

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

December 2020

Newsletter Deadline

**Mark your calendars and please submit your contribution to the next newsletter by
Friday, December 20th**

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

Upcoming Services

In order to protect our congregation and do our part to slow the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19), all in-person church events, classes, meetings, rehearsals and workshops are suspended until further notice. The Resale Shop has decided to open but on an appointment only basis. To reach the church office please email officegpuc@gmail.com or leave a voicemail on the office phone 313-881-0420 ext. 10.

Worship services will 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, December 4, 11, 18 & 25.

UNFAMILIAR WITH ZOOM? - DO THIS IN ADVANCE OF SUNDAY

- If you are unfamiliar with Zoom, become acquainted with the technology - it is easy to use but going through these steps in advance will ensure you are ready.
- Click on the Zoom link that will be emailed on the Friday prior to the Sunday service at least 15 minutes before you plan to use it the first time. This will prompt an app to download onto your device. You may use a laptop, tablet, desktop or smartphone.
 - You will then be asked whether you wish to join the "meeting" with your device audio and device camera. If you do not want others to see what you are wearing at that moment, you can join without activating your camera.
 - Throughout the service, all participants besides the worship leaders will be muted to prevent background noises (barking dogs, ringing phones, etc.) from being included in the worship service.

December 6, 2020

10:30 AM

Sermon: *"Question Box Sermon"*

Worship Leader: Dr. Riegel

Worship Associate: Meghan Boomhower

Typically, in the spring, Dr. Riegel does a Question Box sermon. (Last spring the Question Box sermon got waylaid by this pandemic.) This is an opportunity for you to submit a question to Dr. Riegel, which he will answer during the sermon. If you would like to submit a question, email Dr. Riegel: alexgpuc@gmail.com (*Note – no names will be attached to any questions, so no need to worry about confidentiality in asking your question.)

December 13, 2020

10:30 AM

Sermon: *"Ponder This"*

Worship Leader: Dr. Riegel

Worship Associate: Tonya Wells

Life is said to be a journey. There are many ways of "journeying" through life. Some people make a bee line from cradle to grave. Some people do the "drunkard's walk," constantly drifting from one "shiny object" to the next in a seemingly nonsensical pattern. Other's merely sit by the side of the road and watch other travelers go by... Another manner of journeying through life is to walk, stop, and ponder. In this sermon, Dr. Riegel will extol the virtues of "pondering."

December 20, 2020

10:30 AM

Sermon: *"Intergenerational Service and Drive-by Communion"*

Worship Leader: Dr. Riegel

Worship Associate: Chuck Palmer

This Sunday will be an intergenerational service with various Readings and musical performances. Following the service, from 1 – 2pm, Dr. Riegel and Julie Artis will be stationed outside our church at the circle drive to conduct a drive-by cookie communion. *A sign up link will soon be provided so we know how many cookies to buy– one cookie per person!*

December 24, 2020

5:00 PM

Sermon: *"Christmas Eve Service"*

Worship Leader: The Revs Riegel

This will be a joint service with the Revs Riegel. As many of you know, Kimi will be ending her career in professional ministry at the end of this calendar year. In honor of that, Kimi and Alex will conduct this last of her services together. They will be joined by the Music Directors and some choir members from both churches. The Zoom invite will be made available to both congregations.

December 27, 2020

10:30 AM

Sermon: "TBD"

Worship Leader: TBD

Worship Associate: Suzanne Ross

Alexander's Meander



It's hard to believe that Thanksgiving is already behind us. Next on the horizon is Christmas, but days before that, the winter solstice. The winter solstice marks the time of year when daylight hours begin to increase. The increase of light has traditionally been held to be a metaphor of hope and assurance following many dark days.

We have seen many dark days... and more dark days are in our immediate future.

Yet, rays of light are piercing through this darkness. Hope and assurance are ascending on the horizon.

We find hope in the newly developed vaccines that hold great potential to end our imprisonment at the hands of this deadly pandemic. (Perhaps we can begin to gather in person again when the snow melts... but no promises just yet.)

We find assurance in new leadership for our nation, speaking a message of unity and reminding us of the greater vision of who we are as a collective people.

Other signs of hope emerge as well: the life-giving sun in the sky, the announcements of impending births, friends who reach out to us after long bouts of time and many miles away... a new dawn is breaking. Yin and Yang are finding balance again. (Hopefully you heard that sermon...)

Speaking of sermons, on December 6th I am going to do my annual Question Box sermon, delayed last spring by this pandemic. The Question Box sermon is an opportunity for you to submit to me a question you might like to hear me answer that Sunday morning. Questions can range from the meaning of life to my secret burrito recipe. If you'd like to submit a question for me to consider, simply email me: alexgpuc@gmail.com.

In the meantime, in the spirit of the solstice, keep your eyes on hope and take assurance in the future. As George Harrison said, "All things must change," and change is a comin'!

Be Well Friends,

Namaste,

Alex

Religious Education News



The holiday season will be quite different for all of us this year. The phrase I will be using for the holidays for me and my family, and I hope you share it with yours, is "Be the Light". We are facing the COVID crisis and we will not be able to be in our beloved church for the holiday season, but can we all still "Be the light"? What does it mean to let our light shine or to "Be the light"? Maybe you are afraid of shining bright because you are worried about what people would think of you. Maybe you think you will extinguish the light of your family around you. You may feel more comfortable letting others shine. The thing is when we shine, we give others permission to let their light shine. "Being the light" does not mean to be a positive person all the time and are blissfully happy all the time. It means working towards feeling free and peaceful. It means to show compassion and kindness to others and myself. It is to feel enough as a person and shine a light to the places that are dark. Look for opportunities to lift someone else up.

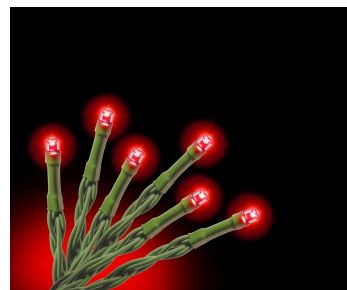
One example about how I show my light is by using my words to touch others deeply. I feel aligned with them when I know I am shining. "Being the light" is not about doing it in the same way. It is about feeling real and true to you. It is about being a lighthouse. Extending kindness to someone else struggling with a very real problem can plant a seed in our hearts and we let them know that they are not alone.

I know that we all can let more light into our lives. I want to share a gift of words to you to help you "Be the light".

My holiday wish for all of you are:

The Twelve Gifts for Healing...

- *The first gift is Strength. May you remember to call upon it.***
 - *The second gift is Beauty. May your deeds reflect its depth.***
 - *The third gift is Courage. May you speak and act with confidence.***
 - *The fourth gift is Compassion. May you be gentle with yourself and others.***
 - *The fifth gift is Hope. May you trust the goodness of life.***
 - *The sixth gift is Joy. May it keep your heart filled with light.***
 - *The seventh gift is Talent. May you discover your own special abilities.***
 - *The eighth gift is Imagination. May it nourish your visions and dreams.***
 - *The ninth gift is Reverence. You are the miracle of all creation.***
 - *The tenth gift is Wisdom. May you hear in a soft voice.***
 - *The eleventh gift is Love. It will grow each time you give it away.***
 - *The twelfth gift is Faith. May you believe.***
- Use your gifts and light well and you will discover others, among them a gift that is uniquely you.***
— Oklahoma Natives



Religious Education Lessons and Classes

Class invitations and parent meetings will be sent by Julie Artis by Zoom to all students and parents.

We invite you to bring in canned or boxed food for our monthly food drive. You can drop it off during the week between 9-4 p.m. M/T/Th/Fr. Call the church to let us know or ring the doorbell when you arrive. This is a part of service that we encourage our students to put into their busy family lives.

Happy Holidays to all of you! Be safe and healthy!

Julie Artis — Director of Religious Education

Upcoming Programs And Events

Our Holiday Tradition Continues

Holiday Giving will be different this year due to the need to protect volunteers and recipients from the risks of COVID-19. However, we will continue our long tradition by giving each of the 25 neediest families at Detroit Merit Academy a grocery store gift card to buy a wonderful holiday meal, complete with a ham or turkey and all the trimmings. The amount of the gift card will depend on the size of the family and the size of our total donations. Any amount is welcome.



You may donate by writing a check to GPUC with "Holiday Giving" in the memo line or by dropping off cash in an envelope with your name on it to the Church Office.

You can give online by clicking here: <https://gpuuc.breezechms.com/give/online>. Please select "Give to Fundraising".

For further information, contact Susie Boynton or Ameera Bandy in the Church office.

Announcements

Online Giving via Breeze

Members and Friends,

We are happy to announce that we will now be accepting donations via text message and online via Breeze! During this time, we've experienced a tremendous amount of financial hardship and have been exploring different ways to make giving more accessible and convenient. Thanks to the help of Sonja Franchett, we were able to jump right in with Breeze and make this available to you all.

To give via Text Message you will text the word "Give" to (313) 766-2911.

To help us defray the cost for processing this transaction, we ask that you include the transaction fee amount of 2.9% to

your total. Example: \$1.00 X .029 = \$.29 Total transaction: \$1.29

To Pay Online go to: <https://gpuuc.breezechms.com/give/online>

When paying online, it will give you the option to cover the processing fee without having to calculate. The processing fee will be credited towards your total tax-deductible giving.

Thank you!

Attention Resale Shoppers

After much deliberation, the resale has decided to open but on an appointment only basis. There will be no more than three (3) customers at a given time. Masks will be required.

If you want to take advantage of the great sales, please call Margo Bishop at (586) 778-2185 to schedule your date and time.

We are looking forward to seeing you happy shoppers!

2020-2021 DIRECTORIES AVAILABLE NOW

Directories are ready to be picked up for those that requested a copy. There are extra physical copies available and PDF copies available as well.

For our members: The directory is made available on our website in the "members only" section and will be updated through the year as changes are made.

Please contact Ameera if you would like to receive a copy of the directory. Thank you!

ENTRY BY APPOINTMENT

Effective as of 7/30/2020: To limit the spread of Covid-19 and with the health of our congregants in mind, we are requiring all entry into the facility to be by appointment only. We ask our members to please call (313) 881-0420 ext. 10 or e-mail officegpuc@gmail.com to schedule an appointment. Upon entry to the building, we require all to sign in and fill out a Covid-19 screening form. We appreciate you all very much and will continue to do our best to keep you all informed of any procedures we are implementing. Thank you! - **Ameera Bandy**

Crossroads East Update: Second Sunday Food Share

This is an anxious time for all of us, but especially for people struggling to access life's basic necessities. If you are in a position to help, please consider bringing non-perishable food or toiletries to the church. Please call or email the Church office in advance if you plan to make a donation to schedule a time to drop off your donations.

The main Crossroads **location downtown and East have re-opened and are accepting donations!**

Thank you for your continued support of our community.

Spiritual Advice in the Age of Coronavirus

Dr. Riegel has posted videos on the theme, "Spiritual Advice in the Age of coronavirus."

You may view his video post on our GPUC Facebook page, at this link: <https://www.facebook.com/Grosse-Pointe-Unitarian-Church-134606831714/> (You will need to scroll down a bit.)

Virtual Services Archive

Those of you that have missed any of the virtual Sunday worship services can watch, listen to the audio or read the chat

on our website under: [WHO WE ARE - SUNDAY SERVICES - VIRTUAL SERVICES](#) or click this link: <https://www.gpuuc.org/virtual-services.html>

We continue to upload the weekly virtual services to the church website.

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 <https://www.facebook.com/groups/DavidKessler/>.

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. Contact information:

Photo by Milada Vigerova on Unsplash

Rebekah Agnew, LLPC

Gilda's Club Metro Detroit: Lake House Location

An affiliate of the Cancer Support Community

Program Manager

Email: ragnew@gildasclubdetroit.org

Gentle Yoga

Weekly Gentle Yoga Session

NOW ON THURSDAYS 4:30PM-5:30PM

Carol Guither offers a weekly Gentle Yoga session via Zoom every **Thursday from 4:30PM-5:30PM**, as long as there is interest.

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. Feel free to use a chair instead of the floor.



Photo by [Avrielle Suleiman](#) on Unsplash

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.

December 3, 2020 4:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

December 10, 2020 4:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

December 17, 2020 4:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system.

Weekly: https://zoom.us/meeting/vpAvf-6sqj0j_bWSQYEN7EO_cvTHF4uRjQ/ics?

[icsToken=98tyKugsrDMtHtCTuV_Hc7AvW9r-b_GxiE5MnZBspTrLVAV8XQDgAspkZqdNGumB](https://zoom.us/meeting/vpAvf-6sqj0j_bWSQYEN7EO_cvTHF4uRjQ/ics?icsToken=98tyKugsrDMtHtCTuV_Hc7AvW9r-b_GxiE5MnZBspTrLVAV8XQDgAspkZqdNGumB)

Healing Clinic and Meditation

ONLINE Healing Clinic and Meditation First & Third Thursdays of the month December 3rd and 17th 7-9PM

The Clinics have changed to an online format for meditation and distant healing. Pranic Healing is a no-touch therapy, therefore distant healing is possible through the principle of oneness.

Join us for this online Zoom community event offering Pranic Healing sessions and Meditation on Twin Hearts.

Pranic Healing is an advanced system of energy medicine that utilizes prana or chi to cleanse and harmonize



the body's energy system. The healing clinic begins with a beautiful guided meditation using the universal Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi. Then Pranic Healers offer mini healing sessions for relief from physical and/or emotional issues.

Donations welcome.

Venmo

<https://venmo.com/Carrie-Viviano>

Cash App

[https://cash.app/\\$CarrieViviano](https://cash.app/$CarrieViviano)

Paypal

<https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/carrieviviano>

Must be 16 yrs old to participate in the meditation. All ages welcome for healing.

To receive Zoom event scheduling info via email or for questions please contact: Carrie Viviano, Pranic Healer/Intro Leader, carrie@pranichealing.com or (586) 943-4404

Contact Information

Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church

17150 Maumee Ave., Grosse Pointe, MI 48230

Office Hours: Mon-Tues-Thurs-Fri 9AM-4:30PM

Phone: 313-881-0420 Fax: 313-881-6430

Email: officegpuc@gmail.com

Website: gpuuc.org

Editor: Kathleen Ruhl newslettergpuc@gmail.com

Background Image Photo by [sergey mikheev](https://www.unsplash.com) on [Unsplash](https://www.unsplash.com)