



The Flaming Chalice

THEOLOGICALLY DIVERSE • RADICALLY INCLUSIVE • JUSTICE CENTERED

Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church | December 2020 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. Maria Cristina via email or phone (617)895-9267.

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Newsletter

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DECEMBER 6

Seasons of Light

We gather in community to rekindle the light of hope for peace on earth, in our nation, and in our hearts. We gather seeking comfort to soften the losses we suffered this year. We gather to worship joyfully and tenderly with our Beloved Community. This Holiday Season, let joy and sorrow join in the fullness of our living.

DECEMBER 13

Las Posadas

Las Posadas is a Latin American Christmas tradition that has become a Starr King tradition over the years. As Unitarian Universalists, we stand on the side of love, justice, and human rights. By re-enacting Mary and Joseph's perilous journey, we recommit ourselves to defending the rights of immigrants to flee from danger and seek refuge. This year, due to the pandemic, we will miss processing through the neighborhood singing Christmas carols and enjoying the wonderful community dinner afterwards. However, we will do our best to bring you a virtual experience that expresses our continued commitment to immigration justice.

DECEMBER 20

Christmas Pageant

Join us for a delightful pageant featuring our Starr King SoUUiful Families in the role of shepherds, angels, sheep, and much, much more! Come prepared to enjoy a wonderful Holiday celebration and to sing along to your favorite Christmas carols.

DECEMBER 21 Monday @ 7pm

Winter Solstice Evening Service

The Winter Solstice is a time to journey inward and reflect on the lessons, joys, and sorrows of the last year. It's also a celebration of the light and darkness in each of us. Join us for a service of readings, songs, stillness, and ritual.

DECEMBER 24 Thursday @ 7pm

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Inspirational music by our own Linli Wang and our Starr King Choir will warm your heart and usher in the holiday spirit.

DECEMBER 27

Seasons of Love

"Five hundred twenty-five thousand six hundred minutes. How do you measure, measure a year?" On the Sunday closest to January 1st, we'll gather to share creative ways to mark the beginning of a new year. Rituals will include reflection upon the year that has just passed; letting go of regrets and pain; hope for the promise of the year to come; and strength to continue building a more just, peaceful, and loving world.

Services led by Rev. Maria Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa

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November Highlights



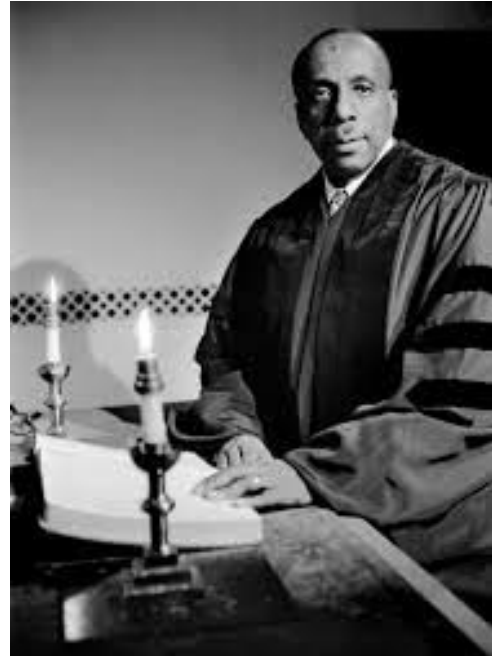
"So thankful for our little quarantine project! Jenny is due in December so we are enjoying our last few days of peace and quiet." #quarantinebaby #thankful #pregnantbelly @bespokeportraitphotography

-Kirk Klausmeyer

From the Minister

The Work of Christmas

*When the song of the angels is stilled,
when the star in the sky is gone,
when the kings and princes are home,
when the shepherds are back with their
flocks,
the work of Christmas begins:
to find the lost,
to heal the broken,
to feed the hungry,
to release the prisoner,
to rebuild the nations,
to bring peace among the people,
to make music in the heart.*

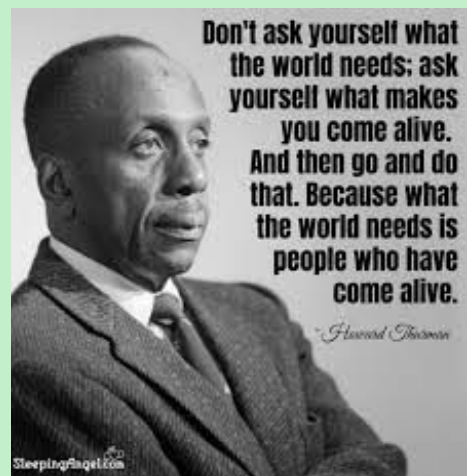


Howard Washington Thurman
1899–1981

African American Theologian, educator, and civil rights leader.

A Life of Radical Choices

Howard Washington Thurman played a leading role in many social justice movements and organizations of the twentieth century. He was one of the principal architects of the modern, nonviolent civil rights movement and a key mentor to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



From Rev. Jim Lewis

To the congregation and board of Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church,

It is with a mix of emotions that I say goodbye to you, at least in the physical sense. As many of you already know, I am on my way to Missouri to see to my mother's home and belongings after her death. After that, I will be headed onward to be with my partner in North Carolina.

It has been my joy to affiliate with you: participating in and creating worship, engaging programming, and beautiful music. I've been enriched and invigorated in these interactions. I've had the opportunity to be engaged in your vision of being "theologically diverse, radically inclusive, and justice centered" and experience you engage what that needs to look like as a modern UU church.

Thank you for your support both in my affiliation and participating in ordination earlier this year. It's hard to believe that was this year! And also know that I will see you again. One of the joys amidst the challenge that has been 2020 is that I will still be able to show up and support worship after my travels have slowed.

I look forward to seeing and hearing about all the new ways you find to engage both your spirits and our ever evolving world. With the continued leadership of your inspired lead minister, Rev. Maria Cristina, I'm sure that great things are in store.

With love,

– Rev. Jim Lewis



Bits from Your Board

Examples of White Allies*

Excerpts from White Allies – The Struggle for Racial Justice

by Drick Boyd, 2015

*(*Please note: While it is my hope to show examples and the legacy of Whites who have taken action for racial justice in their time, in no way is this meant to position White ally action as more important or a stronger voice than the actions of People of Color. – J. Koney)*



Anne Braden

1924-2006

A Life of Radical Choices

“Anne Gambrell McCarty was born in Louisville, Kentucky, on July 28, 1924 to a family with deep Southern roots...with an upbringing (that) was fairly normal for children in White Southern families. People in Anne's circle assumed they were superior to those who struggled with poverty... The discrepancies between her religious upbringing and the reality of racial segregation inevitably raised questions for her. However, by strictly limiting exposure to the negative consequences of segregation, children like Anne grew up believing that this was the way the world was supposed to be arranged; the “Southern way of life.” Later in life, Anne often commented that she had grown up in a prison of White privilege that kept her from seeing and interacting with the world as it really was.”

“During her two years at Stratford College (Danville, Virginia) she was met Harriet Fitzgerald, who introduced Anne to the works of Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, and other “modern thinkers,” but perhaps more important, she also was the first person Anne ever met who openly opposed segregation.”

“Because Anne attended college during the war years, a major topic of discussion on campus was the racist and anti-Semitic ideology of Nazism. These discussions allowed her to examine beliefs and assumptions about the relationship between Blacks and Whites that up to that point in her life were never questioned.”

“In 1944 on a trip to visit Harriet in New York City she had a life-changing interaction with an African American actress at a party. Anne was hesitant at first to speak

Bits from Your Board

with her, never having actually talked in any sustained and meaningful way with a Black person, but as they talked they discovered a mutual love of theater and other subjects, and Anne felt all her fears and misgivings wash away. She wrote: “Suddenly in the midst of the conversation, the realization swept over me that I had completely forgotten there was a difference in our color. We were no longer White and Negro—we were just two young women talking about things we liked to talk about.... It was a tremendous revelation... “Here for a moment, I glimpsed a vision of the world as it should be: where people are people and spirits have room to grow.”

“Anne married Carl Braden and they built a marriage that was bound by love and characterized by a deep mutual respect and commitment to work together for justice regardless of the consequences. One such example was their buying a home for a black family in a red-lined suburb of Louisville, Kentucky suffering the consequences of the backlash for years afterwards. For thirty years following Carl’s death she worked on building or participating in multiracial organizations.”



News from FESCO and La Familia

(Family Emergency Shelter Coalition)

First off, the **Adopt-A-Family** holiday program is on! At the time of this writing (17 Nov), nine families have been identified, and that may increase to 13. Each family requests specific gifts, which you and that family's other sponsors supply. All of the gifts must be at FESCO/La Familia's offices on December 10. In the past, Starr King's families have provided gifts for specific families, as well as money to be spent in rounding out the gift packages. Family sizes range from 2-8 individuals. To participate, contact Stephanie Miller at 510-886-5473 or at smiller@lafamiliacounseling.org.



Second, La Familia has the contracts from Alameda County to 1) expand the COVID testing program at the Eden United Church of Christ to four days a week, and 2) to operate the new Cherryland COVID testing site (corner of Mission and Hampton Roads, scheduled to be open daily, 9 AM to 3 PM). Testing will be free to individuals (they may bill your insurance), and results will be available in 3 days. FESCO/La Familia staff have volunteered to assist you in getting tested, if you want; drop by their office (second floor of Eden UCC, 21455 Birch Street #5, Hayward CA 94541).

FESCO Shuffle and La Familia 45th Anniversary

The FESCO Shuffle, held virtually in September, was very successful. Altogether, \$54,457 was raised from sponsors and pledges; expenses (including \$836 lost when the in-person event was canceled) came to \$4,797, yielding close to \$50,000 for the organization!

The La Familia Forty-Fifth Anniversary Event was also successful. About 150 people attended this virtual dinner and celebration--termed a "friend-raiser," not a fund-raiser--and learned about La Familia's many activities and agencies serving the Alameda County Latinx and social services communities. At least one attendee was surprised to learn that La Familia is so large that not all the employees know each other!

The legal name of La Familia, used for contracts, grants, etc., has been changed to "Alliance for Community Wellness," to reflect the larger communities served and planned for, while La Familia remains the common name used within the community and on the buildings. Jennifer Ellis, our liaison with La Familia, has a new job title, Chief Strategy Officer--congrats and kudoes to her! Sara Voigt, Stephanie Miller, and Lizzie Colima remain in charge of FESCO's operations, as well as taking on additional La Familia responsibilities.

– Kathryn LaMar

Rhythm Circle

RHYTHM CIRCLE IS CONTINUALLY EVOLVING

The SKUUC Drumming For Spirit Drum Circle continues, but has changed considerably because we are now looking forward to our eighth virtual circle, with return to an "in-person" circle dependent on the church's return to indoor services. We can no longer supply you with drums or percussion instruments (although members are free to help yourselves to the ones in the supply area, subject to ministerial and Board approval, with return to the church expected when SIP ends), but now encourage any musical instrument you wish to bring along that makes you feel good!

Because of the time-lag inherent to Zoom, most activities are conducted with only the leader/facilitator of that activity unmuted. That way, you are playing in an ensemble with that leader and whoever is present with you. You are encouraged to bring your own or favorite stories or poems to share, with us providing an ambient soundscape with everyone unmuted if you like; rhythms, chants, and songs to lead; or anything else you might need to bring your inner spirit, emotions, and dreams to the surface to share! If you prefer, you can provide your own backing track, I can choose one for you with adequate notice, or we can "wing it" with everyone or selected people unmuted. We have been having fun sharing rhythmic backing tracks for you to "jam along" with and hone your skills, and I am still constantly learning about screen-sharing, file-sharing via chat, and other means to communicate with you-all.

Because the church has requested that we keep church Zoom activities private, I host the Zoom sessions on my personal account, so they can be listed on Meetup and other community sites. The session is set up as a recurring meeting on the first Friday of every month, from 7 to 9 PM (now through April 2021). The Zoom link is [here](#).

Meeting ID: 889 8503 7615

Passcode: 668038

One tap mobile

+16699006833,,88985037615# US (San Jose)

+13462487799,,88985037615# US (Houston)

We look forward to helping you navigate these challenging times by providing a safe, nonjudgemental environment to share your creativity and spirituality—next meeting is December 4!

SoUUful Family Ministry

November Highlights

SoUUful Family Ministry

Gratitude fills my heart. There were many ways we expressed our gratitude this month, through art, music and giving to those who were in need.

A heart felt thank you for the guest speakers this month:

- Ray and Jennifer: Sharing music and song
- David Longfellow: Appreciating our pets
- Terri Owens: Supporting South Hayward Parish

Thank you

- Diane Meyerson for your donations.
- Lea Casini and Lavon Hodges for delivering our art bags

November's Food Drive

Thank you all for your food donations!!! Once again we have proven we are a caring community with open hearts.

-Lorene Miller



Support Our Indigenous Neighbors

Sign the Protect Juristac Petition

In September we dedicated a service to learning about the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band and their struggle to preserve Juristac, their most sacred site, from becoming an open pit sand and gravel mine. If you missed this service, there is a [4 minute video](#).



Our Board of Trustees and Rev. Maria Cristina sent a letter to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission expressing strong support for the Amah Mutsun and the importance of preserving Juristac; at the same time, more signatures on the petition are always useful. If you have not signed the petition already, [please sign it now](#).

In addition, if you belong to a group that might be receptive to this message, please contact Beth Ogilvie, beth@betho.us, 510-363-0612.

Thank you!

– Beth Ogilvie



From South Hayward Parish

On behalf of South Hayward Parish, I want to sincerely thank everyone who gave during our November food drive and Special Plate. The generosity of the SKUUC family has been extraordinary.

Our special plate raised \$3775.00 to: feed the hungry; comfort the homeless; and fight for social justice. The food collected has gone directly to the pantry shelves.

You have helped your neighbors make it through a tumultuous year. Thank you so very much.

– Terri Owen



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	Second Sunday of the month following Worship
Adult RE	(On hold) Second Tuesday of the Month from 11–12 noon on Zoom Contact: Mileva Saulo Lewis
Book Group+: Trans Inclusion for Congregations	(On hold) Meets every 1st and 3rd Monday at 7:15pm in the sanctuary. Contact: Beth Ogilvie
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



December Birthdays

December 2

Nancy Bonner-Benson

December 7

Mary Lou Schuler

December 13

Zelma Nuñez-Borja
Stuart Fink

December 16

Henry Sprague

December 24

Chris Selig

December 29

Glen Jacob

December 31

Karen Swain