



We are now having in person services and NO RESERVATION is required. We will continue to maintain safe distance spacing of chairs. Masks are strongly encouraged but are not required.

Dec. 4 – Celebrating the Holidays With Music – Join us for a service celebrating the Christmas season presented by LCUUF Music Director Michael Reason. This will be a musical mix of everyone’s holiday favorites along with special readings and some holiday humor. Richard Clarke will be the service leader.

Dec. 11 – If We Do Not Venture Out: Thoughts on Wonder - We are gradually recovering the wisdom and power of cultivating awe, wonder, the sense of the sublime, even as our current culture tends to diminish these profound aspects of life. We'll ponder wonderful things and awe-filled (but not awful) things, and ways we might tap into the awesome universe around us, and the sublime mysteries that lie beyond. But only if we do venture out, to explore this world of wonder. Rev. Matt Alspaugh will give the talk.

Dec. 18 – Reflections on a Season of Celebrations - It’s that time of year when darkness turns to light and many turn to reflecting on the past as the new year approaches. It is also a time of celebrations for many as well as stress and sadness for others. This service will highlight diverse stories and reflections from LCUUF members about what this time of year has meant to them. Kriss Gang will be the Service Leader.

Dec. 25 – Christmas: It’s Not Just for Christians – Christians were newcomers to the early winter/solstice celebrations 2022 years ago and look what has happened since. This Christmas day service will look at the history and myths behind “the reason for the season”. And, we will also learn about how the Unitarians saved Christmas and share stories about traditional Christmas songs written and inspired by Unitarians. Deb Gang will be the Service Leader.



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/j/233941792>

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.



Merry Christmas!





A Work Party to make signs for the December 3rd Celebration will take place on Wednesday, November 30th from 3-5 pm at the LCUUF Fellowship Hall. Materials will be provided, but donations of materials and refreshments are gratefully accepted!

More information: Contact D'Vorah Kelley at dvorah.kelley@gmail.com or Colleen Beery at colleenbeery@gmail.com



“A Celebration of Love, Light, and Peace” Date: Saturday, December 3rd

Time: 4:30-6:00 pm

Location: Carretera, in front of Pranzo Restaurant and the large modern sculpture

Who: all who choose to join us - everyone is invited! Tell your friends and neighbors!

What: An opportunity to promote good feelings and actions during the holiday season with a peaceful celebration of love, light and peace. Participants may hold lit candles, show positive signs portraying the theme, wave to the passersby, pass out treats, etc. **We need volunteers to help both ahead of time as well as help at the event!** Contact D'Vorah Kelley at dvorah.kelley@gmail.com or Colleen Beery at colleenbeery@gmail.com for more information or to volunteer.





MATT'S MESSAGE

We are entering into the darkest time of the year. My body notices this, and tells me, even before I pay attention to the calendar, and notice that Solstice is coming. For at least the last decade, I've noticed this seasonal slowing down of my body, a sense of turning inward, wanting to rest more. It may be mild Seasonal Affective Disorder, I'm not sure, I've never been diagnosed. I notice this pattern even here in Mexico, in the Tropics, though it's certainly milder than when I lived in northern places, Minnesota, and Northeast Ohio.

I realize too, that there may be cultural aspects to my feelings. I'm not energized by the feelings of Christmas; I would like to feel the hope, peace, joy, merriment, but they don't come, and I know I can't force a feeling. Even solstice, with its connections to ancient traditions, does not quite draw me in. Nor can I feel fully connected with the holidays of other religions at this time, nor the holidays of other cultures, even the Mexican culture which surrounds me now.

No, I'm inclined to follow my instincts, or maybe my epigenetics, ancestral ways of surviving the winter. So I turn inward, taking time in solitude, meditating more, sleeping a bit more, going to retreat into my cave and wrap myself in the warmest furriest thing I have - even though it's not that cold right now.

About the dark, a wise person said, "Often, the scariest thing in the dark is the closeness of ourselves, with nothing to distract ourselves from our thoughts and memories and regrets. And we're still ingrained with And so I resist the temptation to light the fire, or just switch on the light, for I know that to truly face the darkness, like many hard things, the only way out is through.

At least with this darkness, I do know that there will be turning, that in early January I will feel a shift, as the sun begins to return, as my body picks up on the quite subtle lengthening of days, and my energy returns. I am renewed, returning a little wiser, I hope, for having dwelt in the dark, and coming to know myself just a little bit better.



Sunday, December 18th. Bring a dozen cookies to the Fellowship and exchange with other UU members.



TACO PARTY

Saturday, December 31st, 2-4pm, cost \$120 per person. Sign up at the fellowship or email Barley Donahue at: barleydonahue@gmail.com



Bobbe Dannenbrink

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

I am the proud first generation American of Mexican immigrants. Augustín Martín Rodríguez Ayala and María Petra Martínez Navarro arrived in Texas in the early 1900's from Guanajuato, Mexico. My father secured employment with the railroad and the small family followed his job from state to state ending up in a small town in Iowa. Only after I graduated high school and left home did I realize how lucky I was to have been raised in that small Jewish settlement. We had excellent schools, on top of everything else, and I am more than grateful for the excellent beginning in my education. With a family of 8, there was no money for college so I took a 2 year business course. Not happy with that, I signed up for a 3 year stint in the Air Force, knowing, at some point, they would finance my college education. I met and later married another airman, "Corky" Dannenbrink from Illinois. (We celebrated our 50th Anniversary but, sadly, the following year he passed away.) With honorable Discharges in hand, we headed for California. "Corky" entered San Jose State and graduated Magna Cum Laude in Journalism and accepted a job on a newspaper. I took evening courses and worked as Secretary to the Director of Nursing at O'Connor Hospital. (My business course came in handy.) Two things interrupted my turn for a college degree; one, I became pregnant and two, my husband was offered a job in New York. With our 3 year old in tow, off we went to the next step in our lives.

After three years, ground was broken for a Jr. College in our little town of Canandaigua. I'm sure I was one of the first to matriculate. With hard work, a scholarship and credit for the courses I took in CA, I was awarded my Jr. College Diploma and off I went to Geneseo State College where I graduated with a degree in Education with an emphasis in English and a minor in Spanish. That same year, I was offered a teaching position to teach English

and implement a Spanish course. Evenings I took the necessary 33 credits to be a tenured teacher. During that time, one of my professors suggested I apply for a scholarship in a Master's program. I was accepted and graduated with a Master's in Education and an emphasis in Bi-Lingual Multiculturalism. All this time, I was teaching full time, working evenings and summers as an interpreter for a migrant camp, taking courses, and being housewife and mother.

While finishing up my work on my Master's, another professor suggested I apply for a Fulbright Scholarship. Talk about paperwork! But, hurrah, I was accepted and with several others and headed for Chile in the summer months. It would take another page to describe that wonderful experience. I regret I never went on for my Doctorate but....

Our son, David, blessed us with a lovely wife and 3 grandchildren. He graduated from college with a major in Marine Biology, went on for his MBA and is now in CA with his family working as Supervising Information Technology Analyst and currently Acting Chief Information Security Officer for the County of El Dorado, CA.

In the early 70's, we and another couple traveled throughout Mexico. Our last stop was a beautiful fishing village. We traveled a road from Chapala along the lake to Ajijic and saw women washing clothes on rocks at the edge of the lake and nets hanging out to dry. We walked the beautiful cobblestone streets, dined in wonderful Mexican restaurants and fell in love with Ajijic. Many years later, on retirement, we asked ourselves, "Where was that beautiful fishing village?" The rest is history.





Kriss Gang, President **BOARD MEMBER MESSAGE**

Season's greetings from the LCUUF Board of Trustees. It is hard to believe December is upon us. Life moves fast here Lakeside, at least for me. Your board has had a busy and productive year so far. We started our year with a retreat facilitated by UUA Congregational Life Consultant Lisa Presley, an excellent facilitator, friend and former cohort. At the retreat we identified important issues the board will need to address as well as opportunities for expanding our community outreach efforts. One of the most important issues identified for discussion was growth and future building needs and plans. To this end we have revisited the extensive work that has already been done with regard to our future building needs and have identified next steps once we reach a critical point in our growth. In terms of community outreach, we have had very preliminary discussions about what our place in the community is or could be. Some of this work will be shared with our newly created social justice team. And, we will continue to look for ways to identify and collaborate with other UUs in Mexico.

Other significant actions your board has taken this year include the formation of a facilities/operations team guided by Robert Barnett. As we grow and use our building more it became clear that we needed to have a "go to" person to oversee building related issues like electrical security wiring, roof repairs, painting and other maintenance issues that arise. We also included, as part of this group, an aesthetics team led by Roy Haynes who brings his professional and artistic talents to finding new ways to make our space more appealing. Thank you all for volunteering your time and efforts for this important work.

What I hope will be one of the most consequential events of the year is the formation of a new Social Justice Team guided by Colleen Beery and D'Vorah Kelley. They have hit the ground running with a social justice and outreach plan of action for Peace public event on December 3rd.

I want to thank Rev. Matt Alspaugh for his calm and wise council and guidance, Treasurer Lorna Dean and David Hudnall for all their work keeping the congregational finances in order, Secretary Cat Barnett for taking board minutes and managing our multiple calendars, Charlie Jacobs for overseeing and reporting on committee work and all his hours keeping all things "tech" operational, at-large board members Susan Miller, Cate Howell and Catherine Luria for their insights and contributions to decisions we have had to address throughout the year. Also thanks to Susan Miller for overseeing the finances and banking relationships for our US non-profit LCUUF Inc. This is the fourth board I have served on and the second time serving as a congregational president and I can say, without hesitation, this is one of the best, most collaborative, respectful insightful and productive boards I have ever had the benefit of working with. Thank you all. And finally, I want to thank all the individuals and committees for their ongoing work. The good news is that there are too many to thank individually in this space (I would be too afraid of missing someone). This is the most time-generous congregation I have ever been a member of.

On a personal note, as Sunday Service Coordinator for December I have put together a series of services celebrating the season with music, readings and reflections on the joys and challenges of this time of year for UUs. I hope that these services will bring some lightness, joy and comfort during what can be an overwhelming time of year.

Happy Holidays, Season's Greetings, Happy Solstice, Merry Christmas, Feliz Navidad, Happy Hannukah and Kwanza wishes to all.



HUMANIST DISCUSSION GROUP

The Humanist Discussion Group will meet on Wednesday, Dec. 28, 2022 at 4pm. Via Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86577912863> Now that the COP27 Climate Change conference is over it is time to review the results of the War on Climate look at the progress and hindrances in our fight to save the planet.

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



Newsletters (including Member Spotlights) from 2015 to the present) are now available on the website. From lakechapalauu.org select the menu tab **News**, then **LCUUF Monthly Newsletters**; or go directly via <https://lakechapalauu.org/lcuuf-monthlynewsletters/>. Newsletters are arranged by year with most recent on top. Click on the month you want to see.

PLEDGE CAMPAIGN for 2023-24

Our Pledge Campaign for 2023-23 concluded on November 27, 2022. LCUUF received pledges totaling MXN 707,850 pesos, from 42 singles or couples. This is 70.8% of our goal of MXN 1,000,000 pesos. Our Budget for next year will be adjusted to align with the pledges received. If you have not yet submitted your pledge, you may still do so by sending an email to: Treasurer@LakeChapalaUU.org. The email should state "My pledge to LCUUF is ... (amount in U.S. or Canadian dollars or Mexican pesos)... for the fiscal year from February 1, 2023 to January 31, 2024." State an annual amount and the currency of your pledge. It is not necessary to start paying your 2023-24 pledge until after February 1, 2023, although we can accept prepayments

Lorna Dean, Treasurer.



FINANCIAL PRESENTATION & ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

On Sunday, January 8, 2023, the Treasurer, Lorna Dean, will give a Financial Presentation after the service. This is a review of the financial status for 2022-23 and a preview of the Budget for 2023-24.

On Sunday, January 22, 2023, LCUUF's Annual General Meeting will be held after the service. Members may participate on Zoom or in person. Non-members are welcome to be observers. We will vote for new members of the Board and the Nominating Committee and adopt the Budget. Further announcements will be forthcoming.



CHOCOLATE FUNDRAISER

Hanna Frederick made wonderful hand-made chocolates and offered them to the congregation for a donation on three Sundays in November. 100% of the donations were for LCUUF. Many thanks to Hanna for raising a total of MXN 6,121 pesos for LCUUF.



LCUUF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| President | Kriss Gang |
| Vice President | Charles Jacobs |
| Secretary | Cat Barnett |
| Lorna Dean | Treasurer |
| Catherine Luria | Member at Large |
| Susan Miller | Member at Large |
| Cate Howell | Member at Large |



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| 08 Bill Frayer | 17 Sue Kelley |
| 09 Johanes Bjorner | 17 Susie Seattle |
| 10 Roy Haynes | 25 Linda Jessen |
| 14 David Rosh | 26 Larry Phil |
| 15 Carol Powell | 26 Flo Rhodes |
| 15 Carol Cummings
Spiers | 28 Richard Clarke |

- Belated birthday greetings to:
- Nov. 14 Matt Alsbaugh
 - Nov. 24 D’Vorah Kelley
 - Nov. 25 Candy Fields



You are invited to a Workshop on LCUUF Sunday Services Monday, December 5, 2:00 to 4:30

Our Sunday Services are one of the most important parts of what we do at LCUUF. This is a workshop for everyone -- from those who are curious about how we create our Sunday Services to those who are experienced and want to learn more.

We'll cover many topics: How we plan and create meaningful and memorable Sunday Services. How to find resources and who to ask for help - for things like readings, music, images, and more. How to present professionally: how to look good and sound good in the front of the room. What's in store for Sunday Services in 2023. I hope to see you there!

Rev. Matt



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

