

The Unitarian
Congregation
of Taos
August 2022
Bulletin Board



- Sun., Aug. 7 Service: *Interdependence and the Toltec Wisdom of Don Miguel Ruiz*, Rev. Jeanne Montclair (in person)
- Sun., Aug. 14 Sharing Circle: *Quality of Life in a Catastrophe* (on Zoom)
- Wed., Aug. 17 Men's Group, 4:30 p.m. (on Zoom)
- Sun., Aug. 21 Service: *So the People May Live*, Rev. Munro Sickafoose (in person)
- Sun., Aug. 28 Sharing Circle: Open Topic (in person)

On My Mind
Rev. Gary Kowalski

Each August, we toss an inflatable mattress down by the bottom of the driveway to lie out under the stars and look for meteors. There will be a full moon when the Perseids peak this summer on August 11-12, reducing visibility, but who can resist a show when the admission is free?

Meteor showers are best seen out of the corner of your eye. That's where the retina's "light detectors" are located. That's also where life's flashes of brilliance and radiance usually occur, not directly in the line of sight, but obliquely, on the borders of conscious awareness.

Meteors descend every night, not in downpours but in a continuous gentle rain of heaven misting earthward. If we could retrain our vision, we would notice them more often. Ephemeral and incandescent, these celestial visitors remind us that eternity spills and shimmers like quicksilver. Pay attention to what is fleeting, they seem to say. Soften your focus. Adjust your eyes to darkness. Rest your body on the earth. What you are looking for is glimpsed, not seen.
-Gary



Upcoming Attractions

On September 4, Gary will be doing a "Question Box" sermon. It's not too soon to be thinking ahead. Are there topics, questions, themes, issues that you would like to hear addressed? Please send your suggestions to Gary (gary.kowalski@gmail.com) by August 28 to give him a week to ponder and prepare.

**Interdependence and the
Toltec Wisdom of Don Miguel Ruiz**
Rev. Jeanne Montclair
Sunday, August 7

Don Miguel Ruiz's book *The Four Agreements* outlines a mini manifesto for living a spiritual life of integrity within one's community. The four carefully chosen statements Ruiz calls agreements are profoundly simple directives with, if followed, tremendous transformational power. To unleash this power, or even Divine power, we must agree to follow fullhearted intentions. Thus our power to transform lies in our willingness to consciously choose to be our best selves, in all circumstances, and commit to actions and intentions to do so. It is easiest to be our best when with like-minded, loving, and affirming individuals. In this day and age, where even the best of us can sink pretty low, it is worth a shot to aim high.

We will meet in person for this Service.

So the People May Live
Rev. Munro Sickafoose
Sunday, August 21

There are lots of questions simmering these days: Who or what is a person? Who are The People? Who has a right to the gifts of existence? What are we willing to sacrifice for the greater good? How do we give as much or more than we take? Posing the questions is just the beginning.

We will meet in person for this Service.

Scam Alert – Again!

Beware fake emails purporting to come from our ministers asking for money or "favors." Scammers create phony g-mail accounts using addresses like "pastorgary@gmail" or "reverendsickafoose@gmail." Our real ministers will never ask you for any gifts in this way. Do not respond to scammers. Delete these messages and mark them as spam. Be smart and stay safe.

SHARING CIRCLES*

Quality of Life in a Catastrophe

August 14

How do you approach and maintain your quality of life in the face of Covid, war in Ukraine, families starving in Africa, mass shootings even on July 4th, a polarized nation, and an excruciating climate crisis? Do the material things we own matter as much in our quality of life as the ownership we take for our thoughts and actions? Is quality of life a goal or a means to an end? What enhances quality of life for you?



Open Topic – Each in Turn

August 28

Using a virtual “talking stick,” each person can speak in turn on whatever is in their hearts or minds in order to share with others something that is relevant to them in the moment.

**The first Sharing Circle of the month will continue on Zoom, but the second will be held in person.*

UCOT Men’s Group

August 17

The UU Men’s Group will meet Wednesday, August 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](#).



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

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Music Committee News

Gael Minton

The 59th Annual [Taos School of Music \(TSM\) Chamber Music Festival](#) is underway with three faculty concerts and four young artists concerts remaining.

The 19 Young Artists/YA — from 18 to 22, comprising 17 string players and two pianists — are already celebrated performers who are completing their advanced musical education in the United States. Here in Taos, for eight weeks, they play chamber music works they have never played before with musicians they have just met.



TSM Young Artists 2022

Tzu-Wei Jack Huang, one of the cellists in this summer’s cohort, from Taiwan, played with the Asian Youth Orchestra in 2015 and appeared in Ruby Yang’s short documentary [In Search of Perfect Consonance](#).

In [this short video](#) Tzu-Wei speaks about himself and plays a transcription of a Brahms Lieder.

Tzu-Wei has played Bartok’s String Quartet No. 2 and Dvorak’s String Quartet No. 10. In his words, “TSM is wonderful in terms of the close relationship between faculty and young artists. We dine together and have coaching every day, including weekends. The level of intensity is among the highest in the U.S. I would say this is the only place that allows musicians to spend so much time carving a single composition.”

After being accepted to TSM, each YA creates a video for the faculty and students. This is violinist [Riana Heath’s intro video](#).

Every summer, the TSM YAs exemplify astonishing ensemble sensitivity, sonority, and vitality. I hope you will catch at least one of their concerts.