

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

January 2024

FEBRUARY 2024 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

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

January 21 - 28

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, January 5, 12, 19 and 26 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](#)

January 7, 2024

10:30 AM

Sermon: *"The Work of Racial Healing"*

Worship Leaders: Neil Sroka

Worship Associate: Michelle Scobie

Racial healing is the first step toward racial equity that the first, second and third principles of Unitarian Universalism call us toward. Coming a little over a week before the eighth annual National Day of Racial Healing, during this discussion Neil Sroka will explain what racial healing is and examine its connection to our shared journey towards racial equity.



January 14, 2024

10:30 AM

Sermon: *"Spirituality and the Brain"*

Worship Leader: Sheila Tully

Worship Associate: Maurya Kay

Cultivating a spiritual life, has proven benefits for our emotional and mental well-being. But science is also now identifying the neuroanatomy of the brain that connects our spirituality and human experience. How can we use neuroscience to enhance and deepen our daily lives?

<https://www.sheilatully.com>

January 21, 2024

10:30 AM

Sermon: *"Rainbow Connection"*

Worship Leader: Valerie St. John

Worship Associate: Meghan Boomhower

Our 7th Principle of Unitarian Universalism states "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are part". Valerie St. John will use examples from the natural world to illustrate this principle. Get ready to learn about the oceanic feeling, quantum physics, mycology, and neurology! Science and spirituality are interconnected in how we perceive ourselves and relate to one another.

January 28, 2024

10:30 AM

Sermon: *"TBD"*

Worship Leader: Ken Meisel
Worship Co-Leaders: Maurya Kay
TBD

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,

Happy New Year! This is my favorite kind of holiday because it is a time to transition from what was to what might be. This is certainly what our congregation is doing. As 2024 arrives, we transition from mourning what was (both good and bad) and pivot toward contemplating our community learnings.

Now is the time to consider what the congregational culture of communication is and ways we can collectively increase our sense of trust for the wellbeing of the future. To be specific, there are three things for each of you to do now:

- 1. Increase integrity/trust in our relationships.** On Sunday Dec. 10th, I ask everyone to take one action toward building trust. It might be reaching out to someone who has fallen away. It might be lowering your levels of suspicion. It might be being vulnerable to share what is in the crevasse of your heart. Or something else.... Then email me at mitraingp@gmail.com to tell me what you did. Take one trust building action! You have until the end of February – the earlier the better.
- 2. Educate ourselves.** Read this article about healthy communication in church life ([CLICK HERE FOR ARTICLE ON TRIANGULATION](#)). It is an excellent synopsis of one of the major ways congregations can get into conflict over the years. It addresses what I believe is the number one issue our collective congregation can address for a healthy future.
- 3. Offer information.** I really want to know more about the structure of communication at GPUC. Please complete this survey <https://forms.gle/KmQMGeLDV6G6ENu2A>. We will also be texting it out in a couple weeks — you don't need to do it twice. It is easy and should only take a couple minutes. I invite everyone – even new folks — to take the survey.

While I am in Oregon for a couple months, I continue to have the health and wellbeing of the Grosse Pointe Unitarian Universalist community at the centering of my thinking. I will miss seeing your faces on Sunday morning and beyond.

While I am away, do your homework, give each other the love you have given me, and make sure to laugh once a day! You will each and all remain in my heart until we are together again.

*With love,
Rev. Mitra*



"There are years that ask questions and years that answer."

— Zora Neale Hurston

Church school for our students is a journey. Church school is a garden of information for our teachers to share their information and our students to enjoy. We encourage our students to be pathfinders, pioneers, detectives and explorers. As we close out 2023, we shared many different religious stories for our students to explore. We hope our students saw some variety in approaches in the different religions. Chronologically we are at the end of the year but will continue our journey in our classes.

As 2024 begins, this is a fresh new start. The first chapter of the year is the Religious Education Program looking at various service projects in the next couple of months. In the month of January, they will be making Peanut Butter and Jelly sandwiches to provide to the homeless. In February, we will be helping with a hot homemade dinner for the homeless at Grosse Pointe United Methodist Church on Tuesday, February 6.

The students will be attending a Christian church in Grosse Pointe in the month of January. They will then discuss the differences. Date and location will be provided to the RE Families in one week.

Mark your calendars for our "Beyond the Birds and the Bees" workshop provided on Sunday, February 4th from noon to 2 pm. All parents, grandparents and other adults, church and community are welcome. This Opportunity is to learn and designed for all adults who want to learn what 2024, State of the Art Sex Education is. If you want more information, please contact julieartis@hotmail.com.

Here are five New Year quotes to start our year:

"The only person you are destined to become is the person you decide to be."

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Your life does not get better by chance; it gets better by change."

— Jim Rohn

"The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step."

— Lao Tzu

"Don't watch the clock; do what it does. Keep going."

— Sam Levenson

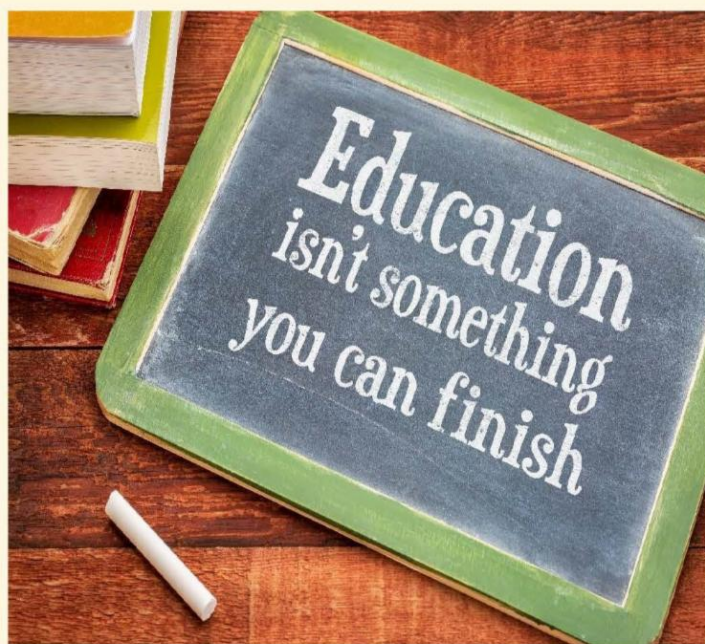
"And now let us welcome the New Year — full of things that have never been."

— Rainer Maria Rilke

Have a Happy and Safe New Year.

Julie Artis,

Director of Religious Education



It's 2024. Is Your Education On Sex Ed Issues Up-To-Date?

Do You Know The Latest On STI's And STD's And LGBTQ Definitions And And And And?

Just What IS All The Sex Ed Stuff That Your Children Have Been Learning?

Is Agender, A Gender?

Does Sex Positive Mean A Good Test Result?

Does PEP Mean To Rally At A High School Football Game?

Is Chlamydia A Pretty Flower Name?

Has Birth Control Changed Since "Back-In-The-Day"?

On Sunday, February 4th The Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church, Partnering With Planned Parenthood Of Michigan, Will Be Sponsoring The Lifelong Education Event,

"Beyond The Birds And The Bees"

The Program Will Be Led By Natalie Elliot, Community Outreach Educator, Planned Parenthood Of Michigan. This Opportunity To Learn Is Designed For Parents, Grand Parents, And Other Interested Adult Church Or Community Members Who Want To Learn What 2024, State-Of-The-Art Sex Education Is

The Program Will Be Held In The Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church Sanctuary From 12 PM-2 PM. Ms. Elliot's Remarks Will Conclude At Approximately 1:30 PM With Q & A To Follow. A Light Lunch Will Be Available (Donations Are Appreciated To Cover Lunch Expenses)

Reservations Are Not Required

"Education Isn't Something You Can Finish"



The Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church 17150 Maumee Ave. (Corner Of Neff And Maumee)
Grosse Pointe, Michigan 313-881-0420

PL
12/23



Do you have a task that's too much for you?
Need help boxing up those Decorations?
We have the solution for you!



Hire a Teen!

\$20.00 per hour



Contact Julie Artis
313-590-2464
email: julieartis@hotmail.com

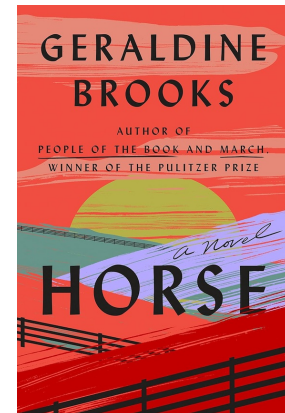
Announcements, Upcoming Programs And Events

Book Discussion Group News

The group meets via Zoom on Tuesday, January 9th, at 6 pm to discuss *Horse* by Geraldine Brooks. Judith LeBeau will facilitate.

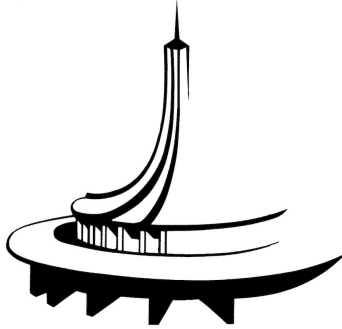
Check the church website for the 2023 - 2024 schedule of books for the rest of the season. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month.

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



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

New UU Meeting in January



There will be a New UU meeting for all interested visitors and newcomers to GPUC on January 28th, at 11:45 AM, right after the service. Please grab a coffee or some water and join us in the library to discuss the "ins and outs" of belonging to the Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church. All questions welcome! Light refreshments will be provided. The meeting will last about an hour and everyone is welcome! Please RSVP to our GPUC office administrator, Ameera Bandy, if you plan to attend. officegpuc@gmail.com

Committee Forming On How To Improve The GPUC Website

Hello Members and Friends,

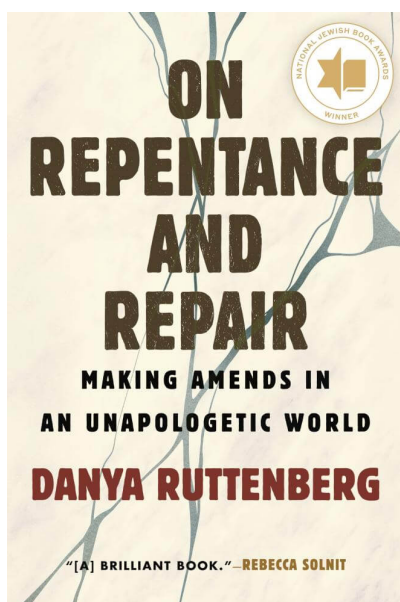
Our face to the greater community today is our website. This is where new residents to the East Side and seekers of a faith community start to search for a church home.

The website is also our internal library for our members. It is the location for our history, current practices, how we are organized, what is going on and our greater connection to the UUA.

While our current website is adequate, we can do better. At our last board meeting, we discussed how we could enhance and improve our current website to provide a stronger informational site and to design it to be easier to navigate.

I am requesting volunteers to explore how we can improve our website. This is a first step. Please reach out to me if you are interested in this important work.

Sincerely,
Ann Lipsitz
President Board of Trustees



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, January 4, 11, 18, & 25



Lay Pastoral (Care) Committee



New Year's

Resolutions...

What to do?

It's that time of year again when some turn their thoughts to New Year resolutions. Me, I don't lean into making resolutions that I tend to ignore by the end of week 1 of the new year!

This year, however, I am challenging the congregation and myself to make a concerted effort to get to know more of the congregation. Let's all try to make at least 2 new friends of those whose faces we see each week in church but really haven't tried to know. Let's give this a sincere effort in order to expand our congregation's desire for a truly joyous community. I dare you to join me.

As We Meet

Poet: Susan Coolidge

As we meet and touch, each day,
The many travelers on our way,

Let every such brief contact be
A glorious, helpful ministry;

The contact of the soil and seed,
Each giving to the other's need

Each helping on the other's best,
And blessing, each, as well as blest

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

- *Suzanne Ross*
- *Bill Salot*

- *Mary Morshead*
- *Pat Freiwald*
- *Lynn and Bill Rehahn*

RESALE SHOP NEWS!!!

The Shop Is Closed on January 3rd, 2024.

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!***

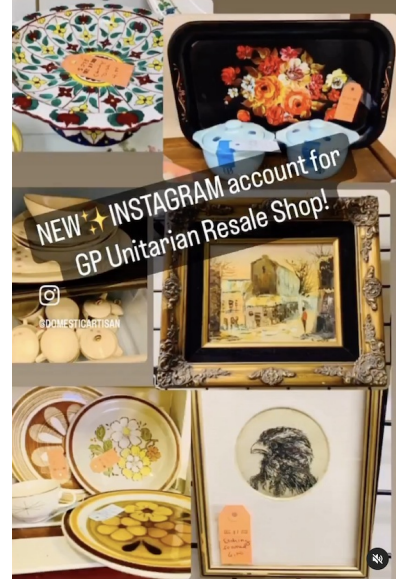
RESALE SHOP NOW ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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 180 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](#)



On December 12, 2023, the Resale shop hosted quite the Holiday Party! Enjoy the photos. Many thanks to Juli Moore and Margo Bishop for all the love, joy & commitment they give to GPUC. Thank you to all the Resale volunteers who work hard to make the GPUC Resale Shop the "best in town" and thank you to Paul Lipsitz for the most beautiful music. Oh, and not to forget...our special guest...Bayley the canine holiday pup.





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 cleanup.

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.





ADULT CHOIR WANTS YOU!

If you like to sing and are one of those experiencing some changes in your schedule, please consider adding GPUC's Adult Choir to round-out your week. You've heard the beautiful music performed during the Sunday services by our small group of choristers for several months now. Please give thought to adding your voice to our group.

We need and want you!

Choir rehearses Thursday evenings from 7:15 pm to about 8:30 pm, in room #2 (the purple room), of the Religious Education Wing of the church. You'll love working with Kayvon, he's wonderful! Kayvon will assist you with deciding what vocal part fits your range best, if you're not sure.

The adult choir performs twice per month and rehearses weekly. Periodic absences for family matters, work and travel are understandable.

***The next choir rehearsal will be
Thursday, January 11th of the new year, at 7:15 pm***

Questions or concerns? Please call 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.***

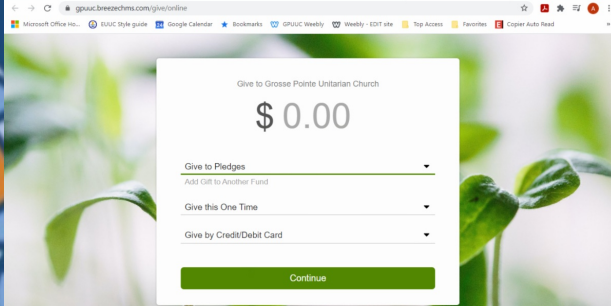
Upon checking out, ***Breeze will give you the option to cover the processing fee.*** The processing fee will provide you with credit towards your total tax-deductible giving for the year and will help us retain every bit of your donation.

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!](#)



Our FOOD SHARING collection is always taking donations!

**“There is always a need for food.”
— Crossroads of Detroit.**

It is time to reinvigorate our Food Pantry Collection program. In an effort to do just that we are going to implement a Second Sunday Themed Collection. Starting in January, every second Sunday of the Month will be a special collection day. Themes will include Cereal Day, Canned Meat Day, and Hygiene Products Day, all of which are in high demand. There will be a shelf in the lobby for food and other items and a box for cash donations. Watch for each collection theme in the weekly announcements. Our first collection Sunday will fall on January 14th, and the theme is Snacks. Bring in individually wrapped single serving snacks or snack cash.

Please consider bringing nonperishable food and toiletries when you go to church.
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

UU Peer Led Grief Group

This announcement pertains to a new peer led group available across the country via the internet. If you are at least 18 years old and grieving the loss of a friend or family member, including pets, you may benefit from these meetings with a compassionate online community. This group will meet every Saturday for 12 weeks from 12pm to 1pm EST starting February 4, 2024. The goal would be to meet in a structured way to assist in moving through the process of grief toward the resolution of feelings and toward gentle comfort. This group is sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Mental Health Network.

If you would like more information about the group, please email UUPeerGrief@gmail.com by no later than January 15, 2024.

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

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