

The Unitarian
Congregation
of Taos
October 2022
Bulletin Board



Sun., Oct. 2	Service: <i>Liberal Religious Community</i> , Rev. Munro Sickafoose (in person)
Sun., Oct. 9	Sharing Circle: <i>Truth</i> (in person)
Sun., Oct. 16	Special Program: <i>Agriculture, Food Resilience and Community in Taos</i> (in person)
Wed., Oct. 19	Men's Group, 4:30 p.m.
Sun., Oct. 23	Sharing Circle: Open Topic (in person)
Sun., Oct. 30	Service: <i>Who Are We?</i> Rev. Munro Sickafoose (in person)

On My Mind
Rev. Gary Kowalski

I just returned from my 50th high school reunion. It was great to see the handful of folks who remain close (if physically distant) friends after all these years. Most faces were a blur, however. I never really tried to maintain those ties. Why did I let them lapse?

Studies show that it gets harder to make friends as we age. Research also indicates that at least a quarter of Americans say they have no one—not a single person—in whom they can confide. The pandemic only deepened this sense of loneliness and social isolation.

For this reason, it was great to see so many new faces last month when I spoke at the Unitarian Congregation of Taos. Half the attendees, roughly, were newcomers. As masks are coming off, folks are coming out of their cocoons, ready to reconnect with other people. In our Sharing Circles, most of our newcomers say that what they are seeking is community—more authentic relationships with kindred souls.

From the experience of my reunion, I know it's hard to break the ice. It's easiest to chat up the old familiars and avoid the harder conversations with relative strangers. It takes effort. But that is the role you have chosen as Unitarian Universalists: to provide a ministry of hospitality and inclusion for all who walk through our doors.

In October, my co-minister Munro Sickafoose will be speaking on the work of building community and will be facilitating a welcoming session for those new to our congregation. (See this newsletter for more details.) But remember, the task of saying "*hola, bienvenidos*" belongs to all of us. Could you invite a new member to coffee? Encourage them to check out your men's group? A personal invitation—a phone call, a note or an email—means so much.

The Unitarian Congregation of Taos is a warm and congenial haven for so many who are free spirits. But that is an achievement, not something to take for granted. So talk to someone you don't know well. Reach out to that person who looks lost or shy.

Go outside your comfort zone and extend a greeting to that new arrival to Taos. Please do your part to keep this a loving and accepting religious home for all who step inside.

—Gary

Liberal Religious Community
Rev. Munro Sickafoose
Sunday, October 2

It is often said that Unitarian Universalism is a covenantal religion, which is to say that our concern is not so much with what we believe as with how we agree to treat each other. But our covenants are grounded in our faith in humanism and the liberal tradition, and those beliefs are important for us as Unitarian Universalists.

We will meet in person for this service.

**Agriculture, Food Resilience
and Community in Taos**
Fifth Sunday Program
Sunday, October 16

The October "5th Sunday" Program will be held this month on the 16th and will continue with the theme of "Agriculture, Food Resilience and Community in Taos." Our two guest speakers will be David Gilroy, Conservation Educator currently working with Taos Soil & Water Conservation District programs, and Chris Bergener, a farmer in Taos for 10 years and a member of the Taos Farmers' Market Board of Directors. He is co-owner with his wife, Fiona, of Copperpot Farm.

We will meet in person for this program.



Who Are We?
Rev. Munro Sickafoose
Sunday, October 30

A plan is in the works for a special session on October 30 in which Rev. Munro will talk about what it means to be a member of the Unitarian Congregation. He'll include the history of Unitarianism, the joining of Unitarian with Universalism, the history of our congregation, and the mission and principles by which we abide.

If you're already a member, refresh and renew this rich history. If you're new to Unitarianism or just to UCOT, learn more about the religion and about this particular congregation. More information will be forthcoming as we shape the program.

SHARING CIRCLES*

Truth
October 9 • In Person

Truth commonly means correspondence to facts. It has to do with reality, actuality, and honesty. But is the truth always knowable? Is truth always mandatory, wise, or advisable? There are many ways to avoid or compromise telling the truth. Silence and/or withholding parts of the truth come to mind.

In the Sharing Circle, let's tell our personal stories of grappling with the truth.

Open Topic – Each in Turn
October 23 • In Person

Using a virtual "talking stick," each person can speak in turn, sharing whatever is in their hearts or minds in the moment.

We will meet in person at the Bent Lodge for both Sharing Circles. Masks are optional.

UCOT Men's Group
October 19

The UU Men's Group will meet Wednesday, October 19, 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](#).



The 2023 UCOT Pledge Drive
Set for September

Note: This looks like old news, but it's very relevant. Somehow this little article fell through the cracks for last month's newsletter.

The Finance and Stewardship Committee will hold UCOT's annual pledge drive for 2023 in September and October. As in previous years, Joe Mazza, UCOT's Treasurer will mail out a pledge packet to each UCOT member. The packet will include an introductory letter, a preliminary budget for 2023, a pledge form and a return envelope.

A member of the Finance Committee or another volunteer will contact you individually to ask for your pledge and answer any questions you may have. The other purpose of these personal contacts is to ask you if you have any suggestions, concerns or questions about UCOT as we prepare for 2023.

Please plan to return your 2023 pledge to Joe Mazza by October 15, 2022, allowing Joe to prepare a draft budget for next year. A key starting point of the 2023 budget is the total amount of pledges to support UCOT in the coming year. The Board will then present the final budget for your approvals at the UCOT annual meeting in January 2023.

Thanks in advance for your financial support of UCOT as we move forward. Without your continued generosity UCOT could not continue to be the spiritual community it is.

Bob Aubrecht
President, UCOT



OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

- 4 Gael Minton
- 26 Dianne Frost
- 27 Michael Burney
- 27 Robert Spillers
- 31 Marsha Fawns