



The Flaming Chalice

THEOLOGICALLY DIVERSE • RADICALLY INCLUSIVE • JUSTICE CENTERED

Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church | March 2021 Newsletter



CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Due to COVID19 shelter in place orders, the church office is closed until further notice.

Kelli is working from home and can still be reached via

office@starrking.org

For pastoral care, please reach out to Rev. María Cristina via email or phone (617)895-9267.

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

starrking.org

facebook.com/StarrKingChurch

Parish Minister

The Rev. Dr. María Cristina
Vlassidis Burgoa

minister@starrking.org

Office Administrator

Kelli Abatangelo

office@starrking.org

Church President

Jennifer Koney

president@starrking.org

Newsletter

Kelly and Nathan Heigert

newsletter@starrking.org

MARCH 7

Deep Hope Grows Here

We celebrate the many ways our Starr King community nourishes our spiritual journeys and keeps us connected. Join us as we pledge our love and support to our Beloved Community and plant seeds for the future.

Service led by Rev. María Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa

MARCH 14

A Mighty Girl!

International Women's Day is a time to reflect on progress made, to call for change, and to celebrate acts of courage and determination by ordinary girls and young women, who have played an extraordinary role in the history of their countries and communities.

Service led by Rev. María Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa

MARCH 21

Welcome Spring!

In early spring we can feel the promise of a new season in each passing day. Almost imperceptibly, the sun warms, the day lengthens, and the air seems pure and thin as it takes on the scent of freshly turned soil, emerging green, and soft rains. Spring is a time of awakening, of healing and renewal, of the dawning and planting of new ideas.

Lorie Miller leads

MARCH 28

Honoring César Chávez and Dolores Huerta

Mexican-American labor leaders and civil rights activists César Chávez and Dolores Huerta committed themselves to la causa/the cause: the struggle of farm workers in the United States to improve their working and living conditions through organizing. They founded the National Farm Workers Association and won important victories to raise pay and improve working conditions for farm workers.

Service led by Rev. María Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa

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February Highlights



Congratulations to Jim & Laura Otermat and Big Brother Drake. We can't wait to meet Baby William Henry!

Happy Wedding Anniversary to Mileva and Keith!

From the Minister

Beloveds,

As I admire the beauty of new Spring blossoms, I am reminded that last year in March we closed our building and began to navigate the COVID pandemic as best we could. Despite all the fear and uncertainty, we regrouped and with great leadership and a core group of volunteers, we moved forward together. Since then, we have not skipped a beat and actually have been able to strengthen our connections. I feel so blessed and proud to be your minister, especially in these times. You have shown up in so many ways to make sure that everyone in our community feels included, connected, and cared for. In this difficult and extraordinary time, you have engaged in ongoing creativity and ministered to one another. For this, I am deeply grateful!

As we approach this one year anniversary of the pandemic, I want to acknowledge the deep grief for so many lives lost to this pandemic. I also want to lift up and honor the many ways we have managed to maintain and breathe new life into our programs. I am grateful for our Board for their leadership, vision, and commitment to our health and safety above all else. While I miss seeing you in person, I know that part of loving you and ministering to you, is making sure that I do my very best to protect you and keep you safe. As I say every Sunday as we extinguish the chalice:

“We extinguish this flame, but not the light of truth, the warmth of community, or the fire of commitment. These we carry in our hearts, until we are together again...and I hope and pray that we can be together very soon.”



Mama Lily gets her first vaccine

From the Minister

In the meantime, we will continue to follow both Alameda County Public Health guidelines, as well as the UUA's recommendations:

“Because of our strong desire to connect once again in the sacred spaces of our congregational buildings, many congregational leaders have begun asking the UUA for guidance in decision-making about when and how to resume in-person programs and services. As your UUA leaders, who always serve in partnership with your own congregational leadership, we have articulated the following principles for thinking about when and how to go back. They are grounded in Unitarian Universalism's deep values:

- Our abiding care and concern for the most vulnerable, inside and outside our congregation.
- Accessibility and inclusion for all of our members and friends to participate in our congregation, regardless of health status, health vulnerability, or ability.
- Recognition that we are part of an interdependent web and, as such, our risk-taking and our protective actions affect far more than just ourselves. Our congregational decisions can impact other congregations and the wider community.
- Ethical treatment and expectations for our leaders and staff, minimizing the risks to their own health and well-being.
- Our affirmation that good science, coupled with our UU values, must be the basis upon which we make decisions about in-person gathering.
- Commitment to our mission, community, and theology more than ever, mindful of the spiritual demands of this transition.

In the midst of uncertainty, the UUA stands by our spring 2020 recommendation that congregations plan for ongoing virtual gathering and operations. This applies to worship, events, rites of passage, and more.

We strongly discourage smaller in-person gatherings (such as meetings or one-to-one pastoral care) in indoor spaces, even with masks. Even the best masks are not 100% effective in preventing the spread of the virus from person to person. Our values of safety and inclusion call on us to minimize risk. We do not always know who might be most vulnerable to being harmed, or killed, by this virus. And we do not want to place the burden of educating or correcting us on the people who are most vulnerable.

Our highest values and commitments call us to refrain from in-person gathering until the COVID-19 pandemic is controlled. We invite you to think of your congregation as primarily digitally-connected, with small in-person nodes that can grow as the pandemic subsides. Learn more about how you can embrace the opportunities presented by this time of virtual gathering.

From the Minister

Our recommendations for congregations are indeed more stringent than schools and businesses that surround you, for the following reasons:

- As a community that values inclusion and collective care, we don't want to create in-person situations that inadvertently exclude those at higher risk, or create situations that force those at higher risk to publicly identify themselves.
- Our decision-making must center the needs of the most vulnerable. The membership of most UU congregations is an older, more vulnerable population than the general public.

We are guided by science and our deepest values, not politics, when we urge congregations to not resume full in-person operations until concrete public health criteria are met.”

With Gratitude and Love,
Rev. Maria Cristina



From the Minister

Our dear Board Secretary, Dr. Mileva Saulo Lewis, was honored by Sigma with the Diana Dunn Service Award during the Hall of Fame Awards Ceremony for Excellence in Nursing Leadership 2021. Congratulations Mileva!

A member of Sigma since 1969, Dr. Mileva Saulo Lewis has provided extraordinary service to Nu Xi in various roles. She served on the Nu Xi Board for approximately 6.5 years in roles such as Chair of the Research Committee, President, and Past President and currently as Membership Ambassador. Being future-oriented, she was instrumental in the establishment of Nu Xi as a Charitable Non-Profit organization in California, realizing that becoming such in California would be to our benefit in raising funds for student scholarships. She saw this through and worked with Harbor Compliance in our first year to ensure that Nu Xi got off to a good start in compliance with state and federal regulations. Dr. Saulo Lewis has also been instrumental in program planning, focusing on the needs of new graduates as they enter the profession and self-care to improve the health of nurses. In the past several months, Dr. Saulo Lewis served Nu Xi as one of the lead negotiators helping Nu Xi to forge a collaborative venture with two other Chapters and Our Lady of Fatima University in the Philippines to offer programs for free CE credit through Zoom annually. This will help us to better serve over 800 members across Northern California and beyond. Also, Dr. Saulo Lewis is representing Nu Xi on the Region One Event Planning Committee where she will be a key speaker at the Conference in June 2022. Nu Xi is pleased to recognize her many contributions with the Diana Dunn Service Award.



Bits from Your Board

UPDATE ON SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION TO VOTE ON AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS:

This meeting was held on Feb. 28 and all the proposed bylaws changes were approved by the congregation. Look for a report in next month's Flaming Chalice.

Dear Members of Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church,

We had a lively, thoughtful, and respectful discussion with congregants on February 7 about the proposed bylaws amendments. The Board thanks all of you who participated! After our discussion, the Board considered and revised the proposed amendments to further clarify, among other elements, the quorum for the Board (now proposed: 50%), the term of the Nominating Committee (same as the Board: 2 – two-year terms), and the effective date for changing from a 10 member Board to a 7 member Board (if passed at our vote on Feb. 28, 2021, then for the election of this year/2021.) We've also added "Pastoral Care" to the list of "permanent" committees and removed the phrase that allowed the Board liaison to a committee to be the chair of that committee (because it is highly discouraged. Being a Board member is enough of a responsibility to take on!) You should have received a Constant Contact email notice already that included the full text of the revised proposed bylaws. If not, please contact me at jkoney@comcast.net and I will be sure and send you the revised version.

On Sunday, February 28, 2021 after service, there will be a **SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION** to vote on the revised, proposed amendments to the bylaws. We will be voting on the bylaws amendments in 3 sections: 1) Miscellaneous; 2) Nominating Committee section; and 3) Board of Trustees: number of members. In order to pass, amendments require a two-thirds vote of those active members present at the congregational meeting.

We look forward our members voting on the proposed amendments as we to continue to improve our business practices and operations, and work to better honor those who serve our Congregation.

In gratitude

–Jennifer Koney

President, Board of Trustees

Starr King UU Church

Bits from Your Board

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Looking for new members for the Starr King UU Church Board of Trustees and Nominating Committee The Nominating Committee is seeking candidates who are willing and able to serve and help guide our congregation closer to our shared values in this rapidly changing world. If you feel called to serve our congregation in this important way, you are invited to review the descriptions of responsibilities for the [Board of Trustees](#) and the [Nominating Committee](#), then fill out [this brief nomination form](#).

If you would like to receive these materials in another format (such as PDF or US mail) or have questions, please contact the Nominating Committee at noncom@starrking.org. The Board of Trustees and the Nominating Committee are important working organs of our church. The positions require thought and creativity. They also offer opportunities for deeper connection and the satisfaction of meaningful service to our beloved community.

Again. If at all interested, reply to noncom@starrking.org or send mail to: Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church, 22577 Bayview Ave., Hayward CA 94541. **Nominations will close on Monday, March 8, 2021.**

Zoom Fatigue

ZOOM FATIGUE ANYONE?

–Mileva Saulo Lewis, EdD, RN

I have to admit that my Zoom meetings are limited to one or two a week. However, recently, I've been on several all-day meetings and noticed I was tired. Was this Zoom fatigue? On Wednesday, I found a very interesting article in the East Bay Times entitled, *Research explains why you're wiped out: Zoom Fatigue*.

Author Lisa M. Krieger, summarizes research being conducted at Stanford University and reports the research of Professor Jeremy Bailenson, founding director of the Stanford Virtual Human Interaction Lab. This first of its kind peer reviewed article, was published recently in the journal Technology, Mind, and Behavior. Krieger describes the studies four major reasons for fatigue and some of the fixes that Bailenson proposes. The link to the full article is below and an executive summary follows:

[Note: I want to encourage your participation in all Zoom activities that our church has to offer. If however, you like others, have experienced Zoom fatigue, this information may be helpful to you.]

Reason One: We're too close for comfort – Everyone is staring at each other; your noticing backgrounds, our faces appear larger -

Solution:

- Exit out of full screen
- Use an external keyboard to create comfortable space

Reason Two: We really hate watching ourselves – After hours of self-gazing, we turn critical – the lighting, your hair style, sloppy shave -

Solution:

- Use the hide-self view
- Add your own photo

Reason Three: We're trapped in a chair which violates our basic nature – “Human beings are restless creatures”

Solution

- Using a camera farther away
- Turn off video – get up – move around – move your body

Zoom Fatigue

Reason Four: We can't see body language, so it takes more energy to communicate – The normal ways of communicating verbally and non-verbally are not available. Having to nod or wait or not be sure if someone is finished speaking takes extra energy

Solution:

- Give yourself an “audio only break”

She concludes the article by saying that corporations, schools, and government entities are reaching out to the Stanford Group to measure Zoom fatigues and more importantly, to improve this method of videoconferencing. Finally, she provides the survey being used by Stanford to measure Zoom Fatigue.

The complete article can be found here:

<https://www.eastbaytimes.com/2021/02/23/new-stanford-research-why-zoom-meetings-can-wipe-you-out>



Drum Circle

SKUUC DRUM CIRCLE MARCHES ON

The SKUUC Drumming For Spirit Rhythmic Music Event meets again on March 5, from 7 to 9 PM. In case you haven't attended recently, we ARE changing and evolving! We still include the "traditional" elements of our circle—casting the circle, honoring the spirits present by moving around the Medicine Wheel or cycling through the Dagara Five Elements, playing Rhythmic Naming or similar getting-to-know-you exercise—but then we expand our wings and go wherever the spirit takes us.

I (Kathryn) have now attended several training events sponsored by Music For People (MfP), and am about to start my third series of classes on playing the Native American-style flute as a spiritual practice, which is based on many of the same principles as MfP, so I'm very excited to introduce these principles to our rhythmic event. Here are some of the practices we are taking on:

- These events feature community music-making-in-the moment, not individual performance.
- There are no wrong notes
- There are no mistakes
- There is a place for everyone in the circle
- We come with varying experiences with music and life, but respect all those present
- We are free to find our place in the circle with whatever instrument or found object we bring, and free to play with any element of music--Rhythm, Melody, or Harmony--or any combination thereof.
- During any exercise or rhythm, people take their time to shine (should they desire), then allow others the same privilege.

Yes, this is vastly different from the musical events you may be accustomed to, but whether we recognize it or not, Music Is Our Birthright. So come and claim yours!

Here is the Zoom invitation for our March meeting—I look forward to sharing rhythm with you.

–Kathryn LaMar

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88985037615?pwd=YXkwbVRUNkJQNhWS0dZbVhYNGlMdz09>

Meeting ID: 889 8503 7615

Passcode: 668038

One tap mobile

+16699006833,,88985037615# US (San Jose)

+13462487799,,88985037615# US (Houston)

SouUful Family Ministry

February Highlights

The Month of February:

We explored the many different kinds of love we have in our lives; our families, pets, nature, ourselves, and the things we like doing. Love is special and so are we!

My Gratitude:

Thank you for your support and participation Bill DeSmidt, "The Cloud Guy". Thank you for sharing your love for nature and your beautiful cloud photos. We are now all looking up in the sky.

Ruth Hultman-DeSmidt: Thank you for your love of poetry. It inspired us to use our imagination and perhaps write about it.

Lea and Lavon: If it wasn't for your deliveries, the children would not receive their art bags. Love you all!!!

-Lorene Miller



Communications

Starr King is on Instagram!

[@starrkinguuc](https://www.instagram.com/starrkinguuc)

Instagram is a fun way to share photos and stories with other UUs and people who want to learn more about us. We already have 55 followers! If you're interested in following along but have questions about how, please email Emily at communications@starrking.org

Survey

How do you get your Starr King news? Please take a minute to answer these questions as we reimagine how to keep in touch with our beloved community. One randomly selected respondent will receive some fun snail mail! Answers will be kept completely confidential.

The link: <https://forms.gle/Dc7a7Skd32r6F8XL7>

Thanks!

-Emily

Past Services

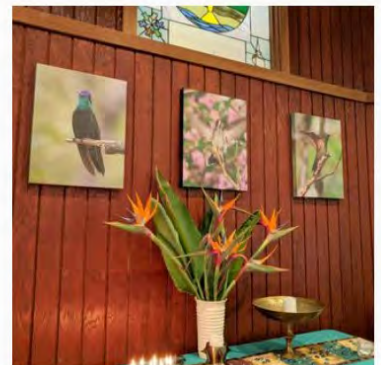
You can view some of our recent services below:

Christina Rivera Jan. 17 service:
<https://youtu.be/opZ3DpxcuUk>

Rev Leslie Takahashi Feb. 21 service:
<https://youtu.be/RbmAlk7VATI>

Instagram

Search



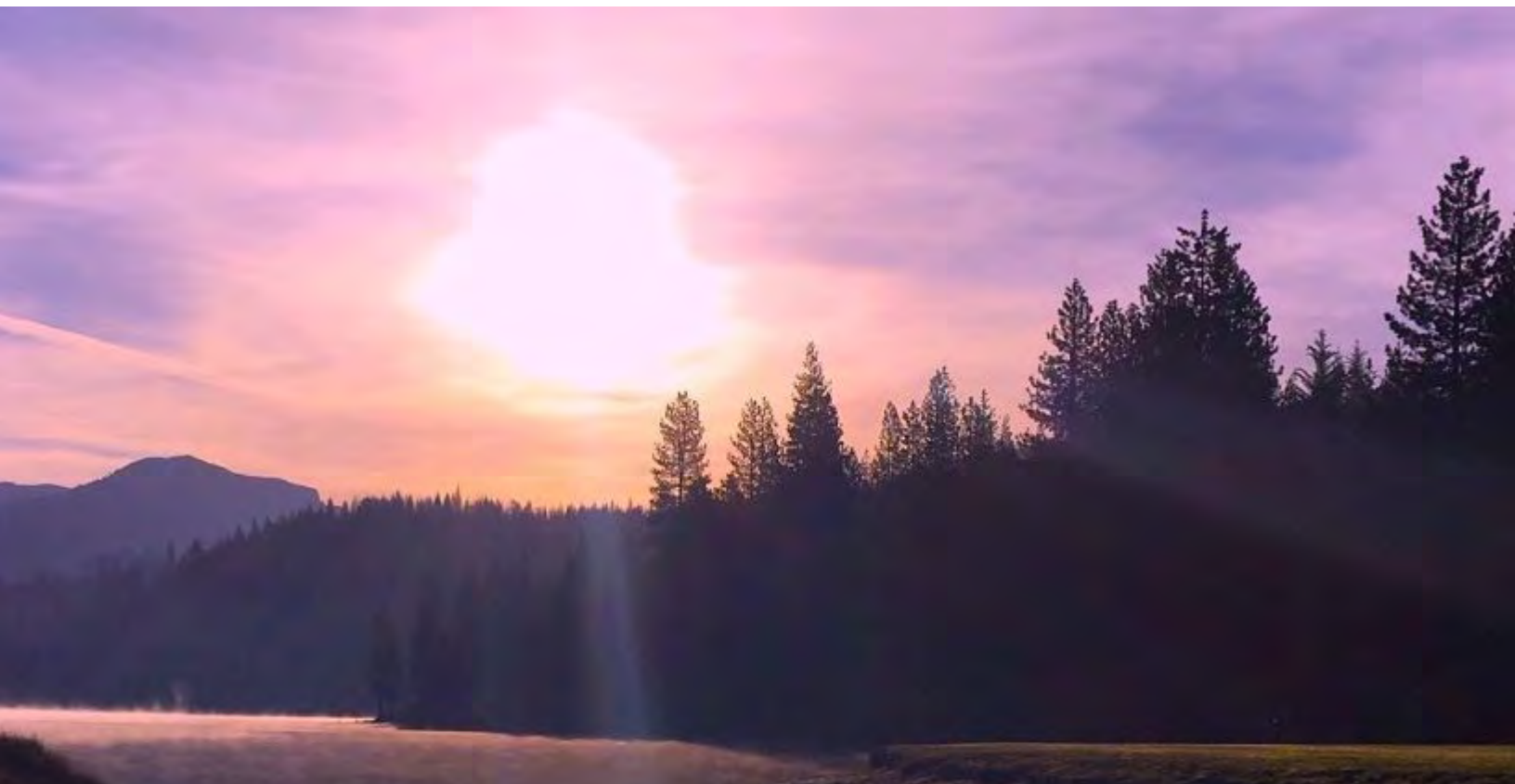
Women & Religion Retreat

**Women & Religion PCD
VIRTUAL Retreat via Zoom**
Saturday, March 13 8:30am to 8pm on
Theme: HANGING IN, HANGING ON

Registration will be open until March 1st. To register, click on the Google form [here](#).

We will share our lives in an opening orientation, small groups, learning sessions, a scavenger hunt in your home, Suffragist bingo, a memorial for Liz Fisher and Meg Bowman, and a closing session.

Registration is \$25. To be added to the retreat email list, send a blank email to: PCDUUwomen+subscribe@groups.io. Also check out our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/WandRPCD>.



Ongoing Activities

All in-person activities done virtually or on hold until further notice.
Please check the website at starrking.org for updates.

Drum Circle	First Friday of the month, 7–9pm on Zoom. For adults and mature kids. Contact: Kathryn LaMar
Evening Meditation	Every Wednesday, 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 Thursday of the month, 7–9pm on Zoom. Open to all. Contact: Jennifer Koney
Family Storytime	Every Monday 6:30pm on Zoom. Contact: Dr. Rev. María Cristina
Peace and Justice Action Team	Usually the second Sunday of the month after worship but not always, so check the church calendar and the announcements email to confirm.
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
Church Bookstore	(On hold) Open on the third Sunday of the month, after the service. Contact: Evelyn Cormier



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 17
Ruth Kuffin

March 22
Karen Cook
Kelsie Kramer Stone

March 24
Susan Dawkins Clark
Cara Prout

March 26
Sherry Thomas

March 28
Brian Johnson