



Newsletter

*Starr King
Unitarian Universalist
Church of
Hayward, California*

February 2018

THE FLAMING CHALICE

Sunday Worship, 10:30am

February Theme: Love



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

22577 Bayview Avenue
Hayward, CA 94541
510-581-2060
www.starrking.org

Parish Minister

Rev. María Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa
minister@starrking.org

Office Administrator

Kelli Abatangelo
office@starrking.org

Church President

Will Fitch
president@starrking.org

Director of Religious Exploration

Allison Prout
dre@starrking.org
DRE Office Hours:
Wednesday and Thursday,
10:30am – 2:30pm

Newsletter

newsletter@starrking.org

February 4: Love is My Religion

Rev. María Cristina

Join us as we explore Love as a guiding force in both the Sikh and Unitarian Universalist tradition.

February 11: Lovingkindness

Rev. María Cristina

Inspired by the work of Sharon Salzberg, we reflect on the Buddhist spiritual path of Lovingkindness as "the liberation of the heart which is love."

February 18: The Spiritual Practice of Smiling

Guest Rev. Barbara Meyers

Come and explore how a simple smile can be a very powerful practice for body and soul.

February 25: Love Stories

Rev. María Cristina

We are invited to share our love stories and to celebrate all kinds of love through music and poetry.

What's Inside

Sunday Services, 1
Welcome, 2
MLK Celebration Photos, 3
Ongoing Activities, 4
Board Report, 4
From the Minister, 5

Mystery Dinner, 7
RE Reflections, 8
Adult RE, 9
Announcements, 10 and 11
Birthdays, 12
Calendar, 13

From our Rev. María Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa:

“Let us be at peace with our bodies and our minds.
Let us return to ourselves and become wholly ourselves.
Let us be aware of the source of being,
common to us all and to all living things.
Evoking the presence of the Great Compassion,
let us fill our hearts with our own compassion—
towards ourselves and towards all living beings.
Let us pray that we ourselves cease to be
the cause of suffering to each other.
With humility, with awareness of the existence of life,
and of the suffering that are going on around us,
let us practice the establishment of peace in our hearts and on
earth.”



Welcome to our New Friends

Hello again and warm welcomes from our beloved community! If you visited us recently: 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 Martin Luther King Celebration Photos



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 sgm@starrking.org for more information.
SKIT Improv Troupe	Second Thursday of the month, 7:30pm. Open to all.

Board Report, January 2018

For those of you who weren't at the Martin Luther King Day Gathering at Hayward City Hall, it was a powerful experience. Terri Owen has been the chief organizer of this march for many years and once again the turnout filled the square and the march inspired those we passed in cars and on the sidewalks. Our church was joined by others in the South Hayward Parish in both celebration of how far we have come and the determination to achieve the changes that are so sorely needed. We had many speakers including our minister, the mayor, and Frank Burton who has been working tirelessly to promote the "Poor People's Campaign." The overriding message is that we believe in "the inherent worth and dignity of every person."

The previous Sunday we had an opportunity to view Naomi Klein's documentary about climate change, corporate overreach, income inequality, but more importantly about a new way of looking at our world history that might allow our grandkids a chance to reach old age. We are in the planning stages for our Earth Day events, and we would appreciate your ideas, input and energy on this key event for our congregation. If there is an overriding message it is "respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part."

The board is continuing to work on the "nuts and bolts" of the church business with a focus on living up to our Mission Statement and the Unitarian Principles and Purposes. We have met recently, both together and in small groups to find better ways to serve the church and form stronger bonds. Will Fitch and Jennifer Koney have devoted a lot of time and energy to both leading our efforts and learning from the diverse group that is our board. They truly represent the words "Justice, equity and compassion in human relations".

For those of you who got here early Sunday, January 14, we played host to an Owl group of youths and their chaperones. They were a great group of kids and this is just one step to creating greater cooperation between congregations. On the weekend of January 26th, we are doing the "Beloved Conversations" workshop with Mt. Diablo UU church; we hope you had a chance to attend this event which promotes "the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all."



From the Minister

Beloved Conversations



The topic of communication has been very present during meetings of the Board of Trustees, the Committee on Ministry, and during the recent Adult RE class addressing congregational polity. We are constantly being challenged to reflect upon language, on the ways we communicate with each other, and on the impact of our words on the fabric of our community. Unlike other organizations, we are a community of individuals who have chosen to be in a covenantal relationship. The old adage “sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never break me” does not reflect the reality of painful interactions. Words can indeed hurt and break the trust in our relationships. One way we try to remind ourselves of the impact our words can have, is to recite the chalice lighting that says: “Love is the spirit of this church and service its gift. This is our great covenant: To dwell together in peace, to speak the truth in love, and to help one another.” Sometimes our egos or our own perception of an issue might get in the way of loving communication. Some of us are familiar with Nonviolent Communication (NVC) which teaches us that when no violence is present in our hearts, we can dwell in the natural state of compassion.



NVC assumes that we are all compassionate by nature and that violent strategies—whether verbal or physical—are learned behaviors taught and supported by the prevailing culture. The practice of NVC helps us to increase understanding and deepen our connections. In addition, the relatively new term “microaggression” makes us aware of the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership. While microaggressions are generally discussed

from the perspective of race and racism any marginalized group in our society may become targets: people of color, women, LGBT persons, those with disabilities, religious minorities, and so on have found greater authenticity in their communication, increased understanding, deepening connection and conflict resolution.

According to Dr. Derald Wing Sue:

“...The most detrimental forms of microaggressions are usually delivered by well-intentioned individuals who are unaware that they have engaged in harmful conduct toward a socially devalued group. These everyday occurrences may on the surface appear quite harmless, trivial, or be described as “small slights,” but research indicates they have a powerful impact upon the psychological well-being of marginalized groups and affect their standard of living by creating inequities in health care, education, and employment.

What Do Microaggressions Say About Us?

Racial, gender, and sexual orientation microaggressions are active manifestations and/or a reflection of our worldviews of inclusion/exclusion, superiority/inferiority, normality/abnormality, and desirability/undesirability. Microaggressions reflect the active manifestation of oppressive worldviews that create, foster, and enforce marginalization. Because most of us consciously experience ourselves as good, moral and decent human beings, the realizations



that we hold a biased world view is very disturbing; thus we prefer to deny, diminish or avoid looking at ourselves honestly. Yet, research suggests that none of us are immune from inheriting the racial, gender, and sexual orientation biases of our society. We have been socialized into racist, sexist and heterosexist attitudes, beliefs and behaviors. Much of this is outside the level of conscious awareness, thus we engage in actions that unintentionally oppress and discriminate against others.”



So, if we are all products of our society and inherit these biases that might unintentionally hurt someone, how can we work on creating more awareness about the ways we communicate and how do we hold each other accountable as members of a covenantal community? We at Starr King UU Church strive to live into and practice our Covenant of Right Relations which states in part:

“In the covenantal tradition of Unitarian Universalism, we strive to build our religious community on a foundation of kindness, understanding and tolerance, and to be guided by our principles in all our actions and interactions... To foster a community of respect, we will speak kindly of one another and to one another, and should difficulties arise between or among us, we will speak directly to those concerned with the goal of reconciliation. We will not engage in harmful gossip and we will urge others to resolve difficulties directly with the person/s concerned...”

This weekend some of us will participate in the Beloved Conversations retreat with our sister congregation, the Mt. Diablo UU Church in Walnut Creek. Beloved Conversations: Meditations on Race and Ethnicity is now serving more than 140 UU, Jewish and Quaker congregations across the United States. Using a small-group ministry format, the curriculum creates a supportive space for congregants to talk about their own experiences, while identifying places where growth is necessary. As an instrument of faith formation, it offers participants a chance to rediscover the sacred and important presence of compassion, grace, risk-taking, vulnerability, and the healing joy when cross-racial relationships are reconciled. The initial retreat is followed by 8 sessions at our own church to continue exploring the topics offered by the curriculum. Our hope is that over time, we can engage the entire congregation in the Beloved Conversations program, a resource to help us live into our covenant of right relations and to help us practice speaking our truths with a compassionate and loving heart.

Beloveds, may we honor each other and our congregational covenant with loving words and deeds. May our words express the deep commitment we each have for building the Beloved Community. May we offer each other the gift of grace, compassion, and forgiveness when we fall short of our aspirations to abide by our covenant of good relations.

With Much Gratitude and Love,

Rev. Maria Cristina



Mystery Dinner Fundraiser

Saturday, February 24 at 6pm
Sunday, February 25 at 3pm

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

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



RE Reflections

February Theme: Love

Featured Faith Tradition: Sikh

A View of Another Liberal Religious Tradition

On January 7, 2018, I had the honor to experience a Three Kings' Day Service at Eden United Church in Hayward. As you may know, I have been trying to establish a relationship with our liberal religious faith neighbors with an eye towards combining youth programs. In the Fall of 2017, we held monthly youth group activities which culminated in a fieldtrip to Eden UCC for their annual Dia de Tres Reyes festivities.

The service was lovely and geared towards all ages. They held a "children's service" which was similar to our "time for all ages" in which the children's minister told the story of the three kings' journey to Bethlehem to see the newborn king. The children paraded around the perimeter of the church following a star held by the reverend. They were given stars & coloring packets to keep them entertained through the remainder of the service.

Their service was performed both in English and in Spanish. As a multilinguist, I enjoyed hearing the Spanish alongside the English both spoken and written in the order of service. The speaker was a DACA recipient and member of their congregation who spoke eloquently and movingly on her mixed experiences trying to succeed in America. We are aligned politically.

What was new and different for me was experiencing the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Surprisingly, all were invited to come forward to receive a blessing regardless of membership in their congregation or that of any other church. I liked the inclusive atmosphere of the ceremony. According to their identity statement, "they are a community of people who understand their sharing of bread and wine in Jesus' name to be a representation of God's feast for all people."

In comparing their identity statement with our principles, it becomes clear that we are more alike than different. The main difference is that they "Proclaim Jesus Christ as their guide to the realm of God," while we rely on our UU seven sources for spiritual guidance.

Still, they "Recognize the faithfulness of other people who have other names for their gateway to God's realm, and invite all sorts and conditions of people to join in our worship and in our common life as full partners." Or, they respect the inherent worth and dignity of all people.

Other beliefs that connect UCC to Universal Unitarianism are the desire not to impose strict dogmatic beliefs on others and to work for justice and peace in the world. They think that:

- The way we treat one another is more important than the way we express our beliefs.
- There is more grace in the search for meaning than in absolute certainty, in the questions than in the answers.

Amen!



Adult Religious Education

February Session: Membership; “Signing the Book” and Hospitality

February 25, 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

This is the last session in a series entitled, **The New UU**. Each of us came to the decision to join Starr King UU Church after our own deliberative process. It may have meant something different to each of us to “Sign the Book” and to join UUs from all over the world. How did you perceive the rights, responsibilities of membership at Starr King? Would you be interested in knowing what the UUA considers those rights and responsibilities? What are the joys of membership? Has membership met your expectations? How can congregational life be strengthened? Bob Simoni, Chair of the Membership and Hospitality Committee will join us to tell us about the work of The Committee and how you can be a part of the journey of “newcomer” to “member.”

What Does it Mean to be White? Common Read Group

As a follow up to the “Developing White Racial Literacy Group” that met in January and February, we have now formed a common read group to discuss the book “What Does It Mean to Be White? Developing White Racial Literacy” by Robin Di Angelo.

This monthly discussion group will begin on Monday, February 12, 7 to 8:30pm in the conference room and we will be discussing the Introduction section. We will continue to meet monthly the second Monday of each month from 7 to 8:30pm in the conference room. Please join us!

We encourage everyone who is interested to join us and please try to read the section being discussed beforehand so we can have richer discussions.

For more information, please contact Jennifer Koney, jkoney@comcast.net.

Future Spring Sessions

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 21st 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 9:30am
- Workshop includes lunch (vegan and gluten-free options provided)
- Childcare available if requested in advance
- Sliding scale \$20 to \$50, no one turned away you 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](#).

Family Game Night

You and your family are invited to our 1st PFLAG Game night. We will bring the games, and you can invite some friends.

- When: February 12, 2018 (Monday)
- Where: 27287 Patrick Avenue Hayward, CA 94544 (Across the street from Weeks Park Library)
- Time: 6:30pm to 9pm
- Please R.S.V.P. to Vickiy Gonzales (vickiygonzales2@gmail.com)

Let's make this event as successful as you are!!! Refreshments will be served.

Annual Women and Religion Pacific Central District Women's Retreat

The annual retreat is coming up on March 8 to 11, 2018. All self-identified women are welcome to join us for a calming respite from our busy lives. Usually held at a retreat center near Napa that was severely damaged in October by the wildfires, this year they will meet at the Anubhuti Center in Novato. Anubhuti is a contemplative retreat center run by Brahma Kumaris, the largest spiritual organization in the world led by women. Our retreat offers something for everyone: delicious meals; workshops for mind, body, and spirit; conversations with new and old friends; time for quiet contemplation; and a boutique, silent auction, and book swap. To learn more about Women and Religion and the retreat, visit our website at <http://womenandreligionpcd.org>. To register, click on "Home" then "Register for the 2018 Retreat" where you can download the printable form. **This year registration will be by MAIL ONLY**, so you will need to print out the registration form, complete it and mail it in with your check to the address on the form. Invite a friend!

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, email dfrey@whalecoastak.org or call 907-322-4966. Discount for groups of 8 or more. We would love to share our Alaska with you!

Save the Date for Oregon Shakespeare Festival

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

Pacific Western Region Justice Journey: Roots, Reflections and Relationships - An Environmental Justice Journey.

A week long immersion experience focusing on Environmental Sustainability through service, learning, and through a meditation practice. The event will be Saturday night, July 14 to Sunday afternoon, July 22, 2018 at Throop UU Church (300 S. Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena, CA). Cost is \$550.00 per person for 8 days. All meals, lodging at the church, local transportation. (Air and ground Transportation to the Throop Church is not included.)

To register: <https://register.pwruua.org/event-registrations/pwr-mission-trip/> or contact: Katie Covey, PWR Mission Trip Lead at katiecovey@gmail.com.

For more information visit <https://www.uua.org/pacific-western/calendar/pswd/rore2-pwr-justices-journey?month=2018-07>

New T-Shirt/Sweatshirt Order

To order a T-shirt or sweatshirt with the new artwork that says "Side With Love," contact Mary Lou Schuler at mlwschuler@gmail.com or talk with her at church.

Volunteers Needed

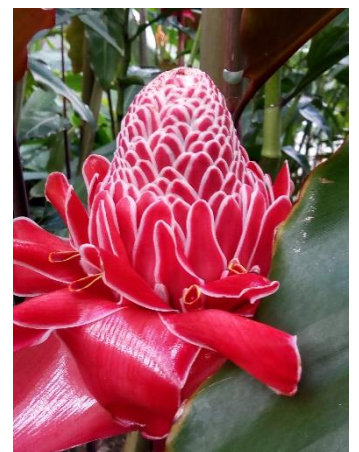
The winter shelter at SHP (South Hayward Parish) opens through April 30, and volunteers are needed to wash towels, sheets, and blankets. Questions? Contact Ralph Morales at [510-785-3663](tel:510-785-3663).

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

In 2017 we earned \$205 with nine participants just doing their ordinary shopping at participating locations. If only half of our members signed up we could earn \$2,500! That's as much as the budget for several different committees. We get 3% of your total purchases at: Lucky, Food Maxx, Save Mart, Black Angus (15800 Hesperian Boulevard, San Lorenzo), and Ghanzi Afghan Kabobs (1235 A Street, Hayward).

To create an account at 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: 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.



Happy Birthday to Mileva Saulo Lewis who turned 80 in January!



February Birthdays

4 Kelli Abatangelo
5 René L. Castle
8 Ellery Medilla
8 Andy Hansen
12 Kirk Klausmeyer

13 Bill DeSmidt
16 Heidi Green
19 Meredith Schuler
19 Alison Corson
21 Nancy Harrison

23 Byron Schatz
24 Eric Gable

Starr King Church Calendar

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

February 2018						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 * 7:00 pm Board of Trustee's	2 * 10:00 am Safety Committee * 7:00 pm Drumming Circle	3 * 3:00 pm Mystery Rehearsal
4 * 9:00 am Choir Practice * 10:30 am Worship Service * 11:40 am Visitor's Circle	5 * 6:30 pm Rainbow Group LGBT NA	6	7 * 7:15 pm SGM Evenings * 7:30 pm Evening Meditation	8 * 7:30 pm SKIT	9	10
11 * 9:00 am Choir Practice * 10:30 am Worship Service * 12:15 pm Peace and Justice Action Team * 3:00 pm Mystery Rehearsal	12 * 6:30 pm Rainbow Group LGBT NA * 7:00 pm White Racial Literacy Group	13 * 11:00 am Adult RE	14 * 12:00 pm Staff Meeting * 3:00 pm Pastoral Care Committee * 7:30 pm Evening Meditation	15	16	17 * 6:00 pm Game Night
18 * 9:00 am Choir Practice * 10:30 am Worship Service * 12:00 pm The New UU: Membership * 12:00 pm Church Bookstore Open	19 * 6:30 pm Rainbow Group LGBT NA	20 * 1:00 pm Executive Committee	21 * 7:15 pm SGM Evenings * 7:30 pm Evening Meditation	22	23	24 * 6:00 pm Mystery Dinner
25 * 9:00 am Choir Practice * 10:30 am Worship Service * 3:00 pm Mystery Dinner	26 * 6:30 pm Rainbow Group LGBT NA	27	28 * 12:00 pm SGM Daytime * 7:30 pm Evening Meditation			

Save the date! 3-10

Canvass Supper - Saturday, March 10. A celebration of our shared community. Details to follow soon. Meanwhile, please mark your calendars and plan to attend. (Questions? Contact Stephanie Smith)