

The Unitarian  
Congregation  
of Taos  
**February 2023**  
Bulletin Board



Sun., Feb. 5	Service: <i>Better Together</i> Rev. Gary Kowalski
Sun., Feb. 12	Sharing Circle: <i>Belonging</i>
Wed., Feb. 15	Men's Group, 4:00 p.m.
Sun., Feb. 19	Service: <i>A Foreign Country</i> Rev. Munro Sickafoose
Sun., Feb. 26	Sharing Circle: <i>Open Topic</i>

***On My Mind***  
**(with apologies to Robert Frost)**  
**Rev. Gary Kowalski**

"Some say the world will end in fire, others say in ice." But the end of the world isn't coming – not tomorrow, or next year, or on any fixed date.

Rather, the world ends every time we dehumanize the stranger, as we close our hearts against caring for the neighbor, as we distance ourselves from the earth and her creatures. The world ends as we withdraw from relationships, avoid intimacy, cultivate indifference. The heaviness of silence, the words of kindness unspoken, the note not written and phone call never made: these are the death rattles of a world shutting down.

Yet the future is continually beginning as we expand the circle of compassion, widen the definitions of family, expand the household of mutuality, honor the soil and plant the seeds of hope. Volunteering, committing, engaging, partnering. The hum of conversation and the noise of dialogue – and, yes, the clash of voices in honest debate – these are the sounds of the future asking how to unfold.

Whether the world ends, or how, or when, then, is really up to us.

"From what I've tasted of desire,  
I hold with those who favor fire  
But if it had to perish twice  
I think I know enough of hate  
To say that for destruction ice  
is also great and would suffice."

– Gary

**UCOT Men's Group**  
**February 15**

The UU Men's Group will meet in person on Wednesday, February 15, at 4:00 p.m. Contact Chuck Fawns for location (kyspirit@taosnet.com).

***Better Together***  
**Rev. Gary Kowalski**  
Sunday, February 5, 11 a.m.

As America is recovering from a pandemic, it is also coping with an epidemic of loneliness. The consequences are many, from shortened life spans to an increase in psychiatric admissions. What are the causes and what are the cures for the social isolation and disconnection that afflicts our society? And how can the Unitarian Congregation of Taos be part of the solution? As always, Gary welcomes hearing your comments and your personal experiences as he formulates his thoughts. A talkback will follow the service, with lunch afterward at Guadalajara Grill southside for anyone interested.



***A Foreign Country***  
**Rev. Munro Sickafoose**  
Sunday, February 19, 11 a.m.

"The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there," wrote L.P. Hartley in his 1953 novel *The Go-Between*. Two years earlier, William Faulkner wrote, "The past is never dead. It's not even past," in his novel *Requiem for a Nun*. History and our relationship to it is complex, and shapes our relationship to the present and the future. Let's explore some ideas about that relationship.

## SHARING CIRCLES

### *Belonging*

February 12 • 11 a.m.

Our sense of belonging has been challenged by the pandemic, which seems to be winding down in slow fits and starts. After spending so much time alone, it may require patience and practice to cultivate the sociability that supports a sense of belonging. For many of us, UCOT provides an important place to practice this ability and then take it into our everyday lives. Of course our present challenges with belonging may track back to difficult experiences of being excluded earlier in life. Where are you in your life presently with regard to this foundational quality, and how did you get here?

### Open-Topic Sharing Circle

February 26 • 11 a.m.

Passing a talking stick, each person can speak in turn about anything on their heart or mind (or may choose to pass). We listen and speak from the heart. All expressions are held in confidence. There is no cross talk, response to other's sharing (such as feedback or suggestions), or obvious reactions by facial expression, vocalizations of sympathy, etc. In other words, this is not a discussion or therapy group but rather a sacred space we create together in which all are safe to feel, access, and express deep feelings and perceptions without concern of any response or evaluation from others.

### Take Climate Action

#### A Note from

#### Gary Kowalski and Chuck Doughty

New Mexico's legislature is in session January 17-March 18. This is the season to contact your representatives to craft policies that preserve our natural environment, shift our economy toward renewable energy and protect the air, water and soils on which our more-than-human world depends. Consider signing up for notifications on pending legislation. Conservation Voters of New Mexico, Sierra Club Rio Grande Chapter, Animal Protection of New Mexico, and Interfaith Power & Light are all good sources of information. [You can find your legislator here](#) and contact them to express your views. Make your voice matter.

FYI, [here's a letter signed by NM faith leaders](#), including UCOT's ministers Gary Kowalski and Munro Sickafoose.

## Music Committee News

Gael Minton

Celebrate this month with woodwind musicians and composers. It is rare in Taos to hear full a woodwind quintet. The renowned Dorian Woodwind Quintet (formed in 1961) performed with the Taos Chamber Music Group around 2008. Take a look at [this list](#) of their most performed works, and listen to the Dorian performing Johann Sebastian Bach's [Little fugue in G minor](#) (5 minutes).



*The Dorian Woodwind Quintet*

Imani Winds (formed in 1997) is another exceptional quintet. Enjoy Brazilian Heitor Villa-Lobos' [Quinteto em forma de chôros](#) (10 minutes).

And this sparkling performance of Jacques Ibert's [Trois Pièces Breves](#) for woodwind quintet is performed by the Diamant Woodwind Quintet (2018), Korean Kumho Young Artist Series.

Finally, a favorite of mine, Johannes Brahms' [Serenade No. 1 in D Major Nonet for Strings & Woodwinds](#) (46 minutes). I have heard this piece live in Boston (Winsor Music, 2004) and with Music from Angel Fire musicians (2010). Here is a 2020 performance by the Israeli Chamber Project.

Enjoy this concert!



## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 12 Margot Coleman
- 19 Dori Jones
- 20 Caryle Zorumski