



# The Flaming Chalice

**THEOLOGICALLY DIVERSE • RADICALLY INCLUSIVE • JUSTICE CENTERED**

Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church | February 2022 Newsletter



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## **FEBRUARY 6**

### **Separation & Belonging**

In these times of separation, as we reimagine and rebuild the new world, Guest Preacher Rev. Mariela, makes a case for Belonging, for learning to belong and feel at home in our own bodies, in our communities, and in the ecosystems we inhabit. Being intentional about Belonging will ensure a less isolating, more humane, and more connected/collaborative/interdependent future for our planet. *Rev. Mariela is of Arawak Afro-indigenous ancestry from the Caribbean and currently lives in Grand Rapids MI. She's an ordained Religious Naturalist UU minister.*

## **FEBRUARY 13**

### **30 Days of Love**

30 Days of Love is our UUA annual celebration that runs approximately from Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in January through Valentine's Day in February. It is an opportunity to collectively nurture our spirits, deepen our understanding, and take action on our values for collective liberation. On this Sunday, we lift up Climate Justice and honor Mother Earth, our home.

*Rev. Maria Cristina preaches*

## **FEBRUARY 20**

### **Celebrating Friendship**

"A friend is one who overlooks your broken fence and admires the flowers in your garden." On this Sunday we will honor Friendship and invite you to share with us stories about the friends in your life who over the years have stood by your side, believed in you, helped you through difficult times, and celebrated with you.

*Rev. Maria Cristina preaches*

## **FEBRUARY 27**

### **Starr King: Our Spiritual Home.**

Join us in celebrating Starr King as our spiritual home. We invite everyone to share their testimonies of what/who brought us here, how we have been nurtured spiritually over the years, and what it means to be part of this Beloved Community.

*Rev. Maria Cristina preaches*

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# January Highlights





# Bits from Your Board

## Value Driven Project Planning

*On behalf of the Board of Trustees:*

*Mileva Saulo Lewis, Vice-President and Diane Meyerson, Secretary*

On 5 December 2021, members of the Board informed the congregation that we were in the very early stages of a project; Investigating the feasibility of a Montessori school in the fellowship hall. We heard your questions about liability and challenges to our non-profit status and taxes. We heard congregational concerns about the impact of such a school on SoUUful Family Ministry. This provisional planning process will guide project planning in the future.<sup>1</sup>

**OUR DECISIONS** will be guided by our values, mission, and vision, and evaluating the project's benefits and risks to:

- The life and well-being of this spiritual community and its various ministries
- Financial health – impact on financial sustainability

On 5 January 2022, The Board approved a provisional Project Planning Process designed to be:

- Transparent and Inclusive;
- Responsible and Prudent.

### **TRANSPARENT AND INCLUSIVE**

- Be open and honest with each other and the congregation
- Provide regular ongoing communication with congregation using many methods such as Weekly Announcements, In-person announcements as appropriate; Constant Contact, *The Chalice*
- Encourage congregational feedback
- Listen to multiple stakeholders

### **RESPONSIBLE AND PRUDENT**

- Be Organized - Establish a Team and their authority
- Be clear about the “problem to be solved” – describe the goal of the project
- Determine criteria by which project will be evaluated

# *Bits from Your Board*

## **Value Driven Project Planning (cont.)**

- Gather Information using a variety of methods and sources to assure that all aspects are heard and considered.
- Evaluate the information – considering benefits and risks
- Make decisions according to all applicable provisions in our Church Bylaws.

**In complex situations, the Board may consider a Feasibility Study; defined as an examination of a situation to decide if a suggested method, plan, or piece of work is possible or reasonable. A Feasibility Study helps us to:**

- Organizes information; Assures depth and breadth of data collection
- Improves Project Team Focus
- Aids decision making process, who decides, and by what criteria
- Identifies valid reasons to proceed or not

<sup>1</sup> This provisional planning process will be reviewed upon the completion of a project for necessary revisions, improvements, and final adoption.



# Nominating Committee

## Message from the Nominating Committee

### Are you interested in serving the church in a meaningful way?

Every May at the annual congregational meeting, the Nominating Committee presents a slate of candidates for open positions on the [Board of Trustees](#) and the [Nominating Committee](#). The positions of Board Secretary and Treasurer are up for reelection this year, and both incumbents, Diane Meyerson and Terri Owen, have agreed to serve another term. We are delighted and grateful! Please thank them! This leaves 4 open positions: 2 at-large board members and 2 nominating committee members.

- If you feel called to serve our congregation in this important way, please click the links above to review the job descriptions, then fill out this brief [nomination form](#). Serving the church this way is an opportunity to connect more deeply with our beloved community, and help guide our congregation ever closer to our shared values.
- If you are interested in training before volunteering or have any other questions, contact any of us (Stephanie, Karen, Beth, Darryl, Mary Lou) or write to the committee at the address below. We welcome your interest!
- You can also [use the form to recommend someone else](#) you feel would be a good leader for our church.

If you would like to receive these materials in another format, such as PDF (or paper!) or have any questions, please contact the committee at [nomcom@starring.org](mailto:nomcom@starring.org). or write to us at Starr King UU Church, 22577 Bayview Ave., Hayward CA 94541.

### Nominating Committee Vision

We (the NomCom) endeavor to nominate individuals for church leadership who embrace the following vision:

- 1. We (the congregation) are relational and spiritual as well as practical.** Our meetings are spiritually uplifting and deeply nourishing as well as supportive of our community in practical ways.
- 2. We have strong partnerships among the minister, the board, and the congregation.** These working relationships are invigorating and mutually rewarding, and strengthen our shared ministry.
- 3. We have compassion with accountability.** We recognize that living our values fully requires attention and feedback and frequent adjustments to how we are together. We embrace the redemptive process of listening, owning our wrongs, apologizing and repair, understanding that this leads to grace\* and true community.



# Nominating Committee

## Message from the Nominating Committee (cont.)

**4. We plan for future generations.** Our decision making looks beyond the present to when the children of the church are grown, and when their children are grown, to the kind of church we want for them.

\*Grace: The state of living in alignment with our values. When we are “missing the mark” in some way, we fall out of grace. The redemptive process restores us to grace.

– The Nominating Committee

Stephanie Smith (chair), Karen Cook, Beth Ogilvie, Darryl Ray, Mary Lou Schuler





# PWR Regional Assembly 2022

## Reflect, Rejoice, Renew

<https://www.uua.org/pacific-western/blog/ra-2022>

Our PWR Regional Assembly is that inspirational, radically inclusive, beyond-the-congregation UU community we've missed. We can engage fully, wherever we are. Whether onsite at the hotel on the bay in San Diego, or online in the comfort of our own homes, we will have opportunities for connection in small groups, inspirational worship, transformative learning, and just plain community fun.

Our speakers aren't fully worked out yet (because, well, you know, COVID) but here is what we know for sure:

- We'll start on Friday, February 4th with an optional Border Justice experience. With on-line and in-person components, our community service/learning/justice opportunity is being developed with UURISE and other local partners. All onsite events will happen on the US side of the Mexican border. Friday evening is when the main conference begins.
- Our theme, Reflect, Rejoice, Renew, sums up the experience we're creating with our speakers, workshops, small groups, and social time. We've been through so much upheaval, grief, and change in our lives and in our religious communities. Together we will be: rejoicing in one another's company again, reflecting on what we've been through, and renewing ourselves, our commitments, and our UU faith.
- We conclude on Sunday, February 6th with a worship service, pre-recorded and broadcast to both an onsite and an online audience. And this service will be yours to use for your own congregation, too.
- We're venturing into new territory together, with a fully-online and fully-onsite unified program. It's our first major UUA multiplatform event! You'll be part of history! This will be an experiment, and we'll all be blessed with the joys, and challenges, of trying new things.

**Where: Virtual and San Diego, California**

Hyatt Regency Mission Bay, 1441 Quivira Road, San Diego, California You can explore the venue directly; for our group rate, please make Hotel Reservations (Hyatt.com)



Pacific Western  
Region



# PWR Regional Assembly 2022

**Reflect, Rejoice, Renew (cont.)**

**When: Friday, February 4 through Sunday, February 6, 2022**

**Schedule**

**Register Online today!**

**Important Deadlines: Registration for onsite attendance ends February 4th.  
Registration for virtual attendance ends February 23rd.**

**More info**

**If you've never been to a regional assembly before, ask Beth Ogilvie about it. *It's awesome.* It's like General Assembly in some ways: the inspiring energizing experience of being with LOTS of other UUs, getting acquainted, learning together, and worshipping together. But it's also smaller and more intimate; a chance to meet people from our region and our area; also a chance to get to know our wonderful UUA regional staff members. Beth is participating virtually and would love to see you there!**



# Peace and Justice Action Team

## Selected Notes

**Meeting Agenda: January 9, 2022**

I. Welcome All!

II. Chalice Lighting

III. Gratitudes

IV. ACTION AREAS

a. Updates

b. Actions to consider (PJAT; Congregation; beyond our walls) and why

c. Antiracism Aspect

**Opportunity:** If you are engaged in the work of racial justice and long for spiritual connection in this work, join us for this year's virtual Seminary For A Day.

**Registration:** <https://www.firstunitarianportland.org/events/seminaryforaday22/>

d. Voting Rights

Vote Forward has a test project going. See <https://votefwd.org/dashboard>

e. Climate Justice

**Local:** Castro Valley Library is hosting a community read with a focus on climate change this year - an important topic to learn and discuss in community! Info is here: <https://aclibrary.org/castro-valley-reads/#discussiongroups2> Sign up here!

f. Community Partnerships

**Action Item:** The Board of Supervisors, through their consultant and former Chief Probation Officer, Wendy Still, have scheduled a Town Hall Community Engagement session featuring representatives from the National Association for Civilian Oversight next week

Please register for this virtual event here: <https://bit.ly/SheriffOversightInformation>

g. Indigenous Solidarity

V. OTHER

V. Reflections, gratitudes, and closing.

Full minutes from the latest PJAT meeting can be found here: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rSM8JZILeUdSoY7sVPfBuSXCodOHiUWBCUTx65WEmo0/edit?usp=sharing>

# Peace and Justice Action Team

## Castro Valley Reads


### Castro Valley Library 2022 Community Reads Program Focuses on Climate Change

The Castro Valley Library has taken a bold step to address climate change as part of this year's "Castro Valley Reads" program, and the Peace & Justice Action Team has formed a book group to join in.

If interested in joining our book group reading and discussing *Earth Keeper* and *Fire in Paradise*, please let Jennifer Koney know by email ([jkoney@comcast.net](mailto:jkoney@comcast.net)) and she will include you. If interested in attending the events or learning more about the program, please visit: <https://aclibrary.org/castro-valley-reads/#events2>

Several of the events are scheduled to coincide with the community read, including the kick-off event that features N. Scott Momaday, the Pulitzer-prize winning author of *Earth Keeper*.

Additionally, there will be a presentation on Feb. 12 from 2-3pm about "Water, Drought and Our Future" and Jennifer Koney will say a few words about why she became a climate activist and how to get more involved with climate action. There is also a climate art exhibit at the Castro Valley Library happening concurrently with the Castro Valley Reads program.



### What are we Reading for 2022?

Our selections for 2022 are *Earth Keeper: Reflections on the American Land* and *Fire in Paradise: An American Tragedy*.

*Earth Keeper* is by N. Scott Momaday, a Pulitzer-prize winning Kiowa poet, novelist, and Native American scholar. In this beautiful book of free-verse poetry, he reflects on his sacred connection to the American landscape and its influence on his people. Momaday shares his reverence for the natural world and calls on all of us to protect the Earth's wonders and beauty.

*Fire in Paradise* is by Alastair Gee and Dani Anguiano, reporters for *The Guardian*. The book is their dramatic narrative of the 2018 Camp Fire on Paradise Ridge and an unforgettable story of an American town at the forefront of the climate emergency. They bring to life the effects of the fire through intimate portraits of local residents and the landscape, and they give all California residents much to consider as we seek to mitigate risks from wildfire and drought.



# *Peace and Justice Action Team*

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11 AT 7:00PM**

**THE PEACE AND JUSTICE ACTION TEAM INVITES YOU TO WATCH THE MOVIE "THE CALL TO COURAGE" BY "BRENÉ BROWN."**

<https://youtu.be/gr-WvA7uFDQ>

Brené Brown talks about how everybody has feelings of fear, vulnerability, shame, stress, anxiety, etc. that prevent them from leading "wholehearted" lives and doing things that take people out of their comfort zone. Brené speaks about choosing courage over comfort and core practices to use to overcome challenges. Courage helps us UUs live through our seven principles and experience joy through our service.

**BRENÉ  
BROWN**  
*the Call to Courage*



# SoUUlful Family Ministry

## January Highlights

**Due to the spike in the Omicron COVID variant and because we want to create a safe church environment for all, Starr King SoUUlful Family Ministry has returned to 100% virtual activities. We will continue to connect via zoom and to deliver the art supplies.**

### Sharing My Thoughts.....

"Why does everything goes into their mouths?" This is a question almost every parent of a young child asks. Putting everything in their mouth is the beginning of exploring the world around them. As they get older, play becomes more involved when exploring their world. Play is actually the child's way of understanding how life works. Through play, children learn to problem solve, develop empathy, understand another's point of view, to respect differences and much, much more.

Play is present all through childhood up through adults! It just changes in structure. For example, a preschooler can use a block for a pretend phone, a school age uses an actual phone, (not activated) to play with. An adult extends their phone play to the internet. Play is so important in child development. It allows children to express themselves and discover their authentic selves. Even at a very young age, self concept is critical.

I use to have a Tee shirt, when I taught preschool, that said, "My Work is Child's Play." My recommendation to you all, is to take a chance, play with a child and see what YOU can learn.

### Dramatic Play this Month:

Exploring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream, the children played in Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s restaurant "Connecting Hands." It is a restaurant where everyone was served.

Their doctor office encouraged the development of empathy and how it feels to nurture someone who is in need. Ramona thought all the animals and all the babies could come to her doctor



# SoUllful Family Ministry

## January Highlights (cont.)

office....."All Welcoming"

Building their cardboard box city took on a challenge of cooperation, learning another's perspective by sharing ideas. They explored how it felt to be a part of a community.

### Happy Heart Circle Time– January Theme: Transformation

This month we explored the theme of transformation and change. We invited the children to think back to when they were babies and asked: "What can you do today that you couldn't do when you were a little baby?" We also had conversations about what they would like to be when they grow up. During our reflective service, we sat outside under a tree, and accompanied by drums, we played "I Spy with My Little Eyes."

For MLK Sunday, we talked about the meaning of segregation. The children engaged in a role play activity to learn about segregation in restaurants and made a mobile showing hands of all skin colors creating a human rainbow.

The service on Transformation was co-led by Nayela, Mireya, and Rev. Maria Cristina. Kudos to Mireya and Nayela for coming up with the idea, for being part of the planning process, and for their amazing creativity. Congratulations Mireya and Nayela for being such wonderful worship service leaders! We especially loved making the handprint butterfly and singing along with the song from Encanto: "Dos Oruguitas/Two Little Caterpillars."

In celebration of the Chinese New Year, we scared away the dragon with loud noises, (banging pots and pans), scaring away what frightens our hearts. Gift bags were delivered to the families including oranges, red envelopes with lucky coins, and art projects. For the younger children: a Chinese drum. For the older youth: a cherry blossom picture frame.





# SoUUlful Family Ministry

## January Highlights (cont.)

Deep Gratitude to our Family Ministry Volunteers who supported our work this month: Lavon Hodges, Lea Casini, Ethel May Shaw, Sheila McClellan, Donnie Rett, Amy Pete, Laurie Matthews, Corina Vasature, and Diane Meyerson.

We could not do this alone, Thank you all! Happy New Year and the best to you all!!

*-Lorie Miller, SoUUlful Family Ministry Coordinator*



*Download PDF and enable your settings to view this video:*



# Ongoing Activities

Out of an abundance of caution for all in our community, we have returned to virtual Sunday services, Small Group Ministry gatherings, and Committee meetings.

In the meantime, continue to do all those things you've been doing to keep you and yours as safe as possible:

- Wear a KN95 mask – do not use cloth
- Double mask if you are unable to find a KN95
- Scrupulous Handwashing
- Maintain Social Distancing
- If you have symptoms – get tested
- Order your Free COVID test kit - [www.covidtests.gov](http://www.covidtests.gov)

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<b>Evening Meditation</b>	First Thursday of the month, 7:00–8:30pm, every Wednesday after, 7:00–8:30pm, on Zoom. Open to all. Contact: Diane Meyerson
<b>Small Group Ministry</b>	Contact <a href="mailto:sgm@starrking.org">sgm@starrking.org</a> for more information.
<b>Board Meeting</b>	First Thursday of the month, 7–9pm on Zoom. Open to all. Contact: Roy Dickerson
<b>Peace and Justice Action Team</b>	Second Sunday of the month after worship (after a 15-20 minute break) in a hybrid model via Zoom using the same link as the service.
<b>Family Storytime</b>	<b>(On hold)</b> Every Monday 6:30pm on Zoom. Contact: Dr. Rev. María Cristina
<b>Adult RE</b>	<b>(On hold)</b> Second Tuesday of the Month from 11–12 noon on Zoom. Contact: Mileva Saulo Lewis
<b>Choir Practice</b>	<b>(On hold)</b> Meets every Sunday from 9–10:15am in the Fellowship Hall. Contact: Lea Casini

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## February Birthdays



**February 5**  
René L. Castle

**February 6**  
Frank Howell

**February 7**  
Oliver Heigert

**February 12**  
Kirk Klausmeyer

**February 13**  
Bill DeSmidt

**February 19**  
Alison Corson

**February 20**  
Lea Casini