


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*

June 2016

Upcoming Services

June 5, 2016 10:30

AM
R.E. Sunday
Dr. Riegel and Julie Artis

Join us for our end of the year recognition of all the wonderful people who work to make our children's religious education program the great success that it is. As a highlight (this year and every year) we have four Seniors speaking to us as they say their goodbyes to our program and launch themselves into the larger world. Always poignant moments when these youth speak! Dr. Riegel will also be fielding questions from the younger people in our church school program – their Question Box sermon time!

June 12, 2016 10:30 AM

Flower Communion
Dr. Alexander Riegel **Meghan Boomhower, Worship Associate**

This is our annual Flower Communion service during which we recall the story of Dr. Capek. Please bring a flower to contribute to our collection and then take home another - a wonderful symbol of our beloved community 😊 The sermon will be our annual "poetry slam," but as always, on the more pensive side. Our annual church picnic follows the service.

June 19, 2016 10:30 AM

Do Black Lives Matter More
Dr. Alexander Riegel **Janet Weber, Worship Associate**

The Black Lives Matter movement has been much discussed in the news and on a myriad of websites and still people ask me, "Do you think black lives matter more than others?" People seem to think that that is the message of the Black Lives Matter movement. Of course all lives matter, but it seems that there is need to talk about why the Black Lives Matter movement needs vocal, nonblack support.

June 26, 2016 10:30 AM

Parenting a Parent
Dr. Alexander Riegel **Chuck Palmer, Worship Associate**

The title speaks for itself. Christine Allyson, Life Coach and Founder and Director of Crystal Clear Consulting (<https://www.facebook.com/ChristalClearConsulting/?pnref=story>) will share with us the challenges and possible responses when we reach that stage of life when it is our turn to care to "parent our parents." More information about her work in this regard can be found at the link provided.

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Alexander's Meander



This meander is intended to bring you up-to-date regarding several aspects of my ministry and my own spiritual life with which a number of you may want to connect.

I recently revised my Mystic Poet Circle website. I invite you to visit the Welcome page on that site (www.mysticpoetcircle.com/welcome) where you can read about the work I will be doing there. I want to encourage you (and encourage you to encourage your friends) to join Mystic Poet Circle. As you will see, there is no fee for joining and you will automatically be informed of material that gets posted there. In a similar vein, in June I will be launching a revision of my Return to the Mystic web site, which will invite people into a similar free membership. Stay tuned for more information about that endeavor.

Regarding my Return to the Mystic website, although it is currently undergoing revision, I have added a page that may interest some of you (Please ignore all other pages.), namely, the page entitled Shantivanam. (www.returntothemystic.org/shantivanam). On that page you will be able to view the travelogue of my 2011 India pilgrimage, which I shared last year at GPUC, but under less than optimal viewing conditions. In addition, you will also be able to view a number of different slide shows from those trips.

The reason for the added Shantivanam page on my website is that I am returning to India in 2017 and I understand that a number of you may have an interest in joining me on that pilgrimage. This page gives you a very comprehensive look at what you might expect. In addition, Russill Paul and I will be doing a webinar together about the Shantivanam experience Wednesday evening, June 29th at 8pm. More information about that webinar will be forthcoming as the date approaches. In the end, if you would like seriously to consider joining me on pilgrimage in 2017, let me know, and when I have a sense of who wants to go, I will connect you with Russill and Asha.

Finally, mark your calendars for the weekend of Nov. 11 - 13. Russill will be coming to Grosse Pointe to conduct a weekend workshop. Details about that workshop will also be forthcoming in June.

Namaste,

Alex

Message from the GPUC Board of Trustees

I thought it might be prudent to reproduce my Review of the year from the Annual Meeting on May 15. As I look at it, I again wish I could thank everyone by name who volunteered their time and energy to our successful 2015-16 church year!

Well, we have had quite an eventful year! Everywhere you look, something new and interesting is happening, and we see new faces and larger attendance at our services. Early in the Fall we started out with a newly paved parking lot and a wonderful Installation Ceremony for our now Settled Minister. We have a new Mission Statement. We will have an air-conditioned Sanctuary aiding us to truly function as a year-round church. We enjoy expanded Adult Religious Education opportunities with Dr. Riegel's leadership, and a host of offerings from musical evenings to a re-invigorated Social Justice Committee to expanded O.W.L. classes to a new NAACP chapter meeting at our church. Today, you are even voting on proposed changes to the Bylaws.

When Rudy and I joined the church in 2009, I found the accepting, caring, liberal community I was needing. I didn't feel it needed to change in any way and was a sort of Miracle that GPUC was here. But I see now that GPUC is constantly changing, adding, and growing in order to continue to be the same spiritually nurturing place that it is. We seem to want to grow spiritually and intellectually, to grow in our outreach and programming, to grow in our message, maybe even to grow in numbers and in our available space.

Our Minister, our RE Director, and the Board initiate some projects that we feel help the church to grow, but a lot of GPUC's new ideas come from elsewhere in the congregation. Members' ideas led to a booth at the LGBT Wedding Expo, Selling Resale Shop items on EBAY, the Amazon Smile Fundraiser, not to mention the many educational, procedural and fellowship ideas that came from committees. These new and expanded areas, of course, build on the solid foundation of our beloved activities that have stood the test of time.

Reviewing the year, I would love to name every event and activity of the year, the Grinch pageant, the Over the Rainbow auction, Resale's Used Art Sale, Memorial services, Stone Soup, book discussions, etc..... but it would take way too long to note them all.

The GPUC Board began the year with some goals that have been realized and some that are still in the works. We need to further consolidate our committee structure. We need to expand our efforts to modernize our communication and marketing, to build on our enhanced web page and newsletter and new committees. We will continue to commit resources to beautifying our grounds, and improving our audio-visual systems. Now that we have a Mission Statement to direct our energy and to describe ourselves to the wider community, we can turn our attention to finding a shared GPUC Vision for the future, to identify areas of focus and the supports, including building improvements, that will accommodate those goals. You will be hearing from the Vision Task force in the Fall.

The GPUC Finance Committee was able to propose a balanced budget, aided by a successful pledge campaign and the continued income from parking lot rental, which we will eventually lose. Finance also developed policies for Investment and Endowment funds, and has begun to look at choices for our investment.

GPUC is run by its congregation. I am constantly amazed at the dedication of the many people who give of themselves to our church community: We are blessed by the devoted efforts of many new and long-time volunteers that oversee the health of our building, of our grounds and of our congregation---Of our fund-raising, finances, outreach and programming. Many volunteers work behind the scenes and deserve more notice. We don't see all the work that goes into maintaining our building and grounds, running the Resale Shop, keeping our Sunday Mornings running smoothly, presenting our programming. There are too many to thank individually here, but please thank them! If you are relatively new to the church, I urge you to find some ways to volunteer - Not only does this enrich our church, but I think it will also bring you enrichment. The Leadership Development Team has plans to facilitate volunteering in the Fall. Thanks also to our wonderful minister and our excellent staff. It has been a great year working with a wise and committed Board who often go beyond their duties to lead other projects. We will miss those who are leaving the Board - Ed Marck, Ann Helm, Suzanne Ross, Rob Lyles. Thank you all. The role of president, this year, has required me to grow and change. I look forward to another year of growth and fulfillment for all of us.

Special Thanks to these people who are leaving their posts this year:

Ed Marck, Board VP
Ann Helm, Board Secretary
Suzanne Ross, Membership Chair and Board
Rob Lyles, Board
George Gray, Habitat for Humanity
Jan Gray, Auction Acquisitions Chair
Karen Webb, Auction Chair
Sonja Franchett, Coffee
Mickie Verderbar, Coffee
Cynthia Luce, Worship Chair
Susan Hartz, Circle Garden
Paul Rowady, Canvass
Joe Buttiglieri, Canvass

Robin Ramsay
GPUC President
May 15, 2016

Religious Education News

"I wish that life should not be cheap, but sacred, I wish the days to be as centuries, loaded, fragrant."-Ralph Waldo Emerson

June is finally here with sunny days and warmth. We have already seen the flower garden at our church and the green grass in the memorial garden. Our smiles are deepened and we are laughing with our hearts open for summer!!!! This is also the ending of our 2015-16 Religious Education Church School Year. We hope you enjoy our RE Sunday, June 5 at 10:30 a.m. with the presentations of our students. They will have their own " Dear Rev. Alex", question box morning. We also have four senior high students who will be sharing their thoughts about their church school experience at GPUC. Please bring your family and friends to celebrate our students learning year of Unitarian Universalist studies.



We will also honor our volunteer Religious Education Committee, teachers and OWL trainers. They have donated their time and talent to make our Religious Education Program enlightened and fun for all our GPUC students.

Even though we are ending our 2015-16 church year, we are looking ahead for the August classes and next year's curriculum. If you would like to volunteer your time in the Religious Education program, please contact me by phone or email at Julie@gpuc.us. We have many volunteer positions that need to be filled. I am also looking for three volunteers to clean our supply closet.

I will be at General Assembly June 21-26 as your DRE representative for GPUC.

As the summer approaches, enjoy your family, church and friends. Remember we have services all summer and the nursery is open. Thank you to everyone for all your time, talent and friendship. Have a safe and fun summer.

With love and gratitude,
Julie Artis, Director of Religious Education

Dates to Remember

June 5- RE Sunday, all students in the church service
June 12-Flower Sunday and church picnic, all students in the church service
June 19-Father's Day

The Nursery will be open at 10:00 a.m. every Sunday morning starting June 19 for the summer. We will have the same loving childcare workers to provide a safe and caring place for our young UU's.

Sunday Workshops

Third Sundays - Introduction to Meditation (June 19)

This is an introduction to meditation course with mini lectures, Q & A, an introduction to various meditation techniques, and 30 minutes of silent meditation per class. We will begin by working with the book "The Attention Revolution: Unlocking the Power of the Focused Mind," by Alan Wallace.

Fourth Sundays - Philosopher's Club (June 26)

In this class we do Philosophy on par with an introductory college level class. Our first study will be "The Consolation of Philosophy," by Boethius (Penguin Classics is the recommended version). For the April meeting we will be discussing Book V. Following Boethius we will explore "Flatland," by Edwin Abbot, "Teddy," by J. D. Salinger, The Myth of Sisyphus, by Albert Camus, and many other Philosophical works. Please note - Reading Required. Out of respect for the other participants, please make sure that you have read the material before attending class.

Announcements

Dear Friends at GPUC,

It is with great joy that I share with you that I have been called to serve the UU Society of Bangor, ME as their settled minister starting in August 2016. Many of you have followed my progress of going through seminary, going through my credentialing as a UU minister and through my ordination last year. Having grown up at GPUC and first feeling my call there I wanted to give you the update on my status.

Originally in my search I had hoped to move closer to MI but the universe seems to have made other plans for me and the Bangor congregation presented itself as a wonderful opportunity. I hope to still be in contact with you all and continue to hold GPUC in my thought and prayers. Look me up if you plan on attending General Assembly this June in Columbus, OH I'll be there!

Peace and Love to you all! Namaste, Rev. Drew Moeller (aka Andrew Moeller).



Annual Church Picnic

Be sure to join us after church Sunday, June 12 for our Annual Picnic!
Hot dogs, water, juice will be provided for everyone and please be sure to bring a dish to share.
Bring a blanket or a folding chair and prepare to relax and enjoy the fellowship, food, and fun with all of our GPUC members and friends.

It's also Flower Communion Sunday, so bring a flower to add to our beautiful vases.

We can use help with set-up and clean-up, and need volunteers to bring grills and be grillers!
See the sign-up list in the foyer or email Jill Crane at villajilla@sbcglobal.net to let us know you are willing to help. Many hands make light work!

HAPPY CAMPERS!

The Schools Tutoring Committee has reached their financial goal thanks to the generosity of the congregation! We will be able to send 9 of the most academically improved 6th graders at Detroit Merit Academy to the Howell Nature Center & Lakeshore Adventure Camp for a week this summer. Many, many thanks GPUC Members & Friends! *We would love to send 1 more deserving child to camp.* Donations of any size are welcome. Please make the check out to GPUC with "Camp" in the memo line. For Further information, contact Susie Boynton.

UU Crafters

We are happy to announce that this congenial group is growing. Stop by and join in the fun. The UU Crafters will meet the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month, June 21 & 28 in the Annex, from 7-9pm. 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.

Our next First Sunday Food Sharing will be Sunday, June 5.

As the fridge at Crossroads East was restocked this week with eggs, milk, produce, and meat, Crossroads employee Frank said, "Your church is a real blessing to us!"

Through May 15 of this year, GPUC has donated 3,022 lbs. of fresh, canned, and boxed food to help folks who visit the food pantry at Crossroads East, located in Salem Memorial Lutheran Church on Moross, just east of I-94.

The next First Sunday Food Sharing will be Sunday, June 5. Please consider putting a couple extra cans or boxes of food in your cart next time you're out shopping. Toiletries, such as deodorant and toothpaste are also helpful. Our donations are very appreciated.

MUSICAL NOTES

A 'YUGE' THANK YOU to all the awesome GPUCers who attended one, or both, concerts performed during our nascent Concert Series. Whether it was Matthew Ball (aka The Boogie Woogie Kid), last October, or our talented Joseph Palazzolo this past April, our sanctuary was filled with great, musical entertainment. The goals of this Concert Series are to provide another venue for quality music on the east side, AND to raise funds for our church. Success was achieved! After expenses were paid, GPUC netted close to \$800! Your support of this endeavor is sincerely appreciated and we look forward to presenting more enjoyable music next church year. Plans are already in the works for season two - stay tuned!

Both the Adult Choir and the Youth Choir are looking for new singers for the next church year! All voice parts are welcome, no audition needed, just a desire to have a wonderful time with a terrific group of folks providing inspiring music for GPUC's appreciative congregation! (Yes, all of that!) The Adult Choir performs twice a month during the Sunday service, warming-up at 9:30 am before the 10:30 service. Rehearsals are weekly on Wednesday evenings from 7:30 - 9:00 in room #2 of the RE wing. Many of us go out afterward for 'beer rehearsal' (beer optional)! The Youth Choir, boys and girls in grades 1 - 6, also sings twice a month during the Sunday service. Rehearsals are held weekly right after the church service, from 11:45 - 12:15 pm, also in room #2 of the RE wing, with warm-ups at 10:00 am the morning of performances. Please consider adding the Adult &/or Youth Choir(s) to your list of 'Things To Do For More Enjoyment In My Life'!

In music,
Birdi Hansen-Marr
Music Committee Chair

Year End Pledge Payment Summaries

On June 1 the pledge payment summaries for the current fiscal year were emailed or mailed to all pledging members and friends. The fiscal year will end on June 30; if your pledge is not yet complete we ask that you please send us payment by June 30th. Your support of the church makes it possible to continue our active program and maintain our beautiful facility. The new fiscal year begins on July 1, 2016.

Notice from the Treasurer

The 2015-16 church year comes to a close on Thursday, June 30. The last date checks will printed in this fiscal year is Thursday, June 30. Any receipts that pertain to the current church year must be submitted to the church

office no later than Thursday June 23, 2016.

Please contact Laura Bartell if you have questions. Thank you.

-- Laura Bartell, Treasurer

NOTES FROM THE OFFICE

Summer Office Hours: The office will be open 9am - 3pm, Thursdays & Fridays from the week of June 20th through August 12th. Regular office hours resume Monday, August 15. Voicemail is available 24/7.

Lost and Found: Please check the "Lost and Found" box in the cloak room and the kitchen for any items you may have left at the church. Unclaimed items will go to the Resale Shop on June 15.

Refrigerator Clean Out: The refrigerator in the coffee kitchen needs to be emptied of all food for the summer. Please remove any food items left in the fridge, freezer, custodian's room and cupboards. All remaining food items will be disposed of the end of June.

Ink Cartridge Recycling: The ink and toner cartridge recycling program continues through the summer. Please bring your empty ink and toner cartridges to the office; they are recycled at Staples for store credit. We have received almost \$400 in store credit since July 2015 through this recycling program! Many thanks to all of you that have contributed their empty cartridges.

Pledge Reminder: The new Fiscal Year begins on July 1, 2016. Please remember to write 2015-16 pledge or 2016-17 pledge on the memo line of your check to receive credit in the intended pledge year.

4 Ways to help GPUC earn money

1. Kroger Community Rewards Program: GPUC members have been participating in the Kroger Community Rewards Program since 2009. This program returns money to the participating organization based on a percentage of the purchases made by the members of the organization who have enrolled. About \$1000 has been earned by GPUC annually since the program began. GPUC has received a check for \$250.00 as result of members using their Kroger Plus card in the past 3 months and \$1,067.68 over this fiscal year. Many thanks to all who are enrolled in this program! Have you signed up to participate? If not, please consider doing it as every little bit helps! Once enrolled - all you have to do is shop at Kroger.

To participate: Sign up at a Kroger store for the Kroger Plus Shopper's Card.

Go to kroger.com/account/enrollCommunityRewardsNow and follow the prompts remembering to check the church name. You will need to use this code: 83283.

Reminder: Kroger requires each person to re-enroll between April 1 and May 1.

Our office administrator, Candy Dunn is glad to help, call her if you encounter trouble or can't access the internet. The enrollment and re-enrollment process has gotten easier every year!

2. Amazon Smile Program: Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church is now an official organization on Amazon Smile. The Amazon Smile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price from your eligible Amazon Smile purchases.

To shop at Amazon Smile simply go to smile.amazon.com from the web browser on your computer or mobile device. You may also want to add a bookmark to smile.amazon.com to make it even easier to return and start your shopping at Amazon Smile.

In the Search box of what organization you want to support type in "Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church" - set this to your default. Every time you shop - use smile.amazon.com as the site address in your browser. This will donate money to the church- no strings attached - similar to the Kroger Card and Scripts programs. If you have trouble setting up your account- please contact Meghan Boomhower for help

3. SCRIP is a terrific fundraising program that allows you to purchase gift cards from companies who return an average of 5% of the amount you spend to GPUC RE. Scrip simply means "substitute money" - in other words, scrip is gift cards from national and local retailers, and they're the same gift cards that you buy at the store. Hundreds of familiar retailers participate in the scrip program.

Gift cards are perfect for graduates, teachers, family and friends. Even better, you can put your everyday household shopping dollars to work by shopping with scrip at stores that participate in the program! Scrip can be used for many purchases including dining out, clothing, gasoline and entertainment. You can support GPUC's RE students all year!

Order forms are available in the foyer and in the church office or they can be emailed to you by contacting Candy Dunn in the church office. You may turn in your order after church on Sundays or drop it in the office. Orders will be placed every two weeks or so, and will be distributed to you upon arrival. Please make checks payable to GPUC, with "scrip" in the memo line.

If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Semanision, the Scrip Coordinator. The proceeds from SCRIP are used to help defray costs of the June 2016 Junior/Senior trip to Boston.

4. Staples Ink Cartridge Recycling Program: GPUC recycles empty ink and toner cartridges at Staples to earn store credit towards the purchase of office supplies. In 2015 we received \$366 in store credit. 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, Office Administrator

Newsletter Deadline

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

***"We are a welcoming, compassionate community,
committed to learning, service and social justice,
celebrating joy, diversity and integrity on our spiritual journey."***

Contact Information
Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church
17150 Maumee Ave., Grosse Pointe, MI 48230
Phone: 313-881-0420 Fax: 313-881-6430
Email: gpuc@gpuc.us
Website:
www.gpuuc.org
Editor: Rudy Wedenoja newsletter@gpuc.us