


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*

April 2015

Upcoming Services

April 5, 2015 10:30 AM

Dionysus verses the Crucified:

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

This Easter Sunday we will contrast the meaning of Jesus' death and resurrection as it is promulgated in the Christian world today with Friedrich Nietzsche's counter example of the meaning of Dionysus' death and resurrection. One savior figured ascended to heaven. The other... to earth. The ultimate destinations of these two "sons of god" have significant implications for how we view the meaning of religion.

April 12, 2015 10:30 AM

Nassruddin and the Sweet Pepper: Laughter as Theology:

Dr. Alexander Riegel **Jim Moir, Worship Associate**

Theology has a lighter but paradoxically deeper side. We will look at various figures that used laughter as the vehicle for religious teaching, from the Islamic world's Mullah Nassruddin to Coyote of Native American lore, among others.

April 19, 2015 10:30 AM

Diversity

Ben Gabel **Janet Weber, Worship Associate**

Ministerial candidate Ben Gabel will speak to us about diversity.

April 26, 2015 10:30 AM

"It's a Circle of Life Thing":

Dr. Alexander Riegel **Chuck Palmer, Worship Associate**

This will be an intergenerational service focusing on the earth's biosphere and the interdependence of life that is required to support life. Where do humans fit into this web of interdependence and what can we do to help sustain it, not only for our sake but for the sake of all the earth's living creatures?

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Upcoming Events

May 3, 2015

10:30 AM

The Gospel According to Calvin and Hobbes: an Introduction to Existential Thought, Part 1:

Dr. Alexander Riegel

Joseph 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!



"Why isn't my life like a situation comedy? Why don't I have a bunch of friends with nothing better to do but drop by and instigate wacky adventures? Why aren't my conversations peppered with spontaneous witticisms? Why don't my friends demonstrate heartfelt concern for my well being when I have problems? ...I gotta get my life some writers."

[Sat Apr 11&25
Enneagram Wkshp](#)

[Thu Apr 16 Women's
Book Disc.](#)

[Fri Apr 17-19
MidAmerica UU
Assem.](#)

[Sat Apr 18 White
People](#)

[Tue Apr 21 Alliance
Luncheon](#)

[Tue Apr 21 WITTY](#)

[Fri Apr 24 Armenian
Genocide](#)

[Fri Apr 24 Movie Night](#)

[Sun Apr 26 Grounds
Cleanup](#)

[Forward To A Friend](#)

Comments from Dr. Alexander Riegel

"It's only logical..."



In honor of Spock's passing (Leonard Nimoy), I greet you with a bit of logic in this month's newsletter. More accurately, I greet you with a psychological observation about peoples' belief about their own "logical" processes.

One of my favorite books is Lewis Carroll's "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland." I love this book because while it often seems nonsensical, the truth is that it's a logical gem. Take, for instance, this exchange between the March Hare and Alice:

"Take some more tea," the March Hare said to Alice, very earnestly.

"I've had nothing yet," Alice replied in an offended tone, "so I can't take more."

"You mean you can't take LESS," said the Hatter: "it's very easy to take MORE than nothing."

On first reading we would all agree with Alice. She can't have more tea if she hasn't had any

yet. However, when the Mad Hatter counters Alice's "logic" with logic, we see that he's spot on. Alice, on the other hand, was only working with a reasoning process that made sense to her and which, making sense to her, she presumed to be "logical." But not all reasoning processes are logical. Indeed, the mere fact that one's reasoning process makes sense to oneself doesn't entail that one's reasoning process is logical - that's logic, Tweedledee! This in turn implies that our reasoning processes are often illogical, though we don't tend to recognize this fact because we don't allow our reasoning processes to be challenged (on which more in an upcoming adult education class next autumn). In sum, we generally don't reason very well at all. What we actually do is something entirely different, though perfectly normal...

We are like Alice, namely, we work with reasoning processes that make sense to us given our personal life experiences. In other words, our reasoning processes are highly subjective and not as sound as we tend to think. This leads to two conclusions that have great significance in life. First, we ought to have more humility about our own perspectives on the world. Second, we ought to be more patient and forgiving toward other people, who are also merely working with reasoning processes that make sense to them given their personal life experiences. In other words, everyone's doing the best they can with what they've got.

Remembering this mantra, "Everyone's doing the best they can with what they've got," has gone a long way toward helping me be more humble about my own perspective on the world as well as more patient and forgiving toward other people, whose ways of being, I must confess, sometimes utterly befuddle me!

If you want a "logical" equation for all of this, try this:

Humility + Patience + Forgiveness = Love

Namaste!

Alex

GPUC President's Message

Spring has finally arrived here in Michigan after a long cold winter. Spring brings a sense of rebirth and awakening. I also have a similar sense for our church. There are many exciting and positive "blossoms" starting to come to life at our church.

The GPUC Board engaged the GPUC Congregation in a conversation about calling Rev. Alex Riegel as our settled minister on March 22. I have received a number of e-mails with your thoughts on calling Rev Riegel, which I do appreciate. The Board members and I have also had many conversations with GPUC members during coffee, following service and at other church functions. There is still time to be heard please don't hesitate to comment.

The UUA offers guidance on how to proceed with calling a current consulting minister as a settled minister. One suggestion is to set up a group that is independent of the Board to field questions from congregational members who may not feel comfortable approaching a Board member. Karen Webb and the Committee on Ministry (COM) have offered to function as this independent group. If you would like your voice heard but are not comfortable talking to a GPUC Board member, please contact Karen or any COM member with your feedback. They will ensure your feedback is heard.

Regards,

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GPUC Board President

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Announcements

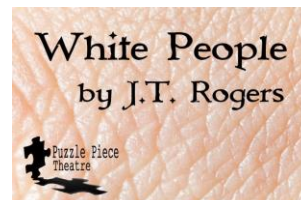
Puzzle Piece Theatre Brings "White People" to GPUC Saturday, April 18th

Join us for a thought-provoking evening of drama. Issues of prejudice, racism, and white privilege are examined in the controversial play, White People, written by playwright J.T. Rogers, which was nominated for both the John Barrymore Award and L.A. Drama Critics Circle Award for Best Play of the Year.

Seemingly simple turns of phrase and expressions explode into deeper assumptions and prejudices, as we listen to the stories of college professor Alan, house wife Mara Lynn, and successful attorney Martin. The character's words linger with audiences long after they leave. The production is directed by Puzzle Piece's Producing Artistic Director, D.B. Schroeder.

Saturday, April 18th

Tickets: \$10, \$15 and \$30.



MidAmerica Regional Assembly 2015 April 17-19

Register now for MidAmerica Regional Assembly 2015. This weekend long event, April 17-19 in Naperville, Illinois, will feature two excellent speakers exploring the New in a New Era of Unitarian Universalism. You will benefit from workshops designed to strengthen your congregation, deepen your social justice work, and enrich you on a personal level. Come and experience the Regional Business Meeting, good food, and time for meeting new friends and old from congregations across our great Region, culminating with the joy of shared worship and musical celebration on Sunday morning. See [MidAmerica Regional Assembly](#)



Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide - Friday, April 24, 2015

April 24th is the 100 year centennial of the Armenian Genocide. People from around the world are holding events, marches etc. as a remembrance and to demand that this horrible part of our world history, be acknowledged and called what it was...genocide. An Ecumenical Service of Prayer will be held at the St. Mary Antiochian Orthodox Basilica at 7:30pm on April 24. For more information please follow this link: [April 24 Commemoration](#)

Spring Grounds Cleanup Sunday, April 26

Please plan to join your fellow UU's this spring in some refreshing outdoor fellowship. As our church grounds wake up in the spring, they require some TLC. We will be doing some light yard work such as raking and trimming, and a few small projects such as tying up bushes and perhaps planting some bulbs. No special skills are required and you can pitch in for an hour or two, whatever your schedule allows. So, plan to join us Sunday, April 26 after the church service. Bring some garden gloves, a broom and a rake. If you have them, perhaps bring some hedge clippers or a tarp. Many hands make light work, so we will plan to finish at 2 p.m. Questions contact Russ Chavey.

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.

WITTY (Widows/ers In Their Transition Years):

No one gets what it is like to re-start your life after the death of your spouse/life partner except someone else who has had to do the same thing. We meet on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 10am at the home of Jean Dupuis for conversation, support and yes to have some fun since friends help to make a rocky road a little smoother. Our next gathering is Tuesday, April 21st. Questions, contact Cynthia Luce

Alliance News

Our April Alliance luncheon will be held on **Tuesday, April 21** at Noon in the Olympia Brown Center. Please note the date change from our usual 2nd Tuesday of the month. Our speaker will be Carol Cain, Free Press journalist and seven time Emmy award winning Producer/ Host of "Michigan Matters" a weekly show airing at 11:30am Sundays on CBS. Carol will share some behind the scenes stories of her interviews which include Mary Berra, Gov. Rick Snyder, Newt Gingrich, Howard Dean, Geraldine Ferraro to name a few. She will share her thoughts on how women are faring at the present time, the road she has traveled and where the news business is going. Carol is the daughter of our late church member and past program chair Ruth Cain. Please join us for what promises to be an interesting and informative afternoon. Lunch will be prepared by our members Margo Bishop and Juli Moore. Program and lunch is \$7:00. Please call Shirley Reeves for reservations.

Think Scrip This Spring

Spring is in the air, and as Mother's Day, Father's Day, and graduations quickly approach, please consider using GPUC's scrip program to purchase any gift cards you may be planning to give!

In case you're not yet familiar with it, scrip is a terrific fundraising program that allows you to purchase gift cards from companies who return anywhere from 2 to 16% of the amount you spend back to GPUC. Follow this link to find out how you can take advantage of this program: [Scrip Program](#)

Send a Kid to Camp

The Send a Child to Camp Campaign is close to its goal: The Schools Tutoring Committee is collecting donations to send 9 of the most academically improved 6th graders at Detroit Merit Academy to the Howell Nature Center for a week. In the 4th year of this program at Merit, the Committee hopes to raise close to \$3,500 (approx. \$380 each - with a discount from the Camp) to reward these hardworking students. We have not quite reached our goal. Donations received to date total \$2520.00. Donations of any size are welcome. Please make checks out to GPUC and write "Camp" in the memo line.
Susie Boynton

News from the Fundraising Committee

Thanks to all who helped to present an evening of stimulating theater with Rosedale Community Players' production of "Diversity in Love". Special thanks to Sara Hassinger and Mickie Verderbar for a great deal of inspired work and marketing. We hope to increase our audience as we become better-known for presenting thought-provoking programs. We earned about \$315 on this first effort after expenses. Please support GPUC by patronizing these events-- and invite your friends! It's a small investment for an enjoyable and broadening evening. The next event is a production of "White People" by Puzzle Piece Theater and our own Dave Schroeder.

Interweave "Diversity in Love"

Interweave was proud to co-sponsor Diversity in Love. We donated the refreshments that raised \$91, and our members staffed the evening as Greeters, Ticket Sales, Ushers, and concessions. Extra thanks go to Jill Crane for heading up the refreshments, and Jenny Marck and Sarah Neely for baking cookies.
Sara Hassinger
For Interweave

Habitat for Humanity "Second Saturday Build"

I would like to thank the following people who helped make our Habitat of Humanity "Second Saturday Build" a success on March 14, 2015:

Wendy Biernat	Susie Boynton
Janice Gray	Colin Partlan
Cole Semanision	Ralph Steinbrink

I truly appreciate that you answered the call to help us out. It is gratifying to know that you care ! Thank you very much !!!!

George Gray, GPUC Representative, Grosse Pointe Partners/Habitat for Humanity Detroit

Shoe Donations

Do you have any extra shoes in your closet that you would like to donate to a worthy cause?

The Detroit Concert Choir (DCC) is conducting a shoe collection drive now through April 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. For more information 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!

Resale Shop News

Time to schedule Thursday evenings at the GPUC Resale Shop. Work for two hours, 7 pm to 9 pm, approximately once every five to six weeks. It's easy, it's sociable, it gives you an exclusive preview of our merchandise. Schedules are updated every three months. Give it a try. Call or text Suzanne Ross.

Wanted--Large Paper Grocery Bags

The Clearance Corner, a separate part of the Resale Shop, is having great success with the end of the month Bag Day sales, and they are running out of large paper bags with handles. You may donate bags to the Clearance Corner on Wednesdays, 10am-3pm, or Thursdays, 7-9 pm. You may also leave them on the top shelves of the cloak room; the staff will pick them up. (Don't forget to shop at the Resale

Shop while you're there--lots of interesting bargains!)
Jean Dupuis

Coffee Hour

Are you a fan of Coffee Hour after Sunday Service? Volunteers are needed to make coffee for Sundays during this year. "Sign up" is in the lobby, or email Sonja Franchett. Training and directions are happily provided! Thanks for your help and participation in building our church community.

Newsletter Deadline

Please submit your contribution to the next newsletter by Friday, April 17 at noon. They should be sent to newsletter@gpuc.us.

Adult Religious Education

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

"The Psychological Enneagram Part I -

Saturday mornings from 9a.m. SHARP - noon: April 11, 25 and May 9th. Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church (GPUC). Cost: \$90 for non-GPUC members; GPUC members and supporting friends attend free of charge. Coffee, tea, bagels, and donuts included. 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.

www.enneagramworldwide.com. Sign up with Rev. Alex at: drriegel@gpuc.us or by signing up in the foyer. Indicate if you need child care.



Women's Book Discussion Group - Thursday, April 16, 6pm, GPUC Annex

Book: Mrs. Lincoln's Dressmaker by Jennifer Chiaverini

In March 1861, Mrs. Lincoln chose Keckley from among a number of applicants to be her personal "modiste," responsible not only for creating the First Lady's gowns, but also for dressing Mrs. Lincoln in the beautiful attire Keckley had fashioned. The relationship between the two women quickly evolved, as Keckley was drawn into the intimate life of the Lincoln family, supporting Mary Todd Lincoln in the loss of first her son, and then her husband to the assassination that stunned the nation and the world. Discussion Leader: Julie Artis, Refreshments: Beth Whitney

Movie Night -

Friday, April 24 at 6pm in the Annex. Please note: The juniors and seniors are invited to this movie discussion. John Artis and Joe Buttiglieri have again volunteered to lead the movie night discussion. Continuing our discussions on racism, this discussion will center on the movie, **Selma**. Please see the film at the movie theater. Ten dollars per person...includes pizza, salad, dessert, wine, a lively discussion and a chance for members to get to know each other. Please pay on the night of the discussion. Sign-up sheet in the foyer. *Child care for this evening event will be provided with advance sign-up!*

New Friday Night Book Discussion

Friday May 8, and 15 from 7 until 8:30pm - Room TBA

Ed Marck will lead a three part book discussion on the book, "**10% Happier**" by Dan Harris. 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 the profoundly stupid decisions.

Something New!

Within the next few months we would like to begin three new discussion groups. The proposed topics are:

- Mystic Poetry
- Philosophy
- Meditation

We will have sign-up sheets in the foyer. Please indicate your preference(s) and what days and/or times would be best for you.

Jill Crane, Director, Adult Religious Education

Religious Education News

The students of our Religious Education Program this year are studying World Religions. Last week I was reviewing the religions we have studied like Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism with the students. One of the students asked me if all people in every religion pray. Then she asked if UU's pray. Here is my answer to all the parents and students in our Religious Education program.



Our well-known religious educator Sophia Lyon Fahs stated, "Many of the past generations and many today have found three abiding values in prayer: the quiet meditation on life, the reaching out toward the universal and the infinite, and the courageous facing of one's profoundest wishes. Let parents' sense and share with their children the glory and mystery of everyday things. Let them look with sympathy upon humanity's age-long dilemmas. Let no question be taboo. The next generation can ill afford to have the deeper values deleted from the book of life."

As parents, we can show an example of our faith by combining prayer as a UU family ritual at home. As an example, a family can light a candle at the dinner table, hold hands, and name things for which they are grateful that day. This simple way to pray can hold long lasting memories for your family.

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 like Jainism, Shinto, Taoism Baha'i, Zoroastrianism, Confucianism and Humanism. The second and fourth Sundays of every month the students start in the church and then proceed to their classes. Easter Sunday the students will have an Easter Egg Hunt.

Junior students will have their Church Pal Brunch on March 29th right after the church service. The juniors are asked to go directly to the annex at 10:30 a.m. to prepare the brunch that will be served to their Church Pals right after the service. The next month lessons will be on Buddhism.

Senior students on March 29 will meet at the Ottenhoff home at 7:00 p.m. to study Baha'i. Easter Sunday, April 5 the seniors are asked to attend church with their parents. Sunday, April 12 at the Ottenhoff home the students will study Taoism. Saturday, April 18 all seniors are asked to attend the play, "White People" at GPUC.

"What should young people do with their lives today? Many things, obviously. But the most daring thing is to create stable communities in which the terrible disease of loneliness can be cured."

Kurt Vonnegut.

See you all Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m. at GPUC to create our UU community!

Julie Artis, Director of Religious Education

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