

The Unitarian
Congregation
of Taos
January 2021
Bulletin Board



Sun., Jan. 3	Service: <i>Perspective</i> Rev. Munro Sickafoose
Sun., Jan. 10	Sharing Circle: <i>Blackbird</i> , the song by the Beatles (via email)
Sun., Jan. 17	Service: <i>Walking on the Earth</i> Rev. Gary Kowalski
Wed., Jan. 20	Men's Group, 4:30 p.m. (on Zoom)
Sun., Jan 24	Sharing Circle: <i>Blackbird</i> (on Zoom)
Sun., Jan. 31	5th Sunday: UCOT Annual Meeting (on Zoom)

The Power of Laughter
Reverend Munro Sickafoose

Laughter is the most generous of balms. It uses no words, yet delivers salvation. Laughter relieves tension and stress, and bathes the brain in endorphins. We need laughter. We laugh because the alternative is unthinkable. We laugh because without laughter our struggles are more painful, more onerous, more relentless. Laughter unites us.

We laugh because to be serious and grim all the time is oppressive, it brings everybody down, and no one wants to be around that. We laugh because laughter is an act of defiance, something we can do that our oppressors can't take away from us. The most powerful thing we can do is laugh at our oppressors! They HATE it when we laugh at them!

We laugh because laughter is so extravagantly HUMAN, so SPECIAL among the animals, so UNIQUE in the universe, and it brings LIGHT into the world. LIGHT comes in many wavelengths, not just those of reason and faith. Can we not shine in more than one frequency? Perhaps the deep frequency of the belly laugh? The high frequency of the giggle?

We cannot forget how to laugh at ourselves! How to laugh in the face of danger and despair. How to die laughing at Death because we know something Death doesn't!

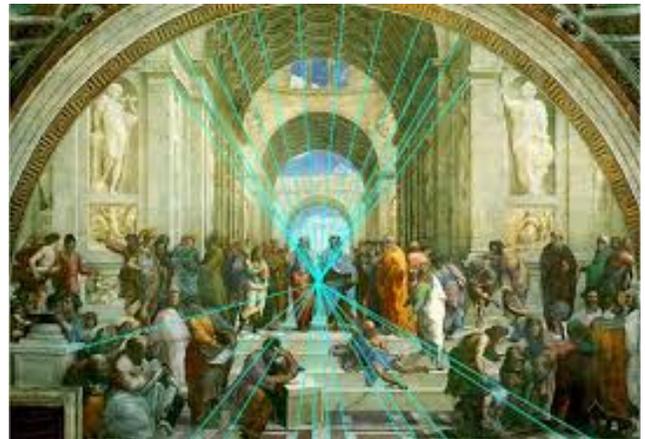
What is it that Death does not know and can never know? Life. Love. Light. Laughter.

So go forth and share with everyone what Death does not know.

UCOT Annual Meeting
Sunday, January 31, 2021

Mark your calendars to save the date, January 31, 2021 (I just like saying that year, since it's not 2020). You'll be asked to vote on the budget, the new slate of Board members, and a second "UCOT CARES About Taos" fundraiser. Both Bette Myerson and I will be stepping down at the end of our terms, on January 31, when Bob Aubrecht and Joe Mazza will step into those positions after the vote. —Barbara Scott

Perspective
Rev. Munro Sickafoose
Sunday, January 3



Linear perspective—the illusion of three dimensions on a flat plane—was introduced into Western art during the Italian Renaissance. It seems like a small thing, but it changed our consciousness in ways we are just now beginning to understand.

See your weekly email for the Zoom link.

Walking on the Earth
Rev. Gary Kowalski
Sunday, January 17

This morning Gary explores walking as a spiritual discipline. "Whoever walks a furlong without sympathy walks to his own funeral," said Whitman, "drest in his own shroud. But whoever walks with mind and feelings outstretched walks in oneness with the infinite."

From labyrinths to pilgrimages to good old-fashioned loping through the great outdoors, walking is an exercise that fortifies both mind and body.

See your weekly email for the Zoom link.

SUNDAY SHARING CIRCLES

January 10 & 24

Thirteen people met over Zoom on Sunday, October 13, to discuss the fate of the Sunday Sharing Circles. With a lot of input, we all decided to keep the online version, via email, for the first session of the month (on second Sundays), and to migrate to Zoom for the second session (on fourth Sundays).

This seemed the best of both worlds. Many of us felt there was real value in writing out one's thoughts to share with others. But a lot of people also wanted to see the faces and hear the voices *behind* the thoughts.

We're also changing the structure a bit. Instead of a script with candle-lighting, multiple questions, and prompts, the facilitator will have a theme for the month. (This was in response to one person who wanted to "go deeper" into a subject.) The facilitator will come up with a quote for that theme on the second Sunday and will email it out as we've been doing. People will send in their email responses by replying in whatever way they're moved or inspired to. We can all read them (I imagine they'll be wildly diverse), and the facilitator will look for a theme, a through line, or a sense conveyed by the bulk of the responses.

Then on the fourth Sunday, that same person will facilitate a Zoom session. They'll take one or two sentences from the written responses (or find new ones) and use those as prompts for the spoken version of the Sharing circle.

We will need someone to keep the time, so if you're comfortable doing that, please let me know.

Five people have already signed up to facilitate, and I imagine once they see how much simpler it is, others will sign on. We all agreed that this will be a work in progress. If something works brilliantly, we'll enlarge it; if it's not working, we'll try alternatives. I expect it to be creative, somewhat experimental, and enjoyable for all who participate.

The months remaining to be filled are May, and July through December.

January's subject will be a song: *Blackbird*, by the Beatles.
—Barbara Scott

UCOT Men's Group

January 20

The UU Men's Group will meet Wednesday, January 20 (Inauguration Day), at 4:30 p.m., via Zoom. To receive a Zoom invitation, contact Dennis Scott at bridge4fun@mac.com.

Music Committee News



January is the birth month of two beloved musicians born centuries apart: Joan Baez and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Baez, born January 9, 1941, will be 80 this January. Mozart, born Jan. 27, 1756, was the genius believed to be the greatest music prodigy ever known. Born Johannes Chrysostomus Wolfgangus Theophilus, the composer preferred Wolfgang Amadeus.

During his short life of 36 years, he composed 24 string quartets, 21 piano concertos, 17 masses, 41 symphonies, 22 operas, four flute quartets, the Gran Partita for winds, four horn concertos, 18 piano sonatas, and more!

He died on December 5, 1791. Google Mitsuko Uchida's superb Mozart performances and prepare to be delighted!

Science vs. Religion

Gary Kowalski has released a newly revised edition of his book *Science and the Search for God: Spirituality for the Twenty-First Century*, on Kindle Direct. Harvard Divinity School Dean William Graham calls it "at once intelligent, humorous, humble, daring and thought provoking." The book leads readers across the startling new cosmos being revealed by astrophysics and quantum theory, showing how a fresh vision of divinity is emerging from the sciences.

Please leave a review on Amazon. Gary looks forward to hearing your comments and reactions!



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

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