

## A LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL?

A message from Michael Franklin, GGSC Board President

We have all been a long time absent from our Church, our center, our spiritual home. It has not been safe to go to our Church, but we cannot help missing doing so. Zoom services have been more useful and successful than I could have imagined, and seeing Spirit adapt so quickly and effectively to this new milieu has been nothing short of amazing.

Online services, however, cannot offer the sense of community, the fulfillment achieved through worshipping together in person in a place so filled with energy and love as is Golden Gate Spiritualist Church.

Unfortunately, each time in the past eighteen months that we seriously considered reopening the Church, it was always one step forward, two steps back. The pandemic was world changing, and every time it seemed nearly under control, up went the R number (*the number of people that one infected person will pass on a virus to, on average*), up went hospitalizations, up went the patients in intensive care.

San Francisco has one of the best vaccination percentages in the country, and when in June of the year, the Governor declared that just about everything could go back to the way it had been, all venues could open with few restrictions, we were thrilled – for about five minutes.

Then the Delta Variant surged onto the scene and all plans for a return to normality went out the window. Our Board discussions of possibly reopening the Church in late August were curtailed. If we could not convene with utmost safety, we could not convene at all. So, where are we now? What are our plans? The Delta Variant surge appears to be subsiding, R numbers are well down, a path ahead seems possible. We have tentatively settled upon October 31st for reopening the church: our renaissance. We believe we can safely and sensibly return to the Church on that Sunday. But, please be aware that anything can happen with this pandemic. We will be watching and discussing each week leading up to October 31<sup>st</sup> to ensure a safe situation for all.

The parameters of the return will be as follows: full vaccination and proof thereof will be required for attendance; it will be necessary for all congregants to wear suitable masks correctly at all times when inside the church; social distancing will be observed as is practical; there will be no hands-on healing initially; there will be no collection plate passed, but there will be a donation box available by the door; there will be no social hour upstairs after service, but we hope, if the weather permits, to have coffee and sweets to share with companionship in the patio beside the church.

*(continued on page 2)*

## UPCOMING CHURCH FUNDRAISER



*Summerland Garden*



*Stairway to Summerland*

An opportunity to win a colorful garden painting by Susan Hazard will be in an upcoming drawing. Two new oil paintings have been donated for the maintenance projects fundraiser. “Summerland Garden” is 24” wide x 18” height, oil with palette knife technique, and “Stairway to Summerland” is 18” wide x 24” height. Both paintings will be ready to display in 3” wide gold moulding frames. These vibrant and original paintings will be shipped to the winners in the contiguous United States at no additional cost. A separate announcement will be sent next month.

*For further information, see the Golden Gate Spiritualist Church at [www.ggspiritualistchurch.org](http://www.ggspiritualistchurch.org).*

### *Presidents Message (continued)*

In preparation for re-opening, we have thoroughly cleaned the main areas and have repainted the downstairs common areas – hallways, kitchen, bathrooms. We have purchased CDC approved air purifiers to remove air borne particles from the auditorium. The curtains, with the exception of those on the podium, have been put away to remove a possible source of contamination (and this has had the ancillary benefit of making the inside of the church brighter). A number of seats were replaced and/or repaired.

One of our main goals, beside a safe situation for all attending service, is to continue our dialogue with those who have discovered our Church or resumed their relationship with it on Zoom. To that end, we have extended the wi-fi in our Church and have set up laptops to carry the service live – not live streaming- but live on Zoom. Those who tune in can interact with the in-person participants, receive messages along with those in the congregation, and be as near to “here” as possible. This is somewhat complicated, but we are determined to at least give it a try. Initially, Wednesday evening services will be only on Zoom and will be held on the first and third Wednesdays only, with questions and answers, and testimonials. This spacing of days will help with virus control and promote safe gatherings.

I know from speaking with many of you that there is a great desire – a need, really- to resume in-person services. I myself cannot wait to do hands on healing again, but that is still a blessing for the future. It is our sincere hope and intention that

the measures noted and the timing discussed will avail us all of a safe and sane return to our heart.

Love and light to all.

Michael Franklin

*GGSC Board President*



### **Board Member Added**

The Golden Gate Spiritualist Church board has a new member as of August, Maria Watts. Maria is a long time member of GGSC, and we appreciate her accepting the invitation to be on the board and her continued involvement in the church.



### **Annual Convention 2021**

#### **CANCELLED**

The 2021 Annual Convention scheduled for October 3-8 in Seattle, Washington has been **cancelled**. According to the National Spiritualist Association of Churches website, “For the health and safety of our delegates, the NSAC Board has met and voted to cancel our annual convention this year in Seattle Washington. We are working together to continue the business of the NSAC and ask for your understanding and patience

through this navigation.” Thank you to the delegates that had volunteered to attend this years convention. We will keep you informed of any upcoming changes or developments.



### **Maintenance Inspection Completed**

On September 10 a professional building and pest inspection was completed at the church property at the request of the Maintenance Committee. Board members and maintenance committee members met with the inspectors and assisted with entry into all areas of the church building and grounds. The good news is the building, including the roof and electrical systems, is in good condition. Copies of the full reports were sent to all Board members on September 14 and 15.

As the report notes, some areas of need for repair or replacement were identified, as: the rear wood deck (adjacent to the kitchen), the metal fire escape structure, the current sun room (being used for storage) and existing guardrails. All these conditions and concerns will be scheduled for attention as finances permit.

If you have any questions regarding the church inspection report, please contact Michael Franklin, GGSC Board President. Thank you to the Maintenance Committee members – June Johnson, David Haddick and Susan Hazard- for their ongoing efforts to keep our wonderful historic building in good working order!



## What is special about Halloween?

Halloween is October 31, and many of us have festivities on our minds. Do we know why the holiday, where the traditions began, and what it all means?

The word Halloween means “hallowed evening”, and early European celebrators called it All Hallows’ Eve. The following day, November 1, is All Saints’ Day; both acknowledging saints (“hallows” is saints). The name over time was shortened to Halloween, as we know it today.

Halloween is celebrated on October 31 because of the Celtic festival of *Samhain*. The October day is believed to be a moment in time when the boundary between the physical world and the world of spirit are felt to be especially thin, enabling us to more easily connect with those who have passed over. A similar idea is shared by the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur, which typically occurs in October and involves saying prayers for the dead. This may be also where Halloween gained its haunted connotations.

The Celtic holiday of *Samhain* involved ritual based ceremonies

to connect to spirits, involving special feasts and possibly costumes as a disguise against ghosts, and the making of wicked appearing lanterns by hollowing out gourds and turnips. The

practice of a trick or a treat originated with the Celtic tradition during *Samhain* of people dressing up as evil spirits. As they moved from one year to the other, the dead and living briefly overlapped, and protection from the dead was necessary. Being seen as a demon protected you from evil spirits. In the Middle Ages, the tradition was continued with an exchange of food or treats while in costume, supposedly on behalf of the dead.

Over time, as the practices moved to Canada and the United States with European immigrants, the pagan meaning of the holiday were reduced to the costume wearing, pumpkin jack-o-lantern carving and “trick or treat” - endearing demands we see today.



Science is not only compatible with spirituality; it is a profound source of spirituality.  
-Carl Sagan



**DONATE NOW**

Keeping the doors of GGSC open relies on the generosity of members and friends. We all benefit when our donors “give until it feels good.” You may donate funds to help keep the church doors open at our website, [www.ggspiritalistchurch.org](http://www.ggspiritalistchurch.org) with the donate button on the left side of the page. If you have items to donate for future fund raising sales, due to limited storage we ask that you please first contact President Michael Franklin or church Secretary Barbara Dullea. You may email us at [info@ggspiritalistchurch.org](mailto:info@ggspiritalistchurch.org) or telephone 415-885-9976



## GGSC News

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