

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

May 2018

Upcoming Services

May 6, 2018

10:30 AM

Transience and Permanence: Is Theodore Parker's Theology Still Relevant Today?

Worship Leader: Rev. Dr. Alexander Riegel

Worship Associate: Joseph Buttiglieri

Theodore Parker was a 19th century Unitarian minister. In 1841 he wrote a sermon that would become integral to the formation of early Unitarianism in America: "On the Transient and Permanent in Christianity." It was a ground breaking and heretical work that helped further the development of Unitarianism in America. We will explore the major theme of this sermon and ask whether it remains relevant to Unitarian Universalism today.

May 13, 2018

10:30 AM

A Potpourri of Motherly Wisdom

Worship Leader: Rev. Dr. Alexander Riegel

This Mother's Day we will hear some of the mothers in our GPUC congregation talk about motherhood. Like what does motherhood look from their different perspectives and what advice would they give mothers to be?

May 20, 2018

10:30 AM

The Art of Rational Relationships

Worship Leader: Rev. Dr. Alexander Riegel

Worship Associate: Chuck Palmer

The ability to conduct rational relationships (which is *vital* for successful relationships) lies in the art of communication. Often our relationships falter not because of genuine conflict with others but because of poor communication. Dr. Riegel will give us a few pointers on how to communicate in rational relationships.

May 27, 2018

10:30 AM

"Memorial Day - what was the original meaning of this holiday and what does it mean today?"

Worship Leader: Dr. John Artis

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Alexander's Meander



Last Sunday I preached a "State of the Church Address." Given the weather, I was impressed by the turn out - 85ish people braved that icy morning to hear the sermon and take in the congregational discussion about programming that followed. I choose to see that as indicative of the vitality of our congregation.

For this blurb I am going to share with you a part of my "State of the Church" sermon, hoping you will consider what I say here in earnest. Specifically, I want to talk about the way we think about membership at GPUC. As I said in my sermon, we live in a "fee for service" age in which we are used to paying our money and getting something back in return (hopefully our "money's worth") and considering that the end of the exchange. That is the nature of the business-client relationship in a capitalistic society. Sadly, more and more people also think of church in these terms as well. Therein lays a problem...

A model of church membership that operates on a "fee for service" business-client relationship cannot work in the long run and here is the reason why. Unlike in the public sector, it is unclear in churches just *who* owns the business and *who* is the client. You see, in churches members serve as *both* the business owners *and* the clients. That is, YOU, the member, must both be the provider *and* the one for whom a service is provided. This means that what you get out of your church is proportional to what you put into your church.

Having said that I will cut to the chase... For the church to function as a successful business it needs its members to act like owners, not just consumers. This means that it needs *everyone* to help it operate, *beyond* making and fulfilling a yearly pledge. That is, it needs *everyone* to serve on a committee (You may be surprised that some of our members serve on three or four committees!). In return, members receive a church that is better equipped to meet their needs.

There is more to be said about this but I will end here with the following request and a promise to tell you the tantalizing secret of how to make the responsibility of Chairing a committee one of the least onerous jobs in the church - *if you seriously consider doing this* and contact me privately about it (alexgpuc@gmail.com). So the request... I am in need of someone to Chair the Social Justice and Adult Ed committees. I am also in need of three or four people to learn and serve as the church's technology committee. Currently I do these things but we have reached a membership size that prohibits my doing them reliably and effectively.

So, please consider the above - you know where to reach me! ;-)

Namaste

Alex

Mothers' Day Proclamation: Julia Ward Howe, Boston, 1870



Julia Ward Howe

Mother's Day was originally started after the Civil War, as a protest to the carnage of that war, by women who had lost their sons. Here is the original Mother's Day Proclamation from 1870, followed by a bit of history (or should I say "herstory"):

Arise, then, women of this day! Arise all women who have hearts, whether our baptism be that of water or of fears! Say firmly: "We will not have great questions decided by irrelevant agencies. Our husbands shall not come to us, reeking with carnage, for caresses and applause. Our sons shall not be taken from us to unlearn all that we have been able to teach them of charity, mercy and patience.

We women of one country will be too tender of those of another country to allow our sons to be trained to injure theirs. From the bosom of the devastated earth a voice goes up with our own. It says "Disarm, Disarm! The sword of murder is not the balance of justice."

Blood does not wipe our dishonor nor violence indicate possession. As men have often forsaken the plow and the anvil at

the summons of war, let women now leave all that may be left of home for a great and earnest day of counsel. Let them meet first, as women, to bewail and commemorate the dead. Let them then solemnly take counsel with each other as to the means whereby the great human family can live in peace, each bearing after their own time the sacred impress, not of Caesar, but of God.

In the name of womanhood and of humanity, I earnestly ask that a general congress of women without limit of nationality may be appointed and held at some place deemed most convenient and at the earliest period consistent with its objects, to promote the alliance of the different nationalities, the amicable settlement of international questions, the great and general interests of peace.

Julia Ward Howe-Boston, 1870

Sunday, May 13 is Mother's Day. The speech above was given by Julia Ward Howe, a Unitarian. She started this special day for all women, all over the world to work for PEACE. She believed in leaders using peaceful ways to settle problems. She started a festival which she named "Mother's Day". Julia Ward Howe is best remembered for writing the famous song, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" and her stance against slavery. We can share our UU faith on Mother's Day by teaching our children and reviewing our 7 Principles of Peace with our whole family.

Sunday, June 3 at 10:30 a.m. is our Religious Education Sunday. Please mark your calendars and join us to share our celebration of learning this past year. Our students will present a project from each class level. We will also hear from our graduating seniors as they share their "Statement of Faith" projects. Mark your calendars for this exciting end of the year Religious Education Service.

Religious Education Lessons

The Nursery will be open at 10:00 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 get to know each other.

Lower and Upper Elementary, Juniors and Seniors will be preparing for their RE Sunday, June 3 at 10:30 a.m.

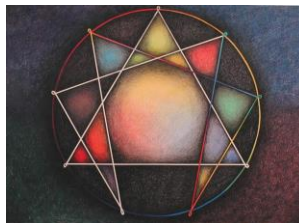
Julie Artis, Director of Religious Education



An evening of building bridges with music, Greg Greenway (of "Brother Sun" fame) and Reggie Harris will share the journey of their longtime friendship and musical efforts, entitling this performance "Deeper Than the Skin," which, we hope, is self-explanatory.

From their website (<https://c9tuning.wordpress.com/deeper-than-the-skin/>): Reggie and Greg have a unique story. Born three days apart, with their ancestry flowing through the same portal of history (Richmond, Virginia), they are on a pilgrimage together - one that began three decades ago. The racial divisions that are the reality of America started them off in two different worlds but the amazing bonds of music, respect, admiration, and shared vision have brought them together as friends and colleagues... The work of justice making is long and difficult. They share not only a story of overcoming but provide a living, breathing example of celebration, creative resistance, and joy. There are many who say that they are the embodiment of those traits - that their talent and communication skills make it infectious. Both are committed professionally to inspiring people; to encourage others to take that step beyond their comfort zone. As they reach across the racial divide, they encourage others to foster the relationships that are, in the end, a path to healing.

Introduction to Enneagram



**Saturdays, May 12, 19 and June 2, from 9am - noon
at Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church**

The Enneagram is a psycho-spiritual tool that combines an exquisite psychological system with traditional spiritual practices in order to bring about personal transformation.

As a psychological tool the Enneagram helps us discover the nature of our personal conditioning, our mental, emotional, and bodily habits. Further, the Enneagram helps us discover our instinctual tendencies, i.e., how we engage the world in regard to three basic survival needs: self-preservation, social interactions, and one to one

interactions.

As a spiritual tool the Enneagram helps us discover the ways in which our personal conditioning is an impediment to spiritual experience. Emphasizing the two self system (egoic self/spiritual self) that is the basis of all contemplative teaching and spiritual practice, we examine the ways in which spiritual practices help us to manage the conditioned self in order to move beyond it, in the direction of deeper spiritual experience. As the mystic poet Hafez says:

*Between the lover and the Beloved there must be no veil.
Thou thyself art thine own veil, Hafez.
Get out of the way!*

In sum, as both a psychological and spiritual tool the Enneagram brings about personal transformation through the relaxation of the conditioned self, which in turn brings us into deeper contact with Spirit.

Instructor: Dr. Alexander Riegel

Cost: Free to members of Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church. All others \$90.

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

[To register, contact Dr. Riegel: alexgpuc@gmail.com]

Announcements

Heigh Ho, Heigh Ho, It's off to Camp we Go!

Ten of the most improved sixth graders at Detroit Merit Academy will be happily singing if we raise the funds to send them to the Howell Nature Center for a week. The three, sixth grade teachers soon will nominate those who deserve a wonderful reward and a red letter certificate from the Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church members and friends. The cost of each session ranges from \$400 to \$600 before the Camp gives us a 20% discount.

We are working with the new camp director now to plan the school assembly, which recognizes the winners and motivates academic achievements in the current fifth graders.

Our campaign to send ten students will begin in a few weeks, but donations of any size are gratefully accepted at any time. Make checks out to GPUC with "Camp" in the memo line. Contact Susie Boynton or Candy Dunn for further information.

Think Scrip This Spring!

Spring is in the air, and as Mother's Day, Father's Day, and graduations quickly approach, please consider using GPUC's scrip program to purchase any gift cards you may be planning to give!

In case you're not yet familiar with it, scrip is a terrific fundraising program that allows you to purchase gift cards from companies who return anywhere from 2 to 16% of the amount you spend back to GPUC. Hundreds of familiar retailers participate in the scrip program. How do these stores help us raise money? It's simple - scrip participating retailers agree to sell gift cards to GPUC at a discount. GPUC families and friends buy the cards for full face value, they redeem them for full face value, and GPUC RE keeps the difference as revenue.

In addition to gifts, you can put your regular household shopping dollars to work by shopping with scrip gift cards at stores that participate in the program. Cards can be used for many purchases including dining out, clothing, entertainment and gasoline. You can support GPUC's RE students all year!

Order forms are available in the GPUC foyer and office. They can also be downloaded from the GPUC website, or emailed to you by contacting Candy Dunn in the church office. You may drop your order in the church office at any time. Orders are placed every two weeks or so, and cards are distributed upon their arrival. Please make checks payable to GPUC, with "scrip" in the memo line.

If you have questions, please contact Jennifer Semanision, the Scrip Coordinator. Thank you in advance for your support of the GPUC RE Program!

Thanks!

First Sunday Food Sharing - Sunday, May 6

Our next opportunity for Food Sharing will be **Sunday, May 6**. The following Food Sharing will be **Sunday, June 3**.

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, 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. **So far this calendar year, GPUC has donated \$759** towards the purchase of these items. This is actually a very helpful option, as not many organizations bring these types of foods. **The staff and clients at Crossroads East are very thankful for our donations!**

GPUC Writing Workshop

The GPUC Writing Workshop Writers have published a book. The authors of the book, Kaleidoscope, will be holding a book signing at the Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church, at 7:00 pm., Friday, May 11th. The community is invited to enjoy refreshments, readings and discussions.

- Jean Dupuis includes a few chapters of her father's biography. Through diaries and research, Jean is getting to know the man who was her father.
- Karin Garrett wrote her memoir of growing up in Denmark during the German occupation.
- Linda Lawrence's whimsical stories will leave you smiling and pondering our human condition.
- Christian Kroeyr gives us a glimpse of the struggles with gender identity and gender expression.
- Zsombor Zoltan offers us a Unitarian view of if (when) artificial intelligence takes over the world.
- See how Carol Ghesquiere interprets the famous six-word short story, "For Sale. Baby Shoes. Never Worn."
- Read an excerpt from Mary Beth Smith's novel about a banker and the hardships his family suffers during the great Depression.
- Emily Marck includes a snippet of her fantasy/adventure series.

There are many more contributors from the church and from the community and they would like to share their tales with you.

Resale Shop News

The GPUC Resale team has had a busy month! We have, fortunately, received some great donations from Stefek Estate Sales. In late March, we received 3000 pieces of higher end clothing, which we quickly turned into a sales bonanza! After our sale, we were able to donate 25 remaining bags to a Veterans Charity. During the last two weeks, we have also received beautiful household and decorative items for the shop thanks again to Stefek Estate Sales.

Our thanks to Connie Roberts, our "techie", for making our EBay program run smoother by interfacing our printer with our EBay site. This will allow us to print mailing labels from the annex.

Did you know that almost 60% of our Resale Shop volunteers are non-church members? Some have volunteered for 10 +years! We owe a big THANK YOU to these silent contributors of GPUC's success! (Or maybe, they just come for Juli's soup and Margo's desserts?).

UU Crafters

UU Crafters will meet on the third and fourth Tuesdays of the month, May 15 and 22 in the Annex from 7-9pm. All are welcome to join us for an evening of social stitching and other small crafts. Check the church calendar on the website and the weekly email for any changes. Contact Ann Helm with any questions.
Submitted by Ann Helm

Care Committee Update

The Care Committee wishes to thank Mary Morshead for all of her help this past month, and again, a tribute to

Susan Hartz for obtaining a desk and chair for writing notes and cards to the sick in our community. We are thankful for having a wonderful team of helpers.

Linda Lawrence

Women's Book Discussion Group

The women will meet, Wednesday, May 16th at 5:30 for their annual potluck at the home of Jill Crane. At this meeting we do not discuss a book, but we do choose the books for the next year. We also plan our summer meetings, which take place at a member's home.

We would love to see new faces, so if you are interested in joining us you will be most welcome. Please let Jill Crane know if you plan to attend and what you would like to bring to the potluck.

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.

Newsletter Deadline

Please submit your contribution to the next newsletter by Friday, May 18 at noon. They should be sent to newsletter@gpuc.us.

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