



THE FLAMING CHALICE

DECEMBER SERVICE PREVIEWS

Sunday Worship: 10:30 AM

December 7— A Right Jolly Old Elf

Rev. Joy Atkinson

He's coming to town. Have you been good? Did St. Nicholas really exist? The sermon will explore various myths and stories surrounding this Christian saint, whose feast day is celebrated on December 6th in many parts of Europe.

December 14 — Winter Festivals of Light

The Pursuit of Radiance

Rev. Joy Atkinson

As the winter solstice, the darkest day of the year, approaches, we will acknowledge various traditions that celebrate light in the darkest time. Children will participate in celebrating these holidays for the first half of this service. The sermon will explore the metaphor of light as a symbol of the human spirit.

Friday, December 19 7 PM Winter Solstice Meditation Service

Rev. Joy Atkinson

Let's pause in the midst of our holiday frenzy! We will gather for a meditative service, to welcome the returning light in the midst of darkness.

If you are interested in bringing refreshments to our Christmas Eve Service, please contact Roy Dickerson at 510-786-2922 or daesworkgd@comcast.net.

December 21— Jesus the Sage

Rev. Joy Atkinson

On this Sunday before Christmas Eve, the sermon will explore some of the recent scholarship concerning Jesus, whose birth so many will celebrate on Wednesday evening. Who was this remarkable figure, beneath the legends? How much of what is attributed to him did he really say?

Wednesday, December 24th, 7 PM

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Join us for a Christmas celebration with singing, readings, music by the choir, a homily by Joy and the warm glow of candlelight.

Sunday, December 28 — What is Faith?

Brian Johnson

This Lay Lead service will explore the question of faith.





Happy December Birthdays

4 Devlin Clark

7 Mary Lou Schuler

13 Zelma Nunez-Borja

13 Stuart Fink

16 Henry Sprague

24 Chris Selig

25 Holly Robinson



29 Glen Jacob

30 Bill Schwab

31 Karen Swain



Inside

Interim Minister's Message Pg. 3

South Hayward Parish Pg. 4

Wheel of Life Pg. 4

Board's Message Pg. 5

Religious Exploration Pg. 6

New Members Pg. 7

Announcements Pg. 9

Ongoing Activities Pg. 10

How to Reach Us Pg. 11



THREE GIFTS

They are called kings or wise men, and Matthew in the New Testament calls them Magoi--Magi, which means magicians, soothsayers, astrologers. It's not clear from the New Testament how many wise men came from the east to pay homage to the newborn Jesus. As stated in Matthew, the Magi followed the star they saw to Jesus, and there they knelt before the babe and presented him with three gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh. Scholars believe that the three gifts are what accounts for later legends that there were only three of them, each bearing one of the gifts. Still later tradition makes these Magi into kings, and gives them each a name and a country of origin. Casper, King of Tarsus, who brought the gold, Melchior, the Arab King, who brought incense and Balthazar, the black King from Ethiopia, who brought the myrrh. This legend universalizes the story, bringing in figures who represent different races of people, all coming to adore this child.

But what about those three gifts? Gold, incense and myrrh? They seem strange gifts for a baby. Of course, as the writers of the New Testament believed, this was no ordinary baby. This was the long-awaited Messiah. So the three gifts were not just those three items, they were symbolic of what this child was to become. Gold, considered the purest and most valuable material, symbolized and prophesied that Jesus would be a king, a leader worthy of the highest praise. Incense was used in the worship of divinities. It was thought to be the bearer of prayers, which would drift upward to the god on a sweet cloud of smoke. And myrrh is a balm, a healing resin which is used to soothe pain. The myrrh symbolized and prophesied the suffering that Jesus was to endure, as well as the healing of our broken world that he tried in his short life to perform.

Scholars differ on how much of this story is historical. Most take it as mythical and symbolic, but let us suppose for a moment that some Magi from out of town brought these gifts to Jesus. If Jesus the infant could have spoken of these three luxurious gifts, what might he have said? Perhaps, he might use these physical gifts as a springboard to speak of the even greater preciousness of non-material gifts—gifts of the spirit. Like Paul of Tarsus, who never knew Jesus but whose life was shaped by his teachings, Jesus might have pointed to such gifts as faith, hope and love. Love is like the Magi's gold—precious, rare, durable and of highest value. Hope is like incense, sweet and uplifting, helping us to overcome the cynicism we all prone to in this lovely but imperfect world. Faith—in the goodness of humanity, in ourselves and in that which is greater than ourselves, is the healing balm that can ease the pain of doubt and despair, and give us the courage to help heal and soothe others.

This holiday season, as we unwrap bright colored boxes, or delight in watching our children or grandchildren do so, may we remember, amid these physical tokens of affection, the gifts of the spirit that Jesus and Paul, and other great religious leaders, spoke of and dedicated their lives to. May these be among the presents you find in your home and in your heart.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ONE AND ALL!

Joy

WORK OF SOUTH HAYWARD PARISH

4

The annual SKUU Thanksgiving service again featured the work of the South Hayward Parish Food Pantry. The congregation collected 660 pounds of food for the pantry by the time the service started. Some donations that came in after the service raised the haul to nearly 700 pounds. This was significantly more than was donated last year.

South Hayward Parish also received the funds in the “special plate” dedicated to the Parish. A total of \$1665.00 was raised.

The themes of thankfulness and gratitude were prominent in the service led by Reverend Joy Atkinson. Guest speaker Sue Merrill, Executive Director of South Hayward Parish, also addressed the congregation.

SHP is thankful for the support of our church; and the congregation is thankful for the opportunity to be actively at work in the larger community.



Sue Merrill, Executive Director of South Hayward Parish addresses the congregation about the work of SHP.



Uma brought in her weight in food donations.

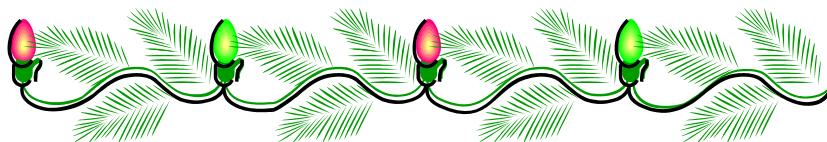
Wheel of Life

Congratulations to Marilyn Mosher who is retiring from the City of Hayward after 27 years of service.



Your SKUU Board - Dec. 2014

By Colleen Dino Board President



November has come and gone so quickly, it's hard to recap all the happenings at Starr King.

Here is a brief outline of what the board has been reviewing.

Budget:

Marilyn Mosher reported that the Finance Committee has decided to discontinue accepting pledge payments via credit cards. They are also exploring other vendors by which credit cards could be used to pay for goods and services, such as fund raisers. The current vendor, Vanco, is complex and expensive. Also, in the future, the Off Budget Account will be used solely for pass-through payments, such as the Ashland trip. Other earmarked donations will be deposited to the savings account and tracked by the use of "tags" in our accounting system.

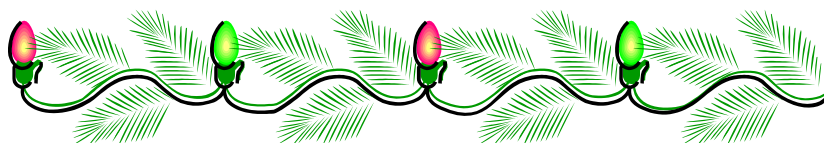
Also, as we approach the end of 2014, Members may want to contribute to your pledge to get the most of your tax right off for 2014.

Diane Meyerson, representing the **Personnel Committee**, presented the latest version of the Personnel Manual for review and discussion. A few changes were discussed and agreed on. Diane will incorporate the changes and notify President Colleen Dino. Members of the BOT who discover additional changes which need to be made will transmit them to Colleen, who will publish them to the full BOT. The final, official Manual will be brought back to the board for approval.

Doug Sprague made a presentation on **Little Free Library**, a program which exists in over 15,000 communities worldwide, usually not involving churches. We would establish a weather-proof "house" elevated on a post near the street as a neighborhood project which would contain books available for free loan and for book donations. Our children and youth would be involved through the entire project, starting with the design and construction.

We are reviewing additional projects that include new signage at the front gate area and investigating the cost savings we might achieve with solar panels.

*Warm regards,
Colleen Dino*



SKUU Religious Exploration News

On Sunday, Dec. 7th, our RE will be talking about Stewardship, we will have guest speakers to tell us about the Free Library project that our children will be making and caring for. For more information about the Free Library project please visit: littlefreelibrary.org. More to come in the coming weeks on how our free library is being established.

On Sunday, Dec. 14, Winter Festival Service, our children and youth will be decorating special boxes to hold donations to go on our tree. The boxes will be donated to FESCO.

FESCO is especially interested in receiving donations of gift cards and small infant/toddler toys. Please bring your donations to the church office by 12/14.

On Dec. 21st, our RE class will be talking about Signs of Welcome, we will design a welcoming program for new visitors. After our training, the children will sign up to be Religious Exploration Greeters, giving new visitor children a short tour of the RE program and inviting them to make special nametags. We will also learn the song "Come, Come Whoever You Are", that we will be singing in weeks to come, welcoming new visitors.

On Dec. 30th, our children will have a lesson on Reverance for Life, we will take a nature walk, talk about recycling, the UU tradition of welcoming new babies our Naming Ceremony. The children will then make a plague with their name on it to take home.

For more information or questions, please contact Rennie Tomley, Director of Religious Exploration at dreskuu@gmail.com

SKUU Welcomes New Members



Bob Breckenridge is a software test engineer. He develops test automation code in computer programming languages. He enjoys playing music, singing, dancing, drumming, hiking, biking, gardening and working for social justice. He says he hopes we can prevent the military-industrial-congressional complex from systematically voting each of us off the island.

Torsten Fink and Michelle Lovett-Fink and their son Carl

Torsten grew up in Germany. He is an electrical engineer at Dolby Sound, working now mostly in product management. He enjoys photography, math and science. Michelle previously worked as a molecular and cellular biologist. She is a school volunteer and a passionate gardener, and is now working on developing half an acre of their property into a "boutique" nursery, specializing in rare plants. She is semi-fluent in 6 languages and enjoys studying languages. Son Carl, 10, loves to play the flute and is very interested in and very good at math and science. The family likes to travel, hike and bike.

Olivia Forte-Gardner and Children Uma and Julian Olivia joined the UU community as a young child in 1980. With her husband Jayashankar she is raising 2 progressive children, Uma, 5, and Julian, 2. She is passionate about the environment, and has worked in conservation agriculture research, forestry, and environmental education for small acre farms. Uma loves school and especially likes art and music. Julian now reads numbers and loves to sing. He also likes yoga. The family lives in Castro Valley and Kerala, India

SKUU Welcomes New Members



Deborah Gallegos is an Artist and Dancer, a Musician with a Community Marching Band, and describes herself as a Crone. She is a Green Building Professional. Deborah likes to travel and volunteer in the community.

Gaea Haas describes herself as a solitary practicing pagan, looking for community worship, a dippy hippie with a positive outlook on life. By signing the membership book, she says, she is affirming that she has found that community in this UU church.

Reed Luce grew up in a chaotic and charged environment, where rationality existed only in books that he read at school. He retreated into books as a child and still loves to read. Reed has read about civil war history all his life and still enjoys this area. He has been in and out of UU churches, and has come to realize that he and UU have a lot in common. He has a master's degree in history and one in English.

Laura Narron Zhang was born in Berkeley and grew up in Contra Costa County. She is a sixth generation Californian on her father's side. Her mom's family, the Murphys, owned a small store in the Cherryland area of Hayward in the 1940s. She works for the City and County of San Francisco as a management assistant and is currently attending the University of San Francisco studying Finance. In her spare time she works on her drought-tolerant garden in South Hayward.



Christmas at SKUUC Will Be Celebrated With a Holiday Meal on Thurs. 12/25

The fun will begin at 2:00 (approx.) on Thursday, Dec. 25th. There is a signup sheet on the back table of the social hall to provide an idea of the attendance. If you want to share one of your great family recipes for a side dish or a dessert, please note it on the sign-up sheet. Don't be deterred if your plans fluctuate, and have to be left to the last minute. The list is just a general idea. You'll be welcome regardless. Come early and stay late to socialize and relax. Ideas welcome for activities before and after the meal.

More info: Collen or Dirk Dino - colleendino@yahoo.com



Holiday Party Join the RE Children and Your Fellow Congregants at the Annual RE SKUU Christmas Party



Sunday Dec. 14th right after the service!

ON GOING FUN AND UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

10

CHURCH BOOKSTORE The bookstore is open every 3rd. Sunday after the service

DRUM CIRCLE Meets the 1st. Friday from 7-9 PM. Come enjoy a fun and spiritual evening

EVENING MEDITATION Meets every Wednesday from 7- 8 PM. Come practice meditation and reap its benefits.

STARR KING ELDERBERRIES Meets every 3rd Wednesday at 12:00 noon. Bring your lunch and enjoy learning about and discussing topics of particular interest to our elder (self-identified) members

FILM GROUP The Film Group[will meet Sat. Oct. 18, 2014 At 7:00 P.M. "Captain America: the Winter Soldier" (2014) well written action-fantasy about a super hero facing danger ; starring Chris Evans, Scarlett Johansson and Robert Redford (rated pg-13). Let Stuart know if you are coming and please bring a movie snack to share.

JUSTICE ALLIANCE Meets on the second Sunday after the service, at 12:00 PM in the conference room. All are welcome.

HOSPITALITY & MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE Meets on the third Sunday of each month at 12:00 P. M.

MORNING DISCOVERY Meets in the fellowship hall from 10 to 11:15 A.M. on first and third Wednesdays. All are welcome to join us to explore community and spirituality discussion and shared silence .

SKIFFLE Regretfully, due to poor attendance, SKIFFLE is taking at least a hiatus.

SKIT Improv. group meets in the Sanctuary on the 2nd. Thursday of the month at 7:30 P.M.

STARR KING CHOIR Rehearsal times are set as needed. For information, please contact Jo Murdach at jo71murdach@yahoo.com or 510-581-6794

HOW TO REACH US

Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church

22577 Bayview Avenue
Hayward, CA 94541

Church Office: 510.581.2060

office@starrking.org

Parish Minister: Rev. Joy Atkinson

minister@starrking.org

Cell Phone:

Church President: Colleen Dino

president@starrking.org

Home phone: 510. 213.3499

Church Website: <http://www.starrking.org>

Webmaster: Beth Ogilvie: webmaster@starrking.org

Newsletter Editor: newslettereditor@starrking.org

Church Office Hours
Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday
9:00 AM-2:00 PM

11

Church Leadership

Board of Trustees

President:	Colleen Dino
Vice President:	Diana Dickerson
Secretary:	Frank Burton
Treasurer	Marilyn Moser
At Large	Wayne Bennion Lea Casini Betsy Dye Stuart Fink Heidi Green Kirk Klausmeyer
Office Manager	Kelli Abatangelo
Interim Minister	Rev. Joy Atkinson
DRE	Rennie Tomley,

Positions

Adult Religious Education – Jennifer Koney

Anti-Racist Multicultural Alliance - Regina
Fassano

Buildings – Bobby Robinson

Chalice Editors – Kathryn LaMar & Allison Prout

Church Website – Beth Ogilvie

Committee Council – Diana Dickerson

Communications Comm. – Melody Appleton

FESCO Rep.– Jennifer Koney

Finance Committee— Keith Lewis

Fundraising Committee– Karen Cook

Green Sanctuary Committee– Colleen Saia

Grounds Care– Walt Korus

Hospitality/Membership – Dirk Dino

Interior – Sherry Thomas

Justice Alliance—Frank Burton

Nominating Committee – Rebecca Parr

Pastoral Care Committee– Karen Cook

R.E. Council – David Middleton

Social – Joyce Kinnear

Social Justice Committee– Mary Swain

South Hayward Parish Bd. Rep.– Terry Owen

Sunday Coffee – Roy Dickerson

Usher Coordinator—Lavon Hodges

Worship Committee – Lu Middleton

Publishing Deadline:

The 20th of the Month Prior to Publication

Please put all contributions in writing & keep articles under 500 words.

Post to:

Email to: newslettereditor@starrking.org
