

The Unitarian
Congregation
of Taos
November 2021
Bulletin Board



- Sun., Nov. 7 Service: *Día de los Muertos*
Marsha & Chuck Fawns
- Sun., Nov. 14 Sharing Circle: *TBA* (via email)
- Wed., Nov. 17 Men's Group, 4:30 p.m.
- Sun., Nov. 21 Service: *Annual Fall Harvest Feast*
Be Scott
- Sun., Nov. 28 Sharing Circle: *TBA* (on Zoom)

On My Mind
Rev. Gary Kowalski

Have you ever noticed that people look like their dogs? Some folks are yappy and high-strung. Others are mellow and always ready for a belly rub. Somehow temperament gets imprinted on physiognomy. Perpetual worriers look like a Shar Pei with furrowed brow and woeful countenance. Glad-handers resemble collies with an ever joyful glad-to-see-you expression on their faces. Maybe people adopt animals that have personalities aligned with their own. But my theory is that we come to resemble the significant others in our relationships. Whatever (or whoever) claims our day-in-day-out time and attention puts an impression on our lives. So wives look like their husbands and *vice versa*.

Today's news gave some confirmation for this theory. A study tracking 33,000 married couples in Japan and the Netherlands found that decades of living together tended to sync the biomarkers for both partners. Men and women in long-term relationships tended to have similar BMI's. They shared physical traits like high or low blood pressure and triglyceride levels, as well as psychological characteristics such as tendency toward depression or the opposite.

It's not surprising. "For better or worse, for richer or poor, in sickness and in health" are transformative vows, not empty verbiage. Through an alchemy of time and constantly rubbing shoulders, coping with both the joys and inevitable irritations of living in tandem, the two truly do become one flesh.

Ponder this: you are what you love. The object that commands your daily sacrifice and devotion may be the stock market, the next election, your work, your family, or your community. Regardless, that reality will be your Creator and put its stamp upon your body, mind and heart. Love wisely therefore, and be careful what you wish for. You may eventually come to look like your dog, or mirror the thing that you most desire.

—Gary

Day of the Dead
(Día de los Muertos)
Marsha and Chuck Fawns
Sunday, November 7

"Grief is not a disorder, a disease or a sign of weakness. It is an emotional, physical, and spiritual necessity, the price you pay for love. The only cure for grief is to grieve."

— Rabbi Dr. Earl Grollman

"Nothing that grieves us can be called little; by the external laws of proportion, a child's loss of a doll and a king's loss of a crown are events of the same size."

— Mark Twain, "Which Was the Dream?"

This year's Día de Los Muertos service will provide an opportunity to honor and mourn together the special people who have died, as well as all the opportunities and activities we have lost in the past year-and-a-half because of the virus.

Using Zoom in our usual service format, an altar and inspirational readings will prompt our sharing. The major portion of the service will consist of together honoring all we have lost.

A reminder to account for the time change that takes place at 2 a.m. on the day of the service. If you forget, you'll arrive an hour early!

See your weekly email for the Zoom link.

Fall Harvest Feast
Be Scott
Sunday, November 21

The UCOT Fall Harvest Feast was one of our favorite celebrations of the year. Something about gathering in person—face to face, across the table, everyone sharing a feast—made it feel like we were creating our family of choice, also known as loving community. But for the second year in a row, we will not be able to gather in person for food, conversation, and laughter.

(cont'd from p. 1)

However, because Thanksgiving is a time of tradition, UCOT is going to host a Zoom meeting, a virtual feast of memory and tradition. We'll ask you to help serve up two main courses: First you can share something that you're thankful for this year, whether it happened this year or decades ago. The second helping will be the sharing of tradition. Is there a Thanksgiving tradition large or small that you have tried to carry over into your current life?

We will try to overlook the limitations of the current situation and focus instead on the people who matter in our lives: each other.

See your weekly email for the Zoom link.



SHARING CIRCLE

Angels

Sunday, November 14 & 28, 11 a.m.

For information on how to join if you are not already on the Sharing Circle mailing list, contact Dennis Scott at bridge4fun@mac.com.

UCOT Men's Group

November 17

The UU Men's Group will meet Wednesday, November 17, at 4:30 p.m. All who are fully vaccinated are invited to meet in person. Those who wish can join by Zoom. Contact Dennis Scott at bridge4fun@mac.com.

Peace Chanukah

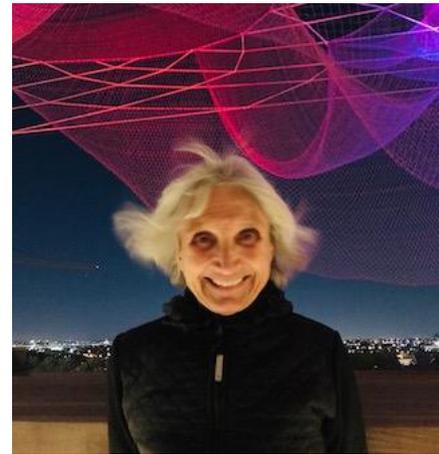
Bette Myerson

All are invited to the 20th Annual Peace Chanukah, Tuesday, November 30, 2021. This interfaith event is free and open to everyone. We will hold the event on Zoom. At the time of print, the registration link is not yet available, but [click](#) here for the publicity flyer with a link that will be active for registration later in the month.



Music Committee News

Gael Minton



UCOT's Martha Grossman

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to have a piano repertoire that encompasses six centuries and several genres of music? Our congregation is blessed with such a unique and talented person: Martha Grossman. She has played for our services for 13 years—adapting to different pianos gracefully—and for the past year-and-a-half, playing on her own Steinway via Zoom.

When asked about her teachers, Martha is full of gratitude and stories of her first teacher from when she was six years old through high school, and her second teacher at the University of Colorado. Frustrated by her inability to take courses outside the Music School curriculum, Martha changed her majors to history and English. After college, she did not play the piano for 20 years while she taught in public schools and served in the Peace Corps in Colombia, South America.

In 1979, through a business connection of her husband, Martha was given a grand piano and began to play again. Her daughter, Naomi, started to play and inspired Martha to begin teaching, often to as many as 20 students at a time.

Of her playing for Unitarian services, Martha says, "I see my part of the service as integral to the message of the minister and it is important that the music I choose bear some relation to that message." She has found that the interest of some Unitarians in contemporary music has given her an opportunity to explore new compositions. Her zest for life and the discipline of practicing at least an hour a day brings a quality to our services beyond words.

Martha, you are a Milagro!

—Gael Minton

UCOT Treasurer's Report

January 1, 2021, through September 30, 2021

| | <u>Income</u> | |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| | <u>Budget</u> | <u>Actual</u> |
| Regular pledges | \$25,500 | \$22,941 |
| Plate/donations | \$1,500 | \$985 |
| LFP pledges | \$1,174 | \$1,565 |
| Total Income | \$28,174 | \$25,491 |

| | <u>Expenses</u> | |
|-------|-----------------|---------------|
| | <u>Budget</u> | <u>Actual</u> |
| Total | \$28,545 | \$23,070 |

| | |
|--|----------|
| Centinel checking account, 9/30/21 | \$81,986 |
| UCOT Cares II donations received | \$ 7,850 |
| UCOT Match | \$ 5,000 |
| UCOT Cares II distributions..... | \$12,850 |
| Total short- and long-term reserves..... | \$81,986 |
| 2021 operating reserve..... | \$19,000 |
| Net long-term reserve | \$62,986 |

As you can see, our actual pledge amount received is \$2,559 less than the pledge budget. Thank you for paying your 2021 pledge amount by the end of the year if not sooner!

Sincerely,
Joe Mazza, UCOT Treasurer



UCOT Board Members Needed for 2022

It is that time of the year when we need to recruit two new Board members for the next set of terms beginning in January 2022.

By way of background, Margot Coleman has announced that she will leave the Board at the end of her current term. I want to thank Margot for her hard work as Secretary of the Board as well as her many contributions to the Board's work over the past several years.

There is also an at-large Board position which has been vacant during 2021 after Barbara Scott completed her term as President in January 2021.

Board member terms are two-year commitments, although we have had a recent practice of asking new Board members to make a commitment to two terms—a total of four years on the UCOT Board.

Following is the basic job description for Board members:

- Attend monthly Board meetings usually set for a Saturday morning from 10 AM to 12 noon.
- Take on a specific assignment as a Board member.
- Act as points of contact between the members of UCOT and the Board.

As a small, emerging Unitarian congregation, UCOT relies on the time, talents, and energies of its members to take on responsibilities for the ongoing work of the Congregation. Without your willingness to help with the administration and governance of UCOT, we would not be able to continue our mission. Please consider becoming a Board member. The next terms begin in January 2022 after the annual meeting.

I will be happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have as you think about becoming a Board member of UCOT.

Bob Aubrecht, President, UCOT
575-770-0280, aubrecht@taosnet.com

The President's Corner

Bob Aubrecht

Like many of you, I have learned to adjust to Zoom as an important way to maintain connections as we have been forced to navigate COVID-19 over the past 18-plus months. I have thought about how we have adapted (or not adapted) to Zoom for meetings, UCOT services and Circles, as well as other gatherings. For some of our members, Zoom has been a challenge to the point that they are not comfortable with the loss of personal contact. For others, Zoom has been a necessary evil to be tolerated until COVID-19 conditions improve to the point where in-person meetings, social events, and celebrations are possible.

I would like to put the technology of Zoom and Facetime in a broader context. Long before I was born, the primary ways in which people communicated were in person or by writing letters. Thanks to the advance of technology, the telegraph, developed by Samuel Morse, became a way to communicate—over long distances and much faster than had been possible via the Postal Service. It did not take long for the next advance—the telephone, invented by Alexander Graham Bell in 1876—to become a dominant way in which people communicated, either across the country or across the street.

As I grew up in the late 1940s and 1950s I became accustomed to using the telephone for regular communications with friends and relatives. We never thought much about the telephone being “new” or different. The phone was one of the ways in which we communicated, especially during teenage years.

The next steps in this evolution were the development of the cell phone, along with the internet. Suddenly, we were in this world of instant communication: emails and, later, texts and selfies. By and large, we seemed to adapt to our cell phones and internet accounts, making use of the advantages and putting up with the hassles and inconveniences of 24/7 communications.

My point in this brief history is to suggest that Zoom and Facetime are the next logical steps in this process of defining how we communicate. Rather than seeing these new technologies as the “evil empire,” I look at them as tools that allow us to deal with the complexities and challenges of COVID-19. Last spring and summer, as we were in the early stages of widespread vaccinations, the possibility of in-person events—social get-togethers, services,

and Circles—seemed just around the corner. Then the Delta variant took off across the country and the world. The needs for social distancing, masks, and caution became important, leading the Board to reconsider in-person events. Zoom again became the best way to maintain all sorts of contacts and events—safely. I don't know how long we will remain in this current pattern—coping with COVID-19 and its serious effects. I DO know that we are all in this together. It seems to me that “being together” in this era of COVID-19 is a challenge and that we can take advantage of Zoom and Facetime to help get us through.

The UCOT Board has continually monitored the COVID-19 data for both New Mexico and Taos County, as well as being mindful of the guidelines of the NM Department of Health, the CDC, and the UUA. We have chosen to continue Zoom services and Circles for the near future as the best way to balance the needs for maintaining the relationships and connections of the Congregation with the concerns for the health and well-being of our members. We are very aware that we are a senior congregation with the health risks and considerations of that age group. It is our plan to continue with a careful and thoughtful approach in the coming months.



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 7 Stephanie Yoder
- 12 Diane Ainsworth
- 18 Jane Starks