



The Flaming Chalice

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



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November 5

The Water we Swim in

We are all raised in a family and societal culture. It can be hard to see the water we swim in, but let's try this Sunday to make the implicit, explicit.

Rev. Elizabeth Sollie leads.

November 12

The Rest of the story

Where you grew up might shape how you perceive reality. This Sunday we will continue to explore the early messages that shaped us.

Rev. Elizabeth Sollie leads.

November 19

Generations

Our guest speakers, Ethel-May Shaw, Mileva Saulo Lewis and Keith Lewis, will reflect on a life that began in the 1930's. They will share what shaped their formative years and what they know so far. Generations sermons often surprise and delight.

Marilyn Mosher leads.

November 26

Stone Soup

Join our Director of Religious Education, Tanya Webster, and Rev. Sollie for an intergenerational service exploring the gifts we each bring to our community. After reflecting upon how we do more when we work together, we will sit down together for a bowl of Stone Soup.

Tanya Webster leads.

WHAT'S INSIDE

3 From the Minister

6 Announcements

10 Ongoing Activities

4 Bits from Your Board

8 Around the Starr
King Hearth

October Highlights



From the Minister

Rev. Elizabeth Sollie

Jim Key was one of the founding members of the Fellowship in Beaumont, SC. Over the years he got involved in regional affairs and beginning in 2013 until shortly before his death in 2017 he was the moderator of the UUA.

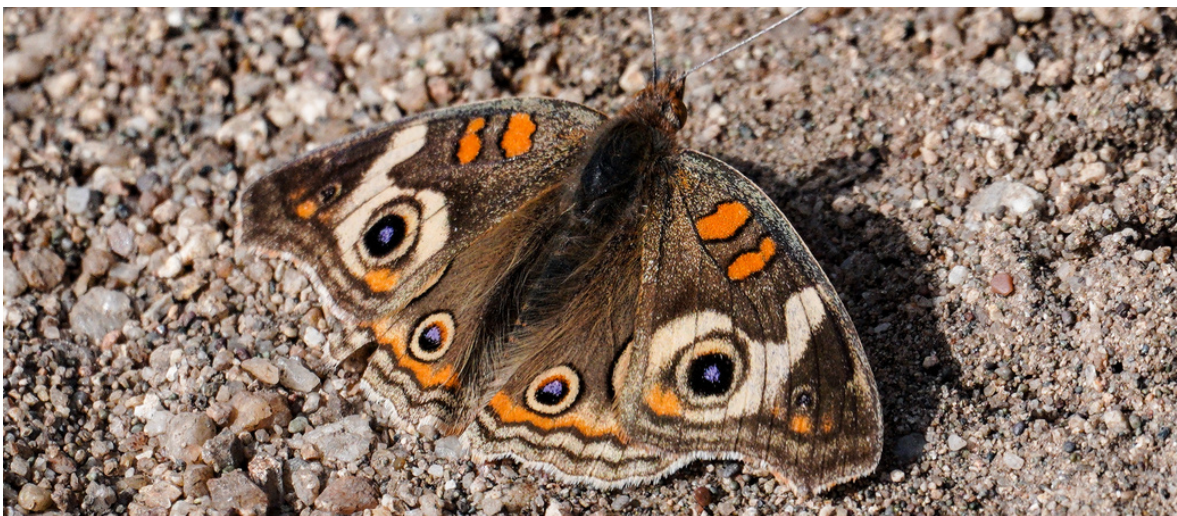
Somewhere along the way, I was gifted with his PowerPoint slide deck for a board training he did. I never experienced his training first-hand but someone who had was using his model and shared it with me. So, it is a little like a game of Telephone. Part of his model is that boards have three areas of responsibility; fiduciary, strategic and generative.

Basically, it is a model that encourages boards to shift from being managers to being leaders and it is not an easy shift for boards to make—especially in small congregations where management may not live anywhere except with the board.

The most mysterious leg of the model is the generative piece. The descriptions of generative thinking include words like cognition and don't readily make sense the way fiduciary responsibility does. I am beginning to think, however, we can distill generative thinking into **this question**, "What is the board paying attention to?" Of all the many short- and long-term challenges that face Starr King UU Church, where are we going to put our attention?

That might turn out to be a useful practice for all of us. What are we paying attention to in our committees, on Sunday morning, in our daily spiritual practice, in our relationships? What we pay attention to is most likely what we will manifest in the end. What merits our attention—what do we want to create?

I started listing some of the things we pay attention to which likely will lead to shutting our doors one last time and some of the things we pay attention to that are life giving and steeped in our values. Then I decided maybe it would be better if you had some space to think about that for yourself. What are you paying attention to in this congregation? What are you paying attention to in your faith journey? If what you are paying attention to was the sole process by which we created the Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church of 2030, what would we have become?



Bits from Your Board

November 2023

Terry Owen, Treasurer and Mileva Saulo Lewis, President

This month, and at the end of each quarter, The Board will update the congregation on our finances. This is the report for 1 July through 30 September 2023.

Financial Institutions:

- Our day-to-day accounts are deposited in the **Bank of Montreal (BMO)**. Previous to Sept 2023, these accounts were handled by Bank of the West. BMO acquired Bank of West in Sept.
- Most of our savings, and the Endowment are invested in **Morgan Stanley (MS)**. MS offers much better rates for our savings; and professional investment management for our Endowment fund.

OUR WORKING CAPITAL: Savings/checking as of 9/30/23 – *Funds available to manage the deficit

| | Unrestricted Savings/Checking | Amount |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| BMO Chkg | Operating expenses | \$44,889 |
| BMO Chkg | Off budget account (pass through) | \$12,127 |
| BMO Svgs | *Unrestricted Savings | 1,196.32 |
| MS Svgs | *Morgan Stanley Savings | 88,435.99 |
| | Total Unrestricted: | \$146,648 |

Restricted Savings: Restricted Savings are to be used only for the purpose intended by the fund or donor. For example, funds in the Minister's Discretionary Fund (\$1800.64) and Sabbatical Fund (\$5350.00) are restricted for those purposes; we are obligated to use this total of \$7150 as specified.

Memorial and Endowment: The account is held at Morgan Stanley. The total amount in the Memorial Endowment fund is \$633,005. The funds are invested in a variety of financial instruments.

Bits from Your Board

November 2023 (cont.)

Pledges for the First Quarter

| Budgeted | Actual | Difference |
|----------|-----------|------------|
| \$38,750 | \$ 22,616 | -\$16,134 |

People pay their pledges in a variety of ways; if you pay monthly or quarterly and you aren't sure where you are in your payments contact Rene' Castle, either by email (renesqrd@gmail.com) text (510-4435-0792), or in-person at church.



Announcements

Addressing Food Insecurity

SPECIAL PLATE for South Hayward Parish – 19 November 2023

On Sunday 19 November, we will be doing a Special Plate for South Hayward Parish (SHP). Our Starr King family is always very generous. Our UU values are at work in our community when we support SHP. Our cash donations help fund the Pantry and the shelters as we go into winter.

So, Bring your Cash or Checkbooks!

STAPLES FOR THE PANTRY:

Between the 5th of November and the 19th of November, we will be collecting the usual staples for the Pantry. Given that food insecurity exists all year long, the Board has also decided that we will do food collections quarterly going forward.

Here are some staple suggestions that are always needed, but you can be creative if you see a bargain!

REMEMBER: FAMILY SIZE ONLY!!

Peanut butter

Tuna

Rice

Beans

Pasta

Oatmeal

If you can't make it to the store, remember that a cash donation is always welcome.

Thank you so much for supporting SHP.

–Terri Owen



Announcements

Thanksgiving Potluck Resumes

Thursday, November 23 at 3 PM

We are pleased to announce that our tradition of Thanksgiving Pot Luck will resume:

JOIN US FOR DINNER ON TURKEY DAY!

Join us for this communal meal and we will all contribute to make our celebration a success. Sign up for the pot luck, or set up or clean up.

Roy Dickerson has generously agreed to cook a Turkey, maybe more than one if enough people sign-up. So, make your **RESERVATION NOW BY USING THE SIGN UP SHEET AT CHURCH** or by contacting Roy at royhds@gmail.com

The sign-up sheet will be in the fellowship hall on Sunday the 5th of November.



Around the Starr King Hearth

Faith Engagement

As we finish up the harvest season, I find myself appreciating the beautiful autumn here in the Bay Area. Each year, my family looks forward to these crisp evenings and our time spent reading and doing homework by the fire. We work on embracing habits that help us create Hygge (hew-ga), the Danish concept of creating a sense of well-being and inner contentment in our homes and lives.

Lately, I have been reflecting on what makes a "home." Besides cozy surroundings, Hygge is often approached by making our surroundings more cozy: using more light during the long nights, light or neutral colors, warm textiles, plants, and simple living. But Hygge also stems from our daily practices and routines, the customs and traditions that anchor us, and dear ones with whom we share our joys and sorrows. Creating a sense of Hygge in the home is good for the heart. I'd love to hear what brings you comfort and how you bring Hygge into your home.

In Religious Education (RE) this autumn, the children have been exploring "Homes." We've reflected on what our "family homes" provide for us, talked about thresholds and hearths, and reflected on the vibrancy and joy found in all the many types of families and homes. We also talked about how "animal homes" have many of the same purposes as ours, built a UU Kids' Den, and discussed our responsibility to take care of domesticated animals and the habitats wild animals need for their homes.

At the same time, the children have focused on our "faith home" here at Starr King. We've explored UU traditions, including chalice lighting, sharing joys and sorrows, and centering practices such as breathing - all of which the children helped lead. Other RE activities included walking a floor labyrinth, making 'hearth' chalices to use with family at home, and making our group covenant into a paper chain for our RE space. A huge thank you to everyone who works to support our Starr King UU families, with a special shout out to session volunteers Lea Casini, Laurie Matthews, Allion Prout, Diane Meyerson, and Grace Wengermarsh! I think the saying "it takes a village" is profoundly true!

I invite you to join us to look around our lovely "faith home" at Starr King UU. Unitarian Universalism is a faith of covenant rather than creed; one of radical hospitality and commitment to Beloved Community, rather than the need for perfection, "always-been-done-this-way-ness," or siloed interest groups.

The UU faith invites us into a never-ending process of learning, growing, loving, and giving. In UUA discussions I attend, there are two concepts I often hear mentioned: that "the church is the curriculum" and that all members, regardless of age or length of attendance, are nurtured by their "faith engagement," the term now used for "religious education."

Faith engagement and personal growth occur for children and adults alike in our shared experiences and the ways we choose to engage our personal faith in the UU community.

Around the Starr King Hearth

Faith Engagement (cont.)

The third UU Principle asks us to support each other's faith engagement and growth. Familiar faces, congregational rhythms, and a supportive community in our "faith home" can increase a sense of Hygge for our spiritual journeys. The next time we "greet our neighbors" in service, I invite us all to notice the contentment that can be found in the warm connections we are creating. May our Starr King community be surrounded by Hygge and comfort this season.

Warm wishes,

–Tanya Webster, DRE



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 |
