

The Unitarian
Congregation of Taos
December 2018
Bulletin Board



Sun., Dec. 2	<i>Begin Again in Love,</i> The Rev. Munro Sickafoose
Sun., Dec. 9	Sharing Circle: <i>Guilt/Shame</i>
Sun., Dec. 16	<i>How To Be Happy,</i> The Rev. Gary Kowalski
Wed., Dec. 19	Men's Group, 4:30 p.m.
Wed., Dec. 19	Women's Group, 6:00 p.m.
Sun., Dec. 23	Sharing Circle: <i>Gifts and Giving</i>
Sun., Dec. 30	<i>Burning Bowls Ceremony,</i> Donna Collins

Services & Circles begin at 11 a.m. at the Masonic Lodge, 124 Camino de Santiago, at the intersection with Gusdorf Road.

On My Mind

The Rev. Gary Kowalski

I'm writing this on a November day just before the voting, down in Los Lunas, where we are door-knocking for candidates. Daylight Savings began last Sunday; the sun slips below the horizon earlier now, signaling the onset of winter. The cottonwoods along the Rio Grande are past their peak foliage; but in the low slanting rays of late afternoon, the trees take on a magical, luminescent quality, as though radiating rather than merely reflecting light. This is what happens when the sun dips low and the shadows stretch off toward some vanishing point lost beyond the edge of the canvas. The world seems drenched in amber.

Truthfully, I am no big fan of winter. I hate paying for heat, among other things, and seem to need a little more of it with each passing year. But seeking things to appreciate about aging, about oncoming night, about the southerly tangent of light that skips and grazes off the northern hemisphere, I think of these autumnal five o'clock hours when briefly, the shadows from hay rows in the farmer's field border on the infinite, when oncoming darkness only serves to make the world even more brilliant, brighter than a midsummer's day.

Dori and I are here electioneering. Most of what we do is a gamble, hoping that a leaflet about polling times and places on a stranger's doorknob will somehow matter. Who knows? But the day we arrived at party headquarters, a young troubled woman stepped inside, not seeking to volunteer but asking for a blessing. Few could understand her mix of English and Spanish. She was a distraction, a difficulty for the campaign staff. But I walked close to listen. She'd been having bad dreams, inner traumas. She had psychiatric issues obviously beyond my scope.

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News from the Board

Barbara Scott

The UCOT Board of Trustees met on Nov. 3 to set policy on a few important issues and thought you'd like to know about them. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, feel free to talk to any member of the board.

Emergency Preparedness: Bob Aubrecht, Ken Harold, and I have been working on an emergency-preparedness plan since Cristy Holden and I attended an active-shooter training at the Santa Fe UU. The board concluded that our best policy is to call 911 in all cases of emergency — whether medical, natural, or disruptive. This means that if there's a medical emergency, an ambulance will be sent. We will also keep both west-facing doors open during services so there are alternative exits. Those sitting on the left will exit through the left door, and those on the right will exit through the right door.

Bylaws: Thanks to Emily Gillispie for taking the first stab at rewriting our bylaws, and to the rest of the board who contributed their ideas. We will present them to you for a vote at the annual meeting and will make sure you get a copy beforehand so you can read them in advance of the vote. If you'd like a copy sooner, please ask Emily or me to send you one.

Audio- and video-equipment lending: Recently a UCOT member asked to borrow the AV equipment for a workshop. We were happy to lend the equipment because it benefited not just our member but also the wider community, and it motivated us to write a very simple lending policy. The equipment can be lent, free of charge, with prior Board approval. If any damage occurs, the borrower will be liable for repairs or replacement of damaged or missing equipment. Also, the equipment must be in possession of and operated at all times by a UCOT member or friend who is familiar with it. The borrower may need to compensate this person for their time, at a rate agreed upon between themselves.

On My Mind

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Yet without understanding fully either her chatter or illness (doing a bit of instant-karma ministry), I knew she wanted comfort from somewhere beyond: the kind of solace I get from watching the warm, late afternoon glow on faraway peaks: “I will lift up mine eyes to the hills, whence cometh my help.”

I asked her if she'd like a prayer. We spent a minute or two outside, palms touching. Theology didn't matter, only connection. Whatever I invoked was not God so much as the Light, within and without, that gives us strength to take one more step and guide us on the path. She seemed comforted.

I am glad for that Light. Sometimes I think I can see more of it: in crazy strangers, in door-belling like evangelists for the Good and the True, also blazing out on the underwings of migrating sandhills flying toward the Bosque this season The world flames and shines out on the cusp of solstice. — Gary

Outreach Committee News: The Holy Cross Auxiliary

Linda Aubrecht

Founded in 1937, the Holy Cross Auxiliary was the first hospital auxiliary in the state of New Mexico. It is a federal nonprofit organization whose mission is to render service to the hospital and the community through supportive involvement with patients, family, staff, and visitors.

This is a difficult time for all hospitals, but particularly rural ones. The cost of providing care and the latest equipment needed to do this keeps rising. Four years ago, patients insured by government payors (Medicare and Medicaid) made up about 56-58% of the hospital's business. Today Medicare and Medicaid patients make up 76% of HCH's business. These payors do not cover the cost of providing care. This is the fundamental issue for many small facilities — they are not being paid adequately for the care provided. Given our low volumes, we don't have the economies of scale that helps larger facilities.

The Auxiliary members are well aware of the financial pressure faced by rural hospitals and donate their time to handle a variety of responsibilities at the hospital, including staffing the day surgery desk, operating the wonderful gift shop, and providing comfort measures to the patients and visitors in the Emergency Room. The ER “advocates” support ER staff as

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UU Women's Group

The UU Women's group will meet in December on the 19th at 6 p.m. for a holiday potluck. We will meet on a later Wednesday than usual in order to allow UUs to attend Peace Hanukkah on December 5th, the first Wednesday of the month. An email will be sent to “the list” prior to the 19th with directions to the hostess' home and instructions for pot luck contributions. As always, carpooling can be arranged and women can meet at the Bridge Club or an agreed-upon place to carpool. Our Holiday Potluck is always an enjoyable social event with delicious food! A hostess is needed for this event. If you are willing to host please contact Marsha Fawns at creatings@taosnet.com before December 10th. If no one comes forward to host we will need to cancel or agree to meet at restaurant this year.

UCOT Investment Study Group

The second series of the UCOT investment study group will be in January 2019. We will meet on January 9, 16, 23 and 30 at 3 p.m. at the Aubrecht's. This will be a continuation of the series we held in November 2019. See or call Bob Aubrecht (758-9675) with any questions.

Vegetarian Cooking Workshops

Barbara Scott

Have you thought about becoming a vegetarian? Or maybe you'd just like to make beautiful vegetarian dishes for yourself and others. Now is your chance to learn how to turn healthy into delicious.

During our September 9th Sharing Circle on Food, many expressed the as-yet-unfulfilled wish to become vegetarian. Others just said they wished they were better cooks. So Brenda Clark offered to teach four classes at her home in Los Colonias in the month of January!

Terry and Brenda were lacto-ova vegetarians for 30 years, prior to moving to Taos. Lacto-ova means dairy and eggs are permitted. However, she says, this can be adjusted easily. The Clarks have a daughter-in-law and a grandson who have many allergies to gluten, corn and soy. So the recipes she will share will, if needed, include adjustments.

The classes will be conducted in Brenda's home for a maximum of six people, so sign up early! Cooking and sampling will be done at each session, plus you'll be given a recipe to take home.

Time and day will be announced later, and a sign-up sheet will be available.

Thank you, Brenda, for expanding the Sharing Circle topic and bringing it to those of us who will be lucky enough to attend!

Outreach Committee

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directed, in an effort that allows doctors and nurses to focus on emergency care.

The profits from the Gift Shop are donated to the Hospital. The treasurer of the Auxiliary reported that since 2006 through May of this year, the Auxiliary has donated \$254,500. These funds are used to purchase needed equipment for the Hospital, particularly in the OR and ER. In the present world of medicine, having and maintaining current and necessary equipment is of utmost importance in meeting the patients' needs. Each year The Auxiliary responds to a variety of requests to help our hospital manage some of the department's unmet needs. In the past, Auxiliary donations have helped purchase mammography equipment and later a digital upgrade. This past year, new phlebotomy chairs and otoscopes for the ER were purchased using Auxiliary donations.

The Auxiliary also funds a scholarship program for students to pursue their education. The members of the Holy Cross Auxiliary care deeply about Taos and serve the community with love, expertise, courage and strength.

The Auxiliary is continually looking for new members. Please give this opportunity to serve the community some thought. It is unusual for a community our size to have the breadth and depth of medical care that we enjoy. It is critical that the residents of Taos fully support Holy Cross Hospital!

Music Committee News

Special music on December 16th: Eileen Wiard, vocalist and keyboardist.

Sunday, December 2: *Begin Again in Love* The Rev. Munro Sickafoose

The Judeo-Christian tradition is the taproot from which Unitarian Universalism arose. December 2nd is the beginning of both Hanukkah and Advent seasons, where lamps or candles are lit to mark the celebration of historic renewals and rededications. It is a time of new beginnings, for each of us and for the world. Join us as we renew and rededicate ourselves to living our values in this difficult time.

Happy December Birthday Wishes To:

5 Mimi Owensby 9 David Owensby
20 Martha Grossman 23 Emily Gillispie
26 Gary Kowalski

Sunday, December 6 Sharing Circle: Guilt/Shame

Guilt and shame are often muddled within our psyches. Brene Brown defines the difference between guilt and shame: Guilt is "I am bad," and shame is "I did something bad."

In which situations have you felt shame or guilt? What techniques have you employed to cope with these feelings? What have you done to believe YOU are enough?

Sunday, December 16 *How to Be Happy*

The Rev. Gary Kowalski

"'Tis the season to be jolly!" But there is so much pressure to be happy, not only during the holidays, but year round. What's wrong with you that you're not constantly upbeat and cheerful? Feeling anxious or depressed or sad may feel like a personal failure in this moody season. But mixed feelings are part of being human. This morning, Rev. Kowalski delivers some perspective on reclaiming a bit of the contentment, satisfaction and gratitude that belong to living in this complicated world.

Sunday, December 23 Sharing Circle: Gifts and Giving

In a time of darkness, we turn to rituals in order to renew and regenerate. We tend embers, hoping for a warming fire. We share food and stories. We save seeds, hoping for sustenance. In a time of darkness, we also give gifts—some tangible, some not. At their deepest core, gifts are grace, hope, and gratitude.

First consideration: In a time of need, what was a gift that filled you with joy and hope.

Second consideration: What gift have you given that was meaningful for you as giver and meaningful for the receiver?

Sunday, December 30 Burning Bowls Ceremony

We look back nostalgically at some years. Others, we're just happy to see them end, anticipating that the next year will bring us peace and joy. Despite the shootings in Pittsburgh, Thousand Oaks, and Jefferson-town, Kentucky, not to mention the California forest fires, we can still be grateful about the results of the Nov. 6 election — especially the diversity.

Please join us for our annual Burning Bowl ritual to release the past and anticipate a brighter future.