

The Unitarian
Congregation of
Taos
August 2019
Bulletin Board



Sun., Aug. 4	Service: <i>What to Do When Your World Turns Upside Down?</i> The Rev. Gary Kowalski
Wed., Aug. 7	Women's Group, 6 p.m.
Sun., Aug. 11	Sharing Circle: <i>This I Believe</i>
Sun., Aug. 18	Service: <i>The True</i> The Rev. Munro Sickafoose
Wed., Aug. 21	Men's Group, 4:30 p.m.
Sun., Aug. 25	Annual Transcontinental Picnic

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

August Is an "Exceptional" Month!

This August promises to be very interesting, in that it's going to be quite different from regular months. On Aug. 4, due to double-booking, we'll be meeting in the Masons' ceremonial room. You may never get another such glimpse of history and tradition, plus Gary will be preaching that Sunday. Please enter through the southeast door off the courtyard.

On August 11, the Sharing Circle will be open to everyone, including the public, for a special "This I Believe" program to share your core belief, à la public radio's long-running feature.

And on August 25, we'll be carpooling to Alamosa for the "Transcontinental Picnic" with the Alamosa and Pagosa Springs congregations.

See articles elsewhere in this newsletter for more information.

On My Mind The Rev. Gary Kowalski

I enjoy watching the honeybees circling the Russian Sage covered in late summer purple blossoms. The Sage grows like a weed, but the bees seem to love it.

Of course the flowers and the insects co-evolved for attraction, but is it going too far to speak of love? Biologists now refer to "swarm intelligence." While a single honeybee might not be too brainy (and in fact could not exist in isolation) a colony begins to exhibit self-organizing behaviors that smack of genius.

When temperature fluctuates, the bees collectively adjust their surface-to-volume ratio to regulate exposure to heat or cold. In rain, the bees on the outside of a colony form shingle-like structures to encourage water runoff.

In a book called *Honeybee Democracy*, Cornell Professor of Neurology Thomas Seeley describes the delicate but deliberate negotiations that occur when

a swarm must find a new nesting site; the group "accomplishes this through a process that includes collective fact-finding, open sharing of information, vigorous debating, and fair voting by the hundreds of bees in a swarm that function as nest-site scouts."

Do you think that Unitarian Universalists—or Americans in general—have anything to learn from the bees? When the system is winner-take-all, it seems everybody loses. Without fair voting—or when sound bites substitute for actual debate—the colony is in danger of collapse. The purpose of life is ... making honey?

Kahlil Gibran wrote,

For bees, the flower is the fountain of life;

For flowers, the bee is the messenger of love.

I am sure there is an algorithm or scientific explanation for it, but watching and wondering at these industrious, clever creatures makes me want to slow down and simply rest content in the warmth of an August afternoon.

Bee here now.



Sunday, August 4

What To Do When Your World Turns Upside Down

The Rev. Gary Kowalski

How do we face adversity with hope? Where do we find consolation when a loved one dies? Or how can we help others cope with loss? Where do we find our balance when the world seems to be turning upside down? This morning Gary draws on the Book of Job and on many years of pastoral ministry to provide some guidance in times of trouble and grief.

Sunday, August 18

The True

The Rev. Munro Sickafoose

Part two of a series on the three transcendental properties of being postulated by Plato—the Good, the True, and the Beautiful—and how they relate to us today. This month, I'll share my thoughts on what is True.

SHARING CIRCLES

August 11, *This I Believe*

Beginning in 1951, radio pioneer Edward R. Murrow asked Americans from all walks of life to write essays about their most fundamental and closely held beliefs. NPR picked it up later and produced it for another four years, with Jay Allison as curator.

On Sunday, August 11, we'll each have an opportunity to speak to the others about what we believe. Your essay can be up to five minutes long; no signup necessary. If you just want to speak extemporaneously, that's OK, too.

Listen to the final essay on NPR's "This I Believe," by writer Luis Urrea on paying attention to the world around him. His belief is that "Life is an act of literary creation." Or scroll through the archive to listen to more: [This I Believe Archive](#)

EVENTS

August 25, *Transcontinental Picnic*

The Transcontinental picnic is on August 25, 2019. The location of the picnic had been changed to Cole Park, 506 2nd Street, Alamosa, CO 81101, which is by the river, the south pavilion. Margot will be happy to arrange carpooling. Please call her at (562) 481-6644.

We also need to decide on whether as a congregation we want to bring desserts or salads. Be sure to sign up at the church, and Margot will give you a call to choose a side dish or dessert. It should be an amazing day with a service, lunch, music and the opportunity for yoga at 1 p.m., paddle boarding at 3 p.m., and a concert with the High Vibes, a funk band, at 6 p.m. The fun starts at 11 a.m. I hope lots of you will come and support this event with the Alamosa and Pagosa Springs congregations.

UCOT Women's Group, August 7

We will meet at the Doughty home at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, August 7th, and continue with *Women Rowing North: Navigating Life's Currents and Flourishing as We Age*, by Mary Pipher. We will explore part four of this book.

Directions to Carol's will be sent in an email to the email list, along with details about how to get a ride if needed.

To be added to (or deleted from) the UU Women's Group list, contact Carol Doughty at lcddoughty@gmail.com.

UCOT Men's Group, August 21

The UCOT Men's Group will meet at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, August 21st. We meet regularly on the third Wednesday of each month from 4:30 to 6 p.m. If you'd like to receive monthly notices and directions, contact Terry Surguine to be added to the email list: tsurguine@gmail.com.

Music Committee News



Join Martha for singing practice at 10:30 a.m. on the 1st and 3rd Sundays. All are welcome; attend when you can.



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

4	Mary McPhail Gray
6	Bob Silver
8	Wally Cox
13	Mary Rogers
14	Sally Savage
22	Mya Coursey

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Dream Tree Project Challenges

In 2004 a group of Taos women, deeply concerned about youth who were homeless and needy, began discussing how to create a service for them that would include housing and counseling support. Over time and with a number of generous donations from Taos residents, notably Agnes Martin and Tom Worrell, they bought and renovated a house on La Posta Street and started an emergency youth service that provides rooms, food, and support for a one-night up to 90-day stay. Initially able to house 8 youth, a recent gift of a neighboring house has allowed them to move the administration services out of the shelter and increase the capacity to 12. They have added a therapy room and a medication-dispensing office. They teach life-skills classes on a wide variety of topics and self-sufficiency skills through the youth's assigned chores in cleaning the house and preparing all meals.

The second model that Dream Tree developed is Transitional Living—housed in 8 casitas on-site and increasingly in locations rented by the agency throughout the community. This program requires that the youth work, pursue an appropriate educational goal, and attend at least one two-hour life-skills class a week at the main shelter. The off-site locations are especially helpful in serving adolescent parents. They can remain in this supportive program up to two years if they meet all the requirements.

A third model is Street Outreach, which serves all three northern New Mexico counties and operates out of a van. Supplies of food, clothing, blankets, grooming items, and information about services are provided to youth they find on the streets. They encourage the youth to come in to the shelter, and some eventually do.

The agency recently purchased Ziggy's Frozen Yogurt store in order to increase their income and establish some job-training opportunities. They also operate "The Farm," which is housed on-site in a trailer and produces high-quality greens—solely contracted to Common Fire and two other Taos restaurants.

Dream Tree provides no medical services due to the high cost of such service. They do have a supervising pharmacist who manages the prescription distribution, and they collaborate with a wide variety of social-service agencies. They are able to do a rapid assessment of mental-health needs upon entrance to the programs. Taos Behavioral Health provides counseling to those youth who need it. About half the youth they serve who are under 18 are in state custody and the other half are in family guardianship. They serve youth up to age 24, and the director, Catherine Hummel, reports that an especially needy group are those who are aging out of foster care. The agency's state license requires them to take in any youth who appears at their building in an emergency status—so there are often sleeping bags on the floor until plans can be made.



Hummel reports that they always need donations, especially to supply youth who arrive at their door with no belongings. Her list includes:

- Kitchen supplies and household goods of all kinds (so casita residents and those who are leaving can equip an apartment)
- Jackets, sleeping bags, backpacks and personal-grooming items for new residents
- Nutritious snacks

Hummel also encourages anyone to offer a two-hour life skills class—it can be on any topic that you have information/expertise about; staff will give you a heads up about the residents' probable participation. Dream Tree is located at 128 La Posta Road. Contact them by phone at 758-9595 or on the web at dreamtreeproject.org.

Caravan of Love

José & Vannesa Gonzalez, of Sin Fronteras Nuevo Mexico, spoke to the congregation on Sunday, July 7, along with Bea Balsamo, on the situation at our southern border. José and Vannesa are in the process of collecting provisions for a return trip to Mexico, where they say the need is greatest, as Mexico does not have the resources to handle the migrant flow. The congregation donated a total of \$2,166 toward their efforts. Several people brought requested supplies. It's not too late to donate. They will be leaving on August 5 or thereabouts. In the meantime, you can take your donations to Hinds & Hinds, Storage Unit 49, just north of Smith's, July 15-19 from 5 to 6 p.m. Please mail your contributions to José Gonzalez, P.O. Box 531, Ranchos de Taos, NM 87557. Make your check payable to Sin Fronteras.

They're also looking for people to drive their own vehicles to El Paso so they can transport supplies across the border in private vehicles instead of the U-Haul. They said it would be helpful if people also wanted to volunteer at the shelters a couple of days, to help with and play with the children. Michael Burney and Barbara Scott will be taking their SUV down and will spend a couple of days volunteering if possible. If you're interested in driving or volunteering, either email Barbara at finaleyes@icloud.com or call José at 575-779-6763 or 575-779-2402.

Items Needed:

- o New underwear (children & adult)
- o New or lightly used socks
- o Diapers and wet wipes
- o Backpacks, shoes (children and adult)
- o Tampons, feminine pads, foot powder
- o Dry beans, rice, canned food, cooking oil
- o Toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo & conditioner
- o Bottled water
- o Clorox bleach, Clorox wipes, soap
- o Paper plates, paper cups, plastic utensils
- o Over-the-counter medications (children & adult)

And Especially...

- o Baby bottles
- o Formula
- o Drinking water
- o Bubbles & soccer balls

A note of acknowledgment to the Outreach Committee for initiating our involvement in this. The outrage began at one of their meetings and spread to the rest of the congregation. And thanks again to all of you who donated. We were all proud to be UU's that day. We *can* make a difference in the world!