



The Flaming Chalice

THEOLOGICALLY DIVERSE • RADICALLY INCLUSIVE • JUSTICE CENTERED

Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church | June 2021 Newsletter



CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Due to COVID19 shelter in place orders, the church office is closed until further notice. Kelli is working from home and can still be reached via

office@starrking.org

For pastoral care, please reach out to Rev. Maria Cristina via email or phone (617)895-9267.

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Jennifer Koney
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Newsletter

Kelly and Nathan Heigert
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JUNE THEME: FAMILIES

JUNE 6

Pride Month

We continue celebrating Pride!

Service co-led by Youth Worship Leader Nayela Reynoso and Rev. Maria Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa

JUNE 13

SoUUiful Families Ministry Sunday

Service co-led by Lorie Miller and Rev. Maria Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa

JUNE 20

Celebrating Fathers

Join us as we celebrate the fathers in our lives with shared stories, photos, and music.

Bob Simoni leads

JUNE 27

Love Letters in a Box

We continue to celebrate Father's Day with a service led by Kirk Smith, who will be reading from his father's letters written in 1924-1925.

Kirk Smith, pulpit guest.

Readings by Keith Lewis

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May Highlights



From the Minister

I read somewhere that traditionally the five year anniversary gift is wood...and I think back to our installation ceremony four years ago...and the drums made of wood, that were such an important cultural element. I can hear the drums as the Aztec dancers blessed me with sacred copal incense...I asked Xiomara, who is an Aztec danzante, if her calpulli would offer the blessing and she immediately said yes! She understood that Drumming and dancing are not for entertainment purposes, but at the heart of indigenous ceremonies marking important rites of passages. She understood that drumming and dancing are sacred prayers: the invocation of the ancestors, the gratitude to the indigenous people of this sacred land, the call to gather together: to bless, to honor, to celebrate!



I can hear the heartbeat of the giant drum that my friends Phil and Ron built especially for that occasion...calling me, welcoming me, blessing me, guiding me to you...I can remember the frame of this sanctuary reverberating and soaking up those prayers that emerged from the wooden frame of the drums...For me, having the voice of the drum and the Aztec dancers leading us in ceremony, was such a blessing, such a gift, an outward expression of this congregation's commitment to diversity, multiculturalism, and the spiritual practice of radical welcoming. It was a hot day and many were probably wishing for air conditioning or a shorter service...but we stayed together, in this sanctuary, even as this new experience took some of you out of your comfort zone... And for that act of Grace, I will be forever grateful...

Today, as I look back on our five years together on this shared journey, I remember so many occasions when we have gathered to bless each other, to heal, and to celebrate. I arrived in August of 2016 and less than three months later, on Election night in November, we were already gathering in this sanctuary to try to make sense of this new reality, to support each other, to pray together, and to offer refuge to neighbors and families who found out about our gathering, people who had never been here before, and needed a safe and brave space...We opened our doors and we opened our hearts, to friends and to anyone who might walk through the sanctuary doors. That was a long night which lasted four long years and then the pandemic hit. And this time, even though our doors needed to remain closed to keep us all safe, our hearts once again, remained open as we created a virtual brave space where we have continued to gather

From the Minister

to bless, to heal, to celebrate. To say that the past five years have been challenging would be an understatement. When it mattered, we showed up, stepped up, rose up, together. And we have not let go of each other. This is commitment, this is mutual covenant, this is shared ministry at its best.

Today and every day, I give thanks for our shared journey, for all the joys and sorrows: The weddings, the child dedications, the memorial services, And all the gatherings where we share our love for each other and for this our Starr King community. May we continue to learn and grow together. May we continue to face challenges together: with grace, compassion, creativity, courage, and joy. And may we remember that on this journey, we continue to be blessed by the Divine, present in the beat of the drum, in the dance, in this sanctuary, and in the spirit of this community. Happy Anniversary Beloveds!

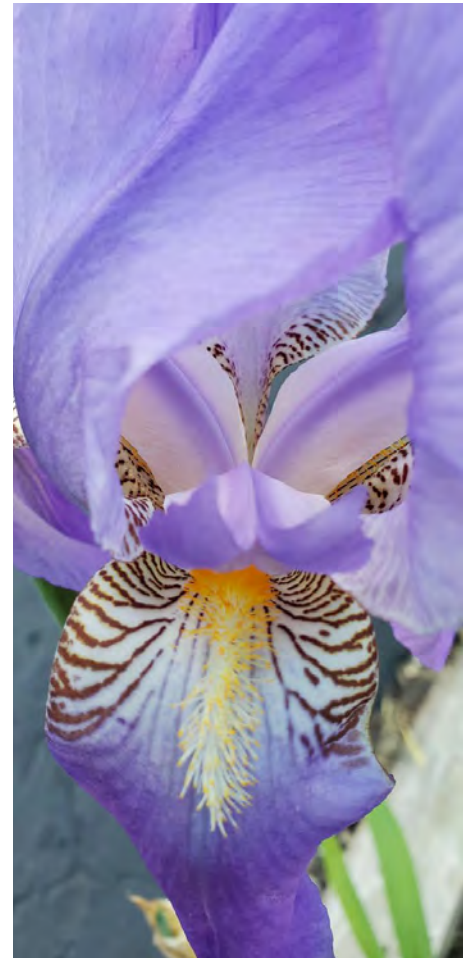
– Rev. Dr. Maria Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa



From the Minister

Morning Prayer

*Spirit of life,
Fuente de Amor,
This morning,
We open our hearts
To your great mystery...
This morning you are the blackbird,
The tender new leaf,
The bold color of red tulips,
The tenderness of a friendly smile...
We know you by many names
Or no name at all,
Yet feel your presence
In every breath...
Every time we forgive and are forgiven,
Every time we show and receive compassion
Every time we look into the face
Of those struggling and suffering injustice
And respond to the call for loving kindness
We experience your divine presence...
Circle of light,
Beautiful darkness,
Green corn woman,
White buffalo woman,
Red road,
Earth mother,
Be with us
As we breathe in hope
And breathe out fear.
Here we are under one sky,
A community of seekers,
Gathered together
Guided by love...
May this morning
And every morning
Find us in awe of your beautiful mysteries
In the teachings and blessings
you share with us
In sunlight,
Darkness
Stardust,
Apple blossoms,
Lilacs,*



From the Minister

Children's laughter
Quiet tears
Loving companions
And in the mystery
Of every hour,
Of every breath...
Of every breath...
Of every breath...
Amen and Blessed Be.

Present Moment...Only Moment By Thich Nhat Hanh

Breathing in, I calm body and mind.
Breathing out, I smile.
Dwelling in the present moment
I know this is the only moment.



"Breathing in, I calm body and mind." This line is like drinking a glass of ice water--you feel the cold, the freshness, permeate your body. When I breathe in and recite this line, I actually feel the breathing calming my body, calming my mind.

"Breathing out, I smile." You know the effect of a smile. A smile can relax hundreds of muscles in your face, and relax your nervous system. A smile makes you master of yourself. That is why the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are always smiling. When you smile, you realize the wonder of the smile.

"Dwelling in the present moment." While I sit here, I don't think of somewhere else, of the future or the past. I sit here and I know where I am. This is very important. We tend to be alive in the future, not now. We say, "Wait until I finish school and get my Ph. D. degree, and then I will be really alive." When we have it, and it's not easy to get, we say to ourselves, "I have to wait until I get a job, in order to be *really* alive." And then after the job, a car. After the car, a house. We are not capable of being alive in the present moment. We tend to postpone being alive to the future, the distant future, we don't know when.

Now is not the moment to be alive. We may never be alive in our entire life. Therefore, the technique, if we have to speak of a technique, is to be in the present moment, to be aware that we are here and now, and the only moment to be alive is the present moment. "I know this is the only moment." This is the only moment that is real. To be here and now, and enjoy the present moment is our most important task. "Calming. Smiling, Present moment, Only moment."

SoUUlful Family Ministry

May Highlights

Happy Heart Circle Time:

There was a lot to celebrate this month. May was full of love. We love ourselves because we are as special as rainbows. Helping other people is a special kind of love. SoUUlful Family Ministry is proud to announce our church's food and clothing drive for South Hayward Parish was a big success.

There was a special celebration for someone we love and who makes us feel giggly and bubbly, Rev. Maria Cristina. *WE LOVE YOU!!!*

I hope everyone enjoyed our water melon pizza. I know I did!! The best pizza ever (I should know, I love pizza).

Gratitude:

- Lavon and Lea: Thank you for delivering the art bags to the families.
- Terri Owens and Lavon for helping with South Hayward Parish's food and clothing drive.
- Thank you Donnie Rett for your craft donation
- A big THANK YOU to you all for all the food and clothing donations.

SoUUlful Family Ministry updates:

SoUUlful Family Ministry will continue weekly emails through out the summer, but as a science camp, not art. The science "experiments" will be child friendly and interactive. A science kit will be provided to the families. Weekly videos of Happy Heart Circle time and family/science videos will be recorded. Delivering weekly project bags will continue.

-Lorene Miller



Ongoing Activities

All in-person activities done virtually or on hold until further notice.
Please check the website at starring.org for updates.

Drum Circle	First Friday of the month, 7–9pm on Zoom. For adults and mature kids. Contact: Kathryn LaMar
Evening Meditation	Every Wednesday, 7:00–8:30pm on Zoom. Open to all. Contact: Diane Meyerson
Small Group Ministry	Contact sgm@starring.org for more information.
Board Meeting	First Thursday of the month, 7–9pm on Zoom. Open to all. Contact: Jennifer Koney
Family Storytime	Every Monday 6:30pm on Zoom. Contact: Dr. Rev. María Cristina
Peace and Justice Action Team	Usually the second Sunday of the month after worship but not always, so check the church calendar and the announcements email to confirm.
Adult RE	(On hold) Second Tuesday of the Month from 11–12 noon on Zoom Contact: Mileva Saulo Lewis
Choir Practice	(On hold) Meets every Sunday from 9–10:15am in the Fellowship Hall. Contact: Lea Casini
Church Bookstore	(On hold) Open on the third Sunday of the month, after the service. Contact: Evelyn Cormier



June Birthdays

June 1

Robin Fink

June 5

Rene G. Castle

June 9

Bethany Salway

June 11

Colleen Dino

June 18

Diane Meyerson

June 24

David Baker

Keith Lewis

June 26

Drake Otermat

June 30

Claudia McDonagh