

The Grosse Pointe Unitarian

Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church
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Editor: Tom Roberts
newsletter@gpuc.us

January 31, 2010

10:30 AM

R U A U U 2
Jim Moir

Participants in the *Articulating Your UU Faith* class will present ideas about being a Unitarian Universalist in order to help us more easily explain our religion to others.

February 7, 2010

10:30 AM

Becoming Welcoming
Reverend Mitra Rahnema

Welcoming is an active verb rather than a passive noun. Today GPUC members are actively launching a year-long *Welcoming Congregation* program. In our service we will explore what it means to live a welcoming life and build communities that specifically welcome gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people.

February 14, 2010

10:30 AM

The Perfect Heart
Reverend Mitra Rahnema

It is a day of love! Who might love you more than your leader? Today we will explore leadership and what makes someone a good leader. This week's intergenerational service will be a performance of the play *The Perfect Heart*. In four acts, we will contemplate leadership qualities and our ability to offer love to the communities of which we are a part.



Minister's Musings

It is common practice for Ministers, Interim and Settled, to create a covenant with a former Minister or Minister Emeritus of any congregation. A covenant is used in many of our Unitarian Universalist congregations going through Ministerial transition, and emerges after the Ministers have several transition conversations on topics of leadership, needs, and congregational health. Your former minister, the Reverend John Corrado, and I have been in conversation since last September. Below is the covenant we created together. I am including it here so our community may know what John and I expect from each other as well as what the congregation can expect from us. My hope is that the covenant will be helpful for the whole community. I welcome conversation and questions, as needed. Please read on, knowing GPUC is deeply loved.

The purpose of a covenant of professional relations is to offer explicit and detailed clarification of responsibilities and roles of ministers in relation to the congregation. As fellowshipped Unitarian Universalist Ministers the Reverends Mitra Rahnama and John Corrado currently adhere to our professional code of conduct. In addition to those professional guidelines, with several months of conversation, below is a specific covenant.

A Covenant between the Reverends
Mitra Rahnama, Interim Minister and John Corrado, Minister Emeritus
Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church

In 2009 the Reverend John Corrado retired after serving the Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church for twenty-five years. John is no longer the minister of the congregation. He is now serving our Unitarian Universalist movement in new capacities; therefore his attention is required elsewhere. John will remain living in the larger metropolitan area with his wife Barbara. The congregation can be assured that John continues to love GPUC members and is committed to the health and future of the church. Therefore, Mitra and John agree:

All ministerial roles or duties with any congregant, and their families are the responsibility of Mitra, the congregation's current Interim Minister. John will not offer or be available to accept any ministerial requests. All services, such as weddings, memorials, worship, blessings, pastoral care or pastoral counseling will be directed to Mitra. We recognize that there are times in which John's ministerial services might be needed. These unique situations will be jointly assessed followed by an invitation from Mitra, if needed.

Mitra and John will consult openly about congregational dynamics, as needed. In the effort to maintain our professional care for the congregation, John will share with Mitra, all information about interactions with congregants. In addition, John will not initiate contact with members, friends, or staff of the congregation. Individuals contacting John will be encouraged to speak with Mitra. John will not be available for pastoral services. When members are faced with needing

ministerial conversation or assistance they will be directed to the current minister serving the congregation.

Allowing time for an adjustment to the layers of transition, John will not return to the Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church facility throughout the interim period. Of course there may be unique times in which it is appropriate for John to return to the congregation, and he will do so only upon the explicit invitation of the current minister of Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church. Additionally, John may choose to send a note of condolence to families, as appropriate.

We agree that all ministerial authority and decision making is the responsibility of the current minister. We both agree that Mitra has no obligation, nor should she have any pressure to extend an invitation for John's return to the congregation at any time.

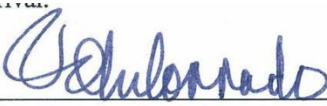
As Minister Emeritus, John will be listed in the Unitarian Universalist Directory under Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church and is a voting delegate at the Unitarian Universalist Association annual General Assembly and District Conference. John's vote in both national and district governing bodies will not represent GPUC. Additionally, as Minister Emeritus, John will be listed in the GPUC directory with address but not telephone number. John will receive the GPUC newsletter at his home address. The congregation is encouraged to add "Minister Emeritus" wherever John's name is listed in church information, including on historical photographs.

This covenant comes with deep and caring recognition of the needs of a congregational community facing a ministerial transition. These needs include:

- Community time to experience and mourn the loss of a former minister
- Space to consider the new identity, direction, goals, and purposes of the congregation's future by recognizing the congregation as part of a larger movement
- Welcome shifts of decision making process, as members discover what they want for the congregation
- To reconnect with a larger movement of congregations and ministers
- To welcome new ministerial (pastoral, administrative and prophetic) leadership, beginning with the Interim Minister and continuing by building deep trust with a newly settled minister

The ability and time to have an authentic bond with a settled minister is essential to a healthy ministerial call.

Our covenant will remain intact through the length of the interim ministry. Following the interim period John will continue to defer any ministerial relationship with the congregation to the called minister. The called minister's settlement period is likely to be at least two years after arrival.

 1.9.10

John Corrado Date

 1/14/10

Mitra Rahnema Date



Religious Education Lessons

Parents and Students have you checked us out on the web? Three websites with which you may want to become acquainted are: **Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations** www.uua.org, **Heartland District of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations** www.heartlanduu.org and **Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church** www.gpuc.us

Upper Elementary students, on Jan 31st, will study “The Adventures of our People: Sophia Fahs” and on Feb 7th, will study “The Adventures of our People: Bela Bartok”.

Lower Elementary students, on Jan 31st will study the fifth UU Principle, “All people need a voice” and on Feb 7th, they will study the sixth UU Principle, “Build a fair and peaceful world”.

Junior students, on Jan 31st and Feb 7th will study “Famous UU’s”. The Secret Pal Society will begin Jan 31st. Juniors, remember to check the basket in the lobby for a letter from your Secret Pal.

Senior students, on Jan 31st, will meet at 6:30 p.m. at the Franchett’s home. Please be prompt! The students will proceed to the Cadieux Café for feather bowling and snacks. RSVP, regrets only, to (313) 881-2385. On Feb 7th, senior students will meet at the Edmonds’ house: 699 Balfour, (313) 331-8756. The seniors will begin their study of the New Testament for the remainder of the church year.

Congratulations to **Simone Arora**, who won the Soroptimist Club's *Violet Richardson Award*. As the award winner, Simone chose COTS, where she volunteers, to be the recipient of a \$250 donation from the club.

The Perfect Heart is an intergenerational play that will be presented to the whole congregation on Feb 14th. All adults and students who would like to volunteer to be part of our special Valentine’s Day program should contact Mrs. Artis. You don’t want to miss this event!

Dates To Remember

Feb 7th	RE Committee meeting at 9:30 a.m. in Room 1
Feb 14th	The Perfect Heart
Mar 7th	Spaghetti Dinner

We are always looking for volunteers for the RE Program. Please give me a call with questions or ideas. Our world is a better place when we care for our children. We work to educate our children in the Principles and Purposes of our faith. Children are our future.

Julie Artis, Director of Religious Education
Julie@gpuc.us



Adult Religious Enrichment

I encourage all GPUC members to attend the Jan 31st service, as the *Articulating Your Faith* group has worked very hard to put this service together.

Adult Forum

Please join us Sunday, Jan 31st for a Discussion on Depression, led by church members Robin Ramsay and Karen Webb. We all need help understanding depression. We will meet after the Soup Sunday in the Fellowship Hall, around 12:30 p.m. Come with questions for Robin and Karen.

Men's Book Discussion Group

Join the men on Monday, Feb 1st, at 7:30 p.m., at the church to discuss *The Hemingses of Monticello, An American Family*, by Annette Gordon-Reed. The book is a very American story. It is prodigiously researched and makes fine use of illuminating primary sources, including extensive letters by Thomas Jefferson and slave property records.

Monday, Mar 1st, *American Sphinx: The Character of Thomas Jefferson*, by Joseph J. Ellis.

Women's Book Discussion Group

On Thursday, Feb 18th at 5:30 p.m. in the church, Kelly Boll will lead a discussion on *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows. This well-researched novel begins after WWII, as the writer seeks to make sense of the turmoil and suffering she has witnessed. This is a delightful book! Please sign up in church foyer. Refreshments, Alice Laitner and Barbara Moran (\$2 refreshment donation).

Thursday, Mar 18th, *People of the Book*, by Geraldine Brooks

Understanding Grief

This five week class facilitated by Rev. Mitra Rahnema will be held on Tuesday evenings from 7 - 9 p.m., Feb 23rd through Mar 23rd. Are you facing the difficult process of grieving? Is your sense of loss overwhelming? Mourning is the outward expression of many thoughts and feelings of loss. It is important to engage with our unique grief and hold ourselves with care. Using the book, *Understanding Grief* by Dr. Alan Wolfelt, the group will be guided through talking, telling stories, listening, and some reading to help process the feelings that come with loss. Please sign up in foyer. \$10 per person, book included.

First Movie Night

The Times of Harvey Milk. This Academy Award winner is the dramatic and moving story of the first openly gay person elected to office in California from his triumphant grass-roots campaign to his brutal assassination one year later by fellow San Francisco supervisor, Dan White. These events and the Twinkie Defense trial that followed united an entire city - first in mourning then in rage.

If you are unable to obtain the above movie you may also watch **Milk**, the Sean Penn movie.

There are copies of both at the Grosse Pointe Central Library and on Net Flicks.

You may pick up a question guide at the sign up table.

Eight dollars per person, includes dinner and drinks-- cash please!

Jill E. Crane, Director, Adult Religious Enrichment

Jill@gpuc.us

The Welcoming Congregation Program at GPUC:

What is the Welcoming Congregation Program?

The Welcoming Congregation Program is a voluntary program for congregations that wish to become more inclusive towards bisexual, gay, lesbian and transgender people. It consists of a series of workshops developed by the UUA, that church members lead throughout the course of a year.

Aren't all UU Churches Already Welcoming Congregations?

It is true that our church probably meets most of the qualifications for a Welcoming Congregation. However, official recognition as a Welcoming Congregation allows churches to be an open safe space for bisexual, gay, lesbian, and transgender persons; to take positions on oppression in our larger communities; and to accomplish outreach.

How Will Being a Welcoming Congregation Benefit Me?

Confronting prejudices in a non-judgmental, non-threatening group allows us to explore their origins and gain knowledge. Understanding our prejudices leads to spiritual growth and congregational unity.

When Will Our Program Begin?

Sunday, Feb 7th is our 'Kick-off' day! Immediately following the service, a light lunch will be available and we will have our first workshop (1-3 p.m.) Childcare will be available.

Do I Need to Sign Up in Advance?

Yes, we are asking that you sign up so that we make appropriate space and food accommodations. Sign up sheets will be available in the lobby beginning Sunday, Jan 24th.

Is it necessary to attend every session/activity to participate?

No! We hope that as many members as possible will participate in this program. We are trying to provide a variety of activities, so that something will appeal to everyone.

I'm ready to attend. What is coming in the next couple months?

February
7th - Sunday: "Kick-Off Service" 1-3pm 1st Workshop Title: <u>Introductions and Expectations</u>; <ul style="list-style-type: none">We will discuss what we do and do not know and create a worthwhile group climate by establishing guidelines, sharing fears, concerns, expectations, and common ground.
26th – Friday: Movie Night Discussion: "The Life & Times of Harvey Milk" Documentary; 6-9 p.m. light dinner; \$8.00.
28th – Sunday: Workshop #2 Title: <u>What We Know and How We Learned It</u> 1-3pm <ul style="list-style-type: none">To understand how we have come to know and what we know about ourselves and others' sexual orientation and gender identification.

March

7th – PFLAG Panel and Discussion Session – Our guests will come from PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) Detroit chapter. 1-3pm

- The panel will consist of parents of gay or lesbian children, an adult gay man and lesbian woman. They will be here to share personal experiences.

14th – Sunday Workshop #3 Title: The Common Elements of Oppression 1-3pm
Purpose:

- To illustrate the commonalities between various oppressions.

19th – Friday: Movie Night Discussion: “If These Walls Could Talk 2” 6-9pm

28th – Sunday: Workshop #4 Title: Gender Socialization and Homophobia 1-3pm
Purpose:

- To understand how homophobia and heterosexism maintain gender-role stereotyping and limit choices for all people.

Dedicate Your Child

Unitarian Universalists believe that every child brings new life and hope into the world. We set aside a special time, called the *Ceremony of Dedication* for the community to bless the child and celebrate the blessing of this gift of life.

When we dedicate a child, we acknowledge that each child’s life is sacred and hold that truth in the light of our faith. If you would like your child dedicated, please contact Rev. Mitra Rahnema, our Minister at Grosse Pointe Unitarian Church. She will be happy to explain and plan a dedication service for your child.

-- Julie Artis for Religious Education

Kroger Contributions to GPUC

In 2009, I spent \$4,385.93 at the Kroger Store, and, at 5%, this constituted a contribution by Kroger of \$219.30 to our church. Isn't that an easy way to make a contribution? Contact Janet Weber for information about this program.

-- Russell Peebles.

From Guyton to Clark School

After much discussion in the last few months, members of our committee have visited four Detroit schools and decided the best match for a long-term partnership would be the nearby

Clark School at 15755 Bremen, Detroit, MI 48224. Mrs. Cindy Lang, a dynamo, has been the principal for five years and recently oversaw the transition from an elementary school to a PK-8 school. The building is neat with stimulating bulletin boards in the classrooms, and the friendly staff is eager to have our members tutoring in the elementary grades.

If you are interested in the tutoring program, contact Susie Boynton at (313) 885-0824 and tell her with which grade(s) you wish to work. The dates for a tour of the school and training will be announced. Most tutors volunteer a couple of hours a week, but any amount of time is appreciated. If you have special talents or interests, a different time frame is possible.

-- Susie Boynton for Outreach

Help an Adult Learn to Read

The Dominican Literacy Center is presenting a free tutor training workshop Friday, Jan 29th, from 5:30-9:30 p.m. and Saturday, Jan 30th, from 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. If you want to help change a life, call the Literacy Center at 313.267.1000 or go online at www.dlcliteracy.org to register. The Center is located at 11148 Harper in Detroit, MI 48213.

-- Susie Boynton for Outreach

Our New Year's Resolution: Recycle

It's working! We are recycling at GPUC. Throughout the church buildings we see collection cans and other evidence of our new commitment to recycling our waste. The City of Grosse Pointe has agreed to include us in their weekly curbside collection and Willie Barber, our custodian, *par excellence*, will ensure that recyclables get to the curb for Monday pickup. Candy Dunn, our very capable office administrator, has offered to retrieve our curbside recycling container, completing that part of the loop.

As important as these two people are, the success of the program is up to the rest of us. We are asking everyone to REMEMBER TO RECYCLE. There are special collection containers throughout our two buildings. Nearly everything is recyclable. Besides garbage and hazardous waste, only two commonly used materials should not go into the marked containers: Styrofoam and waxed cartons (i.e. milk, juice). Large items can go directly into the new blue recycling can outside the Olympia Brown Building.

On Sunday mornings especially, we can capture a large amount of recyclables. Continue putting your Order of Service in the basket in the Gallery as you come from the Chapel. Coffee cups and lightly used napkins can be deposited directly into the marked collection container that will be near the coffee service. Specific details regarding coffee-time recycling will be in each week's Order of Service for the next several weeks.

Our "Green Team" is made up of individuals from different key components of our church life, stands ready to facilitate our recycling program. We've brainstormed the best ways to facilitate recycling throughout the congregation. Besides myself and the individuals named

above, the members of The Green Team are:
Margo Bishop for Resale
Jenny Marck for Religious Education
Ann Ottenhoff for Youth
Ann Parker for Alliance
Suzanne Ross for Sunday Morning Coffee

Please approach one of us, if you have a question, a concern or a good idea to encourage participation. As we start the new year, join our "Green Scene" and RESOLVE TO RECYCLE.

For information about home recycling, pick up the new edition of Wayne County's "Resource Recovery Guide" available in the church foyer.
-- Jo Ann Kelly, Chair, The Green Team

Smell that Coffee

52 cups of Coffee a year, with real half 'n' half or tea with lemon should be waiting for you, as soon as the Sunday morning service is over. Cookies are optional, but the coffee and tea are guaranteed *as long as someone volunteers to make it*. As of today, there are only 24 weeks still open. You must act quickly to get the week(s) that you really want. (Secret: somebody always pops in to help.) The sign-up list is in the kitchen, so please support our coffee-after-church by volunteering.

-- Suzanne Schneider Ross, Coffee Committee

Newsletter Schedule

The newsletter deadlines for the remainder of the year are:

Feb 14th and 28th
Mar 14th and 28th
Apr 11th and 25th
May 9th and 23rd
Jun 13th and 27th

-- Tom Roberts for the Editors