



LAKE CHAPALA UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP NEWSLETTER May 2018

Upcoming LCUUF Sunday Services

May 6th - "**Amid Diversity of Gifts: Flower Communion Service**" - Rev. Matt Alspaugh is presenting and Trudy Crippen is the Service Leader. When Unitarian minister Rev. Norbert Capek created the flower service that we continue today, he asked people to bring flowers of their own choosing from their own gardens or from a field or roadside. The diversity of the flowers was important, for it symbolized our diversity, and how we all can make a contribution with our gifts. Please remember to bring a flower, of any kind, to the service if possible.

May 13th - "**We-Are-Not-Mothers Mothers' Day Service**" - We will be celebrating the ways in which women who do not have children have lived their lives and in doing so have enriched the lives of others. Speakers are Dona Burroughs, Karyn Carpenter, Liz Hill, Sue Kelley and Susan Miller.

May 20th - "**A God for Unitarian Universalists.**" Rev. Matt Alspaugh will be giving the presentation. Many of us came to Unitarian Universalism as refugees from other religions. Some of us sought a respite from the god of childhood Sunday-school lessons and megachurch televangelists, from a god "shrunk down to fit in your wallet" as someone put it. How might we find alternatives that work for us? How might a more rational, expansive, and well, more believable god be imagined or constructed?

May 27th - "**Educational Attainment, One Student at a Time!**" Susan Reynolds will present a close-up look at a hands-on scholarship program in San Juan Cosala. Karyn Carpenter will be the service leader.



Message from Rev. Matt

“Everything changes and nothing stands still.” This quote from Heraclitus is on my mind, in part because it was mentioned in a video sermon I was excerpting for a recent service. The quote is particularly prescient as I reflect on Lake Chapala UU Fellowship’s — and my own — relationship with First Unitarian Universalist Church of Houston. As you may know, Rev. Daniel O’Connell, the senior minister at FUUH, has resigned, citing conflict with the church board. In situations like this, most Unitarian Universalist churches will hire an interim minister who helps them do specific developmental work as they separately begin the process of searching for a new senior minister. The FUUH board plans to follow this process, hiring an interim to start in late August, with a one-year contract renewable for up to two years. Meanwhile we will continue the operational and financial procedures we have in place with them.

I am sad to see Rev. O’Connell go. He had redefined FUUH as a multi-site church, merging two small UU churches into the larger Museum District campus to form “one church in three locations”. He had visited LCUUF in the past and facilitated goal-setting work for the Fellowship. He was instrumental in defining a relationship between FUUH and LCUUF and in helping the fellowship create the position of part-time minister which I now fill. So I acknowledge a degree of loyalty to him and to his vision. FUUH has indicated that our financial arrangement will continue as it is — where many of you pay pledges to FUUH and they in turn pay me. This is reassuring, of course. But I recognize that the coming interim years will be a time for FUUH to reflect on its mission and on what kind of church it wants to be. I’m sure the details of our relationship will change, based on the views of the interim minister and ultimately a new settled senior minister. Everything changes.

A younger Matt would have been anxious in this situation, trying to avoid or prevent change. I’ve come to accept the possibility and promise of change, even when it doesn’t look so promising at the start. At this more mature point in my career and life, I see the changes at FUUH as creating potential for positive changes in our relationship with FUUH. We have an opportunity to discern what works well for us in the relationship, and identify possible changes so the relationship will provide even more of what is needed. And if, over time, we come to realize the relationship is not serving us, we can end it. I hope that is not the outcome, for I am inspired by the possibility of distinct congregations working together. But I accept that everything changes, nothing stands still, and we are all stronger and wiser if we are willing to flow with the change rather than resist it.



Share the Basket

The Share the Basket recipient for the months of June, July and August is the children's music program in San Juan Cosala. *Musica para Crecer AC*, (*Music to Grow AC*) has 90 - 100 students, ages 5 - 22, who weekly sing and learn to play instruments. One-half of the weekly offerings which are not designated as pledge money, will go to this organization. More information about this organization will be shared in our June newsletter.



President Lew Crippen

President's Message

This has been both an exciting month and a month of change. At the request of the Sunday Service Committee, the Board both approved the acquisition of an electric keyboard to replace our piano. As soon as we are able to safely store the new keyboard we will begin using it for our services. Rodrigo Leal has already used it in practice and has given an enthusiastic thumbs-up. After approval from Sue Kelley (who donated our old piano) it was decided to donate it to *Musica Para Crecer, AC*, (*Music to Grow, AC*) of San Juan Cosala. Their Children's Choir has performed for us several times. Danny Medeles and Rodrigo Leal helped get this program off the ground several years ago and welcomed our donation warmly, the more so as their current piano needs repair.

Our thanks to Donna Burroughs and Karyn Carpenter who visited two facilities and provided valuable information and a recommendation to the Board regarding this donation. Thanks also to Joan Ward, who contacted both facilities to see if a donated piano would be welcome. We welcome the opportunity to continue our association with this community effort in San Juan Cosala. *Musica Para Crecer, AC*, will also be the recipient of our Shared Basket program beginning in June. Perhaps they will be able to repair their piano.

The Legacy Team made a preliminary report to the Board. They have made considerable progress since being formed in January. After several meetings, including meeting with our attorney and our accountant, the team is working on a plan for people to leave a bequest to LCUUF, both in Mexico and the US. The Board was unanimously supportive and has asked the Legacy Team to continue their work and

report back with recommendations for changes to our By-Laws, and with more specifics as to what we need to do to conform with the laws in both Mexico and the United States. Thanks to Lorna Dean, Heidi MacLennan, Dave Miller, Norman Woods and Rev. Matt for their work on this project.

As you likely know, Rev. Daniel O'Connell of Houston has resigned his position with First Church in Houston. Rev. Daniel was instrumental in helping our Fellowship acquire Rev. Matt as our part-time minister, and also provided us with the ability to pay Matt from the US (as he is an employee of Houston, not directly of us). Certainly he will be missed by us, but we have been in contact with his temporary replacement, Rev. Dan King, who assures us that things will continue as usual.

The Board also approved a policy for the announcement inserts in the Sunday Bulletin and for the Bulletin Board. Details will be provided this soon.

Finally the Board requests ideas for the Shared Basket program. Please see any Board member with your thoughts and suggestions.



We bid all of our "snowbirds" a fond farewell. Safe travels and we hope to see you back again soon.



HUMANIST DISCUSSION GROUP

The Humanist Discussion Group will meet on May 28th at 3pm at the Fellowship. Our discussion will cover the shared economy, gentrification, loss of cultural identity and inequality. This is a complicated topic that involves the loss of identity of many of our urban centers. Our case study will be the documentary “San Francisco 2.0.” Even though we are just looking at one city, it easily could be Vancouver, Seattle, Portland or any other of the main urban centers in the world. Here is a link to the documentary on YouTube by Nancy Pelosi:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=noLww_BH55M Readings on the subject will also be sent out via e-mail to the group. If you would like to be added to the e-mailing list, please contact Bob Koches at bobkoches@gmail.com



CIRCLE SUPPERS

The assignments for 2nd Quarter Circle Suppers are posted on the bulletin board and hosts have been contacted. We still have a few spaces open, so if you did not sign up, but would like to attend, contact Bob or Kathy Koches.



MEMBERSHIP

We need your support. Please consider volunteering to be an assistant greeter for May, June, or July, The sign-up forms on the greeter’s table.

Currently our committee members are Ellen McFarland, Val Marcum, Liz Moulder, and Marty Weston (Chairperson). We have one vacancy that we want to fill. Please consider joining our committee and mention your interest to one of our committee members.

We are planning an LCUUF New Member Orientation and Ceremony to take place in September when Rev. Matt Alspaugh returns to our Fellowship. If you would like to become a member of our Fellowship, please discuss your interest with one of our committee members.



SUNDAY SERVICE COMMITTEE

The Sunday Service Coordinator for May and June is Susan Miller. Information regarding services can be found on the LCUUF website under “What’s Happening.”



MUSIC SUB-COMMITTEE

Thank you to all of you who participated in our LCUUF choir this past season and enhanced our services with your music. The choir is now on their spring/summer break until our snowbirds return to us in the fall.

The Fellowship has purchased a Yamaha P-115 electric keyboard to replace our piano. We are in the process of obtaining a locking cabinet for storage of the piano and training people on set up and take down of the new keyboard.

The Music Sub-Committee is in the process of reviewing the revising the LCUUF hymnals and we will be working on this project over the summer months. Bob Koches, Chairman



WOMEN'S MOVIE GROUP

The Women's Movie Group will meet on Friday, May 25th. As Joan and Jim Bellamy will be away, we will need another venue for our movie group. If you can host, please contact Kathy Koches. Also, if you would like to suggest a movie please contact Kathy at kkoches@gmail.com



Fellowship Meal

We will be going to the Food Lake Containers for our May 27th monthly luncheon out together after the service. They are located at Hildago 444C in Riberas, just west of the Fellowship on the lake side of the Careterra. Sign-up sheets will be on the welcome table beginning the 2nd Sunday in May. Please join us for this fellowship social.



MAY BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| 6 CB Kelley | 14 Ellen McFarland |
| 11 Cate Howell | 17 Sharon Merits |
| 13 Wes Weston | 20 Fred Koesling |



We send Get Well Wishes to Marguerite Ponder as she recovers from back surgery and Linda Conklin as she has shoulder replacement surgery in mid-May.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT JOHN ROAM

As a young student at Southwest Missouri State College, John had four defined life goals: #1. to lead an interesting and enjoyable life, #2, to get an education and learn about the world, #3, to earn enough money in his life to be totally self-supporting and to maybe even leave something to his kids, and #4, to do something worthwhile. He added later that something worthwhile could be defined as being a writer, a teacher, or being in government service. Near the end of nine decades, he is proud to have done all three and achieved his life goals in spades.

He combined teaching and learning about the world by embarking overseas several times to teach English. He won a Fulbright Scholarship and taught in Greece for six months and then worked as an advisor for USAIDS (United States Agency for International Development) first in Vietnam and then Brazil. He was in Vietnam at the beginning of the war and just after the Tet Offensive, all education and agriculture advisers were called home to Washington, DC. Shortly thereafter John was transferred to Brazil. He loved all these experiences. His third foray as an ESL teacher was with Mary when, in their sixties, they both joined the Peace Corps and spent three years teaching in Poland.

He says he tried to learn all the languages of the countries in which he was fortunate enough to live, but the worst was Vietnamese which is a tonal language and being tone deaf, he found that

especially difficult. Now, like the rest of us, he chugs along trying to speak Spanish with some fluency.

In amongst all these travels, he married, had two kids, and became a regular public school teacher. He taught math and English at the high school and college levels, and also at college he taught education to prospective teachers. He quickly moved up the career ladder, ending as an administrator. One of the jobs he enjoyed most was interviewing new teachers – he loved meeting all these new people. Mary says that he was much admired by his staff and co-workers.

Before he embarked on his teaching career, however, John joined the Army as a paratrooper, where he decided his ambition was to be a pilot. He transferred to the Air Force and started his pilot training. He did well in basic, but tells some funny stories about his advanced training. Once while training in a T6 and with an instructor in the back seat, he bounced the aircraft three times while landing and had to endure the instructor yelling each time “whoopee”. Kind of cheeky, methinks.

Landing was his Waterloo. His final straw (to mix metaphors) was, when landing during training, he broke the nose wheel of his BT25 multi engine aircraft. The powers-that-be suggested that perhaps navigator school was more suited to his talents. However, that was not *his* goal, so he departed the military, earned his master’s degree in Administration on the GI bill, and didn’t look back.

In 1964, he joined a flying club, bought a small aircraft, and learned to fly it. A few years later, selling the aircraft and leaving the flying club marked the end of his flying career, but not the end of his adventures.

After he and Mary married in 1985, they bought an RV and travelled all over Canada, the United States, and Mexico. He recalls seeing the homes of Anne of Green Gables and of Anne Murray in the Maritime Provinces.

After deciding he could not sit in the RV for long periods anymore, he and Mary took a month long trip on The Canadian Pacific Railroad all across Canada.

For many years they have been snowbirds here at lakeside, at first travelling down in their RV. Now they stay at a hotel in Ajijic, but still very much enjoy being snowbirds. They have been members of LCUUF since 1996.

He met Mary at what was then a Unitarian church, before they amalgamated with the Universalists. He was newly divorced and she was newly widowed when they started noticing each other across the proverbial crowded room. Four years later they married. They both very much enjoy ballroom dancing and love that down here there are many opportunities to pursue that. They tried square dancing but it was not as much fun.

John's advice: Have fun, enjoy life and especially, read. He is an avid reader, consuming anything and everything. He is currently working on his third "worthwhile" project: writing his memoirs. I am very much looking forward to reading them. Submitted by Jan Manning



PLEASE remember to bring your own cups to UU events. The fellowship doesn't want to use Styrofoam cups, so please, bring your own and encourage others to not forget!



Please send announcements for May's services to Karyn Carpenter at: newfugger_wander@mac.com



May 10th
Mexico

May 13th
USA/Canada



This Newsletter is produced to provide LCUUF news to members and friends. Deadline for contributions to the June newsletter is May 20th to be sent to: Editor: Kathy Koches at: kkoches@gmail.com