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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 2023

May 2023 Newsletter Deadline

Mark your calendars and please submit your contribution to the next newsletter by Friday, April 21st

Submit items to the newsletter email address: newslettergpuc@gmail.com

Worship services will continue to be provided online using Zoom.

It is recommended that you join early and use a laptop, desktop with a webcam or you may download the Zoom app on your tablet or smart phone via the App store. We also request when joining the online session limiting to one connection per household.

The Sunday worship service Zoom link will be sent by email on Friday afternoons, March 31; April 7, 14, 21 and 28 at 4PM.

UNFAMILIAR WITH ZOOM? - DO THIS IN ADVANCE OF SUNDAY

- Sign onto zoom meeting link 15 minutes prior to service.
- Bring a chalice or a small candle so you can light the chalice when we do.
- Have the order of service handy either electronically or in printed form, so you can follow along with the service.
- Have your preferred refreshments and hot beverages ready to enjoy during the service.
- Enjoy the service and provide email feedback to us on how this option is working for you.

It remains a requirement that all in-person attendees are up to date on vaccination (bivalent booster).

FAKE EMAILS GOING AROUND!

Once again, someone is trying to take advantage of our congregation by using a fake email address to conduct a phishing scam in my name. This has happened several times over the years, as some of you will no doubt remember.

Please, ALWAYS check the address from which suspicious emails come. I only have two email addresses that I use for church purposes and I seldom use my Harvard email address for church communications.

ONLY THESE TWO email addresses are legitimately from me: alexgpuc@gmail.com and alexriegel@post.harvard.edu

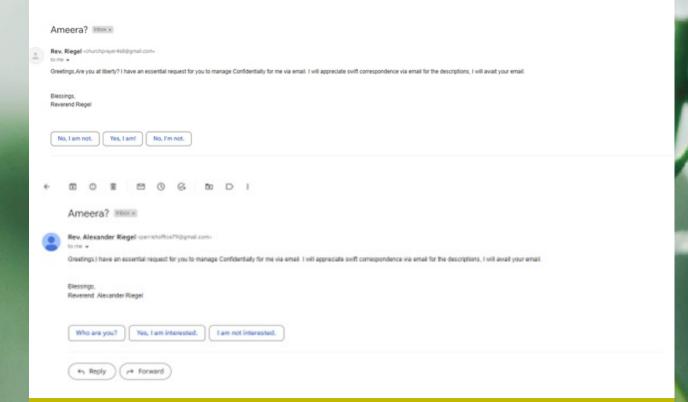
IGNORE ANY EMAIL THAT DOES NOT EXACTLY REFLECT ONE OF THESE EMAIL ADDRESSES AS THE SENDER.

Further, as a reminder, I will never solicit money from individuals in the congregation (or otherwise) via email. If ever (which is unlikely) I were to do this, I would make personal phone calls to discuss the matter.

Please keep these things in mind whenever a suspicious email arrives in your email box purporting to be from me.

Dr. Riegel

How to Spot Phishing in Emails Article — GPUC Newsletter March 2023



Upcoming Services

April 2, 2023 10:30 AM

Sermon: "Doubt"

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

In the mid to late 19th century, both the scientific method (Darwin, et. al.) and Biblical criticism (esp. German) were becoming dominant rational forces. These forces heaped suspicion upon our understanding of religion, especially the orthodox interpretation of the Bible. Unitarians

were especially given to such suspicion and began to approach religion and the Bible with increasing doubt. Today, doubt pervades our UU religion. Dr. Riegel will be considering all of this while exploring the place of doubt in the religious life.

April 9, 2023 10:30 AM

Sermon: "Doubting Doubt"

Worship Leader: Dr. Alexander Riegel Worship Associate: Miriam Engstrom

Following the previous week's sermon on doubt, Dr. Riegel will ask if it ever makes sense to doubt doubt in the religious life? If so (Clearly, his answer will be "yes"), when and why, and how does doubting doubt serve the religious life?

April 16, 2023 10:30 AM

Sermon: "Big Rock Candy Mountain"
Worship Leader: Dr. Alexander Riegel
Worship Associate: John Engstrom

Heaven, the great beyond, life after death... whatever we name it, has captivated human hope and imagination since the religious impulse first arose in us humans. We will explore some of the historical versions of heaven and end with Dr. Riegel's suggestion of where one can *actually* find heaven.

April 23, 2023 10:30 AM

Sermon: "Earth Day"

Worship Leader: Dr. Alexander Riegel and Julie Artis

Worship Associate: N/A

Per usual, this Sunday will be an intergenerational service celebrating Earth Day – but with a different twist this year. We will be celebrating with awe inspiring wonder the fact that the earth and all creatures upon it are actually extraterrestrial in origin! Yes, folk, we are stardust!

April 30, 2023 10:30 AM

Sermon: "Unleash Your Power — Embracing Joy as a Spiritual Practice."

Worship Leader: Greg Bowens
Worship Associate: Michelle Scobie

After leaving his post as the chapter president of the Grosse Pointes-Harper Woods NAACP chapter, Greg Bowens entered Unity Urban Ministerial School, where he is currently studying to enter the ministry. This Sunday, Greg will engage us in an interactive exploration as he helps

us explore the theme of hope. Gosh, who couldn't use a little more hope these days?!

Can't make Sunday Service? Recordings are made available on our website. Visit www.gpuuc.org/virtual-services to watch at any time!

Alexander's Meander



My favorite Wendell Berry poem is *Manifesto: The Mad Farmer Liberation Front*, because it speaks directly and powerfully to authenticity and self-reliance (Emerson, anyone?). Below are a couple of stanzas from the poem:

Invest in the millenium. Plant sequoias.

Say that your main crop is the forest that you did not plant, that you will not live to harvest.

Say that the leaves are harvested when they have rotted into the mold.

Call that profit. Prophesy such returns.

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

And,

Go with your love to the fields.

Lie down in the shade. Rest your head in her lap. Swear allegiance to what is nighest in your thoughts.

It is the last line of Berry's poem that I find most meaningful, however: "practice resurrection."

In this calamitous time, when it is so easy to become absorbed in our dystopian-like present, let us remember our own personal power and the choices we have to direct our own attention and our own actions. In other words, let us be wise, says Berry, "like the fox, who makes more tracks than necessary, some in the wrong direction."

And, let us put faith in, and work toward a future that is sure to come, despite the signs of these

challenging times. Again, per Berry, let us "practice resurrection." Tis the season, after all...

Namaste,

Alex

Religious Education News



April is a month full of dazzling sunlight which we have been waiting for after a long winter. This next month we will be spending Easter and Earth Day together as one. I picked up the poem "Timesweep," from "Windsong (1960)," by Carl Sandburg. Carl Sandburg expresses the spirit of Universalism in this last stanza of his poem, "Timesweep":

There is only one horse on the earth and his name is All Horses.

There is only one bird in the air and his name is All Wings.

There is only one fish in the sea and his name is All Fins.

There is only one man in the world and his name is All Men.

There is only one woman in the world and her name is All Women.

There is only one child in the world and it is All Children.

There is only one Maker in the world and His children cover the earth and they are named All God's Children.

Sandburg obviously demonstrates with the stanza above a commitment to a sense of unity-the same kind of unity we cherish as Unitarian Universalists. As we highlight togetherness this month, this is a time to remember we are All Unitarian Universalists supporting each other at Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church.

Ready to Make a Difference? How can you help?

April 22, 2023 is Earth Day. We look at our 7th Principle which is Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. Waste and pollution aren't just hard on us – they're hard on plants and animals, too. Everything from the air we breathe to the water we drink can be affected.

Here are a few ways you can reduce waste and pollution where you live:

• Try the "Zero Waste Week Challenge." Reducing your waste at home is a great way to start giving back to the earth. Here are some tips to get you started – and who knows?

- Maybe once the week is over, you'll be ready for a Zero Waste Month.
- Switch to recyclable toilet paper. Using recyclable toilet paper can help save everything from trees to water. Plus, it's easy to find at almost any grocery store. Learn more. (Switch to recycled paper towels too for an even bigger impact!)
- Recycle the right way. Did you know dirty items might not get recycled, and that it only takes one contaminated good for the whole bin to get thrown out? Check your local recycling center's guidelines to make sure you're recycling the right way. Find a cause near you. Pick an issue or project in your community that speaks to you and speak up for what matters. Start your search now or get the Give Back App.
- **Give up plastic straws.** It's important to have products at home that can be used again and again, instead of plastics that can be used once. Start by swapping out plastic straws for ones made with a reusable material, like stainless steel.

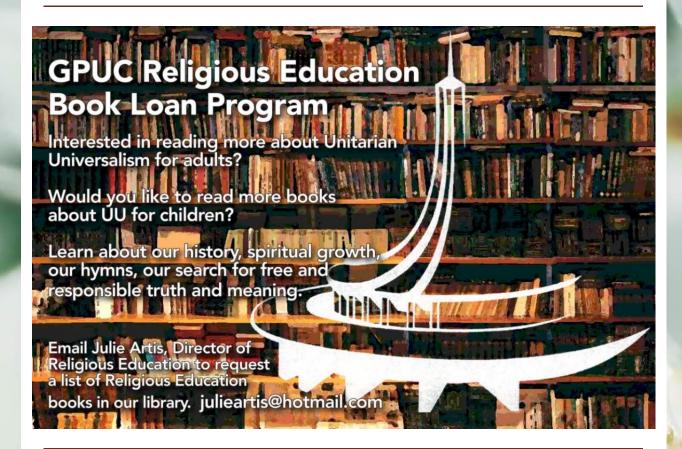
Religious Education Lessons

- Service project for everyone is to bring food to church for Crossroads.
- · Service project for everyone is the Grounds Cleanup in April .
- Spaghetti Luncheon for everyone immediately after church on April 30th.
- Easter Sunday is April 9th and there will be an Egg Hunt for all students.
- Intergenerational service for Earth Day on April 23rd.

Guess who will be visiting GPUC on Sunday, April 9th? There will be an Easter Egg Hunt!!!

Julie Artis, Director of Religious Education





News from The Canvass Committee

As of noon Thursday, March 30, we have received pledges totaling **\$152,045**. We have 40 pledges out of 94 member pledging units and 7 pledges from friends. So we're halfway

to our goal, but we've only raised an extra \$16,885.00 over last year's member pledges.

In order to meet our goal of increasing pledges by \$50,000, we need our members to increase their pledge by at least 20%.

As of today's date the average increase in member pledges is 14%. If you haven't made your pledge, please do so soon. And for those of you who have pledged, thank you for supporting your church. Let's fix the hole!

Jerry Herron, Chuck Palmer, Rudy Wedenoja, Marsha Zeller

Click Here to Submit Your Pledge Online!

UU Ministry for Earth News

Monthly Spiritual Gatherings

Meets on the Full Moon each month 4 pm PT/ 5 pm MT/ 6 pm CT/ 7pm ET

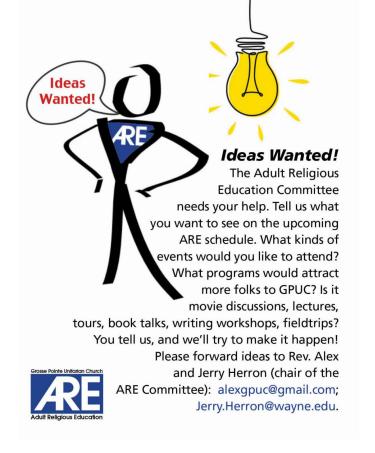
In 2023, UUMFE continues our *Monthly Spiritual Gatherings* so that we may all find time to ground, recenter, and imagine what is possible in a world in need of repair. This year to draw us more closely into alignment with Earth-based philosophies, we will follow the Lunar Calendar. We will gather each month, via Zoom, on the Full Moon to nourish our spirit.

Our next gathering with be on April 6th. We hope you join us!



Register for Our Full Moon Gathering

Announcements, Upcoming Programs And Events





All programs, unless otherwise noted, occur in the sanctuary of Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church.

Programs will begin at 7:30 pm

GPUC Spring 2023 Speakers Series

April 6 — Renga Workshop

Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church Member Bill Rehahn
Renga is a Japanese literary form with roots in ancient China. It encourages cooperation, thoughtful consideration, and stimulates our sensitivity to one another by having writers work together in linking subtly improvised poetic stanzas in the course of an evening. We hope you will join us to create a spontaneous, unique composition using this ancient, Asian poetic form.

April 13 — Things to Do with Poems and Stories

Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church Member Prof. Jerry Herron
Do you ever find yourself feeling as if you need a first-aid kit for your imagination, when same-old, same-old drags you down? I know I have, and there are some stories and poems I turn to—either for solace, or for beauty, or to frighten myself, or to make me think in ways I wouldn't have otherwise. It's not as if every reading experience is motivated by the same need or leads to the same end. And the marvel of literature is that it can find me out whatever my needs may be. I'll provide a little anthology ahead of time (a couple of short stores, two or three poems), and then we'll take a look at the things they can do to make the world come to life in unexpected ways.

April 20 — The 100th Monkey

Dr. Alexander Riegel

From interpersonal relationships to organizational dynamics, erroneous communication is the invisible elephant in the room. Erroneous communication leads to everything from mismatched ideas/agendas to high level conflict. Action Science is an approach to communication that resolves the majority of interpersonal and organization problems. Really? Can a simple communication theory do that much? Yes, it can! Join us as Dr. Riegel introduces us to some of the basic principles of Action Science and see for yourself.

To learn more about these programs, visit the ARE page of the GPUC website: https://www.gpuuc.org/adult-religious-education.html

These are weekly events, from 7:30-9:00 pm (one hour presentation followed by Q&A)

Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church | 17150 Maumee Grosse Pointe, MI 48230 phone: 313-881-0420 | email: officegpuc@gmail.com | web: gpuuc.org

To Learn more about these programs, Click here to go to the ARE page of the GPUC website

Book Discussion Group News Tuesday, April 18, at 6 pm

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, April 18th at 6 pm via Zoom. Kimi Riegel will lead the discussion of Hazel Prior's *How the Penguins Save Veronica*. "A curmudgeonly but charming old woman, her estranged grandson, and a colony of penguins proves it's never too late to be the person you want to be..." (Amazon)



The Zoom invitation will be sent the day before the meeting. Everyone is welcome. For more information, please contact Juli Moore (idmoore1415@gmail.com).

Weekly Gentle Yoga

THURSDAYS 4:30-5:30PM (EST, US and Canada)

This is a 60 minute gentle yoga session that occurs every Thursday from 4:30 - 5:30pm with Carol Guither virtually via Zoom.

Session theme will be announced weekly.

If you have a mat, blocks and a strap (or necktie) that is helpful but you don't need anything except a clean space to lie, sit and stand on.



Please make sure you are honoring your own level of activity and flexibility. Make any adjustments you need. The yoga "mantra" always is "honor your own body". If it's not comfortable, don't do it.

Cost will be <u>\$5.00 per session</u>, and participants can either pay cash/check in person for each session, or pay by the Venmo app. Please <u>click here</u> for Carol's Venmo information.

If you need help signing up for Venmo, please contact Ameera in the office and she will walk you through the sign up process.

Note: Venmo is a subsidiary of PayPal, and requires a credit card number for the transaction.

Thursday, April 6, 13, 20 & 27



How to find great films to watch and have fun along the way

As the weather is getting colder and many of us are looking for a good movie to watch...here's a link that may have some ideas of films you can enjoy. Bored with Hollywood and Netflix? Becoming an adventurous and informed explorer of the cinema world is in everyone's grasp.

https://psyche.co/guides/how-to-find-great-films-towatch-and-have-fun-along-the-way? utm_source=instagram



RESALE SHOP NEWS!!!

We are happy to announce that Carole Hindle has become the new co-chair of the Resale Shop. She will assist Margo Bishop with the many tasks necessary to keep the Shop organized and productive. Thank you, Carole!

The Shop would like to remind all donors that weekly donations are limited to two small boxes OR two small bags. We especially need donations of household items,

treasures and trifles. We are open on Wednesdays, accepting merchandise from 9 am – 2 pm.

The sale rooms are open from 10 am - 3 pm.

RESALE SHOP NOW ON SOCIAL MEDIA

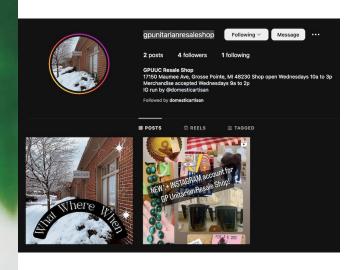
We decided it's time to have our own Instagram account where we'll be able to feature vintage & seasonal displays, special event days, monthly bag day in the clearance room, and much more!!

Christina initiated this account and has currently achieved 103 GP Unitarian Resale Shop followers in 13 days...that's 8 followers per day!!! Thank you Christina...you ROCK!!!

Follow so you don't miss a thing at this great space in our community!!!



Click to find us on Instagram or Scan the QR code below





Celebrating Ameera!

In March the Resale Shop volunteers celebrated Ameera's birthday during our luncheon.

A round of "Happy Birthday to you...cha cha cha" was led by Carole after enjoying Juli's amazing soup and a lovely birthday cake from Karin.

Here's wishing Ameera another wonderful year around the sun.





Exciting News!

The Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church Resale shop will be open on Saturday, April 22nd, in tandem with the GPUC Mom to Mom Sale!!! Hours will be 9am-1pm for both. This will be a great opportunity for those that can't make our usual Wednesday hours so pass it along to anyone that may be interested! If you're interested in being a vendor at the Mom to Mom Sale, click on the link below to fill out the form!!! Its a great motivator for Spring Cleaning items your kiddos have outgrown and enjoying a day with other community Moms! *Spaces Limited!*



Click Here for the Vendor Application Form

May 6, 2023 at the church.

Our auction donations have yielded amazing items from the congregation: Fun and unique parties, delicious soup and other food offerings, gift cards and tickets, artwork, hand-made pieces of clothing, vacations at cabins, and even some cool and artsy compression socks!

We ask that all auction donations are brought to church by April 5th.

We thank you for your generosity, cooperation and enthusiasm for this important church event! Please direct all comments and questions to: Robin Ramsay (<u>rjramsay@comcast.net</u>), Sonja Franchett (<u>skrfranchett@gmail.com</u>), or Kristen Foley (<u>smithk@umich.edu</u>).

Tickets on Sale Now > Click Here to Purchase Auction Tickets!



Giving Made Easy Thanks to Breeze!

Whether you are looking to pay toward your pledge, register for RE or just making a donation to the church, Breeze makes donating so easy that you can do it from the comfort of your couch.

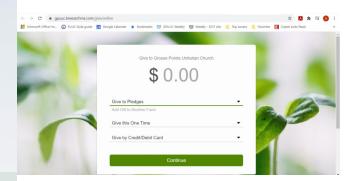
Breeze's checkout module gives you the options of donating using *Credit/Debit Cards or an ACH Payment directly from your bank account.*

Upon checking out, *Breeze will give you the option to cover the processing fee*. The processing fee will provide you with credit towards your total tax-deductible giving for the year and will help us retain every bit of your donation.

Another awesome feature of using Breeze is that you can set up recurring transactions so that you never have to worry about falling behind on your pledge!

If you have any questions about Breeze or how to get started with Automatic Payments, please feel free to reach out to Ameera via email at officegpuc@gmail.com.

Thank you!



Click Here To Give Now!

Crossroads East: Second Sunday Food Share Ongoing

As part of our social justice outreach, GPUC is continually accepting donations for the Detroit social services nonprofit Crossroads.

As all of us are aware, inflation has been high and many people are struggling. If you are interested and able, please bring your donations of nonperishables and hygiene items to church for transport to Crossroads.

If you prefer to make a monetary donation, we also purchase perishables such as milk, eggs, bread and produce. **Our donations are always gratefully received by Crossroads staff! Thank you!**

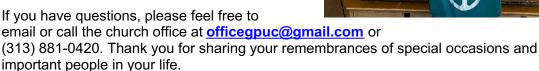
- 13. Hamburger Helper goes nowhere without ground beef.
- 14. They get lots of peanut butter and jelly but usually not sandwich bread.
- 15. Butter or margarine is nice too.
- 16. Eggs are a real commodity.
- 17. Cake mix and frosting makes it possible to make a child's birthday cake.
- 18. Dishwashing detergent is very expensive and is always appreciated.
- 19. Feminine hygiene products are a luxury and women will cry over that.
- 20. Everyone loves Stove Top Stuffing.

- 1. Everyone donates Kraft Mac and Cheese in the box. They can rarely use it because it needs milk and butter which is hard to get from regular food banks.
- 2. Boxed milk is a treasure, as kids need it for cereal which they also get a lot of.
- 3. Everyone donates pasta sauce and spaghetti noodles.
- 4. They cannot eat all the awesome canned veggies and soup unless you put a can opener in too or buy pop tops.
- 5. Oil is a luxury but needed for Rice a-Roni which they also get a lot of.
- 6. Spices or salt and pepper would be a real Christmas gift.
- 7. Tea bags and coffee make them feel like you care.
- 8. Sugar and flour are treats.
- 9. They fawn over fresh produce donated by farmers and grocery stores.
- 10. Seeds are cool in Spring and Summer because growing can be easy for some.
- 11. They rarely get fresh meat.
- 12. Tuna and crackers make a good lunch.

Sunday Morning Flowers

Now that we are having in-person services, we are resuming having flowers to add to the ambience of the Sanctuary on Sunday morning.

We welcome donations for flowers on Sunday mornings. Take a moment to recognize or honor someone dear or to commemorate a special occasion by providing fresh flowers for the Sanctuary. You can make arrangements to bring your own flowers or a monetary donation and someone from the Flower Committee will purchase flowers and make a beautiful arrangement. Please use the insert in the Sunday order of service or contact the church office and sign-up for a Sunday or two.





HOLLY FAIRS...CHURCH HISTORY UPDATE

Church historian and archivist, Janet Weber, is putting together a file about the Holly Fairs that were produced from 1965 to 1994 mostly by the women of the church and were important fund raisers making \$11,793 in that final year. If you have saved any flyers, news articles, or other items from that time as well as information about the Women's Alliance that was so critical in producing these fairs, and you're willing to part with it, now's the time!! **Bring to the church office and place in the historians mail box.**

☐ Kroger rewards support GPUC



Join the 32 households who currently support GPUC by shopping at Kroger. This activity earns around \$500 a year and once enrolled in KROGER COMMUNITY REWARDS it is an easy way to help. **Thanks to those who have enrolled.** Check the bottom of your receipt the next time you shop for the message reassuring you that Kroger is donating to GPUC.

Kroger Community Rewards gives to GPUC - enroll at any time! Our organization number is: FF794

Go to: https://www.kroger.com/account/enrollCommunityRewardsNow

Thanks, Janet Weber

FREE Grief Support Offering



Grief: Releasing Pain, Remembering Love & Finding Meaning

David Kessler is one of the leaders in Grief work in the counseling field. He started a free private online grief group for so many who are isolated during the pandemic and not able to reach out and get the grief support they need. There are live sessions and amazing guests so check them out and feel free to join the free group at

<u>https://www.facebook.com/groups/DavidKessler/</u>. You can also catch him on Instagram @iamdavidkessler and through his amazing podcast Healing with David Kessler on Spotify. https://grief.com/podcasts/.

Tender Hearts grief support group https://www.davidkesslertraining.com/tenderhearts.

Additional grief support: If anyone needs grief support due to cancer, here is a local link to get set up in a virtual program right now with Gilda's Club Metro Detroit.

Photo by Milada Vigerova on Unsplash

Contact information: Rebekah Agnew, LLPC

Gilda's Club Metro Detroit: Lake House Location

An affiliate of the Cancer Support Community

Program Manager

Email: ragnew@gildasclubdetroit.org

Contact Information

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