



LAKE CHAPALA UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

NEWSLETTER, FEBRUARY 2017

Upcoming Services

February 5 – “Reflections on Winter: a Personal Perspective on Aging and Spirituality”

Speaker: Bob Koches; Service Leader: Richard Clarke

February 12 – “Cupid’s Conundrum”

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Paula Gable; Service Leader: Fred Harland

As Valentine’s Day approaches, we are reminded of the joys of romantic love, which is wonderful. Yet, REAL, sustainable love requires commitment and maturity once the flames of passion burn less brightly. Still, a long-term relationship is a wonderful proposition and a rich way of spending one's life loving another -- if you know the "secret" - to be revealed!

February 19 – "What does a UU do with alternative truth?"

Speaker: Trudy Crippen; Service Leader: Karyn Carpenter

February 26 – "Harvest the Power - Lifelong Spiritual Growth"

Presenters: Tomas Dowdy-Winslett, Buddy Dowdy-Winslett

This service explores the challenges of lifelong learning and spiritual growth with emphasis on challenges at various stages and resources available (especially liberal religious options). The focus will be on the necessity of learning within a community while honoring our right of conscience.

Congregational Meeting



The LCUUF Annual General

Meeting was held following the service and a potluck lunch on January 22nd. President Fred Harland called the meeting to order. Secretary Jan Manning reported that 41 members were present. Following are highlights from the reports presented and a synopsis of decisions taken.

President's Report

(Fred Harland)

- It has been a very busy and momentous year. Thanks to all board members, especially retiring secretary, **Jan Manning**.
- The past year began with a move to our wonderful **new location**, and a **celebration of our 10th Anniversary**. We had much to celebrate – a growing, welcoming, and supportive Fellowship, a decade of Sunday Services and support to the Mexican community.
- Two major new initiatives took shape over the year: **pledging and seeking a part time contract minister**.
- **David Miller and Heidi MacLennan** provided leadership on the issue of pledging. The congregation voted to approve pledging for 2017 at a special congregational meeting held on November 27th.
- Heidi thanked the congregation for the generous pledging response.
- A Dec. 18th Special Congregational meeting voted to approve the proposal from Rev. Daniel O'Connell of Houston to advertise for a part time contract minister to be located here, but supervised and supported by the team in Houston.

- We remember and honor the two members who passed away this year, **Sheldon James and Maureen Peterson**.
- Thanks to all members who served on committees and to the 3 retiring chairs: **Donna Burroughs, Membership; Susan Miller, Outreach; and Kathy Koches, Sunday Services**.
- Sincere appreciation as well to the **many individuals** who contribute in a variety of ways to our Fellowship. (15 named, too many to report here!)
- We hosted 2 Visiting Ministers, Rev. Jorge Espinel in March, and Rev. Gary Kowalski in January.
- Rev. Gary Kowalski facilitated two planning workshops during his visit, a congregational goals workshop on Jan. 8 and a follow-up one with the board and committees on Jan. 14th.
- The congregational **goals workshop** identified our strengths and weaknesses, what difference we want to make, what actions to take to address our aspirations and our priorities for a half-time minister. These workshops identified what we hold to be important:
 - (a) Adult religious education,
 - (b) Services and sermons (with the minister both working on them and helping us to be better Service planners and presenters).
 - (c) Outreach, to the Mexican community and getting people to know us better.
- These three issues will continue to be a focus both of our efforts and of our priorities for the minister.
- Other issues mentioned include improving public relations and social opportunities, and adding Spanish to our services. Work will continue on all these goals under the leadership of the board.
- Having successfully moved to our new location, celebrated our 10th anniversary, instituted pledging, and agreed to look for a part-time minister, we now look forward with confidence to the many challenges ahead.

Committee Reports



Ministerial Selection Committee Report (Teresa Sande, Vice-President)

The Committee, composed of Dave Miller, Trudy Crippen, Tom Dowdy-Winslett, and Teresa Sande, met in mid-January with Visiting Minister, Rev. Gary Kowalski and Board President, Fred Harland, to review progress in defining congregational goals and to consider the details of the selection process. A summary profile of the Fellowship had previously been sent to Houston for the purpose of recruitment.

- The Committee decided a priority was to furnish candidates with comprehensive information concerning the interests and needs of the Fellowship. It was further agreed that a **congregational survey** would be an invaluable tool for soliciting and communicating this crucial data. The Committee expressed strong hope that all members of the Fellowship would participate in the process and support this important initiative by completing the survey when it is distributed in the near future.
- The Committee has expressed strong appreciation for the participation and support of the congregation in this new initiative and during a crucial time of challenge, change and significant growth. The patience and goodwill of Fellowship members have brought our congregation together during this exciting time of transition and maturation.

Membership Committee Report (Marty Weston, Chair)

- Wrote and sent for publishing to the Guadalajara Reporter **two articles** featuring Lake Chapala UU and our principles.
- Conducted three new member ceremonies, resulting in **eleven new members**.
- Completed and distributed **redesigned name-tags for members**.
- Provided monthly content for the newsletter.
- In July started the **assistant greeter program**.
- Forms on the greeter table have been consolidated and/or revised.
- We gained Eric Luria and Val Marcum as committee members and said goodbye to Trudy Crippen and Jan Manning.
- We are in the final stages of completing the “**Membership Committee Responsibilities Guide**”. This will give detailed descriptions of the committee’s responsibilities.
- Marty Weston will continue to serve as chairman.

Sunday Service Committee Report (Kathy Koches, Chair)

The Committee is responsible for planning and organizing high quality, diverse Sunday Services that reflect UU principles and sources of faith. To this end the committee encourages and coordinates the participation of members and friends, as well as provides resources and support as necessary. Members of the committee during 2016 were Kathy Koches, Karyn Carpenter, Lew Crippen, Nancy Jordan-Zanot, and Teresa Sande. Karyn Carpenter left at the end of March and Richard Clarke and Mardele Harland joined the committee. Karyn Carpenter, Nancy Jordan-Zanot, Kathy Koches, and Teresa Sande served as Sunday Service Coordinators during 2016. This is an important position and we thank them for their work on our behalf.

52 Sunday Services were planned and presented by members and friends.

We had 4 outside speakers and 45 presentations given by members. We celebrated our pets at Writers' Sunday in February, and the 10th anniversary of our fellowship in March. We had a Book Share service in July and were pleased to have the San Juan Cosala Children's Choir for our celebration of Mexican Independence Day in September. We also had five services between October and December based on the book "A Chosen Faith".

The LCUUF Choir, under the direction of Bob Koches and accompanied by Rodrigo Leal Murillo continues to provide musical inspiration for our services and Mardele Harland accompanies the hymn singing at our services.

A planning meeting was held in January 2017 to review our services of 2016 and plan for services in 2017. Kathy Koches will step down as chairperson after serving on the SS Committee for six years. Mardele Harland will serve as the new chairperson. Catherine Luria joined the committee. The service coordinators for 2017 are: Mardele Harland, (January, February, and March), Richard Clarke (April, May and June), Teresa Sande (July, August, and September) and Lew Crippen (October, November, and December).

A sincere thank you to all who gave presentations, served as leaders, sang in the choir, or contributed in other ways to Sunday Services in 2016.

Care Committee Report *Lynn Cleek, Chair*

The care committee was expanded midyear to a team of five, including myself, Joan Jaquish, Lori Fjelsted, Paul Bennett and Buddy Dowdy-Winslett.

We have sent cards and emails, made phone calls, taken flowers and cake, and visited with those in the fellowship who have needed a hand or just someone to listen to them.

Please remember that we can only do this if we know that you are in need. If you need us, let us

know; or if you know of someone in the fellowship who we might be able to help, please advise us through email or take us aside at the fellowship. We are easy to spot with our lovely care scarves covered in hearts (donated by Buddy Dowdy-Winslett and Tom Dowdy-Winslett).

Outreach Committee Report *(Susan Miller, Chair)*

At last year's AGM, LCUUF voted to support the **Centro de Desarrollo Women's Health Clinics** operated by Silvia Flores in two locations (Ajijic and Tephua, Chapala) and the **Hungry Children of Mezcala Food Program**. Total contributions to the two organizations to date were:

Centro De Desarrolla, A.C.:	\$18,953MX
Mezcala Food program:	\$28,455MX
Children's soccer program:	\$7000MX
Donation of 26 food boxes"	\$1,800MX
Total	\$56,208MX

This represents 45% of our actual 2016-2017 budget. There is a further payment of \$1687 due the end of January to the Centro project.

Also as a result of a vote taken last year, LCUUF continued to support the Hungry Children program conducted by Tania Ruiz Martinez. Donations from members and friends resulted in a total donation of \$28,455MX from February to August of 2016. Due to a change in school policy regarding the in-school food program, the program was terminated last fall. Subsequently, the children are being fed a daily meal at an off-site location. The cost of these meals is being borne by the Anglican Church. The soccer program was terminated in the fall due to lack of participation by the children.

A Motion to increase support to the Women's Health Clinics in 2017 by 20% to \$24,000 was approved. Consideration will also be given to supporting the children of Mezcala through donations of underwear, socks, school supplies, and sweaters or jackets.

Treasurer's Report

(Gary Cleek)

The financial records for 2016 -17 to the end of December were reviewed. The bank balance as of Dec. 31st, 2016 is \$151,975, an increase of \$11,064 from Dec. 2015. All committees are under budget and we will end the fiscal year with a modest surplus.

Looking ahead to 2017-18, **Pledge totals as of Jan. 15th, 2017 are \$392,350MX.** Pledging is ongoing. We are in talks with the Houston UU church to determine the easiest and best way to donate in US dollars directly to the Houston Church. We should have the mechanics worked out very soon. Please let me know if this is how you want to pledge, so I can advise you how to do so as soon as I know. We are anticipating that you can donate by check or credit card and possibly PayPal. We also anticipate that the Houston Church can generate a tax deduction form that you can use for your IRS tax deductions.

The budget for 2017/18

Total revenues projected at \$392,350MX

Total expenses projected at \$204,370MX

Resulting in a net surplus of \$189,980M

Discussion followed. Gary explained that the rent is paid by a small group of members (Trudy and Lew Crippen, Norman and Sharon Woods, Paul Bennett and Jeanne Haely, Heidi MacLennan and Fred and Mardele Harland) and is separate from the budget. The question regarding the part-time minister's salary was answered by Fred and Gary. The total will be \$15,000 USD, \$10,000 of which is salary, the rest living expenses.

Moved by Gary Cleek, seconded by Heidi MacLennan the 2017-18 budget be accepted as presented. Carried.

Nominations Committee Report

(Kathy Koches reported on behalf of the committee which also included Ellen McFarland and Marion Blackmer.)

The following were elected by acclamation to two year terms on the Board of Directors:

Treasurer: Gary Cleek

Secretary: Eric Luria

Member-at-large: Trudy Crippen

The 2017-18 Board also includes:

President: Fred Harland,

Vice-President: Teresa Sande

Member-at-large: Heidi MacLennan

Member-at-large: Joan Jaquish

The following members were elected by acclamation to one year terms on the Nominating Committee: **Paul Bennett, Kathy Koches and Mardele Harland.**



Happy Birthday Greetings to the following who celebrate birthdays in February:

13th Donna Burroughs

16th Janice Kimbal and Diane VanBrocklin

23rd Susan Reynolds

Upcoming Activities

English Country Dancing continues at the Fellowship on Sunday, Feb. 5th and 19th, 2:45 to 5. Contact Catherine CLuriaARNP@gmail.com for information.



Circle Suppers

Assignments for the first quarter circle suppers, to take place in February and March, 2017, are posted on the bulletin board. Hosts will be contacting their guests to arrange a mutually convenient date and time. This is a great way to get to know other members in a small group setting.

A congregational Potluck will be held on Saturday, Feb. 11th from 4:30 to 7 p.m. at the home of Catherine and Eric Luria, Rio Bravo #77, Rancho Del Oro, in honor of visiting minister Rev. Dr. Paula Gable and her husband, Mark Cannon. A sign-up sheet is on the welcome table. Please plan to attend!

Rev. Dr. Paula Gable, Visiting Minister from Ottawa



Paula Gable currently serves as Interim Minister with the First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa and brings greetings from UU friends in the Canadian capitol. In the mid-1980's, she studied at the UNAM while working as a Finance Reporter for the *Mexico City News* (now defunct). She is delighted to have her husband, Mark Cannon, visit Mexico with her for the first time, and to spend time with UU "ex-pats." She has also served UU congregations in Pennsylvania, Georgia, Texas and North Carolina; worked as an engineer, management consultant, executive coach, spiritual director, clinical psychotherapist; organic gardener, Tenzo (head cook) and altar keeper while a residential Zen practitioner; professional student and stepmom to four humans and lots of animals. She loves travel, especially outdoor adventures, the fine arts and dining, greasy spoons, cold beer, red wine, unsalted Margaritas, (reasonably) spicy food and meeting "strangers" who will soon become friends.



Atheist, Agnostic and Humanist Discussion Group

The group will meet February 27th at 3 p.m. at the Fellowship. It is time to brainstorm about topics we would like to discuss, so bring your list. For information contact Bob Koches at (bobkoches@gmail.com).



Choir News

The LCUUF choir needs more singers, especially sopranos and tenors. We have changed the day of practices to the first and third Mondays at 9:30 at the Fellowship. Please contact Choir Director, Bob Koches if you are interested in joining the choir.

Notice: A Celebration of the Life of Maureen Peterson will be held on Sat. March 11th, 2 p.m. at the Fellowship. Mark your calendar and let Donna know if you can attend (at donna.burroughs@gmail.com or 376-106-2087).

This newsletter provides LCUUF news for members and friends. The deadline for the March edition is Feb. 20th. Editor: Mardele Harland (mardeleharlandmx@gmail.com)