

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*

December 2017

Upcoming Services

December 3, 2017 **10:30 AM**

The Tao of Jesus

Worship Leader: Dr. Riegel **Worship Assoc.: Joe Buttiglieri**

The holidays are upon us and the Christian world turns its attention to the birth of Jesus. Most Unitarian Universalists don't hold to the belief that Jesus is the incarnation of God on earth, come in the form of his son to save the world from its sinful state. But that doesn't mean that the historical Jesus, as an enlightened spiritual teacher, can't have meaning for UUs nonetheless. In this sermon Dr. Riegel will explore Jesus' message from a Taoist perspective, which puts Jesus' teaching in a more palatable form for us UUs.

December 10, 2017 **10:30 AM**

Annual Holiday Pageant

Worship Leader: Julie Artis

This is a very special Sunday as we once again enjoy our yearly Holiday pageant. Much time and energy goes into a quick production and every year proves to be something special. Join us as we honor our youth by taking in this theatrical message!

December 17, 2017 **10:30 AM**

Annual All Music Service

Worship Leader: Joseph Palazzolo

Take in the spirit of the season as we enjoy a morning of merriment and singing, continuing our annual tradition of an all music service. Bring your best singing voice and your holiday spirit!

December 24, 2017 **6:00 PM**

Annual Christmas Eve Service

Worship Leader: Dr. Riegel

This year we continue our traditional Christmas in the Round. Dr. Riegel will deliver a Christmas homily, we will have a special guest musician, listen to the birth story of Jesus and sing traditional Christmas hymns, and of course we will hear Dr. Riegel read his favorite part of "The Velveteen Rabbit."

December 31, 2017 **6:00 PM**

Special New Year's Eve Service

Worship Leader: Dr. Riegel **Worship Assoc: Tonya Wells & Suzanne Ross**

Last year we had our first New Year's Eve service, which was a well-attended, contemplative service. This year we will again have a contemplative New Year's Eve service and reflect upon the traditional New Year's theme of endings and beginnings. (AND, if case you are unaware, a number of spots remain from the auction for the Riegel's New Year's Eve party, in the event you would like to follow up this service with some merriment around an outdoor fire, followed by poetry and drinks indoors as we wait for the clock to strike midnight. See Robin Ramsay if you would like to attend this event as well.

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"In the midst of winter, I found there was, within me, an invincible summer."

- Albert Camus

As you read this latest reflection Thanksgiving will be behind us already and we will be knocking on Christmas' door. It is unbelievable how quickly time has passed this fall! But here we are in the midst of the holiday season again...

For many people the holidays are a festive time, full of family and festivities. For others, the holidays can be a struggle. There are those among us who will be dealing with loss, loneliness, sadness and host of other emotions that this season can trigger.

If you are one of these people I want to remind you that you are not alone. And, I want to encourage you to reach out to others, especially to your church community. Indeed, this is the time when some people especially need beloved community and we are here for you. So, lean in... and connect.

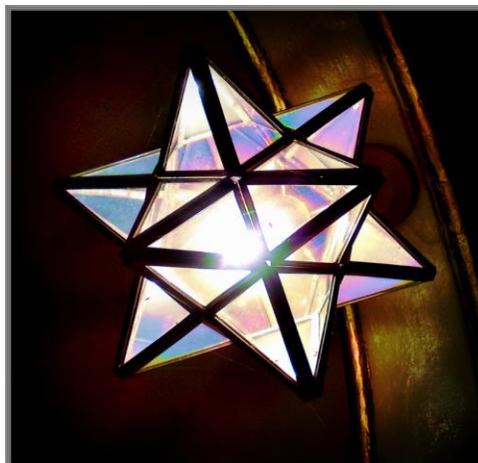
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On another note, you will notice a new section in the newsletter entitled, "Did You Know?" There are a number of things that can fly under the radar and this is our way keeping you up-to-date on various and sundry matters. So, take some time to look at it when you see it. Sometimes small - *but important* - matters will appear there.

Namaste,

Alex

Religious Education News



On December 10, 2017 at 10:30 a.m. our students from the GPUC Religious Education program will provide a holiday program called **One World, One Light**. The students will share their talents by acting, being ushers, singers, readers and more.

Whatever our beliefs, the holidays provide us with our own rituals to celebrate the balance of light and dark. We want to share **One World, One Light** to welcome the healing powers of warmth back into our world. Our students are enjoying preparing for their pageant with much happiness and joy. Let the students guide you through a morning of the happiness of light during this special season.

We are asking for donations of cookies, cheese, crackers and fruit for our after the program snacks for the whole congregation. Please join us for a morning of holiday joy, sharing and hope during this holiday season.

RE Lessons:

The **nursery** will be open at 9:45 a.m. every Sunday morning. We have the same loving childcare workers to provide a safe and caring place for our young UU's.

Lower and Upper Elementary and **Juniors** students on December 3rd will be practicing for the holiday pageant. December 3rd right after church we will hold a rehearsal for one hour to practice for our pageant.

December 10th all students are asked to be at the church by 9:30 a.m. for the pageant.

Senior high students on December 3rd and December 10th are involved with the pageant. December 17th the students will have a holiday party at the Melican home in Indian Village. We will provide more details as the party gets closer.

As we enter into this holiday season I want to share a message to all the students, parents and church members. The most important words you can say at this time of the year is "thank you". So, thank you for helping to provide and maintain our church home. Thank you for stepping up when asked. Thank you for giving and sharing of yourselves. Thank you for believing in providing service to the less fortunate. Thank you for your love and kindness to all. May your holidays be filled with love, joy and a peaceful time with family and friends.

"To be grateful for the good things that happen in our lives is easy, but to be grateful for all of our lives-the good as well as the bad, the moments of joy as well as the moments of sorrow, the successes as well as the failures, the rewards as well as the rejections-that requires hard spiritual work. -Henri Nouwen

Happy Holidays!
Julie Artis, Director of Religious Education

Did You Know

Dr. Riegel's Blog Pages...

Dr. Riegel is currently scrubbing his web pages of past content and relaunching them as blog only pages. This is in response to numerous people who have recently asked when he will begin writing content for them to read (He will start posting that content this December.). If you have previously signed up to receive notifications regarding Dr. Riegel's web pages and wish to continue receiving notifications of his new blogging efforts, you do not need to do anything to continue receiving your notifications. However, if you are not receiving notifications and would like to do so, send Dr. Riegel an email (alexgpuc@gmail.com) in that regard. Following is the list of sites regarding which you may receive notifications:

www.mysticpoetcircle.com
www.returntothemystic.org
www.waitingfurgodot.com

Needed: Three Dedicated Tech People on Sunday Mornings

Hopefully you are aware that we now do video recording of Dr. Riegel's sermons. A number of these videos make it to our YouTube page (www.youtube.com/channel/UC-Exer7CjEV0bHELtTSCz6Q/videos). This effort is an important outreach to our members who cannot always make it to church (especially our "shut-ins") and to those who have not yet discovered our wonderful beloved community (potential members). Currently Dr. Riegel manages all the tech efforts for this project by himself but this is an onerous task for him on Sunday mornings. If you are willing to help out by learning the tech set up for Sunday morning recordings and relieving Dr. Riegel of this task, please contact Dr. Riegel and he will be glad to train you. Once learned, this only requires about fifteen minutes set up before service begins on Sunday morning.

Pay Your Pledge via Electronic Payment

One of the things that helps the church operate smoothly is reliable pledge income flow into the church. Have you ever considered arranging regular monthly or quarterly electronic pledge payments through your bank? This has a number of advantages in addition to helping reliable pledge income flow into the church. First, once you set up regular electronic payments through your bank you no longer have to think about your pledge payment. Second, this helps you avoid facing a significant unpaid church pledge balance at the end of the church year (many of which people do not complete, leaving the church in the "pledge red" at the end of the fiscal year). Thank you for considering this. It's a small thing that can prove very beneficial both to you and the church.

Money Doesn't Grow on Trees and Coffee Doesn't Pour Down from Heaven

Do you enjoy that hot cup of coffee after church on Sundays? Most people do but most people don't realize how this magic happens. It happens by means of a few committed people who take the time to make it happen for you. However, there are too few brew meisters doing this task and they could use your help. Perhaps you can show your appreciation by helping out from time to time? If you are willing to do this, please send Dr. Riegel (alexgpuc@gmail.com) a note and he will get you connected to someone who can train you. Remember, it takes a village to brew a cup!

Musical Notes

MUSICAL NOTES

The 'Big Guy' has made his list and he's busy checking it twice! Have you checked your holiday schedule twice? Double check that you've added **ALL MUSIC SUNDAY at GPUC on December 17, 2017, at 10:30 a.m.** The **Youth Choir** and the **Adult Choir** have been ramping-up their efforts with Christmas Holiday

music at their weekly rehearsals! **ALL MUSIC SUNDAY, December 17, 2017**, has become a popular service each December when our many talented singers share sacred and secular Christmas music with the congregation. This will be the **3rd year** for this joyful service. Many of our church families are not able to attend GPUC's Christmas Eve service to hear these time-honored songs because they are out of town or have other commitments that evening. Each holiday song sung at the Christmas Eve Service will also be performed at the **All Music Sunday Service**, giving everyone the opportunity to enjoy the festive music and also allows the hard working singers to perform these pieces more than once! Both choirs are definitely in the holiday spirit while making great progress perfecting the new and the well-known Christmas songs.

Hope you plan on attending **ALL MUSIC SUNDAY, December 17, 2017, at 10:30 a.m.!**

Ever consider joining the **Adult Choir**, or have a young person in your life who might enjoy singing with our **Youth Choir**? Come try us out! The Adult Choir rehearses Wednesday nights from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m. in room #2 (purple room) in the R.E. wing. We generally perform on the 1st & 3rd Sundays during the service. No 'professional' singing experience necessary, just a basic knowledge of choral singing and a willingness to make great music with a pretty awesome group of GPUC folks! The Adult Choir *especially* needs those (men OR women), who sing in the two lowest voice parts - Tenor and Bass. Bonus: many of the Adult Choir members often go out to Bogart's (on Mack) after rehearsal for 'beer rehearsal' = beverage, appetizers &/or a night-time meal, but more importantly, the jovial camaraderie! Our **Youth Choir** is open to boys and girls in grades 2 - 6 and generally performs on the 2nd & 4th Sundays during the service. They rehearsal immediately after the church service/Sunday School from 11:45 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., also in the purple room of the R.E. Wing. Our fearless, and very talented, 'leader' **Joseph Palazzolo** ('Mr. P.' to the kids!), sends Youth Choir members an email copy of their songs so that they can practice the tune &/or lyrics at home. Please think about joining either of GPUC's fabulous choirs in performing an important and appreciated part of our Sunday Services. Hope to see some 'new' faces and hear some 'new' voices in January! *Questions?*

Call the church office at 313-881-0420 to have your questions forwarded to either

Joseph Palazzolo or Birdi Hansen-Marr.

Birdi Hansen-Marr

Music Committee Chair

THANK YOU EVERYONE FOR A SUCCESSFUL AUCTION!

Together, we raised about \$25,000 for the church,
and some party seats are still open!

Thanks to the donors and the bidders!

Thanks to the many people who gave of their energy, time and expertise!

Here is a partial list: We apologize to anyone omitted.

Chairs"

Robin Ramsay,
Christine Whitwell,
Pamela Shelby
Donation Acquisitions
Suzanne Ross
& Robin Ramsay, chairs
Lynn Baker-Hunter
Meghan Boomhower
Barbara Chiapella
Jud Cole
Kristen Foley
Carol Ghesquiere
Birdi Hansen-Marr
Rob Lyles
Mary Morshead
Colin Partlan
Bill Rehahn
Lynn Rehahn
Janet Weber

Refreshments

Juli Moore
Jill Crane
Mollie Fletcher
Drink Donors
Christy Winder
Russ Chavey
Entertainment
Joseph Buttiglieri
Matthew Whitwell
Laurie Arora
Miriam Engstrom
Maurya Kay
Shawn Grose
Accounting
Rudy Wedenoja, chair
Jeff Marotzke
Kathleen Ruhl

RE Supervisors

Jackie Hoats-Shields
Anne Riha
Silent Auction Management &
Distribution of winnings
Pamela Shelby, chair
Lucy Shelby
Michael Mallon
Amy Hajec
Zoe Hajec
Melanie Singh
Yanna Palicarris
Devi Carruba
Christian Kroeyr
Miranda Barba
Christine Whitwell
Raffle Sales
Meghan Boomhower
Tin Can Sales
Jud Cole

Check-in

Birdi Hansen-Marr
Suzanne Ross
Checkout
Kristen Foley
Barb Chiapella
Rob Lyles
Sarah Neely
Sonja Franchett
Cleanup
Silent Auction group
Russ Chavey
Joseph Buttiglieri
Bill Rehahn
Lynn Rehahn
Matthew Whitwell
Others unnamed -
Thanks

SECOND CHANCE FOR AUCTION PARTIES

Look for sign-up sheets at church!

- Afternoon Piano Recital with Freda Giblin
- Zoo Stories Party at Kristen Foley's home
- Name that Tune III at Linda Lawrence's home
- Burrrrito Dinner with Alex and Kimi Riegel
- New Year's Eve at the Riegels'
- Picnic at the Riegels' Saturday 5/5/18.
- Tiger Game with Friends

Announcements

SO MANY WAYS TO HELP WITH HOLIDAY GIVING

There are ten different ways that members and friends can contribute to making the holidays better for the neediest families at the Detroit Merit Academy School on Alter Road. Opportunities range from donations of food baskets, books, mittens and money to service donations of muscles, shopping and transport.

We welcome participation from all ages and sizes and think there are enough ways for everyone to find some way to contribute to Holiday Giving. Our gifts are greatly appreciated by the recipients as well as by the principal, teachers and staff. Holiday Giving sign-up sheets are available in the church foyer or from the church office. Please return the completed form to the basket in the foyer, the GPUC office or by mail to gpuc@gpuc.us.

First Sunday Food Sharing Sunday December 3

Our next opportunity for food sharing will be **Sunday, December 3**. Donations of non-perishables are taken to **Crossroads East**, located in Salem Lutheran Church on Moross. When I was there last, I noticed they are especially in need of breakfast foods.

If you prefer to donate monetarily, your contributions are used to purchase eggs, milk, bread, and produce. This is actually a very helpful option, as not many organizations bring these types of food.

The staff and clients at Crossroads East are very thankful for our donations!



Funny Name. Easy Fundraising.

SCRIP Gift Cards - Holiday Shopping

Get a jump on your holiday shopping by ordering gift cards through our SCRIP program! Gift cards make great gifts and stocking stuffers for everyone on your list! Holiday orders are due Wednesday, December 6

with delivery by December 16. And of course, SCRIP cards can be ordered at any time throughout the year. Download the order form here, or pick one up in the church office or foyer. Please contact Jennifer Semanision with any questions, and happy shopping!

Alliance Christmas Luncheon

The Annual Alliance Christmas luncheon featuring the Grosse Pointe North Choir will be held Tuesday, December 12 at 11am in the church. It has been our custom to invite as our guests all of the people who volunteer at our resale shop many of whom are non church members. Please join us for food, music and fellowship. Call Joan Hines to R.S.V.P. and for your food donation.

Pledge Reminder

In an effort to keep you up to date on your pledge payments, pledge status summaries are sent quarterly. The second quarter pledge status summary reports will be sent out in *early* December. The last date to make pledge payments in order to get a tax credit for the 2017 calendar year, is Friday, December 29 by 12 noon. The 2017 calendar year tax receipts will be sent in mid-January 2018. Please contact Candy Dunn in the office with any questions. 313-881-0420 or gpuc@gpuc.us

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.

Care Committee Update

We have secured a small table just outside the sanctuary where you will be able to write a message of cheer to anyone in the congregation. There are note cards and paper, envelopes, pens, etc. A member of the Care Committee will be sure to see that your message is sent.

Linda Lawrence and the Care Committee

UU Crafters- Holiday Schedule

UU Crafters will NOT meet in December. I hope everyone enjoys their holidays with friends and family. We will resume our meetings in January on the 3rd and 4th Tuesdays of the month in the Annex 7-9pm. All are welcome to join in for an evening of social stitching (knit, crochet, quilting, needlepoint, etc.) and other small crafts. Check the church calendar on the website and the weekly email for any changes. Please contact Ann Helm with any questions.

Newsletter Deadline

Please submit your contribution to the next newsletter by Friday, December 15 at noon. They should be sent to newsletter@gpuc.us.

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