

Unitarian Universalist Church of Las Cruces

 uuchurchlc.org/news/newsletter/

Directions from your current location

2000 South Solano Drive, Las Cruces, NM 88001

Office hours: Monday-Friday 10:00 AM until 1:00 PM, except for holidays, (575) 522-7281.

Newsletter

October Light

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Las Cruces, Vol. 71, Num. 10

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.

Church Office Open: Monday thru Friday 10:00 – 1:00

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 Minister

The Reverend Rod Thompson

Rod's Ruminations



As I sit down to write this piece for the *Light*, I am feeling kind of Whimsical. I wondered about how many holidays there are in October. Of course, we know about Halloween and Columbus Day (which a lot of us think of Indigenous Peoples Day), but I counted 133 named Holidays in October – everything from National Homemade Cookie Day on the 1st to National Magic Day and National Knock Knock Joke Day on the 31st.

I also checked and there are several Observances that run all month long.

I especially liked that October is Adopt a Shelter Pet Month and Country Music Month. I don't need any more Pets in my life right now, but I will celebrate Country Music all month long.

OK, to be serious, Courage is the topic of for the month of October in "Soul Matters" (a Unitarian Universalist Association publication that we receive to help plan services and RE), so I better say something about Courage. I think you all know what courage is and have experienced it in your lives, and so I don't think I could say anything here that would be any better than these quotations that I've discovered along the way.

Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak. Courage is what it takes to sit down and listen.

Winston Churchill

Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage.

Lao Tzu

Courage Doesn't Always Roar: Sometimes courage is the little voice at the end of the day that says, I will try again tomorrow.

Mary Anne Radmacher

It takes courage to grow up and become who you really are.

e.e. cummings

Courage is the most important of all the virtues because without courage, you can't practice any other virtue consistently.

Maya Angelou

I would be remiss if I did not say that it takes Courage and Commitment to raise your pledge for next year. This is your church, so it is up to you to support it so that we can fulfill it's Covenant, Mission and Vision. See you in church! .

Our President

Susan Hychka

Feed the Flame

Each Sunday, we close our service by saying: "We extinguish this flame, but not the light of



truth, the warmth of community, or the fire of commitment. These we carry in our hearts until we are together again.”

But how do we feed that bit of the flame that we are asked to carry in our hearts?

Care for yourself, one another, and our community.

Spend some time at our Coffee Hour, talking with others, especially newcomers. Enjoy the warmth of community, and sample the treats lovingly provided by sponsoring committees, covenant groups, and interest groups. Show appreciation for them and for Hospitality Committee members who help each week as well as assisting with special events.

Participate in an adult education program, a covenant group, or a service group that will help others and nurture you.

Help our Caring Committee identify needs of our members and provide services in times of need. Offer transportation, provide a meal, or visit members in the hospital or at home. Write a note of encouragement or sympathy. If you hear about someone who might need assistance, let Cheri Coffelt, Hale Huber or Joan Dormody know.

Share your time and talents by joining a committee or ministry that inspires you and fits your talents.

Throughout the week, join individuals supporting our ministries, feeding the bits of flame they carry. For a few examples:

- Join volunteers who stock our Little Free Pantry daily and replenish our Little Free Library.
- Join others who advocate for the welfare of all animals.
- Help conduct monthly cooking classes for young men at the J. Paul Taylor Detention Center and share dinner and conversation during quarterly “Fine Dining” events.
- Help our Religious Education program feed the flame into the future.
- Join Tombaugh Gallery volunteers who display work of young and emerging artists in our community.
- Join our newest interest group, the Climate Action Group, which is focused on learning about actions that will reduce energy use as individuals, educating our community about ways to reduce energy expenses, and advocating for climate friendly policies at local, national, and international levels.

Give money as you can to support our Ministries and our Mission in 2024.

To learn more about our needs and to help us shape our budget for 2024, please attend one

of the information and Q & A sessions that the Finance Committee will sponsor in October and early November.

Please pledge generously to support the ministries of your church.

Thank you all for all you do. Your continuing gifts of time, talent and treasure are deeply appreciated!

Board of Trustees

Board Officers

President: Susan Hychka

Vice President: Bill Fitzgerald

Secretary: Jeanne Gilbert

Treasurer: Jan Thompson

At Large

Rabbitt Loring

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



Bittersweet October. The mellow, messy, leaf-kicking, perfect pause between the opposing miniseries of Summer and Winter. —C.B.H

This October is promising to be a busy one for my family and I. We are all committed (in one way or another) until the very last day of this month! At one point, my hubby and I will even be like passing ships as I leave for my trip, the day before he gets home from his! However, I'm thankful to start October the same way I have for 27 years – by celebrating my oldest child's Birthday! My son Myles was born right here in Las Cruces at 6:27pm on the 1st of October. We'll celebrate this gifted young man's life with a family lunch. A nice cake-filled calm before the start of the busy storm!

Religious Education will also be having an event filled month! Plans are in motion to possibly

host the Albuquerque Unitarian Universalist youth once again for a sleepover, during Pride weekend. Last year we had over 25 students participate in the parade! This year our students have tie-dyed t-shirts and accessories to wear during the festivities. We also have plans for Halloween and our monthly Last Monday Potluck. Unfortunately, Religious Education's plans to host OWL for 10th-12th graders this Fall have been postponed. Nevertheless, now that we have our facilitators trained and all of the materials ready, we'll make the most of this time to plan and promote! Please reach out to me – DRE, Kellie Ingram if you know of any families who are interested in this class for their 10th-12th graders early next year.



Music and Choir

Catherine Massey, Director of Music



MUSIC NOTES

After a wonderful church-wide celebration of my 25th anniversary of music at UUCLC, I

would like to share my gratitude. Rev. Rod Thompson's leadership in the service and special words meant more than I can say. The beautiful decorations and stars, along with the gorgeous chalice table prepared by Gillian Leng and Diane Lee made the whole sanctuary special. Kevin Fitzgerald serving as Service Associate topped off the morning. Sara Thomas led a whole team to plan the festivities: Judy Licht, Julie Woody, Irene Schultz, and Lucy Silva (who taught everyone how to make the lovely stars). They collected money from many members to give me a generous check as a gift. And Susan Hychka represented the board with a presentation of a gorgeous etched glass award. The reception featured a one-of-a-kind music cake designed by Sara! So many wonderful gestures, and I thank all of you who contributed in some way.

Mike Yaczko put together the PowerPoint presentations with vintage photos, after an intense week of multimedia events. Kellie Ingram and the Religious Education youths' sweet song lyrics tribute brought tears to my eyes. Cheri Coffelt was there in the background making everything work, as always. I am so lucky to work with this staff!

Most of all, my joy in being your Director of Music for these years is derived from this whole congregation's willingness to support music in worship all this time. First of all, supporting my participation in the Association of Unitarian Universalist Music Ministries for every conference since 2000 has literally made it possible for me to do what I do. It has led to creating our choir, connecting with the music of so many Unitarian Universalist composers and musicians, and all the skills I've learned over the years. My hope is that whoever might lead music for our congregation in the future will have access to this same support.

Our choir is one of the most dedicated groups of volunteers in our beloved community. They work so hard on everything I throw at them, and have done so for so long that we have a great repertoire of works to draw from for every occasion. And we're still learning more. These dear people have been willing to sing in Chinese while doing Tai Chi—I rest my case. I love to hear them sing, and I know you do too!

Finally, it's the singing! What a rich sound we all made in the sanctuary for this celebration! That's because you have always been willing to try to sing anything! And that's my greatest treasure. Thank you all for all these things.

Administration

Cheri Coffelt, Church Administrator

September

The Church Office is open most weekdays from 10:00 – 1:00. Please call the office if you need a special appointment other than those times. (575) 522-7281.



Committees and Programs

CUUPS by Cassandra Calway –

“Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.”

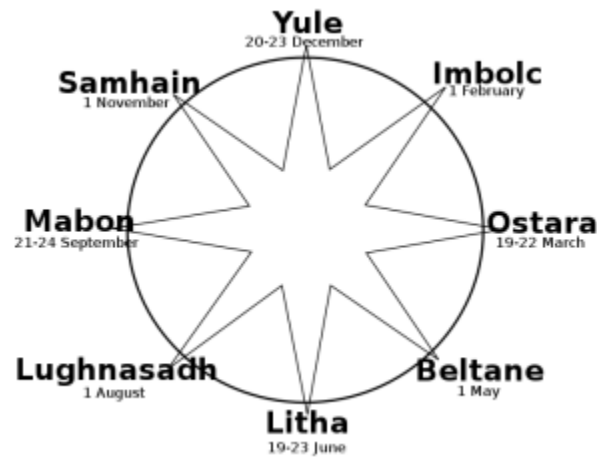
The Sixth Source of Affirmation of the Unitarian Universalist Association

Love Halloween? Thank Samhain (pronounced saa·wn). This Gaelic festival celebrates the end of harvest season and the beginning of winter the darker time of the year. It is celebrated by some Pagans as New Year. Many of the current Halloween decorations and traditions are a direct reflection of this festival. It is also the time of the year when the veil between the living and dead is thinnest.

Come out and celebrate Samhain with Desert Spirit CUUPS on Saturday, October 21. We will meet for potluck at 6:00 and ritual will begin at 7:00.

Pagan Pride Day

Las Cruces Pagan Pride Day is October 14, 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM, at Pioneer Women’s Park. It is a day of entertainment, food, community and shopping! Come out join us and meet the local Pagan community!



The **Wheel of the Year** is an annual cycle of seasonal festivals, observed by a range of modern pagans, marking the year's chief solar events (solstices and equinoxes) and the midpoints between them.

Yule: Celebrates the winter solstice.

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

Ostara: Celebrates the spring equinox

Beltane: Celebrates May Day

Litha: Celebrates the summer solstice

Lughnasadh (Loo-nas-ah): Celebrates the beginning of the harvest season

Mabon: Celebrates the autumnal equinox

Samhain (saa-wn): Celebrates the end of harvest season

The Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans (CUUPS) is an organization dedicated to networking Pagan-identified Unitarian Universalists (UUs), educating people about Paganism, promoting interfaith dialogue, developing Pagan liturgies and theologies, and supporting Pagan-identified Unitarian Universalist religious professionals.

CUUPS was chartered by the Unitarian Universalist Association at the General Assembly in 1987 for purposes of enabling:

- networking among Pagan Identified UUs; providing outreach of Unitarian Universalism to the broader Pagan community continentally.
- providing educational materials on Paganism for Unitarian Universalist congregations and the general public.
- promoting Pagan – Jewish and Christian dialogue; encouraging the development of theological and liturgical materials based on earth and nature centered religious and spiritual perspectives.
- encouraging greater use of music, dance, visual arts, poetry, story, and creative ritual in Unitarian Universalist worship and celebration.

- providing support for Pagan-identified Unitarian Universalist religious professionals and ministerial students; and fostering healing relationships with our mother the Earth and all her children.

Facilities by Charlie Scholz –

GOOD NEWS FROM FACILITIES

In addition to the many things we do to keep the property in good working order, like replacing light bulbs and fixing broken locks, we also try to look down the road to see what we should be working on. To help us with this thinking the Finance Committee always asks us to submit a list of Capital Projects for the coming year. These are items that are outside of the normal Facilities budget, but are, in our estimation, things that need our attention.

For the 2024 Budget, the Facilities Management Committee is proposing three Capital Projects:

1. Replacing gas hot water heaters in Foyer/Gallery, Office/Library and Religious Education building with on-demand electric units. Estimated cost \$8,000
2. Replacing all existing single-pane windows in the Office/Library wing with double-pane windows. Estimated cost \$17,000
3. Removing the existing furnace and old air conditioning unit in Sanctuary and redoing the existing floor ducting to act as an air return. Estimated cost \$12,000

All three would result in energy savings for the Church. And the re-ducting of the Sanctuary would allow for much better air circulation during both summer and winter.

There is one other project that will need our attention in the near future. The roof on the Office/Library wing is in poor condition and the existing duct work is rusting. Replacement would include new insulation, re-ducting of the air vents and a new, more efficient HVAC unit. At the same time, we would replace the adjoining flat roofs over the breezeway and at the back of the Sanctuary. Because we do not know what we will find when we strip those roofs, the estimated cost is between \$35,000 and \$45,000.

Finance by Katie Fitzgerald –

Finance

As of September 29, 2023 the church has received 81% of the total amount pledged for 2023. For this we thank you. If you are one of the 33 faithful members and friends who have already completed your 2024 pledge– THANK YOU! For all who paid their auction invoices, we are grateful. Because of your generosity, the work of the church can continue. Your pledge of time, talent and treasure strengthen our ability to strive for social justice and

nurture spiritual growth in our children, youth and one another. Blessed be!

If you have not yet made your 2024 pledge and would like to do that now, you can Feed the Flame by clicking [here](#) to fill out the convenient electronic form.

Generous Giving by Jack Welch

Generous Giving: September was a busy month for giving. We thank Cathy Carver for her memorial gift in memory of our late church friend, Chris Landt. Chris was Jennifer Trantham's husband. Three of our members made donations in honor of the 25th anniversary of Catherine Massey being our Music Director. Those individuals are Jeanne Gilbert, Susie Lindeman and Sylvie Peale. Also, many contributed to the gift of an overnight stay at Riverbend Hot Springs presented to Catherine at our service Sunday, September 24. We thank Haney and Lyn for their generosity in support of our recently completed handicapped parking area.

Our Tents to Rents Fund received ten gifts. They were made by Nancy L Anderson, Ronald and Dorothy, Francey, Ginny Herrick, Diane Lee, Rabbitt Loring, Lori Miller, Elwin Nunn, Jan Thompson, Janet Pit and Steve Welch, and Jack Welch and Gayle Trantham. This fund will help residents of Community of Hope move unhoused individuals in apartments.

This calendar quarter recipient for our Change 4 Change is our local Childrens Reading Alliance. Our donors for this community organization are Jane Asche, Dale Emmert, Ed Gomolka, Sandy Nielson, Marie and Laruna Warren (3 gifts).

We thank all of our generous donors. Gifts received after September 20 will be acknowledged in the November LIGHT.

Hospitality

Thanks to the various covenant groups and committees that take turns supplying the goodies, setting up and cleaning up for fellowship after our Sunday services. You may have noticed the plexiglass box on the serving table inviting your free will donation. Your donation helps cover the cost of tea, coffee, creamers, cups, etc. that the Hospitality Committee ensures is on hand each Sunday so we can concentrate on the goodies and each other! Thanks for your generous support. *Ed Gomolka and Bill Fitzgerald*

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 Rabbit Loring

New Books!

Our Book Carts are getting a makeover. Well, at least a change in their contents. We have periodically added books as those on the carts have been purchased, and lately we have received so many new book donations that we decided to change out and refresh much of the collection. What we can't put on the shelves in the library, we add to the book carts or send on to COAS Bookstore for credit. The church currently has over \$1500 in credit at COAS. Keep those book donations coming!

Check out the cart in the foyer before or after church service. Come by the library during coffee hour.

Find that special book you just can't live without. Your donations help support the library collection and help us supply books of special interest to groups that request them. The carts made \$50 in the last month. Thank you for all you read! See you in the library!

Membership by Lyn Pearson –

Circle Suppers

It is now September 29, and we have been recruiting guests for three October Circle Suppers for a few days. It's been slow, so I hope you will consider attending one of the three dinners as a way of showing your appreciation both for the Circle Supper program and our hosts who open their homes for these dinners. In October, there will be 3 suppers: 1 vegetarian, 2 meat. Days and times vary, but please note that one dinner is approaching quickly on Friday, October 6, at 6:30 PM. You can click [here](#) to sign up for one of these great dinners.

Thanks to Our September Greeters

In September, our greeters were: Carol Stanfill, Ed Long, Linda Ruchala, Susan and Steve Hychka, Susan West, and Julie Woody. We can always use more greeters and it's one of the best ways to become more familiar with our members who love to see a smiling face on Sundays. If you're interested in becoming a greeter, contact Mark Sukontarak at .

New UU Class

2023 Fall – New UU Class Registration Form (4 class series)

We're still registering for this class. [Click here](#) if you want to register .

NOTE: If you took the 1/2 day New UU class earlier this year, you may still be interested in this class because it gives a deeper perspective of Unitarian Universalism and our own church..

This series of 4 classes is for everyone who wants to explore Unitarian Universalism, whether you're a current church member, contemplating membership, or just interested in learning about the faith.

New UU classes are designed for attendees to get to know each other and better understand Unitarian Universalism. We'll spend some time on our individual faith journeys and consider how that journey may be continued within this religious community. We hope you'll be able to join in the series of four classes to be held on consecutive Sundays after the service.

WHAT: New UU Class

WHEN: Sundays, October 8, 15, 22, and 29 from 11:30 AM until 1:30 PM (bring a brown bag lunch)

WHERE: Church library

WHO: Led by Rev. Nancy J Anderson, Minister Emerita and Rev. Rod Thompson our current minister

Priority is given to new members and those interested in joining. If registrations exceed the limit of 12 a second class will be scheduled. Groups will be limited to 12 with a minimum of 6 people. If you want to participate, but are hesitant to come in person, please call the church office. It might be possible to put together a Zoom version of the class. Register

The New Respectful Relations Team by Julie Woody

Our Church has a new group of volunteers trained in Right Relations. Last Spring Peggy Devlin, Katie Fitzgerald, Gillian Leng, Jennifer Trantham, Jack Welch and myself completed a three month Unitarian Universalist Association training with a number of other churches across the country, designed to help us rebuild relationships that have been harmed by conflict.

We will be putting on a workshop November 11th and doing the Sunday Service on November 12th, as well as speaking to various committees, and covenant groups through out the Fall to introduce ourselves and our new mission to everyone.

We decided the name Respectful Relations team was a more apt name for who we are and what our work is all about.

The mission of the Respectful Relations Team is to provide a safe, nonjudgmental space for members to come together to help restore relationships in a healthy manner when conflict

has arisen in keeping with our Covenant of Right Relations.

Our main goal is not to “fix the problem,” but to open the path to rebuild the relationship in a safe nonjudgmental place. We understand that the relationship is more important than the disagreement. All our conversations are confidential. We believe friends can disagree and remain friends! And we know that listening deeply to others is a first step in any restorative process.

Please join us on **Saturday, November 11th** to learn more about our work and how you can be a part of it.

Social Justice –

Change for Change

The fourth quarter of 2023 (October, November and December)

Mesilla Valley Hospice. Since 1982, Mesilla Valley Hospice has provided end-of-life care 24 hours a day for patients that have been diagnosed with an illness that limits their life expectancy to six months or less. They provide this care in a variety of settings including the patient’s home, a nursing home, a hospital, an assisted living facility, or their own in-patient unit. Their goal is to enable our patients to continue a pain-free life and to manage other symptoms so that their last months may be spent with dignity and quality, surrounded by their loved ones.

Climate Action Group by James Caufield

Join us on the 1st and 3rd Mondays at 7:00 PM May through December 18, 2023, on Zoom for a Climate Action Group meeting. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88911933049?pwd=WkVPdTdyTitJbVpqdHA4U3JybC9VUT09>

Here are some of the things we’ve been doing:

- We created a survey.
- We are working on a brochure.
- We have several willing speakers, but Roundtable/presentation dates need to be arranged.
 - State Senator Bill Soules
 - State Meteorologist Dr. Dave Dubois
 - El Paso Electric
- We selected some books for the church library.
- We will do a service on November 5, 2023, and are willing to do more services.

- James attended Andrew Boyd's "I Want a Better Catastrophe" talk. Another book for the library!
- We postponed a tentative plan to work on our carbon footprint and tax credits. Perhaps we can build more interest.
- We are still looking for a movie license.
- We are still looking at getting a bulletin board.

Please note that there will not be a meeting on Oct. 2 2023. Our next meeting will be on Oct 16.

The Little Free Pantry

Clients of our LFP continue to clean it out daily! Jan Thompson's 7-member crew restocks the pantry daily and demand is brisk. Your donations of useful items (small size, easy to open, shelf stable foods/beverages, toiletries) and money are greatly appreciated. This is one way we serve those in our community in food stress. You can donate to this worthy cause by clicking **here** or on GIVE at the top of the website.

Stewardship by Steve Hychka –

Hello, Church! It's pledge time!! Please generously support our ministries and therefore your current and future needs, your fellows in our congregation, our local, state, federal and worldwide communities.

Without your support we are less likely to obtain the goals you want for the future. Please complete a pledge card or click **here** to pledge today!

Time, talent and treasure. All are ways to show your faith in the dignity and worth of every human being! Feed the flame!

Sunday Services by Charlie Scholz – SundayServices@uuchurchlc.org

We are thrilled and delighted that so many people have volunteered to help us do a Sunday Service this month. Here is our lineup for October:

October 1 Ed Long and Linda Ruchala – A Practical Conversation About Environmental Decision Making

October 8 The Multicultural Awareness Group – Indigenous Peoples Day

Indigenous Peoples Day has rightfully supplanted Columbus Day on our calendars. Its purpose is to honor the original inhabitants of our country, not the invader who marked the

beginning of colonialism and exploitation. The Multicultural Awareness Group will be presenting the service on October 8, 2023 to mark this holiday.

Indigenous religions believe all beings are connected to the earth and should be treated fairly. The divine is in the earth; the earth is sacred. The Diné concept of Walking in beauty is a way we can think about living in harmony with nature and recognizing the sanctity of the earth. In the service honoring Indigenous Peoples Day, we will experience the indigenous view of the sacred through readings, songs and reflections, and end by walking home in beauty.

October 15 Dave and Ilene Steel – A Pale Blue Dot: Respecting the Interdependent Web of Existence of Which We Are Part

In today's service we celebrate our Unitarian Universalist seventh principle affirming that we are part of an interdependent web of existence. What obligations does this principle imply for UUs? How will we show respect for the value of interdependence as we make individual and collective decisions impacting the health of this "pale blue dot" of a planet and all of the beings with whom we share the only home we have? Dave Steele (UU Animal Ministry Chapter Leader) and Ilene Steele (UU Animal Ministry Board Member) will lead this service on behalf of the UUCLC Social Justice Animal Advocates Ministry.

October 22 Rev Rod Thompson – Our Unitarian Universalist Forebears that We Don't Talk About.

October 29 Rev Thompson and Kevin Fitzgerald – Samhein, the Pagan Celebration of All Hallows Eve.

Thanks to the members of the Sunday Service Committee, to Catherine Massey, Kellie Ingram, the Service Associates, the Greeters, and the Tech Crew, all of whom are working together to bring you great worship services.

Tombaugh Gallery by Lurene John –

If you haven't had a chance to view Jill Samoza's art you have until October 6th.

In November we will be featuring Navajo rugs jewelry and baskets that have been collected by Bruce Begin. His interest and advocacy for Native rights began over 40 years ago. The Opening will coincide with First Friday, on November 3rd from 5 to 7. Join us for wine and hor d'oeuvres. Bruce will be available to answer any questions.

Recently I was cleaning out the Gallery storage closet. Buried deep I found the book, Clyde Tombaugh, Discoverer of Planet Pluto by David H. Levy. Pluto was discovered by Clyde in 1930. Later demoted to a dwarf planet, Pluto will always remain as the ninth planet in the

hearts of our Unitarian Universalist members. The book has been donated to our Library so you can check it out to learn more about one of the founders of our Church.

More Tombaugh Gallery News

The online art auction has been postponed. That means there is an even greater opportunity for any artist or group of artists to feature their work in a “Pop-Up” show for a day or a weekend in October. Please contact Lurene John at (503) 490-4908 if you are interested.

In January we will be featuring our 3rd annual Phil Ochs Show. Local artists can submit their art, any medium, that focuses on his song, *I'm Going to Say It Now*. The song is about student activism, particularly the free speech movement. This will be a juried show, with a top prize of \$300 being awarded to the art piece that best represents the song. See below for more information.

The Gallery Committee is still in need of volunteers to help us manage the art gallery, mostly to serve as docents. You will be fully trained. Many volunteers have expressed joy at serving in this very quiet and meditative space. Cathy Cox is our docent wrangler email her at .

Call for Artists

The Tombaugh Gallery is inviting artists to submit up to two works of art for an exhibit based on folk singer Phil Ochs' song, “I'm Gonna Say It Now”. The exhibit will run January 7th through January 20th, 2024.

Artists may use any medium they prefer, as long as the work relates to the Phil Ochs song. There is no submission fee, and first (\$300), second (\$200), and third (\$100) prizes will be awarded at a reception held on Friday, January 19, between 6:00 and 8:00 PM.

In addition, \$100 will be given for *People's Choice* and a \$100 award for the artist whose work is the best interpretation of the Phil Ochs song.

Artists need to indicate their intent to participate by emailing details of their art piece(s) to no later than December 20. Lyrics of the song can be found in the lower right of the home page of Unitarian Universalist Church website and [here](#).

Artists will be responsible for delivering their artwork to the Tombaugh Gallery on January 5th, between noon and 3:00 PM, and will be responsible for picking up their art after the exhibit ends.

The exhibit is being sponsored by A Still Small Voice (ASSV) nonprofit, the Unitarian Universalist Church and the Tombaugh Gallery.

WomenSpirit 2023 Recap by Sara Thomas

Twenty-eight women had a wonderful time at Womenspirit2023. We shared, learned and played together in the beautiful pines of the Sacramento Mountains. Upon arrival Friday, women were greeted and shown their rooms. Catherine Massey led us in a beautiful opening ceremony. We followed that with a campfire and s'mores. Of course we were already very well fed by the dining hall's wonderful food.

Saturday morning commenced with the workshops: a Plant identification Hike lead by Rebecca and Allyson Richins or Sculpture with Jamie Gibbard. Next was Writing with Rabbitt Loring or Homemade Greeting cards with Laurel Weathersbee. In the afternoon there was Somatic Movement Exploration with Susan Conant or Zentangle with Carol Stanfill. Finally, the last workshop of the afternoon was African Dance with Marie Warren. Catherine offered Taize (Mediative Chanting) in our private dining room before our dinner Saturday. Funky Fun shop, our thrift shop of treasures, was open the whole weekend, to support scholarships. In fact, this was the best year ever for scholarship donations: Funky Fun proceeds, plus many generous contributions from individual donors, totaled nearly \$900.

The highlight of the weekend is always the Talent/No talent Show followed by dancing. The talent show was emceed by Anna with bawdy jokes, poetry by LeeAnn Meadows, a reading by Lucy Silva, and an Abbott and Costello skit by Rabbitt Loring and Sara Thomas. Sunday morning ended with a Closing Ceremony by Catherine and lots of goodbye hugs. The theme this year was Creating Community and WomenSpirit certainly did!

Requests and Items of Interest

Emilio Gutierrez-Soto, A Mexican Journalist, is Granted Asylum by Ginnie Herrick

Since newer members of our congregation have not been aware of Emilio, I was asked to write a Light article about him. In 2008 Emilio, age 45 and his teenage son Oscar, fled their home in Mexico to seek asylum in the United States. I believe it was 2011 that Emilio presented his story to our then Sunday morning Roundtable and that afternoon some of us attended a gathering at the Mesilla Community Center. Several of our church members at that time and shortly thereafter became part of a support group. Several years later Elisa Sanchez led a church service in which Emilio spoke. As a result, quite a few members present joined the support group. The group supported Emilio in various manners such as helping him to acquire a food truck, attending his hearings with the judge, providing transportation to his monthly check in with Homeland Security in El Paso. On December 07, 2017 one of the group members drove Emilio and Oscar to their monthly check in. This was two months after Emilio's National Press Club speech in Washington, D.C., criticizing U.S. immigration policies. Department of Homeland Security officials abruptly handcuffed them

during that routine check-in at the El Paso office and drove them toward the nearby border for deportation. When the Board of Immigration Appeals ordered DHS not to deport them, the officials put them in detention instead. Our group rotated weekly visiting Emilio and Oscar in detention where they were held for 9 months. They were released only after a class of students at Rutgers University Law School International Human Rights Clinic brought a habeas corpus case at the behest of the National Press Club. While in detention Emilio was awarded the 2018-19 Knight-Wallace Fellowship at the University of Michigan. Emilio and Oscar have been living in Ann Arbor Michigan since the start of the fellowship shortly following their release from detention. Our support group has continuously kept in contact with Emilio and Oscar.

If you would like to learn more about Emilio and his journey, check on-line National Press Club freedom honoree Emilio. The following is the website for a Mother Jones article from the July/August 2009 magazine. It tells a story of Emilio's life up until one year after he sought asylum here <https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2009/07/we-bring-fear/>

Request: Would You Like to Join a Covenant Group this Fall?

A covenant group is a small relational group made up of six to twelve people who meet regularly to establish and nurture themselves in their own beloved community. Covenant groups provide an opportunity for members to build strong relationships with each other and with the larger church as a whole. Covenant groups encourage people to talk, learn, work, and play together over time.

Los Compañeros our newest group will be exploring life paths and journeys every 1st and 3rd Wednesday, 3:00-4:30, at Laura Jones's mobility-accessible house in northeast Las Cruces. The group will use Mark Nepo's *Book of Awakening* as a discussion springboard, and adhere to the Circle processes of honoring dignity, emphasizing connectedness, supporting expression, and honoring confidentiality. I hope you can join us! *In the end, we are all walking each other home.* –Ram Dass

If you would like to join Los Compañeros this fall, please email Laura Jones or .

Other Covenant Group Opportunities

There may be some openings in groups that meet at other times. If you would like to join a group, please email Jeff Harris at .

Events of Note

Oct 14 Ghosts in Harmony: A Halloween Event Connecting Spooky Stories, Music, and Mental Wellness with Micah Pearson and Old-Time

Pharmaceuticals

- When 2023-10-14
- 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM
- Location: church sanctuary

This Halloween-themed evening of story and song brings together storyteller and mental health advocate Micah Pearson with the Old-Time Pharmaceuticals, Las Cruces' local provisioners of recreational and therapeutic folk music, for a special show connecting spooky stories, music, and mental wellness.

This event is part of the “Songs, Stories, and Social Good” performance series, hosted in cooperation between Cruces Creatives, the Unitarian Universalist Church of Las Cruces, and other local partners. The mission of the performance series is to have each performance both support the arts in Las Cruces (by bringing global performers to the city or by showcasing local talent) and serve a “social good” theme that advances other charitable missions. The social good theme for this event is mental wellness.

Tickets are on a pay-what-you-can scale, with suggested donations between \$15 and \$25. Online tickets are available at \$15, \$20, or \$25; other pay-what-you-can prices can be paid at the door.

You can buy advance tickets by clicking [here](#)

Note: when you pay for your tickets on Cruces Creatives' website, the form will look and act quite differently than our church registration forms. There will be a master attendance list at the door but to be on the safe side, we suggest bringing your email receipt with you to the event.

Circle Suppers

Dinner #1

- Friday, October 27, at 5:30 PM
- 4 guests are invited
- Vegetarian
- Alcohol will be served



- No pets in the home
- Accessible, but ask hosts for instructions on best way to enter the home

Dinner #2

- Thursday, October 26, at 5:30 PM
- 4 guests are invited
- Meat
- No alcohol
- There are pets in the home
- Home can handle cane or walker without too much difficulty.

Dinner #3

- Friday, October 6 at 6:30 PM
- 6 guests are invited
- Meat
- Alcohol will be served or cooked with
- There are pets in the home
- There is a gate code, no stairs, easily accessible for folks with limited mobility.

You can register for one of these great dinners right now by clicking [here](#).

The Tombaugh Gallery

Jill Somoza at the Tombaugh Gallery

The Tombaugh Gallery welcomes artist Jill Somoza with an opening reception on Sunday, September 10, from 11 AM to 2 PM. The exhibit continues through October 6. After many years of painting on canvas and paper Ms. Somoza switched to painting on vinyl. Her paintings are hybrids – sculptural in that they are composed of several irregular shapes made of wooden sticks linked together to create a ‘form’. The shapes are then covered with clear vinyl on which she paints with acrylics. The paintings are non-representational, but the ‘form’ is a real object. The artwork hangs a few inches off the wall by means of feet which allow light to penetrate the translucent vinyl and gives it an air of lightness.



Ms. Somoza, her husband and three children have lived in Las Cruces since 1973, and she has exhibited her work here since then. Ten works of art made in the last three years will be shown at the Tombaugh Gallery located in the Unitarian



Universalist Church at 2000 S. Solano Drive. Regular Gallery hours are Thursday through Saturday, 10 am until 2 pm and Sunday, 11 am to 2 pm.

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 week with your fellow Unitarian

Universalists. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5755227281?pwd=OEp3RTNkcWNid0tTNHFDNHEzUFNIUT09>
Meeting ID: 575 522 7281
Passcode: 7777777

Every Sunday – Library

Library Hours — 11:00 to 11:30 AM.

Every Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct – Circle Suppers

Join members and friends at small, intimate dinners in the homes of our volunteer hosts. We recruit hosts and guests in December, March, June, and September for dinners held in January, April, July, and October. If you would like to learn more, please email .

2nd Friday – Game Night

Join us at 6:30 PM in the Religious Education Building Great Room. Bring a snack to share and a favorite game. Hope to see you there!

3rd Thursday – Death Cafe

Please join us the third Thursday of each month for an opportunity to sit with others and share your experiences with death and grieving. In the church Library 6:30-8:00 PM. Contact Brooks Lewis at or leave a voice message at 512-826-1472.

2nd Saturday – Crafty UUs

Calling all creative and crafty UUs and friends! Our group welcomes all genders, all folks teens through senior citizens, all interested in art, crafts, and creativity.

We will resume monthly meetings on September 9, 1:00 in the Religious Education Building Great Room.

At this first meeting this term we will share our latest creations and think about ideas for our future meetings. Questions? Email

3rd Friday – Eating Out

Eating Out Group will be going to Lorenzo's Italian Restaurant on the 3rd Friday on Sept 15th. Reservations required at or calling or texting Janet Martinique

3rd Saturday – Desert Spirit CUUPs

This 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 .

2nd Saturday in Jan, May, Aug, Nov – Fine Dining Experience

Dinner at the J Paul Taylor Detention Facility with a group of 14-21 year-old young men. Contact Haney Pearson if you would like to participate.