

Unitarian Universalist Church of Las Cruces

 uuchurchlc.org/news/newsletter/

February Light

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Las Cruces, Vol. 70, Num. 2

Services Every Sunday of the Year

We are a transformational Force for Love and Justice in Our Community

We gather to inspire spiritual growth, care for each other and our community, seek truth, and work for justice.

Office Administrator, Cheri Coffelt is working from home; her hours are M-F 9:30-4:30

Join us for Zoom Worship Sunday at 10 AM, See past worship services on our YouTube channel

Deadline for Light submissions is the 25th of every month.

Our Consulting Minister

The Reverend Gary Kowalski



On My Mind

Do churches have a future? Attendance is declining and more Americans than ever define themselves as “nones” when asked about their faith. The pandemic hit houses of worship across the denominational spectrum, with many during lockdown deciding they could participate remotely or not at all. Yet the Unitarian Universalist Church of Las Cruces and congregations like it will continue to exist because they meet perennial human needs.

For the millennia that *homo sapiens* has walked the earth, our species has been curious about questions that go beyond immediate survival or the satisfaction of biological needs. Religion—the need to believe that our brief lives possess some larger, more lasting significance— may be built into our DNA. Though ancient traditions guide us, the search for

meaning begins anew with every generation. Our children's answers may not be ours.. But the questions are the same.

Hominids are also social creatures. They are born into families and evolved because they are able to cooperate. Every culture has organized itself into clans, tribes, guilds, and affinity groups where individuals find affection, belonging and opportunities for mutual aid. As modern life becomes increasingly fragmented and privatized, people will still need face-to-face communities where they feel valued, known and accepted. Zoom and social media will never entirely replace choirs, coffee hours or holding hands in times of joy and sorrow.

Amid the general malaise of organized religion, there are hopeful signs. Multiracial congregations are growing in number. The landscape is becoming more diverse, with the combined total of synagogues, mosques, and Buddhist and Hindu temples now rivaling the number of Catholic parishes in the country. More churches—not just UUs— are embracing women and LGBT folk in leadership roles. More Americans than ever agree that there are many paths to heaven, that the light shines through many windows.

Could ours be a religion for this coming pluralistic, interfaith age?

Rev. Gary Kowalski, RevKowalski@uuchurchlc.org.

Our President

Susan Hychka



Exciting things are happening at the church. You can feel the renewed energy!

Our Consulting Ministers are working with us sharing their thoughts and ideas. From now through mid-May, we will get to know one another better. Rev. Gary and Rev. Munro will meet informally and formally with individuals, interest groups and committees. They will advise us as we take the next steps. Join in the exciting and important work of striving to be a transformational force for love and

justice in this community and beyond!

The sun will again shine through our beautiful stained-glass window in the Tombaugh Gallery! Gallery sales and several generous donations enabled us to order installation of a Lexan protective covering. Let the sun shine in! And yes, the plywood mural created by our "RE Kids" and UU artists will be displayed in another place of honor.

The Committee for our 2023 Auction has begun its work. Please offer to provide a special meal for some lucky bidders. Offer your skills or talents. Offer to make something special.

Plan an event or excursion. Offer to help the committee in some way. And please, come to the Auction Day and join in the fun, food, and festivities!

Our Search Team has officially launched the church's search for a half-time Contract Minister. Please thank Search Team Chair Rabbitt Loring and team members Jack Welch, Jan Thompson, Roy van der Aa, Haney Pearson, and Katie Fitzgerald for taking on this important work. Their goal is to identify an excellent and interested candidate and recommend that the Board negotiate a contract to engage that person beginning in August 2023!

And that's not all! Adult Enrichment Classes are off to a good start, the Climate Crisis Interest Group is meeting, and our Annual African American Poetry Read-In will be combined with a concert by Camerata del Sol as a special Black History Month event. This will be in our Sanctuary at 7:00 pm on Friday, February 3.

Finally, the Board of Trustees elected officers for 2023. They are myself as President, Bill Fitzgerald, Vice President, Jeanne Gilbert, Secretary, and Jan Thompson, Treasurer. At Large members are Skip Shelton, John Seeley, Jennifer Trantham, Rabbitt Loring, and Carol Stanfill.

Board of Trustees

Board Officers

President: Susan Hychka

Vice President: Bill Fitzgerald

Secretary: Jeanne Gilbert

Treasurer: Jan Thompson

At Large

Jennifer Trantham

John Seeley

Skip Shelton

Carol Stanfill

Full board minutes are sent to church members in a private emailing.

Religious Education

Kellie Ingram, Director of Religious Education

"Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world." – Harriet Tubman



Changing the world is a Unitarian Universalist goal everywhere you go and in most everything you do. And Religious Education is no different. Whether through the teaching of important lessons, having fun, or working hard to respect our 8 Principles. Religious education aims to encompass these values every Sunday and at every communal event we hold! This January our wonderful teachers took the time to speak with our youth and ask them, what they would like to learn about in this semester

and the next. These insightful students suggested topics that focus on History, Calendar Events, Green Energy, and Recycling. Right up the traditional Unitarian Universalist alley!

In alignment with calendar occasions and in observance of National Soup Month, Religious Education ended January with- *Soups On!* A potluck soup dinner and games event. Good Fun and Good Food for everyone!

As we head into February, Religious Education will focus on recycling in the way of Plastic Bricks, also known as Eco-Bricks. This easy and fun process is being used around the world as a practical way to clean up the environment. We simply collect “soft plastics” and stuff them into clean 2-liter plastic bottles. Our goal is to create enough bricks to build a recycling bin by Earth Day. A big thanks, to everyone who has donated plastics and bottles! Please keep it up!

Music and Choir

Catherine Massey, Director of Music

MUSIC NOTES



I'm reflecting on the Lunar New Year, more tragic shootings, a meaningful piece of choral music integrated with Tai Chi, and a Chinese colleague of mine. These things converged recently, as the choir and I prepared a piece I purchased a few years ago. It was commissioned by Dr. Adam Con, the clinician at the Annual Conference for the Association for Unitarian Universalist Music Ministries in 2016. Joshua Rist was the composer who created a beautiful setting for selected text from the *Tao Te Ching*, with an opening and closing based on Qigong (with movement). Singing this work with Adam Con was a highlight for me. From his biography: Dr. Adam Jonathan Con is a conductor, a visionary, a respected teacher of choral conducting and Tai Chi Chuan, and a leader in the advocacy of music education. A native of Vancouver and a third generation Chinese Canadian, his holistic approach to choral music through a unique blend of kinesthetic whole-

body movement and Eastern philosophy continues to inspire singers of all ages in mind, body and spirit. His motto is “Music is more than notes in motion; music is notes in Emotion.”

At a time when we were grieving for lives lost in the Asian American community, we focused on these thoughts:

zhì xū jí

shǒu jìng dǔ

wàn wù bìng zuò

wú yǐ guān fù

Seek to attain a perfect emptiness

Remain patient and sincere

Every living thing is rising as one

Through this we observe the return to the root.

Simultaneously, I was the recipient of a lovely gesture by my SPED inclusion teacher, who is from China. For the past 29 years, I’ve taught high school Physics, and I’ve used the same china plate in all of my classes. When students learned about Newton’s 1st Law, they pulled a “tablecloth” out from under this plate—bringing them a sense of triumph when they succeeded (even though we know it’s due to Newton!). But this week some of my knuckleheads messed around and broke this artifact from my teaching. It shouldn’t have mattered, but it made me sad. This is my last semester of teaching, and it seemed symbolic somehow.

Mr. Liu gathered the pieces and found me after school. He had glued the plate together, and written on it with a Sharpie: “Honor of 29 yrs.” It was such a sweet thing to do. That plate looked a bit worse for wear, like I feel sometimes—as I learn how to return to the root after a career in the classroom.

Administration

Cheri Coffelt

Texture

Nature is resplendent with texture. Texture makes our world better, it gives definition, beauty



and interest. Designers often tell you, you can go with a single color palette if you use lots of different textures. Las Cruces has lots of texture, our mountains, our desert, and our cultural diversity.

My favorite architect Frank Lloyd Wright created masterpieces with materials found in nature – he called it “Organic Architecture”. His designs were simple, yet complex because of the texture and materials. The style is timeless, and his buildings stand as a testament to his vision of revealing natural characteristics, instead of trying to cover them. One of his most famous buildings is Unity

Temple in Oak Park, Illinois, built in 1905. Church finances were tight, to save money he used concrete and created this amazing church. If you are ever in Oak Park, you can tour the church, or better yet, attend services there, it’s a UU Church. Wright’s planning and skill created something in the words of the Board of Trustees of that time “...*will long endure as a monument to his artistic genius and that, so long as it endures, it will stand forth as a masterpiece of art and architecture.*”

Life has lots of texture and we sometimes make the mistake of trying to hide the natural with fake plaster. In doing so, we remove the beauty and simplicity of our lives. By hiding who we really are, we create a false façade that won’t last. Let’s embrace texture, the wrinkles, the smiles, the laughter and tears. Let’s create a place where texture is appreciated and celebrated. It will have a cost, and won’t be easy. Frank Lloyd’s Wright’s Trinity Temple did not come in on budget, the price of the completed building ended up being twice the original estimate. Yet, over a100 years later, it stands strong with the bronze words “*For the worship of God, and the service of man.*” Things done well, seldom come in on budget, but they are worth doing.

Committees and Programs

Adult Education & Enrichment – AdultEnrichment@uuchurchlc.org

Progress on Adult Education and Enrichment – Sara Thomas

With several days left to go to the end of registration for Adult Ed, classes are filling nicely. As of Jan 25th it stands at 44 slots filled, 34 for the paid classes and 10 for the free classes. Why separate these? As a church fundraiser, that’s over \$500. The free classes are important community events, although the community can sign up for paid classes also. And the cost of connection with others learning a new skill: priceless!

Thanks to Lyn Pearson, registrations can be done on-line, as well as in-person. Cheri suggested for next fall to add a way for someone not taking a class to contribute for others who want to take a class but can’t afford it, kind of a scholarship fund. Great idea! Not only

that, seven instructors have already approached me with ideas for the fall semester. There will be some exciting offerings in the fall over a wide range of interests. The revived Adult Education and Enrichment program is off to a wonderful start.

Climate Action Group

The cheerful Climate Action Group has been meeting since the beginning of January, with the goal of educating ourselves about the climate crisis and how we can help. Our first goal was to learn about the Inflation Reduction Act and what opportunities that created for us and the community. But it was quickly brought to our attention that a number of climate-related bills are now coming before the New Mexico Legislature. For that reason, we have focused on learning about the legislation and providing information to anyone interested. If you would like to be on our email list, please contact James Caufield, Cathy Cox, or Ginny Herrick.

A number of our members plan to attend the Roundtable talk this Sunday, January 29, at which Steve Fischmann will share his understanding of the pending legislation.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81092766108?pwd=djlCbSt1Q3BxeFMvVjBXYmInQzRpZz09>

Quite a few of our members attended the PowerUp Las Cruces Exposition January 20-21 at the convention center. We attended presentations on electrification technology and available rebates. Several people remarked on how knowledgeable and service-oriented the solar and heat pump etc. contractors and installers are. One session, hosted by aides to Senator Heinrich, asked for input on how the state can implement the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

If you'd like to join us, we are currently meeting on Mondays at 7 PM. Please contact James Caufield, Cathy Cox, or Ginny Herrick.

Committee on Ministry – com@uuchurchlc.org

The chair of this important committee is Julie Woody with members are Peggy Devlin, Jack Welch, and Katie Fitzgerald. Two current vacancies need to be filled during the first quarter of 2023.

Communications – webmaster@uuchurchlc.org

Twitter and Amazon Smile

Because their business practices are not in agreement with our Unitarian Universalist principles, links that provide access to these sites have been removed from our website. If you have questions, please contact webmaster@uuchurchlc.org.

Follow us on social media

- Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/uuchurchlc>

- YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/@uulascruces>
- Instagram at: <https://www.instagram.com/uuchurchlc>

Following, liking, subscribing, and commenting on posts will help us increase our visibility, allowing others to see, enjoy and engage with our content, which brings growth to our online community.

If you have ideas for content that you would like to create for the church online, let us know and we would be happy to work with you. We're excited to take these steps into the future, together.

CUUPS

The celebration of Imbolc originates with the Celts. Imbolc symbolizes the halfway point between the winter solstice (Yule) and the spring equinox (Ostara). The word "imbolc" means "in the belly of the mother." Seeds are beginning to stir in the belly of Mother Earth and many herd animals give birth or are heavily pregnant. This holiday also celebrates Brigid, the Celtic fire and fertility goddess.

The CUUPS group will celebrate Imbolc on Saturday, February 18, we begin with a potluck at 6:00 and ritual at 7:00. Come meet our CUUPS members, bring a dish and, if you like, stay for the ritual. Join Us!



Wheel of the Year

Yule: Celebrates the winter solstice.

Imboc: An ancient festival welcoming the first wave of spring.

Ostara: Celebrates the spring equinox

Beltane: Celebrates May Day

Litha: Celebrates the summer solstice

Lughnasadh: Celebrates the beginning of the harvest season

Mabon: Celebrates the autumnal equinox

Samhain: Marks the end of summer, and the end of the harvest season. It signals the beginning of winter. On this day, pagans believe the veil between the living and the dead is especially thin.

Eating Out by Janet Martinique – EatingOut@uuchurchlc.org

Note the name and email change. We are Eating Out and the email is EatingOut@uuchurchlc.org.

Eighteen people really enjoyed our January trip to Pajare's. Our February Eating Out will be at Sakura Japanese House at 3961 E Lohman Ave at 5:30 pm on February 17th. Price \$15 – \$30 for hibachi steaks, seafood, sushi and more. Reservations required by February 15. [Click here to reserve your spot now.](#)

Facilities by Charlie Scholz – facilities@uuchurchlc.org

Good news from Facilities Management

We've been working for a long time to get the eaves of the Library-Office wing covered with metal cladding. Last week we got an estimate for the material and have authorized that purchase. We've also gotten an estimate for the completion of the project. We're on our way at last.

We also got an estimate for putting a Lexan covering on the Tombaugh Window in the Gallery. This covering would protect the stained glass from damage. The cost was more than we had originally thought, so we are considering other options and possible fundraising.

We've priced the microphones for miking the choir for better quality sound for people who attend streaming services. Right now, we're waiting on the supplier for availability. We will work with Pace Audio, who did our sound system, to make the correct setup.

Finally, we cleaned out the storage room (the furnace room) behind the Sanctuary. Threw out a bunch of junk, moved other items to their proper places and built a new rack for paint cans. This storage area is going to become the location for repair parts.

Finance Committee by Katie Fitzgerald – finance@uuchurchlc.org



A Breakdown of 2022 Finances will appear in the March issue of the Light. Stay tuned...

Hospitality Rotation Schedule

This schedule is now permanently located on the Members page of our website under Sunday Hospitality Rotation. A new addition to the hospitality rotation is the Caring Committee, which will be handling 5th Sundays throughout the year.

Library by Rabbitt Loring

Read Any Good Books Lately?

Are you excited about a book you have read? If a book has spoken to you, consider writing about it to share with the congregation. Below is our first guest column by Martha Loustaunau.

Have you checked out our newly reorganized and user-friendly church library? What are your interests? There are fabulous finds, donated by church members, waiting for you! I have found several already and donated others I wanted to share.

Several years ago, as a social scientist, I became interested and fascinated with the physical sciences, most specifically, physics (for non-physicists), quantum mechanics, and scientific investigation. While browsing, I discovered 13 Things That Don't Make Sense by Michael Brooks. A lot more than 13 things don't make sense in this world, for sure, but Brooks tackles some unexplainable mysteries that science has not been able to solve: Why is there no working definition of life? Why should death happen at all? Why is sex necessary (or not...)? Is the placebo effect real? Is there really such a thing as "free will"? Is cold fusion a hoax or one of the greatest breakthroughs of all time? Reading this book you can explore the mystery of the WOW signal and much more. The book is thought-provoking and fun. Brooks is described as "fascinating...expertly working his way through hotly debated quandaries in a smooth, engaging writing style reminiscent of Carl Sagan or Stephen J. Gould." Check it out and enjoy!



Library hours on Sunday! The library is open from 11:00 to 11:30am after the service during hospitality for your browsing pleasure. Stop by to check out our UU ewe's. Eunice and Edwina have new outfits! The Christmas clothing has been retired and, in its place, – a surprise! Come see what they are wearing now. See you in the library!

Membership by Lyn Pearson – membership@uuchurchlc.org

Lyn Pearson, Cathy Cox, Jeff Harris, Lori Miller, Jodie Nachison, Lindsay Neal, Carol Stanfill, and Mark Sukontarak are your Membership Committee. We meet on the 3rd Monday of the month in the library.

Shhhhh! Sush! Please be quiet!

You may have noticed that the number of people attending worship services is growing. In fact, the sanctuary has been full, and we've had to use overflow seating in the lobby. We

must keep the sanctuary doors open so people seated in the lobby can hear the service, but there's a problem. Those sitting in the lobby seem to think that their lack of proximity to the sanctuary means they can chat and comment during the service. They don't realize how disruptive this is to the congregation and our audio/video personnel. Our greeters will be instructed to maintain quiet in the lobby at all times during services and we hope you'll help them in this endeavor.

Circle Suppers

January was the first time in many years that we've held Circle Suppers for church attendees. We filled four suppers and our gracious hosts seated between 4 and 6 guests each. The reviews are in, and the events were collectively a great success. Everyone shared great food and conversation while meeting new and old friends and learning more about each other. All of the guests who responded to a short survey said they'd sign up to attend future dinners. Hosts found these suppers an easy way to entertain and all of them plan to host in the future. Our next round of dinners will be offered in April and, yes, that's auction month but we'll have the dinners anyway.

Passover Seder

We're currently discussing the possibility of an April Passover Seder. We hope to have it the evening of Wednesday, April 5, if all goes well. A lot of stars will have to align properly so watch for upcoming announcements. Let anyone from the Membership Committee know what you think about a Seder.

Brochures and Publications

You may have noticed that the publication racks on the greeters' counter are multiplying. That's because we have a growing selection of Unitarian Universalist Association brochures plus four new brochures specific to the church: Fun and Fellowship, The J Paul Taylor Center projects, Social Justice, and Religious Education. If you think your committee or program would benefit from a custom brochure, please contact Lyn Pearson. She has a template that makes it relatively easy to design a new brochure.

You can change your address, email, and phone numbers in InFellowship or simply contact Cathy Cox by email or phone.

Social Justice – SocialJustice@uuchurchlc.org

The Social Justice Committee supports several needs in our community for our various ministries.

For Our Animal Ministry

- We urge you to give to the Change for Change offering benefiting the Action Program for Animals
- We encourage you to drop your aluminum cans in the collection barrel in the church library.

Every little bit helps our animal friends.

For Our Ministry for Immigrants

We encourage you to donate winter coats to El Calvario Immigrant Resource Center (located at the El Calvario United Methodist Church on Campo).

For Our Little Free Pantry

Supporting those in our community with food needs. ALL people deserve humane treatment and to have their basic needs met. Unitarian Universalists believe in the inherent worth and dignity of all and that it is our moral obligation to provide some of those basic needs.

We need your help. Feeding the hungry is costly. Food prices have risen so that it is costing us about \$250-300 per month to keep the pantry stocked. Your donations of goods are most appreciated. Alternatively, we are happy to do the shopping for you. You may contribute by check with a note in the memo line that it is for the pantry or donate online to Social Justice and choose the sub-group of Little Free Pantry.

If you choose to do your own purchasing, please remember that we are serving the homeless who have no means to cook and store items. They don't even have can openers, so just easy-open tops, prepared soups (not condensed), single-serving sizes, etc. Leave your donations in the little blue wagon in the Library on Tuesdays and Thursdays or in the Lobby Sunday mornings.

Your participation as a volunteer or as a donor for this all-church social justice project is greatly appreciated.

For Our Ministry for Refugees and Asylum Seekers

We recommend support for Lutheran Family Services (Office at 205 S. Main St.; hours 9am to 4pm).

LFSRM began receiving families in Las Cruces starting in January. They need your help ensuring that families have what they need for their new homes. While each arrival receives an allotment of funds,

LFSRM must purchase items for them with those funds. Donations allow those funds to stay with the families as they establish their new homes in Las Cruces. The following items are needed:

- Small and medium size kitchen/dining tables
- New twin/queen sized beds and/or box springs
- Twin/queen sized box frames
- Dressers
- Gently used and clean couches/sofas (no hide-a-beds, please)
- NEW kitchen waste baskets
- NEW bathroom waste baskets
- CLEAN OR NEW Twin sheet sets
- CLEAN OR NEW blankets/comforters for twin and queen beds
- NEW bed pillows
- Alarm clocks (plug-in kind, please)
- Paper towels
- Brooms with dustpan
- Mops
- Shampoo (no travel-size, please)
- Shower curtain rods
- Shower curtain liner with rings
- Toilet brushes for cleaning
- Gift cards for food (either Walmart or Fiesta Foods)
- Winter jackets/coats for adults (men and women) and children

Sunday Services by Charlie Scholz and Katie Fitzgerald – SundayServices@uuchurchlc.org

The Sunday Service Committee has been very successful this year in filling the church calendar with a variety of interesting programs. We are especially pleased with the contributions of individuals, both members of our congregation and outside speakers who, while not on the committee, were nevertheless willing to lead services and/or work as service associates. This has allowed us to present a wide range of topics as well as a variety of religious points of view in our Sunday Worship.

Our initial task, as of January 2022, was to make sure that we had a functioning committee so we could plan worship services. This was enabled by the co-chairing of Katie Fitzgerald and Charlie Scholz, who took responsibility for organizing the group. Other members like Haney Pearson, Brooks Lewis and John Seeley, each contributed their special talents this year to lead services or to work as an associate at various times. (A full list of Sunday Service leaders and topics is archived on the website.)

Catherine Massey, our Director of Music, has been a great supporter of the efforts of the Committee and very helpful in the selection of hymns and videos, leading the choir and encouraging other musicians to fill in when she was not there. In this we especially appreciate the work of Cathy Cox, Mark Sukontarak, Nancy L Anderson, Rich Richins, and

Dave and Nancy Carlson.

Our monthly meetings on Zoom include discussions of topics and assignments for service leaders and associates. We have also made great strides in revising the standard order of service and the service associates' script to reflect current needs. As of June, we took over the responsibility of supervising the audio-visual technical staff that produces our in-person and streaming services.

Requests and Items of Interest

Request: Committee and Program Members Are Needed

Committees and programs are the lifeblood of the church; they provide a wide range of necessary services and activities. Please consider joining one of these committees.

Finance Committee: 2 people; contact Katie Fitzgerald if you are interested.

Committee on Ministry: 2 people (these are elected or appointed positions; if you are interested, contact Julie Woody)

Little Free Pantry: 2 people; contact Dave Rice if you are interested.

Request: Give Us Yarn!

Yarn collection is ongoing. You may have noticed a large basket in the lobby with a card on the handle marked "Yarn for Hats for the Homeless." One of our Adult Ed classes is collecting yarn of all kinds to make warm hats for the homeless. Please donate your unwanted yarn to this great cause.

Request: Give Us Soft Plastic! (Yes, we need more)

RE continues to collect "soft plastic". What is soft plastic you may ask? It's wrappers and plastic packaging of all kinds. Shrink wrap, bread wrappers, produce bags, and chip bags are all examples (which cannot be placed in your blue bins). You would not believe how much soft plastic actually goes through a household until you start setting it aside in a box or bag to collect it. Bring in your collected soft plastic to deposit in the two bins at church marked for this, one in the lobby, and one in the RE Great room. This will be an ongoing drive for several months for the youth project.

Request: Give Us Empty 2-liter Bottles! (Yep, more of these too)

We are also collecting empty 2-liter bottles. Both items are needed to create building blocks for the project. Please help us out by sending in these items to help reduce, reuse and recycle.

Request: Help Stock the Little Free Pantry

The UUCLC Little Free Pantry continues to serve the unhoused in our community because ALL people deserve humane treatment and to have their basic needs met. Unitarian Universalists believe in the inherent worth and dignity of all and that it is our moral obligation to provide some of those basic needs.

We need your help. First, **we need 2 more volunteers** who would help refresh the pantry one day a week. We will gladly show you the procedure and will welcome you to the “Pantry Crew.”

Second, feeding the hungry is costly. Food prices have risen so that it is costing us about \$250-300 per month to keep the pantry stocked. Your donations of goods are most appreciated. Alternatively, we are happy to do the shopping for you. You may contribute by check with a note in the memo line that it is for the pantry or donate online to Social Justice and choose the sub-group of Little Free Pantry. If you choose to do your own purchasing, please remember that we are serving the homeless who have no means to cook and store items. They don't even have can openers, so just easy-open tops, prepared soups (not condensed), single-serving sizes, etc. Leave your donations in the little blue wagon in the Library on Tuesdays and Thursdays or in the Lobby Sunday mornings.

Your participation as a volunteer or as a donor for this all-church social justice project is greatly appreciated. The Pantry Crew

Generous Giving by Jack Welch

During the past month we received ten special gifts. We thank Ed and Rorie Measure for their generous gift in memory of our late member, Warren DeBoer.

John Bloom, Jean Gilbert, Dave and Ginny Rice, Rosemarie Sanchez, Jan Thompson and Steve Welch and Janet Pitt all made contributions to our Little Pantry.

Jean Gilbert and Rich and Becka Richins supported our youth Holiday Boxes fundraiser. The Richins also made a generous donation to the Community of Hope.

We thank all of our donors for showing that we are a generous congregation.

Thanks to Our January Greeters

Our greeters are the first people you and our visitors are likely to meet. In January, these people were our greeters: Shirley Davis, Peggy Devlin, Ginny Herrick, Diane Lee, Judy Licht, Rabbitt Loring, Tom Packard, Lisa Peterson, Linda Rogers, Robert Severance, Carol Stanfill, Sara Thomas, and Mary Whittemore.

Kudos from NAACP

Our efforts to act on our principles (including the 8th) have not gone unnoticed. UUCLC was publicly acknowledged at the January NAACP meeting by the president, Dr. Bobbie Green. She said she couldn't say enough good things about us. We more than filled two tables at the MLK Breakfast, we gave them a check from the Change for Change collection, we allow them to use our facilities free of charge for their monthly meetings, and we proudly display our Black and Brown Lives Matter sign. She said we don't just have the sign but that we truly make it real.

We can support the NAACP by joining the organization. From their website (naacp.org): "By becoming a member of NAACP, you'll join a network of activists standing up to injustice, fighting back against systemic racism, and answering the call for equality." The cost is only \$30 a year. Our local chapter would love to see more of us at their meetings and supporting their activities.

Events of Note

Feb 9-12 Rev. Kowalski

Gary Kowalski will be in Las Cruces February 9 – 12 if you would like to meet in person. RevKowalski@uuchurchlc.org.

Feb 10 – Chat and Chew

Rev. Gari and Dori will host a "Chat and Chew" brown bag lunch in the library on Friday, Feb. 10 for conversation and camaraderie.

Feb 11 – UU Crafters, Sierpinski's Triangles

Sara Thomas will teach fractals with Sierpinski's Triangles. It's a beautiful repeating pattern you create through measurement. All materials provided.

Feb 11 – Quarterly Fine Dining at The J Paul Taylor Center

Our congregation restarted the "Fine Dining" experience with the J. Paul Taylor Detention Center last August with a successful diner and lively conversation. We held the quarterly experience in November with similar results. These meals featured really good side dishes and my hat is off to the people who volunteered. Thank you so very much.

In a training exercise for Mesilla Valley Hospice, a can of "talking sticks" was passed around with individual conversation starter questions. I pulled the question, "Have you ever saved someone's life?" I talked about the Family to Family classes my wife and I taught for the

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) to help families deal with their ill family members. We hope we have made a difference and possibly saved lives, but the same thing applies to the work done with juvenile detention clients.

We want to break the cycle of juvenile detention to prison to the streets and back to prison until death. Some of these young men come from Las Cruces or other southern New Mexico towns, and I told them more than once that I depend on them to get out and make a difference in New Mexico.

Our February dinner is going to be planned around Elwin's Nunn's Spicy Meatballs in a tomato basil sauce. Peggy Devlin will provide the dessert. We need 4-5 more people to help us out by attending the dinner and providing some additional food items. If you are interested in making a difference in a young man's life or possibly saving a life, please contact Haney or, even better, click [here](#).

Feb 22 – Science and the Search for God

Rev. Kowalski's reading class on "Science and the Search for God" gets underway. This class meets on Zoom on three different Wednesday nights. If you want to sign up for the class, click [here](#). Questions? Contact RevKowalski@uuchurchlc.org.

Feb 25 – UU Crafters, Diamond Painting

Carol Stanfill will lead Diamond Painting. Create a design with tiny jewels! All materials provided. We welcome new ideas for the following month. Both activities suitable for teens.

Apr 22 – 2023 Spring Auction

The Annual UUCLC Spring Auction is coming soon!

Fun, food, drink, and entertainment for all!!

Save the date: Saturday April 22, Earth Day 2023

Please start thinking about what you can donate: events, talents, items, services, etc.

Send comments and questions to: Carol Stanfill and Steve Hychka, 2023 Auction co-chairs, auction@uuchurchlc.org.

Jun 21-25 – 2023 UUA General Assembly

Save these dates. General Assembly 2023 will be held June 21-25 in Pittsburgh as well as virtually from right here in Las Cruces. More information will be forthcoming. The theme is Faithfully Becoming.

We are at a threshold moment for our faith, and will choose the next path in our journey. We will consider new articulations of Article II (including our Principles and Purpose) and elect a new President to lead our Association. These are decisions that will shape who we are and how we respond to and grow through these times. These changes offer us possibilities for becoming more connected, courageous, inclusive, generous, and continuing our ongoing journey of becoming Beloved Community.

Unitarian Universalist Association General Assembly website

The Tombaugh Gallery





The Tombaugh Gallery welcomes artist Song Finger with an opening on Sunday, February 5th, from 11 AM to 2:00 PM. Song is originally from South Korea and currently lives in Las Cruces. She moved to the US in 1971 and was passionate about being an artist. She attended several art schools, including a college in Honolulu, majoring in commercial art. She also attended Parson School of Design. She has worked in advertising and also with freelance fashion illustration from 1981 to 2000. She loves painting and continues to dedicate her time to art. She has a wide variety of styles from portraits to modern art.

The exhibit continues through February 26. The Tombaugh Gallery is open Thursday through Saturday, from 10am to 2:00pm and Sunday, 11:00am to 2:00pm.
Gallery@uuchurchlc.org

Regularly Scheduled Activities

Every Tuesday

T'ai Chi, 10-11 AM in the Religious Education Building great room.

T'ai Chi, 5:45-6:45 PM in the Religious Education Building great room.

Library Hours – 1-3 PM in the library in the Administration Building

Every Wednesday

Caring Conversations meets on Zoom from 9-10 AM. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87064121421?pwd=QmNhYVlrUTltK1cxRDhSRVdOU01rdz09>, Meeting ID: 870 6412 1421, Passcode: 564007

Weight Watchers meets at 9:30-11:30 AM in the Religious Education Building great room.

The Bridge Group plays bridge every Wednesday at 2 pm in the church lobby. If you want to play, contact Nancy Anderson by email, phone, or at church to let her know you would like to be on her weekly contact list.

Every Thursday

T'ai Chi, 10-11 AM in the Religious Education Building great room.

T'ai Chi, 5:45-6:45 PM in the Religious Education Building great room.

Library Hours – 1-3 PM in the library in the Administration Building

Every Friday

Yoga, 12 noon until 1 PM in the Religious Education great room.

T.G.I.F. – Zoom Together. A great way to end your with your fellow Unitarian Universalists. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5755227281?pwd=OEp3RTNkcWNid0tTNHFDNHEzUFNIUT09>
Meeting ID: 575 522 7281
Passcode: 7777777

First Friday Game Night

Unhook from those digital games and join your church friends for some face-to-face fun and fellowship. We have lots of games for all ages. Some people prefer to have a music jam and that's great. It is also a good time for a discussion of current events. Lots of options and lots of fun.

2nd and 4th Saturdays

UU Crafters

UU Crafters welcomes all to attend the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month at 1:00 pm in the RE Great Room.

On Feb 11th Sara Thomas will teach fractals with Sierpinski's Triangles. It's a beautiful repeating pattern you create through measurement. All materials provided.

On Feb 25th Carol Stanfill will lead Diamond Painting. Create a design with tiny jewels! All materials provided. We welcome new ideas for the following month. Both activities suitable for teens.

3rd Thursday

Death Cafe

Please join us the third Tuesday of each month for an opportunity to sit with others and listen to our experiences with death and grieving. In the UULC Library 6:30-8:00 PM. Contact Brooks Lewis at gendrafoxx@gmail.com or leave a voice message at 512-826-1472.

3rd Saturday

Desert Spirit CUUPs is the Las Cruces chapter of the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans. We practice and educate others on Earth-centered spirituality. We gather monthly on the 3rd Saturday of each month at 6 PM for a potluck and either ritual or an informative class. All events are open to everyone interested in learning and/or growing in their spiritual path. Events held at the church unless otherwise noted. Visit <http://www.facebook.com/desertspiritcuups> or email lascrucescuups@gmail.com.