



# The Flaming Chalice

THEOLOGICALLY DIVERSE • RADICALLY INCLUSIVE • JUSTICE CENTERED

Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church | April 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](mailto:office@starrking.org)

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

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(510)581-2060

[starrking.org](http://starrking.org)

[facebook.com/StarrKingChurch](https://facebook.com/StarrKingChurch)

### Parish Minister

The Rev. Dr. Maria Cristina  
Vlassidis Burgoa  
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### Office Administrator

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### Newsletter

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## APRIL THEME: THEOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

### APRIL 4

#### Easter & Flower Communion

As Unitarian Universalists, we recognize that our liberal faith is historically and spiritually rooted in Christianity. Therefore, many of us celebrate Easter and the Resurrection of Jesus, while some of us celebrate the more metaphorical kinds of resurrection: the rebirth of nature and the resurrection of dreams and hopes. Hallelujah for both! The Flower Ceremony, sometimes referred to as Flower Communion or Flower Festival, is an annual ritual that celebrates beauty, human uniqueness, diversity, and community. Everyone is invited to take a selfie with a flower to include in a slideshow that will be shown during the service. Please email your pictures to Rev. Maria Cristina at [rev.vlassidis@gmail.com](mailto:rev.vlassidis@gmail.com) by Friday, April 2nd. *Service led by Rev. Maria Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa*

### APRIL 11

Theological diversity and radical inclusion are parts of our Vision. How do those two aspirations interact to mold our shared worship experience? Several congregants will share their reflections. *Led by the Envisioning Team.*

### APRIL 18

#### Earth Day

Unitarian Universalism's seventh principle: "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part" makes this a day to celebrate religiously. Starr King envisions a world in which reverence, gratitude, and care for the living Earth are central to the lives of all people. We strive to inspire, facilitate, and support practices that honor and sustain the Earth and all beings. This year on Earth Day we will be honoring our faithful gardeners and groundskeepers who diligently work to preserve and nourish this sacred ground. *Service led by Rev. Maria Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa*

### APRIL 25

#### Interconnectedness as a Spiritual Practice

Many Unitarian Universalists draw inspiration from the cycles of seasons, the beauty and complexity of the natural world, and the intricate relationships between humans and all the other life on this planet. Some of us practice indigenous religions and Modern Paganism. All of these are part of the sixth source of our living tradition, "spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature." *Service led by Rev. Maria Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa*

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# March Highlights





# From the Minister

As people of faith, we have a moral responsibility to demonstrate our values and defend our planet and the gift of creation. Some of our legislators are people of faith and say they share those same values, but when actions differ from words, it's time to speak up. Thank you for supporting setbacks in CA.

*"I am the Great-Granddaughter of Dominga, the Granddaughter of Rosario, the Daughter of Lily, and the Mother of Erick, my name is Rev. Maria Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa and I'm a Minister serving the Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church in Hayward, California. As an indigenous person of color and as a faith leader, my theology and principles are rooted in the belief that we are all interconnected and that we have a moral obligation to protect Mother earth, Pachamama, as well as the most vulnerable people being impacted by the pollution created by oil and gas extraction. It's been 5 years since CA State Scientists recommended setbacks between oil and gas extraction and where people live, schools, and healthcare facilities. I am proud to stand in solidarity with frontline communities and hereby demand a minimum of 2,500ft health and safety setbacks NOW. Vote Yes on SB 467!"*

– Rev. Dr. Maria Cristina Vlassidis Burgoa



**GREENPEACE**

**79% of Californians Agree — No Drilling Where We're Living**

**SUPPORT SB 467**



# Bits from Your Board

March 12, 2021

## Changes to the Bylaws: Passed

On Feb. 28, 2021, we held a special meeting of the Congregation to vote on proposed revisions to our bylaws in three areas: 1) Miscellaneous editorial corrections and updates; 2) Specifying direction for the Nominating Committee; and 3) Changing the size of the Board of Trustees from 10 to 7 members. All three sections of proposed bylaws revisions passed. (Updated bylaws can be found on our website.)

The Board worked closely with the Nominating Committee and in consultation with the Regional UUA representatives over a period of a year and a half to develop and finalize these proposed revisions. While not undertaken often, it is good church business practice to review the bylaws regularly and revise as necessary. Bylaws are a living document that serve to guide our church operations. So, hopefully now that we've ventured into these waters successfully again, it will continue as a regular practice for church operations.

The Board would like to offer its sincerest thanks to Mileva Saulo Lewis for preparing and presenting the proposed revisions to the congregation both at the informational session and at the meeting to vote on the changes. Mileva served as liaison from the Board to the Nominating Committee and also has been responsible for formally recording and posting the final revised bylaws now that the amendments have passed. **THANK YOU, Mileva!**

We also sincerely thank Stephanie Smith and the Nominating Committee for their hard and focused work on revising both the bylaws section and the policies used in our nomination process. **THANK YOU!**





# Bits from Your Board

Lastly, the Board sincerely thanks those members who participated in the thoughtful discussions and the voting on these revisions – You were a stunning display of our principles in action! I especially appreciated the care and deep listening that you showed when reviewing and considering the proposed revisions.

We look forward to continuing our practices of caring and the democratic principle at our **Annual Meeting on Sun. May 16** – immediately following church.

Those are the bits from your board for this month!

In deep gratitude,

**Jennifer Koney**

*President, Board of Trustees  
Starr King UU Church*

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**The Congregation held a special meeting on March 28 and voted to support both the Amah Mutson Tribal Band in Protecting Juristac and SB 467 - End Fracking and Dangerous Drilling – UU principles in action!**

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Here's a photo from our virtual meeting with Chris Clemons, Legislative Director for CA Senator Bob Wieckowski. We met on March 9 with representatives from 350 Bay Area Action, 350 Silicon Valley, and others to urge the Senator to support SB 467 - The Anti-Fracking and Dangerous Drilling bill that will be coming to the Senator's Environmental Quality Committee in April. The bill has 4 components: 1) Halting new permits for fracking and dangerous drilling by Jan. 2022; 2) Prohibiting all fracking and dangerous drilling in CA by Jan. 2027; 3) Provide critical setbacks of 2,500 feet from operational oil and gas wells as critical health and wellness protection for communities directly impacted by the hazards of dangerous drilling; and 4) provide pathways for replacement jobs for oil well workers. Our own Reverenda provided a video in support of this bill and for the health protections it would provide to those communities directly affected by fracking and dangerous drilling. Look for more information and opportunities for action to come in the near future!



# Welcome SKUUC New Employees

## **Beth Dombach, Zoom Technician**

Our Volunteer Zoom Technical Team has been responsible for the technical success of our Zoom Sunday Worship Services for the past year. The initial team had 3 who worked every Sunday to present the service – Rene’ L. Castle, Kirk Klausmeyer, and Beth Ogilvie – and 2 who helped many congregants get started on Zoom – Claudia McDonagh and Stephanie Smith. In succeeding months, David Longfellow, Roy Dickerson, Rene G Castle, and Bob Simoni joined the team.



As time went by, the team started to get weary. They started wanting to attend the service more often instead of working the service. People found they needed to drop off the team as other priorities demanded their attention. In February the Board approved the hire of a Zoom Tech for 3 hours a week to significantly reduce the load on the tech team.

Please welcome **Beth Dombach** as SKUUC’s Zoom Technician. Beth began employment with us on March 16. She lives in Jackson, Michigan. On Sunday morning, Beth attends worship and often manages the coffee hour at her own church, UU Church of East Liberty. In the afternoon, she will be our “Media Tech”, working with one of our volunteers on our service. We are happy to have Beth Dombach on board.

## **Emily Watkins, Social Media Technician**

In the 21st century, when someone decides to visit a church, they look at the website first. They might encounter the Google local business page on the way to the website, or they might decide to check out the church on Yelp. If they’re of a certain age, they might look on Facebook or Instagram. A professional and appealing internet presence is vital to the future of the church. Doing it well could also attract a younger and more diverse membership.



Rev. Maria Cristina has been maintaining our Facebook presence pretty much single-handedly. The rest of the work was done by volunteers. In recognition of the need to enhance SKUUC’s presence on the internet, the Board of Trustees authorizes the hiring of a part-time, 3 hours a week, Social Media Technician.

Please welcome **Emily Watkins** as SKUUC’s Social Media Technician. Emily began employment with us on February 16. She lives in Middletown, Maryland, where she is in business for herself providing Social Media Services for her clients. As you may remember, Emily and her husband are former SKUUC members. We are happy to have Emily Watkins on board in her new capacity.

# 2021 FESCO SHUFFLE

*(Family Emergency Shelter Coalition)*

## HELP HOMELESS FAMILIES

### BY SUPPORTING THE 2021 FESCO SHUFFLE

Get on your feet to support FESCOO (Family Emergency Shelter Coalition) in its efforts to end family homelessness in Alameda County by participating in our twenty-fourth (24th) FESCO shuffle. This year's Shuffle is a virtual event from April 1 through June 9, 2021. During this time you can pledge as an individual or gather sponsors from your family and friends. You can also take a short "FESCO" walk in your neighborhood or join the virtual walk and log your miles online.



There will be a celebration ceremony on June 12, from 11 AM until noon.

Register and record your donations at [FescoShuffle.org](https://FescoShuffle.org). For help with or to get more information about registration, please call Stephanie Miller at 510-886-5473, or email her at [smiller@fescofamilyshelter.org](mailto:smiller@fescofamilyshelter.org). Your donations make it possible for FESCO to help homeless families gain stability and find permanent housing.

Special note for musical families: We are looking for a child (~7–15 years old) singer to perform at this shuffle closing celebration, If you are or know one such, contact Stephanie Miller at [smiller@fescofamilyshelter.org](mailto:smiller@fescofamilyshelter.org) or at 510-886-5473.

Your donations make it possible for FESCO to help homeless families gain stability and find permanent housing!

The instructions for registering and donating will be at [FESCOShuffle.org](https://FESCOShuffle.org) starting on April 1.

If you have a small business, you may be interested in becoming a Shuffle sponsor. If so, contact Stephanie Miller at [smiller@fescofamilyshelter.org](mailto:smiller@fescofamilyshelter.org) or at 510-886-5473. There are several sponsorship options, starting at \$250, and the perks include mentions and logos appearing on all shuffle communications for up to a year!

# UUA Decries Anti-Asian Violence

March 17, 2021

The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) joins leaders across the country in decrying the recent surge of hate crimes against Asians and Asian Americans. In this last year, violence and verbal harassment targeting this community have been exacerbated by anti-Asian rhetoric and blame.

We call on federal, state, and local governments at every level to send the clear message that such actions will not be tolerated. We are in solidarity with victims, survivors, and families who have suffered loss and pain.

This country has a shameful history of racist acts towards the Asian community. It includes the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the U.S. incarceration of approximately 120,000 Japanese Americans during the Second World War. Long-standing racist tropes about Asians as “other” are deeply embedded in the national consciousness. These stereotypes fuel current discrimination and we all need to reflect on how they can subtly shape unconscious bias or even outright hatred and violence.

This recent rise in anti-Asian violence has been incited in large measure by the xenophobic rhetoric and misinformation about the Coronavirus pandemic that was spread by the previous president. In contrast, it was gratifying to hear President Biden declare in his recent speech, “It’s wrong, it’s un-American, and it must stop.”

We know these acts of violence are rooted in the same white supremacy and hate that takes the lives of Black, Indigenous, and Latinx people. White supremacy culture works hard to pit marginalized communities against each other to prevent the formation of powerful coalitions. We must condemn media narratives that cast this as a “Black vs. Asian” issue. We need to affirm the interconnectedness of Black and Asian



Artwork by Pauline C. Cuevas



# *UUA Decries Anti-Asian Violence*

communities and all people who are against hatred—and recognize that this discrimination was born of the extremism that hurts us all.

This rise in violence is another result of systemic racism that is rooted deeply in the United States. It's a wake-up call that it's time for America to take a long, hard look in the mirror. We must confront ignorance with information and education. We must not tolerate the racist violence and the multiple systemic crises of injustice that the COVID pandemic has laid bare.

As Unitarian Universalists, we affirm that every human life is important and worthy of respect. In the midst of the forces of hate that seek to undermine our fundamental interdependence, we must reaffirm our compassion and responsibility to one another.

We call upon all of our religious leaders to condemn widely in their congregations and communities this anti-Asian violence and to partner with organizations combating these crimes. We must all respond to incidents of hate while also addressing the root causes of violence and bigotry.



# Ongoing Activities

All in-person activities done virtually or on hold until further notice.  
Please check the website at [starrking.org](http://starrking.org) for updates.

<b>Drum Circle</b>	First Friday of the month, 7–9pm on Zoom. For adults and mature kids. Contact: Kathryn LaMar
<b>Evening Meditation</b>	Every Wednesday, 7:00–8:30pm on Zoom. Open to all. Contact: Diane Meyerson
<b>Small Group Ministry</b>	Contact <a href="mailto:sgm@starrking.org">sgm@starrking.org</a> for more information.
<b>Board Meeting</b>	First Thursday of the month, 7–9pm on Zoom. Open to all. Contact: Jennifer Koney
<b>Family Storytime</b>	Every Monday 6:30pm on Zoom. Contact: Dr. Rev. María Cristina
<b>Peace and Justice Action Team</b>	Usually the second Sunday of the month after worship but not always, so check the church calendar and the announcements email to confirm.
<b>Adult RE</b>	<b>(On hold)</b> Second Tuesday of the Month from 11–12 noon on Zoom Contact: Mileva Saulo Lewis
<b>Choir Practice</b>	<b>(On hold)</b> Meets every Sunday from 9–10:15am in the Fellowship Hall. Contact: Lea Casini
<b>Church Bookstore</b>	<b>(On hold)</b> Open on the third Sunday of the month, after the service. Contact: Evelyn Cormier



## April Birthdays

**April 3**

Michael Noel

**April 10**

Karen Carrell

**April 11**

Frank Satterwhite

**April 14**

Georgia Gruver

**April 21**

Andy Matthews

**April 23**

Henry Wagner

**April 27**

Stephanie Smith

**April 28**

Karen Carrell

**April 30**

Bill Schuler