



Newsletter

***Starr King Unitarian-
Universalist Church of
Hayward, California***

February 2017

THE FLAMING CHALICE

Sunday Worship: 10:30 am February Service Preview

**Church Office Hours: Tues, Wed, & Thur;
9:30 am to 2:30 pm**

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February 5. The Next Four Years.

How we get through the next four years: Love, Activism, and Books: Join us for our book communion. Bring a book to share and leave with one that you have not read yet.

February 12. We Celebrate Love.

On the Sunday closest to Valentine's Day we celebrate ALL kinds of Love with a special guest: Ms. Lorrain Taylor, Executive Director of 1000 Mothers To Prevent Violence. (1000mothers.org)

February 19: Being Old.

Bob Meyerson takes a serious/comic look at the moment of realization when one decides that:

'I am old.' No more just 'aging;' no more 'late middle age.' OLD. Lots to be happy about, lots to be sad about. Lots to laugh about.

February 26. A UU Lent.

An invitation to reflect upon our connection to the divine and our mystical experiences.

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Wheel of Life

Best wishes for a quick recovery to Betsy Dye who has been ill

February Birthdays

Date	Name
2/3	Dick Albert
2/4	Kelli Abatangelo
2/5	René L. Castle
2/8	Ellery Medilla
2/8	Andy Hansen
2/13	Bill DeSmidt
2/12	Kirk Klausmeyer
2/16	Heidi Green
2/19	Meredith Schuler
2/19	Alison Corson
2/20	Lea Casini
2/21	Nancy Harrison
2/23	Byron Schatz
2/24	Eric Gable

Dreaming of Possibilities for America

From the Minister,
Rev. Maria Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa



“Hold fast to dreams, for if dreams die, Life is a broken-winged bird that cannot fly...” Langston Hughes.

If you were feeling discouraged and in need of good news. If you were asking yourself if America is possible. If you were ready for action. I hope you felt recharged and inspired by the recent MLK Day march in Hayward and the Women’s marches that took place on January 21. I certainly did! Both events were great opportunities for renewing hope, feeling connected to the larger community, and engaging in public demonstrations of resistance against hatred and in favor more love, more peace, and more justice for all. My mother and I proudly wore our “Standing on the Side of Love” shirts as we walked the streets of Hayward for the first time, feeling more and more a part of this community. We heard powerful messages about not giving up and now more than ever, recommitting to Dr. King’s dream of building the Beloved Community.



There is something very powerful about gathering with hundreds and thousands of others and feeling united for that moment in time. I felt my little light rekindling and my strength recharged to continue on the journey towards freedom and justice for all. And yet sometimes I find myself thinking that we as a nation seem to be going backwards not forward. I ask myself “is America possible?” I mean America the beautiful, America the sanctuary, America the welcoming, America the queer, the multicultural, America where Black lives matter and where when repressive forces demand that Muslims register we all register as Muslims in solidarity, America the proud and undocumented, America that honors and recognizes the rights of Native American people and Mother Earth, America that protects water rights instead of oil tycoons’ rights and supports access to clean water for everyone. The America of Dr. King against war, against corporate greed, against hatred, and embracing multiculturalism, honoring the inherent worth and dignity of every person. Is this America possible? **Civil Rights activist Vincent Harding** invites us to imagine and explore the meaning of possible through the words of poet Langston Hughes:



“Wherever we have seen these freedom seekers, community organizers, and artisans of democracy, standing their ground, calling others to the struggle, advancing into danger, and creating new realities, it is clear that they are taking the question seriously; shaping their own answers, and testing the possibilities of their dreams.

We need these dreams badly. They are marvelous sources of advanced ideas about democracy. They would likely ask us to nurture the living seed within us and imagine how our cities might become safe, enthralling, and nourishing places, especially for our children. They would ask us to look somewhere between the isolation of the suburbs and the desolation of so many inner cities to dream a way of housing our people in places worthy of human dignity and community. They would encourage visions of a health system that would care for the needs of all our citizens. They would invite us to dream of schools and neighborhoods where children of all races, cultures, and economic groups are taught together to become responsible, compassionate citizens in an ever-expanding democratic society... The work of discovering, exploring, and developing this true America is our work — we, the people, are in charge. To dream such dreams, to grasp such visions, to live lives anchored in great hope is certainly to develop ourselves and our students in the best traditions of the freedom movement, of all movements for justice, compassion, and democracy. Eventually, we might discover that it is also the path to our best personal humanity.



Once, in the midst of the African independence struggles of the early 1960s, I remember hearing a poet of that continent say, “I am a citizen of a country that does not yet exist.” Perhaps this is the paradox into which we must allow Hughes to move us. Together with those we teach, we are officially citizens of the America we now know, but we need to give our greatest energies to the creation of the country that does not yet exist. Hughes calls us to envision it, to encourage our students to use all the magnificent but underdeveloped faculties of their imagination to begin to bring it into being, and to share that work with those who have gone before. Ultimately, Langston Hughes spoke both for our personal lives and for our nation when he wrote:

Hold fast to dreams

For when dreams go

Life is a barren field

Frozen with snow.

It is a message for all of us... We are the nurturers, the encouragers of all the dreams and seeds deep in all the hearts where the future of a redeemed and rescued land now dwells. So we must hold fast and see beneath the snow, calling others to recognize their own magnificent possibilities, to see and plant and join our hope with theirs....

Continuously, persistently, I hear all the heroic voices of struggle joining Hughes in a common message. It says loudly that the work of discovering, exploring, and developing this true America is our work — we, the people, are in charge. Today, we are called to sing in our dreams and say with our actions that America (the America of Langston and Malcolm and Ella and Anne Braden and all the marchers and mourners and organizers) is possible, is necessary, is coming...”

Beloveds, we are the ones we’ve been waiting for: We are all artisans of democracy and creators of new realities. Let us take heart in the numbers of people who are organizing for change and who are encouraging us to make a more loving, peaceful, and just America possible. Si se Puede! Yes we can!

With much Love

Rev. Maria Cristina



[Vincent Harding](#) was chairperson of the Veterans of Hope Project at the Iliff School of Theology in Denver, Colorado, Professor Emeritus of Religion and Social Transformation, and author of ***Hope and History: Why We Must Share the Story of the Movement.***

***Starr King UU Church Board
of Trustees,
By Diana Dickerson***



January 2017 has been a roller coaster for all of us. In my family, we were ready to celebrate my mom's 88th birthday on the 10th. When my phone rang early that morning it was for me to take her to the hospital. Her significant other (Hank) was also very ill, but he refused to go for help until the next day. They both had the nasty flu that has been making its rounds.

They have different health plans, so Hank was at San Leandro Kaiser and mom was at Eden in Castro Valley. The fact that both were 88 years old wasn't helpful. Mom made her way back to health, but Hank died January 25th. We are looking forward to a much better February. Many of us have been dealing with this flu one way or another, but life goes on.

Lately I am reminded of the late 1960s with all the people marching for so many important causes. As we are coming into February the momentum seems to be growing. I hope to be ready to take more time for supporting some of the many 'causes.' I have a yellow shirt and I am not afraid to wear it!

Our church and many others did a fabulous job for the Martin Luther King Jr. annual celebration. We continue to work toward Dr. King's dream of a vibrant, multiracial nation united in justice, peace and reconciliation. I am proud of the support for this celebration year after year in the Hayward City Plaza.

Let us not forget that we continue to support other issues as members of South Hayward Parish, FESCO, and the new Eden Area Interfaith Council (EAIC).

We will continue to work to support our causes and each other. I am so proud to be a member of Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church.

Thank you all,

Diana Dickerson



RE Reflections for February 2017

By Allison Prout



Living Our Values

It was wonderful to participate in the MLK Rally again this year. There were many new families with children. It was inspiring to hear speakers affirm our values and the need to continue to make our voices heard.

Many members of our congregation also attended the women's marches in the Bay Area. We should be very proud of the strong turnout for these events. Pictures don't lie. Women united all over the country and the world in numbers too big to ignore. We must keep fighting to maintain our rights and protect those who are targeted.

On February 5th we will take our first fieldtrip to the Sikh Gurdwara in Hayward. To prepare for our visit, I have been learning about Sikhism and am struck by the similarities of Sikh beliefs to our own. The Sikhs, for example, believe in the inherent worth of every individual regardless of social class or religious belief. They value hard work, family and serving their community. They believe in sharing, not hoarding wealth. They offer sanctuary to those in need. They believe in building a fair and peaceful world.

Our connection with Eden's interfaith coalition has enabled us to get to know our neighbors better. I plan to continue forging connections with other congregations including Eden UCC and Shir Ami Jewish congregation. If there is a religion you are interested in learning more about, please let me know. In these challenging times, we must build bridges, not walls. There is power in unity and mutual understanding.

Allison Prout



Transforming Congregational Leadership

By Beth Ogilvie

Last fall, the New England Region of the UUA ran a webinar called “*Cracking the Leadership Crisis – Re-imagining Congregational Leadership.*”

The promotional email said:

- **Imagine** spending more time developing and nurturing identified leaders in your congregation, and less time struggling to find enough volunteers to fit on every open committee.
- **Imagine** creating a congregational culture that expects its leaders to spend as much time growing as Unitarian Universalists as they do making governance decisions.
- **Imagine** congregational leadership as so meaningful and rewarding that our leaders cherish their time in their role, feeling more blessed than burdened with the responsibility.



It went on to say:

Join with other congregational teams as we explore how to:

- *Release leadership worry and anxiety about burnout and having “not enough” volunteers*
- *Anchor leaders in a profound sense of purpose*
- *Make leadership a personal growth experience*
- *Restructure congregational infrastructure to focus on meaningful work*
- *Liberate the energy of collaboration and covenanted community*

This sounded completely impossible, but I figured if they delivered on even *half* of *one* of those bullet points, it would be worth it. To my astonishment, they succeeded. They showed how we could do those impossible-sounding things. Not quickly, not easily, but a roadmap that could get us there. It focuses on three aspects:

- **Practical** – a different way of organizing “committee work” that shares the load much better
- **Interpersonal** – a different way of doing meetings that nourishes instead of depletes
- **Spiritual** – a new focus on the spiritual rewards and personal transformation possibilities of lay leadership

The group that watched the webinar, the Experi-learners (a term introduced in the webinar, from experiment+learn), will introduce the material to the congregation in stages over time, **but we encourage everyone to watch it now. Here is the [webinar recording](#).**

We will present the first module, “**Many Hands Make Light Work,**” in a **mini-workshop** at the **Committee Council meeting on February 8 at 7 pm.** Everyone is welcome. Committee chairs and Board members are particularly encouraged to come.

Update from the Anti-Racism Multicultural Alliance (ARMCA)

By Beth Ogilvie

- **Congregational Interest Survey.** Many thanks to the 32 people who completed the survey! We will share the results with the other action team leads. If you expressed interest in any of the action teams, you will be hearing from them. The more interest you expressed, the sooner you will hear.
- **Community Partnerships.** We're exploring ways to connect with other groups in the community, particularly the African American community. We don't want "Black Lives Matter" to get lost amidst our other concerns. We have issued invitations to potential community partners to come visit us, start to get acquainted, and see what possibilities ensue. All church members are invited to these conversations. More details will be available in the coming weeks. As Rev. Maria Cristina said to one potential partner:

Here at Starr King we strive to live into our faith and practice our principles beyond our walls. Now more than ever, we are looking for opportunities to learn, to grow, to serve, and to find common ground with our neighbors engaged in social justice actions.

As Unitarian Universalists, we believe that we need not think alike to work together towards the common goal of unconditional love, peace, and justice for all. In that spirit, our church is committed to engaging in meaningful practices to make real our aspirations of building Dr. King's Beloved Community within an intentional anti-racist, multicultural approach and practice. We are reaching out to you and your congregation to hopefully get to know each other, build bridges, share stories, support each other in our challenges, and build that common ground in solidarity.

We invite your participation in these conversations.



Donate to Starr King while Shopping at Amazon

In case you haven't heard, Starr King has an agreement with Amazon where any purchase you make at Amazon through our special link will give us a significant commission generally around 5%. We have made it even easier to find this link by putting it at the bottom right-hand corner on every page on our church's website. Just click on the link that says "[GO TO AMAZON to Donate to Starr King UU Church](#)".

There is another link just below it that says "[Learn more about donating through Amazon](#)". This link will take you to the page that explains how the program works, what percent commissions we receive on what type of merchandise, as well as how much we have earned each month this year.

We think we could be making a lot more from these commissions, so please bookmark the link in your browser. This will help you easily access the site. Tell your friends and family to start using the link, too.

Thanks for helping to support Starr King at no additional cost to yourselves!

Want to volunteer? We have a suggestion! Have fun at coffee hour and help **serve!** Signups are needed for Sunday Coffee. It's a great way to get to know the SKUU congregation as well as to try out new recipes. Have fun talking with everyone! The signup sheet is on the Community Table in the Fellowship Hall.

Special Activities

Game Night is Saturday, February 18, 6:30 pm!

Disco Dance Party! Saturday, February 25, 6:30 pm

Bring family and friends and have a ball! Please bring an hors d'oeuvre or snack to share. We'll provide drinks, disco ball, and irresistible music. Sponsored by ARMCA, the Anti- Racism Multicultural Alliance (because we enjoy good company and we love to dance)



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Church Calendar for February 2017

For details about these activities, go to www.starrking.org/calendar, and hover your cursor over an event.

February 2017						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 * 7:30 pm Evening Meditation	2 * 7 pm Board of Trustee's	3	4
5 * 9 am Choir Rehearsals * 9:30 am Earth Fair Planning * 10:30 am Worship Service	6	7 * 10:30 am Safety Committee	8 * 3 pm Pastoral Care Committee * 7 pm Committee Council * 7:30 pm Evening Meditation	9 * 7:30 pm SKIT	10	11
12 * 9 am Choir Rehearsals * 10:30 am Worship Service * 12 noon Peace and Justice Action Team	13	14 * 11 am Adult RE	15 * 7:30 pm Evening Meditation	16 * 12:00 pm Elder Meeting * 7:00 pm RE Council * 7:00 pm Worship Committee	17	18 * 6:30 pm Game Night
19 * 9 am Choir Rehearsals * 10:30 am Worship Service * 12 noon Church Bookstore Open	20	21 * 10:30 am Safety Committee	22 * 7:30 pm Evening Meditation	23	24	25 * 6:30 pm Disco Dance Party
26 * 9 am Choir Rehearsals * 10:30 am Worship Service	27	28				

Starr King UU Church Ongoing Activities

Activity	Event Schedule
<i>Church Bookstore</i>	Open on the third Sunday of the month, after the service.
<i>Drum Circle</i>	Meets on the first Friday of the month, from 7 to 9 pm, in the Sanctuary. Open to all adults and mature children.
<i>Evening Meditation</i>	Meets every Wednesday, from 7:30 to 8:45 pm. Open to all.
<i>Starr King Elderberries</i>	Meets on the third Wednesday at noon. Bring your lunch. Open to all self-identified elders.
<i>Small Group Ministry</i>	Stay tuned for upcoming SGM Facilitator training. For more info please contact Diane Meyerson or Bob Britton. (Contact sgm@starrking.org for more information).
<i>SKIT (Starr King Improv Troupe)</i>	Meets on the second Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm. Open to all.