


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

September 14, 2014

Upcoming Services

September 21, 2014 **10:30 AM**

What is 'Spirituality'?

Rev. Alex Riegel **Patricia Gillis, Worship Associate**

What Is 'Spirituality'? In any given Unitarian Universalist congregation members run the theological gambit from atheistic to agnostic to theist, from secular humanist to Buddhist to liberal Christian. This theological diversity is, though challenging at times, one of our strengths as a movement. Along these lines, people (not only UUs) are increasingly identifying as "spiritual but not religious." Alex will suggest what people mean by this phrase and share his own perspective of what the term "spiritual" means.

September 28, 2014 **10:30 AM**

Show up. Pay Attention. Speak the Truth. Let Go of the Outcome.

Rev. Alex Riegel **Tonya Wells, Worship Associate**

These four Buddhist principles are an effective recipe for being in relationship, either in one-to-one relationships or in relationships with groups. What does each principle mean and how do the four principles collectively enact our UU principle of the inherent worth and dignity of every person?

October 5, 2014 **10:30 AM**

"Once upon a time...": The Power of Narrative

Rev. Alex Riegel **Jim Moir, Worship Associate**

Narrative is a powerful force in our lives, determining everything from how we understand historical events to how we understand ourselves. We will explore the nature of narrative (our lives are more fictional than we are wont to believe) and the different effects narrative has upon us. Sometimes narrative skews knowledge. Sometimes it is used for control. Sometimes it is emancipatory. Come, rewrite life with us!

October 12, 2014 **10:30 AM**

What in the UU World is Going On?!

Rev. Alex Riegel **Cynthia Luce, Worship Associate**

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It seems we can't say enough about the "nones" these days. The "nones" are those people who do not identify with any particular religious group or organization, many of whom nevertheless consider themselves "spiritual but not religious." They now comprise the third largest religious subset in the United States and they are shaking the ground beneath our UU feet. Alex will speak about this seismic shift and suggest an appropriate UU response to the rapidly changing religious landscape.

October 19, 2014

10:30 AM

Thanks, Love

Mr. Willie Barber

Anne Roberts, Worship Associate

October 26, 2014

10:30 AM

Shadow Plan

Rev. Alex Riegel

Allyson Hartz, Worship Associate

"Until you make the unconscious conscious, it will direct your life and you will call it fate." - Carl Jung

The Psychologist Carl Jung is famous for having introduced us to the concept of the "shadow." The shadow is the sum of those repressed aspects of the human psyche that reside deep within us and of which we remain unaware. Jung's insight was powerful, revealing a great deal about the depths of the psyche and what motivates us. We will learn more about the shadow and explore Jung's great insight. Perhaps it's true that "Only the shadow knows!"

[Sun Sept. 21 - GPUC Directory Updates Due](#)

[Sun Sept 28 - Sufism Discussion](#)

[Sun Oct 5 - Appreciative Inquiry Workshop](#)

[Sun Oct 5 - Food Sharing](#)

[Thu Oct 16 - Book Discussion](#)

[Sun Oct 19 - Arab American Museum Tour](#)

[Sun Oct 26 GPUC Cleanup](#)

[Sun Nov 16 - Conflict Resolution Forum](#)

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Comments from Rev. Riegel

Greetings,

In my last newsletter column I mentioned that I would be writing and speaking about organizational dynamics in the coming months. This is my first installment in that regard.

Organizational dynamics can lull many people into a disinterested sleep, especially in organizations that depend on peoples' volunteer association, such as church. Let's face it. No one comes to church for conversations about organizational dynamics. We come for fellowship, religious education, social justice... grist for our spiritual mills. "You want me to rewrite Bylaws, draw flow charts, and establish Right Relationship guidelines?!" YAWN... That said, I would suggest that in order for an organization best to meet ones' needs the organization needs to be healthy, hence the importance of attending to organizational dynamics, even if the prospect doesn't excite us very much - at first.

Those two words, "at first," are key. They are key because if we truly understand the reciprocal relationship that holds between the health of an organization and getting ones' needs met, or more basically, between the synergy of giving and receiving, attending to organizational dynamics can be a very rewarding, if not even invigorating experience. Stated conversely, disorganization eventually yields to negative forces, like burnout, resentment, and conflict, even in an organization that professes the highest values! So, it only makes sense to take care of the organization, in order that the organization may take care of us, does it not?



Assuming one wanted to attend to organizational dynamics, where would one begin? Any meaningful conversation/work about organizational dynamics begins first and foremost with a meaningful self-understanding of the nature of the organization, not as we imagine it to be, but as it actually is. That may sound simplistic but it isn't. The reality is that most organizations (and people for that matter) have a skewed self-understanding. Self-understanding is skewed because it is human nature to attend to those experiences/dynamics/forces that challenge or threaten us. Consequently, these challenging experiences/dynamics/forces gain a disproportionate amount of our attention as we develop ideas about whom and what we are. The flip side of this is that positive experiences are not given their proper place in our self-understanding. As it is with people it is with organizations...

What is often needed then is a process that counterbalances the disproportionately negative with the positive, a process that encourages the recasting of the organization's narrative in light of those positive aspects that have been underrepresented in the organization's self-understanding. One such process is known as Appreciative Inquiry. Appreciative Inquiry is a process that focuses on the positive aspects of an organization and corralling those positive aspects in the service of problem solving and visioning. It is a highly constructive way to begin meaningful engagement in regard to organizational dynamics.

On Sunday, October 5th I will be preaching a sermon entitled, "Once upon a time...": the Power of Narrative." I will, as the title indicates, be speaking about the power of narrative in our lives. As a part of this sermon I will touch upon Appreciative Inquiry. The following Sunday, October 12th, there will be a quick luncheon followed by a 2 - 2 ½ hour Appreciative Inquiry workshop. In this workshop we will shift our self-understanding by recasting GPUC's story, focusing on those positive attributes that make GPUC the wonderful religious home that it is: its history, its strengths, and its possibilities. I encourage everyone to mark out this time on your calendars. It is an important beginning to the work that lay ahead of us this year!

Namaste

Alex

Announcements

Fall Cleanup

The annual fall cleanup will be Sunday October 26 after the service. Dress in your best raking and clean-up attire. Please bring rakes, gloves, leaf blowers, power cords and tarps. Remember many hands make light work. Questions please contact Russ Chavey or Cindi Arfken.

Tutoring

School is open, and the Tutoring Committee is recruiting members who are interested in helping students in Detroit who need a little more attention. Our outreach effort is a continuing program that began 30 years ago at Guyton Elementary School, which closed in 2009. We continued the program at Clark, Nichols and Detroit Merit in the last five years and know we are appreciated by teachers and students alike for making a difference.

Volunteers can choose your school, day and time to suit your schedule. Most tutors spend an hour and a half with one or more students. Some hours after school are available for tutoring as well as special interest clubs on Wednesdays, if that is your preference. New tutors will start after an orientation and when the MEAP tests are completed in mid-October. Returning tutors may contact their teacher to decide on a beginning date. For

further information, contact Susie Boynton or Jo Ann Kelly.

Movers and Shakers needed!

The Usher (the movers of money) and Greeter (the shakers of hands) Committee is looking for volunteers to join the team! Everyone appreciates arriving at church on Sunday morning, being greeted by a smiling, familiar face, followed by our welcoming ushers at the entrance of the sanctuary. This is a great way to get to know congregants and volunteer your time (especially for those who don't have a lot of time to volunteer outside of Sunday morning). No experience necessary! We will match you up with an experienced usher or greeter. Please **contact Dave Biernat** if interested, by phone or email (contact info is in the church directory).

Membership Committee

The Membership Committee is in need of a Chairperson. The duties include staffing the welcoming table on Sunday mornings, helping facilitate the Pathways to Membership for new members and hosting the Newcomers' Circle once a month. Please contact the office or any board member if you would like more information regarding this very important role in our church.

Alliance Luncheon

The first Alliance Luncheon of the church year will be Tuesday, Sept 16th at Noon in the Olympia Brown Center. Ross and Jeri Grover will give a presentation on life in 17th Century America. They will be dressed in clothing of the period and demonstrate the art of weaving, candle making as well as food preparation. Join us for lunch and a journey back in time. Please call Shirley Reeves at for reservations.

Replies Needed for New GPUC Phone Directory

If you have not replied to Candy regarding your listing for the 2014-15 GPUC phone directory, please do so by Sunday, September 21. Candy must hear from you even if you are not making any changes to your current listing. Please email gpuc@gpuc.us or call the office 313-881-0420. The sooner everyone responds, the sooner the directory will be published. Thank you to all of you that did reply immediately!

Sit and Stitch

Sit and Stitch is meeting on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month from 7 -9pm in the Annex. All are welcome to join us for an evening of social stitching (knit, crochet, quilting, needlepoint, etc.). Please contact Ann Helm with any questions. Feel free to just drop in and join the group!

First Sunday Food Sharing

October 5 will be our next First Sunday Food Sharing date. You can help by bringing donations of non-perishables such as cereals, soups, peanut butter, and canned meats, vegetables or fruits. Also appreciatively accepted are monetary donations, which we use to purchase items such as meat, milk, eggs, and potatoes. These donations are delivered to Crossroads East, located on Moross and I-94 in Detroit, to assist with their food pantry. Thank you!

Care Committee Update

I would like to introduce to you the members of my Care Committee. they are: Sydney Lentz, Mary Morshead, Ann Parker and Joy Spurr. I realize how lucky I am to have such a great team!!!! Please contact any of us if you are in need.
Linda Lawrence, Care Committee Chair

Bob Dupuis

There will be a memorial service for our beloved sage elder Bob Dupuis on Saturday September 20 at 12:00 PM. Donations made in memory of Bob may be made directly to the

Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church Endowment Fund. Please address questions to Paul Rowady.

2014- 2015 UUA Common Read

GPUC is considering participating in the UUA Common Read. This year's selection is 'Reclaiming Prophetic Witness,' by UU theologian, Paul Rasor. There will be a sign-up sheet in the foyer. Please indicate if you would like to order a hard-copy book through the UU bookstore please contact Suzanne Ross. You can also order an E-book through Amazon or Google Play. We would like to have a day or 2 of discussion in early October. We need at least six participants to have a meaningful discussion. I

Book Summary:

In this clarion call to action, leading Unitarian Universalist theologian Paul Rasor dispels the myth that conservative Christianity is the only valid religious voice in the national debates on social policy. Showing that religious liberals are more numerous than many realize, he calls on them to embrace their prophetic heritage and bring their religious convictions to bear on the issues of our time. Reclaiming Prophetic Witness will lift your spirit, while inspiring you to lift your voice and reclaim a place in the public square.

Resale Shop News

The GPUC Resale Shop located at the back of the church parking lot is open Wednesdays from 10 AM until 3 PM and Thursday evening from 7 to 9. We accept donations and consignment items on Wednesdays from 9 AM until 2 PM. Further information is available on the [GPUC website](#).

Youth and Adult Choirs

The adult choir practices Wednesday evenings at 7:30 PM at the church. All voices are welcome. The youth choir practices for 30 minutes after church on Sunday. All K - 6th Graders are welcome. Please see Joseph Palazzolo for more information

Adult Religious Enrichment

Chalice Circles

Last year we began the Chalice Circle program and it was a great success. Thanks to Chris Vadino and the other facilitators we are going to continue it this year. Each month participants receive a packet of information. They have a few weeks to read it. They will meet at various times at the church for two hour sessions to discuss the information with their groups. Meetings are held on the second Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday of the month. Signups continue until Sunday September 21, after church in the foyer. This is a great chance to explore new things with GPUC members. Child care provided for Sunday Chalice Circles.



Adult Forum on Sufism

We are hoping to secure a friend of Rev. Alex's, Salih from Istanbul, to come to give a short talk on Sufism and then give a Whirling Dervish demonstration. All ages are invited. Please see the weekly email for more information.

Tentative Date: Sunday, September 28, at noon

Arab American Museum Luncheon and Tour

A multi-generational tour is planned for Sunday, October 19. We will meet at the museum in Dearborn at 12:45 PM. This is a fascinating place to visit. We will have a tour guide take us through this beautiful facility. Cost of lunch and museum entrance fees to be announced. A signup sheet will be available next week. We will also provide a car pool signup sheet.

Women's Book Discussion Group

October 16, 6.00p.m. GPUC Annex

Book: Quiet by Susan Cain

At least one-third of the people we know are introverts. They are the ones who prefer listening to speaking; who innovate and create but dislike self-promotion; who favor working on their own over working in teams. It is to the introverts-Rosa Parks, Chopin, Dr. Seuss, Steve Wozniak-that we owe many of the great contributions to society. In Quiet, Susan Cain argues that we dramatically undervalue introverts and shows how much we lose in doing so. She charts the rise of the Extrovert Ideal throughout the twentieth century and explores how deeply it has come to permeate our culture.

Discussion Leader: Cindi Arfken

Refreshments: Ann Lipsitz

New Book Lists are available on the sign up table in the foyer. We welcome new participants.

Assertiveness and Conflict Resolution Forum with Robin Ramsay and Karen Webb

For the past several years Robin and Karen have discussed many topics surrounding mental health issues. Please join us on Sunday, November 16, when Robin and Karen present: *What do you do when you don't agree? When you're angry? When you're in conflict with someone? It's a tricky business to work through situations like these in a positive way. We'll explore some constructive approaches to dealing with anger and conflict.*

A sign-up sheet will be put out soon. Please indicate if you need child care.

Coming Soon! Adult Forum: What is Hospice?

We all think of hospice care as end of life care but it is much more than that. Laura Pogue, a staff member of Great Lakes Caring will give us important information regarding the different facets of hospice care. Child care provided, please sign up!

Religious Education News

168 Hours in a week! Can you spare 1-2 for GPUC Religious Education?

On Sunday, September 14, 2014, we will be welcoming our students and teachers for their first church school lesson. I just recently finished the book 168 Hours by Laura Vanderkam. We have 168 hours in one week. Where do you spend these hours and will one to two of those hours be at GPUC? Yes, we are starved for time for work, school, driving, cooking, shopping and cleaning. But when I think of our children's spiritual growth I think of GPUC Religious Education on Sunday mornings and the 1 to 2 hours a week is very important.



I heard our children state that church school is for where we light the chalice. Church is making friends, field trips, a place to do things and make children feel special. Our church is beautiful and during religious education time, we get a treat, we share our joys and concerns, and we learn about the UU ways and other religions. I also heard a child say, "We can't sleep in on Sunday mornings, but I think it is worthwhile!"

I hope you consider spending 1-2 hours of your 168 hours a week at GPUC. This year our hours of studying will be about World Religions. Our classes will be starting with Islam and the Muslim culture. Our Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary and Juniors will start in the church on September 28, and October 12 for the first 20 minutes. September 21, October 5, and October 19 they will begin in Room 2 or the purple room in the RE wing.

Our juniors this year will be meeting in the annex, our fellowship hall. Our seniors on September 21 will have a field trip to Planet Rock in Madison Heights. Details to follow and Ann Ottenhoff and Kathy Konwiak will be the youth advisors this year. September 28th their class will be at the Ottenhoff home at 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Religious Education Library

Our very own Mickie Verderbar restructured our Religious Education Library. Come back to Room 2 or the purple room in the RE wing and check out a book. You may want to check out a book on our first religion we are studying this year, Islam. Some of the books that are available are My Friends' Beliefs by Hiley H. Ward, The Qur'an, Allah the God of Islam by Florence Mary Fitch, Understanding Islam and the Muslims and The best in Islam by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips.

Nursery and Preschool

Our Preschool and nursery is always open at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings. We have caring and skilled sitters to greet you and your children every Sunday. Registration is required for the nursery and preschool.

I am available to answer questions by phone, email or in my office during the week. We are the church of the open mind, loving heart and helping hands!

Julie Artis, Director of Religious Education

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