

The Unitarian
Congregation
of Taos
November 2024
Bulletin Board



- Sun., Nov. 3 Service: *Dia de los Muertos*, Marsha & Chuck Fawns
Sun., Nov. 10 Sharing Circle: *Being Nice in a Cruel World*
Sun., Nov. 17 Service: *Sowing Seeds for the Next Harvest: On Being Grateful*, Rev. Diana Davies
Tue., Nov. 19 UCOT Women's Lunch, 12:15 p.m., Martyrs
Wed., Nov. 20 UCOT Men's Group, 4:00 p.m.
Thu., Nov. 21 UCOT Book Group, 10:30 a.m., SOMOS
Sun., Nov. 24 Sharing Circle: *Open Topic*
Wed., Nov. 27 UCOT Game Night, 6:00 p.m.

Right Now, It's Like This
Rev. Diana Davies

I can remember how, on election night in 2016, I stayed up late, screaming at the television, posting despairing rants on Facebook, and, ultimately, crying on the shoulders of our poor, bewildered, greyhound. In 2020, the outcome was very different, but the night itself, watching the returns and worrying about the electoral college, was no less stressful. This year's election is arguably more important than those that preceded it, and the stakes are almost unbearably high. Given how close the polls are, it seems that this election night will be more than a nail-biter. It is likely to be emotionally grueling and physically exhausting.

That's why, this year, I'm making a plan for watching the election results that is centered around self-care. I'm planning to take in the results in time-limited doses and balance that with spiritual practice. I've yet to work out the details, but it might look like 45 minutes of news followed by 15 minutes of breathing, prayer, or meditation. I know it will be important to do something embodied (yoga or some kind of exercise) because, otherwise, it's too easy to get lost in worst-case-scenario thinking and mental death spirals. It will also be important to get outside from time to time to breathe in some fresh air and take in the night sky.

I hope that you, too, can find a way to take care of yourselves, because this will not be easy. And the more centered, calm, and healthy we can be on November 5 (and the day after that, and the day after that) the more prepared we can be for whatever comes next. If you're looking for ideas for centering and strengthening spiritual practices, Rev. Elizabeth Nguyen has compiled a great list on the [Love Resists page](#).



Dia de los Muertos
Marsha & Chuck Fawns
Sunday, November 3, 11 a.m.

This year's Día de Los Muertos service will provide an opportunity to honor and mourn together the special people who have died, recently or long ago. We are meeting to create an altar of photos and items representing those we are honoring. The altar, inspirational readings, and songs by the Threshold Singers will prompt our sharing. The major portion of the service will consist of together honoring all we have lost, so please bring altar items even if you would rather not speak to the group. A reminder to account for the time change that takes place at 2 a.m. on the day of the service. If you forget, you'll arrive an hour early!



Sowing Seeds for the Next Harvest:
On Being Grateful
Rev. Diana Davies
Sunday, November 17, 11 a.m.

Mystics and teachers from many faith traditions remind us that we have the choice to be grateful in every moment. Not necessarily to be grateful FOR every difficult thing but to choose a spirit of gratitude, even in the face of loss and hardship. What is the gift of gratefulness, and how can we use it as a source of strength and resilience in challenging times?

SHARING CIRCLES

Being Nice in a Cruel World

November 10, 11 a.m.

Oh, goodbye, cruel world

I'm off to join the circus

I'm gonna be a broken-hearted clown

— Gloria Shayne Regney

When James Darren sang this song in 1961, the phrase “Goodbye, cruel world” was a popular catch phrase. It’s been used in innumerable contexts since the late 1800s. It’s a suicide note. It’s a toast before downing a shot of vodka.

At the same time that Darren was singing his lover’s lament, future educator and motivational speaker Leo Buscaglia was finishing his PhD in special education. He had spent World War II in the Navy and worked in the dental section of a military hospital, helping to reconstruct shattered faces. “Dr. Love” became known for giving hugs. He said, **“Only the weak are cruel. Gentleness can only be expected from the strong.”**

Wordnik.com defines cruel as “Disposed to inflict suffering, physical or mental; indifferent to or taking pleasure in the pain or distress of any sentient being.”

This Sharing Circle will provide each participant the opportunity to share their experiences with cruelty, as recipient and perhaps as perpetrator. If someone is cruel to you, does that justify your being cruel to them? If the global horrors of human brutality overwhelm you, are you justified in taking out your frustrations on your animal companion? How do you come to terms with this ever-present dynamic?

Open Topic Sharing Circle

November 24, 11 a.m.

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

Men’s Shelter Lunches

We have been informed that the Men’s Shelter is closing. We will not be packing lunches in November. The men have been referred to NEST. Annette will try to contact someone at NEST to send lunches there.

UCOT Women’s Lunch

November 19, 12:15 p.m.

(Third Tuesday Monthly)

Martyrs Steakhouse

RSVP [here](#)

We will meet at Martyrs on Tuesday November 19 at 12:15 p.m. in their separate meeting space at the rear of the property to enjoy a meal and conversation with UCOT women members and their friends.

Join us as we enjoy delicious food and the company of amazing women. RSVP by 10 a.m. November 19 to rubin.annette@gmail.com.

UCOT Men’s Group

November 20, 4:00 p.m.

(Third Wednesday Monthly)

The UCOT Men’s Group will meet in person on Wednesday, November 20, at 4 p.m. Contact Chuck Fawns charles.fawns@gmail.com for location.

UCOT Game Night

November 27, 6:00 p.m.

(Fourth Wednesday Monthly)

Everyone’s invited to play games — Rummi-kub, Dominoes, Train, or a game of your choice — on the fourth Wednesday of the month. Join us on November 27 at 6:00 p.m. Please RSVP and contact Mary Shaffer for directions or more info: shafferstudios@gmail.com, (432) 386-5888. If you need a ride from the south side of Taos, please call Don Zablosky at (469) 855-9107 or email him at don@donzablosky.com.



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

10 Sam Richardson

11 Kristen Woolf

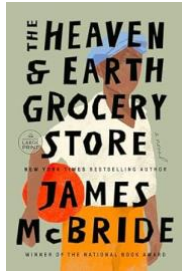
UCOT Book Group

November 21, 10:30 a.m., SOMOS

(This month we meet on the Third Thursday instead of the Fourth, which is Thanksgiving)

The UCOT Book Group is open to all readers and their friends. Bring \$1 to contribute to SOMOS, which allows us to use their space.

In November, we will read *The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store* (2023) by James McBride.



It is a gripping murder mystery set in 1972 Pottstown, where a skeleton's discovery unravels small-town secrets, love, and the inspiring humanity of residents protecting a deaf boy. . .

"A murder mystery locked inside a Great American Novel . . . Charming, smart, heart-blistering, and heart-healing." Danez Smith, *The New York Times Book Review*

It was named a Best Book of the Year by NPR/Fresh Air, Washington Post, *The New Yorker*, Time Magazine, and was on Barack Obama's Favorite Books of 2023 list.

Music Committee News

Gael Minton

Reminder of singing practice each Service Sunday: Martha Grossman will lead a 10:30 a.m. practice at the Lodge on the 1st and 3rd Sundays. On these Sundays, gather round the piano and sing the hymns planned for that service.

* * *

The Taos Chamber Music Group presents "Viaje Especial," with five pieces by composers from Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, and Spain on Saturday, Nov. 2, 5:30 p.m., & Sunday Nov. 3, 3:00 p.m., at the Harwood Museum of Art in Taos.

A very ambitious and sensual program of 20th-century composers with a selection of pieces for violin, viola, cello and piano.

Astor Piazzolla's 1982 composition *Oblivion*, a slow tango, originally arranged for bandoneon (concertina), piano and bass has been arranged for many instrument combinations. [This hour-long youtube](#) has 15 versions of *Oblivion* including two Olympians skating to this beautiful tango.

The UUA Disaster Relief Fund

In sympathy with those UU congregations affected by hurricanes, floods, wildfires, or other natural disasters, the Board has decided to contribute \$1,000 to the UUA Disaster Relief fund. Here are some examples of the help that the Disaster Relief Fund has provided:

- The UU church of Bowling Green in Kentucky received funding after devastating tornadoes.
- The Chico, California, congregation received \$10,000 in immediate aid during the California wildfires.
- The Durango, Colorado, congregation used some of its funds to support firefighters during the Colorado wildfires.
- The disaster relief fund also helped First Unitarian Church in Oklahoma City, where Rev. Diana came to us from, when they experienced terrible ice storms that caused some trees to fall onto the church building.

To learn more, [here is a link to the UUA Disaster Relief fund](#).

Blue Christmas: Acknowledging Sadness and Grief During the Holiday Season (Tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, December 11, 6:00-7:30 pm)

As we head into the winter holidays, many of us may find that we are just not feeling the joy and jolliness that a constant barrage of Christmas songs, advertisements, and holiday cards tell us we are supposed to be feeling at this "most wonderful time of the year." If you have recently lost a loved one, or the holidays have a way of making even a long-ago loss seem like a fresh wound; if you or a loved one are facing serious illness or cognitive decline; if you struggle with financial difficulties, seasonal depression, or addiction; or if you find it hard to be joyful in a world filled with conflict and war, this can feel like a particularly lonely time of year. But you are not alone. This "Blue Christmas" session is not a therapy session but an opportunity to share our stories in a comforting and confidential setting and to try out a few centering and calming spiritual practices.

More information, including details on how to register, will be included in the December newsletter. In the meantime, if you have questions, please reach out to me (Rev. Diana).