

The Unitarian
Congregation
of Taos
March 2023
Bulletin Board



- Sun., Mar. 5 Service: *Emerging from Winter*
Rev. Jeanne Montclair
- Sun., Mar. 12 Sharing Circle: *Mixed Blessings*
- Wed., Mar. 15 Men's Group, 4:00 p.m.
- Sun., Mar. 19 Service: *Now I Become Myself*
Rev. Gary Kowalski
- Sun., Mar. 26 Sharing Circle: Open topic

The Third Smooth Stone
Rev. Munro Sickafoose

James Luther Adams was the foremost UU theologian of the 20th century. He helped frame liberal religion with the metaphor of five smooth stones, a metaphor that comes from the Biblical account of David picking five smooth stones for his sling before going up against Goliath. In January, I wrote about the second smooth stone, and continue this month with the third: *Religious liberalism affirms the moral obligation to direct one's effort toward establishment of a just and loving community.*

As a society, we can disagree about what is just — what is morally right and fair — and probably always will. Conceptions of rightness vary across cultures and political orientations; but even so, there is wider agreement than there appears to be. Prohibitions against murder, theft, coercion, and lying are universal. And it does seem that a sense of fairness is innate in humans and other primates. Even a chimpanzee knows when it gets unequal treatment from its peers.

A loving community is simply one that cares about those in it. And that brings us to the reason the third stone is perhaps the hardest: Who is included in the community? Those who disagree with us? Those who do not believe as we do? Look like us? Act like us? Are justice and fairness reserved only for those in our particular group? The third stone tells us no. The ideal is that all humans are included in the community. Adams tells us that this is no ethereal abstraction, but a goal to be achieved through the hard work of sacrifice, forgiveness, redemption, and reconciliation. Work that is messy, practical, and frequently unsatisfying. Work that we do for its own sake, knowing that the circle can always be cast wider than it is.



***Emerging from Winter,
a Time to Celebrate***
Rev. Jeanne Montclair
Sunday, March 5, 11 a.m.

Purim has been called “The American Jewish Mardi Gras.” This Holy Day, celebrated in Jewish tradition since the second century, shares similarities with ancient Babylonian New Year Celebrations, and today’s Carnevale and Mardi Gras celebrations. As one of the three major “Abrahamic” religions, Judaism’s original influence is still experienced today in Christian and Muslim religious practice. Exploring a lineage of tradition, story, celebration, and the very human need to occasionally cut loose from social, moral and identity norms, let’s shake off the Winter blues in preparation for a Spring renewal.



Now I Become Myself
Rev. Gary Kowalski
Sunday, March 19, 11 a.m.

For women’s history month, Gary honors the life and art of 20th-century poet May Sarton (who some claim as a Unitarian Universalist but who always resisted labels or categories in her quest for personal truth). “We have to dare to be ourselves, however frightening or strange that self may prove to be.”

SHARING CIRCLES

Mixed Blessings March 12 • 11 a.m.

The yin/yang nature of reality causes most events in life to be nuanced rather than clearly “good” or “bad.” According to a national study, 70% of lottery winners end up broke, and a third go on to declare bankruptcy. This counterintuitive outcome of what would seem a blessing illustrates the truth that many – if not most – experiences in life are not what they first appear. As the ancient Chinese sages taught, everything contains the seed of its opposite within it, and in fact depends on that opposition to exist. There can be no dark without light, hot without cold, etc. How have you seen this at work in your life? How can we use this insight to respond to events and experiences? How could this knowledge affect our equanimity in living?

Open-Topic Sharing Circle March 26 • 11 a.m.

Passing a talking stick, each person can speak in turn about anything on their hearts or minds (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 others’ 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.

UCOT Men’s Group March 15

The UU Men’s Group will meet in person on Wednesday, March 15, at 4:00 p.m. An email will be sent as a reminder. Contact Chuck Fawns (kyspirit@taosnet.com) if you are not already on the men’s group email list and would like to be.



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 6 Gyana Pendleton
- 22 Jim Schultz
- 23 Bob Van Diest

Music Committee News Gael Minton

My oboist friend Peggy Pearson’s voice “Everything is better with strings,” rings loud in my head. Sometime I will feature just strings. This month reading Tolstoy short fiction, I went searching for a new Beethoven Kreutzer Sonata performance and found [violinist Patricia Kopatchinskaja \(46\) playing with pianist Fazil Say \(2013\)](#). She is one outstanding string player!

After the sonata I was drawn to a 2015 concert of the [Beethoven Violin Concerto in D Major](#).



Screen shot 1st movement of the Beethoven Violin Concerto

[Next to an NPR Tiny Desk \(Home\) Concert](#) with more Beethoven and a piece by George Johann Carl Antheil, an American avant-garde composer (1900-59).

And finally, a [26-minute film, A Day in the Life of Patricia Kopachinskaja](#). She is Moldovan with professional musician parents. Her family fled to Vienna when she was 12. She now lives in Switzerland, married to a neurologist, and they have a young daughter.

This is a lot of listening, almost two hours. Sample and choose what moves you. I think you will be enchanted and amazed by Patricia Kopatchinskaja.



UU 101
Learning About Our Faith for Everyone
March 5, 12, 19



Are you new to The Unitarian Congregation of Taos? New to Unitarian Universalism? Or are you a longstanding member interested in sharing with others how you came to call yourself a Unitarian Universalist? Maybe you are interested in the history and rituals of our faith.

Join us for UU 101, a class for visitors and new and established members. This class will allow you to share your personal search for truth and meaning, learn about our faith's deep history, and how you can connect deeply with UCOT while continuing your search for truth and meaning within our faith community.

UU 101 is a three-session class. The first session will be in person at the Bent Lodge on Sunday, March 5, at 9:30 a.m. This session will be led by Sara Sautter and will focus on you and your personal spiritual search. The second session, Sunday, March 12, at 4:00 p.m. via Zoom, will be led by Rev. Gary Kowalski and will feature the history of Unitarianism and Universalism from ancient times to the present day. Our third and final session will take place in person at Bent Lodge at 9:30 a.m., March 19, led by Sara Sautter. The final session will focus on our faith community, its history, governance and how you can become involved.

Interested? Click [here](#) to enroll and let us know you will be coming.

Rev. Gary Kowalski has been co-minister of the Unitarian Congregation of Taos since 2015. A graduate of Harvard College and the Harvard Divinity School, he has served congregations as an ordained minister since 1982.

Sara Sautter is a Credentialed Religious Educator in the Unitarian Universalist faith. She has served UU congregations for 30 years.

UCOT Book Club
Sara Sautter

Thanks to those who were able to join us at our inaugural meeting of the UCOT Book Club. We had a lively discussion of *The Man Who Died*, by DH Lawrence. And plenty of laughs about the trippy storyline.

We decided to try a new meeting time – 10:30 a.m. on the fourth Thursday of each month. Gael will be contacting the library to see if we can meet there. More on that later. We planned a not-set-in-stone and varied reading list. The list includes fiction, nonfiction, a classic, and science fiction. We hope it helps us stretch and explore. Upcoming titles include the following:

February 23: **Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption**, Stephen King (fiction).

March 23: **Kinship: Belonging in a World of Relations**, John Hausdoerffer, Robin Kimmerer, Gavin Van Horn (nonfiction).

April 27: **Bewilderment**, Richard Powers (science fiction)

May 25: **An Inconvenient Apocalypse**, Wes Jackson and Robert Jensen (nonfiction)

June 29: **White Oleander**, Janet Fitch (fiction)

July 27: Willa Cather (work not yet selected)

August 24: **Heart of Darkness**, Joseph Conrad (classic fiction)

This is an open group with all invited. Click [here](#) for a flyer with more detail.

