

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

January 2017

Upcoming Services

January 8, 2017 **10:30 AM**

Trespassing Zen Gardens

Dr. Alexander Riegel **Worship Associate: Meghan Boomhower**

Zen gardens are those wonderful little contemplative coffee table items that can bring stillness and peace to daily life when we pause - just long enough - to contemplate them. They bring to mind images of aged Zen masters sitting quietly in natural satori (moment of enlightened understanding). But what happens when we find footprints in our Zen garden sand?! Suddenly, change is afoot! Shall we hunt the scoundrel down, or...?

January 15, 2017 **10:30 AM**

The Language of Inclusion

Rev. Kimi Riegel **Worship Associate: Joseph Buttiglieri**

We are all working very hard so our words don't offend. We learn that some of our common words are actually offensive. PC - is it a good thing? What limits does that put on communication? What are the ways we can redefine language and take it as our own?

January 22, 2017 **10:30 AM**

What Are You Worth?

Cynthia Luce **Worship Associate: Chuck Palmer**

If you had to put a price on your life, could you do it? What would it be? Where would you even start?

January 29, 2017 **10:30 AM**

The Post-Election Blues

Rev. Emeritus John Corrado **Worship Associate: Janet Weber**

No, this isn't a twelve bar ballad, though a slight paraphrase of an old tune, applied to the Presidential election may well describe the situation: "The song is ended, but the malady lingers on." Some cherished UU principles have been challenged. How? What can we do?

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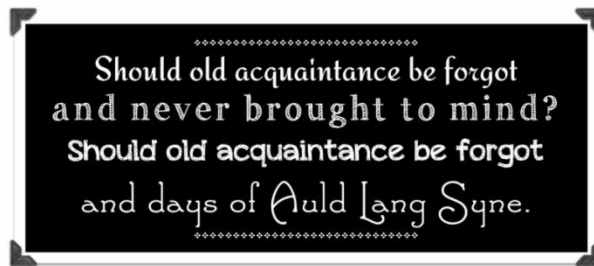
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Every New Year we sing it but I wonder, do we ever reflect much on what it means? "Auld Lang Syne" means, essentially, "days long since passed." So the song asks, should we forget old acquaintances and days long since passed? I'll cut to the chase with this one... we must let go, but we must not forget. We must not forget because those old acquaintances, those days long since passed, are what have made us who and what we are today. So we owe a deep debt of gratitude... let us not forget. Indeed, this New Year, when you lift that pint, don't simply sing the song. Take a genuine moment and recall to mind... then drink with memory and gratitude, to those old acquaintances and those days long since passed... for that is the stuff of which we are made...

On another note, my Study Break begins Jan. 10, I return Feb. 13. While I am away, Rev. Kimi Riegel and Rev. Emeritus John Corrado, along with some of our Worship Associates, will fill the pulpit. Rev. Kimi Riegel will take care of urgent pastoral duties, i.e., hospitalization and death (but by all means, please keep breathing while I am away!). In the event you need to reach her, try contacting her directly, but in the event you do not have her contact information, please contact Candy in the church office or our President Robin Ramsay. As for me, I will be in India again, with deep gratitude for the opportunity to serve this amazing congregation and staring at my navel in hopes of finding further wisdom to share with you on the path...

*For auld lang syne, my jo,
for auld lang syne,
we'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet,
for auld lang syne.*

Namaste,

Alex

Message from the GPUC Board of Trustees

GPUC is such a warm, friendly place at holiday time. I'm so glad to be here.

Vision:

I am thrilled that the congregation has passed a Vision Statement to direct our efforts in the coming years! Thank you Chris Vadino and the other Visioneers for your dedicated and highly effective leadership of this project. The Board has created 2 Task Forces to carry on the process of realizing the vision in practical action, and will be working on finding members for these groups. One task force, chaired by Chris Vadino, will concentrate on needed improvements to our buildings and grounds. The second task force will concentrate on needed programming improvements.

Ongoing Efforts:

Prior to the Vision Statement, the Board has already begun considering landscaping options, fundraising options, and options to support membership growth and communications within our church and with the wider community. Of course, our efforts to provide air conditioning continue, with work to begin in the next few weeks. Russ Chavey, our Grounds Chair, brought the Board the landscape plan completed by Candy Sweeney, whom we hired last year. We plan to implement improvements in stages beginning with

plantings and perhaps some minor construction in the Memorial garden this Spring.

Financial Issues:

Since we are approaching the second half of this church year, the Board and Finance Committee will begin the Canvass process and Budgeting for next year. Thanks to Paul Rowady and Joe Buttiglieri for leading the Canvass and to Juli Moore for taking on organization of the Fellowship Dinner.

Committee Info and Thanks:

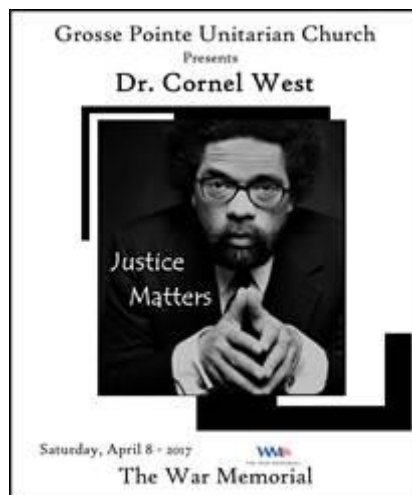
Thanks to Leadership Development and RE for an innovative Coffee strategy which is described elsewhere. I hope we will all support the RE program by contributing to the "tip jar". Thanks to Cynthia Luce and Pat Gillis who have tirelessly provided pithy sayings for our Wayside Pulpit, the sign on Maumee. They are stepping down from this position and are seeking someone to replace them. Thank you to Miriam Engstrom, who has volunteered to chair our Social Justice Committee. And thanks to the subcommittee chairs, Maurya Kay and Miriam Engstrom. The committee is looking for a chair for the Anti-Racism subcommittee. Thanks to Chris Whitwell (and me) for organizing the online mini-auction where \$7000 was raised for the church. Thanks to all who participated by donating and bidding.

Happy New Year!

Robin Ramsay
President, GPUC Board of Trustees

Cornel West

Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church is excited to announce that Dr. Cornel West will be appearing at The War Memorial in Grosse Pointe, MI, on Saturday, April 8, 2017.



At the invitation of Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church, Dr. West will be speaking on the theme, "Justice Matters," at 2pm, preceded by a V.I.P. reception at 12:30pm. Tickets for this event are on sale now and are expected to go very fast!

Ticket purchase information:
V.I.P. reception and near stage seating - \$125.00
Assigned Seating (You may select your own seat on the venue website) - \$35.00

The following link will take you to the venue website for ticket sales:
warmemorial.secure.force.com/ticket/#details_a0S36000002H11jEAC. Once at the site, click on the date in the left hand corner, under the phrase, "Dr. Cornel West - Justice Matters." Subsequent steps will be obvious...

*NOTE - All ticket sale inquiries are to be directed to The War Memorial, phone: 313.881.7511; address: 32 Lake Shore Drive, Grosse Pointe Farms, Michigan 48236. Aside from ticket sale inquiries, inquiries about the event itself may be directed to the Rev. Dr. Alexander Riegel, Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church (drriegel@gpuc.us), through Jan 9, 2017, then between Feb. 13, - April 8, 2017.

Brief Bio

Cornel West is a prominent and provocative democratic intellectual. He is a Professor of Philosophy and Christian Practice at Union Theological Seminary and Professor Emeritus at Princeton University. He has also taught at Yale, Harvard, and the University of Paris. Cornel West graduated Magna Cum Laude from Harvard in three years and obtained his M.A. and Ph.D. in Philosophy at Princeton. He has written over 20 books and has edited 13. Though he is best known for his classics, *Race Matters* and *Democracy Matters*, and for his memoir, *Brother West: Living and Loving Out Loud*, his most recent releases, *Black Prophetic Fire* and *Radical King*, were received with critical acclaim.

Religious Education News



Happy New Year! Wishing you...Love, Peace, Happiness, Joy, Success, Health, Abundance, Creativity and everything else your heart desires!

New Year is the day of new beginnings and happy memories. Winter is upon us and I think of an evening of good food, friends and fun. This description reminds me of the **Circle Circle Dinner**.

The Circle Circle Dinner is Friday, January 13, 2017 - we will begin at 6:00 p.m. Everyone is asked to sign up in the GPUC lobby or contact Julie@gpuc.us. We ask everyone to sign up to bring an appetizer, salad or dessert. The cost is \$5.00 for anyone over 10 years old. Our entertainment this year will be "The Golden Griffons". We will enjoy music, singing and dancing in the main church. This is an evening for all ages; bring your family and friends. The circle of strength of our church is love and friendship; see you all on Friday, January 13th!

RE Lessons

The **nursery** will be open at 9:30 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 students on January 8, 2017 will begin their lessons on Christianity and

begin later in the month on Islam. They will also continue their study of Tolerance through our Golden Club. Parents will be receiving their teaching schedule next week.

Junior and Senior High students and their parents will begin making coffee each week for our church. This is a fund raiser for our Jr/Sr students. Our students will continue their lessons on Christianity during their class time. On Sunday, January 29 the Jr/Sr classes from Northwest Unitarian Church will be visiting GPUC. Our GPUC will host them during our morning service.

Dates to remember

- January 8th-Classes begin and bring in food for Crossroads
- January 8th-RE Committee Meeting at 9:15 a.m. in Room 7
- January 13th-Circle Circle Dinner at 6:00 p.m.

Food sharing Sunday starts Sunday, January 8th. Please remember to have your student bring in food for Crossroads. Thanks for caring.

Julie Artis, Director of Religious Education

Online Mini-Auction

ONLINE MINI-AUCTION



STILL AVAILABLE

- **SEATS to Julie Artis's Afternoon Tea and Poetry in April (date TBD), \$60 each
- **CITY TOUR DETROIT Walking Tours for 2 people \$20
- **2 ROUND TRIP RIDES to the airport by the congenial Wally Friesen. (date restrictions apply) \$125
- **Computer Tutoring by Veronica Smith \$45
- **2 HOUR HOME DESIGN CONSULTATION by Margo Bishop - \$45
- ** 2 TICKETS to the DETROIT CONCERT CHOIR Performance of your choice. \$25

THANKS EVERYONE!

With the help of all our generous donors and bidders, the first Online Mini-auction successfully raised about \$7000 for GPUC. This was an experiment that generally worked out well. We will work to make the process even easier next time.

PAYMENT

Please pay for your winnings as soon as possible. If you have not yet paid, please give a check to Candy in the office or contact Robin Ramsay or Chris Whitwell. Pay with a credit card by going to gpuc.org/online-auction

PICKUP

If you have not yet picked up your objects and gift certificates, please contact Robin Ramsay.

THERE ARE STILL ITEMS AVAILABLE

GO TO 32auctions.com/gpuc2016B.

Don't forget the "B" on the end.

Purchase these items by choosing "BUY NOW".

Or contact Robin Ramsay.

Click here to bid:

32auctions.com/gpuc2016B

Musical Notes

🎵 MUSICAL NOTES 🎵

It's not too late to join GPUC's Youth or Adult Choirs! January is a good month for new beginnings, so consider giving choir a try! Music/Choir Director, Joseph Palazzolo, always welcomes new face and new voices. No audition necessary, just a love of singing to our very appreciative congregation!

ADULT CHOIR

WHO: Ages 18 – ?, GPUC members & friends, all voice parts, but especially need Sopranos, Tenors & Basses – male or female for any part

WHAT: Choir sings 1st & 3rd Sundays during the service

WHERE: Rehearses weekly in room #2 (purple room) of RE Wing, Performs Sundays during the service in the sanctuary

WHEN: Rehearsals – Wednesdays, 7:30 pm – 9:00 pm, Performs – Sundays with pre-service warm-up at 9:30 am

WHY: Singing in GPUC's Adult Choir is a wonderful learning & social experience and provides an important part of the Sunday services.



1st rehearsal – Wednesday, Jan. 4, 2017, 7:30-9:00 pm, room #2 (purple room) in RE Wing. Joseph will help decide your best vocal range.

QUESTIONS: Joseph Palazzolo at 248.582.3281,
or 5jp1music4@gmail.com
OR
Birdi Hansen-Marr at 88.771.6441,
or rjhm5270@gmail.com



YOUTH CHOIR

WHO: Students in grades 1 - 8, BOYS & girls

WHAT: Choir sings 2nd & 4th Sundays during the service

WHERE: Rehearses weekly in room #2 (purple room) of the RE Wing, Performs Sundays during the service in the sanctuary

WHEN: Rehearsals – Sundays, 11:45 am – 12:15 pm (right after service/Sunday School), Performs – Sundays with pre-service warm-up at 10:00 am

WHY: Singing in GPUC's Youth Choir is a super learning & social experience for all, as well as a delightful part of GPUC's services.



1st rehearsal – Sunday, Jan. 8, 2017, 11:45 am - 12:15 pm, room #2 (purple room) in RE Wing.

QUESTIONS? Joseph Palazzolo at 248.582.3281,
or 5jp1music4@gmail.com
OR
Birdi Hansen-Marr at 88.771.6441,
or rjhm5270@gmail.com

ATTENTION CONCERT GOERS!!! GPUC's second concert of this second year will be on SATURDAY, MARCH 11, 2017, at 7:30 pm in our sanctuary. Local talent – RON PIETRANTONI and CARL CAFAGNA will be performing together for this not-to-be-missed evening of marvelous music!



Unitarian Universalists and friends in the Detroit area are invited to join the journey to the **Women's March on Washington on January 21st, 2017**. Our first principle is to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person. Therefore, Detroit area UUs are organizing to support the advocacy and resistance movements that reflect our multiple and intersecting identities. This march is the first step towards unifying our communities, grounded in new relationships, to create change from the grassroots level up. We will not rest until women have parity and equity at all levels of leadership in society. The buses will leave from the Northwest Unitarian Universalist Church (23925 Northwestern Highway, Southfield, MI 48075) on Friday, January 20 at 9 pm. We will arrive at the JFK Stadium in Washington, D.C.

on Saturday morning and then take shuttles to the National Mall for the march. Cost: \$110.00

Our next "First" Sunday Food Sharing will be Sunday, January 8.

Due to the holiday, our January food collection will actually be the 2nd Sunday of the month. Please bring boxed, canned, or bagged donations for our contribution to the Crossroads East food pantry. If you prefer to make a monetary donation, your contributions are used to purchase eggs, milk, produce, bread, and lunch meat for the pantry on a (most) weekly basis. The clients at Crossroads East, located at Salem Memorial Lutheran Church, are assisted with social services needs, food, transportation, and clothing. Through December 12, our donations to Crossroads East this year have totaled 6,837 pounds.

Our donations are always greatly appreciated! Thank you!!!

New U Gathering

If you have been visiting our church this fall and would like to learn more about Unitarianism/Universalism, please join us on Sunday, January 8, after church service in our church library.

Do you have questions about how our Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church is structured? Are you interested in gathering with other new GPUC visitors and hearing their stories? Reverend Alex, along with myself, our church staff, and our GPUC president will be hosting a "New U Gathering" on January 8. Light refreshments will be served. This will be a great time to share our stories, and ask some questions. We hope we can all get to know each other a bit better!

If you are interested in doing a little advance research, our GPUC website is a great resource to explore to get a feel for our church. The link to this is: <http://www.gpuuc.org/> You can find out about upcoming programming, as well as watch the short informational video which explains a bit more about our religious UU faith.

Please feel free to email me or call with any questions. We would appreciate an RSVP to our church office administrator, Candy Dunn, at gpuc@gpuc.us.
Sonja Franchett

Sunday Coffee Service

We are pleased to announce that Julie Artis, the junior/senior students and parents have accepted responsibility for Sunday coffee services beginning with the first service of the year, January 8, 2017.

This will be a fundraising opportunity for the junior/senior students--perhaps for a trip for the group. The money raised will go to RE for the students. For this to be successful, we will have a 'Gratitude jar' at the coffee setup for the congregation to donate money for the students performing this service for the congregation. The parents, of course, will be assisting their student in preparing, serving, and cleaning up.

So far, Julie and I are proud to announce that parents and students have signed up for dates well into February. Julie is also welcoming anyone from the congregation who would like to participate in Sunday Coffee Service. Just give her a call.

The church has had difficulty in finding a coffee coordinator and volunteers to take care of this important service during the last few months. The Board and the Leadership Development Committee are very grateful to those members who have been providing this service to the church with grace and style.

We are hopeful that the congregation will support this new effort by the students. Please Show Your Gratitude!

Leadership Development Committee-- Sabrina Biernat, Kathy Konwiak, Jeff Marotzke, Karen Webb

UU Crafters

UU Crafters meet in the Annex on the third and fourth Tuesday of the month from 7pm-9pm. January meetings will be held on January 17 and 24, 2017. All are welcome to join in for an evening of social stitching (knit, crochet, quilting, needlepoint, etc. and other small crafts. Also, if you like to color and haven't tried the new adult coloring books there are books and markers for anyone who would like to give it a try. Please contact Ann Helm with any questions.

Holiday Giving was Wonderful!

It was wonderful what we accomplished together! We helped 123 people, including 75 children and 48 adults, have some holiday meals to remember. In addition, the parents could pick out a book for each child from the 90 donated and two items from the mitten tree collection of 157 for each child to keep warm this winter. Ann Helm knitted 20 hats and donated 10 others. The recipients were grateful and the children were prone to giving hugs of appreciation.

The giving spirit of our Church was manifest in the number of volunteers who signed up. For the first time, 25 whole baskets and one half basket were donated so we did not have to send shoppers to buy baskets of food. Jim Kelly used his new van to pick up 44 beautiful, double glazed, spiral-cut hams wrapped in silver paper. Kristen Foley transferred 35 loaves of bread to Veronica's car for delivery at church, while Randi Borys shopped for 34 bags of fruit on her day off work. The \$1,689 in donations were spent wisely.

When the baskets arrived at Church, Janet Weber, Mary Zahler checked the contents and assigned the largest baskets to the biggest families, then they attached a tag sending season's greetings from our Church. Karin Garrett spearheaded counting and packing up the gloves, mittens, hats, scarves and socks and books from the mitten tree and organizing the tables for them at Detroit Merit. She gave each parent assistance in choosing items for their children.

The super-efficient crew that loaded all the baskets into a seven car caravan in record time also unloaded at school in the same manner and were assisted by eight students at the school. Wendy Biernat organized the crew to assemble each family's tote bags and tubs together, while Rudy Wedenoja, as usual, masterminded the best layout and flow. Then the crew used their muscle power to take each family's bountiful baskets on carts and dollies to the cars. When we found out that one woman had to take the bus, Wendy volunteered to drive her home with her heavy load. Thanks to the others in this hard-working crew: The Marck family, Amy Thelen and her son Cory, Robin Ramsay, Jim Kelly & his granddaughters Sarah & Elyse and son Kevin, Mark Reeve and Aaron Smith. The distribution of the baskets was completed in one hour, which was a record. What hustlers!

Thank you to Candy Dunn for her beautiful spreadsheet. Special recognition is due to those who shopped for the baskets of food. Mollie Fletcher brought two baskets, and Debbie Connelly had the most original tub decoration. Other donors: Laurie Arora, Candy Dunn, the Marck family, Dick Olson, Robin Ramsay & Rudy Wedenoja, Shona Spratt, Amy Thelen, Chris Vadino & Chuck Palmer, Laura Wagner, Beth Whitney, Sonja & Mark Franchett, Randi Borys, Cindy Brusilow, Karin Garrett, Tonya Wells & Marty Tylenda, Christy Winder & Russ Chavey, Sloane Artis & Jason Thomas, Margit Jackson, Susan Hartz, Julie & John Artis, Susie Boynton and Anonymous.

A final thanks to those who donated funds for all the activities above. Many gave money in addition to other donations and service. Helping so many others have happy holidays was truly wonderful.

Newsletter Deadline

Please submit your contribution to the next newsletter by Friday, January 20 at noon. They should be sent to newsletter@gpuc.us.

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