rides please contact [Rudy Wedenoja](mailto:RudyWedenoja).



Resale Shop News

ART YOU'VE GOTTA HAVE ART is coming to GPUC, this fall, Saturday, October 17, in the Annex. We need your donations. Reproductions, original works, paintings, watercolors, oil, multi-media, quality

sculpture, pottery, and ceramics. All items in excellent to very good condition are welcome. No garage/yard sale leftovers, hand prints of the grandkids, or paint-by-numbers. Items accepted at the discretion of the ART YOU'VE GOTTA HAVE ART committee.

The sale is both fundraiser and community event. It will be marketed to the five Grosse Pointes and its neighbors: Detroit, Eastpointe, Roseville, and St. Clair Shores. We're hoping for a bustling crowd; it's a happy way to meet and greet our neighbors

Details as to when and where to donate will be in the June newsletter.

Questions: please email Suzanne Ross.

Newsletter Deadline

There will be a last newsletter covering this summer's plans. Please submit your contributions by noon Friday, June 12.

Adult Religious Education

Attending Adult Religious Education events enlightens us and broadens our sense of fellowship

Enneagram Make-up Sessions, Saturday, June 6th

Those who registered and participated in the recent Enneagram classes taught by Alex are invited to participate in the make-up sessions being conducted Saturday, June 6th. Schedule is as follows: Body Triad (types 9, 8, and 1) will meet from 9 - 11am; Feeling Triad (types 3, 2, and 4) will meet from noon - 2pm; Mental Triad (types 6, 5, and 7) will meet from 3 - 5pm. Note - Even if you did not miss any of our original sessions, you are welcome to use these sessions for review.



Good Summer Reading:

10% Happier by Dan Harris -

Ed Marck will lead two evening discussions in September as a prelude to Dr. Riegel's monthly meditation group. This book is a good introduction/conversation about spirituality and spiritual practice. Consider it summer reading and then join us in September (exact dates TBD) for what promises to be an interesting and personally meaningful discussion.

More Summer Reading:

Starting in September, Alex will be facilitating a monthly Philosopher's Club, as part of our Adult Ed program. This group will meet following church on Sundays (exact Sunday TBD). We will begin by discussing the book "**The Consolation of Philosophy**," by Ancius Boethius. Please read this over the summer (description below) if you are interested in the Philosopher's Club: Boethius was an eminent public figure under the Gothic emperor Theodoric, and an exceptional Greek scholar. When he became involved in a conspiracy and was imprisoned in Pavia, it was to the Greek philosophers that he turned.

THE CONSOLATION was written in the period leading up to his brutal execution. It is a dialogue of alternating prose and verse between the ailing prisoner and his 'nurse' Philosophy. Her instruction on the nature of fortune and happiness, good and evil, fate and free will, restore his health and bring him to enlightenment. THE CONSOLATION was extremely popular throughout medieval Europe and his ideas were influential on the thought of Chaucer and Dante.

Women's Book Discussion Group Summer 2015

Meetings will be held at members' homes.

Thursday, June 25, 2015 - 6PM at the home of Anne Roberts

Book: The Invention of Wings, by Sue Monk Kidd

Discussion leader, Pi Irwin

Thursday, July 16, 2015 - 6PM at the home of Erika Baer

Book: Where'd You Go, Bernadette? by Maria Semple

Discussion leader, Barbara Moran

Thursday, August 20, 2015 - 6PM at the home of Jo Ann Kelly

Book: The Light Between Oceans by M. L. Stedmen

Discussion Leader, Susan Boynton

- Summer Book Lists are available from the table in the foyer
- The 2015-16 Women's Book Discussion list is also available in the foyer

Jill Crane, Director
Adult Religious Education

Religious Education News

The 2014-15 Religious Education Church School year is coming to an end. *Thank you* for coming to celebrate on Sunday, May 31 and hoped you enjoyed the presentations from each class about World Religions. We hoped you enjoyed the **Seven Principle Sundaes** with the GPUC members. What is a **Seven Principle Sundae**?



COOKIE: A cookie at the bottom of the bowl represents the EARTH. Our 7th UU Principle reminds us to take care of the planet we call home.

ICE CREAM: One or two scoops of ice cream represent LOVE. Love is the spirit of our church and is our 1st UU Principle to remind us to respond with love to everyone we meet, because each person is important.

TOPPINGS: Toppings like hot fudge, caramel or strawberries represent our 3rd UU Principle of learning, to be wise together. You chose your favorite to add and some even took take a little of each because WISDOM can come from many places.

MIXED NUTS: Nuts represent our 4th UU Principle. We all are on a SEARCH for truth and meaning. You searched through these mixed nuts to find the ones you like to add to your life.

WHIPPED CREAM: Adding whipped cream to your sundae represents the JUSTICE and EQUITY mentioned in our 2nd UU Principle. This makes life that much better.

CHERRY: A cherry on top represents PEACE. We work for a fair and peaceful world in our 6th UU Principle. World peace is the cherry on top of life we all must strive towards.

SPRINKLES: Adding a generous dash of red, white and blue sprinkles. They represent DEMOCRACY, which is at the heart of our 5th UU Principle.

Religious Education Lessons

June 7-All students are asked to report to the purple room for a GPUC movie.

June 14-All church picnic.

June 21-Father's Day project

Nursery: The nursery will be open all summer at 10:30 a.m.

Julie Artis
Director of Religious Education

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