

The Unitarian
Congregation
of Taos
September 2023
Bulletin Board



Sun., Sep. 3	Service: <i>Oppenheimer</i> , Rev. Gary Kowalski
Sun., Sep. 10	Sharing Circle: <i>Resilience</i>
Sun., Sep. 17	Service: <i>Embracing Our Rich and Complicated World</i> Rev. Munro Sickafoose
Tue., Sep. 19	UCOT Women's Lunch, 12:15 p.m.
Wed., Sep. 20	UCOT Men's Group, 4:00 p.m.
Sun., Sep. 24	Special Guest Judith Jeyna speaks
Thu., Sep. 28	UCOT Book Group, 10:30 a.m.

Liberal Patriotism
Rev. Munro Sickafoose

A ministerial colleague recently pointed out that liberal religion and liberal politics are not the same thing, and that we have recently come to conflate them. This has made it harder for us to maintain the political and class diversity that once inhabited our pews. Even a decade ago, you could still count on the presence of a few liberal Republicans and the more conservative centrists in our congregations. Alas, tribalism has increasingly driven us into polarized echo chambers, where ideas have become unacceptable just because the other side favors them. One casualty of this development has been the abandonment of patriotism as a liberal value, since patriotism is now perceived to be right wing.

To be patriotic simply means a love for one's country. Patriotism should not be confused with nationalism. Patriotism is our devotion to the country as a whole — including all the people who reside within it — whatever their race, gender, creed, or origin. Nationalism refers to devotion to only one group of people over all others, and this is the false patriotism being promoted by the right.

In "Letter from Birmingham Jail," Martin Luther King Jr. describes "nationalist groups" as being "made up of people who have lost faith in America." George Orwell described patriotism as "devotion to a particular place and a particular way of life." He contrasted that with nationalism, which he described as "the habit of identifying oneself with a single nation or other unit, placing it beyond good and evil and recognizing no other duty than that of advancing its interests." In other words, one is about love, the other is about power. (This is how we tell the difference!)

Neither liberal religion nor liberal politics can afford to cede patriotism to the right or the nationalist movements in America. Love of country is one of the few things that can bring our diversity together, and that love must also point us toward our highest ideals as a country. This does not mean we adopt a false patriotism blind to our history and our prob-

lems, but patriotism as an inclusive dimension of our faith that guides us forward.

Oppenheimer
Rev. Gary Kowalski
Sunday, September 3, 11 a.m.

Everyone is talking about the film, its director Christopher Nolan, and its box office gross. Yet very few of the pundits or critics have tackled the dreadful question of how to live in the shadow of the mushroom cloud that Oppenheimer and his scientific collaborators bequeathed to the world. This morning Gary shares thoughts on the necessity and practicality of creating a nuclear free planet. Bring your own ideas. A talkback will follow his sermon.

***Embracing Our Rich
and Complicated World***
Rev. Munro Sickafoose
Sunday, September 17, 11 a.m.

What an amazing and complex world we live in! When I look back at the changes that have occurred in my lifetime, I'm struck by how deep and far-reaching those changes have been, and how challenging they have been for us as individuals and as a society to integrate. I'll share some thoughts on meeting those challenges.



SHARING CIRCLE

Resilience

September 10, 11 a.m.

“Our greatest glory is not in never falling but in rising every time we fall.” — Confucius

Resilience refers to the ability to cope with whatever life throws at you. A resilient person works through challenges by using personal resources, strengths, and other positive capacities of psychological capital, such as hope, optimism, social supports, and self-efficacy. Overcoming a crisis via resiliency is often described as “bouncing back” to a normal state of functioning. Being resilient is positively associated with happiness.

When we lose out on something important, a big plan collapses, or we are rejected by someone, it’s challenging, but another way of expressing this feeling of loss is that a door is being closed. But one door closing often allows another to open. Come share some of your experiences of being resilient to life’s challenges.

SPECIAL PROGRAM

Judith Jenya, Guest Speaker

September 24, 11 a.m.

This month we’re doing something a little different on this fourth Sunday. Judith Jenya is coming all the way from San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, to talk about her personal *tikkun olam* (repair of the world), which has been to create summer camp experiences, bringing together children from all sides of a conflict, providing them play, creativity, nonviolent conflict resolution and loving attention from a cadre of caring adults amid the violence and loss they had endured.

UCOT Women’s Lunch

September 19, 12:15 p.m.

Meets the Third Tuesday, 12:15 p.m

Martyr’s Fireside Room, 146 Paseo Del Norte

Join other UCOT women and their friends as we enjoy lunch and conversation. RSVP before 10 a.m. on Tuesday, September 19. Contact [Sara](#).

We check in and then let the conversation flow. The company and food are always delightful. Join us! And bring a friend.

UCOT Men’s Group

September 20, 4:00 p.m.

The UU Men’s Group will meet in person on Wednesday, September 20, at 4:00 p.m. Contact Chuck Fawns kyspirit@taosnet.com for location.

Music Committee News

Gael Minton

Martha will be out of town on September 3 and is happy to welcome Martha Shepp to play in her place. Many of you are acquainted with Martha Shepp, as she has played for a service a few times and also has furnished special music for the Congregation.

I heard from a few of you that you liked the piece about Moldova violinist Patricia Kopatchinskaja (March '23 UCOT newsletter).



Patricia Kopatchinskaya

With your forbearance, I present her again. This time, a stellar performance of [Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto #35](#) (37 min.) One listener’s comment: “I know this piece by heart yet with Kopatchinskaja I could believe that I was hearing it for the first time. I love the quirky energy she brings to her playing.”

[Patricia K. performs often with Turkish pianist Fazil Say](#) (see Beethoven’s Kreutzer sonata). In this four-minute segment, they are talking about love of Bartok as well as Janacek and Brahms.

Fazil Say is a world-renowned Turkish-born, German-trained pianist and performer whose artistry stretches from chamber music to jazz. Recognized as one of the greatest artists of the 21st century, Say is not simply a pianist of genius, but also a master composer and improviser.

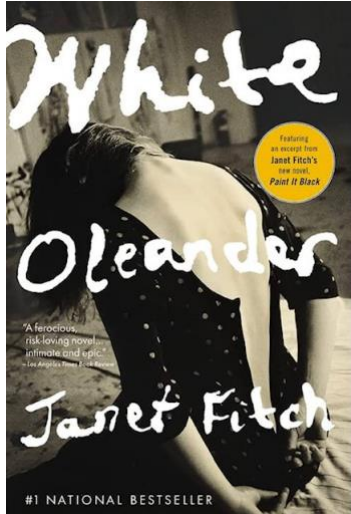


🍁 SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS 🍁

- 3 Donna Collins
- 5 Lee Stringer
- 8 Adela Windsor
- 17 Linda Aubrecht

UCOT Book Group
White Oleander, by Janet Fitch
September 28

Meets the Fourth Thursday, 10:30 a.m.
at SOMOS, 108 Civic Plaza Dr B
Bring \$1 for space rental fee
Contact [Sara](#) for more info



Everywhere hailed as a novel of rare beauty and power, *White Oleander* tells the unforgettable story of Ingrid, a brilliant poet imprisoned for murder, and her daughter, Astrid, whose odyssey through a series of Los Angeles foster homes — each its own universe, with its own laws, its own dangers, its own hard lessons to be learned — becomes a redeeming and surprising journey of self-discovery.



What Else Are We Reading?

In Which We Provide a Few Ideas for
Personal Reading Each Month

Alarmed and saddened by fires, floods, and general political debauchery (not a real word, but I'm making it one) last month I gave myself the gift of happiness and being held in community by reading *This Is Happiness*, by Niall Williams, and *Virgil Wander*, by Lief Enger.

Niall Williams' novel is an intricately observed portrait of a community. *This Is Happiness* is a story about stories as the very stuff of life: the ways they make the texture and matter of our world, and the ways they write and rewrite us. A sweet and engaging novel.

In Lief Enger's novel, *Virgil Wander* is "cruising along at medium altitude" when his car flies off the road into icy Lake Superior. Though Virgil survives, his language and memory are altered. Awakening in this new life, Virgil begins to piece together the past, helped by his community, a cast of curious locals. I have yet to finish the book, but find myself eking out moments to lose myself in this fun and often funny book.

— Sara Sautter

