

*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**

**March 2019**

**Upcoming Services**

**March 3, 2019** **10:30 AM**

***Identity Politics: the Hopes, the Dangers, and the Ties That Bind Us***  
**Worship Leader: Rev. Dr. Alexander Riegel**  
**Worship Associate: Meghan Boomhower**

Wikipedia defines "identity politics" thusly: "The term identity politics in common usage refers to a tendency of people sharing a particular racial, religious, ethnic, social, or cultural identity to form exclusive political alliances, instead of engaging in traditional broad-based party politics, or promote their particular interests without regard for interests of a larger political group." Dr. Riegel will reflect on this phenomenon, i.e., the hopes and dangers it entails, then attempt to place identity politics in what he considered to be an indispensable context.

**March 10, 2019** **10:30 AM**

***The Gift of Uncertainty***  
**Worship Leader: Rev. Kimi Riegel**  
**Worship Associate: Joe Buttiglieri**

We are pattern seeking creatures that strive for predictability. This drive for certainty can limit our perception and thus our knowledge. Let us consider the gifts of uncertainty.

**March 17, 2019** **10:30 AM**

***Spiritual Warp and Woof***  
**Worship Leader: Rev. Dr. Alexander Riegel**  
**Worship Associate: Chuck Palmer**

In our modern world we have easy access to an incredible amount of wisdom and inspiration, bequeathed to us by mystics, philosophers, artists, scientists, et. al. In this service Dr. Riegel will lead us in reflection on wisdom from a variety of such sources, as we each continue to weave together our own understanding of life and our place in it. (Remember, being a UU is about building one's own theology!)

**March 24, 2019** **10:30 AM**

***Notes from the Mad Farmer Liberation Front:  
On the Poetry and Wisdom of Wendell Berry***  
**Worship Leader: Rev. Dr. Alexander Riegel**  
**Worship Associate: Tonya Wells**

Wendell Berry is an American poet, novelist, and essayist. He is a recipient of The National Humanities Medal and was both the 2012

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**Upcoming Events**

- [Sun Mar 3 Facilities Session](#)
- [Sat Mar 19 Fellowship Dinner](#)
- [Wed Mar 20 Women's Book Discussion](#)
- [Sun Mar 31 Grilled Cheese & Tomato Soup](#)

**Forward To A Friend**

Jefferson Lecturer and 2013 Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Join us as Dr. Riegel introduces us to the poetry and wisdom of Wendell Berry.

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March 31, 2019

10:30 AM

***From the Inside Out***  
**Worship Leader: Marla Maiuri**  
**Worship Associate: TBD**

Description: Writer/Speaker, Marla G. Maiuri guides us down the path of what it means to be centered with our own Creator. Where do we find it, and how do we reach that place of knowing. Marla discusses how this place of peace positively impacts our judgments, choices and creation, and affects how we love.

Bio: Marla Maiuri recalls having a wonder for everything beyond our physical experience, since looking up to the heavens from a tricycle. A writer and speaker that shares from spiritual inspiration, Marla writes about matters of the heart. Marla has several books soon to reach publication.

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### Alexander's Meander

Last Sunday I preached a sermon on the book of Proverbs. For a number of years now I have been wanting to dip into this book of collected wisdom, mostly because I think the psychological insights it contains dovetails nicely with the other sources of wisdom I study. My Study Break provided me the opportunity to do just that, so I purchased a book and delved into the material (The book title, by the way, is, "The Message of Proverbs," by David Atkinson.).

As I said in my sermon, I recommend this book to anybody who also wants to delve into the subject or even learn more about Judaism per se (I know quite a bit about Judaism, having studied Hebrew for three years back in the day, and still found my understanding significantly deepened by this book.). I think you will find the role of Wisdom in Judaic thinking enlightening. I also think you will find many of the Proverbs meaningful, helpful, *and challenging*. Take this one for instance:

*Do not rebuke a mocker or he will hate you.  
Rebuke a wise man and he will love you.  
- Proverbs 9:8*

The first part of this proverb is obvious - we've all had this experience. The second part is a little more challenging and few of us have had this experience. As I said in my sermon, I have a number of wise friends, none of whom have loved me for rebuking them! Indeed, have *you* ever thanked/loved anyone for rebuking you?

As you've heard me say in my sermons, we are all deeply invested in ego defense, which in large part is about protecting our views of the world/maps of reality. It's nearly a universal truth that when our views of the world/maps of reality are challenged, even by our friends, we get defensive - rarely thankful/loving. This is the nature of the "scoundrels" we are (I mean that in a truly affectionate way, as those of you who have been around a while know.).

It wasn't until I took a course in organizational communication theory during my Doctoral studies that I became someone who was capable of being thankful/loving toward those who would challenge my way of viewing the world/map of reality. This changed for me when I realized that personal growth, as well as the health of any organization in which we might be involved, is greatly enhanced when we allow others to challenge the way we think. And truly, if what we *really* value is correct thinking and good communication, we must learn to appreciate those who challenge our thinking. They sometimes have important observations we need to hear, about the errors in our reasoning processes or simply alternative ways of thinking about the world.

All of this requires mental humility. We tend not to be very good at that (due to the aforementioned ego defense) but if this is the cost of personal growth, it's worth it. At this point in my life I am able to look back over the years and be very thankful for those who have helped me learn to reason better or shown me alternative ways of thinking about the world.

With that in mind, I encourage everyone to consider this proverb in earnest. Try to be conscientious about having mental humility; about allowing others to challenge your reasoning process or view of the world. You'll see that your ego can take the hit. Even better, you'll see that this is a significant part of personal growth and improved relationships.

Namaste, Alex

Religious Education News



How many of the Unitarian Universalist hymns do you and your students know? Are you familiar with our grey hymnal *Singing the Living Tradition* and the supplement to *Singing the Living Tradition, Singing the Journey*? Some of my own favorite hymns are: "For the Beauty of the Earth," "Forward through the Ages", "Come, Sing a Song with Me", "Lean on Me", "Standing on the Side of Love", "Let it be a Dance", "Spirit of Life, come unto me", and "When I breath in". I find myself humming many of the first lines from these songs throughout the week. Go to the back of the hymnals to see an index of the first lines and titles. Check it out with your children and see how many songs you and your children know.

It's a wonderful vision in my mind when I sing our songs. We are faithful people who keep moving forward like our hymn states; "Forward through the ages, in unbroken line, move the faithful spirits at the all divine. Take the time to learn our hymns in order to not feel like a stranger in your own church. As the song sings; "Let it Be a Dance, May I have this dance with you? Through the good times and the bad times, too, let it be a dance." Take the time, hum, sing out loud and feel good with your children.

### Religious Education Lessons

The **nursery** will be open at 10 a.m. every Sunday morning. The nursery will also be open at 9:15 a.m. on OWL Sundays. 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, Upper** and **Junior** students will continue their lessons on UUism. Our OWL classes continue for Lower and 4,5 and 6<sup>th</sup> graders.

**Junior** and **Senior** high students will have another bake sale on St. Patty's day, Sunday, March 17!! Wear your green and buy a cupcake! They will also continue their lessons on UUism. Please remember to bring your cans and bottles to help our students with funds for their trip to in June, 2019!

### Dates to Remember

Sunday, March 3, RE Committee meeting at 9:15 a.m. in Room 1  
Sunday, March 3, Pool Party at 1:00 p.m. at the Warren Community Center  
Saturday, March 16, Fellowship Dinner at 6 p.m., Senior High Students serving dinner  
Sunday, March 17, Church Pal Brunch, right after church with junior students & pals

Julie Artis  
Director of Religious Education

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### Fellowship Dinner

Every year we kick off our annual Pledge Drive with the Fellowship Dinner. It is an evening of good food, good conversation, entertainment, and then the serious business of making a pledge of financial support for the next fiscal year. As we prepare to enter the third decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, our mid-20<sup>th</sup> century modern church home needs more and more upkeep. And we are also on the cusp of considering some major improvements to our physical plant, improvements that will help us grow and better serve our mission. All this requires money, lots of money, and it is our fiduciary obligation to generously support the church.

Please join us on **Saturday evening, March 16, 2019**, beginning at 6:00 p.m. As an added incentive for parents of young children, childcare will be provided with advance notice to Julie Artis ([julie@gpuc.us](mailto:julie@gpuc.us)).

**In order to confirm your place at one of the dinner tables, please RSVP (yes or no) to Juli Moore ASAP.**

Shortly thereafter a table captain will contact you to personally invite you to his or her table, answer any questions. This year we will have a delicious catered meal. We look forward to seeing you on March 16!

### RSVP

Phone: 810-969-7992 (cell) - if no answer, please leave a message.  
Email: [jdmoore1415@gmail.com](mailto:jdmoore1415@gmail.com)

Yours truly,  
The Canvass Committee: Barb Chiapella, Jerry Herron, Chuck Palmer, and Rudy Wedenoja

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Vision Facilities Committee Update

**Did you know?**

...that construction on our main church building was started in April of 1964 and completed in October of 1965, at a cost of \$416,516.65? (That's over \$3.3 million in 2018 dollars.)

...that an additional \$7,582 (or approx \$60,000 in 2018 \$) was spent in 1966 on modifications to the chapel roof?

...that \$46,736 (approx \$373,000 in 2018 \$) was spent to renovate the Annex in 1965, in lieu of adding a 2nd story to the RE wing?

(Above information taken from letter of Building Committee Chair Creighton C. Lederer to the Board, March 7, 1966.)

GPUC is contemplating its first major construction project in almost 53 years. Are you part of the conversation? Come to RE Wing Room 7 after service on Sunday, March 3, to discuss the building and renovation concepts that are being considered. You can see the ideas we are considering [here](#).

Chris Vadino  
Rudy Wedenoja  
For the Vision Facilities Committee

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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](mailto:julie@gpuc.us)*





## *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](mailto:alexriegel@post.harvard.edu)

*Namaste!*

*Alex*

### Announcements

## MidAmerica Region of the UUA REGIONAL ASSEMBLY 2019



### "Intersectionalities"

The 2019 MidAmerica Regional Assembly is coming sooner than you think! This year, our RA will be held in **St. Louis, Missouri**, at the Marriott St Louis, **April 5-7, 2019**.

The theme is "Intersectionalities"—how we live, work, and relate, as well as share, withhold, or leverage power in our world. Presentations and workshops will explore identities we encounter and embody the challenges of social inequality, and tools and skills we need in order to work more effectively with one another, as well as the general "nuts and bolts" of congregational life such as leadership, stewardship, membership, and religious education. Our Keynote Presenter will be UUA President, Susan Frederick-Gray. Join us to explore, share, and worship with fellow Unitarian Universalists.

More information on pricing (early bird discount deadline is Feb., 28, 2019), deadlines and workshops can be found: <https://www.uua.org/midamerica/ra>

## UUA General Assembly

The UUA holds an annual meeting (the General Assembly or GA) in June. This year's GA will be in Spokane, Washington. GA is an exciting, uplifting and fun event for those who want to experience being immersed for four days in learning and shared experience with thousands of UU's from all over the country. Christy and I have represented GPUC at four GA's over the past few years but cannot attend this year. If you know about GA and have thought about attending, this is a good time to go. If you are not familiar with GA and would like to know more, feel free to reach out to Christy, myself or Julie Artis. It is always a stimulating experience and you have not experienced a worship service like the Sunday morning service at GA with thousands of other UUs all singing and swaying together! The Ware lecture is always memorable and you will be challenged to pick your favorites among the hundreds of breakout sessions to attend. This year's GA is June 19-23 and hotel blocks open up for reservations on March 1 so if you have any potential interest, act soon.

Russ Chavey



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](http://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 [www.uua.org/ga](http://www.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).

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## Music News

### ADULT CHOIR

Thinking of joining? Well, think no more! Come and sing with us. We sing twice a month for service.



Rehearsals are Wednesday evenings from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. in the Purple Room.

### **CHILD CARE**

is available at that time! Friendly, talented people will greet you. No auditions. Come as you are. It's an elite group with down-to-earth people. Now isn't that appealing?

### **YOUTH CHOIR**

-boys and girls K on up-join us! Rehearsals are after Religious Ed class, for 15 minutes. Come sing with us-it's fun. I keep getting such great feedback of how much everyone loves the Youth Choir!

**WARSAW CONCERTO: 75 Years of Uprising** is the title of my upcoming annual solo piano concert, **Saturday, May 11th at 4:00 p.m.** Mark your calendars. This will be an exciting commemoration of the Warsaw Uprising, one of the most important events of WW II. Celebrating its 75th anniversary, you will hear music and stories that will touch your heart. Hope to see you there.

SEE OUR WEBSITE CONTENT: <http://www.gpuuc.org/choir-and-music.html>  
<http://www.gpuuc.org/meet-the-staff.html>

Joseph Palazzolo, Music Director

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### **Our next Food Sharing will be SUNDAY MARCH 3**

As we all know, times are hard for many people right now. 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 staff also has fresh items to offer clients.

Please consider bringing a donation for Crossroads East to church on March 3.

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### **Fellowship News**

#### **Women's Book Discussion Group**

**ATTENTION all church members:** Our member, Professor Jerry Herron will lead the discussion on our March book so we would like to invite anyone who is interested to join us for this special treat. If you would like to be there, please let Jill Crane know so she can plan for the space needed.

**Wednesday, March 20, 5:30pm**

**Middlemarch** by George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans)

First published in eight installments (volumes) during 1871-72. The novel is set in the fictitious Midlandstown of Middlemarch during 1829-32, and it comprises several distinct (though intersecting) stories and a large cast of characters. Significant themes include the status of women, the nature of marriage, idealism, self-interest, religion, hypocrisy, political reform, and education.

Jerry says that if you already have a copy there is no need to purchase or download another one but if you don't he suggests the Oxford World's Classics edition. Amazon has it for \$10.69 in paperback. (I see the Oxford edition is available in Kindle as well, for \$0.83.) I read a lot of books on my Kindle, but for discussing in a group, it's sometimes an advantage to have the book in print. It may be easier to move back and forth to different locations using actual pages.

### **Fellowship News**

#### **Mark your Calendars for Sunday, March 31st!**

The Fellowship Committee has planned a 'Grilled Cheese and Tomato Soup Luncheon' for all members and their families on March 31st, immediately following our church service in the Annex. Coffee will be served in the Annex for this event. Gluten free bread provided for those who need it. Free Will Donation.

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### **Newsletter Deadline**

Please submit your contribution to the next newsletter by **Friday, March 22 at noon.**

Submit items to **The newsletter email address:** [newslettergpuc@gmail.com](mailto:newslettergpuc@gmail.com)

#### Contact Information

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