

# Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church

A Welcoming Congregation 



*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 2015

## Upcoming Services

**May 3, 2015** **10:30 AM**  
**The Gospel According to Calvin and Hobbes: an Introduction to Existential Thought, Part 1**

**Dr. Alexander Riegel** **Joe Buttiglieri, Worship Associate**  
This is the first of a two part series (part 2 will be May 10) using the wit and wisdom of Bill Watterson to introduce us to the philosophy of existentialism. As a UU I am sometimes asked what is my sacred text, if not the bible? I usually answer, part facetiously and part seriously, that my sacred text is the Calvin and Hobbes comic strip. Come find out why!

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**May 10, 2015** **10:30 AM**  
**The Gospel According to Calvin and Hobbes: an Introduction to Existential Thought, Part 2**

**Dr. Alexander Riegel** **Cynthia Luce, Worship Associate**

This is the second of a two part series using the wit and wisdom of Bill Watterson to introduce us to the philosophy of existentialism. As a UU I am sometimes asked what is my sacred text, if not the bible? I usually answer, part facetiously and part seriously, that my sacred text is the Calvin and Hobbes comic strip. Come find out why!

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**May 17, 2015** **10:30 AM**  
**"Because it was he, because it was I": Reflections on the Nature of Friendship**

**Dr. Alexander Riegel** **Chuck Palmer, Worship Associate**  
The title of this sermon comes from a quotation by Montaigne, who uttered these words when reflecting upon the death of a friend. Friendship is something that is ubiquitous in our lives (Cicero: "Not even water and fire, as the saying goes, are as universally essential to us as friendship.") but rarely do we reflect upon it. In this sermon I will reflect upon the nature of friendship, what it is and what it perhaps ought to be. I will suggest that friendship ought to be the primary force for one's personal growth and transformation, though rarely is it used in this regard - quite the opposite tends to be the case.

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## Upcoming Events

[Sat May 9 Enneagram Wkshp](#)

[Fri May 8 & 15 Book Discussion](#)

**May 24, 2015**

**10:30 AM**

**On Behalf of a Grateful Nation**

**Cynthia Luce**

**Anne Roberts, Worship Associate**

Our nation owes a debt to its fallen heroes that we can never fully repay. But we can honor their sacrifice by holding their memories close to our hearts and heeding the example they set. We must honor all who wear America's uniform and the families who love them by never giving up the search for those who've gone missing under our country's flag or are held prisoners of war. We must serve our patriots as well as they serve us, from the moment they enter the military to the moment they leave it to the moment they are laid to rest.

[Sun May 17 Annual Meeting](#)

[Thu May 21 Women's Book Discussion](#)

[Sat May 30 Classism Wkshp](#)

[Forward To A Friend](#)

**May 31, 2015**

**10:30 AM**

**Religious Education Sundae Sunday**

**Dr. Alexander Riegel, Julie Artis**

**Jim Moir, Worship Associate**

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

All Ages Worship Service • No Religious Education Classes • Nursery Care Available

**Comments from Dr. Alexander Riegel**

**The Choices We Make and the Duty to Love**



Those who know me understand that I am a serious dog person. When I was a child I was particularly taken by the northern breeds: their look, their stride, and of course their incredible ability to "talk." I particularly developed an affinity for the Alaskan malamute. From my early teens on I had determined that someday I would have my own Alaskan malamute companion... Fast-forward about 25 years.

One day my stepdaughter and I had heard about a litter of puppies at the local non-kill pound. We went to visit the pups but none of them struck me as my type of dog. When we were leaving the pound I happened to notice a one-year-old Chesapeake Bay retriever. She looked like a calm, stately animal, and rather intelligent to boot. To quicken the story, we ended up taking her home (This is Hootch, in the left frame of the photo at the top of this article).

Hooch was an amazing animal! She was a classic American sport dog who was fiercely loyal to her human companion. She was at my side almost every moment of her waking life. However, we were Hootch's third family so she came with some issues, which we only discovered after taking her home. She was a major female Alpha, she had little tolerance for other dogs, she was crate phobic (we expect former abuse in this regard), and she was terrified of thunderstorms. This meant that about 5% of the time she was quite aggressive. Over time I began to have second thoughts about her, but Kimi and I agreed that once you take an animal into your home it's yours for life.

I noticed that over time I began regretting the fact that Hootch wasn't an Alaskan malamute. Whenever she would misbehave I would begin comparing her to the image of the Alaskan malamute I had in my mind; the Alaskan malamute that was supposed to be my animal companion. I further notice that this was hampering my relationship with Hootch. I was appreciating her less and less...

Finally it dawned on me. I am the one who brought Hootch home and I did it as an act of free will. She was the animal companion that I had chosen. How unfair of me to allow my wishful thinking to undermine my relationship with her. Once I realized what I was doing I understood that the only way forward with Hootch was to accept my responsibility for the choice to make her my animal companion - and act accordingly. Once I accepted Hootch, issues and all, our relationship got much better. I stopped obsessing about the Alaskan malamute that was supposed to be my animal companion and was able to love Hootch the way all animal companions ought to be loved. This was a steep lesson in taking responsibility for the choices we make in life and how owning those choices is an important part of being able to love life, particularly the people in our lives. (This is really a lesson about the people in our lives, in case you've missed the point so far...)

Eventually we had to put Hootch down because of her age, with which with her aggression got much worse. I remember that day in all its terrible lucidity - our 11 years together were rather amazing after all.

Now, as most of you know, my animal companion is an Alaskan malamute, named Nietzsche (in the right frame of the photo at the top of this article). Nietzsche is even more than I imagined my Alaskan malamute companion would be. He is the gentlest being I've ever met and has the deepest, most soulful eyes I've ever seen. Still, I miss Hootch daily and daily thank her for this deep life lesson.

Now I'm off to howl at the moon with that fuzzy quadruped sitting in my backyard, underneath the stars, possibly communing with the spirit of one of my life's teachers...

Namaste,  
Alex

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## Message from the GPUC Board of Trustees

Dear GPUC Community:

The Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, May 17, 2015 following the worship service.

The agenda will include a vote to call Reverend Dr. Alex Riegel as our settled minister. According to GPUC By-Laws we must have a quorum of more than 50% of the congregation present to call a new minister. This vote will be by a written ballot. **It is imperative that all members attend this meeting.**

The agenda will also include voting on Board of Trustees officers and trustees as well as the Annual Budget for the 2015-2016 church year.

The Board of Trustees has authorized absentee ballots in the event that a congregant is unable to attend the meeting on May 17, 2015. Absentee ballots will be available by contacting Ann Helm, Board Secretary. Ballots must be returned to the Recording Secretary's mailbox in the church office by noon on Friday, May 15, 2015. For more information please contact Board Secretary Ann Helm.

Respectfully,

The Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church Board of Trustees  
Ann Helm, Recording Secretary

## Slate of Nominees for 2015-2016

The **2014-2015 Leadership Development Committee** presents the following slate of Officers, Trustees, Committee on Ministry members, and Leadership Development Committee members to be voted upon at the **Annual Meeting** of the Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church on **May 17, 2015**:

### **Board of Trustees**

<b>Officers:</b>	
Robin Ramsay	President
Ed Marck	Vice President
Ann Helm	Secretary
Laura Bartell	Treasurer

<b>Trustees:</b>	
Jenevieve Lilly	1-year term, to 2016 <i>(completing unexpired term of Ed Marck)</i>
Suzanne Ross	<i>Continuing, to 2016</i>
Christy Winder	<i>Continuing, to 2017</i>
Chris Vadino	3-year term, to 2018
Jud Cole	3-year term, to 2018

<b>Auditor:</b>
Mark O'Keefe

### **Committee on Ministry**

Cynthia Luce	<i>Continuing, to 2016 (completing unexpired term of Kinnie Smith)</i>
Veronica Smith	<i>Continuing, to 2017 (completing unexpired term of Ann Helm)</i>
Lynn Baker-Hunter	2-year term, to 2017
Wally Friesen	3-year term, to 2018

### **Leadership Development Committee**

Kathy Konwiak	<i>Continuing, to 2016</i>
Jeff Marotzke	<i>Continuing, to 2016</i>
Scott Sendra	<i>Continuing, to 2017</i>
Sabrina Biernat	3-year term, to 2018
Karen Webb, Chair	3-year term, to 2018

Respectfully submitted,  
GPUC Leadership Development Committee  
April 24, 2015

### Musical Notes

Want to be impressed? Come to Joseph Palazzolo's Annual **Spring Piano Recital by his accomplished students on Friday, May 1, 2015**, at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. Bach, Schumann, Brazilian, Charleston, Gypsy - a plethora of styles performed by talented young people, including GPUC's own Daniel Garan and Liana Bocci. Joseph will also perform. Church members get free admission!

Usher in Spring, finally, with a concert that will get your toes a-tappin'! **The Grosse Pointe Community Chorus' Annual Spring Concert, The Magic of Music, will be performed on Sunday, May 3, 2015**, 3:30 p.m. at Assumption Greek Orthodox Church. Our very own, talented Music Maestro, Joseph Palazzolo, directs this chorus, which includes several GPUC Choir members: Cindi Arfken, Alan Browne, Birdi Hansen-Marr, Chris Vadino and Janet Weber! You can also purchase tickets this Sunday from any of these folks.

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### Annual Meeting: Sunday, May 17, 2015. Important Information About Voting.

Mark your calendar for our Annual Meeting in May, where we will hear a summary of the past year, vote for a new budget for 2015-2016, vote for Board of Trustees, Committee on Ministry, and Leadership Development Committees. According to our By-laws, there are some requirements that need to be met in order to vote at the meeting. Please read the relevant section of the By-laws below. If you believe you may not be able to vote, based on the provisions of the By-laws, you can discuss your situation with Rev. Dr. Riegel. He can make recommendations to the Board about waiving requirements under some circumstances. We are a democratic society, and hope as many people as possible will attend the meeting and will vote. As always, members of the Board are also happy to address your concerns.

#### ARTICLE X - VOTING

- A. Voting and eligibility for elective office at any Annual or special meeting of the Society shall be limited to those Regular Members (defined previously in Article III) (a) who have been recorded as Members at a meeting of the Board of Trustees and (b) who have, as a matter of record on the books of the Society, contributed to the Society during the twelve (12) months completed before the month in which the meeting is held an amount sufficient to cover the current costs of membership in the Unitarian Universalist District of Michigan and the Unitarian Universalist Association. **The requirement for a minimum monetary contribution may be waived by the Board upon the Minister's recommendation.** Voting shall normally be by Members present at regularly or specially called meetings.

*Deadline to speak with Rev. Alex is Friday, May 8*

### UU Class Conversations: Get Real About Privilege and Access.

**On Saturday, May 30** from 8:30 - 4:00 the Birmingham Unitarian Church will host a workshop addressing classism in your faith community. This interactive, full-day workshop will strengthen your UU congregation as you explore the implications of class and classism, begin the process of becoming less classist and more class inclusive, and organize more effectively across class lines. Registration deadline is May 23 and the fee is \$20. For more information please follow this [link](#).

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### Shoe Donations

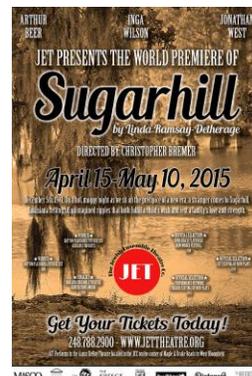
Shoe Donations Extended Through May - A huge thank you to all who have donated so far! The Detroit Concert Choir (DCC) is conducting a shoe collection drive now through May 2015. (GPUC members who belong to DCC are Sam and Veronica Smith and Stan Harr.) You can help us raise funds by donating your new or gently worn used shoes. The DCC will earn money based on the number of pairs collected. They will be distributed by Funds2Orgs, who will purchase all of the donated shoes. All shoes will then be redistributed throughout the Funds2Orgs network of micro-enterprise partners in developing nations

to help impoverished people start, maintain and grow businesses in Central America and Africa. Please help us spread the word and let us know if you have shoes to donate and we will make arrangements to get them from you, or leave them in the coat closet at church. For more information or to get a tax receipt please contact Veronica or Sam Smith or the Detroit Concert Choir office at (313) 882-0118. Thank you for your support! We look forward to hearing from you!

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### **The Jet Presents the World Premiere of Sugarhill**

On a hot muggy night as we sit on the precipice of a new era, a stranger comes to Sugarhill, Louisiana setting off unimagined ripples that both fulfill a child's wish and test a family's love and strength. Sugarhill won both First Place, and the Audience Favorite Award in the Dayton Playhouse FutureFest Competition, and was a selection at the Long Beach Playhouse New Works Festival in August 2014, and a finalist for the Boulder Ensemble Theatre Company's 2014 Generations Competition. Sugarhill was a 2013 Fireside Festival Selection at the Performance Network Theatre. The play was written by Linda Ramsay-Detherage the sister of member Robin Ramsay. Sugarhill is being performed at the JET Theatre in West Bloomfield now through May 10. Contact the JET box office for show times and tickets 248-788-2900 or [www.jettheatre.org](http://www.jettheatre.org).



### **WHAT IS SLOW ROLL?**

Slow Roll is a group bicycle ride that meets every Monday night in Detroit and has expanded into a Global network of community rides. Each week we meet at different venues and take a unique route throughout the city, including all the major and minor neighborhoods that we are so proud of.

Slow Roll is for everyone; all ages, all skill levels and every type of bike is welcome. Our slow pace keeps the group safe and gives riders a unique perspective of our great city and its neighborhoods. This is a fun and diverse event. For more information on the Slow Roll or to register go to [www.slowroll.bike](http://www.slowroll.bike). Anyone interested in joining a GPUC contingent for the Monday night rides please contact [Rudy Wedenoja](mailto:RudyWedenoja).



### **Ink Cartridge Recycling Program**

GPUC recycles empty ink and toner cartridges at Staples to earn store credit towards the purchase of office supplies. We have received almost \$250 in store credit since July 2014 through this recycling program. Many thanks to those that have contributed their empty cartridges! Please drop off your empty ink and toner cartridges in the office; every little bit helps. Candy Dunn

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### **Kroger Kards bring Kash**

\$932.26 was earned for our church by members who have signed up for the Kroger Community Rewards during fiscal year February 2014 to January 2015. If you are one of these supportive families, thank you!!! You will remember that every year you MUST reenroll after April 1. Enrollments are to be done online at [krogercommunityrewards.com](http://krogercommunityrewards.com). GPUC code is 83283. If you would like to enroll for the first time the same info applies. If you have questions please direct them to office administrator Candy Dunn or Janet Weber.

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### **Send a Kid to Camp**

We have 9 happy campers! Thanks to generosity of many members and friends, we have collected \$3,530

this year to send 9 of the most improved sixth graders to the Howell Nature Center camp for a week. There's even enough to help those who carpool with gas money. Students have found the Lakeshore Adventure session that goes to Sleeping Bear Sand Dunes, tubing on the Platte River and downtown Frankfort along with a few days in camp on the ropes course and climbing tower is an unforgettable and enriching experience. It's wonderful to reward those who have worked so hard at school. They will receive a fancy certificate from our church and recognition at a school assembly at the end of May. Many thanks to all who helped the Schools Tutoring Committee reach its goal. Susie Boynton

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### **Fundraising Committee Update**

We enjoyed an enlightening, thought provoking evening on April 18th when Puzzle Piece Theatre brought their production of "White People" to the GPUC Sanctuary. Thanks to Dave Schroeder for producing/directing, Sara Hassinger for the lion's share of organization and publicity, and all the others who volunteered to present this interesting program touching on issues of racism, for ourselves and the community. As a fundraiser, we were successful in raising about \$425.

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### **Resale Shop News**

ART YOU'VE GOTTA HAVE ART is coming to GPUC, this fall, October 17, in the Annex. We need your donations. Reproductions, original works, paintings, watercolors, oil, multi-media, quality sculpture, pottery, and ceramics. All items in excellent to very good condition are welcome. No garage/yard sale leftovers, hand prints of the grandkids, or paint-by-numbers. Items accepted at the discretion of the ART YOU'VE GOTTA HAVE ART committee.

The sale is both fundraiser and community event. It will be marketed to the five Grosse Pointes and its neighbors: Detroit, Eastpointe, Roseville, and St. Clair Shores. We're hoping for a bustling crowd; it's a happy way to meet and greet our neighbors

Details as to when and where to donate will be in the June newsletter. Questions: please email Suzanne Ross.

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### **Newsletter Deadline**

Please submit your contribution to the next newsletter by Friday, May 22 at noon. They should be sent to [newsletter@gpuc.us](mailto:newsletter@gpuc.us).

## Adult Religious Education

### **Attending Adult Religious Education events enlightens us and broadens our sense of fellowship**

#### **"The Psychological Enneagram Part 1 -**

Saturday morning May 9 from 9a.m. SHARP - noon concludes the Enneagram Workshop. The Enneagram is a psycho-spiritual tool that combines an exquisite psychological system with traditional spiritual practices in order to bring about personal transformation and spiritual advancement.



#### **Women's Book Discussion Group - Thursday, May 21, 6:00 PM.**

This is our Annual Pot Luck Dinner at the home of Jill Crane. Anyone interested in being a part of this congenial group, please come for this enjoyable evening where we choose our books for next year. Sign up for you food donations in the foyer.

#### **Friday Night Book Discussion POSTPONED until September.**

Originally scheduled for May 8th and 15th, Ed Marck's book discussion on the book "10% Happier," by Dan Harris (see description immediately below), will take place in September as a prelude to Dr. Riegel's monthly

meditation group, also beginning in September. This book is a good introduction/conversation about spirituality and spiritual practice. Consider it summer reading and then join us in September (exact dates to TBD) for what promises to be an interesting and personally meaningful discussion.

Nightline anchor Dan Harris embarks on an unexpected, hilarious, and deeply skeptical odyssey through the strange worlds of spirituality and self-help. A lifelong nonbeliever, he finds himself on a bizarre adventure, involving a disgraced pastor, a mysterious self-help guru, and a gaggle of brain scientists. Eventually, Harris realizes that the source of his problems is the very thing he always thought was his greatest asset: the incessant, insatiable voice in his head, which had both propelled him through the ranks of a hyper-competitive business and also led him to make some profoundly stupid decisions. Eventually Harris stumbled upon an effective way to rein in that voice, something he always assumed to be either impossible or useless: meditation, a tool that research suggests can do everything from lower your blood pressure to essentially rewire your brain. *10% Happier* takes readers on a ride from the outer reaches of neuroscience to the inner sanctum of network news to the bizarre fringes of America's spiritual scene, and leaves them with a takeaway that could actually change their lives.

Jill Crane, Director, Adult Religious Education

## Religious Education News

*~ Let all thy joys be as the month of May.*

-Francis Quarles

May brings joyful simplicities for all of our children and their parents to enjoy. We begin with May Day. A day to hang a basket of flowers on your front door or on a neighbor's. You can share a bouquet of lilacs, white peony tulips or pink dogwood blossoms with a co-worker.

Sunday, May 10 is Mother's Day! The first Mother's Day was started by a tiny, red-haired, woman named Julia Ward Howe, who lived from 1819-1910. She was a Unitarian, who started the special day for all women, all over the world to work for PEACE. She believed that mothers should step up in the matters of wars. She believed in leaders using peaceful ways to settle problems. She started a festival which she named "Mother's Day," and she chose June, 2, as the day of celebration. In 1906 a woman named Anna Jarvis proposed that Mother's Day be celebrated on a different day and the US Congress settled the matter by voting in 1913 for Mother's Day to be the second Sunday in May.

Julia Ward Howe is now best remembered for writing the famous song, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" and for her stance against slavery. Julia wrote a Mother's Day Proclamation that you can read at [www.peace.ca/mothersdayproclamation.htm](http://www.peace.ca/mothersdayproclamation.htm).

As parents, we can share our faith on Mother's Day by teaching our children and reviewing our 7 Principles of Peace with the whole family.

**7 Principles of Peace:** Love-Hope-Justice-Forgiveness-Courage-Faith-Unity

**Religious Education Lessons:**

**Nursery and Preschool** room is always open at 9:30 a.m. every Sunday morning.

**Lower Elementary and Upper Elementary** students will continue their Sunday morning lessons on various world religions. The students will be preparing for Sunday, May 31, Religious Education Sunday. It will also be Ice Cream Sundae for the whole congregation.

**Junior** students will finish their lesson on world religions. The students will be preparing for Sunday, May 31, Religious Education Sunday.



**Senior** students on Sunday, May 3, 7-8:30 p.m. will meet at the Ottenhoff home to discuss Jainism and Shinto religions. May 10th the students are asked to attend church with their mothers. Sunday, May 17, 5:00 p.m. is the year end picnic. It will be at Windmill Pointe Park. Sunday, May 31 the students will participate in RE Sunday. Please mark your calendars for service projects on July 18 and August 1 at Gleaners.

**Sunday, May 3 at 9:15 a.m.** is the RE Committee Meeting in Room 7.

**Sunday, May 24, Memorial Day**, no classes but the Nursery will be open.

Julie Artis  
Director of Religious Education

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