

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

November 2018

Upcoming Services

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

Annual Day of the Dead Service

Worship Leader: Dr. Riegel & Julie Artis

Worship Associate: Meghan Boomhower

This Sunday is our annual "Day of the Dead" service. We will call to heart and mind the memories of our loved ones who have passed on. Toward that end you are invited to bring a photo or other memento that represents a person(s) whose memory you would like to honor. Tables will be available to display our mementos and you will have an opportunity to take a moment, if you would like, to share why this person was significant to you.

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

Question Box Sermon

Worship Leader: Dr. Riegel

Worship Associate: Tonya Wells

A few weeks ago I invited the congregation to submit to me ideas or questions about which they would like to hear me reflect. I have received quite a few such submissions (There is still time to do this, if you want.) since then so will be conducting a question Box sermon this day. Feel free to email any ideas or questions you would like to be part of my grist for the mill.

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

Annual Thanksgiving Potluck Service

Worship Leader: Dr. Riegel **Worship Associate:** Julie Artis

This is the third year of our annual Thanksgiving Potluck. This will be a shortened service immediately followed by the communal meal. You will hear more about this event in upcoming weeks but in sum, be prepared to bring a dish to share and to honor the Thanksgiving tradition by giving thanks for the bounty of your life.

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

The Science of Happiness

Worship Leader: Peggi Tabor

Worship Associate: Chuck Palmer

This talk looks at recent studies focused on understanding happiness. What causes it? What limits our experience of it? What are the physical and neural correlates of happiness and can we develop and expand them? Listeners will leave this talk with a "toolkit" of both psychological and physiological behaviors designed to increase and maintain our experience of happiness.

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Alexander's Meander



***Walking the Talk:
Should There Be a No Exception Clause to Our Principles?***

As we enter the political season again (the midterm election is upon us) I have noticed the political rhetoric among my liberal friends ratcheting up again. While I think it is important that we liberals be actively involved in politics, I think it is equally important that we be conscientious about *the manner in which* we are involved in politics. I am particularly thinking about the language we use to state our positions and frame the positions of those with whom we don't agree. Too often our language and behavior is toxic...

Why is this the case? Why are we given to toxic language and behavior when it comes to things about which we are passionate, like politics? The reason is that politics are about core values and when it comes to core values, we have strong egoic reactions/defenses. It's part of the nature of the beast. This raises what is for me the principal challenge of living the liberal religious life, namely, that we are called to principles that challenge our natural (and often negative) egoic tendencies.

It is important to remember the principles that unite us as liberal religious people, from our first principle (the inherent worth and dignity of *every* person) to the seventh principle (the interdependent web of existence). Because if we don't remember (and act upon) these principles, our identity as liberal religious people means nothing. By identifying as liberal religious people, i.e., Unitarian Universalist, we opt into a vision of the world that calls us to our better selves. That calling is a challenge for us to live out these principles *at all times and with all people*.

Nevertheless, from time to time, especially during the political season, we seem to feel that there are exceptions to this rule. We seem to feel that the inherent worth and dignity of *every* person is a principal with which we can dispense when another person/people doesn't meet our expectations of how he/she should show up in the world. The problem with this is that nothing about the first principle (or any of the others) suggest that we should make such exceptions. You get the gist...

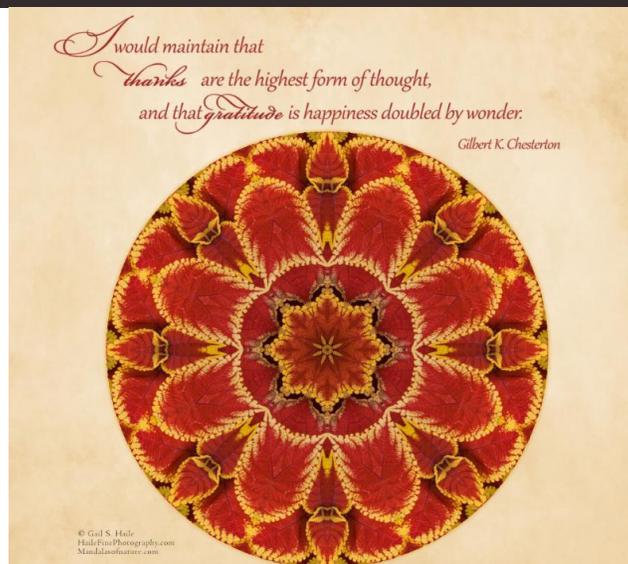
So as we approach this political season (and indeed, at all times) let us remember that the principles we profess as liberal religious people require us to show up in the world in a certain way. That is, we are required to make our best effort to bring our behavior in line with the principles we profess. Anything short of this is to fail to walk our talk. I think Gandhi said it best when he said:

"My life is my message."

Namaste,

Alex

Religious Education News



Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday of the year. It is a time of giving thanks, gratitude, blessings and sharing with others. This time of the year pulls at my senses and pulls my heart to love more, give more and be

thankful and grateful for all that I have. One of my favorite posts from Facebook is 12 Tomatoes I have shared before and will repeat. A parent wrote this list and posted it.

As a parent, I am grateful for....

1. Early wakeups = Children to love
2. House to clean = Safe place to live
3. Laundry = Clothes to wear
4. Dishes to wash = Food to eat
5. Crumbs under the table = Family meals
6. Grocery shopping = \$ to provide for us
7. Toilets to clean = indoor plumbing
8. Lots of noise = People in my life
9. Endless questions about homework = Kid's brains growing
10. Sore and tired in bed = I'm still alive

AMEN

May you all have a wonderful November preparing for Thanksgiving Day. This Director of Religious Education is grateful for the students, parents, GPUC Board, Members, Rev. Alex, staff members and my family and friends. Let the holiday season begin. Peace and love.

Religious Education Lessons

All classes are continuing with our Unitarian Universalism curriculum for this year.



All students and their families are asked to attend the **Juniors' Spaghetti Dinner** on **Sunday, November 4th at 5:00 p.m.** The funds from the Spaghetti Dinner will go towards their Boston Trip in June, 2019. Tickets are available in the lobby before and after church and at the door on November 4th. Adults tickets are \$12 and students 10 years old and under are \$8. This is an evening of fun, good food and fellowship. See you all on Sunday, November 4th.

The students are looking for sponsors!! We want to start the meal with a zero debt. **If you would like to sponsor the dinner you can help by sending a check to cover the Salad Materials for \$130, the Sauce for \$100, Bread & Pasta for \$60, Beverages for \$40 and Dessert for \$40.** Please support our students by attending the event with your family and friends.

The GPUC nursery will be open at 10:00 a.m. every Sunday. A pot of coffee is in the RE wing for our parents to enjoy and share conversation with others.

Dates to remember

Sunday, November 4 - Spaghetti Dinner at 5:00 p.m.
Sunday, November 4 - RE Committee Meeting at 9:15 a.m.
Sunday, November 18 - All Family Potluck Dinner

Julie Artis, Director of Religious Education

Committee on Ministry

Committee on Ministry 2018-2019: Who We Are and Our Role



Committee On Ministry : Sarah Neely, Kathy Konwiak, Jud Cole and Mark Franchett

I wanted to introduce the 2018-2019 Committee on Ministry (COM). The members are Sarah Neely, Jud Cole, Kathy Konwiak and Mark Franchett. We meet the 3rd Tuesday of every Month at 6:00 in the GPUC library with Dr. Alex Riegel.

The GPUC Policy Manual defined our purpose as:

Statement of Purpose:

The Committee on Ministry shall focus on the health of the total ministry of the congregation.

This includes the work of all facets of the congregation: clergy and lay leaders, staff and volunteers, the Board of Trustees and other committees, members and friends, and people of all ages including children, youth and adults.

** The Committee is a group of caring and open lay people dedicated to the well-being of the congregation as a whole.*

** The Committee's role is to monitor all facets of the congregation as the congregation works in a spirit of mutual respect toward common goals.*

** The Committee's evaluation shall be guided by the church's Statement of Mission and Covenant.*

** The Committee shall give honest and pertinent feedback to the Board of Trustees, Minister, staff and other committees concerning their effectiveness in serving the congregation's total ministry.*

** The Committee is responsible for identifying issues within the congregation and, if necessary, suggesting a process for resolution and healing. The Committee itself is not responsible for resolving disputes.*

** The Committee shall report at least annually to the Board of Trustees regarding the health of the shared ministry.*

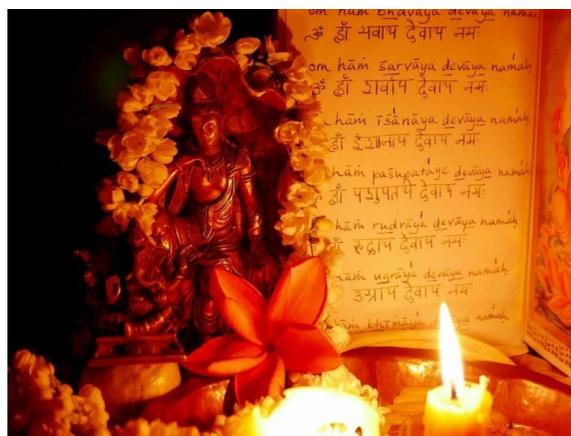
In the end, we are here to help. Please feel free to contact any us.

Regards,

Mark Franchett, Chair COM

Mantra, Meditation, and Mystical Musings - Part I

*A Course of Interspiritual Study and Practice
with Dr. Alexander Riegel
at The Detroit Theosophical Society*



Description: This course will be an interspiritual study and spiritual practice course with heavy emphasis on learning Sanskrit mantra. Our facilitator, Dr. Alexander Riegel, will facilitate us in learning the Sanskrit alphabet, numerous simple mantras, and three to four more complex Sanskrit mantras. We will also practice silent meditation and study various scriptures from the world's mystical streams, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Sufism, and Christianity. Classes will meet the second Sunday of each month, Nov. through June, from 6 - 8pm at The Detroit Theosophical Society in Berkley, Mi., beginning Nov. 11th.

Schedule:

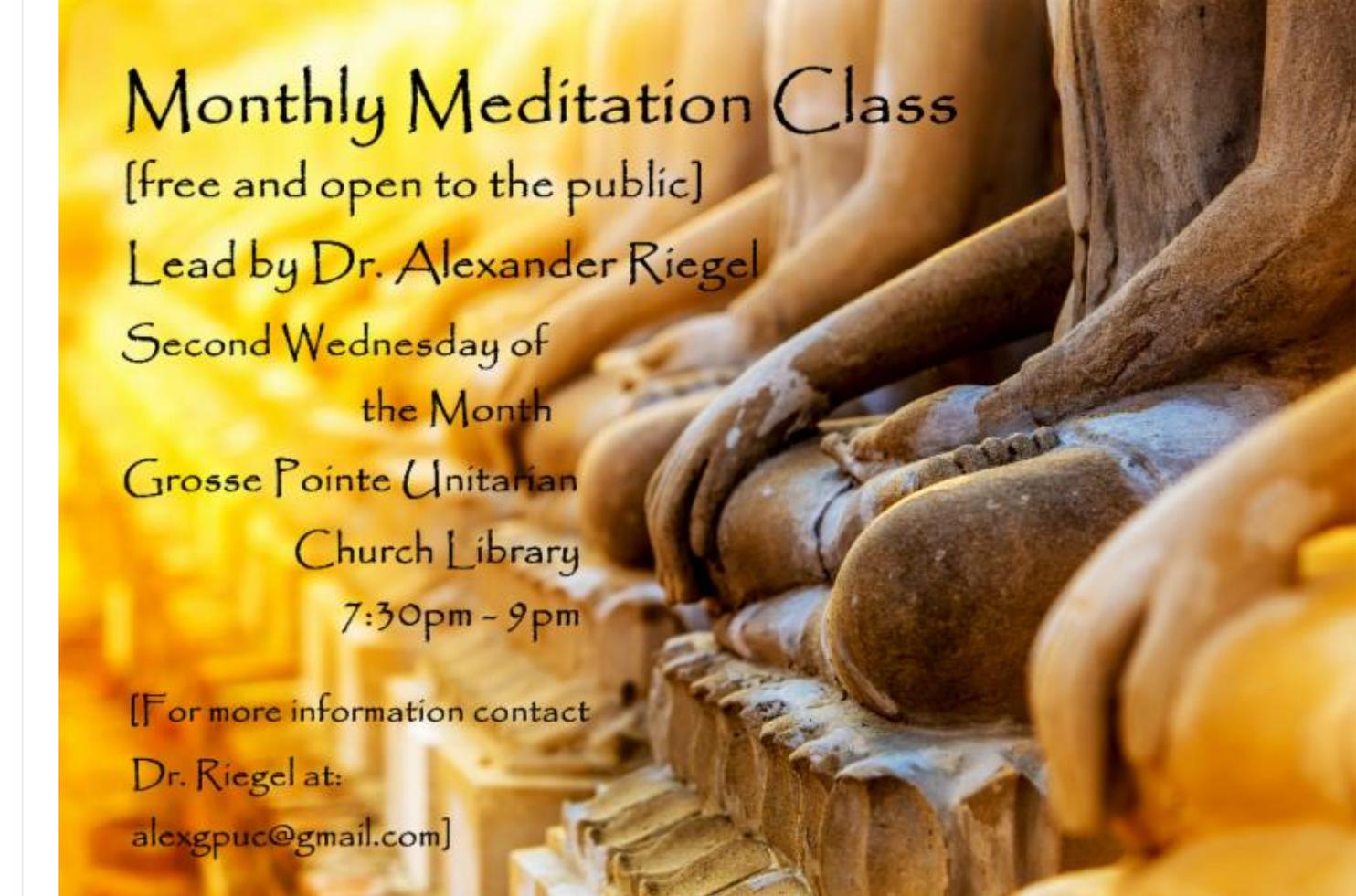
6pm - 6:50pm: mantra study and practice

7pm - 7:30pm: silent meditation

7:30pm - 8pm: spiritual study

Tuition: \$160 (payable to Dr. Riegel: 786 Harcourt Rd. Grosse Pointe Park, Mi. 48230) no later than Nov. 7th. You may contact Dr. Riegel at: alexriegel@post.harvard.edu if you would like to ask questions about course content before committing to this course.)

Note(s): A minimum of ten people are required for this course to take place. As soon as Dr. Riegel knows we have the minimum number of people registered he will confirm the course with you. (We do not expect reaching this minimum to be a problem.) ALSO, Dr. Riegel will make every effort to capture an audio recording of each class, in the event you have to miss a class or two.



Monthly Meditation Class

[free and open to the public]

Lead by Dr. Alexander Riegel

Second Wednesday of
the Month

Grosse Pointe Unitarian
Church Library

7:30pm - 9pm

[For more information contact

Dr. Riegel at:

alexgpuc@gmail.com]

Announcements

Fall Grounds Clean-up date change to Saturday, November 10th

Due to the rain last Saturday, the fall grounds clean-up has been moved to **Saturday, November 10 from 10 am-12 noon**. Each fall the congregation is invited to come together for a couple hours on a Saturday morning to clean up and help put to rest our wonderful church grounds. Many hands make light work as we trim bushes, rake leaves, cut back weeds and branches, clean gutters and do a few other small tasks to help maintain our grounds. No special skill or experience is needed and this is a family friendly affair. It can be one hour or three hours, it is up to you. This saves us a lot of money if we do not outsource this work. **Please join us at 10 am on Saturday, Nov. 10th**. Bring rakes, tarps, gloves, clippers, pruning shears if you have them, but mostly your enthusiasm.

Russ Chavey, Grounds Chair

Third Annual Thanksgiving Potluck on Sunday, November 18, 2018

Looking forward to all of the wonderful food donations our members bring to this day of Thanksgiving. Your main dishes, casseroles, salads, vegetable dishes and desserts are a treat for all of us. Look for the sign-up sheets on the table near the coffee kitchen. Warming trays and the oven will be available for your use.

We Need Tutors for Detroit Children

The Schools Tutoring Committee wants to add five additional tutors to our ranks in order to return to our usual size. The need is great for reading and math, especially since the recent results in math testing have slipped a bit. Some math tutors arrive in time to hear the classroom lesson, then proceed to tutor one student at a time or small groups.

Volunteers can choose when to start tutoring as well as the grade level, and day and time. The schools are located nearby, and staff and students really appreciate our help. Please contact Susie Boynton for further information or to join our efforts.

Music News

Do you love to sing? The GPUC Adult Choir is always looking for new singers. We rehearse on Wednesday evenings from 7:30-9:00 and we sing on two Sundays a month. In an effort to recruit some young parents, we will be providing free child care on Wednesday evenings beginning in January. "I love singing in the choir because Joseph runs such a fast paced but careful rehearsal and he picks great music!" says one enthusiastic choir member. If you have any questions about singing in the choir, both Joseph and choir members would be more than happy to speak with you.

Our next Food Sharing will be SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 4

With each new month comes a new opportunity to contribute to the food pantry at Crossroads East! Please consider bringing canned, boxed or bagged foods to church with you on that day. Cereals, soups, prepared meals, peanut butter, pasta... any **non-perishable foods** you would like to donate will be gladly received. Also accepted are toiletry items such as toothbrushes and toothpaste, soap, and deodorant. Your contributions are taken to Crossroads East, located in Detroit Cooperative Church on Moross.

Monetary donations are also very gladly accepted. Milk, eggs, fruits, vegetables, and bread are purchased with the money that you donate. These fresh groceries are delivered to Crossroads East on a (most) weekly basis, and are very much appreciated by the staff and clients.

Social Justice Committee Update

The Social Justice Committee held its first meeting in September, and I'm happy to report the committee is a good mix of church members, from those new to the church in the past few months, to those who've been here 50 years.

We are in the process of determining which of the myriad social justice issues will get our time and energies in the coming year. Empowering women, helping people coming out of prisons and jails, working on issues around racial and economic disparities are among the issues we're talking about.

Given that our group is small--about 12 active members--we will choose one primary topic, and focus on that; we see ourselves teaming up with those organizations and groups already working on the issue. Yes, there are social justice needs everywhere, but yes, too, there are many groups working for change. We are one of them.

namaste,
Suzanne Ross, Social Justice Chair

Alliance Holiday Concert

Begin the holiday season by attending an all church Christmas Concert and pot-luck luncheon on **Tuesday, December 11** at 11:30am. This has been an annual event by the Alliance and features the Grosse Pointe North High School Choir followed by lunch at the church. Church members, friends and guests are invited. Watch for further announcements. Call Mary Morshead with any questions.

UU Crafters

UU Crafters will take a holiday break in November and December. We will not resume in January. Please contact Ann Helm with any questions.

Women's Book Discussion Group

Wednesday, November 28, 5:30 p.m., Church library

Please Note: The book club is meeting one week later due to the Thanksgiving Holiday

The Invisible Man, by Ralph Ellison Discussion Leader: Barbara Moran

Invisible Man is a novel by, published by Random House in 1952. It addresses many of the social and intellectual issues facing African Americans early in the twentieth century, including black nationalism, the relationship between black identity and Marxism, and the reformist racial policies of Booker T. Washington, as well as issues of individuality and personal identity.

New 2018-2019 Phone Directories

The 2018-2019 GPUUC Phone Directories are here and ready to be picked up. They are available in the foyer on Sundays or in the church office during the week. It is your responsibility to notify the office of any changes in your contact information. If you do not see a directory with your name on it - please contact the church office. An electronic copy of the directory can be found on the church website (gpuuc.org) under the members only tab.

-- Candy Dunn

Newsletter Deadline

Please submit your contribution to the next newsletter by **Friday, November 23 at noon.**

They should be sent to **THE NEW NEWSLETTER EMAIL ADDRESS: newslettergpuc@gmail.com**

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