



*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

**January
2021**



Newsletter Deadline

Mark your calendars and please submit your contribution to the next newsletter by

Wednesday, January 20th

Submit items to the newsletter email address: newslettergpuc@gmail.com

Upcoming Services

In order to protect our congregation and do our part to slow the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19), all in-person church events, classes, meetings, rehearsals and workshops are suspended until further notice. The Resale Shop has decided to open but on an appointment only basis. To reach the church office please email officegpuc@gmail.com or leave a voicemail on the office phone 313-881-0420 ext. 10.

Worship services will be provided online using Zoom.

It is recommended that you join early and use a laptop, desktop with a webcam or you may download the Zoom app on your tablet or smart phone via the App store. We also request when joining the online session limiting to one connection per household.

The Sunday worship service Zoom link will be sent by email on Friday afternoons, January 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29.

UNFAMILIAR WITH ZOOM? - DO THIS IN ADVANCE OF SUNDAY

- Sign onto zoom meeting link 15 minutes prior to service.
- Bring a chalice or a small candle so you can light the chalice when we do.
- Have the order of service handy - either electronically or in printed form, so you can follow along with the service.
- Have your preferred refreshments and hot beverages ready to enjoy during the service.
- Enjoy the service and provide email feedback to us on how this option is working for you.

January 3, 2021

10:30 AM

Sermon: "Ponder This"

Worship Leader: Dr. Riegel

Worship Associate: Carol Guither

Life is said to be a journey. There are many ways of "journeying" through life. Some people make a bee line from cradle to grave. Some people do the "drunkard's walk," constantly drifting from one "shiny object" to the next in a seemingly nonsensical pattern. Other's merely sit by the side of the road and watch other travelers go by... Another manner of journeying through life is to walk, stop and ponder. In this sermon, Dr. Riegel will extol the virtues of "pondering."

January 10, 2021

10:30 AM

Sermon: "Ode to Spot"

Worship Leader: Dr. Riegel

Worship Associate: Maurya Kay

This is the first in a three-part sermon series, entitled "Keys to the Kingdom," that Dr. Riegel will be giving on the nature of the "self." Understanding the self is important for many reasons (to wit, Socrates: "Know Thyself."). Mostly, as many have heard Dr. Riegel say, because one must live one's entire life within one's own skin (How's that going for you, by the way?). Given this, we need to know the terrain therein.

We begin with the mind, what most people take to be the dominant aspect of the self but which Dr. Riegel considers the least dominant aspect of the self. Indeed, he believes that we have erroneously inverted the "hierarchy of the self," taking the mind to be most dominant, followed by the emotions, then the body. In reality, it is the body that is most dominant, followed by the emotions, then the mind. With this in mind, Dr. Riegel will help us reconsider the mind's place within the self.

January 17, 2021

10:30 AM

Sermon: "The Heart Has It's 'Reasons'"

Worship Leader: Dr. Riegel

Worship Associate: Chuck Palmer

This is part two of a three-part sermon series on the nature of the "self." Dr. Riegel will discuss the role of emotions within the self, exploring everything from the evolutionary role of emotions to the emotions' unrecognized influence on the mind.

January 24, 2021

10:30 AM

Sermon: "Where Sinew Meets the Bone"

Worship Leader: Dr. Riegel

Worship Associate: Tonya Wells

This is part three of a three-part sermon series on the nature of the "self." Dr. Riegel will discuss the role of body within the self, explaining why it is the body that is most dominant within the self. He will end by explaining how a correct understanding of the self gives us the "Keys to the Kingdom."

January 31, 2021

10:30 AM

Sermon: "Welcome Revelations from Julian of Norwich"

Worship Leader: Kelly Fordon

Worship Associate: TBD

Julian of Norwich's story resonates today on many fronts. A medieval anchorite and mystic, Julian (1342-1416) lived through a global pandemic and penned the first book in English written by a woman. The central message of Revelations of Divine Love is "All Shall Be Well," which was not a popular notion at the time. In this sermon, Kelly will discuss Julian's various roles as mystic, writer, and revolutionary, as well as how she survived the last 44 years of her life in a small anchorite cell.

Alexander's Meander



"A Walk"

My eyes already touch the sunny hill,
going far beyond the road I have begun,
So we are grasped by what we cannot grasp;
it has an inner light, even from a distance-

and changes us, even if we do not reach it,
into something else, which, hardly sensing it,
we already are; a gesture waves us on
answering our own wave...
but what we feel is the wind in our faces.
— Rainer Maria Rilke

"So we are grasped by what we cannot grasp; it has an inner light, even from a distance..."

As the New Year turns, my mind drifts back to this Rilke poem, which captured my heart many moons ago. The poem reminds me that there is a force in life beyond our comprehension, which, though beyond our comprehension, nevertheless *grasps us* in the deep recesses of our beings. And "it has an inner light..."

It's been a rough 2020, friends! I am glad to see the calendar turn! And with that turning, I see rays of hope that "already touch the sunny hill" upon which we are soon to tread: astronomical rarities, longer daylight hours, the triumph of science... new leadership. I have placed my faith in these rays of hope. My spirit senses change – we are approaching that sunny hill.

I find myself imagining a not-too-distant day when we can gather again in beloved community, look one another in the eyes, and be reminded in that glance of our shared humanness. My mind imagines... and my heart leaps at the prospect. It's an impulse of hope... and faith... and of love. I hope you feel it, too?

Between now and that day, look for such rays of hope, rays that can restore your will for tomorrow, for "this, too, shall pass." And in the meantime, keep staying safe, and keep leaning into this beloved community!

Namaste,

Alex

Religious Education News



**And now let us welcome
the New Year full of things
that have never been.
— Rainer Maria Rilke**

January, the month of new beginnings and new memories. We begin this year with high hopes of the COVID Virus getting under control. I seem to spend an inordinate amount of time working on my mental wellbeing these days. What are some sure-fire actions to help me and maybe you live our lives to be happier, smoother and more peaceful as we start 2021? There is no specific formula to do this but below are some thoughts to try.

New Year advice:

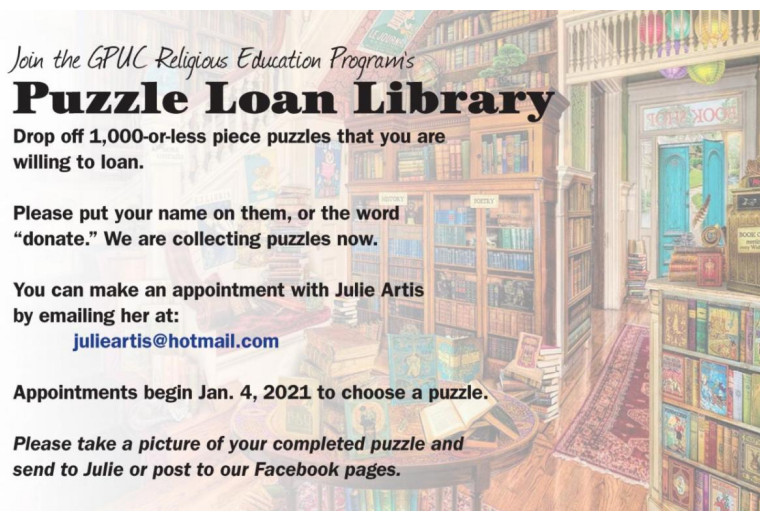
1. **Live in the moment.** Have long term goals but then avert your attention and focus back to today. Be fully present in your life and do not check out of life and live for a future that hasn't arrived yet.
2. **Give up comparing your life to others.** We are all here to accomplish different things at different times. Success is not always about money or how many friends a person has in their address book. The more you are true to yourself, the less you will worry about what others are doing.
3. **Stop overthinking.** When you are in your mind you are in 'enemy territory'. People can be extremely hard on themselves and tend to default to negative, self-critical thinking. Thinking time can find solutions and make action

plans for your life. The moment you find you are ruminating over the same topic without much progress, it is time to distract yourself and do something else.

4. **Maintain balance in your life.** It is hard during this COVID time to find time to pamper ourselves. Part of honoring and loving ourselves is accepting that we deserve love and care and that we owe it to ourselves to take care of ourselves. Meditation is a good way to help with a balance life.
5. **Choose your thoughts about the world wisely.** What you want to believe or choose to believe will shape your world and your family's world. It is vitally important to analyze and carefully craft what you wish to believe about yourself, the world and other people. Be open and trust in good. You will be happier for it. Never give up hope and faith and positive perceptions even in the face of the pandemic. Do not let the pandemic define you and wear you down. When we focus too much on all the negativity, we can become bitter.
6. **Laugh a lot.** How else will you learn about your strengths and weaknesses? Get out of your comfort zone and meet others by attending zoom meetings during this time. Call friends, watch funny movies, learn some jokes to share. This is the best way to conquer fear and gain confidence and you will be able to look back on your life with fewer regrets.

Religious Education Events

Below is a poster of our Puzzle Loan Library. I have received many puzzles to start our making appointments for students and members to come into GPUC and pick a puzzle to loan. Call me at 313-590-2464 or email me at julieartis@hotmail.com to make your appointment. Once you finish your puzzle, take a picture of it and email me the photo. I will post it on our social media accounts. Have fun and stay in touch with your GPUC friends.



I look forward to seeing you all on zoom classes and at the zoom church service. Happy New Year and stay safe.

Julie Artis, Director of Religious Education

Upcoming Programs And Events

About GPUC's Racial Equity Task Force



Who starts a church project during a pandemic lockdown? GPUCers, that's who. During last spring and early summer, in the wake of the killings of Armaud Arbury, Breonna Taylor and George Floyd, and with increasingly overt racism coming from the White House, GPUC's Social Justice Committee met frequently, via Zoom. In mid-June Rev. Riegel delivered a compelling sermon entitled "Learning to Be White" in which he urged us to commit ourselves to dismantling the white power structure. Meanwhile we learned of the devastation being wrought on the Black and Hispanic communities by the coronavirus. And each day brought word of new voter suppression and intimidation techniques, aimed primarily at communities of color.

Over the course of several meetings and discussions, the Racial Equity Task Force (RETF) was created as a subcommittee of the Social Justice Committee, focusing on anti-racist education and activism. Meetings are held on the fourth Sunday of the month at noon, currently via Zoom. The next meeting will be **Sunday, January 24, 12 noon**. (Note that no meeting was held in December.) Mark Franchett, Daniel Rathbun and Chris Vadino are co-chairs.

Photo by [Jon Tyson](#) on [Unsplash](#)

RETF maintains a resource page on the GPUC website, updated monthly with links to recommended books, articles, films and organizations. We have hosted book and article discussions and these will continue in the new year. On **Monday, January 11, at 7:30 pm** Mark Franchett will lead a discussion of the New York Times opinion piece *"My Body Is a Confederate Monument"* by Caroline Randall Williams. On **January 25 and February 8 (both Monday nights at 7:30 pm)** Freda Giblin and Chris Vadino will host discussion of *How to Be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi.

These upcoming events and our monthly meetings are open to the GPUC community. To request Zoom links for any of these events, please e-mail Mark Franchett at markfranchett@gmail.com

Bike Drive 2021

We are kicking off the GPUC Resale Shop used bike drive. Here is a great opportunity to recycle that old bike, clean out a spot in your garage and help GPUC. This winter we are collecting bikes for resale this coming spring. We will take donated bikes in any shape, size or condition. All bikes will be reconditioned and tuned up for resale. Please email, text or call Mark Franchett for pickup of your donated bike. (mark.franchett@gmail.com)



May Day Auction 2021

May Day! May Day! Calling all GPUC Members and Friends to our NEWLY SCHEDULED **Online Auction for May 1, 2021**. We will feature events with imaginative, safe ways to mingle and socialize, cooking and restaurant food opportunities, and wonderful items created and purchased by our members - ALL to be bid upon. Our auction will have both silent and live bidding options, with lots of "technical support" and "training" for our bidders to be successful. MARK YOUR CALENDARS for May 1, 2021. Please contact Robin Ramsay (rjramsay@comcast.net) or Christy Winder (clwinder@gmail.com) with any questions or good ideas.

Save the dates:

This year's **annual meeting** will be **Sunday May 23**. It will be held via Zoom once again and will begin shortly after that Sunday's service. More information to follow.

The spring grounds cleanup will be **Sunday April 11, 1-3pm**

Announcements

Breeze makes giving easy...

Members and Friends,

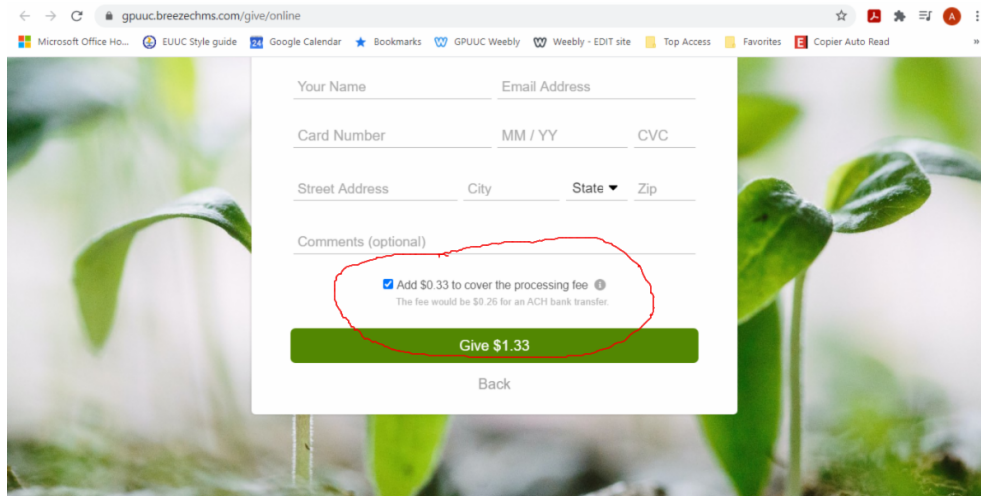
We are so glad that since we have began, many of you have utilized Breeze for donating towards holiday giving or paying towards your pledges. We hope as time goes on, we will continue to use Breeze to keep us all connected and make it easier for donating.

Here are ways to Donate using Breeze:

To give via Text Message you will text the word "Give" to (313) 766-2911.

To help us defray the cost for processing this transaction, we ask that you include the transaction fee amount of 2.9% + \$0.30 to your total.

Example: \$1.00 X .029 = \$0.029 or \$0.03 + \$0.30 Total transaction: \$1.33



To Pay Online go to: <https://gpuuc.breezechms.com/give/online>

When paying online, it will give you the option to cover the processing fee without having to calculate. The processing fee will be credited towards your total tax-deductible giving.

If you have any questions about Breeze, please feel free to reach out to Ameera.

Thank you!

Looking to shop? Resale now accepting appointments!

After much deliberation, the resale has decided to open but on an appointment only basis. There will be no more than three (3) customers at a given time. Masks will be required.

If you want to take advantage of the great sales, please call Margo Bishop at (586) 778-2185 to schedule your date and time.

We are looking forward to seeing you happy shoppers!

Still haven't gotten your 20-21 Directory?

For those who have requested this years directory, they are available for pick up Mon-Tues-Thurs-Fri from 9:00AM-4:30PM or may be sent by mail.

Please contact Ameera if you would like to receive your copy.

For our members: The directory is made available on our website in the "members only" section and will be updated through the year as changes are made.

Thank you!

ENTRY BY APPOINTMENT

Effective as of 7/30/2020: To limit the spread of Covid-19 and with the health of our congregants in mind, we are requiring all entry into the facility to be by appointment only. We ask our members to please call (313) 881-0420 ext. 10 or e-mail officegpuuc@gmail.com to schedule an appointment. Upon entry to the building, we require all to sign in and fill out a Covid-19 screening form. We appreciate you all very much and will continue to do our best to keep you all informed of any procedures we are implementing. Thank you! - **Ameera Bandy**

Crossroads East: Second Sunday Food Share Ongoing

This is an anxious time for all of us, but especially for people struggling to access life's basic necessities. If you are in a position to help, please consider bringing non-perishable food or toiletries to the church. Please call or email the Church office in advance if you plan to make a donation to schedule a time to drop off your donations.

The main Crossroads **location downtown and East have re-opened and are accepting donations!**

Thank you for your continued support of our community.

Spiritual Advice in the Age of Coronavirus

Dr. Riegel has posted videos on the theme, "Spiritual Advice in the Age of coronavirus."

You may view his video post on our GPUC Facebook page, at this link: <https://www.facebook.com/Grosse-Pointe-Unitarian-Church-134606831714/>. (You will need to scroll down a bit.)

Virtual Services Archive

Those of you that have missed any of the virtual Sunday worship services can watch, listen to the audio or read the chat on our website under: [WHO WE ARE - SUNDAY SERVICES - VIRTUAL SERVICES](#) or click this link: <https://www.gpuuc.org/virtual-services.html>

We continue to upload the weekly virtual services to the church website.

Earn Money for Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church



Kroger rewards: Make it your New Years Resolution

Join the 32 households who currently support GPUC By shopping at Kroger. This activity earns around \$500 a year and once enrolled in KROGER COMMUNITY REWARDS it is an easy way to help. **Thanks to those who have enrolled.** Check the bottom of your receipt the next time you shop for the message reassuring you that Kroger is donating to GPUC.

Kroger Community Rewards gives to GPUC - enroll at any time!
Our organization number is: FF794

Go to: <https://www.kroger.com/account/enrollCommunityRewardsNow>

Thanks, Janet Weber

FREE Grief Support Offering



Grief: Releasing Pain, Remembering Love & Finding Meaning

David Kessler is one of the leaders in Grief work in the counseling field. He started a free private online grief group for so many who are isolated during the pandemic and not able to reach out and get the grief support they need. There are live sessions and amazing guests so check them out and feel free to join the free group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/DavidKessler/>.

Additional grief support:

If anyone needs grief support due to cancer, here is a local link to get set up in a virtual program right now with Gilda's Club Metro Detroit. Contact information:

Photo by Milada Vigerova on Unsplash

Rebekah Agnew, LLPC

Gilda's Club Metro Detroit: Lake House Location

An affiliate of the Cancer Support Community

Program Manager

Email: ragnew@gildasclubdetroit.org

Gentle Yoga

Weekly Gentle Yoga Session

THURSDAYS 4:30PM-5:30PM

Carol Guither offers a weekly Gentle Yoga session via Zoom every **Thursday from 4:30PM-5:30PM**, as long as there is interest.

If you have a mat, blocks and a strap (or necktie) that is helpful but you don't need anything except a clean space to lie, sit and stand on. Feel free to use a chair instead of the floor.



Photo by Avrielle Suleiman on Unsplash

Please make sure you are honoring your own level of activity and flexibility. Make any adjustments you need. The yoga "mantra" always is "honor your own body". If it's not comfortable, don't do it.

January 7, 2021 4:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
January 14, 2021 4:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
January 21, 2021 4:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
January 28, 2021 4:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system.

Weekly: https://zoom.us/meeting/vpAvf-6sqj0j_bWSQYEN7EO_cvTHF4uRjQ/ics?icsToken=98tyKuqsrDMtHtCTuV_Hc7AvW9r-b_GxiE5MnZBspTrLVAV8XQDgAspkZqdNGumB

Healing Clinic and Meditation

ONLINE Healing Clinic and Meditation First & Third Thursdays of the month January 7th and 21st 7-9PM

The Clinics have changed to an online format for meditation and distant healing. Pranic Healing is a no-touch therapy, therefore distant healing is possible through the principle of oneness.

Join us for this online Zoom community event offering Pranic Healing sessions and Meditation on Twin Hearts.

Pranic Healing is an advanced system of energy medicine that utilizes prana or chi to cleanse and harmonize the body's energy system. The healing clinic begins with a beautiful guided meditation using the universal Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi. Then Pranic Healers offer mini healing sessions for relief from physical and/or emotional issues.

Donations welcome.

Venmo

<https://venmo.com/Carrie-Viviano>

Cash App

[https://cash.app/\\$CarrieViviano](https://cash.app/$CarrieViviano)

Paypal

<https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/carrieviviano>

Must be 16 yrs old to participate in the meditation. All ages welcome for healing.

To receive Zoom event scheduling info via email or for questions please contact: Carrie Viviano, Pranic Healer/Intro Leader, carrie@pranichealing.com or (586) 943-4404



Contact Information

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