



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

**January 2018**

**THE  
FLAMING  
CHALICE**

**Sunday Worship, 10:30am**

**Church Office Hours**  
**Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday**  
**9:30am – 2:30pm**

22577 Bayview Avenue  
Hayward, CA 94541  
510-581-2060  
[www.starrking.org](http://www.starrking.org)

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DRE Office Hours:  
Wednesday and Thursday,  
10:30am – 2:30pm

**Newsletter**  
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January Theme: Mindfulness & Spiritual Renewal

**January 7: O Star of Wonder!**

*Rev. María Cristina*

We all need a little magic in our lives, especially at times when we are waiting for a signal, perhaps searching the night sky for answers. Inspired by the narrative of the Magi/Three Kings, we reflect upon our spiritual journeys and the mystical signs that brought us to new places.

**January 14: Honoring the Legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

*Rev. María Cristina*

As we enter into a new year, we recommit ourselves to the work of building the beloved community.

**January 21: Movement**

*Guest Becky Leyser*

What has the #MeToo movement taught us about relating to others? How can we use this information to support our social justice work? What does it mean to begin again after so many women have come forward to name their experience?

**January 28: We Begin Again in Love**

*Rev. María Cristina*

Reflections on forgiveness as self-care and spiritual renewal.

## What's Inside

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From our Rev. María Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa:

**Wishing you time in the New Year  
To embrace your whole beautiful self,  
To celebrate your journeys,  
To nourish your creativity,  
To reimagine possibilities,  
To reaffirm your true calling,  
To reach out when it gets tough and lonely,  
To bring good medicine into your heart  
in the form of forgiveness, compassion,  
letting go, humility, and laughter.  
To trust that you deserve unconditional love,  
To know that you are loved,  
To feel that you are loved,  
You are loved,  
You are loved,  
You are loved!**

## Welcome to our New Friends

Hello again and warm welcomes from our beloved community! If you visited us in December for Las Posadas, Winter Solstice, Christmas Eve, or just to find out what we're all about: please know that we would be so happy to see you again.

Our congregation's regular Sunday worship is informal, friendly, and eclectic: sometimes quiet, sometimes loud, but always musical – we do like to sing. There's almost always laughing and applause, but sometimes there are tears. We welcome people of all abilities, ages, races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, and creeds. We welcome you!

For more information about visiting us again, please enjoy [exploring our website](#) or [get in touch](#) with any questions you might have.

# 2018 Intentions

*Having an intention is not wishing or hoping something will happen. And it's different from a goal or expectation. When you set an intention you let go of your timetable or report card that measures whether you've passed or failed. You are simply inclining your mind toward a particular vision. Then you make a heartfelt decision to do what you can to bring it about.* James Baraz, meditation teacher

What are your intentions as a member of Starr King this year? Here are some ideas:

- Spend some time thinking and writing about the UU [Seven Principles](#). Bonus points for memorizing them!
- Join the community on Facebook. You can follow our [official page](#) (and write a review!) but also remember to join the [members' page](#) where we share photos and chat.
- Ready to rev up your social justice action in 2018? Reach out to Frank (frank.burton.now@gmail.com) to get on the Peace and Justice Action Team mailing list for opportunities to serve.
- Donate a bit of your time to one of the [committees](#). They will be over the moon!
- Make practical plans, like filling out the [Life Crisis Form](#) so we can help you in case of an emergency.
- And try something new! You might be surprised by how much you enjoy meditation, drumming, or improv.

## Try Something New: Ongoing Activities

Choir Practice	Meets every Sunday from 9:15 – 10:15am in the Social Hall
Church Bookstore	Open on the third Sunday of the month, after the service
Drum Circle	First Friday of the month, 7 – 9pm, in the Sanctuary. For adults and mature kids.
Evening Meditation	Every Wednesday, 7:30 – 8:45pm. Open to all.
Elderberries	Third Wednesday of the month, at noon. For self-identified elders. Bring your lunch.
Small Group Ministry	Contact <a href="mailto:sgm@starrking.org">sgm@starrking.org</a> for more information.
SKIT Improv Troupe	Second Thursday of the month, 7:30pm. Open to all.

## Board Report, December 2017

We hope everyone had very happy holidays!

The December 10th Las Posadas evening was a tremendous success: great food, great company, lots of new faces, song, and laughter. Probably the most fun part was watching the kids (young and old) dressing up for the event and listening to the singing. Everyone who came is excited about making this an annual event. Congratulations to Reverend Maria Cristina on a great idea!

For those of you who don't get up to the cottages, there is one missing. Ornea Cottage had a lot of structural issues, and it was decided that the cost of repairs would not be justified. The cottage was an important classroom for years when we had more children. We may need more space in years to come, but the future is difficult to fathom. This is a good time to look at our space in new ways and think about what our needs may be. Please look at the grounds and consider our long-term vision.

One driving vision we have is for social justice. This is reflected in our efforts with the upcoming "Beloved Conversations" workshops, our efforts to create a just society, and to treat all with respect. The humanistic values represented in our mission statement also include a mandate to preserve nature and the goal of finding meaning in this wonderful merry-go-round we call life. The [mission statement](#), [principles](#), and purposes are found in our order of service every week. Few of us know the words by heart but we all know and share the sentiments they embody. We have been challenged to explore those words and see if they truly represent us. We on the Board and Com would like to hear from you on these words and sentiments: do they strike a chord and give you purpose or do they need a change?

The old year is about done and 2018 will bring many changes. The Board is working on those nuts and bolts issues that keep the organization going and Com is wrestling with keeping us focused on our true goals. All of us in the congregation have a lot to be proud of as we look back on 2017 and realize that 2018 is both a challenge and an opportunity. May the new year live up to its promise!





# From the Minister

## Grace and Miracles



On the evening of December 10th, we gathered to celebrate our first Las Posadas at Starr King UU Church. The invitations had been sent out, the songs had been rehearsed, and the food and hot chocolate awaited hungry pilgrims. We had no idea if people would show up. How would this new tradition be received? And slowly, as the sun went down, more and more people arrived. As I was lighting the luminarias by the entrance, a couple came through the gates and excitedly announced that they were neighbors and wanted to join us to learn more about Las Posadas and to be in community. As it got darker, we lit our candles and what a sight to see children of all ages donning angel and shepherd costumes! As we processed towards the first house up the hill, at one point I looked back and saw this magical vision of dozens of people walking together and singing by candlelight.

We arrived at the first house and were greeted by an "angry inn keeper" and his ferocious miniature dachshund Brutus. In response to our impassioned plea for shelter, they sent us away and we responded by singing "Paz, queremos paz, y libertad en este mundo!" "Peace, we want peace, and liberty in this world!" We walked to the second house where once again we were turned away by the inn keepers. As we were preparing to walk to the third house, a family of three: mother and children, stood in the doorway, marveling at the sight and smiling. We made an impromptu stop and without a second thought, performed our songs and connected with this family. We hugged, exchanged greetings and blessings, and invited them over to church for dinner. This was the spirit of Las Posadas where no one remained a stranger.

We returned to church where the doors were opened wide for all and everyone was welcomed to enjoy more music, delicious food, and a piñata filled with candy for the children. The fellowship hall exuded hospitality and warmth. My heart was overwhelmed with gratitude and joy and I was moved to tears as I witnessed the miracle of beloved community in the making. I enjoyed singing Christmas carols and was especially grateful to meet our neighbors and to get to know Grace and her daughter Milagro, who is a gifted piano player.

Beloveds, in describing the spirit of Las Posadas, I would say that the evening was blessed by the grace of the community and the miracle of love. Together, we lit up the night, we sang with fervor and conviction of peace and liberty, a communal prayer that traveled beyond our walls to reach all who are in search of sanctuary. Our beautiful faces were illuminated by the light of the stars and the hope in our hearts for a more compassionate and loving world. As Unitarian Universalists, we gathered in the spirit of radical hospitality to express our solidarity with all seeking refuge.

We opened the doors of our hearts and our church to let in the light and the warmth of new friends.

May the Spirit of Las Posadas bless us with grace and shine bright in our hearts throughout this new year. Now more than ever, we need to be the miracle workers and keep building the beloved community. Let us work together to keep the doors of our hearts open! Let us keep singing of peace and liberty for all! Let us keep loving without borders!



With Infinite Gratitude and Love, Rev. María Cristina



# Mystery Dinner Fundraiser

**Saturday February 24 at 6:00 PM**  
**Sunday February 25 at 3:00PM**

Our own playwright Glen Jacobs wants to get the word out about his exciting new mystery dinner fundraising event:

## **THE MYSTERY OF THE HOUSE OF DANGEROUS SQUIRRELS**

### **Okay, what's this all about?**

A fun show with unusual characters in a funny and entertaining story. Glen plays Tab Geller, a sort of Indiana Jones type world explorer who comes home to his family. He brings with him a certain amount of mystery - and danger! He has many enemies, some of the supernatural variety. There will be some adversity for this family, which they will face in unexpected ways. So it's about love, hope, loss, killer squirrels, and sandwiches. Lots of sandwiches...

### **Will it be okay for kids?**

As always, that depends on the kids. The play is done in the style of a soap opera. There is some talk of affairs and questionable parentage. We would rate it "PG."

### **Who's in it?**

Many of our favorite actors will be back, such as Stuart Fink and Mary Lasack, along with some stand-outs from our last play, Guadalupe Middleton and Bob Simoni. Plus some new faces like Emily Watkins and our own Rev. María Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa!

### **Do you need help?**

Yes, we need volunteers to help prepare food, set up, clean up, take tickets, etc. Daryl Ray has volunteered to be bartender again.

Please see Glen at church or contact him through email if you would like to help. We will also put out a signup sheet in the Fellowship Hall. Glen's email: [capspriff@sbcglobal.net](mailto:capspriff@sbcglobal.net)

**Tickets will be \$25**  
**Come one, come all:**  
**for fun! for food! for funds!**



# RE Reflections

January Theme: New Beginnings

Featured Faith Tradition: Buddhism

Happy New Year! I find it helpful at this time to reflect on the year that has ended, to let go of what was negative, and to set a positive intention for the year ahead. It is an opportunity to forgive ourselves for mistakes we have made, learn from them, and move forward.

Sometimes we have to begin again to get where we are meant to be. The life of the Buddha is a prime example of the power of new beginnings. Siddhartha's father, the king, attempted to control his son's fate by keeping him sequestered in the palace, removed from worldly suffering. When Siddhartha escaped from his confines and discovered the true nature of suffering, he felt compelled to run away and figure out for himself how to overcome it. Thus, he began a journey that led him to become the great holy man he was destined to be and to discover the path to enlightenment.



Excerpt from the [Story of the Life of Buddha](#), Tapestry of Faith Building Bridges Curriculum

When Siddhartha was born, a wise man predicted, "If the prince remains in the royal household, he will become a great king. But if he leaves the household, he will find Truth and become a great holy man." King Suddodana envisioned Siddhartha as a holy man: giving up all worldly possessions, a wandering teacher with a begging bowl. That was not the life he wanted for his only son, so he surrounded his son with everything he would ever need or want.

When he was 29, Siddhartha left the palace to explore. On his journey, he encountered old age, illness and death for the first time. He could not understand the purpose of such suffering.

Finally he met a holy man in saffron robes. The prince asked, "Who are you?" The man replied, "I am a monk, a seeker of Truth, of life over death. To find it, I have given up everything on this earth." Siddhartha decided he must do the same if he was to find peace.

He spent the next six years living as an ascetic. Asceticism taught that the way to Truth was to deny the body. Ascetics denied themselves food and comfort and lived as hermits. Yet, after six years, Siddhartha felt no closer to the Truth. He decided that Truth was not to be found in extreme circumstances or by denying the body, but through the mind and the heart. From that day forward, he chose to follow a middle path of moderation.

After six years of seeking, one day Siddhartha came to a bodhi tree and sat down beneath it, vowing not to leave until he knew the Truth of how to conquer suffering and death. While meditating and searching his heart, he came to understand how he was connected to all life, and how to conquer suffering and death. He had become the Buddha—the awakened one.

# Adult Religious Education

January Session: Governance & Decision Making at SKUU  
21 January, 2018 noon – 2pm in the Sanctuary

*The meaning of freedom and tolerance is revealed more clearly by the way people behave than by the generalizations they utter. — Conrad Wright, Unitarian Universalist historian*

In our earlier sessions in the fall, we learned from each other about our experiences in a variety of faith traditions. Just as each of them has a different set of values, traditions, practices, and rituals that form the basis for congregational life, so do each of them operate differently when it comes to structure, administration, and governance.

This session will give us a chance to:

- Hear more about how/why Starr King Unitarian Church was founded
- Learn about changes over the years
- Discuss what it means to be a “free church”
- Learn how our congregational polity differs from those of other faith traditions
- Explore the spiritual underpinnings of our structure and what it means to be a covenant church
- Learn how we are part of and supported by the Unitarian Universalist Associations

You may be interested in reading the short one-page information on:

[Background on Congregational Polity](#) and [Covenant as Promise](#)

## Planning for Future Adult RE

At our January meeting we will establish our priorities for the year by reviewing the topics that you said were of interest to you. These included: further exploration of our UU history, our place in contemporary society, and health related topics such as Dementia, Cognitive Problems with Alzheimer’s Disease, Advocating for Yourself with your Physician, Getting the Most out of your Health Care Provider Visit, and the End of Life Option Act in California.

Many of us have worked and worshipped in environments that were “top-down” in nature. This way is not consistent with our views of fairness and justice and the values of our UU tradition. In her book *Women’s Way of Knowing*, Margaret Wheatly started a conversation about different styles of leadership describing the power of collaboration and consensus building and decision making. Similarly, Juana Bordas in her book, *Salsa, Soul, and Spirit: Leadership for a Multicultural Age*, addresses new approaches to leadership from Latino, Black, and American Indian Communities. We have asked Rev. María Cristina to lead us in discussing leadership from this new perspective. Yes, we will dance the Salsa and make salsa!



## Future Spring Sessions

February 25: **Membership - "Signing the Book."** When you "Signed the Book" signifying your joining SKUUC and all UUs across the world, what did it mean to you then? What's changed? How we each perceive the rights, responsibilities, and joys of membership at Starr King.

March 25: **Unitarian, Universalists and Unitarian Universalists.** Beginning discussion of the American roots of our tradition, how it's changed over time, and its relevance to us and the greater community in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Diane Meyerson, Kathryn LaMar, Shelia McClellan, Ethel May Shaw, and Mileva Saulo Lewis

## Announcements

### UU Class Conversations Workshop

The UU Class Conversations workshop that was postponed in October because of the Northern California wildfires has now been rescheduled. The new date is February 10. If you registered in October and did not request a refund after the cancellation, you are still on the registration and do not need to register or pay again.

- Saturday, February 10, 2018, 10 - 4:30pm
- UU Church of Berkeley, 1 Lawson Street., Kensington
- Refreshments and registration open at 9:30 a.m.
- Workshop includes lunch (vegan and gluten-free options provided)
- Childcare available if requested in advance
- Sliding scale \$20-50, no one turned away if cannot afford to pay

This is the first all-day workshop open to congregational members to be held on the West Coast. If you would like to register you can do so [online here](#).

### Volunteers Needed

The winter shelter at SHP (South Hayward Parish) opens 12/1 through 4/30 and volunteers are needed to wash towels, sheets, and blankets. Questions? Contact Ralph Morales at [510-785-3663](tel:510-785-3663).

### Save the Date for Oregon Shakespeare Festival

Annual trip to the [Oregon Shakespeare Festival](#), April 6-7, 2018. Details will be coming out soon. Contact: [terriowen\\_07@yahoo.com](mailto:terriowen_07@yahoo.com)

*"Crowns in my purse I have, and goods at home,  
And so am come abroad to see the world."*

## WhaleCoast Alaska 2018

Have you ever dreamed of visiting Alaska? If so, WhaleCoast Alaska 2018 is for you! Four Alaska UU fellowships invite you to experience our eco-cultural and spiritual program this summer.

See Alaska through the eyes of local UUs, with friendly homestays and unique tour activities. See wildlife, including moose, bears, caribou, whales, bald eagles, seals, and otters. Visit Denali National Park. Experience Native Alaskan culture. Forget the cruise ships - our program is the best way to visit Alaska!

Tours led by Dave Frey, member of the Fairbanks UU congregation and Alaska travel expert. Find out more about this Alaskan trip of a lifetime. For complete information go to: [www.WhaleCoastAK.org](http://www.WhaleCoastAK.org), email [dfrey@whalecoastak.org](mailto:dfrey@whalecoastak.org) or call 907-322-4966.

Discount for groups of 8 or more. We would love to share our Alaska with you!

## Raise Money for Starr King Register for eScrip and Shop Locally

We get 3% of your total purchases at:

- Lucky
- Food Maxx
- Save Mart
- Black Angus, 15800 Hesperian Boulevard, San Lorenzo
- Ghazni Afghan Kabobs, 1235 A Street, Hayward

To create an account at <http://www.escrip.com>, choose "Starr King Unitarian Church" as the non-profit to receive benefits, and enter the phone number(s) you have linked with your Lucky Rewards account.

If you don't have a Lucky Rewards account, create it here:

<https://www.luckysupermarkets.com/rewards/my-rewards#Account>.

Then anytime you use that phone number when you make your purchase at Lucky, Starr King will get credit.

## January Birthdays

5 Sherman Lewis  
7 Roy Dickerson  
7 Steve Blake  
11 Walt Korus  
13 Jay Durant

13 Doris Haskell  
16 Beverly Powell  
16 Mary Swain  
16 Ethel-May Shaw  
18 Sophiana Carrell

19 Allison Prout  
20 Emily Watkins  
24 Mileva Saulo-Lewis  
25 Debbie Frederick  
30 Ben Matthews



# Starr King Church Calendar

For details about these activities, go to [www.starrking.org/calendar](http://www.starrking.org/calendar) and hover your cursor over an event.

January 2018						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> 6:30pm Rainbow Group LGBT NA	<b>2</b> 8am Office Opens after holidays  1pm Executive Committee	<b>3</b> 7:15pm SGM  7:30pm Evening Meditation	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 10am Safety Committee  7pm Drumming Circle	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> 10:30am Worship Service  11:40am Visitor's Circle  1:50pm Choir Practice	<b>8</b> 6:30pm Rainbow Group LGBT NA	<b>9</b> 7pm White Racial Literacy Group	<b>10</b> 12pm Staff Meeting  3pm Pastoral Care Committee  7pm Committee Council Meeting  7:30pm Evening Meditation	<b>11</b> 7:30pm SKIT	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> 10:30am Worship Service  12:15 Peace and Justice Action Team  1:50pm Choir	<b>15</b> 6:30pm Rainbow Group LGBT NA	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 7pm RE Council  7:15pm SGM  7:30pm Evening Meditation	<b>18</b> 7pm White Racial Literacy Group	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 8am Private Rental, Lewis Room
<b>21</b> 10:30am Worship Service  12pm Church Bookstore Open  12pm Adult RE  1:50pm Choir  3pm Play Rehearsal	<b>22</b> 6:30pm Rainbow Group LGBT NA	<b>23</b> 1pm Executive Committee	<b>24</b> 12pm SGM  7:30pm Evening Meditation	<b>25</b> 7pm ARMCA	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> 8am Private Rental, Lewis Room
<b>28</b> 10:30am Worship Service  1:50pm Choir  3pm Play Rehearsal	<b>29</b> 6:30pm Rainbow Group LGBT NA	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 7:30pm Evening Meditation			