



# The Flaming Chalice

NEWSLETTER OF STARR KING UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH    OCTOBER 2007

## *A Month of Sundays*

### *October Celebration Previews*

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

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**7: *A Passion for the Freedom of Conscience*** (Rev. Bela-Botond Jakabhazi & Rev. Katie Kandarian) This year's Balazs scholar, our Transylvanian Unitarian visitor, comes to Starr King Church in his first preaching opportunity after arriving in the United States. Come hear his wisdom and the vision of Unitarianism in Eastern Europe.

*Immediately following the service, the minister will hold a brief informational session in the Library for those with questions about Unitarian Universalism or interested in membership.*

**14: *Our Living Tradition: Association Sunday*** (Rev. Katie Kandarian & Janet Hayes, UUA Public Relations Director) Congregations across the country will be participating today in a opportunity to celebrate our movement and assure its prosperity well into the Twenty-First Century.

*Chalice Deadline.*

**21: *Class Consciousness*** (Rev. Katie Kandarian) A recent article in the UU World focused on "the class problem" of our particular faith. Is this just a problem for folks in Walnut Creek or Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, or might there be a nugget of truth for those of us in the neighborhood of Hayward?

*Bookstore Open.*

**28: *A Day of Remembering*** (Carol Bodeau & Starr King Youth) Let us honor those we love who have died. For our Dia de los Muertos celebration, please bring a photo of a loved one to place on an ofrenda created by our high school youth, who will join in leading this service.



### **Dinner Theatre FUNdraiser** at Starr King Church

Mark your calendars right now!

✓ **Election: 2084**

Saturday 3 November • 6:30 P.M.

Sunday 4 November • 2:30 P.M.



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# Katie's Bay View Rev. Katie Kandarian

## Christmas in October

Although I do plenty of it in my ministry, planning is not my greatest strength. Often I prefer being spontaneous, looking at the present moment, making decisions about what I want to do as it comes up. I hate being tied down to something I *thought* I might have wanted to do at an earlier time. Although it's good to have the ability to be flexible, a certain amount of preparation is necessary and advantageous in life so that we don't live in constant chaos and to give us a certain measure of accomplishment. It's in that spirit that I bring up the subject of Christmas three months out, at the beginning of October.



Part of this year's Christmas theme will be devoted to the spiritual aspects of the December holidays (such as love, joy and peace) and less on the materialism and consumerism that is so much a part of our larger culture. And here I go in the next sentence telling you about our upcoming holiday bazaar (to be held December 9 and 16). Yes, we *will* be selling things. But the goal is not a fundraiser but an opportunity to share our craft items with each other, or a way to help us stay out of the malls. I know I'm taking this time to consider my contribution to the bazaar.

This year, I'm actually *making* some items to contribute. I have not magically become a crafter but have found, working alongside my daughter, that we are really enjoying giving as gifts some really cute and cozy fleece blankets we've been making together. We're planning on making some to sell at the bazaar.

I know lives nowadays are *really* busy. And it's hard to change completely. But if we cooperate and plan ahead, we might begin to do a little better at learning to slow down and to live our lives a little more consciously. I still haven't accomplished this with food preparation, but our intern Carol Bodeau makes this really great soup that is healthy, delicious and, as she said, not hard to make. Knowing I couldn't plan ahead enough to accomplish making it myself, I suggested she make it for the bazaar. I'd love to buy some homemade soup that I could serve to my family. Yum.

There are many of us who have personal creativity to share with each other. But, just as taking BART and the Muni to get somewhere might take a little more time and thought than simply driving, so might our creative sharing. I believe the results just might be worth our additional effort.

I invite you to begin thinking about what you might share.

Love,

## October Birthdays

Best birthday wishes to . . .

- 7 Wendy Robertson
- 8 Scott Kinnear
- 12 Dick Marshall
- 25 Frank Perry
- 30 Jonathan Gray



Have we overlooked your birthday?

To be included in these birthday greetings, send an email with your name and the month and day of your Annual Celebration to [editor@starrking.org](mailto:editor@starrking.org).



## Wheel of Life

Please send information to the Pastoral Care Committee.

- 🌸 Congratulations to Bill & Jean Gaylord who are celebrating 60 years of marriage.
- 🌸 Alysa Baker-Blanc has just begun her freshman year at UC Santa Cruz.



# The Board Bulletin

Meg Jurich, President, Board of Trustees



October feels like the threshold of the holiday season. Here at Starr King, we'll soon be enjoying our Mystery Dinner and holiday parties, then a Seder. All of these wonderful events are put on by volunteers from our congregation: Actors, stagers, decorators, cooks, servers, kitchen assistants, publicists, to name a few, create these wonderful occasions for enjoyment and community building. Volunteering is a very effective way of giving to our congregation and getting back so much more in return.

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If you didn't get a chance to visit our Committee Fair on Sunday 23 September, there are other ways you can find out about volunteer opportunities here at Starr King. Often our church newsletter lists volunteer opportunities. A listing of committees is also found in our church newsletter. All committees are happy to have visitors. You might attend a meeting or call the chairperson to see if their activities speak to your skills or interests.

Committees are the vital means by which we keep things running here at Starr King. Committees do the planning and follow through for their areas of responsibility. They meet as often as needed to get their work done. Now that we have the wonders of email communication, much volunteer work can be done from your home office. Whatever your skill or interest might be, there is a place for your talents within our church community.

Still not sure where or how you might want to get involved? Meet our Volunteer Coordinator, Karen Cook. A past president and "professional" church volunteer, Karen can answer any of your questions and make suggestions as to where you might begin to become more involved.



You are already so busy you can't see straight? Why volunteer? Because you owe it to yourself. Your experience of Starr King will grow deeper and richer. You will make the church your own church home and grow closer to fellow members. And you will be giving of yourself to a community that nourishes you in return.



## OUR CHURCH BOARD IN ACTION

### September 2007

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

1. A request for a portable cart for video presentations during cottage conversation meetings was referred to the Social Justice and Interior Committees for approval and for purchase under those budgets.
2. The following members volunteered and Liaison Assignments were approved: Andy as Membership Committee Liaison, Donnie as RE Committee Liaison, Sara as Finance Committee Liaison.
3. The Finance Committee presented a Fundraising Policy under which fundraising activities will be directed through the Fundraising Subcommittee of the Finance Committee. While the RE Committee may have separate fundraisers, they will need to be coordinated with the Subcommittee. After amendments, the policy was approved.
4. Unitarian House: A meeting with the geological engineer looking at the stability of the ground needs to be held before seeking permits at the county. Construction costs are not increasing at the level they have been. Financing from church members may be the best option in the current environment. A congregational meeting will be convened when more information is available.
5. A letter of corrective action was presented to the Board. Motion to send the letter passed unanimously.
6. A Subcommittee to Recommend a Safe Congregation Policy was established and will report to the Board on its progress in November.
7. Rev. Katie presented a Share-the-Plate Policy under which the church will raise funds for a separate organization through the offering plate once a month. Included in the list of organizations will be those we currently support and a few recommended by the Social Justice Committee, with flexibility for emergency situations. Katie will put together a yearly schedule of receiving organizations. This policy was adopted for one year, then reviewed.
8. Vice President's Report: Darryl presented a list of current committees and chairs and reported on the Committee Council held 20 August. The Committee Fair will be 23 September.
9. Treasurer's Report: Pledges and expenditures on schedule.
10. RE Report: Katie has met with Carol and Carey to determine curriculums for the fall. The youth group will create a video on UUism for Youtube.





# REFrigerator Page

## Children's Religious Education

Carey Sanchez Para, *Religious Education Chair*

The Fall Religious Education classes have begun! Children in the lower elementary school grades are learning about *UU Superheroes* led by Laura McMichael-Cady. This curriculum explores the lives of famous Unitarians, Universalists and UUs and encourages children to live their own lives fully and use their "super powers" to grow both spiritually and ethically. Children in the upper elementary through middle school grades will use *In Our Hands: A Peace & Justice Program*. This curriculum explores the concepts of peace and justice within oneself, with others and with our Earth. Jim Forsyth and Rythe DeSmidt are co-teaching the *In Our Hands* curriculum in Unitarian House. SKY (Starr King Youth), grades 8 and up, will continue to meet in Ornea Cottage with Carol Henrie and Dick Albert. They will explore what it means to be a UU and develop their own personal credos. The SKY group will lead an intergenerational Dia de los Muertos service at the end of October.

Religious education enrollment forms are available. Baby and toddler care will be provided in the Library during the second service on an as-needed basis.

**A REMINDER** that we will have Intergenerational Worship at our *Day of Remembering* service on Sunday 28 October. Please bring photos in memory of loved ones to place upon the altar for the Dia de los Muertos celebration.

The Unitarian Universalists of the Bay Area (17 congregations) have joined together in a marketing campaign. Print ads appear in BART stations, magazines and other public spaces. Commercial ads appear during The Daily Show and The Colbert Report on Comedy Central. Some of the print ads specifically address religious education for children. "Unitarian Universalists believe in teaching children about all the great religions of the world, about social justice, the wonders of nature and ethical decision making." We look forward to meeting and welcoming newcomers who are interested in learning about the UU faith.

Carey Sanchez Para, Religious Education Chair  
510/502.4098 or [careysanchezpara@comcast.net](mailto:careysanchezpara@comcast.net)

## Adult Religious Education

Coming Soon for All New Members:

*The New UU*

This four-session course will include sharing personal religious odysseys, learning about Unitarian Universalism, learning about this church and its committees and exploring issues within Unitarian Universalism. Karen Cook and Meg Jurich will lead the class.

This class is not limited to members new to Unitarianism or to Starr King Church. All members are welcome to participate and to refresh and deepen an understanding of Unitarian Universalism.

A sign-up sheet will be available at church beginning on Sunday 16 September. Classes will begin on Tuesday 16 October from 7 to 9 P.M. (this will be changed to 7:30 if necessary), and we will meet in the Library (Church Sanctuary building) for four weeks through Tuesday 6 November.

Please sign up as soon as possible so we know how many to prepare for. You may also email Karen Cook ([cookstortz@aol.com](mailto:cookstortz@aol.com)) to register.



### Dinner Theatre FUNdraiser

at Starr King Church

Mark your calendars right now!



***Election: 2084***



Saturday 3 November • 6:30 P.M.

Sunday 4 November • 2:30 P.M.



Tickets \$25; purchase in advance. Contact Renee Ray.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

☺ 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.

☺ **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).

☺ **Babysitters Needed.** The Religious Education Committee is in need of babysitters during Sunday services. Can you provide this valuable service on a regular or occasional basis? Please contact Karen Kramer (783.2221).

☺ 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.

☺ 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).

☺ **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 **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 .

☺ 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 in the library.

☺ 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.

☺ **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.

☺ 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.

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



☺ **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. You can view the website calendar for all church events.

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

## 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.



☝ Join our **Grounds & Landscape Enhancement** activities at Church. Lately we have been keeping our weekends free and are working on Fridays from 9:30 A.M. into the afternoon, as well as one other weekday TBA. We're flexible and can find a way to include you. Our project 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) or Walt Korus (487.8362).

☝ 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).

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

## EVENTS

### ♣ **FESCO Swinging on a Star 20 October**

Join FESCO, The Family Emergency Shelter, for its festive Annual Dinner and Auction on 20 October to benefit homeless families in the Bay Area.

Guests will have the opportunity to “carry moonbeams home in a jar” as they bid on fabulous silent and live auction items while dining on delectable Greek fare created by the evening’s hosts, Resurrection Greek Orthodox Church. Dazzling entertainment will be provided by professional barbershop group, the Moonlighters, and dancers Corrie van Thiel and Mike Daniele, among others.

Proceeds of each ticket will provide over a week of nutritious meals for a parent or child in FESCO’s Family Shelter. For over twenty years, FESCO has provided emergency shelter, job training, and transitional housing and after-care services for homeless families in the Bay Area.

The gala evening begins at 5:30 P.M. with a silent auction, accompanied by savory Greek appetizers and fine wines, followed by a delectable dinner and a rousing live auction, emceed by Paul Russo. Auction items include gourmet gift baskets, fine dining opportunities, exciting travel packages and premium theater tickets. For further information or tickets for this event, please consult FESCO’s website ([www.fescofamilyshester.org](http://www.fescofamilyshester.org)) or call 510/886.5473.

Come “swing on a star” so you can help homeless families with children become “better off than they are.” Together, we /are/ making a difference in the lives of homeless parents and children in Alameda County! Please contact Pamela Mead at FESCO (510/886.5473 or [pamelam@fescofamilyshester.org](mailto:pamelam@fescofamilyshester.org)) or Diane Meyerson ([ddmeyerson@yahoo.com](mailto:ddmeyerson@yahoo.com)).



### ♣ **A Very Grateful Adult Halloween Party 26 October**

Bring your dancing shoes! Bill DeSmidt’s band *The Other Guise*, a Grateful Dead cover/tribute band, will be playing at Starr King Church on Friday 26 October. Doors will open at 7 P.M. Music starts promptly at 7:30 and will end at 10 P.M. Tell a friend! Bring a friend! Come dressed up — there will be a costume contest. \$5 donation at the door. Refreshment tickets will be sold (water, soda, beer and wine).

### ♣ **Election 2084: Dinner Theatre at Starr King Church**

#### **Vote for Fun and Fantastic Fare!**



Saturday 3 November • 6:30 P.M.

Sunday 4 November • 2:30 P.M.

Our annual homegrown play is always engaging with some humor, some thought-provoking ideas and some audience participation. For your dining pleasure, we will offer a fabulous feast comprised of favorite foods of U.S. presidents. A Starr King *FUN*draiser. Two performances: Saturday 3 November at 6:30 P.M. and Sunday 4 November at 2:30 P.M. Tickets are \$25; please purchase in advance. Contact Renee Ray (538.4376 or [choidle@aol.com](mailto:choidle@aol.com)).

## Save the Date!



### ♣ **2007 Christmas Bazaar 9 & 16 December**

This year we want to offer a bazaar that features the talents of our membership. What do you create, cook or grow that would make a unique gift? Please plan to donate your talents! Any questions or info contact: Ruth DeSmidt (510/582.7297).

### ♣ **Annual Trek to the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, Oregon 15 & 16 March 2008**

A great weekend getaway — fun, educational, relaxing.

The Starr King Plan includes:

- Two nights lodging (with breakfast) at the Plaza Inn two blocks from the theater.
- Tickets to three plays
- A pre-trip overview of the plays
- A talk by one of the actors (for our group only) on Sunday morning.

Plays to be seen are:

*A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, Shakespearean comedy

*The Clay Cart*, a world classic from India

*Fences* by August Wilson

Cost for this weekend is \$205 per person, double occupancy (\$95 deposit). Make checks payable to *Starr King UU Church*; deliver at church or mail to Doug Sprague or Donnie Rett.

NOTE: Open to non-members. Invite your friends!

# Intern Reflections

Carol Bodeau



Dear friends,

Thank you all so much for the kind, welcoming way you have greeted me in my first weeks here.

I'm starting to learn names and remember who they belong to, even beginning to understand who goes with which committees and activities. You have already made me feel very much at home.

I thought you all might like a taste of the sorts of things I'll be doing this year; I'm very excited about the projects and opportunities for ministry that I'm discovering at Starr King UU Church. This year, I'll be leading worship regularly, sometimes with Rev. Katie Kandarian, and sometimes on my own.

Though I am not serving as your DRE, I will be helping the youth and children to lead some special intergenerational worship services, including Dia de los Muertos, a Kids Give Thanks service in November, and the children's holiday service in December.

I'll be working with South Hayward Parish in various ways, particularly in coordinating our monthly Vigils of Caring and in helping with the spring Martin Luther King Day activities.

You'll also see me at Board meetings and various committee meetings, as I learn about worship, pastoral care and the nuts-and-bolts of how the congregation works. I'll also be teaching some adult RE classes, so keep your eyes open for more info on those.

I would love to get to know you, so please feel free to introduce yourself to me if we haven't met yet. I have office hours when the church office is open, and welcome your visits.

In peace and gratitude for our time together,

## ONGOING ACTIVITIES

♣ **SKIFFLE Nights Have Changed!** Starr King Instrumentalists for Fun, Laughter and Entertainment gather in the Sanctuary for instrumental music every Monday evening from 7 to 9 P.M. All instruments and levels invited.

♣ **Morning Discovery** meets at Church from 10 to 11:15 A.M. on first and third Wednesdays (3 & 17 October). All are welcome to join us to explore community and spirituality, discussion and shared silence.

♣ **Evening Discovery** meets at Church at 7 P.M. on first and third Wednesdays (3 & 17 October).

♣ **SKIT** improv group meets in the Sanctuary on second and fourth Thursdays (11 & 25 October) at 7:30 P.M.



♣ The **Book Group** will meet Thursday 11 October at 7 P.M. at the home of Marge Schwab (510/538.3226) to discuss *Persuasion* by Jane Austen. All welcome! Please ring to let the host know you will be coming. The November book will be *You Can't be Neutral on a Moving Train* by Howard Zin.

♣ The **Film Group** will gather on Saturday 13 October at 7 P.M. The film will be *Brokeback Mountain* the recent remarkable film about a secret homosexual relationship between two cowboys that begins in the 1960s. The film stars Heath Ledger and Jake Gyllenhaal. All welcome! Let host Stuart Fink (510/537.4421) know you are coming; bring a movie snack to share.

♣ The **Social Justice Committee** meets on second Sundays (14 October) after second service. All welcome. Discussion will focus on prioritizing issues we plan to address in the coming year.

## ... Our Church There

♣ Join the **No Room for Racism** vigils that are held in Hayward every third Friday (21 September) 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.

♣ **Vigils of Caring.** South Hayward Parish holds vigils of caring the first Friday of each month to remember those who have died as a result of violence. Our first vigil, remembering Shawn Kimbell, will be held on Friday 5 October at 12 noon at the intersection of D Street and Grand Avenue. All are welcome to attend.

♣ **The Pagan Interest Group** will host a celebration of Samahain (pronounced 'sow-en'), the pagan new year, on Sunday afternoon 28 October. All are invited to attend this ritual circle gathering. We will meet on the back patio at 1:15 P.M. and begin the circle at 1:30 P.M. For more info, contact Bill and Ruth DeSmidt.

♣ **Prices are rising for Fair Trade Coffee** due to new guarantees to coffee farmer cooperatives. Please keep this in mind as you make your coffee donation on Sunday morning. Benefits of Fair Trade affect 28 farmer cooperatives in 14 countries. For background about how Fair Trade puts our principles into action: <http://r.vresp.com/?EqualExchange/da95ca45fb/950275/d0f9d32d6b/40328cb>.

♣ **Ministries to Incarcerated UUs.** The Church of the Larger Fellowship, a cyber-space congregation providing Unitarian Universalism to isolated religious liberals, offers a spiritual lifeline to incarcerated UUs. Over 300 prisoners across the US have joined the UU Church of the Larger Fellowship. With no access to the web or UU Sunday services, their only way of learning more about UUism is through written publications and letters exchanged with other UUs. Members of any UU congregation who might like to write to a CLF prisoner-member are invited to visit the CLF website ([www.clfuu.org](http://www.clfuu.org)).

# Committee Highlights

## Intern Committee

*Bob Meyerson, Chair*

Over the years, Starr King Church has made a commitment to be a teaching congregation for professional ministry. We have been blessed in the past by having great interns who have gone on to serve our faith community. Given our history, I was honored to be asked to chair the Intern Committee for this year.

This year we are fortunate to welcome Carol Bodeau, a student at Starr King School for the Ministry, as our Intern Minister.

The newly-formed Intern Committee had its first meeting with Carol on 6 September. All of us on the committee were impressed not only with the credentials and experience which Carol brings, but her open attitude recognizing the importance of this internship on her path to become a Unitarian Universalist minister.

The committee, along with the ministerial supervision of Katie Kandarian, will work to ensure that Carol will use these next nine months as a time of growth, not just for her, but for our Starr King congregation.

The Intern Committee is currently comprised of Karen Urbano, Al Murdach, Doug Sprague and Bob Meyerson. We will be meeting with the intern minister on a regular basis, going over her activities and providing encouragement and/or suggestions.

All of us on the committee hope you will share your ideas with us, and get to know Carol. We ask members of the congregation to let the individual members of the committee know your feelings and reactions to the intern's activities; this is especially important. As we strive to be a positive force in her development, we are confident that her contributions will provide a growth experience for the entire congregation.

If you haven't yet met Carol, make it a point to do so. Remember when you were a first-timer at Starr King. Imagine the extra anticipation that would exist if you were expected to get up and lead a service that first few weeks! Think of that and recognize that it will be a wonderful thing if, in nine months, both Carol and the Starr King Congregation can say, "Wow....I'm sure glad we met!"

If you miss one of our weekly celebrations of worship be sure to check out the podcast recording on the website  
[http://www.starrking.org/skuu\\_podcast.htm](http://www.starrking.org/skuu_podcast.htm)  
Crystal Carroll • webmaster

## Social Justice: Marriage Equality

*Regina Fassano*

The California legislature recently passed AB43. This bill, authored by Mark Leno, would give same sex couples the right to marry in California. In 2005, the legislature also passed the bill; however, it was turned down by the governor. Governor Schwarzenegger needs to know that GLBT people deserve all the rights of marriage that straight people enjoy. It's very likely that the governor will veto this bill again. I will be circulating a petition shortly at church to send to our legislature to support same sex marriage. Additionally, you can call the governor's office (916 /445 .2841); just follow the voicemail prompts to support AB43. The governor is expected to vote on this bill by 14 October.

Starting 7 October, vigils will be held through 14 October, led by straight allies in support of LGBT rights. Several vigils are being organized across the state, including in San Francisco. I will disseminate more information at church as soon as it is available. In the meantime, you can visit the website [uulm.org](http://uulm.org) or CA Faith for Equality. There are several other pieces of legislation that we will be expected to vote on in the 2008 elections. Information about this legislation can be found at [eqca.org](http://eqca.org).



## 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.

# 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.20: **Holy Spirit**

UU's may have lost something by their rejection of Trinitarian doctrine. In particular, they have by now lost all consciousness of the "family drama" that is incorporated in the doctrine of the Trinity, which its focus on the relationships between the loving father (God), dutiful son (Jesus) and supportive, mothering presence (Holy Spirit). The doctrine of the Trinity, admittedly, is somewhat confusing, especially since it does not represent three gods, but different aspects of the one God; that is, each aspect of the Trinity is considered to be equally God, but each is understood in Christian terminology as a different manifestation of God in human consciousness. Simple to say? Sure. Easy to comprehend? No way.

The Holy Spirit is probably the least easy aspect of the Trinity to figure out. It doesn't help matters that for years, because of a mistranslation, it was referred to as the *Holy Ghost* in English, spawning no end of jokes. Representations of the Holy Spirit in Christian art are likewise confusing. It is at times shown as a dove, as a beam of sunlight or as a tongue of fire. Descriptions in Christian literature are likewise diverse. Sometimes the Holy Spirit is described as a person, at other times as breath or as a force, a driving wind, an irresistible power, a whisper, a comforter, a blessing, a nurturer, a yearning, a mother and as life itself. According to the Book of Job, "When God withdraws his spirit, all flesh dies."

Although the Holy Spirit is mentioned prominently in the New Testament, especially in the Acts of the Apostles and in the letters of St. Paul, its importance faded from view in Christian history in the West (although Eastern Christian churches have always preserved a strong interest in the Holy Spirit). After the Protestant Reformation in Europe in the Sixteenth Century, the emergence of Protestantism, with its emphasis on the individual soul's direct confrontation with the divine without mediation of church or priest, brought renewed attention to the action of grace upon the individual soul and his or her redemption in the eyes of God. Since grace, or divine love, has always been viewed as a property of the Holy Spirit, this person of the Trinity began to receive renewed attention and devotion, first in Protestant (especially evangelical) circles and finally in the Roman Catholic Church itself. The late Pope John Paul II proclaimed himself a disciple of the Holy Spirit and recommended special devotion to encouraging its work in the world.

UU's today do grant special attention to the notion of *spirit*. However, the term often is equated with abstractions such as truth, beauty, and goodness, and the divine element present in the Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit seems to be lacking. Perhaps a possible improvement might be to try to

recover the playful emphasis once accorded the term by Christian mystics, who gave it a universal religious yet not specifically sectarian meaning.

Referring to the work of the spirit, Meister Eckhart (a Thirteenth Century mystic) says, "Sometimes I feel such a sweetness in my soul that I forget everything else—and myself too—and dissolve in thee. But when I try to catch it perfectly, O Lord, thou takest it away... If you love me, why do you run away? Ah, Lord, you do this because you want me to have a lot of experience with you!"

A UU mystic, Ralph Waldo Emerson, expressed similar thoughts in his *Journals*: "Far the best part... of every mind is not that which he knows, but that which hovers in gleams, suggestions, tantalizing, unpossessed, before him. His firm recorded knowledge soon loses all interest for him. But this dancing chorus of thoughts and hopes is the quarry of his future, is his possibility, and teaches him that his man's life is of a ridiculous brevity and meanness... but that vast revolutions, migrations, and gyres on gyres in the celestial societies invite him."



### Five Year Vision

Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church  
(adopted March 2007)

A vibrant, dynamic community where meaningful transformative spiritual practice flourishes in an intergenerational environment.

A congregation that:

- ❖ Celebrates our unity in common worship and nurtures each individual's search for truth.
- ❖ Provides adults and children with a rich array of opportunities for personal and spiritual growth and service to others.
- ❖ Embraces visitors and welcomes them into our spiritual community.
- ❖ Actively addresses critical social justice issues, making a real difference in people's lives through moral, spiritual and material support.
- ❖ Cultivates an aesthetically pleasing environment that enriches our community and spiritual life.

## Committee Highlights

# *Friends of FESCO* (Family Emergency Shelter Coalition)

*A Slice of Life* by Katie Johnson, MFT

Being homeless sometimes requires second chances. A family may enter the shelter and, given all the chaos in their lives, find it just isn't the time to make the changes needed to live independently. There are a variety of reasons why families may not be successful the first time around. Maybe they are newly sober or perhaps still struggling with addiction, or fleeing a domestic violence situation, or have been chronically homeless for the majority of their lives, or aren't emotionally able to take on the challenge of finding employment, childcare and housing. Whatever the reason, we sometimes encounter families that struggle to make it work the first time around. We don't fault them, and we hope that perhaps we are planting seeds, showing them that it is possible to live independently.

When I think of second chances, one particular mom comes to mind. She was in our shelter years ago and wasn't able to maintain independent living. She wrestled with her own drug addiction and also a violent ex-husband who kept her daughter from her and had been unemployed for a number of years.

This mom entered the shelter about three months ago with her youngest child. Her two oldest children remain with their fathers. When she arrived, it was understood that she had been at FESCO years before. There was some trepidation about how she would fare, given her history and circumstances. However, this mom has proved to us how valuable second chances can be.

She entered the shelter in an overwhelmed state. She seemed unable to effectively parent her toddler, described herself as depressed and was struggling with sobriety, as well as dealing with a daughter whose father had turned her against her mother.

Against these odds, this mother almost immediately found a job and has been steadily working for the duration of her stay at FESCO. She has done a fantastic job of putting away money in savings each week and now has a sizeable amount that will help her when she moves out.

In addition to finding employment, this mom has secured childcare for her son and has reestablished contact with her two older children, including her daughter. She is in court

proceedings to gain custody and is willing to fight for her. She regularly attends NA meetings, as well as counseling. Best of all, this mom is about to move out into her own housing through our Linkages program. She is excited to live on her own again and is proud of all her accomplishments during her stay here.



We are proud of her, too, and it is inspiring to see a family come together and make it work this second time around. It is families like this that make the work rewarding. It gives us hope when we might be dealing with a family that just isn't ready at this time. We can be sure that in one way or another FESCO is planting seeds of hope. Perhaps we won't see those seeds grow this time around. It may be months or even years later when we encounter a family

again. But maybe the second time around we might be lucky enough to bear witness to the growth and blooms of those seeds planted years ago.

*Celebrate* with FESCO, the Family Shelter

### Fourth Annual Dinner and Auction *Swinging on a Star*



**Saturday 20 October 2007**

Dinner • Silent Auction  
Live Auction • Entertainment



Agape Hall  
Resurrection Greek Orthodox Church  
Center Street • Castro Valley

\$45 per person



*For ticket information or donations for auction items,  
please contact Diane Meyerson.*

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

# How to Reach Us



## **Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church**

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Church President: Meg Jurich  
510/886.3080  
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Chalice Editor: Carol Henrie  
510/886.1018  
[editor@starrking.org](mailto:editor@starrking.org)

### **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](mailto:editor@starrking.org)

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

## **Church Leadership**

### Board of Trustees

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FESCO — Diane Meyerson  
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Interior — Lavon Hodges  
Intern — Bob Meyerson  
Kitchen Manager — Sherry Thomas  
Membership — Wendy Robertson  
Committee on Ministry — Lee Berger (Convenor),  
Doris Haskell, Carol Henrie, Keith Lewis,  
Kirk Smith, Karen Yearout

Nominating — Bob Stortz

Outreach — Susan Blanc

Pastoral Care — Bob Stortz, Convenor

Pledge Secretary — Marilyn Mosher

R.E. Chair — Carey Sanchez Para

Social Justice — Evelyn Cormier

South Hayward Parish —

Jim Forsyth & Barbara Storms

Sunday Coffee — Terry Babbidge

Sunday Service Setup — Mary Richards

Volunteer Coordinator — Karen Cook

Welcoming Congregation — Mary Lasack

Worship — Betsy Dye

