



## LAKE CHAPALA UU FELLOWSHIP NEWSLETTER    JUNE 2019

### **Upcoming LCUUF Sunday Services**

**June 2, 2019** – “Thinking about Sunday.” Speaker is Matt Alspaugh. Joan Ward is Service Leader. Whether we call it a service, a gathering, a meeting, or worship, we expect our time together on Sunday mornings to be somehow special. We expect to go away with something worthwhile, whether an idea, a feeling, an intention, or even something ... ineffable. How do we accomplish this, week after week? Where does creativity and variety play in this? Whose voices get heard, and when? This service will explore questions like these, and then be followed by a time of open discussion. This discussion is the first of three on the Board’s Open Questions: “What are your expectations of our Sunday Services? Why do you come or why do you occasionally stay away?”

**June 9, 2019** - “Caught in His Trap.” Speaker is Richard Clarke. Carol Johnson is Service Leader. This is the deeply personal story of a father. Not all fathers were like those on TV in shows like “Father knows Best.” How you we deal with long-term pain, when the other party has died? Richard will talk about his father, the painful relationship, and how he is trying to deal with this, and keep growing.

**June 16, 2019** - Life is Change, Growth is Optional." Speaker is Rev Matt Alspaugh. "Life is change, growth is optional: choose wisely." There's plenty of truth to this aphorism, both for individuals and institutions. We'll reflect on change in our lives, and how change creates openings for growth. We'll explore what resisting change, and choosing not to grow looks like, as well as wise and unwise growth. This service will be followed by a time of discussion to consider the Board’s question, "How do you see the Fellowship developing over the next three to five years? Do you expect to see the Fellowship growing both in terms of membership numbers and our involvement in the local community and within the congregation?"

**June 23, 2019** - “Time is up!” Speaker is John DeWaal. Lew Crippen is Service Leader. Relationships to the natural world, based on domination and the logic of never-ending growth, is like a cancer which, on a finite planet, can only lead to death - death of other people, death of other species, and death of self. John will talk about the crisis we all face, and how we might approach it.

**June 30, 2019** - "Tell Me Something I Don't Know." Speaker is Susan Miller. Dave Miller is Service Leader. As Unitarian Universalists, we have an open, shared pulpit. On any given Sunday, our speaker may be our part-time minister, a guest speaker, or a member or friend of the Fellowship. All speakers are free in that they have the right to express themselves as they see fit. This Sunday, we will explore how our individual and congregational lives are enhanced by the many different souls who share their thoughts and ideas with us.



## MESSAGE FROM REV. MATT

How do we face great sadness? How do we face sorrow that is part of disease, disability, death? How do we face our own pain as we witness the violence, corruption, a sense that the world we know is decaying in on itself?

Writer and mystic Parker Palmer suggests that there exists what he calls the *tragic gap*. This is the gap between the way things are and the way they might be. This is the gap between a life limited by disease or disability and a life of health, or between death of a loved one and imagined future life with them. It is the gap between a corrupt and deceitful government and one that is civil and functional; or between tolerance for random killings and demand for a peaceful, nonviolent society.

These tragic gaps separate reality from possibility. Palmer suggests that we must live in the gap, which brings on tension and discomfort. We cannot merely live in reality, for this is the place without dreams, a land of cynicism and hopelessness. Nor can we live fully in possibility, for this becomes a fantasy world, without sense or connection to what is real.

So we live in between, in the tragic gap, and we take in the pain and the fear.

According to Palmer (and this fits with my own experience), the fear emerges only when we risk breaking our hearts. He tells us:

"...there are at least two ways to understand what it means to have our heart broken. One is to imagine a heart broken into shards and scattered about -- a feeling most of us know, and a fate we would like to avoid. The other is to imagine the heart broken open into a new capacity -- a process that is not without pain but one that many of us would welcome. As I stand in the tragic gap between reality and possibility, the small tight fist of a thing called my

heart can break open into greater capacity to hold more of my own and the world's suffering and joy, despair and hope."

Writer and Jungian analyst Clarissa Pinkola Estes speaks of the heart breaking open in a different way. She writes "there are other ways through a sadness that comes upon one as one sees the suffering world... one way is to put one's suffering to good use as you see fit. Suffering, like love, like hatred, like even tiredness, is energy that can be translated and used elsewhere."

I think that we require a certain courage (from *coeur- age*, quality of heart) to choose to move toward the pain, and then to pass through it, inviting the opening of the heart, the release of new energy, and the deepening of compassion. This passage may not be possible for everyone in every situation, but I do think we should strive for it when we are faced with great sadness. With our hearts opened we become changed. I find such changed people a joy to be with, for they embody a generous, wondrous spirit. They inspire me that even in the tragic gap, there is hope.

## Congregational Discussions

In June and July, our Board will lead congregational discussions on the three Open Questions they chose to consider this year. The questions will feed planning and decision making for the future. We hope you can join us for these discussions, each after the service.

On June 2, we'll look at **Sunday Services**: What are your expectations of our Sunday Services? Why do you come or why do you occasionally stay away?

On June 16, we'll look at **Growth into the Future**: How do you see the Fellowship developing over the next three to five years? Do you expect to see the Fellowship growing both in terms of membership numbers and our involvement in the local community and within the congregation?

On July 7, we'll look at **Our Value**: What value does the LCUUF bring to you? To others? What do you think attracts potential new congregants to the Fellowship? What value to you bring to the Fellowship for others?



Karyn Carpenter & Miss Annie the Newf

## BOARD MEMBER'S MESSAGE

**ARE YOU FULLY INVOLVED?** My journey with UU began about 5 years ago when I joined our local fellowship. Raised in a small Presbyterian Church, I found myself frustrated as every weekday I was encouraged to think positively to succeed, then Sunday morning I was asked to join in responsive readings which usually included the theme - "I am a sinner". As soon as I graduated High School and could make my own decisions, NOT attending church was the first place I pushed back against my parents.

With Lake Chapala Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, I felt an instant connection. I loved the often quirky lay-led programs which - no matter their quality or topic - gave me a chance to get to know others in our church. While I appreciate Matt, I still cherish our lay-led programs.

My background before moving Lakeside is extremely diverse, but one of my many pasts includes volunteer coordination. I draw on that experience since my position as VP of the Fellowship is working directly with the committees that make our fellowship function. These hardworking members do a fabulous job, often putting time in every week outside Sunday services, but they need your help. While your situation may keep you from joining a committee, I encourage you to offer your time to assist as you are able. Make yourself available a few Sunday mornings to be greeter. We can even pull a chair over for you if standing is a problem.

Do you have a program or part of one that you might offer to give one Sunday? We can use your input. Your volunteer contributions enrich the Fellowship, the various committees and YOU, as volunteering helps you become better acquainted with other members.

I thank each and every one of our volunteers, whether you serve on a committee, ensure we have printed announcements each week or come early on Sundays to tweak our AV equipment. These people, and many more, make our fellowship run smoothly.



## CIRCLE SUPPERS

The third quarter circle suppers will be held in July, August and September. The sign-up sheets will be on the tables beginning mid-June. Please sign up and indicate if you can be a host and how many you can accommodate (including yourself) or if you wish to be a guest. These suppers are a great way to get to know your fellow UUs. If you need information contact Bob or Kathy Koches at [kkoches@gmail.com](mailto:kkoches@gmail.com)



## CHOIR NEWS

The choir is on hiatus until November when our new Choir Director, Linda Jessen returns from Canada.



## JUNE

- 06 Buddy Dowdy-Winslett
- 08 Helen White
- 16 Francisco Urzua
- 23 MaryHelen Montgomery



## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT CAROL JOHNSON

Carol has always considered she has had a lucky and charmed life. She was born just outside New York City and grew up there the only child of wonderful middle class parents.

After graduating from college, she spent almost a year in Europe with extensive stays in Spain and Greece - also visiting London, Paris, Barcelona, Italy, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Switzerland, Belgium, and Holland. As she puts it “so young, so free....”

She spent her 20's in Manhattan and all the wonders it has to offer a young single woman. She earned an MA in Art History from Columbia, and remained in NYC and worked in television production.

Looking back, she wishes she could do her twenties over. She says she was damaged by sexism because she was brought up thinking that having a career was never something to seriously consider. Her indulgent parents made her life too easy. “Poor little lady, don't fret your pretty little head.”

Some interesting facts about Carol: she once went skinny dipping in a mountain stream with John Lennon. She would have liked to meet John Denver because of his spiritual side. She is most proud of her two kids and that she has finished a few paintings that she likes. As a child she wanted to be a boy because everybody knew they were 'better'.

She likes the folk music of the past along with some post-sixties musical theater. After the necessities of food, clothing and shelter she considers laughter the most important thing. She thinks that being called a real artist the greatest compliment you could give her. She is obsessed with politics although she is trying to back away a bit now (she is convinced Donald Trump gave her cancer) but will never stop watching Stephen Colbert or Trevor Noah – they keep her informed.

She still has lots left to accomplish. The one superpower she wishes she had is invisibility so she could sneak on flights and go to all the places she still wants to visit – all over Africa, South America, and more of Asia. Her bucket list also includes going hang gliding.

She considers her husband Richard as one of the most influential people in her life for introducing her to her guru in California, for being with her on their 8 year sojourn in India, and for being the best life partner ever.

She has been a spiritual “seeker” since she was seven years old and found her truth was unrelated to the “traditional church” and that the “big man in the sky had nothing to do with anything.” She first visited a UU service in 1972 in Denver, and loved it but didn't return until she and Richard moved to the magnetic Lakeside in 2015 and joined LCUUF.

Submitted by Jan Manning



Please send any announcements for June services to Donna Burroughs at [donna.burroughs@gmail.com](mailto:donna.burroughs@gmail.com)



## SHARE THE BASKET

Our Share the Basket recipient for June, July and Aug. 2019 is Poco a Poco San Pedro Itzicán. Poco a Poco is a nonprofit organization that supports various initiatives in San Pedro Itzicán and the surrounding towns. These remote villages are located along the shore of Lake Chapala, in the vicinity of Mezcala, and are indigenous communities who lack education and support. Health issues, poor nutrition, and little work, together with many social issues, make it hard for these communities to survive. People are willing to learn and work, but it's not easy for them because of the lack of education, and money to make a change to their lives.

Poco a Poco believes that a "hands up - not a hands out" approach is the best way to help. Poco a Poco works on creating small, start up projects to enable local people to earn a living, and encourage and enable children to attend school. Some of their numerous projects include English classes, food share programs, gardening projects, emergency health funds, and more. To learn more about this organization visit their website at [www.pocoapocosanpedro.com](http://www.pocoapocosanpedro.com)



## Fellowship Meal

On June 30<sup>th</sup> the Fellowship will be going to Gosha's Restaurant in Ajijic for lunch after the service. The restaurant is located at #24 Careterra. Please sign up at the round table in the foyer.



## Women's Swim

### Party-Tuesday, June 18 - 3:30- 6:30

Beat the summer heat with a LCUUF Women's Swim Party. This event is being hosted by Joan Ward. Bring fruit, veggies or other snacks to share as well as what you would like to drink. Remember to pack sunscreen, a hat and towel.

**You MUST RSVP by email** so we have enough seating for everyone. Directions to Joan's house will be provided when we hear from you. Please, RSVP by email only to Karyn Carpenter at [newfugger\\_wander@mac.com](mailto:newfugger_wander@mac.com)



**PLEASE remember to bring your own cups to UU events.** Please, bring your own and encourage others to not forget! You can store your cup in the plastic tub in the library.



**The LCUUF Newsletter is produced to provide LCUUF news to members and friends. Deadline for contributions to the July newsletter is June 20th to be sent to: Editor: Kathy Koches at: [kkoches@gmail.com](mailto:kkoches@gmail.com)**