

The Unitarian
Congregation of
Taos
February 2020
Bulletin Board



Sun., Feb. 2	UCOT Annual Meeting Followed by lunch
Sun., Feb. 9	Sharing Circle: <i>Humility</i>
Thu., Feb. 13	Women's Group, 4 p.m.
Sun., Feb. 16	Service: <i>Sola Scriptura, Sola Fides</i> Rev. Munro Sickafoose
Wed., Feb. 19	Men's Group, 4:30 p.m.
Sun., Feb. 23	Sharing Circle: <i>Change</i>

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 pledge allegiance to the earth on which I stand, and to the environment of which I am a part, one planet in a Process, with soil, water and air like one body, indivisible, with resources to be cherished and protected by all." —Vern Barnett

We ordinarily pledge allegiance to a flag. But do nations even exist, in the same way as people, or frogs, or DNA, or climate? Our highest loyalties are usually to our own families, not necessarily a bad thing. We then extend comradeship and allegiance to friends, neighbors and other close acquaintances. Thinking and living locally can be wise. Can we really care for the Earth without tending our own gardens and backyards first?

Yet suppose the order were reversed? Imagine how our priorities might change if we conceived of ourselves first and foremost as world citizens, rather than as patriotic Americans? What if we envisioned national boundaries the same way satellite images do, as wholly imaginary divisions on a seamless landscape? What if we identified with our mammalian family, the animal kingdom, and the interconnected web of life itself more than with our own species, our own political party, our own religious creed or even more parochial associations?

Kurt Vonnegut once made the distinction between a *karass* and a *granfalloon*. "To understand a granfalloon," he announced, "take the skin off a toy balloon." *Hoosiers* were a good example of a granfalloon. People who supposed they are kin because they happened to be born in Indiana. "The United States," I am beginning to think, might be another granfalloon. Look how our government lied to us, for a generation, about another senseless war in Afghanistan.

Mystics and spiritual masters have always suggested that we widen and expand our scope of belonging. Without forgetting that the most important person is the one you're with, recall that your real

race is the human race. Your real self-interest is tied up with the fate of icecaps and old-growth forests. To use old, metaphoric language, you are a child of God (whatever Henry Louis Gates or Ancestry.com may say!).

To what, or whom, do you pledge allegiance? How far can you extend the circle of your compassion and community? I have far to go, I know. But the Earth and the Milky Way are in the right direction. —Gary

Sunday, February 2
UCOT Annual Meeting

On Feb. 2, we'll discuss the Congregation's business. Please come and make your voices heard and your votes count. If you are not a member but would like to attend the annual meeting, feel free—friends are welcome. If you wish to vote, please speak to Barbara Scott about becoming a member.

Stay for lunch, provided by your board and paid for by your donations and pledges. We'll send out the agenda a couple of weeks beforehand; so if you have any additional items you'd like to address, please call Barbara at 758-4846 or email her at finaleyes@icloud.com.

Sunday, February 16
Sola Scriptura, Sola Fides

On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther posted "95 Theses" on the door of the Wittenberg church; and so began the Protestant Reformation. At the core of Luther's call to action against the corruption infesting the Catholic Church were two principles: *sola scriptura* and *sola fides*. How might those principles guide us today?

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

7	Sang Roberson
12	Margot Coleman
19	Dori Jones
20	Caryle Zorumski

SHARING CIRCLES

February 9, Humility

Humility is the opposite of hubris. Wikipedia describes it as the act of being humble, and the word humble comes from the root word humus, of the earth. It involves suppressing one's innermost desire to shine a spotlight on their lives or the good deeds they're doing. It involves taking a mental step back and having the emotional fortitude and spiritual capacity to not showcase, brag or boast. Or as C.S. Lewis puts it, "True humility is not thinking less of yourself, it is thinking of yourself less."

Humble people can receive a bad rap. Humility is frequently associated with being too passive, submissive or insecure, but this couldn't be further from the truth. In observing the world, we don't see a lot of humility these days. But pride is all over the place. And in light of the upcoming presidential race and the increase in narcissism among our youth, I think it's safe to say that, as a society, we could use a little more humility.

How has humility impacted your life...your relationships with colleagues and/or family? Has it been a current throughout your lifetime?

February 23, Change

What a love/hate relationship we have with change! When our lives are happy and full, we want things to stay just as they are: Like teenagers in love, we can't imagine our feelings ever changing. When life is messy and difficult, we pray that change will come soon but find it hard to believe that it ever will. And in both cases, the inevitable force of change rolls on, introducing some bitter into the sweet of happiness; some peace and joy into the despair.

UCOT Women's Group, February 13

Accommodating concerns over driving at night, we will be holding our monthly meetings on the second Thursday of each month from 4 to 6 p.m.

In February we will continue exploring the book *When Things Fall Apart: Heart Advice for Difficult Times*, by Pema Chödrön, chapters 6 to 10. An email will go out prior to February 13th detailing directions to the hostess's (Stephanie Yoder) home. Chris Westover will facilitate. If you wish to be added to or removed from the email list, contact Carol Doughty, lccdoughty@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.

UCOT Men's Group, February 19

The Men's Group will meet at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 19th. To receive monthly notices and directions, contact Terry Surguine to be added to the email list: tsurguine@gmail.com.

Outreach Committee News

Taos Behavioral Health (TBH)

Mary McPhail Gray

TBH began in 2005 as a volunteer organization of men mentoring boys. It soon grew to also mentor girls, then transitioned to a 501(c)(3) clinical service with counselors and social workers seeing youth, parents, adults, and families. It began seeking donations and grants to support its work.

Repeatedly, Taos agencies and the school system requested additional services, especially as state funding to support behavioral health interventions was cut. TBH learned how to bill insurance companies for part of the services provided—weathering tough decisions by the former state administration.

We currently have over 6,000 clients in our database, and we have served one in three Taos students. We have an MOU with the school system to place clinicians in all Taos schools to provide individual counseling, group work, classroom support, and intervention in crises such as suicide, violence, and grief/loss.

With the demise of Tri-County, we have greatly enhanced our adult outpatient program, as well as increased family therapy. We have three clinicians skilled in treating veterans, a population that continues to increase. We have a curriculum developed and key staff who are ready to launch a residential treatment program for adolescent boys as soon as a suitable building can be located or built.

Requests for our services continue, and we are processing about 20 new clients each month. Our staff of 60 includes clinicians skilled in such interventions as Acudetox, Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing (EMDR), Group Processing, Dialectical Behavioral Therapy, and individual Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. There is an ongoing commitment to further training and skills enhancement in all services. And we always need new, committed board members!

