

*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*

## February 2017

### Upcoming Services

**February 5, 2017** **10:30 AM**

**Reflections on Character Building**

**Tonya Wells**

**Worship Associate: Maurya Kay**

There are so many ways to consider how to build character. Join us to hear about one person's effort to advance the "Science of Character" on line. The service will also offer one Unitarian Universalist's perspective on how we can shape our character as well as influence the character of those around us.

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**February 12, 2017** **10:30 AM**

**Stewardship as a Unitarian Universalist Value**

**Joseph Buttiglieri**

**Worship Associate: Chuck Palmer**

How do we manage our resources to serve ourselves, our church and the larger world? How do the seven principles call on us to act as stewards and what does that mean? Do love and compassion play a role in stewardship? Join us to explore these and other questions together.

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**February 19, 2017** **10:30 AM**

**Meh: On the Wisdom of the Stoic Philosophers**

**Dr. Alexander Riegel**

**Worship Associate: Tonya Wells**

Alex returns to our pulpit.

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**February 26, 2017** **10:30 AM**

**Our Unitarian Heritage**

**Dr. Alexander Riegel**

**Worship Associate: Maurya Kay**

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## Alexander's Meander

I will continue to be on study break the first part of February and will return February 13. While I am away, Rev. Kimi Riegel and Rev. Emeritus John Corrado, along with some of our Worship Associates, will fill the

pulpit. Rev. Kimi Riegel will take care of urgent pastoral duties, i.e., hospitalization and death. In the event you need to reach her, try contacting her directly, but in the event you do not have her contact information, please contact Candy in the church office or our President Robin Ramsay. As for me, I will be in India again, with deep gratitude for the opportunity to serve this amazing congregation and staring at my navel in hopes of finding further wisdom to share with you on the path...

Namaste,

Alex

## Message from the GPUC Board of Trustees

Now that our Vision Team has identified our congregation's hopes for the future, the Board is developing two teams to work on practical applications of our Vision. The first team, headed by Chris Vadino, will focus on identifying facilities improvements that will help us to reach our goals. Chris is in the process of building her team. The second team will focus on programming improvements to help us reach our goals. We are in the process of identifying a chair and members of that team.

The Board continues to work on projects that already have been identified.

**Air-Conditioning:** You have probably noticed some signs of construction in our main building. Installation of our new air-conditioning has finally begun. We hope to have cool air to support our summer programming this year! Thanks to all who brought this plan to fruition, including Veronica Smith and her team and John and Anne Roberts for their generous donation!!!

**Landscaping:** We have a landscape design for improving the Memorial Garden, Parking walkway, and our other grounds. Russ Chavey, our Grounds Chair, has worked with Candy Sweeney, designer, to bring us this plan. The Board authorized \$35,000 for Stage One of the Plan, which includes plantings, irrigation, drainage, and some changes to the gates and walls. The Board has been planning for this expenditure, so there is money available. The Board is planning to offer church members the opportunity of donating large trees for our grounds.

**Communications/Marketing/Membership:** The Board has authorized hiring a part-time support person to improve the effectiveness of our communications, including social media, publicity, audio-visual capacity. We are hoping this person will also give some time to our membership program as well. Money for such a position was anticipated in this year's Marketing budget.

**Social Justice Event:** The Board is sponsoring a lecture by the well-known speaker on Race Relations, Cornel West. Dr. West will speak at the War Memorial on April 8th on the subject, "Justice Matters". We hope to see everyone there. Please consider buying tickets to this event and please spread the word about this important speaker. Although we have already sold more than half of the tickets, we need to sell ALL the seats for this financial venture to break even. Let us continue to serve as a beacon of liberal thought on the East side!

**Budget and Canvass:** The Finance Committee and Board will begin working on a budget for the 2017-2018 Fiscal Year which starts July 1. After the Board approves the budget, the Congregation will get together to discuss and then will vote at our Annual Meeting in May. Thank you to Paul Rowady and Joe Buttiglieri, chairing Canvass, and thanks to Juli Moore, who is organizing the Fellowship Dinner. Please welcome their contacts with you, as they solicit pledges for the next year. Now, more than ever, liberal thought needs our support. Thank Goodness there is a UU church in Grosse Pointe. Our mission depends on the generosity of our congregation. I know I am happy to support this wonderful institution and community!

**Crossroads Donations:** Thank you to Jenny Marck and her family for their labor and organization of our monthly donations to Crossroads! Jenny has summarized our donations for 2016, which I thought would be of interest to the congregation. Please see below.

**From Crossroads East Task Force, Jenny Marck:**

During the 2016 calendar year, our donations to Crossroads East totaled 6,837 pounds. This represents the food and toiletry items donated on our FSFS Sundays, as well as the grocery items, deodorant, and toothpaste purchased with our monetary donations and my Kroger "bonus" money, which altogether totaled \$3,226.

The monetary contributions to FSFS have decreased markedly this year:

From Jan - March, 2016 \$1,015

From April - June, 2016 \$873

From July - September, 2016 \$734

From Oct - Dec, 2016 \$604

It seems that the reason for the decrease is fewer very large individual donations. The money from the actual FSFS Sunday collection and the money from the Alliance and Resale are consistent.

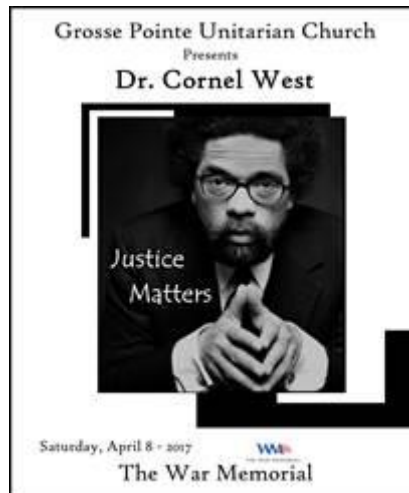
Crossroads employees continue to be very appreciative of our donations, and especially are glad to receive the milk and eggs that we bring.

Robin Ramsay

President, GPUC Board of Trustees

**Cornel West**

**Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church is excited to announce that Dr. Cornel West will be appearing at The War Memorial in Grosse Pointe, MI, on Saturday, April 8, 2017.**



**At the invitation of Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church, Dr. West will be speaking on the theme, "Justice Matters," at 2pm, preceded by a V.I.P. reception at 12:30pm. Tickets for this event are on sale now and are expected to go very fast!**

**Ticket purchase information:**

**V.I.P. reception and near stage seating - \$125.00**

**Assigned Seating (You may select your own seat on the venue website) - \$35.00**

**The following link will take you to the venue website for ticket sales:**

**[warmemorial.secure.force.com/ticket/#details\\_a0S36000002H1jEAC](http://warmemorial.secure.force.com/ticket/#details_a0S36000002H1jEAC). Once at the site, click on the date in the left hand corner, under the phrase, "Dr. Cornel West - Justice Matters." Subsequent steps will be obvious...**

\*NOTE - All ticket sale inquiries are to be directed to The War Memorial, phone: 313.881.7511; address: 32 Lake Shore Drive, Grosse Pointe Farms, Michigan 48236. Aside from ticket sale inquiries, inquiries about the event itself may be directed to the Rev. Dr. Alexander Riegel, Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church ([drriegel@gpuc.us](mailto:drriegel@gpuc.us)), through Jan 9, 2017, then between Feb. 13, - April 8, 2017.

## Brief Bio

Cornel West is a prominent and provocative democratic intellectual. He is a Professor of Philosophy and Christian Practice at Union Theological Seminary and Professor Emeritus at Princeton University. He has also taught at Yale, Harvard, and the University of Paris. Cornel West graduated Magna Cum Laude from Harvard in three years and obtained his M.A. and Ph.D. in Philosophy at Princeton. He has written over 20 books and has edited 13. Though he is best known for his classics, *Race Matters* and *Democracy Matters*, and for his memoir, *Brother West: Living and Loving Out Loud*, his most recent releases, *Black Prophetic Fire* and *Radical King*, were received with critical acclaim.

## Religious Education News



We need to talk about families and loss. One of our individual families at GPUC recently lost their 20 year old daughter. We at GPUC lost that lovely young woman who was near and dear to us. Let's face it, it takes great love and courage to live life to its fullness. Every day we face a number of losses, big and small. We may lose money, our marriage is not good or our child is not doing well at school. We may be entering a new phase of our life with our child leaving for college or a partner becoming ill.

We all face changes every day and we may think we can get used to changes. The real picture is that we greet our losses with silence and anger, and they are scary. We don't want to feel the losses. Loss changes our world. Our life becomes painful. What to do?

While UU offers no detailed approach to facing loss, our 7 Principles lead quite naturally to beliefs about loss and our response to it. The information below is taken from "Taking It Home: Families and Faith".

Go to [uua.org](http://uua.org) for the full article. The following beliefs are widespread throughout our congregations:

- No one holds the ultimate truth about life, death, and the existence of the soul.
- We have the right to change our minds.
- We have the right to our individual opinions and beliefs.
- We believe that a deep reserve of strength exists with each of us.
- Every person has the courage and ability to contemplate the unknowable.
- Life is hard and loss is inevitable.
- Life is good and worth living.
- God (however one defines that concept) is characterized by love, not ultimate power.
- Our job is to live on earth with truth, beauty, and goodness.
- We can and do draw inspiration and strength from a wide variety of sources.
- There are no "chosen" people.
- UU's tend to accept scientific explanations of occurrences.
- Many UU's believe in "salvation by character", the way we live our lives today here on earth.

We can help each other during times of loss by: offering support through our Care Committee, recognizing the wrenching pain of loss, acknowledging differences of opinion in an atmosphere of respect and acceptance, sharing our emotions, both pleasant and painful, and "walking through the nettles" with each other.

If you need to talk regarding your losses, remember to call the staff at GPUC or Care Committee. We are here for you!!!

## RE Lessons:

The nursery will be open at 9:30 a.m. every Sunday morning. We have the same loving childcare workers to

provide a safe and caring place for our young UU's. We also have a pot of coffee for parents to enjoy and get to know each other.

**Lower and Upper Elementary** students in February will begin their lessons on Islam. They will also continue their study of Tolerance through our Golden Club.

**Junior and Senior High** students and their parents have begun to make coffee each week for our church. Our students will continue their lesson on Christianity.

**Dates to remember:**

February 5th-RE Committee Meeting at 9:15 a.m. and bring in food for Crossroads

March 12th-Swim party

Happy Valentine's Day! "Where there is great love there are always miracles."-Willa Cather

Julie Artis, Director of Religious Education

## Friendship Dinner

**Friendship Dinners** Previously known as Circle Dinners

So as to avoid confusion between the Circle Dinner put on by the Religious Education Department we have changed the name of the previously known Circle Dinners to Friendship Dinners. Circle Dinners are a tradition from years back and are a great way for seasoned members and newer members of the church to get to know one another in small group settings, in members' homes.

Here's how they work: We put out a sign-up sheet in the lobby.

You may indicate if you would like to join the dinner and if you wish to host the event in your home. Usually eight people go to each home, but if you can accommodate six or ten, that would be great.

Once we have a list of participants, we will divide them up into the different homes. The host will then call you and give you a food assignment. Usually the host supplies the home and the guests bring the food and wine. Food could be anything from appetizers, main dishes, vegetables and side dishes, salads, rolls, desserts and wine.

Our first **Friendship Dinner will be held on Saturday, February 25.**

The sign up sheet will be out on Sunday, January 29th and the dead line for **signing up will be Sunday, February 19th**, which will give us time to divide up the diners and give the host a chance to call you with the food assignment.

Please consider joining us and also offering your home. You will enjoy getting to know members you didn't know before.

If you have questions, please speak with Jill Crane, Fellowship Chair.

## Musical Notes

# ***Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church Concert Series*** ***"Saturdays at 7:30"***

*Presents*

**CARL CAFAGNA IN CONCERT WITH RON PIETRANTONI**

***Saturday, March 11, 2017, 7:30 pm***

17150 Maumee Avenue

Grosse Pointe, MI 48230

(313) 881 – 0420 [www.gpuuc.org](http://www.gpuuc.org)



An all-around musician, **Carl Cafagna** (cah-FAH-nyah) sings, plays sax and other winds like nobody else. He has performed with Mel Torme, Natalie Cole, The Temptations, Martha Reeves, among others. He has toured the U.S., sung in the Church of The Madeleine in Paris, in London's Westminster Cathedral, and in New York's Carnegie Hall.



Pianist **Ron Pietrantonio**, who has performed with the Sun Messengers, is currently accompanist for the Grosse Pointe Community Chorus, and Grace Community Church of Detroit, plays for many high schools and in pit orchestras for musicals throughout Southeastern Michigan.

***Together they will take you on a musical journey through time and space to another dimension. Classical, Pop, Jazz, Rock, Blues...***

**TICKETS: Presale – Adults \$15, Seniors (60+) & Students \$12**

**At Door – Adults \$20, Seniors (60+) & Students \$15**

➔ **Go to: [www.gpuuc.org/upcoming-events.html](http://www.gpuuc.org/upcoming-events.html) and buy tickets with **PayPal** or buy them through church office during business hours, (313) 881-0420.**

[www.gpuuc.org/upcoming-events.html](http://www.gpuuc.org/upcoming-events.html) and buy tickets with **PayPal**

O did you hear the news, my friends, the church is going **Green!**  
Your pledges and donations surely put you on our team.  
It starts with food and Fellowship at church on March 18.  
So join our crowd and give some love with the Sharing of your **Green!**

O, the Sharing o' the **Green,**  
Yes, the Sharing o' the **Green!**  
So join our crowd and give some love with the Sharing of your **Green!**

Save the Date!! Our annual **FELLOWSHIP DINNER** will be held in the church on **SATURDAY, MARCH 18**. This exceptional evening of food, fellowship and song is the kick-off event for the church pledge drive for fiscal year 2017-2018. All members and friends of GPUC attending will hear about plans for the future of our church and the importance of everyone's responsible financial participation in that future. Please mark your calendar to save the date. Everyone interested in attending will be contacted by the end of February with details about the evening. Any questions about the dinner, please contact Juli Moore.

## Announcements

### **Our next First Sunday Food Sharing will be Sunday, February 5.**

Please bring boxed, canned, or bagged donations for our contribution to the Crossroads East food pantry. If you prefer to make a monetary donation, your contributions are used to purchase eggs, milk, produce, bread, and lunch meat for the pantry on a (most) weekly basis.

During the 2016 calendar year, our donations to Crossroads East totaled 6,837 pounds. This represents the food and toiletry items donated on our FSFS Sundays, as well as the grocery items, deodorant, and toothpaste purchased with your monetary donations, which totaled \$3,226.

The clients at Crossroads East, located at Salem Memorial Lutheran Church, are assisted with social services needs, supplemental food, transportation, and clothing.

Our donations are always greatly appreciated! Thank you!!!

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### **Resale Shop News**

Are you looking for something to do on Wednesdays with a great group of people? Learn a new skill, share a few laughs, and have lunch with us. The GPUC Resale Shop is looking for a volunteer who would like to help/learn merchandising on the internet. Wednesday daytime hours. Flexible time schedule, but approximately 9-3 PM. Writing skills a plus. Contact Amy 313 822-3029.

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### **UU Crafters**

UU Crafters meet on the 3rd and 4th Tuesdays of the month. Meetings take place on Tuesdays, February 21 and 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.

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### **Newsletter Deadline**

Please submit your contribution to the next newsletter by Friday, February 17 at noon. They should be sent to [newsletter@gpuc.us](mailto:newsletter@gpuc.us).

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