



Newsletter

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

January 2017

THE FLAMING CHALICE

**Church Office Hours: Tues, Wed, and Thur;
9:30 AM to 2:30 PM
22577 Bayview Avenue
Hayward, CA 94541
510-581-2060**

**Office Manager: Kelli Abatangelo
office@starrking.org**

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

Newsletter: newslettereditor@starrking.org

Parish Minister:

**Rev. Maria Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa
minister@starrking.org**

Church President: Diana Dickerson

**president@starrking.org
Home phone: 510-786-2922**

Director of Religious Exploration:

**Allison Prout
dre@starrking.org
DRE Office Hours: Wed, Thurs, 10:00 AM to
2:00 PM**

**Sunday Worship: 10:30 AM
November Service Preview**

January 8, 2017: Epiphany and the Three Kings
Rev. Maria Cristina Vlassidis-Burgoa
What gifts shall we bring?

**January 15, 2017: Commemoration of Dr. Martin
Luther King, Jr.**
Rev. Maria Cristina Vlassidis-Burgoa
Commemoration service.

**January 22, 2017: Pastoral care as a Spiritual
Practice**
Rev. Maria Cristina Vlassidis-Burgoa
Spiritual care

January 29, 2017: Loss and Change
Joyce Kinnear
How do we deal with loss and change? At the start of a
new year, with so much loss in the past year and
upcoming change, what are some ways we can move
forward with hope?



Happy New Year!
**Happy Chinese
New Year!**

What's Inside

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January Birthdays

Colleen Saia has compiled a spreadsheet for all of our birthdays. You can see a complete printout on the welcome table at the back of the Social Hall. Please contact her with any additions or corrections.

Date	Name	Date	Name
5	Sherman Lewis	18	Sophiana Carrell
7	Roy Dickerson	19	Allison Prout
11	Walt Korus	20	John Lunger
13	Jay Durant	24	Mileva Saulo-Lewis
13	Doris Haskell	24	Carolyn Lunger
16	Beverly Powell	25	Debbie Frederick
16	Mary Swain	30	Ben Matthews
16	Ethel-May Shaw		



Yes, the Drum Circle will meet on January 6, at 7 PM.

The Wednesday Meditation group now meets from 7:30 PM until 8:45 PM.

Wheel of Life



Our heartfelt condolences go out to **Bob Britton** on the death of his brother.

Congratulations to **Xiomara and Laura** on their marriage on Saturday, December 2017.

Many Happy Returns to **Zelma Nunez-Borja** on celebrating her 70th birthday

***From the Minister,
Rev. Maria Cristina
Vlassidis Burgoa***



The Miracle of Hanukkah

“Hope begins in the juxtaposition of rage and love, in the very collision of human despair and divine love”

Ann Sill

The story of the First Hanukkah tells us that Judah Maccabee gathered the people and told them to go up to Jerusalem and purify the Temple in to prepare for worship. When they arrived in Jerusalem they found the Temple deserted, its gates burned down, destroyed. The people in their distress began to lament to see their temple in ruins. Judah brought a new menorah, as the people gathered new rocks to build the altar. However, they could not find enough oil to properly light the Menorah. Together, they looked for and found a jar of oil that should not have even existed. And then a miracle: the lights lit from that one small jar of oil burned for eight days straight. And so they made it a law to celebrate the festival of lights to commemorate the restoration of the temple and the miracle of Hanukkah.

Hanukkah offers us three lessons:

Rededication: What is it in my life that I value but have in someway fallen away from or am not taking care of? It could be a relationship with a spouse, child, or friend; it could be a volunteer activity for a social or political cause; it could be making time regularly for spiritual practice.

The power of faith: The miracle of Hanukkah is that the people, knowing the oil could not possibly last for the desired duration of their celebration, lit the flame anyway. It was at that moment, when the light was first kindled, that the miracle occurred in their hearts.

The power of community: While we may not be able to achieve our goals or overcome our challenges alone, if we are part of a spiritual community, we can.

Before the restoration, the temple had been burnt down, covered with overgrown weeds, and remained desolate and dark for three years.

Sometimes in our lives things fall apart. Relationships are broken, our bodies become fragile, connections are lost, regret, cynicism, and despair grow strong while our inner light grows weak and we experience hopelessness. And the light of true hope can only emerge when we embrace the darkness. Now more than ever, we need the light of true hope.

John Schneider, a trauma psychologist, writes

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“Perhaps the most important dimension of witnessing is our ability to hold hope for another . . . Sometimes people say, ‘I can’t imagine ever recovering from this’ or ‘Do you ever think it will be better?’ or ‘Can I make it?’

When our own light goes out, it takes another person to help us rekindle it. The real miracle is the human connection. Hope lives in the borderlands, at the crossroads, in the darkness, where we find each other, when we bear witness, and lament together. There in the darkness, amidst the ruins, we restore the broken places, we gather new rocks, and we rededicate ourselves to the task of restoring the light. Arise! Shine! for your light has come said the prophet Isaiah. You might be asking where is my light? Everywhere I turn I see people lamenting. Where is my light? Can I find it among the ruins? Arise! Shine! For I also see a new movement, new leaders, a new vision for this country that has been playing in the dark for too long. I see people standing on the side of love, keeping hope alive. This Hanukkah I see rededication to peace, to justice, to freedom. And I see hope being born of the ashes, from the shards and the brokenness, and I see hope resurrected like a miracle, among the ruins.

Arise! Shine! You are the divine spark!

So come down from the hills and declare victory even when the temple is wrecked. You are the stuff from which such miracles are made!



image by zoe cohen (www.zoecohen.com)

Zoe Cohen

President's Report

***by Diana
Dickerson***



It is hard to believe that we have made it through the elections and the holidays. It seemed a little dicey with our election results being quite scary. Then we got back in the groove and the shopping was looking like one of those survival shows we try so hard not to watch. Well now, this is the time to begin a new and unblemished year.

I don't usually make any resolutions any more. The old ones just made me feel as if I was unable to stick with the program. However, this past year, I have felt that I need to make resolutions that speak to who I want to be.

How I can help? Where are my energy and/or my money needed? I was speaking with a friend the other day and the subject of 'Sanctuary, came up. I said that I don't have any room to have someone to stay at our house. My friend responded that she is ready to set up a tent. I hadn't even given that a thought. This really got me thinking, I want to be the person who can try a little harder to help those who are in need. We all need to think about how we can help those who are less fortunate than we are.

We are fortunate to have some very dynamic people who attend our church. I am planning to get lots of great ideas that will help me to make the most of my efforts. I am sure that we all know who to talk to for more ideas. If you already have them, please share them with me.

My resolution for 2017 is to step up my work for those in need, to make myself become part of the solution. Please share your thoughts with me, I am usually at church on Sundays.

Have a happy and helpful New Year!

Diana Dickerson



New Year, New Beginning

I am excited heading into the new year to leave the busyness of the holidays and the frustrations and disappointments of 2016 behind. Yes, I am concerned about the political future of our country, but we have work to do. Coming up in January, we will have a chance to stand together and proclaim the inherent worth and dignity of every person at our annual MLK Rally. It will be especially important this year to make our voices heard, and to stay engaged.

At the end of last year, we introduced the Latin American Christmas tradition of Las Posadas to the congregation. In the new year the children will learn about Sikhism and visit the Sikh Gurdwara in Hayward where we have been welcomed thanks to our connections with the Eden Interfaith Council. Interfaith activities with Eden UCC church and Shir Ami, Jewish congregation are also in the works.

Another issue to tackle in the new year is our church babysitting policy. Although we want to make childcare available for church members to attend church events, we have limited resources. I want to simplify the process. But, in order to take the responsibility off of committees, I need the help of a babysitting coordinator. So, if you know someone who is a good organizer and communicator, please let me know. The time commitment will be about one half-hour per event.

Babysitting (Childcare) Coordinator Responsibilities

- Be the point person for babysitting requests
- Call or email babysitters on the designated list
- Notify requestor if a babysitter is or is not available
- Cancel babysitter within 24 hours of event if services are no longer needed
- Work with DRE to expand provider list within safety guidelines

FESCO CHRISTMAS DRIVE A SUCCESS!

I want to thank all of you who generously contributed to the FESCO Christmas drive. It was a huge success and we delivered **4 bedding sets, 7 bath sets, and 10 coloring sets** to the shelter before Christmas.

Allison



From The Safety Committee

January 2017 Report

The Safety Committee wants to thank everyone who has and is helping to make Starr King a safe place for all our members and guests.

We want to personally thank some people who have been actively engaged in furthering our safety objectives.

Lavon Hodges and the Ushers, especially for their work in keeping the sanctuary aisles and exits clear. Karen Cook for her help with the new “FIRE” Buckets; Darryl Ray and the Buildings Committee for the tasks they have completed and the many tasks on which they are working; Roy Dickerson; Walt Korus, Dirk Dino and Will Fitch for volunteering to act as monitors/guides during drills and evacuations, and of course Rev. Maria Cristina for her suggestions and support.

We will be looking for others who wish to volunteer for the various tasks which will affect the success of the Starr King’s Safety Program.

For instance, we will be seeking volunteers, to act as partners to one or more of our members who might need extra help during a drill or evacuation.

As we mentioned last month, we are planning a second round of training for use of the AED machine. If interested, please sign up on the back table in the fellowship hall. On the same sheet please indicate if you have already taken AED training or CPR training. Also let us know what day or evening you would prefer. The training takes about 3-4 hours.

While it is sometimes difficult to adapt to change, there are some things which are necessary, either because they are required by local ordinances and/or because they improve the safety of our site for all who utilize it. One of these requirements is that any type of exit or passageway which leads to an exit must have a width of at least 36”. We would ask that whenever you are on the church site, whether during a service, attending a meeting, enjoying the after church refreshments, attending a community meal or at any other time, please be vigilant and cooperative about keeping all means of egress at least 36” wide. All these passageways should be clear of anything which might impede someone’s ability to exit in case of an emergency.

Just as a “heads up,” there will be an evacuation drill sometime this spring. A Congregational Meeting will be held prior to the drill to explain the procedures to be followed.

As a committee we are more than happy to answer any of your questions or consider any suggestions you might have. Please contact one of the members of the committee (Georgia Gruver, gpgruver@comcast.net; Bob Britton, brittonr@sbcglobal.net; or Beverly Powell, beverly.g.powell@gmail.com).

Submitted by Georgia Gruver



Small Group Ministry

Why Small Group Ministry?

Did you join Starr King Church because you wanted to serve on a committee? Probably not! You just might have been looking for a spiritual community where you can share your values and engage in a common search for truth, love and justice. Probably if you were asked what you seek in a church you would respond that you are looking for community, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and support for your spiritual journey.

Small Group Ministry (SGM) provides a place and structure to discuss spiritual and philosophical topics while building deep and lasting personal relationships. Do you ever wish you could discuss a sermon at church in more detail? Do you ever wish you had time to make connections to church members that lasted more than a few minutes over coffee? Do you ever want to share something deeply personal that won't fit on those little pink slips? Why that is the purpose of SGM!

What exactly is Small Group Ministry?

- ◆ **Spiritual seeking.** To deepen our spiritual lives and build on the benefits we receive from our regular worship services.
- ◆ **Community-building.** To foster positive connections among newer friends and long-time members of our congregation.
- ◆ **Ministry.** To extend the ministry at Starr King by caring for and ministering to one another.
- ◆ **Intellectual exploration.** To expand our understanding of the world and ways to demonstrate Unitarian Universalist principles in our lives.
- ◆ **Living our values.** To engage in service projects to benefit the church community, the neighborhood, or the larger society.

Small Group Ministry is *not*:

- ◆ A social club, although ties between church members deepen through SGM.
- ◆ A debate society, although many important topics are discussed.
- ◆ A support or therapy group, although the atmosphere is positive.
- ◆ A worship service, although there is a strong spiritual aspect to the meeting structure and topics.
- ◆ A rigid template of activities, although there are general guidelines to follow.
- ◆ A closed “fraternity”, although groups must be limited in size to be effective.

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Our Adult Religious Education Committee (AREC), in collaboration with Reverend Maria Cristina, has been meeting to explore ways to revitalize and sustain SGM at Starr King Church. In December we met with Julia Rodriguez of the San Jose First Unitarian Church to learn about their very successful SGM program. Easily a majority of congregants at their church are participating in SGM. Our AREC will be meeting again after the holidays to evaluate what we learned and making plans going forward.

Many of you have already participated in SGM at Starr King and expressed an interest in continued participation. If you have not yet participated in SGM and are interested or would like to learn more, please contact Bob Britton, Kathryn LaMar, Diane Meyerson, or Mileva Lewis.

Bob Britton



Lavon Hodges reminds us that the signup sheets for Sunday coffee are on the Community table in the Fellowship Hall. Providing coffee and refreshments for Coffee Hour is a great way to get to know your fellow UUs and to try out new recipes. Let's make it happen!



Church Calendar For November, 2016

For details about any of these activities, go to starrking.org/calendar, and let your cursor hover over a particular event.

« Prev		January 2017				Next »
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 * 9:00 am Choir Rehearsals * 10:30 am Worship Service * 11:40 am First Sunday Visitors Circle	2	3	4 * 7:30 pm Evening Meditation	5 * 7:00 pm Board of Trustee's Meeting	6	7
8 * 9:00 am Choir Rehearsals * 10:30 am Worship Service	9	10 * 11:00 am Adult RE	11 * 3:00 pm Pastoral Care Committee * 7:00 pm ARMCA * 7:30 pm Evening Meditation	12	13	14
15 * 9:00 am Choir Rehearsals * 10:30 am Worship Service * 12:00 pm Church Bookstore Open * 12:15 pm SGM Info Session	16 * 12:00 pm Elder Meeting	17	18 * 12:00 pm Elder Meeting * 7:30 pm Evening Meditation	19 * 7:00 pm Worship Committee	20	21 * 6:00 pm ARMCA Movie Night
22 * 9:00 am Choir Rehearsals * 10:30 am Worship Service * 12:15 pm Peace and Justice Action Team	23	24	25	26	27	28 * 1:00 pm Tentative Facility Rental
29 * 9:00 am Choir Rehearsals * 10:30 am Worship Service	30	31				