

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 2018

Upcoming Services

March 4, 2018 **10:30 AM**

Confessions of a Drunken Mystic

Worship Leader: Dr. Alex Riegel **Worship Associate: Suzanne Ross**

Periodically I am asked to discuss my personal theology, usually because people find my mystical leanings interesting, baffling, or even quirky. In this sermon I will explain my mystical leanings, touching upon the theological, philosophical, and psychological influences that have shaped my journey thus far.

March 11, 2018 **10:30 AM**

Where There Is No Love There Is no Enlightenment

Worship Leader: Dr. Alex Riegel **Worship Assoc.: Meghan Boomhower**

This sermon is a follow up to the previous week's sermon. After having explained my mystical leanings the previous week (see above), I will discuss why mysticism means much more than navel gazing. I will argue that mysticism is the antidote for the afflictions our modern age faces.

March 18, 2018 **10:30 AM**

#themtoo

Worship Leader: Dr. Alex Riegel **Worship Associate: Tonya Wells**

In the #metoo era it is important to recall that women have always played a major role in shaping society. In that spirit, this will be my yearly UU history sermon, which I will use to call to mind the myriad ways in which our UU foremothers have shaped not only our UU movement but the society in which we now find ourselves living.

March 25, 2018 **10:30 AM**

Question Box/Potpourri

Worship Leader: Dr. Alex Riegel **Worship Associate: Maurya Kay**

This will be a question box sermon, which means you are invited to submit a question to me (alexgpuc@gmail.com - you must include your name) that I will spend a few minutes answering during my sermon. If time permits, I will draw from the "collective wisdom plate" that holds various and sundry quotations upon which we may reflect together.

April 1, 2018 **10:30 AM**

Sermoni Perfectus: The Power of Language in Life

Worship Leader: Dr. Alex Riegel **Worship Associate: TBD**

The weekend of April 13/14 we will have the opportunity to study Jesus' teaching through an examination of his original language - Aramaic. For this Easter sermon, then, I will discuss how language, particularly some of the language that Jesus used, shapes the way we perceive, interpret, and even have experiences. That is, Jesus' words in English convey one meaning, another in Greek, and yet another in his original Aramaic.

In This Issue

[Upcoming Services](#)

[Alexander's Meander](#)

[Religious Education](#)

Announcements

[Church Grounds](#)

[Building Stewards Needed](#)

[Alliance News](#)

[UU Crafters](#)

[Flowers](#)

[Jr/Sr Fundraiser](#)

Upcoming Events

[Sun Mar 4 Food Sharing](#)

[Sat Mar 10 Fellowship Dinner](#)

[Sun Mar 11 RE Pool Party](#)

[Sun Mar 11 Living Presence](#)

[Sat Mar 24 The Dearing Duo Concert](#)

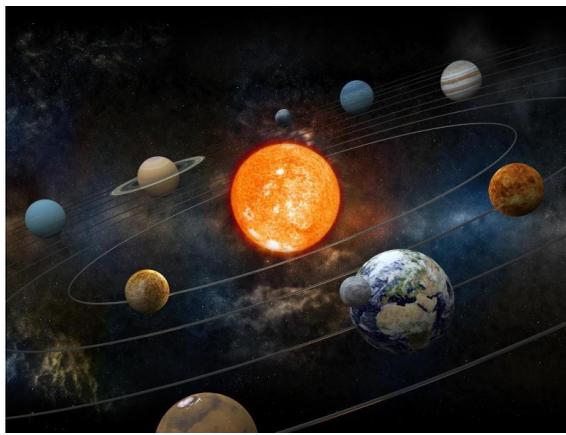
[Sun Mar 25 Living Presence](#)

[Mon Mar 26 Suicide Prevention](#)

[Tue Mar 27 UU Crafters](#)

[Fri-Sat Apr 13 & 14 The Aramaic Jesus](#)

[Forward To A Friend](#)



Your Orbit

Upon my return from India I am met with the tragedy of another mass shooting in America. I (and I imagine many of you) feel like I'm living in Bill Murray's *Groundhog Day*. "Didn't we already live through this?" And, "Didn't we already live through the 'Didn't we already live through this' déjà vu experience?" On and on and on and on... It's hard not to feel despair when such atrocities repeat with apparent impunity - even after a month of navel-gazing. Yes, ministers, too, feel despair at times...

At the same time, while I was in India my spiritual practice took me deeper within myself than I have ever been. In that deep dive I again encountered an inexplicable and ineffable experience of total absorption in love. If only I could articulate this experience for you... hand you a piece of it... Regardless, that love, I concluded many years ago, is the ground of our being, the most fundamental quality of our essential nature. It is from that experience that I want to hand you a piece of advice on the heels of our most recent tragedy - nothing new - you've heard me say it before - but advice that always bears repeating...

First, though, for those of you wanting more verbiage than I offer here, I direct you to the sermon I delivered after the mass shooting this country experienced last fall:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xJ4c1N2LSs>

Now onto that piece of advice I promised... In our modern world, as connected as it is by technology and communication channels, it is easy to get overwhelmed by negative new cycles that revolve around atrocities. So it is important to remember to keep our perspective, which we do by returning to our own selves. That is, we must have some means to connect with the love that is our essential nature. In other words, REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE! Then, with that remembrance; cognizant of love, act within your own orbit. Be loving and kind toward all those whom you encounter and if you feel compelled to take action, take that action in the spirit of love. We cannot leverage the entire world but that does not mean we do not have a vital role to play in the lives of those whom we encounter. This is one way in which we can overcome our despair...

Namaste,
Alex

Religious Education News

LET THERE BE LIGHT

Let me learn the lessons you have hidden in every leaf and rock. -Native American Prayer

We deal with stress and threats in our day to day life. I was profoundly affected by the terror attacks of Sept. 11, 2001; I did not lose a relative or friend but it changed me. Remembering that day and what I read, view or hear in the news every day, I look for peace in my life. I was struck again for the need for peace after the horrific events of February 14, 2018. I recently read a book that brought peace to me and wanted to share it with all of you. It is called ***Let There Be Light-Poems and Prayers for Repairing the World*** by Jane Breskin Zalben. Here are a few pages from the book.

May the poor find wealth, Those weak with sorrow find joy, May the forlorn find new hope, constant happiness and prosperity.

May the frightened cease to be afraid, And those bound be free, May the weak find power, And may their hearts join in friendship. -His Holiness, The Dalai Lama

Love is the strongest force the world possesses, and yet it is the humblest imaginable. -Mahatma Gandhi

Think of all this fleeting world: A star at dawn, a bubble in a stream; A flash of lightning in a summer cloud, A flickering lamp, a phantom, and a dream. -The Buddha 6th Century B.C.E.

O my Lord, inspire me That I may be thankful for Your blessing. Wherewith You have blessed me and my father and mother, And that I may do good works that please You. -Qur'an 46:15

Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace; Where there is hatred, let me sow love; Where there is injury, pardon; Where there is discord union; Where there is doubt, faith; Where there is despair,

hope; Where there is darkness, light; Where there is sadness, joy. -St. Francis of Assisi, 13th Century

This year in our Religious Education classes we are studying World Religions. The book, ***Let There Be Light*** ties together the religions we have been studying-Buddhism, Judaism, Hinduism, Christianity, Taoism, African, Eskimo and Native American traditions. I hope by reading this book it can bring strength, hope and some sustenance to your daily life. ***Let there be light.***

Religious Education Lessons:

The nursery will be open at 9:45 a.m. every Sunday morning. 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 take time to get to know each other.

Lower, Upper and Junior students are finishing up their unit on Buddhism.

Junior and Senior students will continue their lessons in their OWL classes on Sunday nights at 6:30 p.m. at GPUC.

Dates to Remember:

March 4 - RE Committee Meeting at 9:15 a.m. Room 7 in RE wing.

March 10 - Fellowship Dinner at 6:00 p.m. Childcare provided, please sign up

March 11 - Pool Party after church at 1:00 p.m. Please sign up

Julie Artis, Director of Religious Education

Fellowship Dinner

Dear GPUC Members and Friends,

You and your family are cordially invited to attend the always-fun and festive **2018 Fellowship Dinner on Saturday, March 10th at 6 p.m. at GPUC**. This gathering for food, friendship, laughter, conversation and music is not only one of the year's best occasions for GPUC fellowship - it is also the kick-off event for our annual pledge drive, which will be focused on this year's theme:

Bringing the Vision to Life!

Now, everyone needs to know that this event is not just about funding the operating and visionary needs of GPUC for next year and beyond. Yes, in truth, there will be a bit of gentle and loving arm-twisting. However, this event is more like a rally! We are interested in your time and expertise as well as your financial support! And, since childcare will be provided with advance notice to Julie Artis at julie@gpuc.us, you are quickly running out of excuses.

Plus - newly empowered by his recent trip to India - Reverend Alex has agreed to levitate anyone who needs a ride to the event... (Ok, that part may not be entirely true, but certainly we can find transportation for anyone needing a ride, as well.)

Bottom line: If you are in town on March 10, you should not miss this special opportunity to find yourself among the warm and open-minded community that is connected to GPUC and pledge your support for its future...

If you haven't already been contacted by a table captain for this event, please contact Paul - at eprowady@gmail.com or 630-461-9363 - or Chuck - at chaz313@sbcglobal.net or 313-938-0081 - for further information.

We look forward to seeing you...

Paul Rowady and Chuck Palmer, Canvass Committee Co-Chairs

Pool Party

Please note: Due to the Community Center's change
in party room hours: Pizza first; swimming after!

It's a **POOL PARTY** for
GPUC R.E. families

When: Sunday, March 11, 2018

Where: Warren Community Center
Indoor Water Park
5460 Arden, Warren

Time: Pizza in the party room at 1 PM, then swim
as long as you like - pool closes at 5:00.

Cost: \$6.00 per person (please pay by March 4)

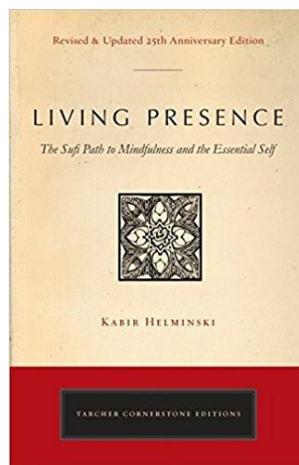
Please R.S.V.P. by Sunday, March 4, in one of
the following ways:

1) email Julie Artis: Julie@gpuc.us

2) call Julie Artis and leave message: 313-590-2464

3) sign up in the GPUC lobby

Living Presence



Webinar Book Study Group Now Forming *Living Presence*, by Kabir Helminski

Dr. Riegel will soon be conducting a book study webinar for GPUCers and other interested parties. On the following dates, from 7pm - 8pm, we will discuss Kabir Helminski's book, *Living Presence* (see description below): Sunday, March 11th; Sunday, March 25th; Sunday, April 8th; Sunday, April 22nd; Sunday, May 6th; and Sunday May 20th; Sunday, June 3rd; and Sunday, June 10th. Other dates may be added if content warrants.

Registration deadline is midnight, February 28th.

As described on Amazon.com: "In Sufism, the mystical branch of Islam, presence is the quality that describes a heart-filled state of mindfulness, an experience of being conscious in the present moment. It is only in this present moment, Sufi teachings reveal, that we can connect with the Divine, and the Divine can live through us. "But that description hardly touches the profundity of this book. Indeed, Dr. Riegel considers this book the best modern guidebook for those on the spiritual path. You may explore the themes in this book further on the Amazon site: https://www.amazon.com/Living-Presence-Revised-Mindfulness-Cornerstone/dp/0143130137/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1518788852&sr=8-1&keywords=living+presence

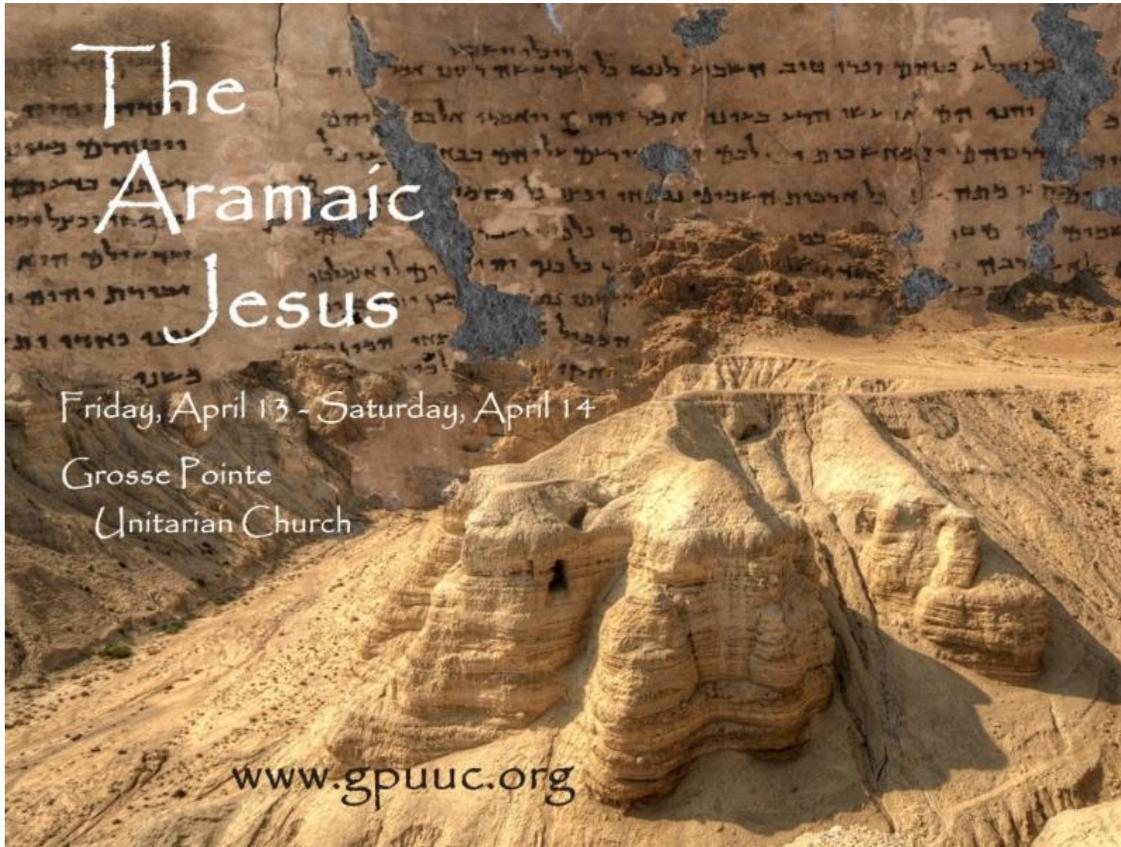
To register for this webinar book study group, please email Dr. Riegel at: alexgpuc@gmail.com.

***Note** - There is a minimum requirement of ten registrants for this book study to launch. While you need not be available for every session, please do not register unless you can commit to most sessions. Sessions will be recorded for later viewing in the event a session is missed. There will be no

review of previous session contents for those who miss a session. **Registration deadline is midnight, Wed., February 28th.**

Cost: This book study is free to members and pledging friends of GPUC. For all others the cost is \$40 (\$5 per session), due no later than March 1st.

The Aramaic Jesus



Based on the work of scholar Neil Doulgass-Kloz, our presenter, Munira Elizabeth Reed will lead us to an understanding of The Lord's Prayer in accordance with the original Aramaic language that Jesus spoke.

Friday Evening Introduction (7 - 8:30pm - *free and open to the public*) - Come for a taste of Aramaic and a new view of Jesus.

Saturday Workshop (9am - 5pm, lunch break from 12:30 - 2pm) - We will look closely at the language Jesus spoke, how it is interpreted, and gain a new perspective on his message. We will chant, move, and sit together as we experience the Lord's Prayer from a fresh and personal perspective.

Saturday Evening (7 - 8pm - *free and open to the public*) - Chanting and Meditation

Workshop Tickets - \$25 in advance through website (www.gpuuc.org/adult-religious-education) or through the church office; \$35 at the door. ***NOTE** - *The Friday and Saturday evening events are free and open to the public.*

'Saturdays at 7:30' Presents in Concert - The Dearing Concert Duo

GROSSE POINTE UNITARIAN CHURCH
Saturdays at 7:30 Concert Series, Year 3
Saturday, March 24, 2018

DEARING CONCERT DUO
Featuring Steven & Abha Dearing



AN EVENING OF VOICE,
FLUTE, & CLASSICAL GUITAR

6-TIME DETROIT MUSIC AWARD
WINNING DUO

CDS FREQUENTLY HEARD
ON WRCJ

FROM THE MEDIA: "...technically assured and rhythmically sprightly...Polished, dynamic performances." - **George Bulanda, Hour Magazine**

"What makes the music sing is the Dearing's lovely tonal blend, secure phrasing and the way Steven's clean articulation and steady rhythm lays the foundation for Abha's warm approach to melody. The sound world is elegantly...while the duet sports a seductively intimate blend..." - **Mark Stryker, Detroit Free Press**

"Abha sings in a beautiful soprano...richly textured...passionate... Marvelous program of duets...there is definitely artistic dialogue going on here." - **Ted Shaw, Windsor Star**

TICKETS: Presale - \$20
At Door - \$25

Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church
17150 Maumee Avenue
Grosse Pointe, MI 48230
313-881-0420 www.gpuuc.org

GO TO: www.gpuuc.org/upcoming-events.html to purchase with PayPal, OR call the church office during business hours: 313-881-0420. If paying via PayPal, we will keep your name at the event ticket desk for check-in upon arrival. **NO TICKETS will be otherwise issued before the concert. PLEASE bring a copy of your PayPal email receipt as proof of purchase.**

Proceeds of the concert benefit the church.

Announcements

Church Grounds Donation Opportunities

Last year the church board approved a long term plan for maintaining and improving the church grounds. These plans are always available for review by contacting me and they will be posted during the fellowship dinner. As has been discussed over the past couple of years, many of the trees on the grounds are post mature, diseased and dying. This presents opportunities for members and friends of the congregation to make donations of trees in honor of or in memory of loved ones. I am always available to discuss what the church's needs are, price ranges for desired trees and to help with obtaining, planting and caring for the trees. Feel free to contact me if you have questions.

Russ Chavey
Grounds Committee.

Alliance News

The Alliance will present a luncheon/program on Tuesday, April 10 at Noon in the Annex. Suzanne Bilek will present a power point program titled 'Public Art and Civic Pride'. She will be showing some of Detroit's most beautiful monuments. This is Suzanne's second presentation for the Alliance. Her first was a circle tour of

Lake Superior. A pizza and salad lunch will be served. Cost of the luncheon will be \$7.00. All church members, friends and guests are welcome. RSVP to Mary Morshead 313 885-2259 or mmorshead@yahoo.com.

First Sunday Food Sharing - March 4

Our next opportunity for Food Sharing will be **Sunday, March 4**. Donations of non-perishables are taken to **Crossroads East**, located in Salem Lutheran Church on Moross. They greatly appreciate our donations of peanut butter, breakfast foods, canned fruits, veggies, and soups, etc. They also gladly accept donations of toiletry items, such as toothbrushes, deodorant, etc.

If you prefer to donate monetarily, your contributions are used to purchase eggs, milk, bread, and produce. This is actually a very helpful option, as not many organizations bring these types of foods.

Thank you for the continued generosity. The staff and clients at Crossroads East are very thankful for our donations!

UU Crafters

UU Crafters meets on the 3rd and 4th Tuesdays of the month in the Annex 7- 9pm. They will *not meet on March 20* but will meet on March 27. All are welcome to join in for an evening of social stitching (knit, crochet, quilting, needlepoint, etc.) and other small crafts. Check the church calendar on the website and the weekly email for any changes. Please contact Ann Helm with any questions.

Building Stewards Needed

GPUC rents its facilities to outside groups. It has been in the best interest of GPUC to supply an on-site 'Building Steward' to be present during these facility rentals. Providing guidance and safety for our visitors, building and grounds is the goal of a Building Steward. This position is to be staffed by members of GPUC who will be on site at functions that can last several hours. They will monitor all components of activities being held in our building facilities. A training session for this position is required; stewards will be paid for their services.

If you are interested in a building steward position please contact Candy Dunn in the church office at 313-881-0420 or gpuc@gpuc.us

RE Junior/Senior Fund Raiser: Returnable Bottle & Can Drive

Please help our GPUC Junior/Senior students raise funds for their various church programs and field trips. Please remember to bring in *clean* returnable bottles and cans and place them in the box marked: BOTTLES/CANS.

Thanks to your donations and participation, the returnable bottle and can drive has been a great success - *let's keep those returnable bottles & cans coming in!*

Flowers for the Sanctuary

Please consider recognizing or honoring someone dear or commemorate a special occasion by providing fresh flowers for the Sanctuary. Flowers add significantly to the ambiance on Sunday mornings. Please use the insert in the Sunday order of service or contact the church office to sign-up for a Sunday or two.

Let us know if you will bring your own arrangement or provide a check (minimum cost \$20) for Susan Hartz (our talented flower chairperson) to purchase and arrange the flowers.

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

Community Event



SUICIDE PREVENTION:

WHO? WHAT? HOW? WHERE?

Monday, March 26th | 7:30-9:30pm

Pierce Auditorium

15430 Kercheval Ave, Grosse Pointe Park, MI 48230

ALL PARENTS, STUDENTS, TEACHERS, AND STAFF ARE WELCOME

FREE ADMISSION

Join us for an expert panel discussion on Suicide Prevention. We will explore **WHO** is at risk, **WHAT** signs and symptoms to look for, **HOW** to address suicide ideation, and **WHERE** to get help. *There will be an open question and answer session after.*

MODERATOR:

Beth Walsh-Sahutske,
MA LPC,
*Counseling Department Chair,
Grosse Pointe South High School*

SPEAKERS:

Gigi Colombini,
LMSW
*Clinical Social Worker
specializing in treatment
of suicidality in the
outpatient setting*

Amelia Lehto
*Specializes in suicide
prevention and postvention
on the local, state, and
national levels through
trainings, advocacy and
innovative technology*

Elise Boyd
*Suicide Attempt Survivor
Suicide Prevention
Advocate College Student*

Nancy Buyle
*School Safety/Student
Assistance Consultant
MISD Crisis Intervention
Counselor*



PRESENTED BY:



www.KevinsSong.org

Newsletter Deadline

Please submit your contribution to the next newsletter by Friday, March 23 at noon. They should be sent to newsletter@gpuc.us.

Contact Information
Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church
17150 Maumee Ave., Grosse Pointe, MI 48230
Phone: 313-881-0420 Fax: 313-881-6430
Email: gpuc@gpuc.us
Website:
www.gpuuc.org
Editor: Rudy Wedenoja newsletter@gpuc.us