

Unconditional Love
Grosse Pointe
Unitarian Church
Radical Inclusivity



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

Reverend Mitra Rahnema

December 2023

JANUARY 2024 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Mark your calendars and please submit your contribution to the next newsletter by

December 21 - 26

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, December 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29 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.

[Click Here For Current COVID 19 Policy](#)

December 3, 2023

10:30 AM

Sermon: *"(Re)Centering"*

Worship Leaders: Rev. Mitra Rahnema

Worship Associate: Miriam Engstrom

What do you marginalize in your life? What do we marginalize in our community? Possibly an experience, feeling, hope, or belief? Today we explore the sacred journey of centering and re-centering.

December 10, 2023

10:30 AM

Sermon: *"To Whom do you Defer?"*

Worship Leader: Rev. Mitra Rahnema

Worship Associate: Maurya Kay

Who or what has a say on what you do in your life? Is there anyone who points and you then follow? Let us explore the nuances of trust throughout our lives.

December 17, 2023

10:30 AM

Sermon: *"Annual Holiday Pageant: "One World, One Light""*

Worship Leader: Julie Artis D.R.E.

Worship Associate: Rev. Mitra Rahnema

This year our RE students have been studying the Abrahamic faiths: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. This year's holiday service is entitled, "One World, One Light". Our students are enjoying the preparations for their service with happiness and joy. Come, let our students guide you through a morning of happiness during this special season. We will have cookies, cheese, and crackers to enjoy after the service for everyone.

December 24, 2023

10:30 AM

Sermon: *"Discovering your Gifts"*

Worship Leader: Rev. Mitra Rahnema

Worship Associate: Chuck Palmer

Intergenerational

What is your gift? Many of us don't know. Today, let us explore the gifts we have and how

we use them to bless the world.

December 24, 2023

6:00 PM

Sermon: *"Christmas Eve: Everything is Holy Now."*

Worship Leader: Rev. Mitra Rahnema

Worship Associate: Chuck Palmer

Intergenerational

In a world with abundant loss, tragedy, and uncertainty arrives a holiday of hope, love, peace and goodwill. This Christmas Eve we honor what is holy in the paradoxes of our lives.

December 31, 2023

10:30 AM

Sermon: *"Remembrance and Contemplation"*

Worship Co-Leaders: *Chuck Palmer and Carol Guither*

Start the New Year's holiday by remembering some of the people we lost who made a positive impact in the world.

Symbolically cast off unwanted aspects of your life in a Fire Communion and contemplate how you can grow and change in 2024.

Can't make Sunday Service?

Recordings are made available on our website.

Visit www.gpuuc.org/virtual-services to watch at any time!

Mitra's Musings



Dear GPUC Members and Friends,

December, the last month of 2023, the days are shorter, the holiday lights are brighter, the food is sweeter, and the work of connecting hearts continues. If we are lucky, it is a month filled with special moments, laughter, and good toasts to love shared. And, if we are lucky, we remember those who do not have our resources or company and respond with generosity.

This Fall our church has been coming to terms with conflicts over the last year, mourning the losses of people and trust, and finding hope for more joy to be had.

I am so proud of this community work – I know it is hard and sometimes you want to retreat – but many of you are keeping invested – and for that I am honored to accompany

you. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your journey so far. The final fireside chat will be this December 14th at 6:30pm - all are invited to sit in, share, listen, and be present to the complex emotions of our community.

Let's also remember this can be a stressful month. The changing season and the holiday gathering add pressure to that which we are already doing. Heightened is the need to take care of ourselves. When stress is high, remember to breathe deeply and take extra moments to slow down. Do things like take a hot shower or bath when chilled, send texts to good friends, and laugh when things feel messy. Always remember, there is so much more spirit underneath any given moment. And when you are lonely or unsure, remember the GPUC congregation is with you and will be in the days, months, and years ahead.

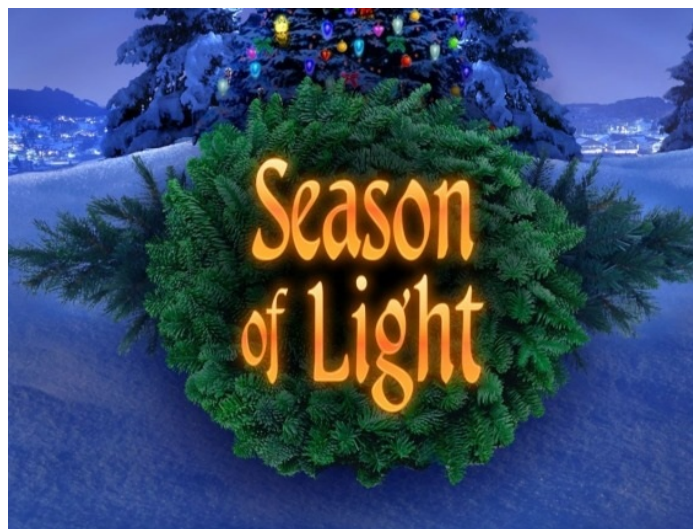
That said, I want to highlight our pastoral care committee and specifically the work of Debbie Connelly, our current chair of the committee. The entire committee does a beautiful job reaching out to those of us who might be isolated or going through difficult times. Over the past few months I worked closely with Debbie to navigate the pastoral ways to be connected. I am grateful for her care and time – coordinating all of us to be there for one another.

Of course, if you have a pastoral concern, you are welcome to contact myself or Debbie – as we work together (Debbie: m040685@yahoo.com, Mitra: mitraingp@gmail.com). Additionally, you can now complete a pastoral care card in the foyer of the church. If you would like to talk through some stressor, grief, or other issue feel free to make an appointment with me through our church administrator Ameera at: officegpuc@gmail.com. Even though I will be in Oregon in January and February, I will still be available for the health and well-being of our congregation at large.

Lastly, I am with you in person through Christmas Eve. Since this day falls on a Sunday we will be having two different worship services. The first is a traditional Sunday morning service at 10:30 am and the second is a traditional Christmas service at 6pm. I will be there, our staff leaders will be there – so come to both and let Christmas time be a worshipful time!

*Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas, And much love,
Rev. Mitra*

Religious Education News



On December 17, 2023 at 10:30 a.m. our students from the GPUC Religious Education program will provide a holiday program called **One World, One Light**. The students will share their talents by sharing their light wisdom, being ushers, musical talent, and readers. Whatever our beliefs, the holidays provide us with our own rituals to celebrate the balance

of light and dark. We want to share **One World, One Light** to welcome the healing powers of warmth back into our world. Our students are enjoying preparing for their pageant with much happiness and joy. Let the students guide you through a morning of the happiness of light during this special season.



We are asking for donations of cookies, cheese, crackers and fruit for our after the program snacks for the whole congregation. Please join us for a morning of holiday joy, sharing and hope during this holiday season.

RE Lessons: The nursery will be open at 10:15 a.m. every Sunday morning. We have the same loving childcare workers to provide a safe and caring place for our young UU's.

- All Elementary and Juniors and Senior students on **December 3rd** will be enjoying a holiday crafts morning.
- **December 10th**, during class and right after church, we will hold a rehearsal to practice for our pageant.
- **December 17th** all students are asked to be at the church by 9:30 a.m. for the pageant.

As we enter this holiday season, I want to share a message to all the students, parents and church members. The most important words you can say at this time of the year is **"thank you"**. So, thank you for helping to provide and maintain our church home. Thank you for stepping up when asked. Thank you for giving and sharing of yourselves. Thank you for believing in providing service to the less fortunate. Thank you for your love and kindness to all. May your holidays be filled with love, joy and a peaceful time with family and friends.

*"To be grateful for the good things that happen in our lives is easy,
but to be grateful for all of our lives—the good as well as the bad,
the moments of joy as well as the moments of sorrow,
the successes as well as the failures,
the rewards as well as the rejections —
that requires hard spiritual work.*

— Henri Nouwen

Happy Holidays!

Julie Artis,

Director of Religious Education

Hire a Teen



Do you have a task too much for you and need help?

Do we have the help for you!

Contact Julie Artis at: 313-590-2464

julieartis@hotmail.com

\$20.00 hr

Christmas Trees



This Year You Could Buy Your Christmas Tree From IKEA-

**Or You Can Purchase A Fresh Fraser Fir Christmas Tree
(Fully Assembled!)**

Through The Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church

17150 Maumee Ave Grosse Pointe City

Corner Of Neff And Maumee- In The Back Of The Church Parking Lot

Trees Will Be Available For Viewing And Purchasing This Friday, December 1st, 1 PM - 6 PM And Saturday, December 2nd From 9 AM Until 6 PM. Additional Days And Hours Will Be Announced If Needed...

But Supply Is Getting Limited!

◆ Trees Can Also Be Purchased Through The Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church Web Site

www.gpuuc.org

◆ Trees Are All \$80.00

◆ Local Delivery Is Available For

\$10.00 Per Tree Thank You For Your Purchase!



Click here to order a Christmas tree

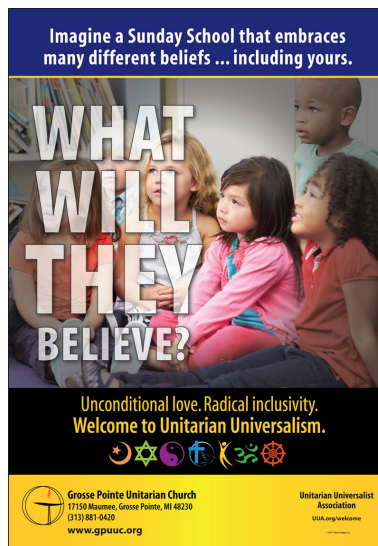
RE REGISTRATION 2023-24

It's that time of the year to register your students for GPUC's Religious Education Program. Since 1963, we've been providing our students with a well rounded Religious Education. Let us tend to the spiritual lives of our children together!!

For more information, please email our Director of Religious Education, Julie Artis: julielartis@gmail.com.

Thank You!

Click Here For RE Registration Forms



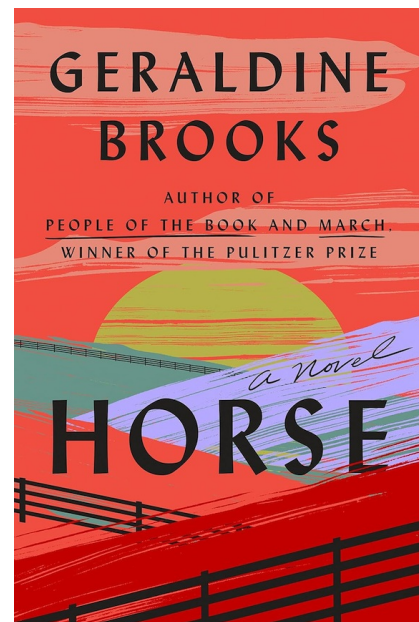
Announcements, Upcoming Programs And Events

Book Discussion Group News *We do not meet in December.*

For January, the group decided to meet via Zoom. The date is January 9th, and the book is *Horse* by Geraldine Brooks (416 pages). Judith LeBeau will facilitate. "Despite the simplicity of the title, Geraldine Brooks' latest novel is a heart-pounding American epic that gallops backward and forward in time to tell a story about race and freedom, horses and art, and the lineage of not just ancestors but actions" (Amazon). It will make for delightful holiday reading.

Check the church website for the 2023-2024 schedule of books for the rest of the season. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month.

Everyone is welcome. For more information, please contact Kathy Kuehn (kgkkuehn@gmail.com).



[Click Here For The 2023-24 Reading List](#)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



PERFORMANCE: DiChiera, Turina & Coleridge-Taylor
Sunday, December 10, 2023 at 4:00 pm
Grosse Pte Unitarian Church, 17150 Maumee, Grosse Pointe 48230

Chamber Music at the Scarab Club will present its next concert in the sanctuary of the acoustically wonderful Grosse Pte. Unitarian Church on Sunday, December 10th at 4 pm. CMSC is pleased to present several works by Dr. David DiChiera, the founder of Michigan Opera Theatre (now Detroit Opera). Baritone Jonathan Lasch, trumpeter David Ammer and pianist Mary Siciliano will perform the poignantly beautiful Letter to Sarah. **Tenor Stephen Riesen will sing DiChiera's 4th Sonnet, What Lips My Lips Have Kissed** and Detroit Opera Orchestra cellist Ben Maxwell will perform Letter to Roxanne.

The program will also include the Sonata in D Minor for Violin and Piano by African-British composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor and Piano Trio No. 2 in B Minor by Spanish composer Joaquín Turina, featuring pianist Mary Siciliano, violinist Velda Kelly and cellist Ben Maxwell.

As always, each piece will be introduced by one of the musicians and the concert will be followed by a delicious and friendly reception.

Tickets - \$30 at the door, \$25 in advance, \$10 for students. Purchase tickets online [here](https://www.scarabclub.org).
More info: www.scarabclub.org or call (248) 921-3193

Chamber Music at the Scarab Club is a popular series dedicated to presenting fine chamber music programs in informal, intimate settings that encourage a close rapport between audience and performers. The series includes performances at Detroit's historic Scarab Club and Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church. Innovative programming and a connection with literature and the visual arts have assured this small series a key place in the metropolitan Detroit arts scene.

GPUC Members Can Purchase Tickets At The Door For \$20

**Fireside Chat hosted by Rev. Mitra
Thursday, December 14 at 6:30PM**

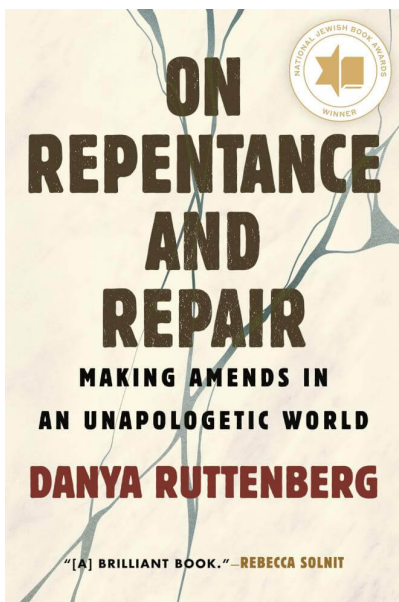
Let's Fireside chat!



Let us talk, listen, and maybe even laugh a little.
Thursday, Dec. 14th, 6:30 - 8pm in the gallery.

Do you want to talk about what's happening in the church, or what the minister is thinking about, or Unitarian Universalist faith, or things happening in our larger community? Do you have questions, comments, or concerns to lift up? Come share what is on your mind and/or ask questions at this informal evening community conversation.

Rev. Mitra will bring a bottle of wine to share — feel free to bring something too.



Exploring Accountability with the UU Common Read: *On Repentance and Repair*

On Repentance and Repair: Making Amends in an Unapologetic World is the 2023-24 UU Common Read. In this 2022 Beacon Press book, Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg offers a fresh perspective on how we make ourselves accountable to others.

This UU Common Read offers a glimpse into Judaism, one of Unitarian Universalism's foundational sources, through the writings of 12th century physician and scholar, Maimonides. The book invites us to explore practices, informed by Jewish tradition, that can lead us toward meaningful atonement in our personal, community, and national lives.

Find Workshop 1 and more resources for this Common Read at
<https://www.uua.org/read>

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 themes are **announced weekly on Wednesdays.**

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 \$5.00 per session, and participants can either pay cash/check in person for each session, or pay by the Venmo app. Please [click here](#) 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, December 7, 14, 21, & 28



Sending You Bountiful Blessings!

Sending you Bountiful Blessings for this holiday season. May you feel Peace and Fulfillment in all that you do. May you be showered with Abundance in all its forms. And may Serenity follow you wherever you go. Have a beautiful holiday season filled with Love and unexpected Miracles!



Please consider sending a note of cheer to the following church members:

Bill Salot
Pat Freiwald
Suzanne Ross

Mary Morshead
Lynn and Bill Rehahn

RESALE SHOP NEWS!!!

We 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 9AM – 2PM. The sale rooms are open from 10AM – 3PM. ***Come visit us!***

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!!

Volunteer Christina initiated this account and has currently achieved 174 GP Unitarian Resale Shop followers!!! Thank you Christina...you ROCK!!!

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

My faves in the shop today! 8 rms. 10-3



[Click For Important Guidelines ...](#)

[Click to find us on Instagram or Scan the QR code below](#)



Coffee Volunteers Needed!

Need is high for volunteers to sign up to make the coffee and tea we all enjoy after service. Current openings include making coffee and/or clean up. If you are a new volunteer, pick a date and an experienced congregant will show you the ropes.

Call Kathy Konwiak if you need more information, Thank you.



Do you enjoy singing? Well, GPUC's newly reformatted adult choir wants YOU!

Do you want to spend your precious free time with generally nice, kind, fun, and like-minded folk? Well we do, and we also share the love of performing music together!

That's right, GPUC's very own church choir is just that! We all are good people who enjoy singing together and performing for our great congregation every few weeks! Please come and join this wonderful group of choristers!

We rehearse on Thursday evenings at 7:00 p.m. in room #2, the purple room, of the R.E. Wing of the church. We love having Kayvon Kashani-Gharavi as our new, enthusiastic Choir Director! You're sure to meet some old and new friends in this choir. We have a terrific time together! But we certainly could use your voice to buffer our choral sound!

Questions? See or contact Birdi Hansen-Marr at 586-696-4529.



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.**

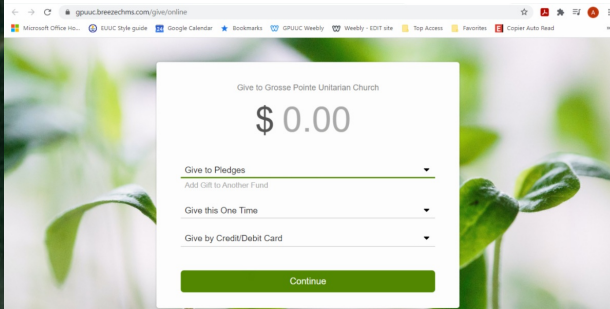
Upon checking out, **Breeze will give you the option to cover the processing fee.** The processing fee will provide you with credit towards your total tax-deductible giving for the year and will help us retain every bit of your donation.

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!**

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.

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.

Sunday Morning Flowers

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.

If you have questions, please feel free to email or call the church office at officegpuc@gmail.com or (313) 881-0420. Thank you for sharing your remembrances of special occasions and important people in your life.



Earn Money for Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church



□ 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

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