



# The Flaming

# Chalice

NEWSLETTER OF STARR KING UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH MARCH 2008

## A Month of Sundays

### March Celebration Previews

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#### Two Sunday Services at 9:30 A.M. & 11 A.M.

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- 2:** *The Life That Is Waiting for Us* (Rev. Katie Kandarian) Steven Sondheim wrote the play *Into the Woods* to remind us that happily ever after isn't always. How might we rewrite our dreams to create happy endings?

Please plan to stay after Second Service for the RE Brainstorming Session. What should our Religious Education program look like in five years? *ALL AGES* are invited to share ideas on what makes a great RE program. *See Page 3.*

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#### Daylight Savings Begins 9 March: *Set Your Clock FORWARD*

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- 9:** *Peace & Celebration* (Carol Bodeau & Rev. Katie Kandarian) Celebration Sunday: We'll joyfully celebrate sharing in this community through our pledged financial support. Looking to the past and to the future, we ask, "What have we got to celebrate this year in the life of our community?" In what ways does Starr King UU Church bring peace and joy to us individually and to our world? *Chalice Deadline.*

March 9 is Celebration Sunday. Please come prepared to sign your Pledge Card for 2008-2009. Reception to follow. *See Page 4.*

- 16:** *A Moveable Feast* (Carol Bodeau) On the last Sunday in the season of Lent that precedes Easter, we will explore the meaning of Palm Sunday in a creative worship format. UUs are increasingly exploring contemporary worship forms that include movement, lots of special music and dynamic ritual. How can these new ideas enliven our ritual practice and our shared worship? *Bookstore Open.*
- 23:** *What to Say When the Ducks Show Up* (Rev. Katie Kandarian & Carol Bodeau) **\*\*INTERGENERATIONAL SERVICE\*\*** This Easter Sunday we'll share our annual Flower Communion and ask the question, *Are we ready for the unexpected?* Please bring a flower to share, and if you're younger, be ready to find Easter eggs.
- 30:** *Spiritual or Religious?* (Rev. Katie Kandarian) *I'm spiritual—not religious*, say many. What exactly are they getting at? Is one good, the other bad, one free, the other burdened? What are you? Today's special collection will go to the work of the California UU Legislative Ministry.



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# Katie's Bay View

Rev. Katie Kandarian

## Peace & Celebration

*There can be no vulnerability without risk; there can be no community without vulnerability; there can be no peace, and ultimately no life, without community.*

—M. Scott Peck

Easter comes early this year, as does Daylight Savings. On the very morning that we spring forward and bound out of bed, we are invited to attend our Celebration Sunday, at which we celebrate our religious and spiritual community with our pledged financial support.

If we've begun to open our eyes this season leading to Spring and Easter, we might have noticed around us and experienced for ourselves some of that transcending mystery and wonder that exists in our world, and especially in our community.

Through attending our Vigils of Caring, where we meet in a different Hayward location each Friday to remember someone who has died as a result of violence, I have begun to open my own eyes. Small as these experiences may seem, they inspire me start to think and to care. As we meet at the train tracks with the Amtrak streaking by, I wonder what we might do to help keep our youth safe as they walk to school in the morning. When we gather at the neighborhood shelter after a fatal beating, with the words *blessed are the poor*, I wonder, how do we help our people who are homeless, those who have fallen on hard times due to addiction, mental illness or the sheer demands of the high cost of living in the Bay Area? So we meet at our South Hayward Parish board meetings to attempt to uncover solutions.

Our UUA president has invited our congregations to work for peace again this year. There are so many ways we can do this, beginning with the work of South Hayward Parish or our congregation's Social Justice committee or our California UU Legislative Ministry.

We can begin to work for peace through direct experience of the world in which we live, through supporting our community, our Starr King congregation. In the words of M. Scott Peck, *there can be no peace, and ultimately no life, without community*. We have so much to celebrate this spring: *this* community, our larger faith and our ability to have experiences and to share them with each other.

Remember to spring forward and join us in peace and celebration! Love,



## March Birthdays

Best birthday wishes to . . .

- 1 Alison Shaw
- 1 Marian Babbidge
- 2 Mike Kanninen
- 4 Collin Carrell
- 8 Bill Hitchings
- 10 Audrey LePell
- 10 Sierra Gray
- 12 Rebecca Parr
- 12 Darryl Ray
- 13 Margarita Jacob
- 16 Renee Ray
- 17 Ruth Kuftin
- 18 Jean Gaylord
- 19 Greg Kuftin
- 22 Karen Cook
- 22 Kelsi Kramer Stone
- 26 Sherry Thomas
- 26 Maya Para
- 28 Bryne Golec
- 28 Susan Clark
- 28 Brian Johnson



## Wheel of Life

*Please send information to the Pastoral Care Committee.  
Good news is welcomed, as well as your sorrows.*

- ☺ Bill & Ruth DeSmidt are once again writing the music they love for their group, Gravity.
- ☺ Diane Meyerson's father is recuperating from illness. We wish Diane and her family all the best during this time.
- ☺ Carey Sanchez-Para is home recovering from surgery. Our healing prayers are with her.
- ☺ Jean Gaylord is in remission from her cancer. Hooray!



## Children's Religious Education

At its December 2007 meeting, the Board heard a report from intern Carol Bodeau concerning the needs of our Children's Religious Education Program. Carol comes to Starr King with a strong background in Religious Educa-

tion, which has served our church well during this transitional year following the retirement of our former Director of Religious Education (DRE), Jean Wilcox. It was Carol's assessment that the Children's RE program infrastructure must be strengthened not only for the benefit of parents and children but also as a condition of attracting a new DRE. Currently, the burden of RE responsibilities is falling on too few shoulders.

In order to move forward and stay focused, the Board agreed that a task force be established. The task force is to be made up of representatives of the Board (Donnie Rett and Mary Lasack have volunteered to serve), parents of children in RE and interested members of the congregation.

The partially-constituted task force met early in February to sketch out goals and objectives. The first step will be to complete the formation of the task force by insuring representation from parents who wish to contribute to the design of the RE program. It is anticipated that the task force may evolve into a standing RE Council of approximately six members who serve two-year terms (with two rotating off each year). The task force will create a five-year plan for the RE program and a sustainable RE infrastructure. More immediately, the task force will develop a job description for the RE Coordinator, and begin the hiring process.

In order to get to work, the task force needs to have a sense of the congregation's concept of RE and what a dream RE program would look like.

The RE Brainstorming Session scheduled after second service on Sunday 2 March is an opportunity for members of Starr King to say just what it is they'd like to see in our RE program. Kids, RE teachers, parents, *all* members can provide valuable feedback to help the Task Force create an exciting program that better meets everybody's need to grow into more spiritual beings.



## OUR CHURCH BOARD IN ACTION

February 2008

*The following is a summary of the Board's business meeting. Feel free to discuss any of these items with Board members.*

1. **Disruptive Member Policy:** COSMIC delivered a draft Policy on Disruptive Behavior and discussed their process in writing and revising the draft policy at the request of the Board. The Board will take the draft policy under advisement until the next meeting.
2. **Unitarian House:** The informational meeting was well attended. However, County staff has now added a sprinkler system requirement and determined that the property is in a construction moratorium zone due to our nearness to the creek. County staff will not meet with the Board subcommittee or the architect until May.
3. **Board's Discussion of the Intern's Report on RE/RE Report:** A discussion of Carol Bodeau's December report on RE was held, with ideas brought forward on how the program can be well constructed. Meg Jurich wrapped up the discussion with a review of the RE task force's previous meeting. This task force is gathering ideas and doing vision planning for the future.
4. **Membership Report:** Andy Hansen prepared a spreadsheet comparing children and adult visitors in falls 2006 and 2007. The average number of visitors between the years was relatively static.
5. **Finance Report:** The Service Auction is on track. Sarah Gonzales is collecting board policies to assemble a binder with by-laws, policies and procedures, and she is creating a list of policies that need to be developed or reviewed.
6. **President's Report:** Update on Unitarian House meetings, the RE task force, the UU Growth Conference and the volunteer coordinator working with new members.
7. **Minister's Report:** The special plate collections have been going well. We collected \$1,269 for Association Sunday in October, \$825 for South Hayward Parish in November, \$847 for FESCO in December and \$901 for the UUSC in January. The special plate for February will be for fire relief in Southern California. Katie Kandarian passed out two letters that the congregation received in thanks for the Association Sunday collection and (from the mayor) for the Martin Luther King, Jr. march.
8. **Vice President's Report:** Growth Workshop notes have been developed and will be sent to the attendees, who will reduce the notes to three or four items for the Board to review and work on in the church.
9. **Treasurer's Report:** We are currently on track with pledge income.

*Our Church Here . . . All are welcome to participate!*

## EVENTS

♣ **Earth Spirituality Classes** continue on the first Sunday of each month. Please join us for any or all of the following topics:

**2 March:** Communicating with Spirit (channeling, divination and tarot).

**6 April:** Mystical Visions (dreamwork and meditation).

**4 May:** Shamanic Journeying (drums, chanting, trance states).

### ♣ ***Building Your Own Theology***

In this adult Religious Education series, participants explore their own religious and spiritual journeys. In the class, we will talk about important people and experiences that have shaped our personal ideas about the meanings and mysteries of life, and about what is sacred. Through the class, each participant develops a personal credo, a statement of religious truth and meaning that is uniquely his or her own. And we will have the chance to share portions of these credos in a worship service in late May. The class will be led by Rev. Katie Kandarian, Intern Minister Carol Bodeau and Darryl Ray. We will meet after the second service, from 12:30-2 P.M. on the following Sundays:

30 March

13 April

20 April

27 April

11 May

25 May



The workbook for the class is available in the office and costs \$16. To let us know you're interested, please call the church office and register.

### ♣ **WhaleCoast Alaska — 2008**

Five Alaskan UU fellowships invite you to experience our eco-cultural program this July, our twelfth year. See *REAL* Alaska, with UU homestays in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Seward, Juneau and Sitka. UUs host events and lead tours. We visit Tlingit and Inupiat Native Alaskans, see lots of wildlife like bears, moose, caribou, whales, sea otters and bald eagles. We visit Denali and other National Parks. Dave Frey, a 27-year Alaska resident, leads the programs. Contact us for a brochure ([www.wuurld.org](http://www.wuurld.org), [waltonfrey@gci.net](mailto:waltonfrey@gci.net) or 907/322.4966). Reservation deadline 15 March.

# Peace & Celebration!

You are all warmly invited  
to attend our congregation's annual  
*Celebration Sunday*



9 March 2008



at 9:30 and 11 A.M.



With a lovely dessert reception  
in the library  
immediately to follow Second Service



This Sunday event is our opportunity  
to share our responsibility  
and to demonstrate  
our commitment to our congregation  
for its ongoing health and wellbeing.

Let us share our joy and delight  
at the opportunity we have  
to enjoy religious freedom  
and spiritual growth together.

## Intern Reflections *Carol Bodeau*



Well, as many of you know, it's been a challenging month for me. A few weeks ago, while attending a ministers' retreat, I fell and broke my shoulder while walking in the hills.

This injury followed only a few months after another shoulder injury in which I experienced a partial tear of a rotator cuff

muscle. So, as I began to slide on that steep, muddy hillside a few weeks ago, I thought to myself, "Oh. I have to protect my injured right shoulder!" And in so protecting the right shoulder, I broke the left one. Both are healing well, but it'll be a while before I'm completely back to full strength. But, you know, I've learned some amazing things in the last few months:



- There is abundant goodwill in the world, both here in this community and in the larger community all around.
- Too much forward momentum can be risky; slowing down and admitting one's limitations is wise.
- It's awfully easy to go straight to self-blame and judgment when things go wrong; being compassionate with oneself can be a lot harder than being compassionate with others.
- It is possible to type really fast with one hand.
- It is impossible to drive safely with one hand.
- Things that really matter are connection, caring and commitment (not results, speed or performance).

When all is said and done, the healing journey can be a place of great blessings, I believe, as long as we are willing to surrender to the process, leave expectations behind and come to each moment asking what gifts — surprising or not — it might be bringing.

May you find the gifts in all your days.

Peace,

## *Committee Highlights*

### Earth Ministry, *Karen Urbano*

If you have looked in the library lately, you will see that SKUUC's Earth Ministry now has its own green bulletin board. I hope you will check it frequently for updates.

Our Green Audit is progressing, and at our next meeting we will start brainstorming ideas for our Green Sanctuary application.

One project that would fulfill one of the sustainability requirements could be to use the UU Legislative Ministry's Low Carbon Challenge. "Making lifestyle changes requires purpose and planning and practice. It is difficult to do alone. Those who try to go on a 'carbon diet' alone, don't usually follow through," said the Rev. Lindi Ramsden, UU Legislative Ministry Executive Director. "A supportive group from our faith community can help us make our carbon footprint more congruent with our values."

The idea is to join UUs across the Pacific Central District in losing a million pounds of carbon emissions by Earth Day 2009 through forming Carbon Rings — circles of five to eight UU households who gather to build community, share insights and fears, assess their carbon footprint and help one another make lifestyle changes to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 5,000 pounds per household. Contact the UULM office at 916/441.0018 x202 for more information. (From the *PCD Currents*.)

Finally, Earth Ministry will be presenting the worship service for Earth Day Sunday on 20 April. If you would like to participate, please contact me or our intern, Carol Bodeau.



### Committee on the Interior, *Lavon Hodges*

#### **Reminder Regarding Posting and Providing Fliers**

Please date any fliers you wish to share with our Starr King community. Also, please ask a member of the Interior Committee before posting or placing any fliers or posters, so that you can be directed to the appropriate display location. Your cooperation is appreciated!



*Auctioneer Eric directs the bidding while Starr King members enjoy delicious desserts.*

## Service Auction a Big Success!

The 2008 Service Auction was a fun and lively event. The bidding was competitive as various church members vied for the offered services. The selection of offers was varied and creative and had something to appeal to everyone.

Even with the current economic downturn, when the final bids were totaled, \$12,000 had been raised to support the work of the church. This was approximately \$4,000 more than the total from the last auction!

The committee would like to thank all of you who offered such interesting and appealing services this year — all 66 of them. Also, to those of you who attended and bid on all the items, we offer our thanks for making this service auction another winner.

We now have two years to enjoy our purchased services. The added benefit of each service is the interactions with the providers. Everyone wins!

Hats off to chair Terri Owen and committee members Crystal Carrol, Karen Cook, Robin Fink, Eric Gable, Sarah Gonzales, Georgia Gruver, Darryl Ray, Renee Ray, Donnie Rett, Doug Sprague and Sherry Thomas.



*Auctioneer Sarah encourages lively Service Auction bidding.*



## Covenant of Good Relations

In the covenantal tradition of Unitarian Universalism, we strive to build our religious community on a foundation of kindness, understanding and tolerance and to be guided by our principles in all our actions and interactions. We covenant to welcome one another as unique individuals and to celebrate our diverse beliefs as we walk our chosen paths together. We promise to share our gifts and to encourage and appreciate the contributions of others. To foster a community of respect, we will speak kindly of one another and to one another and, should difficulties arise between or among us, we will speak directly to those concerned with the goal of reconciliation. We will not engage in harmful gossip, and we will urge others to resolve difficulties directly with the person/s concerned. Should we need assistance to restore good relations, we will call upon the process and resources provided by Starr King Church. We will participate in the democratic process by which our religious community governs itself, and we will respect the outcomes of the collective wisdom. For the health and wellbeing of our beloved community, we make this pledge together.

# Committee Highlights

Association Affairs, *Ramón Urbano*

## Leading Congregations into a Multiracial, Multicultural Future: Now is the Time!

Back in 1977, the General Assembly made a commitment to becoming an antiracist, anti-oppressive, multicultural Unitarian Association of Congregations. This was confirmed by a General Assembly Responsive Resolution passed by UUA members in 2006 which seeks to address behaviors towards people of color in our congregations and communities. Albeit slow, we are striving as UUs to address, learn and act on this issue. I believe we are fully intentioned and take this to heart. It happens to be an area of importance and focus for me, having been part of the Steering Committee of the Latino, Latina UU Networking Association some years back. There is a lot to do for all of us.

A good start in Conference "Leading Congregations Into a Multicultural Time!" that February in note speaker, the Lewis, PhD, is the Worship and the Arts at in New York City. After congregations in urban From all accounts from the conference last year in great and, more important, to this issue. The conference included a day-long workshop with small group conversations and in-depth exploration of what it means to lead a congregation into a multiracial, multicultural future.



our area is the 2008 "Leading Congregations Into a Multiracial, Multicultural Future: Now is the Time!" that took place 22 - 24 San Jose. The key- Reverend Jacqueline Senior Minister of Vision, Middle Collegiate Church seminary she served two Trenton, New Jersey. friends that heard her at Washington DC, she she takes a practical tack

In addition, Dr. Shakti Butler spoke. An inspirational facilitator, trainer and lecturer, she is a multiracial African-American woman (African, Arawak Indian and Russian-Jewish). In the past she was the Executive Director of World Trust Educational Services, Inc. While in that position, she designed and brought out a national program of public dialogue designed to help people learn together and share their feelings about race and culture called *Heart to Heart Conversation*.

It is hoped that this conference will be an impetus to work more in this area. By the time you read this, I will have attended, and I will bring back ideas on what we might do as a congregation or in our area in this effort. What are we/you doing now?



## Grounds and Landscape Enhancement,

*Carol Henrie & Walt Korus*

Many heartfelt thanks to the wonderful Starr King volunteers who came out for our February All Church Workday to tackle the weeds a wet winter has bestowed upon us. Thanks to Dick Albert, Chris Bacina, Colleen and Dirk Dino, Joyce Kinnear, Walt Korus and Roy Dickerson, and to Wendy Robertson who tackled more weeds on her own schedule.

One of our most important goals is to provide native habitat on our property. Many persistent weeds challenge natives. Winter's rains bring infestations of *Malva* or mallow (see photo below). Eliminating mallow right now is crucial! Mallow only reproduces by seed; its tough seed coat results in low germination each year but long viability of the seeds. Common mallow (*M. neglecta*) can be found growing all year. Although its growth habit is spreading, plants can reach over two feet tall; each has one deep tap root. White-light pink-purple flowers are found in the leaf axils. The fruit is a round, smooth, flat button. Each of its 10 to 12 sections has one seed.

Mallow growing in landscape impacts the aesthetic value, while high numbers or large plants can greatly interfere with the success of native plants. Additionally, if allowed to mature to the point of producing seed, the amount of seed in the soil will cause increasing problems in future years.

Mallows are best controlled mechanically by hoeing or pulling out young plants, but older plants may resprout from the crown. Because of the rapid development of the long tap root, pulling is best accomplished when the plant has four or fewer true leaves. Removing plants before they seed will help reduce the impact of the plant in coming years.

Planting competitive desirable plants offers culture control; shade will reduce germination and seedling growth. Mulches can also be effective. At least three inches of organic mulch (bark or wood chips) will make it physically difficult for the seedling to emerge and will screen out the amount of light that mallow requires to effectively sprout.

**Please feel free to pull as many mallows as you wish!** We welcome your help, and we love sharing information about our church



grounds. If you can, please volunteer to take a bag of weeds home for your greenwaste pickup.

## ONGOING ACTIVITIES & FUN

♣ **SKIFFLE dates have changed again to Wednesdays!** Starr King Instrumentalists for Fun, Laughter and Entertainment gather in the Sanctuary for instrumental music every Wednesday evening from 7 to 9 P.M. All instruments, levels of musicianship welcome.

♣ **Morning Discovery** meets in the Library from 10 to 11:15 A.M. on first and third Wednesdays (5 & 19 March). All are welcome to join us to explore community and spirituality, discussion and shared silence.

♣ **Evening Discovery** meets in the Library at 7 P.M. on first and third Wednesdays (5 & 19 March) for thoughtful reflection on different topics that focus on the spiritual, the religious or the personal.

♣ The **Social Justice Committee** meets on second Sundays (9 March) after second service. All welcome.

♣ The **Book Group** will meet Thursday 13 March at 7 P.M. at the home of Donnie Rett (276.0545) to discuss *The Mayor of Casterbridge* by Thomas Hardy. All welcome! Please ring to let the host know you will be coming.

♣ **SKIT** improv group meets in the Sanctuary on second and fourth Thursdays (13 & 28 March ) at 7:30 P.M.



♣ Join the **No Room for Racism** vigils that are held in Hayward every third Friday (21 March) from 4 to 5 P.M. at the intersection of Jackson-Mission-Foothill. An opportunity to stand for your values! Sponsored by South Hayward Parish.

♣ The **Film Group** will gather on Saturday 22 March at 7 P.M. The film will be *Galaxy Quest*, a very funny science fiction comedy where a TV sci-fi cast meets real aliens, starring Tim Allen and Sigourney Weaver. Let host Stuart Fink (510/537.4421) know you are coming, and please bring a movie snack to share.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

♣ **Do you know our Church history? *An Ordinary Miracle* and *The Miracle Continues*** are available in the church office, \$15 each or two for \$25.

♣ **Help make our website brilliant!** Please submit your contributions of photos of church events and/or activities for the website (<http://starrking.org>) to [webmaster@starrking.org](mailto:webmaster@starrking.org).



♣ **To schedule an event**, visit the online calendar at our church website ([http://www.starrking.org/skuu\\_committee\\_meetings.htm](http://www.starrking.org/skuu_committee_meetings.htm)) to check availability, then call the office and we will add your event. View the website calendar for all church events.

♣ Please submit written announcements for the Sunday bulletin to Nancy by 1 P.M. on Tuesday. Office contact info: [office@starrking.org](mailto:office@starrking.org) or 510/581.2060.

♣ To preserve a sense of worship on Sunday mornings, please remember to **switch off cell phones** and other devices before entering the Sanctuary.

♣ **Committee chairs/events coordinators:** To avoid schedule conflicts, notify the Church Office Administrator of dates and times of ALL meetings and events (even if ongoing or off-site).

♣ Donate interesting books in excellent condition to our **Church Bookstore** for resale. Shop in our bookstore on third Sundays. See Evelyn Cormier.

♣ Our **SKUUC Food Donation Basket** for South Hayward Parish Food Pantry is located just inside the eastern entry door in our Sanctuary. Please be generous every week and donate healthful nonperishable food items .

♣ Stuart Fink has placed a Lions' Club collection box on the Community Table. **Eyeglasses you no longer use** will go to Latin American countries, along with eye doctors who will fit people in need.

♣ The Religious Education Committee would like to remind parents with small children that **the service can be heard in the library** should you need to leave the sanctuary due to crying or antsy children. The volume adjustments are near the speakers .

♣ The **Outreach Committee** suggests recirculating the *UU World*. Leave old copies in waiting rooms, or put them in the Outreach Committee box in the church office for use at public events.

♣ **A Gentle Reminder** from the Worship Committee: Candles of joy, sorrow and concern should be brief and pointed, or the service may run too long.

♣ **Babysitters Needed.** The Religious Education Committee is in need of babysitters during Sunday services. Please contact Karen Kramer (783.2221).

♣ **How are chalice lighters and readers for services chosen?** The Worship Associate for the service asks someone to do it. If you would like to participate in worship by lighting the chalice and/or reading from the pulpit, just tell any Worship Associate, who will add your name to the list of interested participants. *Please note* that you must be at church 15 minutes prior to the start of the service in order to be asked.

♣ Our Sanctuary serves as an all-purpose room; things get moved several times each week to accommodate meetings and activities. *PLEASE* after an event or meeting, **leave the Sanctuary in the worship configuration**. Put chairs back *each time* they are moved.

♣ The Worship Committee reminds us that the **musical postlude** at the end of the service is a part of worship; please remain seated to maintain a reverential quiet until the last note.

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

🌱 **Serving Sunday Morning Coffee** is a great way to meet members and spread happiness! *Your help is needed* in the set up position. This person would arrive at church about 35 minutes before first service, start the coffee and set everything up, then remain and serve coffee after first service. Please let Terry Babbidge (889.9462) know if you can fill this important slot on Sunday.



🌱 **Calling All Volunteers!** Please join our All-Church **Grounds & Landscape Clean-Up Day** on Saturday 9 February. We will work from 9 A.M. into the afternoon. Our main focus will be to tackle the weeds on our cultivated plateaus, but we're flexible and can find a way to include you. Bring gloves to protect your hands. Our mission is to create a beautiful, water-wise environment of native and Mediterranean-adapted plants that affords inspiring beauty and spiritual solace, while providing habitat. Work ranges from light weeding and cultivation to irrigation maintenance to vigorous weed-clearing and mulching. We always have fun! Contact Carol Henrie (886.1018).

🌱 Please see Betsy Dye if you would be interested in operating the **sound system** one or two Sundays a month.



🌱 Sign up at the Community Table to bring **flowers or plants for the altar**. Let us know if you are honoring a loved one or celebrating a special occasion.

🌱 **Volunteer pianists:** Share your talents when our regular accompanist is off. Contact Joyce Kinnear (885.0781).

🌱 **Babysitters needed!** The Religious Education Committee is in need of babysitters during our Sunday services. Volunteer to offer your services on a regular basis or on occasion. Please contact Karen Kramer (783.2221).

## What's the Word? Al Murdach

*This monthly column explores today's meaning and significance of some important religious words from the Christian tradition.*

### No.24: **The Afterlife**

The topic of the afterlife curiously supplies an instance of close agreement between UUism and Christianity. Many UUs and most Christians agree that human life continues after death but are not sure what this life consists of, where it is or what (if any) kind of activity it involves. For all this uncertainty, UUs with some of their current roots in Native spirituality and New Age thinking seem to have a better intellectual grasp of this phenomenon than traditional Christians. For example, the current 1995 catechism of the Roman Catholic Church contains no entries for *immortality*, *eternal life*, *everlasting life* or *afterlife*. Jesus himself mentioned eternal life but provided no details. Hence the Christian church officially maintains an agnostic we-don't-know attitude when questioned about the details of the afterlife, although it does not question its existence. On its face this attitude is somewhat paradoxical since one of the prime objectives of the Christian faithful is to gain entry into eternal life, a goal about which even its founder would say or maybe even knew very little. The Bible and other major religious texts are of little help since most of what they contain is metaphoric or highly speculative.

So what do we *really* know about the afterlife? We typically have no direct personal evidence of the afterlife while we are alive. After death, people usually don't return to tell us about it. The words *typically* and *usually* are used in the previous two sentences because some individuals, such as seers, mystics, mediums and shamans, do claim to have experiences of the afterlife before their deaths or to be able to return in other forms after their deaths to communicate with the rest of us about what they have found out. It is difficult to verify these occurrences and most have to be taken on faith if they appear to be genuine and believable. Some individuals claim to have had near-death experiences and to have returned with information about how the afterlife appeared to them in the brief time they experienced it.

The information provided by these sources is not especially illuminating. For example, mystics of various traditions speak about being "bathed in love" on their trips to heaven, being absorbed in a "great light" when encountering the divine or "becoming one with the universe" as they merge with the infinite during meditations. Individuals who communicate with the dead will describe most of them as "happy," "full of joy" and in "constant motion" as they travel about in spiritual bodies trying to help all of the rest of us with our daily trials. (They also say that some of the dead are still "troubled," but that is a subject for another column.)

All of this data, while interesting and possibly reassuring, still provides us with little detail. In the end, fortunately or unfortunately, we are left with the poets, the only ones who provide glimpses of what our afterlife might be like, not in the matter of detail, but in the process of experience. Witness Wordworth in his *Intimations of Immortality*:

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:  
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,  
Hath had elsewhere its setting,  
And cometh from afar:  
Not in entire forgetfulness,  
And not in utter nakedness,  
But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God, who is our home:  
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!



## Committee Highlights

# Friends of FESCO (Family Emergency Shelter Coalition)

*A Slice of Life* written by Martha Trigueros, FESCO Program Director

The family that will be highlighted today first came through the shelter doors and into FESCO 17 October 2007.

Shelly is a married mother with a teenage daughter, Rachel. Shelly's husband was a client at The Victory Outreach Recovery Program in Hayward. Shelly came to FESCO stating that she had a history of drug use but had been sober for a number of years.

The family had been homeless for two months in Hayward due to unemployment and Shelly's husband's inability to work. When Shelly and her daughter came to FESCO, she was receiving \$356 with Calworks and \$274 for food stamps. She had no savings; in fact the family had never saved any money before entering FESCO's program.

Shelly secured employment with Safeway working eight hours, shortly after entering the shelter. This was Shelly's first job in many years. Shelly was provided with goals for her first thirty days of FESCO program participation. This provided her with a clear sense of purpose. The goals included building a savings account and finding affordable housing. Shelly began to save for the first time, maintained her working schedule and found affordable housing. During their stay at FESCO, her 13-year-old daughter maintained consistent attendance at school, where she achieved a 3.0 grade point average.

The family overcame many hardships but managed to turn things around with the help and support of FESCO's program and staff. Shelly came to FESCO with little hope, but left full of optimism for her family. She came to the program with no savings and left with a \$1000. She arrived with no home and left to a two-bedroom apartment. In the process, a divided family found unity again. Clearly FESCO provides families with an opportunity for a second chance.

## Cate Steane appointed as Executive Director of FESCO-The Family Shelter

FESCO is excited and proud to announce the selection of Cate Steane as its new Executive Director. Cate previously was Director of Operations for Rubicon Programs in Richmond, California, an award-winning social enterprise/social services nonprofit with 220 employees and a budget of \$16 million that provides comprehensive social services to people with barriers to housing and employment.

In Cate's own words, "I have been motivated by a passion for moving people out of poverty. I understand how a stable and secure place to live is the essential foundation for a family to be able to obtain employment and education, the paths to financial independence. I believe this passion, combined with my experience in affordable housing and nonprofit management, makes for the right fit as Executive Director of FESCO."

Cate was also previously Director of Operations at Jewish Vocational Services and Director of Personnel and Administration at Chinatown Community Development Center. Cate has extensive experience developing and overseeing volunteer programs and a solid foundation in fund development.

An attorney by training, Cate previously had a tenants' rights law practice, was a Commissioner of the San Francisco Rent Board and served on the Board of the Housing Rights Committee of San Francisco. Her first experience feeding and finding housing for homeless people came during her post-college year in the Jesuit Volunteer Corps. She is a graduate of Yale Law School and Boston College.

Welcome Cate!

*Cate Steane (at left) has been appointed Executive Director of FESCO.*



Diane Meyerson represents Starr King UU Church on the FESCO board.

# How to Reach Us

## **Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church**

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Parish Minister: Kathryn Kandarian  
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Chalice Editor: Carol Henrie  
510/886.1018  
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### **Church Administrative Hours:**

Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday  
9 A.M. – 1 P.M.

### **Minister's Office Hours:**

Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday  
9 A.M. – 1 P.M.

*Note:* Please observe the minister's *uninterrupted* reading & writing time on Monday.

### **How to Reach Your Chalice Editor**

Deadline is the second Sunday of each month. Please put your contribution in writing.

Post to: Carol Henrie  
24929 Minnie Court  
Hayward CA 94541

Email to: editor@starrking.org

Leave in: The box marked *Newsletter Editor*  
in the Church office

## **Church Leadership**

### Board of Trustees

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Adult Religious Education — Andy Hansen  
Bookstore — Evelyn Cormier  
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*Chalice* Newsletter — Carol Henrie, editor  
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FESCO — Diane Meyerson  
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Intern — Bob Meyerson  
Kitchen Manager — Sherry Thomas  
Membership — Wendy Robertson  
Committee on Ministry — Lee Berger, Doris Haskell,  
Carol Henrie, Keith Lewis, Kirk Smith  
(Convenor), Karen Yearout  
Nominating — Bob Stortz  
Outreach — Susan Blanc  
Pastoral Care — Bob Stortz, Convenor  
Pledge Secretary — Marilyn Mosher  
R.E. Chair — Carey Sanchez Para  
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Social Justice — Evelyn Cormier  
South Hayward Parish —  
Jim Forsyth & Barbara Storms  
Sunday Coffee — Terry Babbidge  
Volunteer Coordinator — Karen Cook  
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