



## Upcoming LCUUF Sunday Services

**Dec. 5<sup>th</sup> – How To Be A Good Ancestor** - Humankind has had a rapid and destructive impact on our planet. How might we hope to turn that around and thus become good ancestors? Fred Harland will give the talk and Mardele Harland will be the Service Leader.

**Dec. 12<sup>th</sup> – To Know the Dark, Go Dark** - A favorite Wendell Berry poem begins: To go in the dark with a light is to know the light. To know the dark, go dark. Our culture eschews the darkness, fears it, chases it away. And yet, the darkness has much to offer us. But going into the dark can be a fearful thing. In this time of seasonal darkness, it's good to reflect on how we might relate with the darkness in our lives and in the world around us. If we do so, we just might, as Berry tells us, learn that "the dark, too, blooms and sings." Rev. Matt Alspaugh will give the sermon and Joan Ward is the service leader.

**Dec. 19<sup>th</sup> – Celebrating Christmas** - We will celebrate Christmas through music and readings. The children's choir from San Juan Cosala, Musica Para Crecer, will perform for us and we will join together in singing some traditional Christmas carols.

**Dec. 26<sup>th</sup> – After the Birth, the Slaughter** - We take up one of the more challenging parts of the Biblical Christmas story, Matthew 2:13-23, sometimes known as "The Slaughter of the Innocents." This text reveals a dark side of Christmas, as Herod, representing imperial power, has all the male infants in the Bethlehem region killed in a desperate attempt to eliminate the baby Jesus. This is not the stuff of Christmas carols and greeting cards! We'll delve into the complexities of this story, and how it might inform a thoughtful reading of scripture and other sacred texts.

## In-Person Fellowship Attendance Requirements

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The LCUUF Board decided at their September meeting to amend the current, in-person attendance requirements. **We will now require that all attendees be vaccinated for Covid.** No one will be required to show proof of vaccination. You may be vaccinated anywhere, with any vaccine. This change will be effective beginning with the first service in October. **Masking and social distancing will still be required for attendees in addition to Covid vaccinations.**

This change is being implemented in an effort to be responsive to the congregation and to encourage in-person attendance. The Board will review this new policy after we have had some experience with this change. We will carefully consider feedback from those attending and those not attending. Of course we will also review any change in the number of attendees. So that you are aware, the Board was split in coming to this decision, so it is especially important to let us know your feelings about, and experiences with, this new policy.



We are also meeting on-line, at our usual time, Sundays at 10:30, using a service called Zoom. Here's how to get set up. We suggest you do this before the meeting.

To join via video on your computer, tablet or smartphone, please click the link below – you will be stepped through downloading a free app that will let you connect to the meeting. <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/233941792>  
Meeting ID: 233 941 792

Or, for audio, just dial-in by your location

+52 229 910 0061 Mexico

+52 554 161 4288 Mexico

+1 253 215 8782 US

+1 301 715 8592 US

+1 778 907 2071 Canada

+1 438 809 7799 Canada

+1 587 328 1099 Canada

+1 647 374 4685 Canada

Elsewhere? Find your local phone

number: <https://us04web.zoom.us/u/fnTR4N3JJ>

We encourage you to try to connect early, to get things set up. However, you won't be able to join the service until about 10:00am on Sunday. But it's good to get set up early.



Rev. Matt Alspaugh

## MESSAGE FROM MATT

I received an email from another church which raised a particularly interesting question: What happens if this COVID-19 pandemic becomes endemic, that is to say, it has no end? That, rather than just going away as some pandemic diseases have, it hangs around, most likely at a lower level of intensity. Many other pandemics have transitioned to endemics. The flu of the 1918 pandemic is now known as the H1N1 flu variety; the 1957 flu pandemic is the H2N2 variety, and the 1968 pandemic is the H3N3 variety. These pandemics initially had fairly high fatality rates that decreased in the years that followed, as people developed natural immunity. Vaccines have helped, also. So now, many of us, especially those at risk, get flu vaccines annually. These annual vaccines attempt to target the endemic varieties that experts think will reemerge that year.

So what does this mean for us? If COVID continues to be around, how do we as individuals deal with it? We will have to accept that it is a reality in our daily lives. We will have to face the risk that it brings, and balance that risk with living out our lives. We'll have to find the balance to be able to do what we thought were risky things, like taking restaurant meals, riding buses, going to theaters, flying, and attending Sunday services. We'll each have to do our own risk calculus rather than depending on government or organizational mandates, balancing current infection numbers with our own evaluations of our health and vaccination status. This is not new; we do similar risk calculus with other daily activities. For example, we consider who is driving a car we ride in, perhaps avoiding crazy taxistas, inebriated persons, and teenage drivers.

As a fellowship, we'll have to navigate the risk calculus of an endemic together. This may mean that we choose to hold or cancel gatherings based on our sense of the risk, and our sense of the comfort levels of our participants. It may mean we adjust our requirements (like meeting in open air and wearing masks) according to the same risk calculus. Should the pandemic become endemic, we will once again be reminded that we can't simply go back to the way things were. That the New Normal is not simply a return to the Old Normal, but that together we will find our way through.



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## Board Member's Message

As I write this column, my husband, Dave, and I are in Virginia and are getting ready to drive to Massachusetts for Thanksgiving with his family. After the holiday, we return to Virginia to prepare for our elder daughter's wedding on December 11, 2021. If you had asked me three years ago about the potential for a world-shifting pandemic and another wedding in the family, I would have pooh-poohed the probability of either or both events happening. Shows how much I know!

While life can be truly unpredictable, there are some things that we can count on. And one of those things is the Lake Chapala Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Annual General Meeting. Our AGM will be held on Sunday, January 23, 2022 (it seems odd to type that date), after the Sunday service. The meeting will welcome in-person and Zoom attendees. The main business of the meeting will consist of approving the 2022-2023 annual budget, voting for the new Board of Directors, and one other special item: At the meeting, we will have a special congregational vote that will formalize and reaffirm our status as a Welcoming Congregation.

So, what is a Welcoming Congregation? According to the Unitarian Universalist Association's website, such a congregation makes a spiritual practice of welcoming lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people into our faith communities. "Being welcoming means striving for radical inclusion, and creating spaces that honor every part of our identities, backgrounds, and experiences."

An additional, earlier, meeting will be held after the Sunday service on January 9, 2022. At that meeting, Lorna Dean, our hardworking treasurer, will present the proposed budget for the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

If you are aware of any other agenda items that you would like to see added to the AGM agenda,

please communicate them to our Board president, Lew Crippen, as soon as possible. I think we can all agree that this has been a challenging yet rewarding year in the life of our Fellowship. Be sure to attend the budget meeting and the AGM and celebrate another year in the life of our beloved community!

### And remember to mark your calendars!

Sunday, January 9, 2022: 2022-2023 Budget presentation after the Sunday service.

Sunday, January 23, 2022: LCUUF Annual General Meeting after the Sunday service.

See you soon! Susan Miller



## UU Pledge Campaign for 2022-2023

The Pledge Campaign for LCUUF for the next fiscal year, February 1, 2022, to January 31, 2023, will conclude on December 5, 2021. As of November 17, 2021, we have received pledges totaling MXN 765,100 pesos from 35 pledge units. A pledge unit is a single person or a couple who pledge together. Even though we have met our initial goal of MXN 750,000 pesos, I encourage all member and friends, who have not yet pledged, to make their pledges for next year as soon as possible. We use the pledge total to develop the budget for 2022-23. Email your pledge to [Treasurer@LakeChapalaUU.org](mailto:Treasurer@LakeChapalaUU.org) State your pledge for 2022-23 as an annual amount. It is best if you specify your pledge in the currency you plan to pay it in (pesos, U.S. or Canadian dollars).

There are also paper Pledge Forms on the table at the Fellowship if you attend in person. You can put the completed Pledge Form in an envelope in the offering basket or scan and email it to me. It is not necessary to start paying on this pledge until after February 1, 2022.

Lorna Dean, LCUUF Treasurer



## SHARE THE BASKET

Now that we are having in person services again, any loose pesos in the offering basket on Sunday will be split: 1/2 to the LCUUF general fund, and 1/2 to the Share the Basket recipient for the month.

If you pay your pledge or make a donation to LCUUF by PayPal, by Bill Pay, or pesos directly to Lorna Dean or David Hudnall, you may specify the amount that you want to donate to the Share the Basket program.

Our policy for Share the Basket, during the coronavirus crisis, has been: If we collect more than MXN 5,000 pesos in any month, the full amount will go to an organization providing assistance to low-income members of the Lakeside community. If we collect less than MXN 5,000 pesos in donations in any month, the balance will be subsidized from the LCUUF treasury, as long as this is financially feasible. However, we have received over MXN 5,000 pesos for each month so far this year.

Poco a Poco/Brigada Estatal in San Pedro Itzicän <https://www.pocoapocosanpedro.com> is our recipient for Share the Basket donations in December, 2021. Poco a Poco volunteers work alongside and in very close cooperation with the Brigada Program.



## LCUUF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Lewis Crippen
Vice President	Charles Jacobs
Secretary	Susan Miller
Treasurer	Lorna Dean
Member at Large	Eric Luria
Member at Large	Cat Barnett
Member at Large	Kriss Gang



## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

01 Jesse Quarter	20 Kathleen Pharis
08 Bill Frayer	25 Linda Jessen
10 Roy Haynes	26 Larry Phil
14 David Rosh	26 Flo Rhodes
15 Carol Powell	27 Frank Howell
17 Sue Kelley	28 Richard Clarke



We welcomed nine new members in November!



Barley Donahue, Jane & Al Castleman & Kim Kovach



Steve & Sharon Wilson, Dave Rosh, Kathleen Pharis & Annie Morris



## HUMANIST DISCUSSION GROUP

The Humanist Discussion Group will meet on Wednesday, December 22nd at 4pm. Via Zoom - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86577912863>

Because of the Holidays there is no topic. But for those that wish to have an open discussion I will be there on Zoom .

I will be sending out readings early for the January meeting. We will be discussing the book "The Dawn of Civilization" by David Graeber and David Wengrow. The readings are extensive including a link to the controversial book. If you wish to receive the reading materials prior to the meeting and are not on the mailing list please contact Bob Koches at: [bobkoches@gmail.com](mailto:bobkoches@gmail.com)



The Nominating Committee is open to submissions of members that would like to serve the LCUUF in Board positions for the 2022-2024 term: President, Secretary and three Member at Large positions will be open. Also, there will be open positions to fill for the 2022 Nominating Committee. If you are interested in being on the list of nominees or recommending a member, please forward the nominations to Paula Odom at [paulaodom01@gmail.com](mailto:paulaodom01@gmail.com)



# Volunteers Needed

With the Fellowship opening up to in person attendance, The Welcome and Membership committee is looking for friendly, smiling faces that can meet and greet guests on Sunday mornings. It requires you to be there in person, greet guests and ask them to register. If you would be willing help part-time or specific Sundays, please reach out to Paula Odom [paulaodom01@gmail.com](mailto:paulaodom01@gmail.com).



The LCUUF News-letter is produced to provide LCUUF news to members and friends. Deadline for contributions to the January Newsletter is December 20th and should be sent to Editor Kathy Koches, at: [kkoches@gmail.com](mailto:kkoches@gmail.com)

Happy Holidays!

When someone says "Happy Holidays" instead of "Merry Christmas", remember, they're not doing it because of political correctness. They do it out of respect. Because from the 20th of November to January 24th, there's at least 14 different religious holidays. So, when someone says Happy Holidays to you, thank them. Because they don't know what you believe in. It's called respect. Not a war on Christmas.

