



# The Flaming Chalice

Spiritual growth in a theologically diverse community

Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church | September 2019 Newsletter

## Church Office Hours

Tuesdays, Wednesdays,  
and Thursdays  
9:30am – 2:30pm

To meet with the minister for pastoral  
care or discuss congregation life,  
please contact Rev. María Cristina  
on Monday, Tuesday and  
Wednesday for an appointment.

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[starrking.org](http://starrking.org)

[facebook.com/StarrKingChurch](https://facebook.com/StarrKingChurch)

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10:30am – 2:30pm

## Newsletter

[newsletter@starrking.org](mailto:newsletter@starrking.org)

Sunday Worship, 10:30am

## September Theme: Belonging



### SEPTEMBER 1

#### Protest, Resistance, and Empowerment

Join us for our annual Labor Day Sunday Service. We will lift our spirits with the poetry and music of liberation that inspires us in our struggle to stop the growth of hate and empowers us to promote a world where compassion is wedded to power.

– Bob Britton



### SEPTEMBER 8

#### Coming Home Like Rivers to the Sea

Join us as we gather for our annual Water Ceremony to welcome another year together and recommit ourselves to our shared spiritual journeys and ministries. Created in 1980 by two Unitarian Universalist women—Carolyn McDade and Lucile Schuck Longview—they considered water as more than simply a metaphor; that water is elemental, evoking feelings of awe and reverence. Today, this ritual speaks to our connectedness to one another, the totality of life, and our commitment to environmental justice. We believe that Water is Life and a symbol of our solidarity with communities struggling to have access to clean water. You are invited to bring water from your favorite place (including your kitchen sink) for the ritual. – Rev. María Cristina



### SEPTEMBER 15

#### Who We Are: Our Liberal Faith Tradition

Unitarian Universalism is a liberal religious tradition that was formed from the consolidation of two religions: Unitarianism and Universalism. Both religions have long histories and have contributed important theological concepts that remain central to Unitarian Universalism. Since the merger of the two denominations in 1961, the UU Church has nurtured its Unitarian and Universalist heritages to provide a strong voice for social justice and liberal religion. – Rev. María Cristina



### SEPTEMBER 22

#### What We Believe: Diversity in Theology

UU is predominantly a faith of “come-inners,” who joined the church as adults, with a minority of “born-inners,” who were born or grew up as UUs. We may come from the faith tradition of our childhood, or none at all. Stories abound of UU congregants saying, “I was always a Unitarian Universalist, but didn’t know it,” or “I finally found a church community where I could express my beliefs and have them accepted.” Gatherings of newcomers express joy at finding a community of like-minded people. – Rev. María Cristina



### SEPTEMBER 29

#### Our Vision & Mission: Building the Beloved Community

The congregation's Vision, Mission, and Covenant process captures the people's sense of who they are and who they want to be as a religious community, and the results can help the congregation in all areas of its decision making. What should our priorities be? How should we spend our money? How should we treat one another in committee meetings, social gatherings, and the children's time? A clear and living Mission, Vision & Covenant can help answer these questions.

– Rev. María Cristina

## What's Inside

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## Bits from Your Board

### DID SOMEONE TURN ON THE LIGHTS?

You may have noticed a brighter sanctuary recently. How long did it take for you to see that the back wall and sliding doors have been painted the lighter color of the walls? Many thanks go to our painters and supporters (Allison Prout, Cara Prout, John Prout, Lorie Miller, and myself) for the bright new look.

Did you also notice our new and larger screen and projector? Those are the results of great ideas and long hours by Frank Burton, Rene and René Castle, Bob Breckenridge, and Beth Ogilvie. We'll be able to see the budget numbers projected in bold and bright numbers from now on!

Our ceiling fans have been a bit ornery lately. Thanks to Roy Dickerson, one has been repaired and we're working on the other one. We're off to a bright start in the sanctuary for our new church year!



Our next Board of Trustees meeting will be held **Thursday, September 5 from 7 – 9pm in the Fellowship Hall**. All are welcome and we'd love to have you visit us!

Our agenda items include: Reports from the Treasurer and Finance committee, next steps of the Strategic Visioning process, re-certifying as a Welcoming Congregation, updates from the Nominating, Safety, and Facility and Grounds committees, and giving gratuities to our hard-working grounds caretakers.

Come see what we're up to and we welcome your input and presence as we work together to help manifest our mission.

Those are the bits from your board this month!  
In gratitude for our beloved community – *Jennifer Koney*

# From the Minister

## **Beloveds,**

On Sunday, September 8 we will gather once again for our annual Water Ceremony. This ceremony calls us to honor the power of community, of individuals coming together like rivers to the sea, to form a collective committed to Justice. It is a calling that reminds us that we are united by our thirst for Justice, by our UU Principles and Congregational Covenant, and by our deep abiding unconditional Love for each other, our communities, and by our solidarity with all people who are suffering.

This Summer I was blessed with many opportunities to recharge energies and revitalize my commitment to continue building the Beloved Community among the good people of Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church in Hayward. From attending General Assembly, to visiting friends and family in Puerto Rico, to spending quiet time meditating by the ocean, and reading and reflecting in preparation for our new church year, I am grateful for all the ways I have experienced spiritual renewal.



It was powerful being in Puerto Rico right after a popular uprising successfully ousted the Governor after his homophobic and misogynistic comments became public. More than a million people from all walks of life took to the streets for 12 consecutive days demanding an end to corruption and forcing the Governor and many of his aides to resign. After Hurricane Maria which left more than 4,600 people dead and hundreds of thousands of homes destroyed, the people of Puerto Rico have said "Enough!" This little but mighty nation is such an inspiration! While in Puerto Rico I also got to attend two religious services with communities that made a big impression on me because of their commitment to social justice and every day practice of their values: The Church Without Walls and the Bahai Community. Last but not least, I had the honor of visiting SAGE Puerto Rico, the first community organization offering services and support to seniors from the LGBTQ+ communities through the ongoing support of Waves Ahead, Inc. So far, they have helped to rebuild 21 homes and offer free therapeutic services throughout the island. There may be a whole sermon series inspired by these experiences, so stay tuned!

Beloveds, I hope you have also been blessed by the love of family and friends, the beauty of nature, and the every day miracles that give us strength and joy for the journey. Strength to bear the loss of a loved one, to be a source of support for someone who is grieving, to be of help when someone is going through a difficult time, and to move forward even in the face of uncertainty, fear, and devastation. Strength to continue our efforts to denounce the inhuman treatment of immigrants and refugees being kept in cages and suffering the separation from their loved ones. And Joy to express gratitude for our friends and families and for the many gifts we receive from Mother Earth.

As we prepare to greet another year together:

May we be blessed with a renewed commitment to continue building a spiritual home that is a source of inspiration, strength, companionship, hope, and healing for us, our families, neighbors, and communities.

May we gather once again in Peace and Love to express gratitude and to share our joys, sorrows, and hopes.

I look forward to beginning another year of Shared Ministry with you!

**With Gratitude and Love,**  
Rev. María Cristina

## **Water**

by Philip Larkin

If I were called in  
To construct a religion  
I should make use of water.

Going to church  
Would entail a fording  
To dry, different clothes;

My liturgy would employ  
Images of sousing,  
A furious devout drench,

And I should raise in the  
east A glass of water  
Where any-angled light  
Would congregate endlessly.





“All the time, people talk about, ‘oh this animal is going to die, and that bird is going to die, and this butterfly is going extinct,’ and nobody thinks about the fact that these things eat and drink off plants. If you don't save the plants, you can't save the animals.”

– Mary Frances Kelly-Poh



# South Hayward Parish

## South Hayward Parish Is Facing a Crisis – Possible Solution Found

On June 14<sup>th</sup> the Board of SHP was notified that as of Dec 31<sup>st</sup>, we will lose our home at the Westminster Hills/New Bridges Outreach Center in Hayward.

Our landlord, and one of our founding member congregations, New Bridges Presbyterian (merged West Minster Hills/Mt Eden churches), must sell the property. They have supported SHP for years by allowing of the use of the space at a rent far below market value.

Since the merger which created New Bridges, they have been maintaining two very large campuses (their congregational home; and the Outreach Center). Now they need to sell the Outreach Center property, and we understand. We thank them for their support of the work of SHP over so many years.

Since our notice in June, the Board and Staff of SHP have been looking at various options which would allow us to continue our important work. It seems clear that renting a new space at market value would be out of reach for the resources of a small non-profit such as SHP. For this reason, the Board is exploring a strategic alliance with a larger organization (much as FESCO joined with La Familia a few years ago). With greater financial stability, this alliance would allow SHP to move forward and continue our important work.

These talks are ongoing and details cannot be shared at this time. The Board hopes that we will have definite news within the next month. The Board and Staff consider this alliance to be an exciting new chapter for SHP, and a solution to the crisis.

**We still need you!** SHP will continue to exist and we will continue to need your support, both spiritual and financial. Fundraising and our donor base will continue to be a major portion of our budget within this new framework. Likewise, all volunteers will continue.

With your help, this new plan should allow us to continue to feed the hungry, comfort the homeless and fight for social justice. We will be providing more details in the near future.





**South Hayward Parish Dinner and Auction  
Saturday, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 5pm  
Seeking Auction Items!**

The second annual SHP Dinner and Auction will be coming up in October. Last year's event was fun and raised money for SHP programs.

City Council member Francisco Zermeno will be our auctioneer this year. We will have a silent and not-so-silent auction, and enjoy a catered dinner.

**This is an off year for our SKUU auction, so perhaps you  
have something of value that you could donate.  
We are soliciting donations, and all ideas will be considered.**

If you have an idea, or would like to donate: please contact:  
Terri Owen, LavonHodges or Mileva Lewis

Thanks!



# Envisioning Our Future

**Sunday, September 29, 2019**  
**12:15pm to 2:15pm in the Sanctuary**

Earlier this year, members of the Starr King community met to share our values, the times when Starr King was at its best and what we dream about for our future. Our visioning was designed to help us **Discover** “our best moments” and to **Dream** about our desired future. The assumptions of our planning process are:



*Save the Date!*

- All the wisdom and skills needed to assess the past and present and to envision the future we want to create were in the room.
- There are many "right" pathways to reach a given point or end result.
- None of us has all the answers; we need each other's perspective of reality to get a better understanding of the whole.
- The future doesn't just happen. It results in large part from what we do or don't do today and every day.

You gave the Envisioning Team a lot of information to review and synthesize. In fact, you gave us 4,207 words! We will ask you to:

**Review the values that SKUUC members said guide us as Unitarian Universalists.** While we use the UU Seven Principles as guides, many come from other faith traditions or no faith tradition and have other language for values that resonates with them. Language matters. We'll ask you to review the numerous values you named and to identify those that most resonate with those that will serve as a guide or compass as we, as a spiritual community, choose the priorities for our ministry for the next two to three years.

**Review your Dreams in the following areas and choose your highest priorities:**

- **Building a Better World.** Working for justice, equity, and compassion in human affairs through prophetic witness and action.
- **Caring Community.** The warmth and care of our beloved community is one of our greatest strengths Caring Community
- **Family Ministry and RE.** Supporting our families and our children is a vital part of our mission. Adult RE – lifelong learning — is also a vibrant part of our mission. Learning keeps us alive, responsive, engaged.
- **Worship** is the single most important thing we do together. It's what distinguishes us from a support group, a social club, or a political action group. It's what makes us a church.



## Each one of us can

- Make a difference
- Learn from each other
- Pool our perceptions
- Join together to create our future

Even if you were not able to attend the earlier session, please join us on this important day in the life of our Beloved Community. Join us!

—Your Envisioning Team: Jennifer Koney, Beth Ogilvie, Teri Owen, Keith Lewis, Mileva Saulo Lewis, and the Rev. Dr. María Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa.



# RE Reflections

## Welcome to the new church year!!

I hope you had a restful and relaxing summer. It is so important to take time for yourself and those you love and to practice self-care. We are like batteries that run low on energy and need to be recharged or else we risk burning out. Taking playtime, downtime and family time (PDF) allows us to recharge our batteries and gets our creative juices flowing.

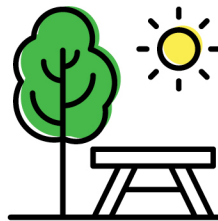
You don't have to spend a lot of money or go on a fancy vacation in order to re-energize. Go outside in nature and get in touch with the elements. Spend time together with loved ones and friends at a park or library. Simply slow down; take naps, get enough sleep and resist the urge to overschedule. Shift your focus from doing to being. Be kind to yourself.

**We all know that spending time outdoors is good for you on both a physical and mental level, but the benefits of spending time specifically at the beach have just been revealed.**

That incredible feeling of peace and calmness that you experience at the beach is now being referred to as "blue space." That's what scientists have dubbed the effect that the combination of soothing smells and sounds of water have on your brain. The blue space is enough to make you feel at ease in a hypnotic sort of way.

When you notice how relaxed you feel at the beach, it's not just all in your head. Science says that it's a change in the way your brain reacts to its environment leaving you feeling happy, relaxed and reenergized.

*Via CoreSpirit*

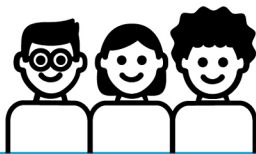


On September 8th we kick-off the start of our new church year with our traditional water communion followed by a potluck BBQ and picnic at Lake Chabot. All are invited. Bring along a sample of water that represents your summer experience to add to our communal well. Bring along some food to share at our potluck picnic. But most importantly, bring your beautiful selves!!

I hope to see you there.

## Do you know the UU Kids' Principles?

1



We believe that each and every person is important.

2



We believe that all people should be treated fairly and kindly.

3



We believe that we should accept one another and keep on learning together.

4



We believe that each person must be free to search for what is true and right in life.

5



We believe that all persons should have a vote about the things that concern them.

6



We believe in working for a peaceful, fair, and free world.

7



We believe in caring for our planet Earth, the home we share with all living things.



Our heartfelt thanks go to **Lea Casini**, **Lorie Miller**, **Roy Dickerson** and the volunteers who assisted them in organizing and leading summer camp for our children.

# Adult Religious Exploration

## Congregation Preferences

The Adult RE Committee (AREC) wants to thank you for taking the time to tell us about what topics were a priority for you for the Fall 2019 – Spring 2020 church year. Members of the congregation rated 33 items in six categories by rating each item as **Very Interested (3), Moderately Interested (2) or Not Interested (1)**. Survey Monkey™ calculated a score for each item. The AREC reviewed the survey results and are pleased to present the highest priorities to you; priorities that will shape next year's sessions.



### Question One – World Religions in Greater Depth

Buddhism	2.54
Earth traditions	2.37
Islam and Hinduism	2.22, 2.21



### Question Two – A Deeper Dive into Unitarian Universalism

Adults growing in faith	2.17
History	1.93
Worship	1.70



### Question Three – Health, Well-Being, and Transitions

Healthy, positive aging	2.36
End of life – what is a “good death”	2.21
Planning End-of-Life Care	2.22
Life transitions from older to elder	2.18



### Question Four – Spiritual and Personal Growth

Spirituality – What is it? Lived out?	2.44
Powerful Non-Defensive Communication	2.32
Outdoor activities	2.15
Shared Ministry	1.96



### Question Five – Multi Cultural Education

Building the beloved community	2.19
Beloved conversations	2.11
White Racial Literacy Book Group	2.07

We will use our next few meetings to establish educational sessions for the fall/winter quarters. We want to thank you for letting us know the topics that hold the greatest level of interest for you. The Adult Religious Education Committee meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of every month from 11am to 12 noon. Please join us!

If you have ideas or questions, please check-in with any member of the AREC (Nancy Bonner-Benson, Kathryn LaMar, Sheila McClellan, Diane Meyerson, Ethel-May Shaw and Mileva Saulo Lewis.)



# Ongoing Activities

<b>Book Group: White Racial Literacy</b>	Meets every 1st and 3rd Monday at 7:15pm in the sanctuary.
<b>Choir Practice</b>	Meets every Sunday from 9 – 10:15am in the Fellowship Hall
<b>Church Bookstore</b>	Open on the third Sunday of the month, after the service
<b>Drum Circle</b>	First Friday of the month, 7 – 9pm, in the Sanctuary. For adults and mature kids.
<b>Evening Meditation</b>	Every Wednesday, 7:30 – 8:45pm. Open to all.
<b>Elderberries</b>	Third Wednesday of the month, at noon. For self-identified elders. Bring your lunch.
<b>Small Group Ministry</b>	Contact <a href="mailto:sgm@starrking.org">sgm@starrking.org</a> for more information.
<b>SKIT Improv Troupe</b>	Second Thursday of the month, 7:30pm. Open to all.
<b>Board Meeting</b>	First Thursday of the month, 7-9pm in Fellowship Hall. Open to all.



# Announcements



## Chris Crass at MDUUC

Saturday August 31, 10:00 am–4:00 pm  
Mount Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church

Hello Starr King UU Church,

My name is Rev. Rodney Lemery and I am a community minister with the Mount Diablo Unitarian Universalist Church in Walnut Creek, CA. I wanted to take a moment and extend a professional invitation to your congregation. MDUUC is excited to host the racial justice educator Chris Crass into the Bay area for a SURJ co-sponsored event next Saturday August 31st, from 10:00 am – 4:00 pm in our Fellowship Hall (Bortin Hall).

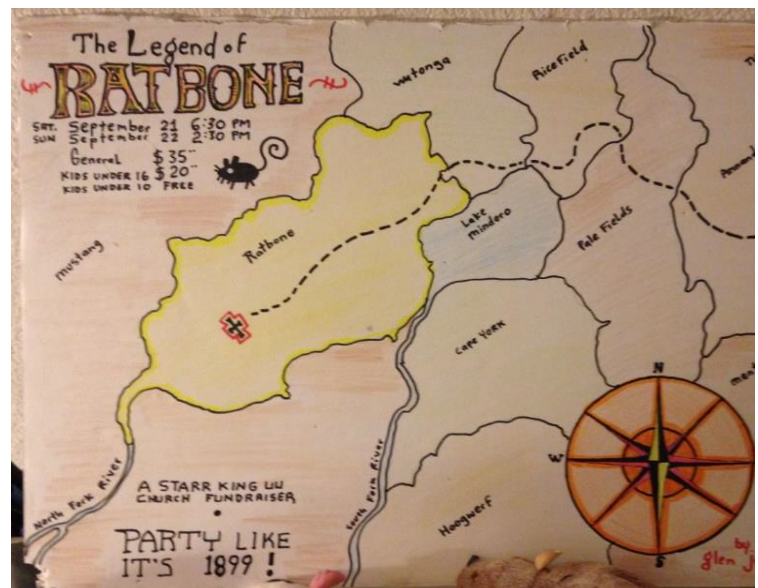
We look forward to welcoming you into this unique and important work for around white fragility and racial justice work. As you are aware, racial justice and equity is an important part of our faith movement and the greater world. Please let me know how I might be able to support you in helping us reach out to a broad audience to share this interesting experience and opportunity as we work toward greater liberation for all of us!

– Rev. Rodney Lemery

## The Legend of Ratbone

Saturday September 21, 6:00pm  
Matinee on Sunday Sept 22, 2:30pm

The planning and preparation for our new mystery dinner fund raiser, "The Legend of Ratbone" are going well. We have had a couple of rehearsals so far, fliers are being distributed, and tickets are now on sale. Tickets sales are going strong at the church, and tickets are also available on line through Eventbrite. Everyone involved feels that this will be a very fun and entertaining show. Please buy tickets for yourself, your families, friends, co-workers and casual acquaintances.



It is uncomfortable for most of us to ask for money, but this is the one big fund raiser for the church this year. So I will say without apologies; please buy tickets. Please bring extra money for wine and soft drinks. Bring even more dollars to buy clues. (There may be a couple of free donated tickets available for someone in need. Please see the ticket sellers).

Taking pictures and filming is OK, even encouraged. Photos and even clips of the musical numbers being posted to social media can only be good publicity for our church. Folks are encouraged to come in western wear to the show. Get into the spirit of the old west. Our tall tale takes place in December of 1899. It is nearly the turn of the century and there is much excitement for the grand future that will be the year 1900. Be prepared to "Yee Haw!" Come to clap and laugh, and have a grand old time. The table that guesses the "who done it" will win a special mystery dinner mystery prize!

"The Legend of Ratbone" will be presented on Saturday September 21 at 6:00PM and a matinee on Sunday Sept 22 at 2:30 PM. You can buy tickets in advance, or at the door. \$35 general, \$20 for kids 16 and under, free for children under 10. Dinner will be served, and there will be regular, vegetarian and vegan options.

Come one, come all! Party like it's 1899!

– Glen Jacob

Sat 9/21: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/mystery-dinner-the-legend-of-ratbone-tickets-68473354647>

Sun 9/22: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/mystery-dinner-matinee-the-legend-of-ratbone-tickets-68473719739>



## **Starr King Church Choir Resumes**

Do you like to sing? Please come and sing with  
The Starr King Church Choir, starting on Sept. 8.

We will be meeting every Sunday at 9:00 a.m. (9:00 – 10:15)

Choir members are asked to come as many Sundays as possible, but you are not expected to make every rehearsal.

Linli, our choir director and pianist, will be helping us for three Sundays every month, September – June. The fourth Sunday will be led by choir members.

We usually sing for the congregation once a month.

Come have fun and enjoy this musical group.

# 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.

September 2019						
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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> * 10:30 am Worship Service	<b>2</b> * 6:30 pm Rainbow Group LGBT NA	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> * 7:30 pm Evening Meditation	<b>5</b> * 7:00 pm Board of Trustees	<b>6</b> * 7:00 pm Drumming Circle	<b>7</b> * 8:00 am Facility Reserved
<b>8</b> * 9:00 am Choir Practice * 10:30 am Worship Service * 12:15 pm Fall Church Wide BBQ * 3:00 pm Mystery Dinner Rehearsal	<b>9</b> * 6:30 pm Rainbow Group LGBT NA	<b>10</b> * 11:00 am Adult RE	<b>11</b> * 12:00 pm SGM afternoons * 3:00 pm Pastoral Care Committee * 7:30 pm Evening Meditation	<b>12</b> * 7:30 pm SKIT	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> * 9:30 am New BOT Members Orientation
<b>15</b> * 10:30 am Worship Service * 12:00 pm Church Bookstore Open * 12:15 pm Peace and Justice	<b>16</b> * 6:30 pm Rainbow Group LGBT NA * 7:15 pm White Literacy Group	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> * 7:30 pm Evening Meditation * 7:30 pm SGM Evenings	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> * 6:00 pm Mystery Dinner
<b>22</b> * 10:30 am Worship Service * 2:30 pm Mystery Dinner Matinee	<b>23</b> * 6:30 pm Rainbow Group LGBT NA	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> * 12:00 pm SGM afternoon * 7:30 pm Evening Meditation	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> * 8:00 am BOT/COM Retreat
<b>29</b> * 10:30 am Worship Service * 12:15 pm Congregational Envisioning	<b>30</b> * 6:30 pm Rainbow Group LGBT NA					

Calendar developed and supported by [Kieran O'Shea](#)



## September Birthdays

**Sept 2** Mary Lasack

**Sept 3** Andrew Lasack-Chappel

**Sept 3** Olivia Kiesling

**Sept 4** Mama Lily

**Sept 6** Daniel Hitchings

**Sept 8** Michelle Lovett-Fink

**Sept 9** Ruth Hultman-DeSmidt

**Sept 11** Marilyn Mosher

**Sept 13** Liz Macera

**Sept 14** Kirk Smith

**Sept 15** Terri Owen

**Sept 17** Mary Ann Davis

**Sept 18** Rev. María Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa

**Sept 20** Carey Sanchez-Para

**Sept 28** Allison Fink

**Sept 29** Donnie Rett