

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*

September 2016

Upcoming Services

September 11, 2016 **10:30 AM**

Ingathering: UUnity in Diversity

Dr. Alexander Riegel & Julie Artis, D.R.E. Worship Assoc.: Janet Weber

After a long and hot summer it will be good officially to welcome everyone back for what is already shaping up to be an important and exciting year in the life of our beloved community. This will be an intergenerational service in which we reaffirm our message of radical inclusivity. Join us for stories, songs, readings, and various other liturgical tricks of the trade.

September 18, 2016 **10:30 AM**

UbuntuUU?

Dr. Alexander Riegel; Worship Associate: Chuck Palmer

Ubuntu is an African term that means "a person is a person through other persons." We will explore this notion and ask, is ubuntu the summum bonum of UUism? (Hint - yes!) If so, what does this mean for how we UUs enact our religion in the world (or in one's own church, for that matter)?

September 25, 2016 **10:30 AM**

Jack's Magic Beans

Dr. Alexander Riegel; Worship Associate: Cynthia Luce

There is a creative folk tune by Peter Mayer entitled Jack's Magic Beans in which Jack (as in "Jack and the Beanstalk," of course) failed to plant his magic beans as a child only to rediscover them in a drawer as a middle aged adult. What does one do in such a situation? We will consider this situation (in which most congregations find themselves, most of the time) from the point of view of GPUC in the year 2016, as this Sunday we launch our vision process!

October 2, 2016 **10:30 AM**

When Gulliver Woke Up

Dr. Alexander Riegel; Worship Associate: Ann Roberts

Johnathan Swift's "Gulliver's Travels" is a fantastic fictional account of a one Lemuel Gulliver who, travelling the world, finds himself in the land of the Lilliputians; people less than six inches tall but whom for all the world think themselves the most significant. There is great psychological depth in this story. We will focus on the part of the story where Gulliver wakes up only to find himself bound by the Lilliputians. What insight for our own lives might we gather from considering Gulliver's condition?

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Alexander's Meander



"I'm sooooo excited! And I just can't hide it!"

Well, what a long, hot summer it's been! I am very much looking forward to seeing EVERYONE as we enter the Fall season and people return from their summer travels and vacations. The first service back following Labor Day weekend is Sept. 11th. This will be an intergenerational service, meaning that there is no children's RE that Sunday as we will all be worshipping together. Our theme for that Sunday is UUnity in Diversity. Through song, story, and reflections we will reaffirm our message of radical inclusivity.

We already have many things planned for the Fall, including: the upcoming Brother Sun concert on Thursday, Sept. 22 (Get your tickets early!); one day spiritual study and practice retreats on the various world religions (starting with Sufism Oct 1st); a weekend workshop with my friend and teacher, Russill Paul (Nov 11 - 12); the formation of a PFLAG chapter here at GPUC; and an important children's RE curriculum on the Abrahamic faiths. Further, the dice roll right, a very special and important event is coming in late Spring/early summer!

As you can see, GPUC is thriving and I expect another wonderful year serving this congregation. I remain deeply grateful and feel humbled to serve as your minister. Together, the future looks very promising indeed! Along those lines, PLEASE take the time to read the article in this newsletter about our new vision team and the work they will be doing this year. It is exceedingly important that we follow their lead as together we envision exactly how our shared ministry will take shape over the course of the next five years.

Welcome back!

Namaste,

Alex

Message from the GPUC Board of Trustees

I was very happy to greet a new Board of Trustees at our first Board Meeting of this new Church Year. Welcome to our new Board Members: Joe Buttiglieri as VP, Paul Rowady as Secretary, Christine Whitwell, and Janna Sendra! Many thanks to our leaving Board members Ed Marck, Ann Helm, Rob Lyles and Suzanne Ross. We will miss your valuable insights.

This year, the Board has a number of goals that will require the congregation's support and participation. We are hoping to grow in numbers and programs which will require changes in our governing and committee structures, and possibly changes to our physical plant.

- We have just begun to take some preliminary steps to streamline our committee structure by encouraging groupings of committees to meet with each other. We are hoping these groups will be able to identify ways they can support each other, communicate better, and possibly work together on tasks.
- The air-conditioning project is moving forward a bit more slowly than we had initially hoped. The team under Veronica Smith has thoroughly researched and drawn up a plan with the help of an expert in this area. It has taken some time, but we now have 2 bids from contractors. The HVAC team and engineer are reviewing the bids and will make a recommendation to the Board soon.
- We are still hoping to obtain landscape design recommendations for grounds' improvements. Thanks to Russ Chavey for working on this. Efforts are in the works for paving the island walkway in the parking lot. Russ is in the process of receiving bids.
- Plans are in process for improving our audio-visual capabilities.
- We have a Vision team headed by Chris Vadino, which is developing a process, building on our mission statement, to define a shared GPUC vision for the future.
- As a congregation we must put more energy into the mechanisms that support growth including the following excellent committees:
 - The Membership Committee, We must all help in the recruitment of new members and getting them involved at GPUC.
 - The Leadership Development Committee in identifying and recruiting new leaders for our bustling community. A Committee Fair is being planned for September or October.
 - The Fellowship Committee in their efforts to provide fellowship activities that help us to bond as a community.
 - The RE program; historically one of our strongest enablers for growth.
 - The Social Justice Committee and Adult Education Committees as they continue to build these programs.
 - The Buildings and Grounds committees are the gateway and the physical image of our church.
 - Building tools for publicizing and marketing our activities to the wider community.
 - Creating an atmosphere more conducive to socializing during our coffee hour.

Finally, let me introduce our new committee leaders: We want to celebrate the addition of a new team

member at the Resale Shop. Amy Thelen has agreed to co-chair with Margo Bishop and has innovative ideas for marketing Resale products! Thanks, Amy! We are saying a heart-felt thank-you to Jenny Marck as she leaves her role as coffee coordinator but continues to give her dedicated and valuable service for our Crossroads Food Donations. Zsombor Zoltan has agreed to coordinate coffee for the next few months while we find another coordinator or revise our Coffee strategy. Thank you Zsombor! We would also like to say thank-you to Courtney and Jerry Bocci and Barb Chiapella for their enthusiastic leadership of Fellowship Committee for the past 2 years. Jill Crane will be taking over as chair of that committee and we hope Courtney, Jerry and Barb will continue to work with her. Fellowship is a big job and an important one and we must put more energy (and people) in that direction. Thanks, Jill for taking on this responsibility and thanks for your many years of devoted service to our church as Adult Religious Education Director and Assistant.

Robin Ramsay,
President, GPUC

A Vision for GPUC

We've Been Busy Visioneering!

At the end of last year the Board appointed a vision team to begin the work of helping our congregation create a vision for our beloved community. That vision will be a statement that describes what we want to achieve as a congregation over the next five years. The group has met several times this summer and is now at the point where it is time to engage the congregation and begin the process. That effort will begin with a questionnaire (to be released Sunday, Sept. 11) about various topics, largely aimed at ascertaining where the congregation feels our collective efforts should be put in service of our shared ministry. Please take the time to complete this questionnaire. Your input is vital to this effort!

In short, the vision team will be ascertaining the congregation's perspective on a number of topics, ranging from your perspective of the demographics where we do our ministry to your personal aspirations for GPUC. That is, the vision team will guide the congregation through a process in which the vision statement itself reflects the congregation's understanding and desire for how we shape our ministry.

Once the vision team has compiled your responses to the questionnaire, it will use that information as the basis for further engagement with congregation over the course of this Fall, in the form of a few congregational and small group meetings. This will not be an onerous and drawn out task but similar to our successful Mission Statement efforts last year, engaging, informative and fun. Indeed, this is an exciting time to be talking to one another about what our vision ought to be and what we would like the future to hold for our beloved community.

Finally, we introduce you to the vision team, which has adopted the title, "GPUC VisionearTeam." The play on words is intended to emphasize our role as listeners and facilitators. We are: Chris Vadino (Chair), Pi Irwin, Russ Chavey, and John Artis (Dr. Riegel sits on the committee in his role as our minister.).

Religious Education News

Welcome to the 2016-17 Religious Education Program! We are excited about another year filled with our members, new friends, opportunities to explore our world together, and relationships that nurture the hearts, minds and souls of our young students and parents.

It is our goal each year to create a community of many ages that nurtures compassion and integrity, while inspiring spiritual exploration and service for the greater good. Our classes are designed as a three year pillar system, beginning with Unitarian Universalism, followed by the Abrahamic Faiths and ending with world religions. For the 2016-17 year we will be in our second year of the pillar system with a focus on Abrahamic Faiths. Our classes and activities create an environment in which our students can think critically, recognize their own inherent worth and that of others and can discuss and discover their own beliefs, values and ideals.

Our program is a cooperative system and requires the work of many hands and hearts to thrive each week. Please take the time to look through the opportunities for volunteer service which are available and decide how you would like to be involved. Your involvement will not only support the health of our program, but it will also help you to find and build a church community and help you feel at home in our wonderful and vibrant church.

Religious Education Lessons

September 11th will be our first Sunday back with an all Family Service. Please remember to bring your registration forms to the Religious Education office. On the following Sunday, September 18th the students will begin in the church and then go back to their classes in the RE wing. The nursery will be open every Sunday including Labor Day Sunday, September 4th. Our caring sitters will be there to greet your young UU's.

Registration forms have been mailed out to all past parents. If you are new and would like to register your child, please contact me by phone or email at Julie@gpuc.us Teaching assignments will be sent out during the second week of September.

The first Religious Education Committee meeting will be at 9:15 a.m. on September 11 in Room 7 of the RE wing.

I look forward to greeting you every Sunday!

Julie Artis, Director of Religious Education

Brother Sun Concert - Thursday Sept. 22, 7:30 PM.



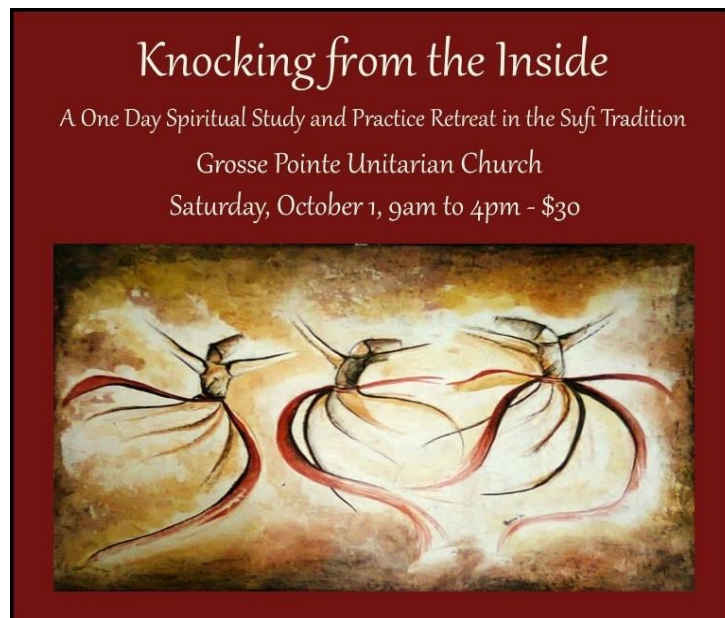
Brother Sun is a folk trio that is increasingly recognized as one of the better folk trios in the country. Their newest (and 3rd overall) CD, *Weights and Wings*, recently debuted as the #1 CD on the Folk DJ Music Chart. We are lucky that they have selected Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church as their Autumn 2016 Michigan venue!

This is an experience not to be missed, so mark your calendars!

Tickets available: call the church Office 313-881-0420 or purchase them in the foyer following Sunday Service.

<http://www.gpuuc.org/upcoming-events.html>

Announcements



A One Day Spiritual Study and Practice Retreat in the Sufi Tradition Saturday, October 1,

This is the first of four retreats scheduled between now and May 2017. Each retreat will focus on one of four mystical traditions, within Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism. We will examine the teachings from one of these mystical streams as well as provide guidance on a variety of spiritual practices, i.e., mantra, silent meditation, walking meditation, and turning exercises.

Retreats run from 9am - 4pm (with a one and a half hour lunch break).

Cost: \$30 at the door (lunch not included).

<http://www.gpuuc.org/upcoming-events.html>

FROM HAPPY CAMPERS TO TUTORING

Now that our happy campers have returned from the Lakeshore Adventure session in northern Michigan with the Howell Nature Center, the Schools Tutoring Committee continues our Church program to assist students at Detroit Merit Academy, Clark Academy and Nichols Schools in Detroit. The schools know that the time volunteers give has made a difference in the students' reading and math skills. Usually, tutors

volunteer 1.5 hours per week, but some wanted to tutor twice a week (Colin Gillis, John Boomhower and Joy Spurr. Each tutor will work out a convenient day and time with the assigned teacher.

Other tutors last year included Rob Lyles, Sam Pruitt, Harry Walker, Susie Boynton as well as friends Ruth Orintas and Julie Panizzai. So far this school year, Rev. Kimi Riegel and friend Mary Zahler have joined our group for the orientation at the end of September before tutoring begins in early October. Contact Susie Boynton or Candy Dunn for further information or to volunteer for this highly appreciated activity.

First Sunday Food Sharing

To kick off fall, September 11 will be our next First Sunday Food Sharing. Our donations are taken to Crossroads East on Moross, just east of I-94. This location is close to our church home and has a food pantry, clothing closet, provides job assistance, and counseling. We will be collecting non-perishables such as cereal, noodles, rice, canned fruits, veggies, soups, and sauces. If you prefer to donate monetarily, your money is used to buy items such as eggs, milk, meat, produce, and bread. Our donations are greatly appreciated and really help keep the shelves, fridge, and freezer stocked. Our donations are always gladly received! From this January through the end of August, GPUC has provided over 4,491 lbs. pounds of food and toiletries to Crossroads East! Many, many thanks!

Jenny Marck

Fall Grounds Cleanup

This year's fall grounds cleanup will take place on Saturday, October 8 (with Saturday, October 15 as a rain date). To those of you who have participated in the past, thank you again. To those who have not, please consider joining us. We gather at 9 am to clean up leaves and other debris from the church grounds, we trim some of the growth around the edges of the parking lot and usually do a couple other very small yard improvement projects. No particular skill is required, just some enthusiasm and perhaps some gloves, a rake (and a tarp and/or hedge trimmers if you have them). You may leave whenever you like, we will be done no later than 11am. This is always a family friendly affair, children are welcome. We look forward to another morning of outdoor "communion" at GPUC.

Russell Chavey
Grounds Committee

UU Crafters

We are happy to announce that we will continue this Fall on the 3rd and 4th Tuesdays of the month. Our September meetings are September 20 and 27 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.

Fellowship Committee

The Fellowship Committee is looking to plan several exciting events for the upcoming church year. The two main functions the committee is organizing are the Thanksgiving Brunch and the end of year picnic. This year we hope to re-start the Circle Dinners. We are looking for your ideas for fun ways to involve all of our members in fellowship.

We need additional committee members. Please contact me if you are interested. We will be having a planning meeting in the early fall.

Jill Crane, Fellowship Committee Chair

NEW GPUC 2016-17 Directory

Phone directory update emails and letters were sent to members and friends beginning August 22. This is your chance to update emails, add cell numbers, or delete/correct outdated information. The directory also offers "GPUC Blue Book" listings. Members may share their business/professional services info via special listings in the back of our new directory. Our youth are invited to list their skills such as babysitting, pet care, leaf raking, etc.

This year you have the option of receiving an electronic directory or a printed directory. Be sure to indicate your preference when replying.

I need to hear from you even if you are not making any changes to your current listing. The deadline for submitting your directory updates and GPUC Blue Book listing information is Sunday, September 11. Submit information to: gpuc@gpuc.us or send it in writing to the church office.

Alliance Luncheon Program:

Join us in the Annex for a pizza and salad luncheon on Tuesday, October 11th. Our featured speaker Suzanne Bilek, a specialist in local art and history, will show a power point presentation on the Lake Superior Circle Tour. Program highlights include Art and Nature, Wilderness and Water and History and Indian Culture. Don't miss this 1100 mile journey around one of our Great Lakes. Lunch will be served at Noon for a cost of \$7.00. Please contact Mary Morshead for a reservation.

Musical Notes



Rehearsals - Wednesdays, 7:30 - 9:00 pm, room #2 of RE Wing.
The **FIRST** rehearsal of this church year is Wed., Sept. 7th.

- Choir Sings** - 1st & 3rd Sundays of month during the service, with 9:30 am warm-up
- ~ NO audition necessary, just an enjoyment of singing in a group of fine folks, to an appreciative congregation, led by our dynamic director - Joseph Palazzolo.
 - ~ ALL voice parts welcome, but an extra "atta boy/girl" if you sing soprano, tenor or bass! Voice parts are not gender specific. Joseph will help decide your best vocal range.
 - ~ Many singers go out for 'Beer Rehearsal' afterward!

QUESTIONS? Please contact: Joseph Palazzolo or Birdi Hansen-Marr



GPUC's Youth Choir,
Grades 1 - 6

WANTED!

Boys & Girls, Guys & Gals, Fellas & Sheilas, Lads & Lassies, Dudes & Dudettes, Males & Females, Really Young Men & Really Young Women, Brothers & Sisters, Sons & Daughters, Grandsons & Granddaughters, in grades 1 - 6.

~ **Rehearsals** - Sundays, 11:45 am - 12:15 pm, immediately after the service, in room #2 of the RE Wing. **FIRST** rehearsal - Sunday, September 18, 2016.

~ **Sings** - 2nd & 4th Sundays of the month, with 10:00 am SHARP warm-up before the service.

~ While we'd love your child to rehearse & sing each time, we realize that this is not always possible. Your child is welcome as often as possible.

~ **Some benefits from singing in the YOUTH CHOIR include:**

- * learning about choral & solo singing, & music in general
- * listening & paying attention to Mr. Palazzolo & peers
- * cooperating in a group setting with various ages
- * gaining self-confidence by performing in front of a very appreciative congregation
- * expanding memory skills by memorizing the music
- * the value of being a productive part of our church community
- * making new friends & having a GREAT time

QUESTIONS? Contact: Joseph Palazzolo or Birdi Hansen-Marr



MATTHEW BALL, attorney-turned Boogie, Blues & Ragtime musician, will perform the opening benefit concert for Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church's Concert Series, Second Year, showcasing Michigan's talented artists.

Described as "MICHIGAN'S BEST" in Ragtime, Boogie & Blues, Matt will perform piano favorites from the SWING DANCING DAYS of the 20s, 30s, & 40s!

DO NOT miss this special toe-tappin' program of FAMILY piano fun, featuring classics like Suwanee River, Over the Rainbow, Amazing Grace, Waltzing Matilda, The Entertainer, Side by Side, In the Mood, Chopsticks Boogie, Bumble Boogie & MORE!

www.boogiewoogiekid.com & You Tube videos

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND

MATTHEW BALL

"The Boogie Woogie Kid"

THE OPENING CONCERT
of the 2nd Year

SATURDAY
OCTOBER 15, 2016
7:30 pm

Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church
17150 Maumee, Grosse Pointe, MI 48230

TICKETS:

Adults: \$15 - Advance \$20 - At Door

Seniors (60+) & Students: \$12 - Advance
\$15 - At Door

Call to reserve: 313.881.0420

"Awesome!" "Crushing!" "Fantastic!"

Newsletter Deadline

Please submit your contribution to the next newsletter by Friday, September 23 at noon. They should be sent to newsletter@gpuc.us.

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