

Unconditional Love
Grosse Pointe
Unitarian Church
Radical Inclusivity



*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*

April 2019

Upcoming Services

April 7, 2019 **10:30am**
When Lightning Strikes: Ed's Search for Meaning

Worship Leader: Dr. Riegel **Worship Associate:** Maurya Kay

In an episode of the television series Northern Exposure, Ed gets struck by lightning. Afterward, he struggles to discover the meaning of this event in his life. This is something that most of us are prone to do when significant life events occur to us; wonder about the event's meaning for our lives. Maybe we can learn something from Ed's experience.

April 14, 2019 **10:30am**
Original Blessing

Worship Leader: Dr. Riegel **Worship Associate:** Meghan Boomhower

This is our yearly all generational Earth Day celebration. This year we consider the theme "original blessing," from the theology of Matthew Fox. Original blessing stands in opposition to original sin. Like what would be our relationship with the earth if we operated from the principle of original blessing?

April 21, 2019 **10:30am**
Jesus, the Jewish Mystic

Worship Leader: Dr. Riegel **Worship Associate:** Tonya Wells

When Jesus was walking the earth there was no such religion called "Christianity." Indeed, Jesus was a Jewish mystic. In this Easter sermon Dr. Riegel will attempt to create a picture for us of the social and religious context in which Jesus lived and look at his teaching from within that context.

April 28, 2019 **10:30am**
The Universality of One World

Worship Leader: Frederick Glaysher **Worship Associate:** Joe Buttiglieri

In 1964 Kenneth L. Patton wrote *A Religion for One World: Art and Symbols for a Universal Religion*, published by Beacon Press, about the Universalist Meeting House on Beacon Hill in Boston. Mr. Glaysher reflects on the intervening fifty years in the life of the country and discusses how Kenneth Patton's visionary wisdom and mysticism have much of value still for our time. [*Frederick Glaysher is an epic poet, rhapsode, poet-critic, and the author or editor of ten books, including The Parliament of Poets: An Epic Poem*]

* **Sunday Forum following this service:** A reading from *The Parliament of Poets: An Epic Poem*, a story of humanity coming together in universal peace, set partly on the moon at the Apollo 11 landing site and around the world. In

In This Issue

- [Upcoming Services](#)
- [Alexander's Meander](#)
- [Religious Education](#)
- [Monthly Meditation](#)
- [Labyrinth Workshop](#)
- [Safety Committee Wkshp](#)
- [Stilling The Mind Workshop](#)
- [Warsaw Concerto](#)
- [Adult OWL](#)
- [Grounds Cleanup](#)
- [Committee Annual Reports](#)
- [Food Sharing](#)

Upcoming Events

- [Wed Apr 3 Monthly Meditation](#)
- [Sat Apr 13 Labyrinth Wkshp](#)
- [Sun Apr 14 Food Sharing](#)
- [Sun Apr 21 Child Dedication](#)
- [Sun Apr 28 Grounds Cleanup](#)
- [Mon Apr 29 Safety Seminar](#)
- [Sat May 4 Stilling the Mind Wkshp](#)

[Forward To A Friend](#)

1977, Glaysher had a theatre course in the Interpretative Reading of Poetry, learning that the rhapsodes would travel throughout ancient Greece reciting Homer. Before long the idea of writing an epic poem became compelling and the dream that one day he might also revive the storytelling art of the rhapsode. Since publication in late 2012, Mr. Glaysher has given more than twenty-five epic poetry readings, including at Birmingham Unitarian Church, Paint Creek Unitarian Universalist, Troy Interfaith Group, the Theosophical Society of Detroit, Shelton Theater (San Francisco), University of Michigan (Rackham Amphitheatre), Wayne State University, and elsewhere.

Alexander's Meander



Our Union - by Hafiz

Our union is like this:

You feel cold, so I reach for a blanket to cover our shivering feet.

A hunger comes to your body, so I run to my garden and start digging potatoes.

*You ask for a few words of comfort and guidance,
so I kneel by your side and offer you a book as a gift.*

You ache with loneliness one night so much you weep, and I say,

"Here is a rope. Tie it around me.

Hafiz will be your companion for life!"

In the Riegel household it is that time of year again, when we eagerly discuss our garden plans over coffee and wait for the weary weather to lift enough that we might start turning soil. Yes, this time of year we return to the soil - and thereby our souls.

As I write this meander I am mulling over my upcoming sermon on Wendell Berry (said sermon now past), as may already be evident. I haven't thought about Berry in quite a while so re-immersing myself in his wisdom has been like a homecoming. Berry connects farming with soul in a compelling and convincing way. Through his poetry and prose he reminds us that farming (and by extension, gardening) serves as a great antidote to our materialistic and overly technological age.

Thinking on this, I am also thinking about the opportunity summer affords us for more activity and leisure. I am especially thinking of how youth spend their summers, though the obvious advice I am about to give applies equally well to adults.

Sometimes I challenge my spiritual direction clients to spend one hour "on the cushion" (in meditation) for every hour they watch television. People are often daunted by this challenge because they immediately realize how easily time gets absorbed in the screen. People also realize (at least those who take me up on this) how transformative this can be in their lives.

So (especially in regard to youth, but also willing adults), why not take up a similar challenge yourself? Forget the one-one ratio aspect and just do this... commit to one hour of gardening every other day. That is enough time to manage a reasonable size plot, whether youth or adult. I've seen youth do this and it is absolutely wonderful how rewarding they find it! And, adults find it incredibly rewarding as well, especially as the veggies ripen - nothing like broccoli straight out of the garden on a warm summer day!

In the end this amounts to a behavioral strategy for "soul management," something from which most of us could benefit. So, why not give it a try? Turn over some soil. Drop in a half dozen rows. Water and weed. Then kick back with a little book from the "mad farmer" (a great conversation starter for youth!): "The Mad Farmer Poems," by Wendell Berry. Speaking of whom:

"So, friends...

Put your faith in two inches of humus that will build under the trees every thousand years..."

- Wendell Berry



Sunday, April 21, 2019 we will be conducting the child dedication service during the church hour. If you are interested in having your child dedicated, please contact Reverend Riegel.

What happens when a child is dedicated in our church? There is no "standard" UU Ceremony for Dedication. Each dedication may use different words, provided by the family from their cultural and religious traditions. We do believe that each child brings new life and hope into the world. We do join together to name and dedicate the child. We do affirm our commitment to nurture the child and hold the child in the fabric of our community. Our community hopes that every child receives love, guidance and nurturing. We are mindful in the UU Ceremony for Dedication of the following statements:

- We give witness to our values and our commitment to be a religious community that stands on the side of love.
- We form a covenant with the family to support them and to honor and recognize the child is a precious gift of life and is entrusted to be cared for by family and the community.
- We affirm the dignity and individuality of the child as we state the child's place in the community of humankind.

The dedication can use different words and may also include a variety of symbols and rituals such as: water, laying of a minister's hand on the child's head as a blessing, a gift of a flower, or a gift of a book. The UU Ceremony for Dedication is a time to celebrate and be grateful for the wonder of each child. We as UU's claim each life as sacred and dedicate our minds and hearts to the spirit of each child. Let me end with a quote by Sophia Lyon Fahs: "Each night that a child is born, is a holy night; A time for singing; A time for wondering; A time for worshipping."

Religious Education Lessons

The **nursery** will be open at 10 a.m. every Sunday morning. We have the same loving childcare workers to provide a safe and caring place for our young UU's. We also have a pot of coffee for parents to enjoy and get to know each other.

Lower and Upper Elementary and Junior students will continue their lessons on UUism. Our OWL classes have finished and were very successful. Thank you to all our OWL teachers. Thank you to all our Church Pals that stepped up and wrote letters to our junior students.

Senior students will continue their lessons on UU's. They are preparing for their youth trip to Boston in June, 2019. Please remember to bring in your cans and bottles to help our students with funds for their trip to Boston.

Dates to Remember

Sunday, April 7 at 9:15 a.m. RE Committee meeting
Sunday, April 14, Earth Day Service
Sunday, April 21, Easter

Julie Artis, Director of Religious Education

Monthly Meditation

**New meeting Schedule: Meeting the *FIRST* Wednesday of the month.
April class meets Wed., April 3rd.**

Monthly Meditation Class

[free and open to the public]

Lead by Dr. Alexander Riegel

First Wednesday of
the Month

Grosse Pointe

Unitarian Church

7:30 - 9pm

More info at:

alexgpuc@gmail.com

Labyrinth Workshop

Labyrinth Workshop

**Saturday, April 13, 2019
from 10 a.m. to noon**

Ages 14 and up

**Cost: \$10 per person ages 14-18
\$15 adults**

This event will fill quickly

Register early to save your spot!

Payment due prior to the event; Register by March 17th
(Paypal, cash or check)

The workshop will cover:

- The History of the Labyrinth
- Learning to do The Walk
- The Walk

Bring a favorite pen & journal to capture
reflections of your experience

Workshop Facilitator: Kathy Igoe

*Labyrinth will be set up in our church
GPUC members will receive a free finger labyrinth!*

**Grosse Pointe
Unitarian Church**

17150 Maumee Ave.

Grosse Pointe, MI 48230

for more information, please call

313-881-0420

*To register please sign up
in the church lobby or email julie@gpuc.us*

AVOID | DENY | DEFEND

The GPUC Safety Committee hosts an evening presentation

AVOID | DENY | DEFEND™

A program developed at Texas State University's
Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT)™

It is an easy to remember method for people of all ages and abilities to follow.

About AVOID | DENY | DEFEND

During an act of violence
(e.g. robbery, hostage situation, workplace
violence, activeshooter):

AVOID starts with your state of mind.

- Pay attention to your surroundings.
- Have an exit plan.
- Move away from the source of the threat as quickly as possible.
- The more distance and barriers between you and the threat, the better.

DENY when getting away is difficult or maybe even impossible.

- Keep distance between you and the source.
- Create barriers to prevent or slow down a threat from getting to you.

- Turn the lights off and silence your phone.
- Remain out of sight and quiet by hiding behind large objects.

DEFEND because you have the right to protect yourself.

- If you cannot AVOID or DENY, be prepared to DEFEND yourself.
- Be aggressive and committed to your actions.
- Do not fight fairly.

THIS IS ABOUT SURVIVAL.

CALL 911 when you are in a safe area.

When Law Enforcement arrives, SHOW YOUR HANDS AND FOLLOW COMMANDS.

Remember that What You Do Matters®

Presentation by Special Agent James J. Soper, ATF

Special Agent (SA) James J. Soper, is a member of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) / Detroit Field Division. The ATF is under the Department of Justice (DOJ) and focuses its efforts on combating violent crime federally. Presently, SA Soper is assigned as the Division Tactical Advisor (DTA) for the Detroit Field Division, which consists of coordinating and instructing all tactical training for agents and Task Force Officers (TFO). This includes Active Shooter Response training.

Monday April 29, 2019
7pm-9pm

Doors will open at 6:45pm

Q&A session to follow presentation

Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church

17150 Maumee Ave.
Grosse Pointe, MI. 48230

for more information, please call

313-881-0420

Stilling The Mind Workshop

yoga chitta vritti nirodha
Stilling the Mind
a half day workshop including:

Saturday	yoga	Grosse Pointe
May 4, 2019	meditation	Unitarian Church
9a - 1p	mantra	Cost: \$30
	sacred texts	
	ethics	

[register at gpuc@gpuc.us]

Musical Notes



The poster features a red shield with a white eagle at the top, and a red Star of David below it. The title 'WARSAW CONCERTO' is written in large, bold, white and red letters. Below the title, '75 Years' is written in a cursive font. The text describes the 75th anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising and lists the performers: Joseph Palazzolo, Piano, and Sonia Lee, Violin. The date and time are 'May 11th 4:00 p.m.' The location is 'Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church, 17150 Maumee Avenue, Grosse Pointe, MI. 48230'. Ticket prices are '\$20 Presale • \$25 At The Door'. Contact information includes the website 'www.gpuuc.org' and the phone number '313-881-0420'. A note at the bottom states 'Net proceeds will benefit GPUUC'.

WARSAW CONCERTO

75 Years

2019 marks the 75th Anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising. Come hear in story and music the joys and sorrows of a great people who dared to stand up for freedom. Music of Chopin, Paderewski, St Saens, Mendelssohn, rediscovered music of Weinberg, Polkas, Klezmer music and The Warsaw Concerto.

Joseph Palazzolo, Piano
with Sonia Lee, Violin

May 11th
4:00 p.m.

Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church
17150 Maumee Avenue
Grosse Pointe, MI. 48230

Tickets: \$20 Presale • \$25 At The Door

For more information, please visit
www.gpuuc.org > what we do > upcoming events or call
313-881-0420
Net proceeds will benefit GPUUC

WARSAW CONCERTO: 75 Years of Uprising

The story of Warsaw between the World Wars is a fascinating and seldom-heard one.

In this Mr. Palazzolo's annual solo-piano concert we will explore the music and culture of this city, both Jewish and non-Jewish and see how the citizens dealt with their oppressors by rising up.

Come and hear the story and the music. Joining Joseph is virtuoso violinist Sonia Lee.

Saturday, May 11 at 4:00 p.m. In the Sanctuary.
\$20 Presale \$25 At the Door

Tickets will be sold after Sunday service beginning March 31st.
To buy tickets online, visit our website: <http://www.gpuuc.org/upcoming-events.html>



Memorial Day Weekend Retreat w/Revs. Alexander and Kimi Riegel

The focus of this retreat will be devotion and personal practice, meaning that we will spend our mornings and evenings in group devotion/spiritual practice. At the same time, there will be plenty of grist for your mental mill, as I will be giving lectures and facilitating group work with material pertinent to our theme. We will also spend time doing group and dyad work with spiritual texts. Finally, for those of you who wish, we will set aside an hour a day for a focused study of mantra (beginners included).

The cost of the retreat is \$300. This includes three nights lodging (everyone gets their own room, save couples that wish to share) and nine meals.

*NOTE - We are limiting attendance to 20 people. This has been our approximate attendance in the past but in this instance Kimi and I are both going to open up this opportunity to members of our churches, so don't hesitate to register!

To reserve your spot, please send a nonrefundable \$100 deposit to me at: 786 Harcourt Rd., Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan, 48230. There is no deadline for sending in your deposit but spaces will be reserved on a first-come first-serve basis.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at: alexriegel@post.harvard.edu

Namaste!

Alex

Announcements

Our Whole Lives: Sexuality Education for Adults

Our Whole Lives (OWL) values:

- Self Worth
- Sexual Health
- Responsibility
- Justice and Inclusivity

OWL models and teaches caring, compassion, respect, and justice. It helps adults address their attitudes, values, and feelings about themselves, their sexuality, and others' sexuality. Participants are guided by trained facilitators through an engaging program that addresses topics many adults have not had the opportunity to discuss in depth.

OWL is a secular curriculum, appropriate for a variety of settings. *Sexuality and Our Faith for Adults* is a religious supplement for use in Unitarian Universalist and United Church of Christ congregations.

For more information contact the Director of Religious Education:



Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church
17150 Maumee
Grosse Pointe, Michigan 48230
313-881-0420
julie@gpuc.us
www.gpuuc.org

Workshop Titles

Introduction to OWL

Sexuality and Values
Sexuality and Communication

Sexuality and Spirituality

Discovering the Sexual Self
Experiencing the Sexual Other

Sexuality and Early Relationships
Sexuality and developing
Relationships

Sexuality and Committed
Relationships

Sexual Diversity
Sexuality and Family
Sexuality and Aging
Sexual Health

Closing Session

Adult O.W.L. Registration: <http://www.gpuuc.org/adult-religious-education.html>

SPRING YARD CLEANUP- April 28

This spring the church yard cleanup will happen after service on Sunday, April 28 from noon to approximately 2 pm. Please consider putting this on your home calendar. For those of you who have participated in the past, you know that no particular talent, green thumb or otherwise, is required. Just bring your enthusiasm, wear "outdoor" clothes (no one in the sanctuary that morning will mind I can assure you), bring gloves, a rake and if you have them a tarp and loppers. This is a family friendly, inclusive activity. Snacks and drinks will be provided to hold you over. Arbor Day this year is April 26 and the service that Sunday will revolve around nature so what

better way to celebrate spring than by "working" together with your fellow UU's in our wonderful grounds!

"The leaves that fall in autumn, the sap that rises in spring--is that not, after all, the symbol of the life to come?"
-Rosa Bonheur

Russ Chavey
Grounds Committee

Committee Annual Reports

Spring is here and our GPUC Annual meeting held on Sunday, May 19th after the worship service is fast approaching. All Committee Chairpersons are asked to complete a committee report for inclusion in the Annual report. Please **submit your report no later than Friday, April 26th** to Candy by email (gpuc@gpuc.us.) Each Committee's input will be compiled with the goal of completing the Annual report for distribution to the membership no later than Monday, May 13th.

OUR NEXT FOOD SHARING SUNDAY AT GPUC WILL BE APRIL 14

Beginning in April, we will be hosting Food Sharing for Crossroads East on the second Sunday of each month. Crossroads East, located in Detroit Cooperative Church on Moross and Chester, offers social services, employment assistance, a clothing closet, food pantry, and more. Each month, GPUC collects **non-perishable foods** to help keep their pantry stocked. We also collect **money** to purchase milk, eggs, bread, fruits and vegetables. These items are bought and delivered several times a month, so the Crossroads staff has fresh items to offer their clients, in addition to canned and boxed foods.

Please consider bringing a donation for Crossroads East to church on APRIL 14.



General Assembly is the annual meeting of our Unitarian Universalist Association. Attendees worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through democratic process. Anyone may attend; congregations must certify annually to send voting delegates. The 2019 General Assembly will be June 19-23 in Spokane, Washington. Most General Assembly events will be held in the Spokane Convention Center.

The Power of We

What do we want Unitarian Universalism to be? It is a time when we are asking big questions in our faith, and GA 2019 will be focused on digging into those questions together. It is a critical chance for congregational leaders and passionate UUs to set new goals and aspirations for our religious community. Help begin to reshape our Association and our congregations in new and powerful ways.

This year's theme is about collective power, "The Power of We," as well as the possibility, the purpose, the struggle and the joy of what it means to be together in faithful community. In the past two years, Unitarian Universalism has recommitted to the work of liberation inside and outside our faith community. The antidote to a time of dangerous dehumanization is a love that connects us to our deeper humanity. Come to Spokane to experience what our shared faith can become when we embrace the Power of We.

Registration and Housing Open March 1

GA Registration and the GA Housing Reservation System open at 9 a.m. PST at <https://www.uua.org/ga>

Spokane

The Spokane region is the gateway for adventure and exploration in the Intermountain Northwest. Located driving distance from Glacier National Park and Yellowstone, Spokane is nestled in natural beauty. Spokane is located on interstate I-90, 110 miles from the Canadian border and 18 miles from Idaho. It is the largest city between Seattle and Minneapolis. Spokane International Airport (GEG) is serviced by Alaska, American, Delta, Frontier, Southwest, and United Airlines. Nonstop service is offered to 17 destinations, including Minneapolis, Chicago, Dallas, Phoenix, and LAX. Spokane is accessible by rail via Amtrak's Empire Builder route (Chicago - St. Paul/Minneapolis - Spokane - Portland/Seattle). It is also reachable by Greyhound Bus.

Excellent Programming

GA will offer more than 100 programming selections over the course of five days. This year, in addition to Theme-Based Programming, the schedule will feature Role-Based Track Programming, including time for discussion among attendees, sharing inspiring models and stories, and concrete suggestions for how to further the work or "take it home." More programming details are available at www.uua.org/ga.

Financial Aid Available

The UUA is committed to the goal of making GA accessible to as many attendees as possible. Go to uua.org/ga in the month of March to learn about scholarships to support delegates - particularly those from marginalized groups - and volunteer opportunities (work in exchange for registration).

Newsletter Deadline

Please submit your contribution to the next newsletter by **Friday, April 19 at noon**.
Submit items to **The newsletter email address: newslettergpuc@gmail.com**

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