



*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*

**November 2020**

### **Newsletter Deadline**

Mark your calendars and please submit your contribution to the next newsletter by **Friday, November 20th**

Submit items to the newsletter email address: [newslettergpuc@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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, November 6, 13, 20 & 27.**

### **UNFAMILIAR WITH ZOOM? - DO THIS IN ADVANCE OF SUNDAY**

- If you are unfamiliar with Zoom, become acquainted with the technology - it is easy to use but going through these steps in advance will ensure you are ready.
- Click on the Zoom link that will be emailed on the Friday prior to the Sunday service at least 15 minutes before you plan to use it the first time. This will prompt an app to download onto your device. You may use a laptop, tablet, desktop or smartphone.
- You will then be asked whether you wish to join the "meeting" with your device audio and device camera.
  - If you do not want others to see what you are wearing at that moment, you can join without activating your camera.
  - Throughout the service, all participants besides the worship leaders will be muted to prevent background noises (barking dogs, ringing phones, etc.) from being included in the worship service.

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**November 1, 2020  
10:30 AM**

**Sermon: "Poets, Philosophers, and Saints"**

**Worship Leader:** Dr. Riegel

**Worship Associate:** Chuck Palmer

The potpourri theme may be a bit worn but when Dr. Riegel does do these sermons, the content is never the same. So, this is another potpourri sermon, in which he will reflect upon four different excerpts of wisdom from different poets, philosophers, and Saints. What will the wisdom of the ages reveal to us this day?

**November 8, 2020**

**10:30 AM**

**Sermon: "Galileo's Telescope"**

**Worship Leader:** Dr. Riegel

**Worship Associate:** Carol Guither

In 1610, Galileo announced that he had discovered mountains on the moon, that Jupiter itself possessed moons, and that the sun was the center of the universe. Such claims were considered scientific anathema because fellow astronomers of the day were convinced that Aristotle's cosmological scheme was correct (the earth was the center of the universe and all heavenly bodies were perfect spheroids). Hence, Galileo's fellow astronomers refused to look through Galileo's telescope. This historical legend stands as a metaphor for the refusal to admit disconfirming evidence in defense of one's own bias. Dr. Riegel will discuss "Galileo's telescope" relative to Unitarian Universalism's principle: "A free and responsible search for truth and meaning."

**November 15, 2020**

**10:30 AM**

**Sermon: "It's All About the Squiggles"**

**Worship Leader:** Dr. Riegel

**Worship Associate:** Maurya Kay

The symbol for the Taoist tradition is yin-yang. This is understood as a symbol that represents opposites, which together comprise the whole. Such opposites include male-female, light-dark, moon-sun, intuitive-logical... In this sermon Dr. Riegel will take the liberty of adding another pair of opposites, squiggly-straight, and argue that "It's all about the squiggles."

**November 22, 2020**

**10:30 AM**

**Sermon: "In Praise of Normalcy"**

**Worship Leader:** Dr. Riegel

**Worship Associate:** Tonya Wells

Pre-pandemic, from time to time Dr. Riegel would hear people complain about the hum-drum, repetitive nature of life. "Where's the verve?!" In the midst of this pandemic, people are clamoring to have the hum-drum back again! As Thanksgiving approaches, he will speak about our new found appreciation for the importance of normalcy in life.

**November 29, 2020**

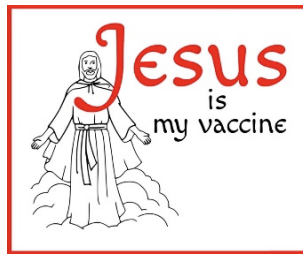
**10:30 AM**

**Sermon: "The Experience of Gratitude in a Time of Disconnected Lives"**

**Worship Leader:** John Artis

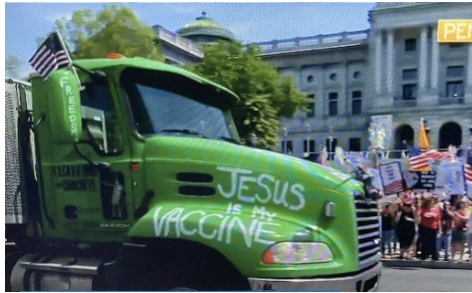
**Worship Associate:** Suzanne Ross

Dietrich Bonhoeffer once said, "In ordinary life, we hardly realize that we receive a great deal more than we give and that it is only with gratitude that life becomes rich." Today, a few days after Thanksgiving, we are able to find our pathway toward gratitude and the enrichment of our lives. Today let us explore what we can be grateful for in our lives.



When this pandemic hit us last March, most of us thought we'd be through it by now. However, as the facts started rolling in, we learned that we are in for the long haul. We also learned just how dangerous this virus is. Not only have nearly a quarter of a million Americans died already, the death rate is projected to exceed 400,000 shortly after 2021 begins. On top of that, we are becoming more aware of the potential long-term health consequences of having contracted covid. In other words, "getting over covid" just means that one is past the initial symptomatic stages. Even after one becomes functional again, there can be long term damage to heart, lungs, and other organs. On top of that, it seems that asymptomatic carriers have not necessarily avoided long term organ damage. Apparently, even asymptomatic carriers can be suffering internal organ damage and not know it.

In light of these daunting facts, it is stunning that so many people shun the CDC's advice on how to help mitigate covid's rampage through our society. The most extreme example I've seen of this is the growing meme among the



religious right: "Jesus is my vaccine!" Such thinking is tantamount to Pentecostal snake handling. Although, at least snake handlers believe they have scripture to support their practice, i.e., *The Gospel of Mark*: "And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up serpents with their hands; and if they drink any deadly poison it will not hurt them..." So, this got me to thinking...

Is there any scriptural support for the belief that "Jesus is my vaccine"? Wondering this, I called upon my powers of Biblical research and exegesis and, lo and behold, after many days and nights searching the scriptures for any such reference, I found it! It exists in a little-known gospel: *The Gospel of Idiocy, Chapter 1, Verse*

1. Obviously, I jest. But here's a legitimate passage that is pertinent to the covid antivaxxers, from *The Gospel of Matthew*: "Jesus said to him, 'Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Forgive my bordering on intolerance here but my mind is about as full of instances of absurd thinking as it can get these days and needed a little catharsis. But what is one to do when so many of one's fellow citizens succumb to magical thinking, putting themselves and others at so much risk? Catharsis is a very minor and temporary cure for one's frustrations, though it can bring a moment of respite from all the inanity.

Catharsis aside, all one can really do these days is manage one's own orbit - oneself and one's effect on the people in one's life (Reasoning with the unreasonable is like hitting one's head against a wall and as my friend Dave pointed out to me many moons ago, "It's a wall, man!). Along those lines, let me throw a little more scripture at you: "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ." (In other words, yes, Cain, you **ARE** your brother's keeper. (Perhaps you remember that after Cain killed his brother Abel, God inquired of Cain regarding the whereabouts of Abel, to which Cain responded, "Am I my brother's keeper?"))

So, friends, as this pandemic rages on and we hunker down for a second wave, let's remember that we are our brother's keeper. Wear your mask. Keep your distance. *Respect the guidelines leadership has placed on church usage*. And remember, just because you are not symptomatic, that does not mean you are not a carrier. Most of all, remember that this virus is not a respecter of persons. Just because you know someone doesn't make that person any less likely to be a carrier than a stranger on the streets... (notwithstanding the people with whom you live).

Stay safe. Stay rational. Stay connected to this beloved community.

Namaste,

Alex



The holiday season is beginning and the first of many holidays is Thanksgiving. This is my favorite holiday. It is a time of giving thanks, gratitude, blessings and sharing with my family and others. It will be a vastly different Thanksgiving for me and my family. I have spent the last 31 years with my personal family and my brother's family with 32 family members around two tables. This year it will be with my family with 6 adults. It will pull at my heart and I will miss my beloved extended family. As I am sharing this different time for me, I am still so grateful and thankful for so much in my life.

We will begin a new tradition with our family. We will be starting a Grateful Pumpkin on November 1. Each day in November, we will take turns writing what we are thankful and grateful for. On Thanksgiving, the gratitude pumpkin will be displayed on our dinner table, and we will read each entry. I am hoping to instill the thought that we have so much to be thankful for even during this difficult time. I hope you join me in making a Grateful Pumpkin!

Here are 7 Scientifically proven benefits of gratitude that will motivate you to give Thanks year-round.



1. Gratitude opens the door to more relationships.
2. Gratitude improves physical health.
3. Gratitude improves psychological health.
4. Gratitude enhances empathy and reduces aggression.
5. Grateful people sleep better.
6. Gratitude improves self-esteem.
7. Gratitude increases mental strength.

Remember gratitude does not cost any money and does not take much time. Gratitude may be one of the most overlooked tools that we all have access to every day. An "attitude of gratitude" is one of the simplest ways to improve your life! I would love to hear about your Grateful Pumpkin. Please email or share on our Facebook page your story after the Thanksgiving weekend. I am grateful for all the RE Families!!!

### Religious Education Lesson and Classes

Rainbow bags are still available for all students that are registered in our RE Program. Please send your forms in today. Class invitations and parent meetings will be sent by Julie Artis by Zoom.

Here is a fun activity you can make with your student during the month of November - Pumpkin Playdough.

[https://www.happinessishomemade.net/pumpkin-pie-playdough/?fbclid=IwAR1dpMtQwrGncCSiJyaFopc\\_2c9amj9HBO5mBwhC8CFyDhFGKenBhGG5QG0](https://www.happinessishomemade.net/pumpkin-pie-playdough/?fbclid=IwAR1dpMtQwrGncCSiJyaFopc_2c9amj9HBO5mBwhC8CFyDhFGKenBhGG5QG0)

[fbclid=IwAR1dpMtQwrGncCSiJyaFopc\\_2c9amj9HBO5mBwhC8CFyDhFGKenBhGG5QG0](https://www.happinessishomemade.net/pumpkin-pie-playdough/?fbclid=IwAR1dpMtQwrGncCSiJyaFopc_2c9amj9HBO5mBwhC8CFyDhFGKenBhGG5QG0)

We invite you to bring in canned or boxed food for our monthly food drive. You can drop it off during the week between 9-4 p.m. M/T/Th/F. Call the church to let us know or ring the doorbell when you arrive. This is a part of service that we encourage our students to put into their busy lives.

**"A true Thanksgiving is an open home, an open heart, here grows a bountiful harvest." - Judy Hand**

Happy Thanksgiving,

*Julie Artis, Director of Religious Education*

### Upcoming Programs And Events

### Fall Grounds Cleanup + Lunch!

This fall the annual grounds cleanup promises to be extra special.

On **Sunday November 1 from 1-3 pm** we will be doing the usual yardwork to put our church grounds to sleep for the winter. But, thanks to Julie Artis and Jessica Keyser's efforts, there will be a coney lunch as well!

We will have a coney truck in the parking lot and anyone who wishes to will be able to purchase a coney, side salad and drink for \$10 plus ice cream for an additional \$2 (or a free will donation if finances are tight).

To purchase, please go to our website: [www.gpuuc.org](http://www.gpuuc.org)

On our homepage, scroll down to "Events and Announcements". There, you will see a Red payment button with the words "Coney Kit". When you click that button a secure window will pop up allowing you to purchase your Coney Kit (For ice cream, please add \$2.00 to your total).

The truck will be with us from 12:30 to 2:30 so plan to come, eat, socialize (distanced and outdoors) and pitch in with some help in the yard if you're interested and able (not required).

- Russ Chavey



The Adult Religious Education Committee is pleased to announce our Fall schedule for upcoming programs. We work closely with the Social Justice Committee. To honor the work of the Social Justice Committee, our Adult Religious Education Committee will focus our efforts on spirituality, philosophy, and psychology for our programming initiatives.

## Adult Religious Education presents a discussion of *Jesus and After: The First Eighty Years*

**Monday, November 16th @ 7pm**

John Artis and Bill Rehahn will lead a discussion of E. Bruce Brook's *Jesus and After: The First Eighty Years*

Join us for what will be a thought-provoking conversation examining the words of Jesus and the early Christians.

STUDIES IN EARLY CHRISTIANITY

**Jesus and After**

*The First Eighty Years*



E Bruce Brooks

All Programs take Place via Zoom. **Email Registration is Required.**

Email registration is required, email John Artis: [jartis@hotmail.com](mailto:jartis@hotmail.com).

Please register by noon the day of the program.

(Register with the email address where you would like us to send your Zoom invite.)

We cannot guarantee that you will receive the Zoom invite if you register after that time.

### GPUC Book Discussion Group

The next Book Discussion Group meeting will be held

**Tuesday, November 17th, at 7 pm via Zoom.**

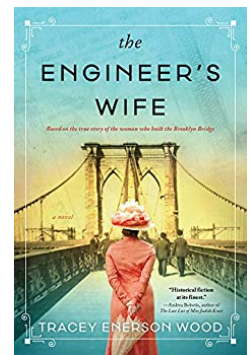
Juli Moore will lead a discussion of "The Engineer's Wife" By Tracey E. Woods.

Book group members will receive the Zoom invitation the day of the meeting. If everyone can be on time to the meetings (they start at 7 pm), we can have a few minutes of socializing before the leader begins.

Those non-group members wishing to attend should contact Juli Moore:

[jdmoores1415@gmail.com](mailto:jdmoores1415@gmail.com)

[Download the 2020-21 Book List here](#)



### Announcements

#### 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](mailto: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

**2020-2021 DIRECTORIES AVAILABLE NOW**



Directories are ready to be picked up for those that requested a copy. There are extra physical copies available and PDF copies available as well.

**For our members:** The directory is made available on our website in the "members only" section and will be updated throughout the year as changes are made. Please contact Ameera if you would like to receive a copy of the directory. Thank you!

### **Announcement From The Canvass Committee**

Our treasurer, Rudy Wedenoja, reports that only a third of congregation members are up to date with payments toward their annual pledges of financial support. With the loss of income from Grosse Pointe Pre-K and the general decline in facility rental income, our members' pledges have become much more important. Our fiscal year began on July 1st, so we are now into our second quarter of our fiscal year. Most of our budget is salaries and building maintenance, so despite the decline in use of our church buildings, our expenses have remained essentially constant.

Please send your pledge checks to the office administrator. If your financial circumstances have changed since making your pledge, please contact us so we can plan accordingly. Thank you for your continuing support in these challenging times.

Chuck Palmer  
Canvass Committee Chairperson



To the Members of Our Congregation:

The Endowment Committee would like to provide some general information about our committee, our endowment, and plans for the future.

**WHAT THE FUND IS FOR:** The Endowment Fund cannot be used for operating expenses; its purpose is to provide support for long-range projects that GPUC may decide to undertake, such as capital improvements to our church building. To that end, it is essential to the wellbeing of GPUC that we maintain a robust endowment and that we make plans for building that fund.

**MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:** The Endowment Committee has three members: Russ Chavey, Jerry Herron (chair), and Jeremiah Hess. Our committee, in consultation with the Board, is responsible for looking after our Endowment Fund.

**WHAT MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION CAN DO:** In order to build our endowment, we need your help.

- You might consider making a cash gift to the fund. These can be sent to the Church office, with a notation that your gift is intended for the Endowment Fund. Such gifts can be made in memory of individuals, in which case we will notify the family of the person being honored that you have made a memorial gift.
- If you have a will already, please consider making a planned gift to the GPUC Endowment Fund, and if you do make such a gift, please let us know. If you do not yet have a will, please consider including GPUC as your plans go forward.

**WHAT COMES NEXT:** Our committee would be glad to provide information about making a gift, or including the GPUC Endowment Fund in your estate plans. Just let us know if we can be of help.

### **Attention Resale Shoppers**

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!

## Crossroads East Update: Second Sunday Food Share

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 has re-opened and is accepting donations!**

*Crossroads East remains temporarily closed until the re-opening of its host church.*

Thank you for your continued support of our community.

## Zooming Dueling Pianos a Success!

We had 83 email addresses that were logged in to our (first) virtual concert at GPUC on Oct. 24th. Since many of these represent 2 or more people--a possible total of 166 in our audience! Thanks to all of you who paid for tickets and gave extra donations towards this fundraiser for GPUC.

We had people as far afield as Florida and even New Zealand watching!

It was great fun collaborating with my good friend and GPUC-er Anne Roberts on music dramatic, comic, tender, angry, heroic, and triumphant. People appreciated our verbal program notes as well as our musical collaboration. The Roberts' are traveling back to Florida as we speak and will be there until their usual northern migration in May.

IF YOU MISSED THIS CONCERT, not to worry - *we will be offering it for a limited time online* - we will be announcing a registration process where you can donate whatever amount you wish, and then you will be sent a link to watch/listen to the program as many times as you want. Stay tuned!

- Joseph Palazzolo

### THE PROGRAM

Cortege Burlesque	Emmanuel Charbrier
Hebrides Overture (Fingal's Cave)	Felix Mendelssohn
Chicken Reel (used in cartoons)	Joseph M. Daly arranged by Julia Smith
<u>Selections from "Porgy and Bess"</u>	George Gershwin, arr. by Percy Grainger for 2 pianos
Catfish Row	
It Ain't Necessarily So	
Summertime	
Bess, You Is My Woman Now	
Oh, I Got Plenty O' Nuttin'	
Oh Lawd, I'm On My Way	
Feuillet d'album (Album Leaf)	Camille Saint-Saens
Adagio and Fugue in C minor	W. A. Mozart
Libertango	Astor Piazzolla

## Volunteering Opportunities

### Virtual Tutoring at Detroit Merit

The Schools Tutoring Committee is happy to announce that all the teachers at Detroit Merit Academy have many varieties of software to make virtual tutoring a reality and many students who could benefit from extra attention. If you would like to help with this rewarding activity, please contact Susie Boynton at **313-885-0824** to indicate the grade level (K-8) and subject matter you are interested in. After the school matches your request, we let you and the teacher work out the time and day that accommodates your schedule. The teachers and students have always welcomed and appreciated our volunteers.

### Interested In Becoming A Building Steward?

When our church building is rented to groups or organizations for their meetings, concerts or other activities a building steward is required. The steward is a congregant who can open the building, turn lights on, make sure the heat or A/C is working, adjust the audio as needed, locate cleaning supplies if an "accident" occurs, be aware of any damage

occurring to the property, lock up after the event and generally be available to answer questions. The steward is typically paid \$50. If you would like to consider becoming one of our new stewards, please reach out to Ameera who will be doing the training.

## FREE Grief Support Offering



Photo by Milada Vigerova on Unsplash

### 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:

**Rebekah Agnew, LLPC**

**Gilda's Club Metro Detroit: Lake House Location**

An affiliate of the Cancer Support Community

**Program Manager**

Email: [ragnew@gildasclubdetroit.org](mailto:ragnew@gildasclubdetroit.org)

## Gentle Yoga

### Weekly Gentle Yoga Session NOW ON THURSDAYS 4:30PM-5:30PM

Carol Guither **has made a change** to her weekly Gentle Yoga Session. She will now be offering the 60 minute gentle yoga session every **THURSDAY beginning October 15th, 2020** 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.

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.



Photo by [Avrielle Suleiman](#) on [Unsplash](#)

November 5, 2020 4:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)  
November 12, 2020 4:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)  
November 19, 2020 4:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)  
November 26, 2020 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](https://zoom.us/join/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 November 5th & 19th 7-9 PM

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](mailto:carrie@pranichealing.com) or 586-943-4404**

Contact Information

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