

The Grosse Pointe Unitarian

Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church
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November 15, 2009

10:30 AM

HELPING THE HELPERS TO HELP OTHERS
Antoinette McIlwain, Director, Ravendale Project

“Toni” McIlwain will talk about the Ravendale project’s work as a comprehensive community revitalization effort that encompasses family counseling, “at risk” youth programs, neighborhood improvement, block-club development and economic strategies. The Ravendale area covers 38 blocks and 4,000 plus residents on Detroit’s east side. The organization has seen a 40% reduction in crime and a positive change in the aesthetic appeal of the area. Mrs. McIlwain has been honored and recognized by two governors and countless others including Tiger Woods. As the economy has worsened across the country and even more in Michigan, Mrs. McIlwain has seen the devastating effect on Detroit firsthand. She will share the stories of her Ravendale constituents and suggest how we all can and must work together to help Michigan recover from these difficult economic times.

November 22, 2009

10:30 AM

SUSTENANCE SUNDAY
Reverend Mitra Rahnema

What came first, food or community? Today is the GPUC traditional Thanksgiving Sunday. Let us give thanks and break bread together. Please bring an item to include in the communal stone soup, which we will enjoy after the service.



Minister's Musings

Ohhhh.....Leaves! We are surrounded by leaves. Recently I was driving down a street covered with leaves in every crevasse of the neighborhood. Suddenly, the wind came in, bringing down the few leaves left on the tree limbs and raising up the leaves covering the ground. This created a swirl of leaves in the air, twirling around, rising up, coming down, floating and flying. It was a constellation of leaves; each one individually in their experience, piles

of leaves taking up space, and wind adding the breath of movement that says, take notice! These days, church is a bit like that constellation of leaves. People are each experiencing the community as individuals, and groups of people are taking up space, and the spirit of life blows in and keeps the church in motion. I have taken notice!

Many of our congregational happenings this fall are worth taking notice. Several programs continue to flurry with great strength. We recently enjoyed a successful **GPUC Auction** encouraging us to Reach To the Stars! **The Alliance** is continuing the wonderful lunch programs every 2nd Tuesday of the month. The beloved **Resale Shop** is having a robust fall with record sales. Additionally, members are working hard to build and install a new boiler, repair our chimney, and other tasks that say, "**We care for our home.**" Don't forget, **Fall Clean Up** on **Nov. 22nd** will be an opportunity for all of us to pitch in. I hope to see you there! Individuals are maintaining our lovely **gardens**, offering **Sunday flowers**, **greeting**, **ushering**, and **coffee making**. Each task is thoughtfully coordinated. Each task is an individual piece of love.

Several committees are lifting off, re-forming, and ready to grow. The **Caring Committee**, co-lead by Mary Morshead and Susan Hartz, is considering expanding the ways we care for each other. The **Membership Committee**, lead by Ann Lipsitz, is clarifying how we think about and invite visitors into our community. A **Music Committee** is taking shape, lead by Cindi Arfken, which will be exploring the musical programs of the congregation. A few new **Adult Religious Enrichment** programs are coming to life, such as the theological chat on **Nov. 20th** considering the question, "What does it mean to be Human?" and our newest course lead by our own ministerial candidate Jim Moir entitled **Articulating Your faith** is well on its way.

Let us also notice, new ideas are freeing from the trees and becoming reality. Members are exploring church **recycling** and how we can better care for our earth. The "Guyton School" committee is researching a **new school** to build a relationship with. Several members are exploring the **welcoming congregation** path offered by our Unitarian Universalist Association in which the community engages with questions about what it means to intentionally welcome the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender population.

There is much more than what could be mentioned on this page. Yet, the time is now for you to join in the swirling, rising, and shifting movement. This is your opportunity to try something new! If anything sparks an interest please contact me or the committee chairs. Your time, knowledge, skills,

and voices are the twinkle in the constellation that is church. We are all the better for your presence. So let the wind blow, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Much love,

Rev. Mitra Rahnema



Religious Education Lessons

LOWER AND UPPER ELEMENTARY STUDENTS on **Nov. 15th** will be reviewing Beginning Myths: Two Stories from the Hebrews. **Nov. 22nd** all students will attend the Sustenance Service.

JUNIORS on **Nov. 15th** will be reviewing Principle #6-To promote peace, liberty and justice for all. John Engstrom will be teaching. **Nov. 22nd** all juniors will be attend the Sustenance Service and helping with serving. Juniors are preparing the "Guest at your Table" boxes for the Sustenance Service.

SENIORS on **Nov. 15th** will meet at the Franchett home at 7:30 pm; continuing with the study of the "Old Testament". **Nov. 22nd** all seniors will attend the Sustenance Service and help with serving.

"**Festival of Light**" program is on **Dec. 13th, 2009**. Please return your student contact to Mrs. Artis with your written statement. If you did not receive one or need help with costumes please call or email Mrs. Artis. This is a wonderful program to invite your family and friends to attend. We will have refreshments after the program for the whole congregation. I am looking for two parent volunteers to organize this part of the event.

Dates to Remember

Nov. 22 Sustenance Service-All Family

Nov. 29 and Dec. 6 Rehearsal for "Festival of Light"

Dec. 6 RE Committee Meeting

Dec. 13 "Festival of Light" Program, all children at church by 9:15 a.m.

If you have questions or want to volunteer, please give me a call or email me. Thank you for supporting the Religious Education program for GPUC.

Julie Artis, Director of Religious Education



ADULT RELIGIOUS ENRICHMENT

ARTICULATING YOUR FAITH

Starting Thursday **Nov. 12th**, from 7:00pm to 9:00pm at the church, Jim Moir will lead a short course that will help you to better explain to others what Unitarian Universalism is, not to mention, helping you to understand it yourself. Additional dates include Nov. 19, Dec. 3, 10 and Jan. 21. The January meeting will be a planning session to share the results at a

Sunday service. \$15 course material fee.

Sign up with Jill Crane at jill@gpuc.us

WOMEN'S BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

The women meet Thursday, **Nov. 19th** at 5:30pm in the church gallery. Hanne Nielsen will lead a discussion on **The Yacoubian Building** by Alaa Al Aswany. This book paints a colorful picture of contemporary Egypt. The Yacoubian Building is an actual structure, built in the 1930's and was an "architectural gem" that housed the "cream of society." But it underwent considerable changes over the decades that followed. It ended up housing many levels of society.

Refreshments, Doris Cook and Carolyn Griffith. \$2 donation towards refreshments.

Sign up in church foyer.

THEOLOGICAL CHAT WITH REV. MITRA RAHNEMA

Please join us Friday, **Nov. 20th** from 7:30 until 9pm in the church for an informal chat with Rev. Mitra on **What it Means to be Human**. To be human, must we know pain, joy, love, or loss? Does humanity mean acknowledging helplessness or understanding compassion? Are we more than the sum of our parts? What DOES it mean to be human? Summary available in church foyer. \$3 refreshment donation. Sign up in foyer on Sunday mornings.

MEN'S BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

Monday, **Dec. 7th** 7:30pm in the church library. The men will discuss **The Elegance of the Hedgehog** by Murial Barbery. The book follows events in the life of concierge, Renee Michel, whose deliberately concealed intelligence is uncovered by the unstable but intellectually precocious girl named Paloma Josse. Paloma is the daughter of an upper-class family living in the upscale Parisian apartment building where Renee works. The book is full of allusions to literary works, music, films, and paintings. It incorporates themes relating to philosophy, class-consciousness, and personal conduct.

Note...

On Thursday, **Jan. 21st**, at 5:30pm the **Men's and Women's Book Discussion Groups** will have a joint discussion on **Hot, Flat, and Crowded** by Thomas Friedman.

If you need child care for any of the above events please contact Julie Artis in the Religious Education Wing.

Jill Crane, Director, Adult Religious Enrichment
jill@gpuc.us

ALLIANCE LUNCHEON

Our speaker for the Tuesday, **Nov. 10th** Alliance lunch is Dr. Philip Hessburg, president of the Detroit Institute of Ophthalmology in Grosse Pointe. The Institute is notable for having presented international conferences on the Relationship Between Vision and the Safe Operation of a Motorized Vehicle. These conferences are the only ones of their kind in the country. He'll speak of the impact of research being done that could dramatically reduce the millions of deaths that have resulted from traffic accidents in this country. You'll learn also how research could allow seniors with minimal vision impairment to continue driving safely.

The luncheon begins at noon. Please call Shirley Reeves, 313-822-4651, for reservations. Guests are always welcome.

LOCK UP WHEN YOU LEAVE

The outside doors have been left unlocked recently on more than one occasion after afternoon and evening meetings. Please make sure that all the doors are locked when you leave, do not assume that someone else will lock them. If you need a quick lesson on the lock and crash bar system please see Candy Dunn in the office; I will be happy to go over the lock procedure with you.

-- Candy Dunn, Office Administrator

FALL YARD CLEANUP

Please consider joining your fellow GPUCers for a few minutes after service on **Nov. 22nd** as we prepare the churchyard for winter. We will be raking leaves, trimming back trees, weeding and a few other small jobs. If you plan to come, dress appropriately and consider bringing a rake, gloves, tarp to drag leaves, small cutters, hedge trimmers, etc. You could spend 30 minutes or an hour or two with several of your fellow church members helping the church and enjoying what I hope will be some brisk Michigan fall weather.

-Russ Chavey for the grounds committee

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY - SCRIP Czar
(ok, "SCRIP COORDINATOR")

Official name of your group: SCRIP

What we do: We earn extra (free!) money for the church while providing gift-cards to the congregation to be used as gifts & for personal use.

What is required: (This is a one-person job.)

Two times a year: Notify congregation of deadlines; provide order-forms & take orders; enter orders on scrip website & arrange for payment; pass out scrip cards when they arrive. "Train" next scrip coordinator.

Time commitment: Orders are placed 2 times a year: late-November & late-April. You are committing to do both Winter & Spring for one year, but you do not have to commit to multiple years.

Prerequisites?: Access to a computer.
Attention to detail.

Other ways to get involved: If you don't care to coordinate scrip, you can certainly *purchase* some!

Next steps? Contact Janis Garan: 313-885-2869
jgaran@sprynet.com for training & "hand-off."

GUYTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO MEET

The Guyton School Committee will meet on Sunday, **Nov. 15th** after church in the library to discuss the reports from the visit to three Detroit Schools and future plans. All are welcome to attend.

--Susie Boynton for Outreach

SHE'S A WINNER

Energetic, Dedicated, Accessible, some would say this is a perfect description of Laurie Arora's contribution to the church. That campaign slogan, along with a lot of hard work and handshaking helped Laurie win a seat on the Grosse Pointe Park City Council. Congratulations to Laurie for a well deserved win.