

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

June 2019

Upcoming Services

June 2, 2019 **10:30 AM**

Religious Education Sunday

Worship Leaders: Julie Artis and Rev. Dr. Alexander Riegel

Come celebrate our year-long Religious Education classes with presentations by our students about Unitarian Universalism. We are a community that lifts up the span of ages. This is a gift of love and hope for every person in our GPUC congregation. We will all then enjoy a Unitarian Universalist Ice Cream Sundae after the service. Family and Friends are invited.

June 9, 2019 **10:30 AM**

Flower Communion

Worship Leader: Rev. Dr. Alexander Riegel
Worship Associate: Tonya Wells

It has become a tradition on the Sunday when we have our annual Flower Communion service that I do a "poetry slam" for my homily and we also have a picnic in the Memorial Garden area. So, please bring a flower to contribute to our flower display (The meaning of Flower Communion will be explained at the beginning of the service.) and, if able, *bring a dish to share, as well as a blanket or folding chair upon which to sit.* [Regarding the picnic, hot dogs, water, lemonade, coffee, and tea will be provided. And, if you remember last year, our Chief Chef, Jeff, made fabulous French Fries. Prepare to relax and enjoy the fellowship, food, and fun!]

June 16, 2019 **10:30 AM**

In the Beginning Was the... Ear?!

Worship Leader: Rev. Dr. Alexander Riegel
Worship Associate: Joe Buttiglieri

In the Bible, *The Book of John* begins with the phrase, "In the beginning was the word..." Also in the Bible, the world is created by language, "And God said, let there be..." The Bible (and actually, ancient Greek philosophy along with it) reflects the *logocentric* - or word centered - nature of Western civilization. *Words... Words... Words!!!* In this sermon I will call into question our word centered culture and suggest that we need to learn to listen as much as we've been taught to talk. In fact, I will suggest that the skill of listening is integral to our first principle: The inherent worth and dignity of every person.

June 23, 2019 **10:30 AM**

Until Giving Is Receiving

Worship Leader: Rev. Dr. Alexander Riegel
Worship Associate: Maurya Kay

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Upcoming Events

- [Sun Jun 2 Vaccination Seminar](#)
- [Sun Jun 2 Ice Cream Social](#)
- [Sun Jun 9 Food Sharing Sunday](#)
- [Sun Jun 9 GPUC Picnic](#)
- [Mon Jun 10 Women's Book Club](#)
- [Sun Jun 23 First Aid Class](#)

[Forward To A Friend](#)

In his book, "The Prophet," Khalil Gibran writes about many themes, one of which is "giving." He counsels us that we do not truly understand giving until we understand that "giving is receiving." Our culture has trained us toward individualism, materialism, and the wanton pursuit of instinctual gratification. These tendencies fly in the face of Gibran's counsel. In this sermon I am going to explore what it is Gibran is calling us to understand, in light of these cultural tendencies.

June 30, 2019

10:30 AM

Mass Transit in Detroit -- Brother Can You Spare a Ride?

Worship Leader: Chuck Palmer

Worship Associate: Suzanne Ross

Chuck will explore the history of mass transit and analyze why the Detroit metropolitan area lacks adequate mass transit options. It's not a simple as population density and being the home of the American auto industry.

Alexander's Meander

There are a few items I need to address in this newsletter article before summer is upon us. First, after conversations with the Committee on Ministry and the Board, it has been decided that this year we ought to return to the more traditional model of ministerial scheduling. Specifically, the tradition in Unitarian Universalist churches is for the minister to take vacation and Study Break over the months of July and August. When I arrived at GPUC we attempted to change this because I thought it important to shift our culture to "year-round church." I do not believe that this shift has occurred. In fact, I've learned that in Grosse Pointe there is a great deal of resistance to summer church. In light of that, this year I will be taking July as my vacation month and August as my Study Break. This means my Study Break will not occur midyear, per usual (Most of you are aware that I used to go to India for a month following the holidays.).

Along these lines, also traditional in Unitarian Universalist churches is for the minister to accrue one month sabbatical for every year served, not to be utilized before four years. I have been serving GPUC for five years (though the first year as acting minister, for which accrued sabbatical time is not part of the contract). This means that I have a Sabbatical coming up next year, which, after discussions with the Board, we have settled on me taking from January through April of next year. The Worship Associate committee is aware of this and is already planning pulpit coverage for that time. In addition, during that time I will be available for urgent pastoral needs, namely, hospitalization and death. Or, in the event I cannot return in a timely manner, the Board and I will have arranged for other pastoral coverage. Since I do not begin my Sabbatical until January, there is ample time for us to discuss this and have conversations about it between now and then.

Finally, I want to say a word about our recent Annual Meeting. That was a very long meeting (two hours!) during which we manage a lot of content. We approved a loan of up to \$200,000 to repair our roof, which is in dire need of such repair! We also managed *significant* bylaw revision. In the weeks leading up to the meeting and during the meeting itself, I was impressed with the democratic process. Honest conversations were had about disagreements regarding the bylaw proposal. Compromises were made regarding the bylaw proposal. And civil process was followed by everyone at the meeting itself. In the end, I think we reached a place with which most people were relatively comfortable and the bylaws were passed. Kudos to this congregation! Not every (read "many") congregations could not handle so much content, given the nature of that content, so well. So, although it was an onerous process, it was a successful process and exemplifies what Congregational polity (rooted in the democratic process) is all about. I hope everyone feels good about this process... and as for myself, I feel I have a clear direction about where my time and energies need to be going in the near future to help us realize the intent behind these bylaw revisions. In sum, I am excited that we set the stage for continued evolution and growth. Let's see how the next few years goes and if we need to tweak the system, we will do that. But in the meantime, let's all breathe and get on with the promising future that's before us!

Namaste,

Alex

Religious Education News



We should not hesitate to help our children see that what they learn and feel here is Unitarianism, and that our effort in the direction of liberal religion is born of a deep commitment to life. Through worship and through learning and through relationships with others, it is the love of life we are doing our best to help along.

- Robert Doss

As our **Religious Education** year winds down, I want to express my deep appreciation for all the volunteers who made this year successful. It is through your commitment and caring that makes our Religious Education Program work. On June 2nd we will celebrate the Religious Education program. We invite all members to listen, sing, and celebrate the UU year as our students present a small part of what they learned this past year. We are dedicated to come together from different places and examine our own paths.

Our young people have attended the beginning of the regular worship service all year. This brings the whole congregation together for the chalice lighting, hymn and Time for All Ages. Our young people feel a part of the larger congregation. This participation with our youth helps to strengthen their identity as Unitarian Universalists. We also shared in Children's Chapel in the RE wing this year. Your DRE lead the children in child centered, developmentally appropriate worship during Sundays this pass year. Multi-Generational Worship services occur at holidays and other special times to include our students with the whole congregation. We also shared Child Dedications together with the whole congregation. Our GPUC community welcomed the children into the human community, in the spirit of human oneness, and into the fellowship of life.

We encourage you to share RE Sunday, June 2nd with us. This Sunday we will share our belief of each individual and the power of community. After our presentation we would like you to enjoy our Seven Principle Sundaes out in the garden area. See you all June 2!!!

Dates to Remember:

June 2-RE Sunday, all students in the church service

June 9-Flower Sunday and church picnic, all students in church service

June 16-Father's Day, all students in the church and the nursery will be open at 10:00 a.m.

The **Nursery** will be open at 10:00 a.m. every Sunday morning starting June 16 for the summer. We will have the same loving childcare workers to provide a safe and caring place for our young UU's.

Children must be taught how to think, not what to think. - Margaret Mead

Julie Artis
Director of Religious Education

Send a Kid to Camp

Send a Kid to Camp 2019!

We have exciting news! The Spirit of Alexandria Foundation is matching our funding and we will be able to send **20** of the most improved sixth graders at Detroit Merit Academy to the Howell Nature Center camp this year! The new camp session, "Alexandria's Outdoor Adventure Camp" has been chosen for the campers.



GPUC members and friends have shown great heart in the past for supporting students who have worked hard to improve their achievements during a very important time in their schooling. With a 20% discount, the cost to sponsor one camper is \$320 for a week. Donations of any size are gratefully accepted at any time; please make check out to GPUC with "Camp" in the memo line. Contact Susie Boynton or Candy Dunn for further information.

Musical Notes

Warsaw Concerto: 75 Years An Extremely Successful Event

...we had about 150 in our audience! People were there from the Polish and Jewish communities as well as our own church members. Thanks to Miriam Engstrom for her expertise with theater, the staging was perfect with the Polish Flag, the Polish Resistance Flag, and the Israeli flag, as well as priceless artwork of Tamara de Lempicka.

World-class virtuoso violinist Sonia Lee made the concert very special, indeed.

Perhaps the greatest feature of the afternoon was our special guest: Halina Konwiak, mother-in-law of Kathy. Halina is in her nineties and fought in the Polish Resistance as a child. What an honor to have her with us as we marked this significant anniversary with narrative and music.

The audience must have liked the show, because when I hit the last chord on the title piece, they shot to their feet, cheering.

Thank you so much to the entire music committee for selling tickets, ushering, and hosting the event-it was such a pleasure for me-all I had to do was focus on the great music.

Joseph Palazzolo
GPUC Director of Music

GPUC Office Notes

Year End Pledge Payment Summaries

The week of June 3rd the pledge payment summaries for the current fiscal year will be emailed or mailed to all pledging members and friends. The fiscal year will end on June 30; if your pledge is not yet complete we ask that you **please send us payment by Friday June 28th**. Your support of the church makes it possible to continue our active program and maintain our beautiful facility. The new fiscal year begins on July 1, 2019.

Notice from the Treasurer

The 2018-19 church year comes to a close on Sunday, June 30. The last date checks will be printed in this fiscal year is Thursday, June 27. Any receipts that pertain to the current church year must be submitted to the church office no later than Wednesday, June 26, 2019. Please contact Sabrina Biernat 313-622-4253 or Candy Dunn in the office 313-881-0420 if you have questions. Thank you. - Sabrina Biernat, Treasurer

Notes from the Office

Summer Office Hours: The office will be open 9am - 3pm, Thursdays & Fridays only beginning the week of June 24th through August 16th. Regular office hours resume Monday, August 19. Voicemail is available 24/7.

Lost and Found: Please check the "Lost and Found" box and the many coats left in the cloak room for items you may have left at the church. Unclaimed items will go to the Resale Shop on June 26.

Refrigerator Clean Out: The refrigerator in the coffee kitchen needs to be emptied of all food for the summer. Please remove any food items left in the fridge, freezer, custodian's room and cupboards. All food items remaining will be disposed of the end of June.

Pledge Reminder: The new Fiscal Year begins on July 1, 2019. Please remember to write 2018-19 pledge or 2019-19 pledge on the memo line of your check to receive credit in the intended pledge year.

Ink Cartridge Recycling: Continues through the summer. Thank you to all that donated empty cartridges. The empty cartridges are redeemed for store credit at Staples.

Safety Committee

Safety Committee

I would like to thank the members of the committee for all their hard and dedicated work:

Karen Valliere	Carol Ghesquiere
Sonja Franchett	John Engstrom
Julie Artis	Rev. Alex Riegel
Bill Rehahn	Lynn Rehahn, chairperson

Recent activities include:

- The committee hosted a First Aid/Stop the Bleed workshop in January 2019. Another workshop is scheduled for June 23, 2019.
- Special Agent James Soper, ATF made an Avoid/Deny/Defend presentation in April.
- Installation of a new manual Fire Alarm in the foyer

- Purchased First Aid Kits/Trauma Packs, Fire Blankets and signage.
- Worked with Dave Biernat on updating Usher/Greeter safety protocols
- For those of you interested, the UUA has recently posted a *UUA Safe Congregations Handbook*. The URL is: <https://www.uua.org/safe/handbook>.

Thank you.



STOP
THE BLEED

**Lifesaving training is
for everyone**

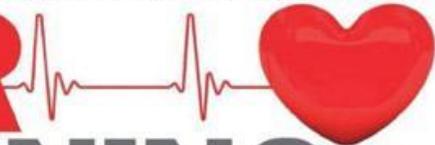
GPUC First Aid Workshop
June 23, 2019
in the Annex after services

Members from the staff of Beaumont Health
will conduct a hands-on presentation that will cover:

- Basic First Aid
- Trauma care/Stop the Bleed
- CPR
- AED Use

The presentation will run approximately 90 minutes-to-two hours.
Lunch will be provided.

Maximum class size is 15 participants.
There will be a sign-up sheet in the lobby for those interested in participating.

CPR 
TRAINING

Get trained. Save a life. You'll be glad you did.
Presented by the GPUC Safety Committee

Harbor Springs.

Jill Crane

I will miss you all very much!

The Women's Book Discussion Group

The Women's Book Discussion Group will meet at the home of Anne Roberts on **Tuesday, June 4th** at **6 pm**. We will order pizza and salad and divide the cost between us.

Please join us as we will choose the books for the coming year. We welcome new members!

Please let Anne or Jill know if you plan to attend.

Jill Crane for Fellowship

SUNDAY JUNE 9 IS OUR NEXT FOOD SHARING OPPORTUNITY

On the second Sunday of each month, **food pantry and bathroom staples** are collected at GPUC. The donations are delivered to Crossroads East, a social services agency located on Moross in Detroit. If you prefer to donate monetarily, your donations are used to purchase perishables such as milk, eggs, bread, potatoes, and fruit.

Our donations are always gratefully received! Thank you for continuing to help folks in our community who could use a hand!



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, June 19 through Sunday, June 23 in Spokane, WA

General Assembly is the annual meeting of our Unitarian Universalist Association. Attendees worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through democratic process. Anyone may attend; congregations must certify annually to send voting delegates.

The Power of We: What do we want Unitarian Universalism to be? It is a time when we are asking big questions in our faith, and GA 2019 will be focused on digging into those questions together. It is a critical chance for congregational leaders and passionate UUs to set new goals and aspirations for our religious community. Help begin to reshape our Association and our congregations in new and powerful ways. Come to Spokane to experience what our shared faith can become when we embrace the Power of We.

[Register HERE for General Assembly](#)

**Juneteenth
Celebration
Service**

**Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church
&
St. Paul AME-Grosse Pointe Park(Host)**

**Wednesday June 19, 2019
7PM**

**St. Paul AME-Grosse Pointe Park
1385 Wayburn
Grosse Pointe Park, MI 48230
Rev. Jeffery L. Baker, Host Pastor**

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Newsletter Deadline

Please submit your contribution to the next newsletter by **Friday, August 16 at noon.**
Submit items to the **newsletter email address:** newslettergpuc@gmail.com

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