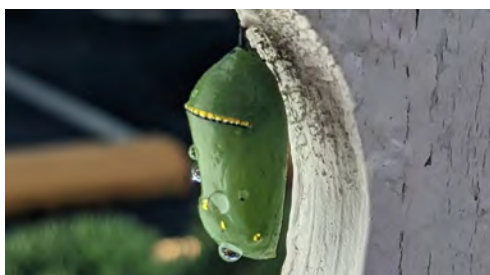




# The Flaming Chalice

THEOLOGICALLY DIVERSE • RADICALLY INCLUSIVE • JUSTICE CENTERED

Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church | January 2023 Newsletter



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## JANUARY 8

### Inside the Chrysalis

What is waiting inside you to be born? In this month of exploring Potency and Expectation, what deep transformation is possible? Join us for this intergenerational service with Rev. Ruth Rinehart and Family Ministry leader Lorie Miller.

## JANUARY 15

### What Are Our Unifying Values?

What values hold Starr King community together?  
What unifies us as a community?  
*Reverend Ruth Rinehart leads.*

## JANUARY 22

### Underground

You cannot always tell by looking what is happening. Join us as we look to weave real connections in church community.  
*Reverend Ruth Rinehart leads.*

## JANUARY 29

### Spiritual Practices for Unitarian Universalists

As peoples of many beliefs, let us explore together forms of spiritual practice that resonate with our hearts and minds.  
*Reverend Ruth Rinehart leads.*

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# December Highlights





# From the Minister

**Rev. Ruth Rinehart**

Still in the holiday season, but with this year drawing to a close, I hope this finds you rested. I DO hope you are finding rest this week, a slower week between holidays. My first winter holiday season with Starr King. I learned a few things about you.

The Blue Holiday Service, which we held Tuesday, Dec 13th, is usually a small service, as it was here at Starr King. Those who come generally appreciate its intimate nature, with its call to let grief be seen, let sorrow find its place, let comfort be given and received. We are complicated people, living in complicated times. May we allow the full range of our emotions to wash over us – not getting stuck, and not asked to be invisible or pushed aside.

Winter Solstice service was the best attended of the four holiday gatherings in December! We honored the longest night, and held the dark, as we welcomed the return of the sun and longer days. I appreciated the help of the worship team as we transformed the sanctuary from the usual forward-facing chairs to chairs set in the four directions, all facing the altar in the center of the sanctuary. Calling the directions, casting a circle, enjoying the beautiful Starr King choir, singing, poetry and reflection, and then opening the circle again – it was a beautiful gathering.

The Saturday night Christmas Eve service was special (lots of caroling, poetry and Christmas reflections), as was the casual Christmas morning gathering in Fellowship Hall to watch a pre-recorded service. It was interesting to me that more people came to the Solstice service than to Christmas Eve and Christmas Day combined! I hope to continue offering Equinox and Solstice services.

May you be well.

May you know the love that surrounds you.

May you know that you are needed – you – your unique and precious gifts.

Blessings,

*–Rev. Ruth (she/her/hers)*

[minister@starrking.org](mailto:minister@starrking.org)

(720) 290-5715

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



# Announcements

## Our Ministerial Search Begins

– Mileva Saulo Lewis and Marilyn Mosher

The search for a settled minister begins with us. This transition is a time of discernment: an opportunity to reflect on our strengths, potential areas for development, enriching and expanding spiritual presence, and determining “Who will we choose to be?”

All in the Starr King family are invited to participate in a series of important meetings over the next five months—small cottage meetings followed by larger Congregational Conversations. The results of conversations in the smaller groups will help guide the discussions at the full congregational meetings. These gatherings are designed not only to help us achieve a successful ministerial search, but also to listen to each other deeply about our desires for the future.

The Transition Fellowship Team, the group supporting Reverend Ruth during this time of transition and in her final year to attain Final Fellowship as a UU minister, will facilitate the cottage meetings. Dates and time will be provided in the weekly announcements and will be scheduled to accommodate a variety of schedules. At least one meeting per month will be held via Zoom.

Congregational Conversations will be held on the third Sunday of each month right after church and will be led by Reverend Ruth. Dates and topics for the Congregational Conversations are:

**January 15, 2023 – What are Starr King’s unifying values?**

**February 19, 2023 – How will we support Religious Education?**

**April 16, 2023 – Do we want a Fellowshipped UU Minister?**

**May 21, 2023 – Financial Stability and Stewardship: What is the way forward?**

NOTE: There will not be a meeting in March as we will focus on Stewardship and Canvass.



# Announcements

## Congregational Conversations & Cottage Meetings

**January's theme: What are Starr King's unifying values?**

**Congregational Conversation in January:**

**January 15, 12-1:30pm after Sunday worship service  
& other third Sundays, January - May (except March)**

Everyone is invited to join Rev. Ruth and the Starr King community to discuss important issues facing this congregation in our search for a new settled minister.



### **Cottage Meetings in January**

**Tuesday, January 3, 6:30-8pm with Darryl at Starr King**

**Thursday, January 5, 1:30-3pm with Marilyn at Starr King**

**Saturday, January 7, 10:30-12pm with Amy\* at Starr King**

**Tuesday, January 10, 3-4:30pm with Nathan via Zoom**

**Saturday, January 14th, 2-3:30pm with Liz at Starr King**

**\*Child care available at the January 7th Meeting with Amy!**

Cottage meetings are conversations with 3-8 other members, small enough for generative conversations in this interim time. This is important work for the future of the church.

**[Sign Up for Cottage Meetings](#)**

# Announcements

## **Staff Changes at Starr King**

Hello dear ones. We want to let you know of some important changes in staffing here at Starr King UU Church. Our goal is to hire a new Office Administrator who lives locally, to start mid- to late-February. The position, for the most part, will require in-person services at our church location in Hayward. The position combines the tasks currently performed by the remote Office Administrator position as well as the remote Zoom Tech position.



During the pandemic, our Minister, Support Staff and the congregation met in a virtual environment to do the work of the church. Post-pandemic, the needs of our church have changed as we return to in-person gatherings. More recently, it has become evident that Starr King needs an in-person Office Administrator with the skills of the current Office Administrator and Zoom Tech positions.

The transition to consolidate the positions was approved by the SKUUC Board of Trustees, in recognition of the need to host more and more in-person gatherings, including Sunday Services, meetings, and other events.

Emily Watkins, our wonderful virtual Office Administrator, has formally resigned from Starr King, effective February 28, 2023. (She is off to wonderful travel adventures beginning March 2023, hiking the Appalachian Trail!)

Beth Dombach, our wonderful remote Zoom Technician, has recently moved to Pennsylvania and started as a Head Teacher position. Beth will continue as Zoom Technician until a new Administrator is hired. In the future, she is available to work as a contractor for Starr King zoom tech support on an as-needed basis.

Our search for a local Office Administrator will begin this week. The Job Description will be posted on the Starr King website and public Facebook page, as well as other forums. Click here for the link to the job description. Please forward this to anyone you think might be interested. (It is best practice that we not hire a member of the congregation; we are looking outside the Starr King community for this new hire.)

Staffing changes are never easy, but we believe the right person for our community will find us. If you have any questions, please contact [Rev. Ruth](#) or [Diane Meyerson](#).

## **Peace and Justice Action Team (PJAT) update.**

PJAT will meet next on January 8th after our church service at noon.

Besides our usual updates, we will be discussing “Special Plates” for 2023 Worship Services. Please join us with your special plate ideas.

*–Darryl Ray and Ben Ogilvie*

# The Seven Principles

**What does it mean to have values, to have these 7 principles**  
by Ben Ogilvie

*We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote*

- *The inherent worth and dignity of every person;*
- *Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;*
- *Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;*
- *A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;*
- *The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;*
- *The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;*
- *Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.*



So begins Article II of the UUA bylaws – the existing Article II – with the 7 principles. What does it mean to have these principles? What role do they play in our lives and in the life of our church? *We...covenant to affirm and promote...* We like affirming these ideas. We like the ideas themselves, we believe in them, and we feel good about who we are because of them.

Promoting them, though – that’s a whole different kettle of fish.

What, for example, are we doing to promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person? Or justice, equity, and compassion in human relations? Are we doing anything? As a church? Individually? Do these principles have meaning if they’re not associated with action?

That’s my question to you. What does it mean to have principles? Is it sufficient just to be in favor of them? Is that what makes us UUs? That we are in favor of these ideas? That we believe in good things and have good intentions? Or are they also calling us to action? Are we people who are called to build the Beloved Community in the here-and-now by working to make these goals more real in the world.

*I’m not saying everyone should go out and march. That is not what this is about. I’m talking about something much deeper and more fundamental. I’m talking about learning, acknowledging, and caring that there are large gaps between our ideals (e.g. justice, equity, and compassion) and our reality, and then embracing practices of loving discernment and individual and cultural change that will move us closer to these beautiful goals. As individuals, as a faith community, and as citizens of the world.*

# The Seven Principles

(cont.)

The best part is we already know how. We've practiced it with our Zoom Inclusion initiative. Last summer we learned to our dismay that we were unintentionally sending messages to our Zoomies that they really weren't that important. This is an example of a gap between the ideal: We want our Zoomies to feel included and loved, and the reality: our words and actions were having quite the opposite effect, in spite of our good intentions. So we made some changes, and it's an ongoing process of learning, experimenting, getting feedback, and gradually getting better at it. We can apply what we've learned here to the inclusion of other groups as well.

Are you with me? You can respond to [ben@betho.us](mailto:ben@betho.us) or catch me after worship.



# SoUllful Family Ministry

## December Highlights

### Sharing a thought....

Land Acknowledgment: Where does it begin?

“What do you see?” “How does it smell?” “How does it feel?” These questions are asked during our children’s land acknowledgment in circle time. Neil de Grasse Tyson, an Astrophysicist, believes we should, “preserve that curiosity” that children naturally have when it comes to learning and understanding the world around us.

In circle as our children explore the freshly dug up, small piece of land, they answer those presented questions. As they explore, some with spoons, some with their hands, have said, “I see a little rock. a bug, a little plant, a small stick,” and “It smells good.” This ritual has lead our children wanting to contribute to our Land Acknowledgment, i.e. Olly found ice from a bowl left outside and added it to our “plot”. Another child has asked several times if he could go out and just dig in the dirt. He piles up his findings to share.

Is this not the beginning of connecting to our Earth and the land we live on to those who have lived upon it long before us? Closing with another Neil’s quote, with children whose curiosity has been encouraged, “will become shakers and movers of the world.”

### Circle Time

We began December with a Winter Wonderland. Our Inter-Generational service joined the hibernating Bear’s heart beat and “wondered” how winter felt, what it looked like and how to prepare for it. We continued our circle time in the classroom. We touched on feeling connected and loss during this season. We ended our month with a special guest, Allison Prout. She joined our circle and talked about Hanukkah while the children built a menorah.

### Ornament Gathering

We honored our Christmas tree with hand made ornaments. The process was heart warming, Christmas music in the background, sipping warm apple cider, hot chocolate with tons of marshmallows and finding an inner peace in the process of creating an ornament.



# SoUllful Family Ministry

## December Highlights (cont.)

### Youth Events

Jeffrey Melcher, Our DRE consultant has been busy with our youth and families coordinating, inviting and connecting with invites to their Dungeons and Dragons sessions, family game nights and a no rehearsal pageant on December 24th. Both churches enjoyed a shared meal at Round Table pizza(!) after a Sunday service.

\*January's Event: Mountain Top UU church Virtual invitation 1/14/23

[The Mountain Top: A BIPOC UU Community](#), [Colorado UUs United for Racial Justice](#), and UU Justice Ministry of California present monthly Youth Virtual Worship. This is a UU youth worship in a space that is meant to be youth-led. It'll be dynamic and engaging. Come meet or reconnect with other UU youth from around the Pacific Western Region. Look for a RE email follow up with the link to this invite.

### Family Celebration: A baby on the way!

Congratulations to the Salway Family and to Soren who is a big brother! Everyone, please meet Isobe, born Dec. 21, 7lbs, 10oz! A solstice baby!

**Gratitude.** Thank you all for your support! I am very grateful for our volunteer's for their commitment to our children. A special thank you to our guest, Allison Prout, for visiting our children.

-Lorie Miller



# 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.

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<b>Evening Meditation</b>	Every Wednesday 7:00-8:30 pm, on Zoom. Open to all. Visitors welcome. Contact: Diane Meyerson
<b>Board Meeting</b>	First Tuesday of the month, 3:30–5:00 pm 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>Starr King Singers</b>	Sundays before the service from 9:30-10:00 a.m.
<b>Starr King Choir</b>	Every Monday 7:00-8:00 pm. Contact: Linli Wang at <a href="mailto:music@starrking.org">music@starrking.org</a>
<b>Adult RE</b>	(On hold) Contact: Mileva Saulo Lewis at <a href="mailto:milevalewis@comcast.net">milevalewis@comcast.net</a>
<b>Small Group Ministry</b>	Contact <a href="mailto:minister@starrking.org">minister@starrking.org</a> for more information.

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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](mailto:ddmeyerson@gmail.com).



## January Birthdays

**January 4**  
Sherman Lewis

**January 6**  
Roy Dickerson

**January 9**  
Jacqueline Black

**January 10**  
Walt Korus

**January 15**  
Mary Swain  
Ethel-May Shaw

**January 16**  
Sandy Simoni

**January 18**  
Allison Prout

**January 24**  
Mileva Saulo-Lewis

**January 25**  
Debbie Frederick