



The Flaming Chalice

THEOLOGICALLY DIVERSE • RADICALLY INCLUSIVE • JUSTICE CENTERED

Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church | December 2022 Newsletter



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SUN, DECEMBER 4, 10:30 AM

Intergenerational Service: Winter Wonderland

All ages are welcome in the winter wonderland! Join us for this intergenerational service with Rev. Ruth Rinehart and Family Ministry leader Lorie Miller.

SUN, DECEMBER 11, 10:30 AM

Mystery and Wonder

Our first source: direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder. In these transitional times, what sustains us?

Reverend Ruth Rinehart leads.

TUES, DECEMBER 13, 7PM

Evening Blue Holiday service

A contemplative and reflective service for those in the community who are still suffering losses, who suffer from seasonal sadness, or simply don't get into the holiday "cheer" and could do with less glitter all around. Multi-platform: in the sanctuary, and at the usual worship zoom link.

Reverend Ruth Rinehart leads.

SUN, DECEMBER 18, 10:30 AM

Light and Hope in the Face of the Unknown

What can the story of Advent and Hanukkah say to us as UUs in our time of preparation for a new beginning?

Mileva Lewis leads.

WED, DECEMBER 21, 7PM

Solstice Eve Service

Join us in a more pagan service, as we celebrate the darkness and behold the coming light.

Reverend Ruth Rinehart leads.

SAT, DECEMBER 24, 7PM

Join us for Christmas Eve

The 7pm service is adult-oriented, reflective and contemplative.

We are also considering adding a family-oriented service, at 5pm, if families want it! This 5pm service would be more oriented to the children.

Reverend Ruth Rinehart leads.

SUN, DECEMBER 25

No service today

A zoom link will be sent in the weekly newsletter for a beautiful Sunday morning Christmas service to view. And, thank you to all the many volunteers it takes to put on a service, giving them the day off for Christmas!

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From the Minister

Rev. Ruth Rinehart

Hello beautiful Starr King Unitarian Universalists! We are well within the holiday season now, and I hope you are taking care – of your heart, of your body, of your home and family and loved ones. Some of us love this season, some of us not so much. Some of us are surrounded by loved ones, some of us are grieving those who are no longer with us. Take good care. Reach out for support and love and help. Let your community know what you need. Reach out to others who might need to hear your voice. Know you are surrounded by love.

As your Interim Minister, I'd like to meet with every one of you, frankly, every member of this church. [Please click on my Calendly link](#) to schedule some time! It can either be in person at the church, or on zoom. I look forward to talking with you.



Congregational Conversations and Cottage Meetings. Part of the work of the interim time is conversations about your congregation: who have you been, who are you, what direction do you want to go in, what do you want for the future, who do you want for your next minister? We'll be doing this in large groups and small.

Starting in January, on most third Sundays, we'll have larger Congregational Conversations, in the sanctuary, from noon to 1:30, through May. Then, for smaller conversations (from three to eight people, other than facilitator/s), the members of the Transition Team will be facilitating gatherings. The hope is that everyone will want to attend at least one of these – they will be scheduled from January through May: mornings, afternoons, evenings, weekends, in person and in zoom. Everyone should be able to find one that will work for them. For these smaller Cottage Meetings, watch for schedules in the weekly newsletter.

The front of this Flaming Chalice points to the extra holiday offerings:

- You are invited to a Blue Holiday Service on the evening of December 13th, from 7 to 8pm. This will be contemplative and reflective, for those in the community who are still suffering losses, who suffer from seasonal sadness, or simply don't get into the holiday "cheer" and could do with less glitter all around. This will also be available on zoom at our normal worship zoom link.
- You are invited to an intergenerational crafty holiday ornament party! Saturday, December 17th, 1 to 3pm. Mulled apple cider, hot cocoa and cookies. It will be fun!
- You are invited to a Solstice service, 7pm, on December 21st. Also available on Zoom, our normal worship link.
- Christmas Eve is on Saturday evening:
 - We will enjoy coming together for a family service, at 7pm. This is an adult-oriented service: reflective, contemplative.

From the Minister

Rev. Ruth Rinehart (cont.)

- We are also considering adding a family-oriented service, at 5pm, if families want it! This will be fully focused on the children.
- Christmas Day and New Year's Day fall on a Sunday every 6–8 years, and this is the year. With the board's approval, we have given the tech team and all volunteers off this year. I will be sending you a link you can zoom into, for a service that morning, both Christmas Day and New Years' day. It is possible that the church will be open for a very casual gathering, coffee, hot cocoa, etc. We'll let you know if that is the case.

Be well, beloveds. Trust yourself. Listen to your heart. Ask for what you need. Show up for your community in ways that are meaningful to you.

I love you,

–Rev. Ruth

minister@starring.org

(720) 290-5715

You may schedule appointments with me by clicking [this link](#).



Announcements

Christmas Caroling

Fa la la la la!

Join us for a night of Christmas Caroling.

Saturday, December 10th at 6:30 PM
Cinema Plaza
1069 B Street, Hayward, CA 94541



A Special Event: 100K Trees For Humanity

Addressing climate change begins with one single seed. Changing the course of climate change started right here in our very own backyard. Starr King hosted an event inviting city officials, communities, local schools and cities, garden groups and caring loving people, to join us and our host Amos White.

At this event people gathered and took action. We gathered seeds from our own Mother Oak, sorted out the healthy seeds and planted them in small containers.

Our goal is to grow as many seedlings as we can to distribute to designated locations in the city of Hayward. Because of this event our hope for a better climate is becoming a reality. I am pleased to report, teachers left our gathering with all the supplies needed and a commitment from Amos, to begin a planting program with their 4th and 5th graders at their school, Cherryland!

If you missed this past event, no worries, there will be others. Look for upcoming dates in our announcements.

A special tree memorial for Bob Stortz's ashes was also held at this event. Look for the beautiful Sequoia tree on the south side of our parking lot. Memories of Bob were shared along with Karen Cook expressing gratitude for this occasion. Bob loved the outdoors and this church. She thought this was a perfect placement for Bob, along side "his" tree.

—Lorie Miller



Announcements

Proposed changes to Article II of the UUA Bylaws

The UUA's Article II Study Commission has released a draft of the revised Article II for our consideration. This is still a work in progress. A new version will come out in December and they'll take feedback on that, so that will be a good opportunity to share thoughts and feelings about it with the Commission. I doubt there will be major changes, though, so this one is still worth looking at. It shows the direction they're going.

Sometime in the new year the Commission will release the version that will go to General Assembly in June for the first vote. If it gets a majority vote at this GA (2023), it will come up for another vote at GA 2024, and if it gets a 2/3 vote then, it will replace the existing Article II in the UUA bylaws.

You can [read the existing Article II on the UUA website](#), along with some historical notes.

Below is the proposed text of the new Article II as it stands now. Note that the existing **Section C-2.1 Principles**, which contains the 7 Principles and the 6 Sources, has been subsumed into the new sections **C-2.2 Values and Covenant** and **C-2.3 Inspirations**.

Article II Purposes and Covenant

Section C-2.1. Purposes.

The Unitarian Universalist Association shall devote its resources to and exercise its organizational powers for religious, educational, and humanitarian purposes. Its primary purposes are to equip congregations for vital ministry, to support and train leaders both lay and professional, to heal historic inequities, and to advance our Unitarian Universalist values in the world. We will transform the world by our liberating love.

Section C-2.2. Values and Covenant.

Love is the enduring force that holds us together.

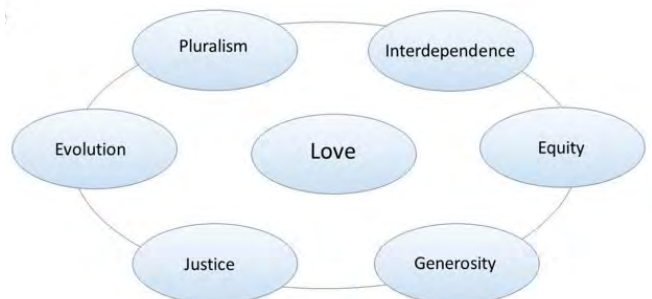
As Unitarian Universalists in religious community, we covenant, congregation-to-congregation and through our association, to support and assist each other in engaging our ministries. We draw from our heritages of freedom and reason, hope and courage, building on the foundation of love.

Love inspires and powers the passion with which we embody our values. Inseparable from one another, these shared values are:

***Justice.** We work to be diverse multicultural Beloved Communities where all people thrive.*

We covenant to dismantle racism and all forms of oppression within individuals and our institutions. We are accountable to each other for this work.

***Generosity.** We cultivate a spirit of gratitude and hope.*



Announcements

Proposed changes to Article II of the UUA Bylaws (cont.)

We covenant to freely share our faith, presence, and resources. Compassionate generosity connects us one to another in relationships of mutuality.

Evolution. *We adapt to the changing world.*

We covenant to collectively transform and grow spiritually and ethically. Evolution is fundamental to life and to our Unitarian Universalist heritages, never complete and never perfect.

Pluralism. *We celebrate that we are all sacred beings diverse in culture, theology, and experience.*

We covenant to learn from one another and openly explore the depth and breadth of our many wisdoms. We embrace our differences and commonalities with love, curiosity, and respect.

Equity. *We declare that every person has the right to flourish with dignity and worthiness.*

We covenant to use our time, wisdom, attention, and money to build and sustain a fully inclusive and accessible community of communities.

Interdependence. *We honor the sacred interdependent web of all existence. With humility we understand our place in the web.*

We covenant to care for and respect the earth and all beings by fostering relationships of mutuality. We work to repair the bonds we have broken.

Section C-2.3. Inspirations.

As Unitarian Universalists, we draw upon, and are inspired by, the full depth and breadth of sacred understandings, as experienced by humanity. Grateful for the religious lineages we inherit and the pluralism which enriches our faith, we are called to ever deepen and expand our wisdom.

Section C-2.4. Inclusion.

Systems of power, privilege, and oppression have traditionally created barriers for persons and groups with particular identities, ages, abilities, and histories. We pledge to replace such barriers with ever-widening circles of solidarity and mutual respect. We strive to be an association of congregations that truly welcome all persons who share our values. We commit to structuring congregational and associational life in ways that empower and enhance everyone's participation.

Section C-2.5. Freedom of belief.

Nothing herein shall be deemed to infringe upon the individual freedom of belief which is inherent in the Unitarian Universalist heritages or to conflict with any statement of purpose, covenant, or bond of union used by any congregation unless such is used as a creedal test. In expressing our beliefs, we do so in the spirit of love, in ways that further Beloved Community.

Peace and Justice Action Team

Notes from Nov 13 Meeting

Last meeting: November 13

Next meeting: December 11 after worship, around noon

All are welcome. Please join us!

Message sent to the Executive Committee about actions passed at the meeting:

Nov 15, 2023

Dear Executive Committee,

At the Nov 13 PJAT meeting, the 17 members present unanimously approved three resolutions we are asking the board to endorse. These are to:

1. Get another of the All-Inclusive Progressive Pride flags and hang it on the back wall of the sanctuary where we had a pride flag in previous years. They only cost about \$10.
2. Display the Pride flag all the time at the Church's front gate, not just on Sunday mornings. We believe this is an important statement about who we are. We feel quite strongly about this.

We realize there is a risk of the flag being vandalized. We can get spares, and look at a way to mount it behind the gate. We can also consider putting up a sign with a message about why we're doing it, that it's about love, and inviting conversation. The Brookline church where Rev MC was assistant minister before she came here did that with their Black Lives Matter sign and it didn't get vandalized. Such a message doesn't guarantee no vandalism; at the same time it's more of a "calling in," an invitation to openness, to understanding, or at least to dialog. [Ben's note: I thought of the Brookline sign after the meeting. If the board approves the idea, we can discuss it at the next PJAT meeting.]

3. Hang the beautiful Juristac banner designed by Kelly Heigert high on the back wall of the sanctuary, with the option to supplement or replace it with other justice-related banners for new campaigns.

We would appreciate the Board's consideration and support for these initiatives.

*Respectfully,
Darryl Ray & Ben Ogilvie
PJAT co-chairs*

Items presented or discussed

UU the Vote, EAIC, ICJJ – Bob Britton

- **Sheriff Oversight:** The Alameda Board of Supervisors have not yet implemented

Peace and Justice Action Team

Notes from Nov 13 Meeting (cont.)

Sheriff Oversight. In addition they have not committed to an independent legal council for any oversight entity which is very important. Instead it is planning a "retreat" on Dec 6 to discuss Sheriff Oversight under the newly enacted legislation - AB 1185.

Although the Board will not be voting on a proposal for sheriff oversight since it is billed as a "retreat", it will be the first time the full Board discusses and likely states their position on Sheriff Oversight and what has become critical to ICJJ - "Independent Counsel". We hope to turn out a substantial number of supporters in favor of strong independent oversight. I'll have more information on their Dec 6 retreat when it is calendared on their website.

- **Faith in Action East Bay and the Interfaith Coalition for Justice in Our Jails (ICJJ)** have called upon Attorney General Rob Bonta to investigate the illegal hires and halt the reinstatement of their police powers until reevaluations can be conducted and certified under the oversight of Bonta's office. So far the AG has not responded, however 41 of the 47 deputies who failed their psych exams have been reinstated.
- The next **BOS Public Protection Committee** meeting is on 11/17/22 at 10AM. There is also a BOS retreat on 12/6.
- "Care First, Jails Last" initiative was passed by the BOS in May 2021 and a task force has been formed but money has not been allocated. For more info see [Care First Coalition CARE FIRST, JAILS LAST - CARE FIRST COMMUNITY COALITION \(carefirstcoalition.org\)](https://carefirstcoalition.org)
- Bob recommended that folks contact VoteForward.org and help increase the turnout for the Georgia Senate runoff election. [Vote Forward \(votefwd.org\)](https://VoteForward.org)

Indigenous Solidarity – Ben Ogilvie and Darryl Ray

In a discussion of land acknowledgments, we agreed that a land acknowledgment is best done in an ongoing relationship of solidarity with local Indigenous people.

We are in relationship with the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band and that gives our land acknowledgment legitimacy and meaning. We would also like a relationship with the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe since we live in their territory. At some point we will ask their advice about our land acknowledgment, but not as the focal point of our relationship! It needs to be about *them*, and the kind of support they want from us, not the other way around.

We decided that before we reach out to the Muwekma Ohlone, we will educate ourselves by studying their very extensive [website](#) and reading books such as [The Ohlone Way](#). We will organize this like a book group or a class and invite the whole

Peace and Justice Action Team

Notes from Nov 13 Meeting (cont.)

church to join us in this important learning. We will also ask: *What kind of support do they want from us, and what are we prepared to do?* Their website has some very clear requests.

We will publish updates in the Chalice and/or the Weekly Announcements.

Here are some related sources:

[Rethinking Land Acknowledgments - Anthropology News \(anthropology-news.org\)](http://anthropology-news.org)

[Muwekma Ohlone Tribe | American Indian | Native American Tribes](#)

[Muwekma Ohlone Tribe - Land Acknowledgment](#)

Action Item (Darryl & Ben): Convene the first meeting to decide how we want to organize this project, and get it started.

Members of the project so far: Darryl, Ben, Danny K, Lea, Rene G, Tom W. Contact Darryl or Ben if you want to join the core group.

Last Minute Indigenous Justice Update – Darryl Ray

Congress members, Anna Eshoo, Ro Khanna, Eric Swalwell are co-sponsors of a bill to reaffirm the federal recognition of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay. In addition, the San Francisco Democratic Party, the Santa Cruz Democratic Party, and the Santa Clara Democratic Party have all passed formal resolutions calling on the region's congressional delegation to act now.

Immigration Justice – Reverend Ruth

Reverend Ruth led a discussion about what roles SKUU can play in support of Eden UCC efforts to help local immigrant families. The consensus was that there are ways individual members can help out; however, we don't have the size or bandwidth to be formally trained to offer housing or support to immigrant families in need in the way that Eden is doing. If individuals are interested in helping out they should contact Eden.

[Accompaniment Network - Eden United Church of Christ \(churchcenter.com\)](http://churchcenter.com)

SoUllful Family Ministry

November Highlights

Sharing a Thought....

“It Takes a Teenie-Weenie ‘Village’ to....”

After our Sunday service, Olly, Olly’s mom Kelly, and Liz were out in the back sitting at a table. I joined in the middle of their introduction to a very tiny baby ant, who was scampering around on the table top. Olly and Liz were discussing the proper name for their new little friend. Olly thought “Olly” was a good name, not just for this ant, but for all ants. Liz laughed and played with her words, “All thee ants would be called Olly.”

After a few minutes Liz and Olly thought the baby ant looked stressed and decided to let it go. They corralled the ant onto a piece of paper. Liz paused for a moment and said “I will be right back.” We all watched her walk off with Olly the ant. She was gone for more than a few minutes.

She returned empty handed. She was asked, “Where did you go?” Liz replied, “I didn’t want the ant to be all by itself, so I went to look for a community of ants. I found one out in the play yard. Now the baby ant will not be alone.” Olly listened to Liz’s words with much interest.

I too listened with intent and was moved with Liz’s compassion for this single teeny-tiny baby ant. It occurred to me that Olly was taught a wonderful lesson about the Web of Life. No matter how large or how small, we are all a part of the interdependent web of all existence. Thank you, Liz.

Circle Time:

This month we participated in our first Multi-Generational service. With kindness we were able to change a situation for a very thirsty bird. Adding rocks to a low water level provided the bird with a cool drink of water. We explored a live zoom circle from our classroom with our friends at home. We played a scavenger game. Both children at home and at church participated. It felt like everyone was in the same room. How fun. Lastly we are learning that the ground we stand on is more than just dirt and rocks. When inspecting it closer, it is a home for little bugs and a place for plants



SoUUlful Family Ministry

November Highlights (cont.)

to grow. On our exploration walk we found nature items to hang on our Dream Catcher.

Classroom

The children are learning “life” in our expanded dramatic play house. Going to work, managing the household and taking care of two babies required communication, problem solving, developing a schedule and supporting each other when the other needed help. It was interesting seeing this play unfold.

Winter Garden

Our garden has provided us with a delicious salad for a snack.

Gratitude

I acknowledge the commitment it takes to manage a children religious program. I appreciate all that take the time out from your lives to support our children. Thank you classroom volunteers, Kelly, Laurie, Lea, Corina and Diane. Thank you Cricket and Mileva for your thoughtful dramatic play donations.

Bless It Be.

–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 Starr King 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, 3:30–5:00 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.
Starr King Choir	Every Monday 7:00-8:00 pm. Contact: Linli Wang at music@starrking.org
Adult RE	(On hold) Contact: Mileva Saulo Lewis at milevalewis@comcast.net

We would love to celebrate your Birthday in The Chalice. If your special day is not already listed, please let us know the day and month of your Birthday. Send information to ddmeyerson@gmail.com.



December Birthdays

December 2
Nancy Bonner-Benson

December 12
Austin Klausmeyer

December 16
Henry Sprague

December 7
Mary Lou Schuler

December 13
Guadalupe Perez-Middleton
Zelma Nuñez-Borja
Stuart Fink

December 29
Glen Jacob