



We're Back! We will resume in person services beginning March 6th. We are limiting attendance to 20 people and you must make a reservation at: Reservations@lakechapalauu.org Attendees must be fully vaccinated and masks are required.

Upcoming LCUUF Sunday Services

Mar. 6 – Faith, Trust & Doubt - Faith is a complex topic for us Unitarian Universalists. We don't trust the blind faith of some other religious traditions. We are uncomfortable being told to 'just believe.' Yet, over time, many of us have developed an abiding faith, maybe better, enduring trust, in our answers to the deep questions of life. In this service, we'll explore the nature of such faith, or trust in our own spiritual understandings. Rev. Matt Alspaugh will give the message and Dee Dee Camhi will be the service leader.

Mar. 13 – Giving: Sharing Your Gifts. We have all heard, "It is better to give than to receive." This service will show just how true this is, and in how many ways, in terms of biology, in the neurochemistry of your brain, in evolution and care for the planet and in terms of powerful personal expression and spiritual growth. Richard Clarke will give the talk. Carol Johnson is the Service Leader.

Mar. 20 – Sisyphus was on a Roll – In Greek mythology, Sisyphus was punished for cheating death by being compelled to roll a heavy boulder uphill, only to see it roll back down just as he reached the top. We consider meaningless and difficult tasks to be Sisyphean in nature, and we worry that such tasks in life can lead to depression. How do we deal with the Sisyphean tasks in our lives? How do we reflect on aspects of our life history that were pointless and arduous? We'll explore the stones we, too, roll. Rev. Matt Alspaugh will give the message and Dee Dee Camhi will be the service leader.

Mar 27 – Free Will: Is it All an Illusion? – Philosophers, theologians and scientists have considered and debated as to how free we are in our thoughts, choices and actions at least since the time of ancient Greece. From Aristotle, Epicurus and the Stoics through Augustine, Aquinas and Calvin up to scientific investigation of the 1980s, consideration of free will and determinism has raged. The talk will give an overview of the topic from several different and differing perspectives. Lew Crippen will give the talk and Dee Dee Camhi will be the service leader.



16 Years Strong - by Trudy Crippen and Rev. Matt Alspaugh

The first week in March will be the 16th anniversary of the first service of the Lake Chapala Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. The fellowship had an organizing meeting in February 2006, after Barbara Lauer had advertised the possibility of forming a Unitarian Universalist congregation in the newspaper. Rev. Matt Alspaugh and Trudy Crippen comment on those early days.

Trudy here: Six people attended that planning meeting: Fran and Bill Murphy, Fred and Mardele Harland, Barbara Lauer, and me, Trudy Crippen. Bill and Fran decided not to continue. They were looking for something more like The Freethinkers. While many of our members attend both today, we wanted this to be a Unitarian Universalist group. I would say that our founders were Fred and Mardele Harland, Sue and Kelley Kelley, Lynn Cleek, Barbara Lauer, and me, Trudy.

Matt here: I am impressed with the early decisions the congregation made at that February meeting. Trudy lists them as:

- We would be a Unitarian Universalist fellowship.
- We would be a spiritual group, and we specifically agreed that we would fill a different need than Open Circle.
- We would meet in a place that was open to the public, not in a private home.
- We would meet all year, not taking a summer vacation. (We have missed three Sundays in sixteen years.)

I think those qualities formed a good basis for the fellowship, and are part of the reason LCUUF is where it is today. When I was considering becoming your minister, almost five years ago, I do remember reading about some of these qualities, and they made me feel confident I could fit in here. In particular, I was glad that the fellowship identified as Unitarian Universalist, even though it cannot join the US or Canadian denominational associations. I also appreciated the spiritual focus, however broadly that was interpreted, which meant Sunday services would feel familiar to many who come from UU congregations in other places.

Trudy here: Yes, we made decisions, both at that February planning meeting, and then at open meetings following every service for our first two months. One of our other decisions included finding a meeting place that was quieter than the covered garden attached to Melanie's restaurant at Danza del Sol. We were right next to the pool. But I will forever be grateful to Francine, Melanie's owner, who gave us space and furniture without a second thought. Our next meeting place was Pedro's Gourmet, Peter now owns Go. Peter not only let us use his facility, he gave us the keys and the security code. He asked that if we took a collection we would give some to the St. Pedro's orphanage on the south side of the lake. This brought us to our first outreach project.

By the way, we received more from the UUA than we gave. Rev. Meg Riley, senior minister of the Church of the Larger Fellowship, or CLF, found a workaround for us. I love workarounds. We became a member of the CLF. We paid dues to the CLF and both their office manager and Meg were there whenever we called. One time, one of our members and I had lunch. The other woman, who was well on her path into dementia, was very angry with her partner, to the point of violence. I needed someone who wasn't a friend, I needed a minister, and Meg and my friend had a long conversation. Thank you, Meg.

I have been using the word 'member' pretty freely. We haven't typically distinguished between different kinds of attendees. Technically our members are people who signed the book, but I tend to think of people by where we were

when they joined us. In 16 years we have met in five different locations.

So we have the stone on the foundation, the people who were here from the first Sunday and who could be depended on to do anything.

Our stones are Lynn Cleek, Steve Barr, Susan Barr, Carol Powell, Diane Van Brocklin, Sheldon James, Sue Kelley, Kelley, Fred Harland, Mardele Harland, Els Abercrombie, Adolf Abercrombie, Bebe Hord, Barbara Lauer, and me, Trudy. These people were here from our inception.

By our first anniversary we had our bricks and mortar started. Paul Bennett, Jeanne Haely, Bob McKeown, Varn, Dottie Taylor, Janice Kimball, Marcia Turn, Sharon Woods, Norman Woods, Sharon and Maynard Merits, Ana Ellsworth, Bob Koches, Kathy Koches, and Lew Crippen. These are the people who became regulars when we were meeting at Pedro's.

We had a steering committee by that time, headed up by Fred Harland. The steering committee was focused on developing our bylaws. We also had hymnals, thanks to Mardele Harland, Sue Kelley, and Barbara Lauer. We had a Yahoo group and weekly communications.

When we moved to the synagogue, we were joined by many more, so many more that I know I will leave someone off if I try to list them. We had our first choir and we finally had a home for Sue Kelley's piano. Before that, we had depended on Corrine's accordion and Bill Frayer's harmonica and guitar. Our music was a little rough.

It has been a busy 16 years since our first service. In June, we will celebrate our Charter Sunday's fifteenth anniversary. We have struggled at times. More than 20 of us have died. Many more moved back to the US or Canada. But we continue to grow and thrive. Our members have never hesitated to stand up and make a difference, whether it was Els Abercrombie who brought votive candles in our first month, telling us we needed them so we could share joys and concerns. Or whether it was Sharon Woods who took on the job of creating a sanctuary. Or whether it was our amazing

minister and technical team who figured out how to continue our services during the pandemic. We did not have Internet. We did not even have a camera, but they managed to create a solution that has made us stronger than we ever had been.

Yes, we have a minister! I guess we are here to stay.



LCUUF, INC.

Many members and friends of LCUUF make their donations in U.S. dollars through the U.S. charitable organization, Lake Chapala Unitarian Universalist Fund, Inc. (LCUUF, Inc.), based in Texas. LCUUF, Inc. is registered as a 501(c)(3) organization with the IRS.

LCUUF, Inc. held its Annual Meeting on February 10, 2022, by Zoom. Financial documents were approved and new directors elected. The directors for LCUUF, Inc., and their terms, are now:

Kriss Gang, President (until February 2024)

Norman Woods, Vice President (until February 2024)

Treasurer, Susan Miller (until February 2023)

Secretary: Lorna Dean (until February 2024)

Member at Large: Joan Ward (until February 2023)

The Annual Meeting of LCUUF, Inc. is held in February of each year, and directors' terms end at the Annual Meeting as indicated above. We attempt to keep at least two members of the Board of Directors of LCUUF on the Board of LCUUF, Inc.

Susan Miller distributed the U.S. tax receipts for 2021 from LCUUF, Inc. by email in January 2022.



Board Member's Message

Charlie Jacobs, Vice President

The office of Vice President of the Board of Directors has only two defined tasks. First, the Vice President must stand ready to step in for the President if he or she is incapacitated, and the Vice President must write a report detailing the activities of the various committees of the Fellowship. Not a very strenuous job description since I have only had to step in and cover for the President once when he was hospitalized in the last two years.

When the Covid pandemic began and the Sunday Service Committee and Rev. Mat Alspaugh decided to move services to Zoom, I got interested in what they were doing and wanted to be involved. I figured that with my background in electronics I could be of some use to them. The first Sunday that Zoom services were on the Internet, I was there doing anything that was asked of me. As time went by, I was able to slowly increase the number of things that I could help with. As I had worked with computers the last 30 years of my career, I began to operate the computer that sent out the service to Zoom. At the time, all camera switching was done in the one computer. When we learned more, another computer was bought and tasked with providing slides for the service. In these early days of the over the Internet services, things were never the same week to week. We were learning so fast that changes were made week to week.

We eventually started using a program that allowed us to do a more professional job of presenting the service each week. This worked, but not very well. Every week there were some problems that had to be solved in a short period of time, before the service could be transmitted. Finally we decided to buy a dedicated video switcher that would work in hardware rather than software. Once this was done, the problems that cropped up every week were gone. It was at this point that the idea of using

separate tech teams was implemented. People were recruited and trained, they then took over the task of switching cameras and slides for the services. By using two tech teams, we allowed each team one week off between each week working.

At this point, the video was being done without any problems, but the sound was another matter. Using the wireless microphones allowed loud pops and various other sounds into the services. We worked for several months to try and eliminate these problems, with no luck. Finally we obtained a new set of wireless microphones and the problem was solved. We sent the first set of microphones back to the manufacturer to have them repaired. When the manufacturer checked the microphones, we were informed that they were counterfeit. Apparently, someone was making microphones that looked just like the originals and selling them in Mexico.

Now, most of the sound problems have been resolved. On some inputs, there is a slight hum and we have reduced this as much as possible. What has been taking time lately is sharing the stage with the Bare Stage theater group. When the tech team was not having to share the stage, there were wires and cables running everywhere. Sharing with Bare Stage has meant that all of the wires and cables must be hidden. The tech team has moved most of the wires and cables to beneath the stage. Those not beneath the stage have been wrapped with sleeves to cover the mass of wiring and make things neater.

This is where we are at this time. Things are going well, no real problems to take care of each week for the service. We are working to recruit more team members to have two more tech team. We want each team to only work one Sunday out of four. The slight hum problem is being addressed and hopefully will be eliminated soon.

We finally have a group that works like a well-oiled machine. The services go out each Sunday with no problems. We will keep trying to improve and we hope that everyone is enjoying the services.



SHARE THE BASKET

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.

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.

The recipient for March Share the Basket is Operation Feed. Their mission is to increase self-sufficiency by providing weekly despensas and supporting other educational and income opportunities for people of limited resources.



March 17



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 03 Sharon Wilson | 13 Michelle Naquaiya |
| 07 Joan Ward | 27 Paul Bennett |
| 15 Lorna Dean | 30 Susan Miller |
| 16 Marie McGregor | |



HUMANIST DISCUSSION GROUP

The Humanist Discussion Group will meet on Wednesday, March 23, 2022 at 4pm. Via Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86577912863>

We will be discussing how our unconscious biases distort our perception of reality. As you make decisions and take action based on your perceptions, there is a risk that these unconscious biases could negatively affect the outcome. People have general tendencies in how we process information and establish meaning that drive the dissonance between our perceptions and our reality.

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



Benito Juarez Birthday – Mar. 21



LCUUF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Kriss Gang
Vice President	Charles Jacobs
Secretary	Cat Barnett
Treasurer	Lorna Dean
Member at Large	Catherine Luria
Member at Large	Dee Dee Camhi
Member at Large	Susan Miller



The LCUUF Newsletter is produced to provide LCUUF news to members and friends. Deadline for contributions to the April newsletter is March 25th and should be sent to Editor, Kathy Koches, at: kkoches@gmail.com