



The Flaming Chalice

THEOLOGICALLY DIVERSE • RADICALLY INCLUSIVE • JUSTICE CENTERED

Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church | August 2022 Newsletter



For Pastoral Care, please email
Mileva Lewis at
office@starrking.org

22577 Bayview Avenue
Hayward, CA 94541
(510)581-2060

starrking.org

facebook.com/StarrKingChurch

instagram.com/starrkinguuc

Interim Minister

(Beginning Aug. 15)

Rev. Ruth Rinehart

minister@starrking.org

Board President

Roy Dickerson

president@starrking.org

Office Administrator

Emily Watkins

office@starrking.org

Newsletter

Kelly and Nathan Heigert

newsletter@starrking.org

AUGUST 7

The Collective Endeavor of UUism

This Sunday, we'll explore the joy of the 4th principle, the free and responsible search for truth and meaning. Welcome our guest speaker, Antoinette Scully, a writer, activist, and National Organizer for the UU Women's Federation. She will speak about her spiritual journey in the larger context of finding her place in Unitarian Universalism and how ruminating on the 4th principle can help us all understand how we fit in.

AUGUST 14

Starr King Sing-Along

Our pianist Linli Wang leads this musical service!

AUGUST 21

A New Ministry

Our new Interim Minister, Reverend Ruth Rinehart will introduce herself a bit, as well as mapping out a broad overview of the coming two years. Transitions can be so challenging; how will we be together in challenging times?

AUGUST 28

Who and What is Starr King UU Church?

Who and What is Starr King UU Church? Who are you as a community? Who are you in the Unitarian Universalist World? Who are you in the wider world? Theologically Diverse. Radically Inclusive. Justice Centered.

Reverend Ruth Rinehart leads.

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July Highlights



From the Minister

Rev. Ruth Rinehart

Dear ones, I am so grateful to be joining you soon, August 15th to be exact. I am grateful we have time – two years to spend together, get to know each other, and do the work of this interim time.

My beginning work is joining with you in this journey, listening to you, coming to understand your uniqueness and your strengths. On August 21st, I will introduce myself to you a bit, as well as map out a broad overview of our time together: A New Ministry. Part of my role with you is simply good ministry: preaching, pastoral care, and officiating the rites of passage and life transitions that arise in every community.

The other part of my work with you will be the specific work of the interim, which starts slow and will include the first phase, Looking Back – a time to understand your history, habits, and achievements. It is also a time to recognize that this transition has affected each of you differently. I look forward to hearing from you, coming to know your uniqueness in this time of congregational change, and how you will move forward together into your new future at Starr King UU Church. Transitions can often trigger unhealed wounds from the past; this is normal. It is often a tender time, individually and collectively. Healing is possible. I hope you will join us for a potluck after service on the 21st.

I will also be preaching on August 28th: Who is Starr King UU Church? Who are you as a community? Who are you in the Unitarian Universalist world? Who are you in the wider world?

After service on the 28th, I hope you will join us for a Listening Circle, the first of many we will enjoy together. Listening Circles are a sacred practice of being in community together. Where voices are heard and not criticized. Where people are free to speak without interruption. Where we hear differences of opinion, and stay in love and covenant with each other. Where “hot topics” can be explored and emotions can find rest. Where our hearts can turn to wonder. Where we learn about each other. Where we sometimes can come to see more clearly the road ahead.

On Sunday the 28th, we will consider the Land Acknowledgement spoken at the start of Sunday services. Land Acknowledgements are formal statements recognizing the land was originally inhabited by indigenous peoples. It is a practice that has been increasing over these past years. It is complicated. As Unitarian Universalists, our faith calls us to action in the world, to help create the more just and beautiful world we all know is possible. Land acknowledgements are words; what actions are we called to? Join us on the 28th, for our first Listening Circle, to consider Land Acknowledgements.

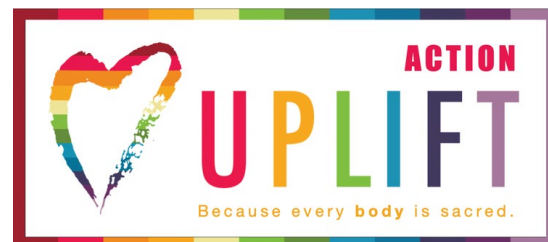
AND, dear ones! Before I accepted this position as your Interim Minister, my husband David and I had already scheduled a vacation in England for the first two weeks of September. So, I'll be here for a hot minute, and then gone! I will be back to lead worship the last two Sundays of September, the 18th and the 25th. Then, we'll really settle in for the beautiful journey we have ahead of us.



Reproductive Justice

Mileva Saulo Lewis and Diane Meyerson

Many of us were stunned, although not surprised, when in June of this year, the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) overturned *Roe v. Wade*, which for nearly fifty years protected the right to access an abortion in all 50 states. We have witnessed the continuing efforts following *Dobbs* for states to immediately enact laws outlawing abortion entirely and yes much to our shock and dismay, not consider exceptions for the life of the mother, rape or incest.



Representatives from UU churches in every state participated in the first of three Webinars on 21 July. We listened to the pain of our fellow UUs from states where restrictions have already impacted the lives of people in their state. This UUA educational series entitled UPLIFT Action is designed to:

- Inform us of the broader context in which this issue is being discussed, and
- Provide the variety of ways that we can live our UU values by outlining the ways in which we can participate and resources to assist us.

The UUA webinar explained that Reproductive Justice is:

... is not the same as “reproductive rights” or reproductive health.” Whereas a “reproductive health” model focuses on the provision of services and a “reproductive rights” model focuses on laws and legality regarding an individual’s right to care, Reproductive Justice focuses on access and equity for all. “Reproductive rights” and “reproductive health” language and approaches are limited in scope to strategies related to “pro-choice” movements, sex education, and family planning. They do not engage the broader social, economic, political, or cultural factors that impact an individual’s or community’s access to care.

This 6 minute video is a powerful explanation of the difference between Reproductive Justice, reproductive health, and reproductive rights, watch [this video](#) on “Choice vs. Access” from Planned Parenthood of the Pacific Southwest.

As Unitarian Universalists we live our Faith by acknowledging that:

- *All of our bodies are sacred,*
- *Each is endowed with the twin gifts of agency and conscience,*
- *Each of us should have the power to decide what does and doesn’t happen to our bodies, and*
- *When disparities in resources or freedoms make it more difficult for certain groups of people to exercise autonomy over their own bodies, our faith compels us to take liberatory action.*

Adapted from UU UPLIFE ACTION, 21 July 2022

Zoom Inclusion Group

Zoom Inclusion Survey

I'd like to announce the creation of the Zoom Inclusion Group (ZIG), an ad-hoc group put together to foster greater inclusion of Zoom service attendees with the whole congregation. The inaugural members of this discussion group are Nathan Heigert, Ben Ogilvie, and Stephanie Smith.



The inspiration for this group came from the realization that since the beginning of hybrid services there has been the inadvertent creation of an advantaged “in-group” (in-person attendees) and a disadvantaged “out-group” (Zoom attendees). Some of the disadvantages to attending over Zoom include not hearing any non-miked speech coming from the sanctuary, a limited view of the congregation, and other issues.

We'd like to hear from our regular “Zoomies”. Is there an issue with the online services you'd like to address? Do you have any comments or suggestions for how to feel more equal and included with the whole congregation? We are welcoming all ideas.

Over the coming weeks we will be gathering and considering all input, starting with an online survey to collect responses. You can find the [survey here](#).

Just to be clear in case there's any mistake, the purpose of this team is *not* to disparage the way Zoom has been utilized by SKUUC up until now. When quarantine started in March 2020, the swift and competent implementation of video-recorded and live broadcasted services with Zoom held our church together and brought us into each other's homes, and we are so grateful to the technical wizards that put that together.

The point instead is to recognize our privilege when we see it and to do our best to promote equitable treatment where we can. A lot of us take for granted our ability to “return to normal” both at church and elsewhere in society, something that can't be depended on if a health or mobility issue leaves you vulnerable. We already account for this in some ways; by continuing to wear masks after county restrictions were lifted we are keeping in mind our fellow members. We don't have all the answers, but we are able to listen and to take suggestions.

We do have some ideas that we've already facilitated, which include:

- Adding a “faces camera” so people on zoom can see the faces of people in the building.
- Showing the gallery view in the building at several points during the service so people in the building can see the faces of people on zoom.
- Creating opportunities for us to greet each other across the ether using these two views.
- Running a microphone to people in the building who want to speak (eg visitors introducing themselves) to be sure the folks on zoom can hear.

Zoom Inclusion Group

Besides the survey, you can also email Nathan at zig@starrking.org with your thoughts. Otherwise, look for the ZIG team in Zoom during coffee hour calling in from Fellowship Hall or from their homes after service to have a chat.

We look forward to improving everyone's experience for the ongoing duration of hybrid services, which very much looks to be the permanent way things work.

Humbly yours,

–Nathan Heigert, Chairman of the Zoom Inclusion Group

SoUllful Family Ministry

July Highlights

Sharing thoughts...

"Living in the moment"

In those moments in life where we don't quite get it right, look for those opportunities to loosen up those expectations that keep us stuck in the "plan." Children have a great way of being in the moment, and our children taught me that exact thing.

My story....

My plan was to teach the children how music plays a part in telling a story. I gave 4-5 five year olds, sliding whistles. They could explore their whistles for a few minutes, then they were to sit quietly while I told a story about a bouncing balloon. On cue they were to blow and slide their whistle once, either up or down, according to the story.

What was I thinking!!? The whistles were way too much fun to keep quiet in their laps. So, the exploration continued, loudly. Being the adult that I am, I stuck to the plan and moved the circle outside. The outdoors only encouraged the children to get up and move even more. Forget about sitting quietly listening to a story.

I took a breath, released myself from my expectations and suggested we become a marching band of sliding whistles. It was great fun. We marched around the grounds, blowing our whistles as loudly as we wanted. The opportunity almost missed was, experiencing music and movement as a community. We became members of a special marching band.

I am grateful for our children's presence.

Classroom Time

This month was busy. We started off with Donnie R. helping the children create gorgeous cards using pressed flowers. We explored making beautiful music with our very talented guest, Jessica, Mary Lou's daughter. We learned that different instruments create different sounds and sitting together playing our instruments created a community of "song". It was amazing to hear our children play their instruments.



SoUUlful Family Ministry

July Highlights (cont.)

In the children's carpentry area they hammered their way to create, planes, (with spinning propellers), and mini potted plant stands.

We were invited into the sanctuary for two special church services. The first one, we learn to breath deeply and feel our drumming heart beats. The second one, we participated in Glen Jacob's Book Communion service. The children shared with the Congregation, their favorite book and helped read a story.

Our garden continues to flourish. We shared our harvest with our church friends and with the South Parish Food Pantry. From the looks of the garden there will be plenty more to come!

Gratitude

The generosity of others never ends. SoUUI Family is truly blessed. Thank-you all for your participation, especially to our special guest, Jessica. Her music filled our hearts. I want to acknowledge our classroom volunteers. Your time with the children is greatly appreciated, Laurie M., Diane M. ,Lea C., Kelly H. and Donnie R. A special thank you to Donnie for your special talent of creating art using pressed flowers. Thank you Renee' and Darryl Ray for your wood donation. Our carpentry program could not exist without your thoughtful gift, especially Renee, who patiently cuts up her wood scapes for us to use.

-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 will 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	Every Wednesday 7:00-8:30 pm, on Zoom. Open to all. Visitors welcome. Contact: Diane Meyerson
Small Group Ministry	Contact sgm@starrking.org for more information.
Board Meeting	First Tuesday of the month, 3:00 pm 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.
Starr King Singers	Sundays before the service from 9:30-10:00 a.m.
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



August Birthdays

August 13
Al Murdach
John Gruver

August 20
Marge Schwab

August 21
Regina Fassano

August 27
Jennifer Koney