



STARR KING
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

The Flaming Chalice

October 2024

Newsletter

[View
Upcoming
Services](#)

October Worship Services:

Please see our website for an up-to-date listing of upcoming worship services.

From the Minister

Rev. Elizabeth Sollie

We are engaged now in the adult faith formation curriculum called "Create Theology Together". Theology is on my mind. There is a growing interest in Unitarian Universalism in process theology. For those of you who like tidy definitions and simple explanations, process theology will be a stretch.

Process philosophy was first articulated by Alfred North Whitehead, a philosopher and mathematician. Here is a sample of his thought process from a lecture, "Each actual entity is analysable in an indefinite number of ways. In some modes of analysis the component elements are more abstract than in other modes of analysis. The analysis of an actual entity into 'prehensions' is that mode of analysis which exhibits the most concrete elements in the nature of actual entities. This mode of analysis will be termed the 'division' of the actual entity in question. Each actual entity is 'divisible' in an indefinite number of ways, and each way of 'division' yields its definite quota of prehensions."

When my fellow seminarians told me they loved Whitehead, I was dubious and pushed back. I may not be the sharpest crayon in the box, but I was pretty sure none of the other crayons understood Whitehead

either. When quizzed, the seminarians would admit, “Well, I love Monica Coleman.” Monica Coleman wrote a book called, *Making a Way Out of No Way: A Womanist Theology*.

Coleman writes, “Process theology offers a postmodern theology based on the philosophy of mathematician-philosopher Alfred North Whitehead. In process theology, everything that happens is a product of the past, what's presently possible, and what we do with those things. Whether you are a quark, an amoeba, or a person, you undergo this continual process of sorting through these three inputs: what you inherit from the world, what's possible in your context, and what you do about it. God is the one who offers the possibilities to the world, urging us to choose the paths that lead to a vision of the common good. While the principles of God's vision do not change, the way it gets played out on earth depends on what is happening in the world. God takes in, or incorporates, the events of the world into who God is. God then relates those events with God's vision for the common good, searching for the best of what has happened in order to offer those aspects back to us in our next instance of living. In short, our experiences in the world influence who we are and what we do. We then go on to influence those around us. What we do also affects God and how God relates to the world.”

You can see why students prefer Monica to Alfred. Whitehead primarily concerned himself with process philosophy, Coleman with process theology and sometimes they are jointly called process thought. Coleman lifts up perhaps the most salient point of process theology—god is not in all respects non-temporal ([eternal](#)), unchanging ([immutable](#)), and unaffected by the world ([impassible](#)). Instead, everything that happens in the world, happens in relationship and God is in that relationship and is changed by it. I bring up the philosophy/theology/thought distinctions, because I think you can be a process theologian with or without a concept of deity. And many people have applied process thought to many faith traditions. Process thought can be integrated into a variety of ways of perceiving reality.

One of my professors described process thought this way. God is the lure to the good and the compost pile. Every living creature's experience becomes a part of that compost pile. God holds the history. And the compost pile is changed by those experiences and affects all that comes out of it later. Relationships, rather than atoms are the core building blocks of the universe.

I often set out to write a sermon about process thought to orient us all, but I always give up on it. I don't know that I understand it well enough yet. But there are elements that I really love including the idea that we

are co-creators of the universe and that what we put out there becomes a part of the whole. I also love the idea that everything, us, the cosmos, reality, god, the future—all of it is always becoming. And we cannot know with absolute certainty what that becoming will lead to. There is a lot of possibility in process thought.



Announcements

Join Us for a Very Important Conversation!

Sunday, 6 October 2024
12:00 Noon to 1:30 pm Pot Luck

Dear Beloved Community,

As we look toward the future and the exciting process of finding a new minister, we invite you to join us in engaging, reflective conversations.

Why Participate?

This is more than just a meeting—it's a unique opportunity to actively participate in the process that will shape our future. Your voice is essential; this is a way to share your thoughts in an inclusive, thoughtful environment. Whether you've been with us for years or are new to the

congregation, your input will help us define the leadership we need for the journey ahead.

What to Expect:

Enjoyable conversations using the World Café method. The World Café is a simple yet powerful conversational process that brings people together to explore meaningful questions in a relaxed and informal setting. It emphasizes deep listening and connecting ideas across small group discussions.

Together, we'll tap into our community's collective wisdom, ensuring everyone has a voice in this vital moment. This method aligns with our Unitarian Universalist principles of inclusivity, shared wisdom, and respect for all voices. It's a chance for every congregation member to shape what we want our spiritual leadership to look like in the coming years.

How Does It Work?

In a welcoming, relaxed atmosphere, we will have meaningful conversations with fellow congregants to answer the following questions for our search.

- What does the congregation hope the minister will focus on in the next ministry partnership?
- What work is slow, stuck, or left undone within the congregation?
- How can the minister best build trust with the congregation? How could a minister break trust in your congregation?
- What are the current sources of pride for your congregation?

Small Group Conversations:

We'll gather in small groups and discuss specific questions about our desired qualities in our next minister. Before each conversation, you will be invited to write down your insights first to ensure others' perspectives do not influence your thoughts. This practice encourages deeper reflection and guards against bias.

Rotation and Idea Exchange:

After 15 minutes, participants will move to new tables to discuss new questions with different people. This rotation is designed to bring fresh perspectives to each discussion and build on the ideas shared earlier.

Visual Recording:

Each table will have chart paper to record key ideas. These visual notes will help us track common themes and new insights as they emerge throughout the conversation.

Bringing It All Together:

At the end of the event, we'll gather as a large group to share what we've discovered, reflect on our discussions, and identify the qualities that resonate most deeply with our community.

Let's Gather in Conversation—Together!

As we embrace this journey of change and renewal, we ask you to bring your entire self to this conversation. The World Café will provide a space for each of us to listen, speak, and dream about the future of our congregation.

In faith and community,
The Ministerial Search Committee
-Diane Meyerson, Bob Britton, Zelma Nunez-Borja, Keith Lewis, & Grace Wengermarsh

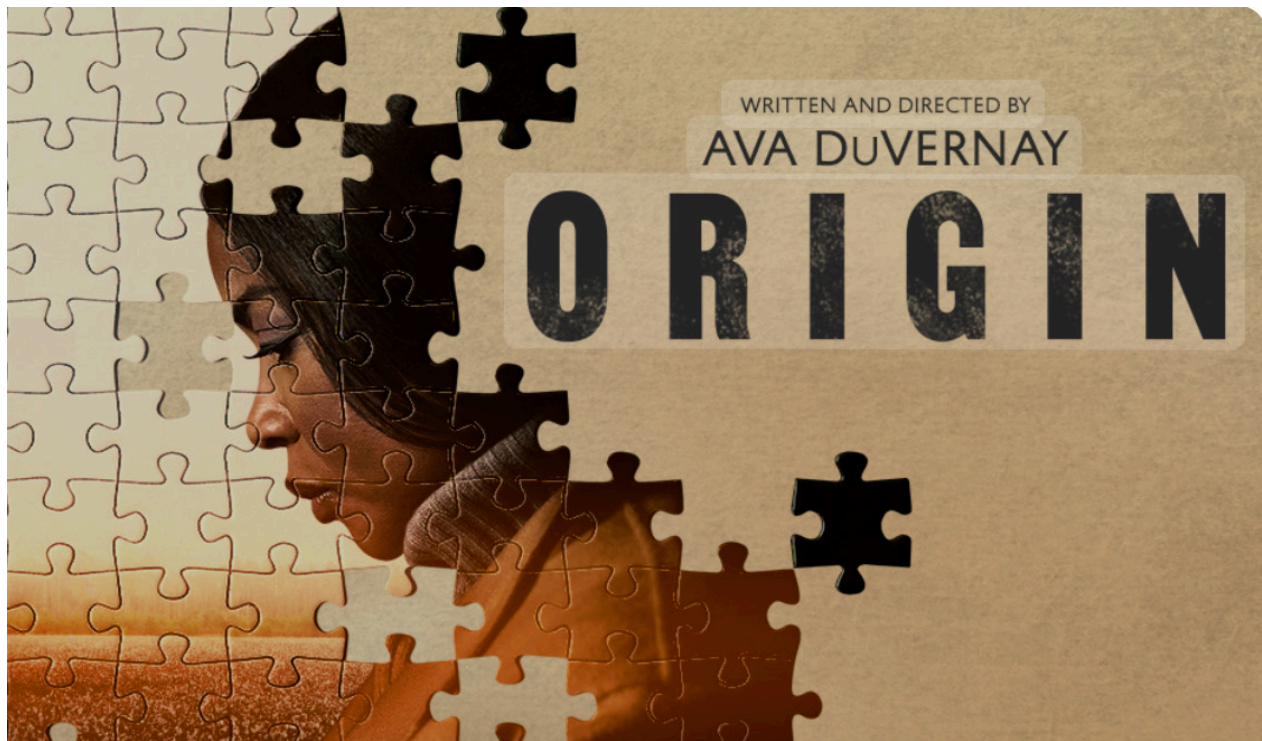


Anti-Racist Resources

A series from our Board's ARAOMC (anti-racism anti-oppression multiculturalism) subcommittee and church members. This month Grace Wengermarsh recommends the film *Origin* by Ava DuVernay: “*Origin*, directed by Ava DuVernay, is a poignant exploration of the impact of systemic racism and injustice through the lens of a personal narrative. The film follows the journey of Isabel Wilkerson, inspired by her life in civil rights activism and a writer, as she grapples with her identity and the historical legacy of oppression. Through her experiences, the story delves into themes of resilience, the quest for truth, and the power of storytelling in the face of adversity. It captures the emotional and societal complexities of confronting the past while striving for a better future, making it a profound reflection on the ongoing struggle for equality and justice.

I enjoyed the movie because of how personal it felt. The storytelling made the issues tangible and relatable, humanizing the struggle against racism.”

-Grace Wengermarsh



Around the Starr King Hearth

Tanya Webster

October will be a busy and fun month for our Starr King families! Sunday mornings continue with lessons and activities from the Soul Matters series. This month, the theme centers on the practice of Deep Listening. April Rosario, a Soul Matters DRE, explains more about this Soul Matters series, and theme of Deep Listening:

"This year's overarching frame is The Practices of Our Faith. We're using this frame to focus on how Unitarian Universalism is a lived faith that inspires us to act, live, and love our values out in the world. Or, to put it another way, we're diving into our long-loved commitment to "deeds, not creeds." Our frame of practices is also a way for us to connect to our UUA's new core value of love, with each of our monthly themes being framed as a practice that helps us embody love in our daily lives.

"With all this in mind, this October packet explores the practice of Deep Listening... Here are a few things to keep in mind as you work with these sessions:

- Deep Listening brings us into the realm of compassion by helping us hear others without judgement and enabling us to listen to the

calls of our own hearts.

- Listening is a social justice practice. It invites us to listen to those whose voices are often marginalized, thereby enabling us to view the world differently and to call others to do the same.
- Listening is so much more than what we do with our ears. A major goal this month is to help kids understand that deep Listening asks us to get ourselves out of the way and put others first, and in doing that, we center love in our communication with others.”





Ongoing Activities

Children & Youth

Children meet every Sunday from 10:30-11:30am in person. Youth meet Wednesdays 7:00-8:00pm on Zoom. Contact: [Tanya Webster](#)

Evening Meditation

On vacation for August. Starting on September 4th: every Wednesday 7-8:30 pm, on Zoom. Open to all. Visitors welcome. Contact: [Diane Meyerson](#)

Board Meeting

First Tuesday of the month, 4:00–5:30 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 7:15-8:15 pm. Contact: [Linli Wang](#)

Adult RE

Check our website for upcoming opportunities: <https://starrking.org/adult-programs>

Visit Church Center

View Our Calendar

Notice anything new? Yes - the monthly newsletter! Please let our office administrator Emily know if you have any accessibility challenges with the new format: office@starrking.org

Contact Us!

Forward Email

Leave us a Review



Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church is a member congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association and a certified Welcoming Congregation. We welcome every part of your identity, background, and experiences.

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