

# Unitarian Universalist Church of Las Cruces

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 [uuchurchlc.org/news/newsletter/](http://uuchurchlc.org/news/newsletter/)

## March Light

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Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Las Cruces, Vol. 72, Num. 3

### 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.

Our church administrator is Cathy Cox and the church office is open Mon.-Tues. 10-2, Wed. 2-5, Thurs.-Fri. 10-2

Library hours Mon.-Fri. 10-1

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

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### The Reverend Rod Thompson

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#### Rod's Ruminations

According to Soul Matters, the theme for March is Transformation and that is certainly what is happening in your church office right now. As you know Cheri, our Office Administrator for the last 4.5 years, has left us. I hope you had a chance to come to Cheri's Marti Gras themed Thank You Celebration. And thank you to all those who helped make it such a special occasion.

Cheri left the Office in good hands! The HR Committee has recommended, and your Board has hired Cathy Cox as Office Administrator for the next three months. Cathy has posted her office hours on the office door, and of course she is available by phone at 575-522-7281. The transition in the office has affected us all as we adjust to different office hours and the expected learning curve for anyone stepping into established routines. We all need to be patient through this process.

It seems like the weather is also in transition, too. In Ohio March just means more winter, even though Spring officially arrives on the 19th, snow almost always follows. Here in Las Cruces, as I write this, my thermometer says 75 and rising. Does that mean Spring is early, or just New Mexico normal?

The line up of wonderful Sunday Services for March certainly seems like it, too, is set for transformation – from “Our Ancient Humanism Roots” to begin the month to “Easter/Passover and Spring” at the end. Just another great month at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Las Cruces. See you in church!

## **Our President**

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### **Susan Hychka**

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Good News! Your Board of Trustees and Rev. Rod Thompson have agreed to extend his half-time contract ministry for a second year, which means he will serve our Congregation until August 15, 2025. We are delighted with this opportunity to continue to work together! During this interval, the Congregation has work to do.

As Unitarian Universalist Association congregational consultants Joe Sullivan and Meck Groot explain, “Of course, decisions need to be made, and there’s nothing wrong with using the democratic process. But (sometimes) that isn’t enough... Sometimes, we need deeper and wider wisdom than our minds can reasonably grasp but which our hearts call us to do. Sometimes, we need to broaden our perspective by listening heart-to-heart to fellow congregants. Sometimes, love begs us not to marginalize anyone by turning them into the ‘minority opinion.’ Sometimes, we need to re-remember and recommit to our mission and values. Sometimes, we need to pause and wonder together.” “In situations where no options seem clear, or stakes feel high and choices feel risky, group discernment is a way we can wonder together. Through group discernment, we can sort out what risks might be the faithful ones to take. For a risk to be faithful, its hoped-for outcome must advance our mission and vision. It must lead to more love, more grace, more justice. Group discernment requires we listen for/to the transformative power of love. It requires that we release attachment to particular outcomes. We must trust that all others have released particular agendas and come wholly open.”

Groot and Sullivan conclude their article by stating, “And it takes time. Open, spacious time we usually think we don’t have. Yet, imagine how much ease and effortlessness may result when a trusting community is aligned, engaged purposefully together intentional, willing to take losses for the sake of something greater, and collectively enlivened by a courage that wasn’t there before. Imagine how much time and energy and grace that would free up! Just imagine.”

Watch for invitations to join in discerning our next steps. Let’s do this together.

## **Board of Trustees**

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## **Board Officers**

President: Susan Hychka

Vice President: Linda Ruchala

Secretary: Laura Jones

Treasurer: Jan Thompson

## **At Large**

Rabbitt Loring

Bill Fitzgerald

Jean Gilbert

Carol Stanfill

Kevin Fitzgerald

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

## **Religious Education**

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### **Kellie Ingram, Director of Religious Education**

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“Spring is nature’s way of saying, ‘Let’s party!’” — Robin Williams

And party we will! The month of March will see the completion of OWL classes! This involves 8 Sundays of 4-hour sessions. The dedication of our student’s weekly attendance combined with the dedication of our facilitators consistently navigating the need to be flexible, definitely deserves a celebration! I would personally like to Thank-Rabbit, Haney, Jacob, Rhianna & Cindy for all that they have done to see OWL succeed.

March is also the month of Bunny Buddy’s! This yearly program is a fun way to build community and make connections between the religious education students and the church congregation. Bunny Buddy’s are matched together and then get to know each other through letter writing and secret token/gift exchanges. We then end the weeks of fun with a reveal party, where the youth try to guess their Buddy’s!

Religious Education will end March with one last party, when we host our Last Monday Potluck and Game Night. These themed dinners are a great time and place to get to know our youths. If interested in becoming an religious education volunteer (there are several different ways to donate your time) or learning more about the religious education program, please reach out for more information about attending one of these communal meals!

Religious Education is always looking for volunteer teachers to help lead lessons, please reach out to me (DRE Kellie Ingram) or anyone on the religious education committee if you are interested in being part of this important, joyful program!

## Music and Choir

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### Catherine Massey, Director of Music

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#### Music Notes

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Our Soul Matters theme for the month of March is “Transformation.” While it may seem that I’m just joining in the current cacophony of people writing about Taylor Swift, I promise I’ve been planning this column for a long time because I think she exemplifies that theme so well. Because Ms. Swift made her Eras Tour accessible by releasing it as a movie, I’ve had the chance to become acquainted with her work (more than the couple of songs I knew before) and to draw much inspiration from her. I’m deeply impressed with how she uses songwriting and powerful performances to transform deep disappointment and pain into art that is so relatable by so many. (Yes, I am now a Swiftie. And she doesn’t just write breakup songs!)

I listen sometimes to “The Daily,” a podcast by the New York Times. These three quick stories about Taylor Swift in a conversation between journalists Michael Barbaro and Taffy Brodesser-Akner were a revelation to me. I’m just going to touch on what I learned from them, but the [podcast is from 12/15/2023](#) if you want to hear it. Remember that Taylor started performing as a teenager. There was an incident when she wanted to celebrate having sung the national anthem at a big game, and she contacted all her friends to get together. They all turned her down, saying they had other plans, so her mother took her to the mall—where she saw all her friends hanging out without her. Her mother said, “I’ll take you to a better mall!” and they left. But that broken-hearted 17-year old wrote a song about it, and in it she said the best thing was driving “home with you,” her mother. So remarkable not just to write about the pain, but to see the comfort right there at the time, as a young teen.

Another incident you might have heard of in the media was when Kanye West took the microphone away from Swift during her acceptance speech at an awards show. Fast-forward: Later Taylor was seen in social situations with him and his then-wife Kim Kardashian. Some time after that, West released a single that expressed ugly things about Taylor (really horrendous). Taylor was publicly upset, understandably. Then Kim Kardashian, who had vast influence at that time for reasons I’ve never understood, released a video that purported to show Taylor giving Kanye her blessing for releasing that song. The video was fraudulent. Instead of continuing to engage on social media in a no-win situation, she went silent for almost a year. When she reemerged, she did so with a new album with a snake on the cover: “Reputation.” Through this music she questioned the motivations of such people, and also her own motives for attempting to win over people who in fact hated her. Knowing the context for those songs makes them even more amazing.

Another story takes us to the present: Taylor is rerecording all of her early albums so that she can own the rights to the music. Her trusted business associate and long-time friend/mentor betrayed her by selling all of her early albums to someone who hates her and her music, without honoring her prior request to purchase it all herself. Re-releasing all of these albums has put her in the powerful position of having multiple albums on the charts simultaneously, as fans buy them up to replace the old ones. I can't think of better revenge.

Here's another example of Taylor's ability to transform evil. She was sexually assaulted by a radio DJ in Colorado, who sued her claiming she falsely accused him. She counter-sued for a symbolic \$1, and won. How many women were encouraged to speak out by this courageous stand? Now of course she is on an international concert tour and is the center of yet more conspiracy theories regarding her new romance with Kansas City Chiefs player Travis Kelce. And, she's a billionaire who fills the food banks in each city she performs in and pays those she employs well. She confirms my belief in the power of music, and is one of my more contemporary sources of Unitarian Universalist faith.

## **Administration**

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### **Cathy Cox, Church Administrator**

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### **March**

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Please note that church office hours have changed. They are now Mon.-Tues. 10 AM until 2 PM, Wed. 2 PM until 5 PM, Thurs.-Fri. 10 AM until 2 PM, and the library is open Mon-Fri 10 AM until 1 PM. You can email the .

## **Committees and Programs**

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### **Communications by Lyn Pearson**

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I'd hoped I was done with these articles for awhile, but scammers continue to find different ways to get into our heads and personal information. This time, many of our committees and programs received a very polite request from Susan Hychka to share our church directory with her. This is called email spoofing for the purpose of phishing. Email spoofing is a technique used in spam and phishing attacks to trick users into thinking a message came from a person or entity they know or trust. Phishing is the fraudulent practice of sending emails or other messages purporting to be from a reputable person, company, or organization in order to induce individuals to reveal personal information, such as passwords and credit card numbers. In this case, the reputable person was Susan and the personal information was all the information that is found in our church directory.

Happily, many recipients quickly realized this email was a scam and notified Susan right away. Kudos to everyone who caught the scam! What was disturbing about this particular email was that it was both exceptionally grammatical and polite, which breaks the general rule that such scams are invariably non-grammatical and not particularly polite. They often tend to be pretty hysterical, “Pay now or go to jail,” or “I’m in desperate need of a bit of money to get out of this jam,” or “Don’t miss this fabulous offer!”.

Be aware that these scams are now ubiquitous; as fast as solutions are found to stop one, another type pops up. The scammers come to your door, call on the telephone, send email, and undoubtedly ground mail. If you’re a bit paranoid, good, because they’re out to get you — and your money. We are entering a new season of scamming in that a very interesting election will be taking place in November and there are innumerable groups, legitimate and not, that want your financial support. If you don’t know the caller or the organization, or if the “ask” seems strange, don’t respond to it. Stay safe!

## **COM/RRT**

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If you are wondering what these letters mean – they are for the Committee on Minister and the Respectful Relations Team. And although they do different things, they are composed of the same folks!

The Committee on Ministry works to support the Minister and be his eyes and ears in the congregation giving him feedback.

The Respectful Relations Team was trained last spring and it is charged with helping members listen respectfully to each other when conflict arises.

We are Peggy Devlin, Katie Fitzgerald, Gillian Leng, Jack Welch, and Julie Woody. Please ask any one of us for more information!

## **CUUPS by Cassandra Calway –**

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“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*

Spring is in the air! Ostara is the first equinox of the year and is associated with the Goddess E’ostre, it is said that she walked the countryside on a Spring morning bringing warmth to the land. She found a tiny bird that was almost dead, she tried to warm it but it was too late. She turned it into an egg and when the egg hatched a baby bunny was revealed a symbol of fertility and love. Now you know the origin of the Easter bunny! Come celebrate with us! We will meet on March 16, 6:00 for potluck and 7:00 for ritual. Everyone is welcome!

Join us on May 19th for a day of tea, snacks and divination. This is a fundraiser for Las Cruces Pagan Pride Day and is always a lot of fun! Here is a link for the [flier](#) with all the details and how to purchase tickets or you can contact Cassie directly or email with any questions. You may also call CUUPS new phone number 575-249-5372.

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.

## Facilities by Charlie Scholz –

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We had two big accomplishments this past month, along with the usual maintenance and repairs. We built new shelves in the Auction closet and finally got the fresh air ducting to the furnace in the Sanctuary working correctly.

In the case of the Auction closet, Bill Fitzgerald and Dave Rice measured, cut and installed the shelving and supports, while Steve Hychka and I cleared out the closet, sorted and restacked most of the items. There is considerably more usable space in the closet now.

The fresh air furnace ducting was a more complicated operation. AireServ, our go-to HVAC folks, did a good job installing the new ducts and the regulator for the air intake. But we could not get the electrical circuit at the furnace to remain switched on. Finally, Bee Hive Electric traced the fault to an outlet in the Sanctuary that had been improperly wired. Now the system works perfectly in both furnace and fan mode.

Finally, we received notice that the City of Las Cruces is designating two areas in the city as MRA's, or Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas. This means that they will be eligible for special funding and for private/public partnerships to improve commerce and living

conditions for their populations. We are on the edge of one such district. So, we have been in touch with the City to see how the planning will go and how we might be able to benefit from it. We'll keep you posted.

## **Finance by Ed Long –**

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The Finance Committee would like everyone to know that Ed Long, the chair is home and recuperating from surgery. We hope to see him back at church soon.

## **Generous Giving by Jack Welch**

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Nancy L Anderson donated to our Minister's Discretionary Fund while Cathy Carver donated to the Little Free Pantry.

Generous Change 4 Change donations were received from Jerry and Jodie Nachison, Elwin Nunn, Jan Thompson and Marie and Karmin Warren.

For each of our generous donors we say many thanks.

## **Hospitality**

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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**

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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**

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### **New Sections in the Library!**

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Access to the online library catalog is now available to everyone. The library inventory, since its inception, has been in an Excel file in my computer. It is easy for me to add books, to delete those removed from the shelves, and to look up a book when I get a request from someone. The difficulty has been that I am the only one who can find books in the library. Thankfully, times have now changed.

Lyn Pearson, our tech mavin extraordinaire, has found a way to make this file more accessible. You can now go to the church website to see if our library has the book you are looking for. Choose “Library” on the banner at the top of the page. Categories are listed. You can search by title, author, or key word. I couldn’t remember the last name of one of my favorite authors, so I typed in “Barbara.” Kingsolver was one of the first suggestions!

Remember that library hours have been expanded to include the hours that the office is open. Checkout is with the card box near the door. Instructions are posted there. Please remember to return your book and then tear up the card. Our library has a lot to offer. Come check it out!

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Our two book carts, one in the lobby and one in the library, are always available for you to find a wonderful book to purchase. Proceeds from sales are donated to the church library fund.

## **Membership by Lyn Pearson –**

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### **Welcoming Congregation Recertification**

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The Unitarian Universalist Association now requires Welcoming Congregations to recertify every year. We are in the process of preparing to do this. The UUA suggests that our first step should be a congregational assessment to evaluate how well we are incorporating LGBTQ+\* subjects into our services, whether we recognize days and seasons that are important to LGBTQ+\* communities because they bring visibility and affirmation after generations of invisibility and erasure, if we provide continuing education about LGBTQ+\* issues of importance, and whether and how the church donates time and money to one or more local or national organizations, campaigns, or projects that uplifts the dignity of LGBTQ+\* communities.

\* – including transgender, genderqueer, and nonbinary

If you are interested in working on this short-term project, please contact Lyn Pearson directly or send email to .

### **Thanks to Our February Greeters**

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In February, our greeters were: Sara Thomas, Carol Stanfill, Jaimie Gibbard, Linda Rogers, Diane Lee, Susan West, Peggy Devlin, Cindy Backman, Mark Sukontarak, Lisa Stevens, and Tom Packard.

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 .

## Eating Out – Terrific time had by all!

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The Eating Out dinner group had a great time Friday evening (2/16) at Sakura Steakhouse. About eighteen folks joined for dinner and cooking show. The conversation was lively, and the antics were memorable. It was an excellent group and a superb way to meet, reacquaint ourselves and break bread with folks from our church.

If you missed this group dining adventure, fear not! Our March Eating Out will be March 15th, 5:30 PM at Paisano Cafe, 1740 Calle De Mercado, Las Cruces. Please contact Janet Martinique at to make your reservation by March 13.

## Roundtable –

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Roundtable resumes in March after a many-year hiatus. We will meet from 11:45-12:45 in the sanctuary. It will also be available on Zoom, at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88973973837?pwd=bkZhVEduOThGR2xtODYvaVRNZINoUT09>

Education never ends. Come learn with us. We have discussions, not arguments. Our goal is to learn more about all sides of issues and to learn more about one another. If you have a topic you would like discussed, contact Janet Martinique, Jan Thompson, Steve Hychka, or Charlie Welch. You can also send email to .

**Mar. 3 – “Profits Over People?”** A report on the recently concluded 30-day New Mexico legislative session will be presented by Senator Bill Soules and Representative Joanne Ferrary. They will tell us about bills that were passed as well as some that failed to make it to the Governor’s desk. How will this affect our lives as New Mexicans?

**Mar. 10 – “Growing up a 2nd Class Citizen in New Mexico.” Elisa Sanchez**

I grew up in a segregated community, Grant County. How did that segregation manifest itself? What was it like to live like that and what lessons did I learn? Has it changed and, if it did, what caused the change?

**Mar. 17 – No Roundtable** Instead, you are urged to attend the special, open meeting of the Social Justice Committee where you will help select the 4 local charities that will be recipients of our 2024-25 Change for Change program.

**Mar. 24 – “What’s in the new ‘green sanctuary’ program?”** The UUA “Green Sanctuary” program used to mean making a church campus environmentally efficient, and about 30% of UU churches have done that. The new Green Sanctuary program includes much more, including congregational transformation, lessening emissions and reducing vulnerabilities to climate change on campus and in the community, and work toward climate justice. James Caufield will try to describe this ambitious program, and we can talk about what we have done and what we might still do. He’ll also try to breeze through some of the survey results.

## Mar. 31 – No Roundtable Easter Sunday

### Social Justice –

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#### Change for Change

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Please Join Us for the Change for Change Selection meeting on March 17 after Sunday Service

The Social Justice Committee invites Members and Friends of the church to join a special hybrid (Zoom and in-person) meeting on Sunday, March 17, at 11:30 AM to select the four charities which will receive our Change for Change (C4C) offerings for the period April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025.

Four local (Las Cruces or Dona Ana County), charitable organizations will be selected. This special meeting will be held in the sanctuary and over Zoom (link to be provided in Week-at-a-Glance).

In this selection meeting, advocates for nominated charities will make brief (5 minute) presentations. Those attending in the sanctuary will vote by paper ballot while those attending over Zoom will vote via the Chat feature. A member or friend who is unable to participate in the Zoom meeting, may request an absentee ballot by email to Dave Rice ( ) on or before 6 PM on Friday, March 15.

At 11:30 light sandwiches and water will be available for those who attend the Change for Change voting meeting which will start promptly at 11:45. We respectfully request that those who will not be attending the voting meeting in the sanctuary, enjoy hospitality in and around the religious education building immediately following the service as usual.

Please direct questions about our process to David Rice .

#### “Barking News and the Cat’s Meow”

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May we have a drum roll, please?! Now we have done it! In the month of February 2024, Cans-for-Critters surpassed the \$20,000 mark in funds raised last decade through the reclamation of aluminum cans. With these funds we have been able to support the life affirming and lifesaving work of virtually every animal rescue and shelter group in our county. We have also been able to assist many individuals, including members of our congregation, in meeting the basic needs and health care expenses for their beloved animals. The generous members of the church are the most prolific aluminum can collectors and donators in the city! On behalf of the over 350 animals that we have been able to help—THANK YOU!

In gratitude, Dave and Ilene Steele and Jean Gilbert

Contact Dave Steele at Thank you!

## **Change for Change — Jan 1 to Mar 31, 2024**

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Casa de Peregrinos (House of Pilgrims) was selected to be the recipient of our Change for Change contributions from January 1 to March 31. C de P is our local emergency food program working to meet the needs of low income families that are experiencing food insecurity. Their mission is to end hunger while providing mobile pantries and resources that build strong, diverse, and inclusive relationships and partnerships in the community. When the government ended its pandemic stimulus program that had pulled many New Mexico children out of poverty, we have seen a steep increase in the number of families having to receive food assistance. Your contributions can help keep kids nourished and ready to learn at school. Please be generous.

### **Climate Action Group by James Caufield**

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Karuna Richard (Warren) has a company that is starting an Algae Industrial Park. Karuna has grown and sold algae products for 20 years. This project is almost 1000 acres. He, Steve Hychka and Jane Asche and her husband went up to see the property near Spaceport on 2-12.

Jane Asche and Dave Steele have been very active during this legislative session. Jane has been working on schools, and filled in CAG on environmental bills. There are 11, including one for providing solar for schools, and another for geothermal. All are going nowhere, and we need people to attend legislative meetings between the sessions as well as during, if they are going to have a chance to pass.

Dave Steele was one of several speakers selected from around the state to speak about the Green Amendment to the Senate Rules Committee. Various interests spoke, giving arguments for their points of view, including bad arguments and misinformation. Dave says it will be a marathon, not a sprint, but the Green Amendment folks are still in the race.

### **This is Dave's report**

The 30 day "shot" legislative session is now over. SJR 8, The New Mexico Environmental Rights Amendment, was tabled in the Senate Rules Committee after several of the members of the NM Green Amendment Coalition, including Dave Steele, were given an opportunity to speak briefly on behalf of the Resolution. The opponents speaking against the amendment included lobbyists for the fossil fuel industry, clean energy manufacturers, electric companies, land developers, and factory farm interests. Much of their testimony was erroneous and misleading. But the fight continues! The Coalition is regrouping in early March to begin planning for the next legislative session. Our opponents have shown us their hand and we will be prepared to counter their misinformation next time around. This is a marathon and not a sprint! Please stay tuned!

James Caufield did a more thorough study of Unitarian Universalist Association's updated Green Sanctuary plan, which is much more wide-ranging than earlier versions. Since it raises many issues that go beyond the Climate Action Group, it was thought that James should present at a Roundtable. James volunteered for a March 24 slot, unless Professor Dave Dubois, the State Meteorologist, is available.

CAG is now meeting only 1 time per month, the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. For the Zoom Link please contact James Caufield at .

## The Little Free Pantry

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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.

## Sunday Services by Charlie Scholz – [SundayServices@uuchurchlc.org](mailto:SundayServices@uuchurchlc.org)

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March 3, 2024	Charlie Scholz	Our Ancient Humanism Roots: the Nature of Things	The Nature of all Things calls us to examine the ancient roots of humanism.
March 10, 2024	Charlie Scholz Rich Richins Linda Ruchala Jerry Nachison	Personal Transformations	Four of our own have transformations to share: personal and otherwise. Perhaps you have one of your own?
March 17, 2024	Kevin Fitzgerald	Wearing of the Green with Special Music	Celebrate all things Irish as we explore the myths of Patrick and Bridget and the more general topic of religious transformations.
March 24, 2024	Rev. Rod Thompson	The Parables I Wish Jesus Hadn't Told	Jesus is reported to have told some wonderful stories, or Parables, as a way of teaching that goes beyond the limitations of words. There are some of these Parables that I'd just as soon the Gospel writers had left out.
March 31, 2024	Rev. Rod Thompson	Easter/Passover/Spring Family Service	This will be a memorable family service in which we acknowledge three religious traditions that are all associated with this date.

## **Tombaugh Gallery by Lurene John –**

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### **Searching For Artists**

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We are looking for artists to feature in our Gallery for next fall and winter. Do you have a favorite local artist that you would recommend? Call Lurene so we can make contact or drop an email to .

### **UUCLC Book Club**

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We had a great time at our first book club gathering on Feb 8th. During our inaugural meeting we selected our first three books to read and discuss over the next few months:

1. *February – Handmaid’s Tale*
2. *March – A Dog’s Purpose*
3. *April – Mad Honey*

We are all looking forward to our reading adventures and time spent together to discuss our literature selections. Read on!

Danny and Deborah Hawkins

### **Requests and Items of Interest**

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#### **Auction Volunteers Needed**

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##### **Mar 23, 30, and Apr 6 Auction Volunteer Sign ups – Join in on the Fun!**

Our church auction on Saturday, April 20, needs volunteers to run smoothly. Shifts are short, with a range of jobs from kitchen help in the morning to beverage servers and silent auction helpers in the afternoon, and spotters in the live auction in the evening. Volunteer sign-ups will be Mar 23, Mar 30 and Apr 6 at 11:00am right after the service. Please see Sara Thomas at the Volunteer Sign up Table near the religious education building to reserve your slot. If you aren’t planning to be at church, please feel free to call her. We appreciate our volunteers without whom the auction couldn’t happen!

#### **Gallery Volunteers Needed**

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The Gallery Committee is still in need of volunteers to help manage the art gallery, mostly to serve as docents. You will be fully trained. Many volunteers have expressed joy at spending some quiet meditative time in the gallery. The shifts are just two hours. Cathy is our Docent

Wrangler, email her at .

## Events of Note

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**Mar 3 – Exhibition opening** from 11 AM until 2 PM in the Tombaugh Gallery.

**Mar 5 – Buddhism 101** is getting a fresh start on Tuesday, March 5th from 2:30 to 3:30pm. Classes are held at Good Sam's. To get directions to the correct room, please contact instructor Reba Montera or Adult Enrichment coordinator Sara Thomas. It's not too late to learn mindfulness!

**Apr 19-20 – Connect with other UUs in the Pacific Western Region.** Our 4<sup>th</sup> Regional Assembly will be held in Denver on April 19 and 20, at the beautiful First Universalist Church. You can attend either in person or online. The keynote address will feature a conversation between our Unitarian Universalist Association President Rev. Dr. Sofia Betancourt and the new President of the United Church of Christ, Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia A. Thompson. There will be inspirational worship, workshops, and a craft room. There will be a reception Friday evening. We will also host a continental breakfast and catered lunch on Saturday. This is a family friendly event, with childcare.

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Courtyard Marriott Hotel Cherry Creek. Sign up for no-host dinner groups Saturday evening to continue the conversations. We hope to connect with you at RA! Register Today at: <https://www.uua.org/pacific-western/calendar/pwr-uua/pwr-threads-connect-stories-inspire>

## The Tombaugh Gallery

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### Tombaugh Gallery Features

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#### Encaustic Art

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The Tombaugh Gallery is presenting a combined show featuring two well known Las Cruces artists, Carrie Greer and Karen Ziebert. Both artists have explored various mediums over the course of their careers but both have discovered the breadth of expression possible with encaustic or working in wax. The artwork is painted with melted pigmented wax or fused to the substrate using a heat source, such as a propane torch. Carrie explains that “the wax calls to me as I enter into a journey with it. . . .” Karen calls encaustic art “My new love.” Both artists have exhibited their work extensively in Las Cruces and throughout the state.

The exhibit opens with an artists reception on Sunday, March 3rd from 11:00 to 2:00. The show runs through March 24th.

The Gallery, located in the Unitarian Universalist Church at 2000 S. Solano Drive, is regularly open

Thursday–Saturday 10am–2pm and Sunday 11:30am–2pm. For details, call the church office at 575-522-7281.

## Regularly Scheduled Activities

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### Every Tuesday

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**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.

### Every Wednesday

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**Caring Conversations** meets on Zoom from 9-10

AM. [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87064121421?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87064121421?pwd=QmNhYVlrUTltK1cxRDhSRVdOU01rdz09)

[pwd=QmNhYVlrUTltK1cxRDhSRVdOU01rdz09](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

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**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.

### Every Friday

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**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?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5755227281?pwd=OEp3RTNkcWNid0tTNHFDNHEzUFNIUT09)

[pwd=OEp3RTNkcWNid0tTNHFDNHEzUFNIUT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5755227281?pwd=OEp3RTNkcWNid0tTNHFDNHEzUFNIUT09)

Meeting ID: 575 522 7281

Passcode: 7777777

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 .

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### **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!

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### **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.

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### **2nd Saturday – UU Crafters**

The UU Crafters Group meets the second Saturday of each month at 1:00 in the Religious Education building. Come join us to learn new crafts, share your projects, and have fun. All are invited, guys, gals, teens, members, non-members, new crafters, and experts. We share project ideas and always learn fun new crafts. In November we will be sharing our projects and learning something new: origami ornaments. Some supplies to bring, if you have these: origami paper, beads, thread or string.

November 11th at 1:00 p.m. Carol Stanfill and Sara Thomas. Questions? Email

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### **3rd Friday – Eating Out**

Our March Eating Out will be March 15th, 5:30 PM at Paisano Cafe, 1740 Calle De Mercado, Las Cruces. Please contact Janet Martinique at to make your reservation by March 13.

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### **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 .

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### **2nd Saturday in Feb, 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.