



The Flaming Chalice

THEOLOGICALLY DIVERSE • RADICALLY INCLUSIVE • JUSTICE CENTERED
Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church | October 2023 Newsletter



Interim Minister

Rev. Elizabeth Sollie

minister@starrking.org

Board President

Mileva Saulo Lewis

president@starrking.org

Office Administrator

office@starrking.org

Newsletter

Kelly and Nathan Heigert

newsletter@starrking.org

22577 Bayview Avenue

Hayward, CA 94541

(510) 581-2060

starrking.org

facebook.com/StarrKingChurch

instagram.com/starrkinguuc

October 1

Second Skin

Humans develop a sort of second skin to protect themselves. It is pretty hard to dwell in the land of inherent worth and dignity for ourselves, so we develop ways to keep ourselves safe.. This second skin, however, often leads to conflict. *Rev. Elizabeth Sollie leads.*

October 8

Blessing of the Animals

This Sunday we will bless the pets that bless us. We will be outdoors (and on Zoom) and all well-mannered pets are welcome to join us. Pets that don't relish travel or other animals are welcome to attend in the form of a picture. We will have a chance to share what makes our particular pet special. This is a multi-generation service and children will stay for the whole service. The attention span of dogs may be short, so we will plan on a condensed service. Feel free to bring extra snacks to share (human and pet snacks) and we will enjoy each other's company after the short service.

Rev. Elizabeth Sollie leads.

October 15

Our Radical Activist Ancestors

The religious right is a relative newcomer in US culture. The religious left dates back to the Revolution. Jefferson's stirring words in the Declaration of Independence about liberty and equality inspired generations of activists, people who believed that those words applied to them, and at the same time were keenly aware that the reality did not match the promise. Prophetic encounters gave our activist forebears the insight and strength to tackle this great injustice. *Ben Ogilvie leads.*

October 22

Let's Talk about the Climate

Like literally, let's talk about the changing climate and the impact it has on our lives. *Rev. Elizabeth Sollie leads.*

October 29

Day of Remembrance

We will create a ritual this morning to remember our dead. If you have pictures of mementos to share, we will create a small altar. If you lost someone in the past year, we will have time to remember them and time to speak the names of anyone still on your heart. Cultures all over the world visit with the dead at this time of year. *Rev. Elizabeth Sollie leads.*

WHAT'S INSIDE

3 From the Minister

6 Announcements

7 Ongoing Activities

4 The Real Rules
on Advocacy

September Highlights



From the Minister

Rev. Elizabeth Sollie

I have still just scratched the surface of getting to know you. I hope more of you will make an appointment with me so we can get to know one another. So far, I have found each of the people I have sat down with to be utterly delightful. What kind and interesting people you are!

Now that we have hired some staff, we begin to learn how to work together. In this congregation, the minister is the chief of staff — the boss. We would do well to remember that everyone has the right to only have one boss. Getting supervision from an entire congregation can be exhausting. So please reach out to Tanya, our new DRE and Emily, our new interim office administrator with your needs, but remember that if it is a large project or something outside of the scope of their duties, they will need to work with me to see how these things can be accomplished. Please also remember that they have their own list of work and priorities and respect that the timeline for getting things done may need to be negotiated. It takes some time to learn to work well together, so we appreciate all your kindness and patience as we learn together. This is an unusual circumstance that almost everyone on staff is new. There is a lot of creation in progress. What an exciting time for the congregation!

In that same vein, I would like to do some educating about services. Ministers necessarily plan services ahead of time and some distance out. I welcome your suggestions, but encourage you to start thinking into the future. If something is meaningful to you, I would love to try to incorporate it, but I need some lead time. Tacking things on that don't fit with the theme can leave everyone feeling scattered. So pull out your calendar and send me your suggestions for the future. I would also encourage anyone who feels a deep investment in the way services unfold to consider joining the worship team. That is where you will have the most influence and it is a fun team, besides.

Transition teams are getting underway. The last few weeks have been spent in populating the teams. Now we are in the Doodle poll stage, trying to set up planning meetings. Stay tuned. And don't forget to check out adult faith formation offerings. That too, is getting underway and I look forward to some rich discussions.

See you Sunday!



The Real Rules on Advocacy

By Bob Britton

You often hear that churches and other houses of worship cannot get involved in political advocacy without jeopardizing their tax-exempt status. Actually, this is only partially true. Within certain small limitations, a religious organization may engage in many activities that advance their values and beliefs. The UUA publication, "[The Real Rules](#)"* provides clear guidance on how we as Unitarian Universalists can advance our values and beliefs in the public realm. As Unitarian Universalists we are free to advance our values of care for our environment, an inclusive society, racial justice, tolerance, forgiveness and love in our places of worship, in the halls of government, in the offices of politicians, in the media and on the street!

The Real Rules lays out a 3-point primer that shows we actually have the ability to advocate publicly for our values usually far beyond capacity. Allowed is issue advocacy and lobbying. What is prohibited is commonly called – “Electoral Politics” but which the IRS calls “Political Campaign Intervention.”

1. ISSUE ADVOCACY

Without limit, we are free to advance our values on any issue through education and mobilization of ourselves and the rest of the world.

2. LOBBYING

Encouraging a city council, legislator, Congress, etc. to pass a particular law constitutes lobbying. Lobbying cannot be “substantial”. “Substantial” is determined on a case-by-case basis, however, courts and the IRS have ruled that lobbying activity constituting 5% or less of total activities is acceptable. "Total activities" includes the total amount of money, staff, and volunteer time that goes into running the organization. The total amount of time spent in actual lobbying is almost certain to be miniscule compared to all the hours and funds devoted to running the organization.

3. POLITICAL CAMPAIGN INTERVENTION

Congregations and their representatives can do nothing that advocates for or against candidates for public office or political parties, also known as electoral politics. This includes fundraising on behalf of candidates and donating meeting space, or other in-kind donations. Church sponsored candidate forums must be equal opportunity to all candidates. This prohibition applies to advocacy for or against candidates for political office or political parties. It does not prevent us from advocating without limit for or against ballot propositions, to run voter registration drives, or non-partisan get out the vote efforts.

–

**This is a summary and does not constitute legal advice. It has been adapted from an article from the UUA "[The Real Rules](#)"*

The Real Rules on Advocacy

(cont.)

FREE TO ACT AS INDIVIDUALS

The restrictions on lobbying and political campaign intervention apply only to a congregation as a legal entity, or to a person or group speaking in the name of the congregation. A minister or congregation member may freely engage in these activities as an individual. However, if the person(s) is identified by or likely to be associated with the congregation, it may be helpful to clearly state that they are speaking as individuals. A minister may, of course, identify as a minister while clarifying that they are not speaking on behalf of the congregation.

FREE TO EXPRESS OUR VALUES IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

The real rules illustrate that we are far from exhausting our right to political advocacy whether that is on the boulevard demonstrating for divestment from fossil fuel investments, at the jail protesting the incarceration of those suffering from mental illness, decrying racial disparities in the criminal legal system, or pointing out the huge wealth and income inequality in America. We can do all of this and more to spread our Unitarian Universalist values of love and justice. As the poet Elizabeth Alexander wrote in her poem Praise Song for the Day:

*What if the mightiest word is love?
Love beyond marital, filial, national,
Love that casts a widening pool of light,
Love with no need to pre-empt grievance...
Praise song for walking forward in that light.*

Announcements

Adult Faith Formation–Covenant

Thursdays at 6:00 PM, October 19th, November 2nd and 16th.

We will meet on Zoom. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9291456582>

Meeting ID: 929 145 6582. One tap mobile +14086380968

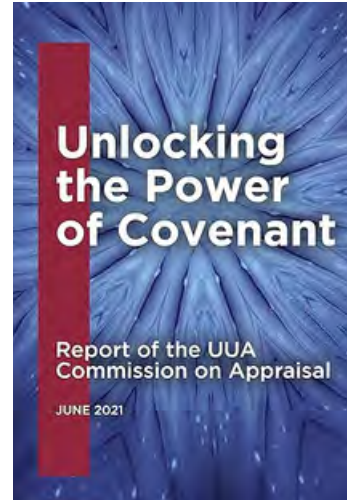
Our next three faith formation offerings for adults will center around the notion of covenant. As Unitarian Universalists we often use covenant to create lofty agreements, wax poetic and use it as a club when we don't like someone's behavior. We are a faith built on covenant, but perhaps a deeper understanding of what that means would benefit us all. Let's explore the topic through the vehicle of the Commission on Appraisal's 2021 report, *Unlocking the Power of Co=venant* which is available in print through the UUA's bookstore or digitally through [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com). Please let Rev. Sollie know if you need financial or technical help to acquire or access the book. We want everyone to be able to participate.

Participants will read on their own and come ready to discuss. Discussion moderators will be Rev. Sollie and Mileva Saulo Lewis.

October 19—Chapters 1-4

November 2—Chapter 5

November 16—Chapter 6, appendix and resources



Ongoing Activities

- Masks are optional.
- Eating & drinking are permitted in the Fellowship Hall
- Singing without masks is permitted
- Encourage gathering in all indoor and outdoor settings.

We will continue to provide:

- Virtual worship as an option as well as for meetings
- KN95 mask for your use

Evening Meditation	Every Wednesday 7:00-8:30 pm, on Zoom. Open to all. Visitors welcome. Contact: Diane Meyerson
Board Meeting	First Tuesday of the month, 3:30-5:00 pm on Zoom. Open to all. Contact: Mileva Saulo Lewis
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
Small Group Ministry	Contact: Terry Hunt (hunt.terence@gmail.com) or Mileva Saulo Lewis (milevalewis@comcast.net)
Adult RE	Check our website for upcoming opportunities: https://starrking.org/adult-programs