



The Flaming Chalice

THEOLOGICALLY DIVERSE • RADICALLY INCLUSIVE • JUSTICE CENTERED

Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church | March 2022 Newsletter



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MARCH 6

RETURN OF IN PERSON GATHERING W/ VIRTUAL SERVICE International Women's Day

This year, the United Nations has chosen the theme "Gender Equality Today for a Sustainable Tomorrow" They are promoting gender equality in the context of the climate crisis. Theologically, we find inspiration and valuable resources in Eco-Feminist and Eco-Womanist approaches in the powerful voices of women and girls leading the climate justice movement.

Rev. Maria Cristina leads

MARCH 13

Preemptive Radical Inclusion

CB will share reflections on the idea of Preemptive Radical Inclusion as an entryway to meaningfully increase equity and justice among ourselves and in the world, a way to embody beloved community by our willingness to take seriously the idea that "all of us means all of us."

Guest Speaker: CB Beal

MARCH 20

Communing With Nature

We welcome our own Torsten Fink who will share with us his amazing nature photographs as he reflects on his latest nature adventure.

Guest Speaker: Torsten Fink

MARCH 27

Covenant

We are living in immensely difficult times. Deep societal issues including racism, economic inequality, and environmental injustice mar our current lives and threaten to harm the lives of future generations. There are no easy remedies to these community ills, but returning to the practice of covenant may offer a path forward. Living in covenant creates and develops community. It also furthers both the mission and the health of our faith movement.

Rev. Rodney Lemery, Jennifer Koney, and Ben Ogilvie Co-Lead

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Announcements

Regathering Committee

In-Person Worship along with Virtual Worship will return on **Sunday, 6 March**.

Out of care for those who are vulnerable in our congregation, we will continue to wear masks indoors. We will provide for an Outdoor Fellowship Hour with coffee/tea/juice following the service.

New Church Administrator

Are you a church member with a question about email communications? the database? the meaning of life? Well, your magical administrator can help with those first two! When in doubt, email Emily at office@starrking.org for help with your individual or group questions.

Here are some of the things Emily can help with: <https://starrking.org/member-resources>



From the Minister

Beloveds,

This month I had the blessing of being part of a wonderful event: The Coastal Salish Family Day.

We gathered via zoom with Melanie Schambach, who came up with the mural idea, and other artists and community members who participated in the creation of a mural that accompanied the Red Road Totem Pole on its way to DC. The mural is an amazing collective creation! Claudia and I painted together the red and yellow circle depicting the Mapuche cosmovision. Someone else added a beautiful feather to it and in that way we, the 250 people who painted, are now forever connected. We are now raising funds to print coloring books which will include the symbols painted on the mural and the stories shared by the painters. This coloring book will be distributed free of charge to schools and community centers. To learn more about the mural, please check out [Melanie's page](#).



From the Minister

In Solidarity with the People of Ukraine

“The Ukrainian Kokum Scarves” By Mallory Kimotastim

“Where I’m from, in Treaty 6 territory, Ukrainian floral scarves have become iconic among many Indigenous Nations. These days, you’ll even see these scarves integrated into pow wow regalia. Us nehiyawak (Cree people) call them “kokum scarves” because kokum means “your grandmother”, a reminder of our grandmothers and a symbol that we carry them with us, when we need them the most.

So, why the floral scarf? On the prairies, there is a vast history of trade and commerce between Indigenous Nations. But what people may not recognize is the history of trade and cooperation between the original peoples and settlers. In fact, the Ukrainian and Cree communities often worked closely together during times of major hardship and famine. Cooperation like this, between Indigenous Nations and newcomers, is a story that is found over and over again across Turtle Island. It was because of this trade, commerce, and cooperation that floral scarves became a symbol of the strength and hard work of our matriarchs.

Long ago, when Ukrainian people arrived in this territory, they brought with them beautiful floral patterned fabrics that were a natural complement to the floral patterns found in Cree, Dene, and Metis beadwork. Our grandmothers adopted these patterns as they worked closely with their new neighbours to help each other. I guess that also explains why feasts in my community usually feature foods such as pierogies, and cabbage rolls, alongside our traditional foods.



From the Minister

In Solidarity with the People of Ukraine

So what does the floral scarf mean to me? When I was growing up, I often watched nohkum (my grandmother) with her hair tied up in a scarf picking berries, preparing meat, cooking for a feast or watching the grandkids. To me, “kokum scarves” are a symbol that embodies the intrepid and entrepreneurial spirit of my grandmothers: women who worked relentlessly to find opportunity, and to build relationships and cooperation among families and nations to ensure our survival. That’s what “kokum scarves” mean to me. For me, the “kokum scarf” also represents a love for one another.”

Rev. Maria Cristina: “In solidarity with the people of Ukraine, I too wear the kokum scarf as a prayer for Peace.”

As I watched in tears the images of the military attack on Ukraine and the heartbreaking images of thousands of people trying to escape as their homes are being bombed, I learned from a post on Facebook by Paul Bond that in Kyiv, Ukraine, there is a monument commemorating the country’s 1991 independence:

“It is the Slavic Goddess Berehynia – who represents the protection of the home. She holds a viburnum branch, the national symbol for women, motherhood, the soul of the nation, and love. And love. And Love.”

From our Unitarian Universalist Association:

We join in solidarity with so many around the world and pray for the people of Ukraine. Our hearts go out to those who are enduring devastating loss of life, violence, instability, and upheaval due to Russia’s invasion by land, air, and sea.

Our UU faith calls us to remain deeply committed to justice and we believe we have a moral responsibility to support the creation of peace and the equal rights of all people. Russia’s unprovoked invasion of Ukraine is a stark reminder that human rights are fundamentally linked to our interdependence.

A recent UU World blog post by Bruce Knotts, director of the Unitarian Universalist Office at the United Nations, expresses how UUs have long been at the center of this struggle on the global stage and were an integral part of the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. The essential message of the Declaration recognizes the closely held UU value of the inherent worth and dignity of all people.



Credit: [Paul Bond via Facebook](#)



Bits from Your Board

Values Driven Project Planning Update – Montessori School

Mileva Saulo Lewis, Vice-President and Diane Meyerson Secretary

Last year, the Board of Trustees embarked on a feasibility study to discern whether or not to rent the Fellowship Hall to a Montessori School. The Board expressed its deep appreciation to Claudia McDonagh for the passion she brought to this project and to the entire committee, Roy Dickerson, Terri Owen, and Diane Meyerson for their due diligence in gathering a significant amount of information for The Board to review.

The Board reviewed all of the relevant information gathered by the Project Team as well as input from members of the Congregation and used the Project Planning Process, shared with you in the February Chalice designed to be:

- Transparent and Inclusive as well as Responsible and Prudent,
- Guided by our values, mission, and vision, and to
- Evaluate the project's benefits and risks to:
 - The health and well-being of this spiritual community and its various ministries
 - Financial health – impact on financial sustainability

Transparent and Inclusive:

- We heard and paid attention to congregation members' concerns on 5 December
- Interested members of the congregation attended two Board meetings and offered their perspectives; some in favor of the project and some who were not

Guided by Values, Mission, and Vision - First and foremost - the health and well-being of our spiritual community and our various ministries

- Ultimately, having the Fellowship Room occupied Monday-Friday or approximately 10 hours per day, would be disruptive to our ministry to families and children
- While the project would have benefited the school; it had the potential to be a divisive issue within the congregation
- Other opinions expressed were that it would be a positive addition to Starr King and could potentially draw people from the community to our church as well as the school's Director having had 20 years of experience running Rainbow Montessori School in San Francisco and five years running a Montessori pre-school of six children from her home."

Bits from Your Board

(cont.)

Responsible and Prudent - Equally important the impact on Church's Financial Sustainability and Church's Non-Profit Status

- Estimates at this time were that it would cost at least \$30,000 to \$40,000 to upgrade and or install: Conditional Use Permit; Fire alarms, new electric outlets, fencing throughout the entire property, and consultant fees. This did not include additional unforeseen expenses such as those for consultants, attorneys, insurance, and accounting experts.
- There was uncertainty as to whether or not the owner of the school could attain the enrollment necessary to yield a benefit to Starr King.
- If we rented to a for-profit organization such as this school, it would be imperative that all operations between the school (tenant) and the Church (landlord) be totally separate and that the Church would have no involvement in the school's day-to-day operation. This may have required hiring staff to be the liaison to the school.

Board Decision: The Board of Trustees, at its meeting of 2 February decided that it was not in the best interest of our spiritual community to proceed with the proposal to have a Montessori School rent our space.

Finally, the Board wants to assure the Congregation that we are diligently exploring other ways to ensure the financial sustainability of our church that can be unifying and consistent with our values and mission.

#UULent

#UULent is a creative spiritual project that you can celebrate with the wider UU community from March 2–April 17. Starr King will be sharing photos on Facebook and Instagram.

You can post photos on your personal social media—just remember to include the hashtag **#UULent**. Or send Emily photos (with brief description) to match any of the daily themes. She will credit you on church social media with your *first name only* unless you prefer to remain completely anonymous - just let her know:

office@starrking.org

2022 PHOTO A DAY #UULent



Join a Unitarian Universalist practice of Lent! Each day, Unitarian Universalists and our friends and family intentionally reflect on a daily word, carry our awareness throughout the day, and capture an image that represents the word for us. We share our reflections and images on social media with the hashtag #UULent. On Sundays, we challenge each other to reflect on the daily word and also embody and enact it in our lives. (Created by Mr. Barb Greve; designed by Alex Kapitan)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
MARCH			2 reflection	3 soil	4 breathe	5 vulnerability
6 hospitality	7 flexibility	8 grief	9 alone	10 growth	11 adaptability	12 faith
13 help	14 inspire	15 share	16 serenity	17 energy	18 free	19 trust
20 compassion	21 encourage	22 rest	23 fear	24 foundation	25 gentleness	26 contemplate
27 change	28 play	29 art	30 empathy	31 water		
APRIL					1 movement	2 soul
3 companionship	4 humor	5 love	6 invigorate	7 depth	8 grace	9 solace
10 accountability	11 stretch	12 curiosity	13 focus	14 strength	15 wait	16 hope
17 rejoice						

NURTURE Your Spirit. Help HEAL Our World.

Peace and Justice Action Team

Selected Notes

Meeting Agenda: February 13, 2022

I. Welcome All!

II. Chalice Lighting

III. Gratitudes

IV. ACTION AREAS

a. Updates

b. Actions to consider (our committee; for the Congregation; and/or beyond our walls) and why

c. Antiracism Aspect

d. Climate Justice

State: CalGEMS setbacks draft rule updates on actions: [Sen. Kamlager letter](#).

Local: Castro Valley Library is hosting a [community read](#) with a focus on climate change this year. PJAT has its own book group: Sun. March 6 via zoom after church.

Also: Climate art exhibit (including Jennifer Koney's works). Link [here](#).

e. Community Partnerships (including Interfaith Coalition for Justice in Our Jails and Eden Area Interfaith Council)

[Bob Britton Report via email](#)

f. Indigenous Solidarity

Red Road Totem Mural: A fundraiser campaign to produce a coloring book and a website to share the mural with the wider community. [Here's](#) how you can donate.

[Boarding School Accountability](#)

[The National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition](#)

V. OTHER

[Red Road Totem Pole Mural project](#) – See “From the Minister” above or the link for more information.

VI. Reflections, gratitudes, and closing.

Full minutes from the latest PJAT meeting can be found here: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1j8lFXkqC3H-mEUGdMDfr9DQRoQIC05NfA5Zn7ACVLCg/>

Peace and Justice Action Team

PJAT MOVIE NIGHT

DAVID ATTENBOROUGH: A LIFE ON OUR PLANET

MARCH 11, 7-9PM VIA ZOOM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9796339783?pwd=ZmhFOtA1T0JRa3JvV0ZzZDVkd1VUUT09>

Join us for a virtual movie night! The renowned naturalist, David Attenborough, reflects on his many adventures while sharing his love for our planet and the many disastrous changes he has observed over the many years. He shares what he believes we can and must do to save our planet.

You can click [here](#) to join the movie night at 7pm on Friday March 11th. The Peace & Justice Action Team will also email the same link a few days before. If you're not already on our mailing list, please email Emily at office@starrking.org for information.



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DAVID ATTENBOROUGH
A LIFE ON OUR PLANET

SoUllful Family Ministry

February Highlights

Sharing Thoughts...

"Hello Friends"

"You are my friend" is not just a nice greeting, but it actually tells a story. The story begins at infancy, where the infant and caregiver functions as one. It's magical thinking, for example, the baby just thinks "I am hungry" and milk instantly appears, "I need comfort," love is felt and "I am uncomfortable," their diaper is changed.

There is a time in this story when the magical thinking fades away and is replaced with a time lapse between the want and the response. That is when the child begins to realize they are a separate person, creating a "sense of self."

This separate person grows and soon realizes there are many like them, other children who also have likes, dislikes, opinions, feelings, etc. In their cooperative play they learn how to share ideas, make compromises and respect feelings.

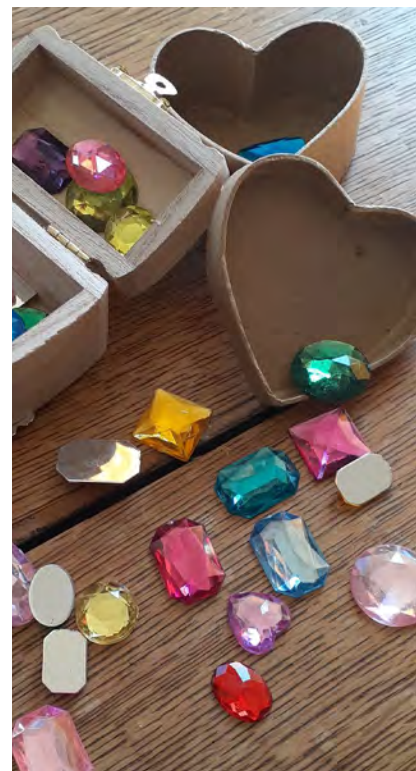
In our cardboard box town, decisions were made on who lives in what box, where the doors and windows go and how to hang the curtains. In the bird seed bin, they shared their play space, took turns with the special utensils and divided up the hidden treasures.

This story may appear to end here, but no, friendships are continuously being made and to think it all began in chapter One, "Infancy"

"You are my friend."

Happy Heart Circle Time

The children felt the belonging to Mother Earth by creating a counter top compost bin with our guests, Claudia McDonagh and two specials guests, Soren and his mother Bethany Salway. The children watched "Happy Water-Sad Water" an original slide show about water conservation and water pollution. Play dough "Love Lunches" were served to those who love us and families contributed photos to our slide show, celebrating our spiritual home, Starr King.



SoUUlful Family Ministry

February Highlights (cont.)

Family Projects

A composting “kit” was sent home for the families to begin their own journey of composting. To support our Mother Earth, the kids made seed balls with recycle newspaper. It was another fun way to plant seeds. Our children discovered that having friends is like a treasure. They decorated a chest and filled it up with jewels and finally to end our month, the children celebrated our spiritual home with one of their favorite church activities, an individual bird seed bin!

Gratitude

A special shout out to Claudia, Bethany and Soren for sharing their passion about composting. Thank you families for sharing your photos with us, Lea Casini for her garden seeds, and Lavon for delivering our weekly art bags.

-Lorie Miller, SoUUlful Family Ministry Coordinator



Ongoing Activities

Starr King welcomes all church interest groups and committees to meet in-person at the church either inside or outside the facility. If your group has been meeting by Zoom, it may continue to do so, by discretion of the group. All groups meeting in-person on the Church grounds should continue to observe COVID safety protocols by:

- Wearing masks
- Practicing social distancing
- Refraining from serving and sharing refreshments

We applaud your continued participation in SKUUC activities.

Evening Meditation	First Thursday of the month, 7:00–8:30pm, every Wednesday after, 7:00–8:30pm, on Zoom. Open to all. Contact: Diane Meyerson
Small Group Ministry	Contact sgm@starrking.org for more information.
Board Meeting	First Wednesday of the month, 7:30 on Zoom. Open to all. Contact: Roy Dickerson
Peace and Justice Action Team	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.
Family Storytime	(On hold) Every Monday 6:30pm on Zoom. Contact: Dr. Rev. María Cristina
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



March Birthdays

March 1
Liana Klausmeyer

March 2
Joey Murdach

March 4
Collin Carrell

March 7
Katrina Homerick

March 9
Nathan Heigert

March 10
Audrey LePell

March 11
Ray Oducayen

March 12
Rebecca Parr
Darryl Ray

March 13
Margarita Jacob

March 14
Sara Raymond

March 16
Renee Ray

March 22
Karen Cook

March 24
Susan Dawkins Clark
Jamie Prout

March 26
Sherry Thomas