

The Unitarian
Congregation
of Taos
October 2026
Bulletin Board



All programs begin at 11 a.m. unless otherwise stated

Sat., Oct. 3	UU101: Rev Diana Davies, 12 noon
Sun., Oct. 4	Service: <i>What Might We Do?</i> Rev. Diana Davies
Sun., Oct. 11	Sharing Circle: <i>How Did You Get Here?</i>
Sun., Oct. 18	Service: <i>The Unitarians and the Utes</i> , Rev. Diana Davies
Tue., Oct. 20	UCOT Women's Lunch, 12 p.m., Martyrs
Wed., Oct. 21	UCOT Men's Group, 4 p.m.
Thu., Oct. 22	UCOT Book Group, 10:30 a.m., SOMOS
Sun., Oct. 25	Sharing Circle: <i>Open Topic</i>

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

The verb “worship” comes from the Old English *weorthscipe*, meaning to ascribe worth to something. As Unitarian Universalists, in worshipping together, we ascribe worth to our community itself, and we honor the inherent worth of every person. I love worshipping with you every first and third Sunday. And I find our time together to be sacred and uplifting. But there’s always room for exploration and growth, which is why I’d like to roll out two changes to our Sunday worship services.

Beginning this month, you’ll notice that, for the Joys and Sorrows ritual, the black and white stones have been replaced by river stones of various, natural colors. UU Alex Kapitan has written a powerful [essay](#) about how always tying darkness to bad things (to sorrow, in this case) and lightness to good things (joy) can reinforce racial bias. And, of course, no experience in life is truly black or white. It may be a very small change, but it’s one way to be more intentional in our use of metaphor.



This fall, we’re also taking a step toward shared ministry in worship, which is the idea that everyone, not just the ordained minister, takes part in ministry of the congregation. The lay leaders who assist by reading announcements and introducing the Joys and Sorrows and Shared Responsibility parts of each service will be invited to give a short, personal reflection on the topic of the sermon. Or someone other than the lay leader might give a short reflection. In this way, attendees can gain a deeper, more nuanced understanding of the service theme by hearing multiple perspectives, and the community has an opportunity to learn more about fellow members. I know that I’m excited to grow our shared ministry together.

What Might We Do?
Rev. Diana Davies

Sunday, October 4, 11 a.m.

Bent Lodge, 124 Camino de Santiago, Taos

Let’s talk about money... I know. Just hearing that word spoken from the pulpit can make many of us cringe. Because “the financial” and “the sacred” don’t seem to belong in the same space. But how might we think of giving as a spiritual practice? How might it be an expression of our joy, and help to nurture more joy? And what might it mean to give (and to love) from a place of abundance?

The Unitarians and the Utes
Rev. Diana Davies

Sunday, October 18, 11 a.m.

Bent Lodge, 124 Camino de Santiago, Taos

In 1870, President Ulysses S. Grant invited Christian denominations to “manage” indigenous peoples. Unitarians were assigned to oversee the Utes of Colorado. These Unitarians wanted to do good, wanted to help the Utes, without understanding anything about their culture or trying to respond to their actual needs. Knowing this history can help us learn from the mistakes of our spiritual ancestors, so we can learn to do better.

UU 101

Saturday, October 3, noon-3 p.m., Bent Lodge

Are you new to Unitarian Universalism and/or UCOT? Do you have questions about who we are as a congregation and as a faith? Rev. Diana Davies will offer a 3-hour Saturday workshop (10/3, 12 p.m.) at the Bent Lodge that will cover the basic history, theology, and principles of Unitarian Universalism, as well as an overview of the history of UCOT and ways you can get involved. A light lunch will be included. We welcome those who have joined within the past year (or since the last UU 101 offering) or who are considering becoming a member of UCOT. {cont’d on next page...}

Longer-term members who would like a refresher are also welcome.

An RSVP is required. Register by October 2, [online](#) or by contacting [Julian Spalding](#). Please let us know about any food allergies.

SHARING CIRCLES

Bent Lodge, 124 Camino de Santiago, Taos

How Did You Get Here?

Sunday, October 11, 11 a.m.

Each one of us has a unique story to tell about how we “landed” in a Unitarian congregation, and more specifically, at UCOT. Be ready to share the “stepping stones” (religious, spiritual, or otherwise) that have formed and informed your journey. (2-3 minutes, please). Hopefully, this will inspire lots of conversation after the circle concludes.

Open Topic

Sunday, October 25, 11 a.m.

Come as you are. Say what you like from your personal experience. Share your thoughts or feelings as we pass the mic.

Sign Up to Lead a Sharing Circle in 2027

Each month we have one person who presents a topic or question for the group to consider on the 2nd Sunday and then to lead the Circle on an open topic on the 4th Sunday. Ask Don Zablosky, or email Don@DonZablosky.com, any questions you may have related to leading a group or any questions about the purpose of our group.

Medical Debt Relief Program

We are again invited to participate in the community's Medical Debt Relief program.

Funds raised are used to “purchase” the debt of people who cannot afford to pay their hospital bills. This saves them from having their bills sent to collection agencies. The program “purchases” the debt from the hospital at 8 cents on the dollar.

Please send your tax-deductible donation to UCOT by mail or on our website, or put a check in the basket. The deadline is November 12th.

Please let me know if you have questions about this worthy project:

Bette Myerson, 575-779-1709

UCOT Women's Lunch

Tuesday, October 20, 12 noon

Martyrs Restaurant, RSVP [here](#)

Join us at Martyrs, in their separate meeting space at the rear of the property, to enjoy a meal and conversation with UCOT women members and friends. Enjoy delicious food and the company of amazing women. RSVP by Monday, October 19, to [Yvonne Lewis](#).

UCOT Men's Group

Wednesday, October 21, 4:00 p.m.

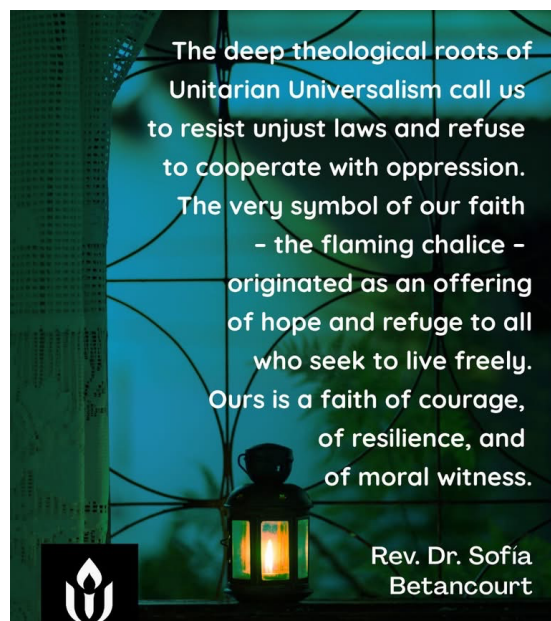
The UCOT Men's Group will meet in person on Wednesday, October 21, at 4 p.m. Contact [Dirk Herrman](#) (dirkvherrman@aol.com) for this month's location.

Charitable Giving Program

Taos Search and Rescue

Taos Search and Rescue is an all-volunteer nonprofit community organization with high standards of professionalism and service. They operate solely by the grace and generosity of their community. The organization operates year-round in all of the off-road areas surrounding Taos, throughout the state, and occasionally in southern Colorado. The team searches in all seasons. They look for lost hikers, climbers, hunters, campers, children, skiers, snowmobilers, and people with Alzheimer's or dementia. They rescue persons injured in backcountry settings, which include the mountains, the high desert and the Rio Grande Gorge. Their primary deployment is through the N.M. State Police.

UUA Corner



A Shower of our Collective Gifts

On September 6, we celebrated our annual water ceremony. Everyone in attendance was asked to write down one gift they bring to this congregation. This is a word cloud generated from that list of gifts. A larger font indicates that multiple people gave the same response.



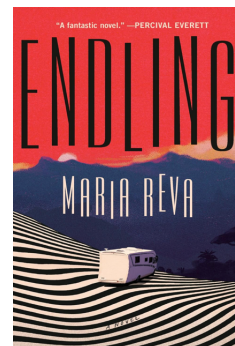
OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

- 16 Jim Kelly
- 26 Dianne Frost
- 27 Michael Burney
- 31 Marsha Fawns

UCOT Book Group

October 22, 10:30 a.m., SOMOS
(Fourth Thursday Monthly)

In October, we will be reading and discussing **Endling** (2025), by Maria Reva, a novel in which “the fate of some snails serves as a harbinger for the fate of Ukraine. The book is funny and smart, full of science, longing, and adventure, all the while reminding us what the world stands to lose, and what it has already lost. This is essential reading.” Ann Patchett, author of *Tom Lake* and *Whistler*.



Ukraine, 2022. Yeva is a loner and a maverick scientist who lives out of her mobile lab. She scours the country’s forests and valleys, trying and failing to breed rare snails. Yeva, Nastia and her sister, Solomiya, embark with others, and Lefty, a last-of-his-kind snail with one final shot at perpetuating his species, on the journey of a lifetime across hundreds of miles.

But their plans come to a screeching halt when Russia invades Ukraine. In a stunningly ambitious and achingly raw metafictional spiral, **Endling** brilliantly balances horror and comedy, drawing on Reva’s own experiences as a Ukrainian expat tracking her family’s delicate dance of survival behind enemy lines. As fiction and reality collide on the page, Reva probes the hard truths of war: What stories must we tell ourselves to survive? To carry on with the routines of life under military occupation? And for those of us watching from overseas: Can our sense of normalcy and security ever be restored, or have they always been a fragile illusion?

Endling is a tour de force from an author who weaves a story of love, loss, humor, and hope that only Maria Reva can tell.

Please join us for the conversation.

The UCOT Book Group is open to all readers and their friends. Please bring \$1.00 to contribute to SOMOS for allowing us to use the meeting space. To view the entire **2026 Book List**, follow [this link](#).

2027 UCOT Pledge Campaign Begins October 4

We Heard You! That's the name for this year's annual pledge campaign. Why? Because we spent the spring and summer hosting Cottage Meetings (see article below) to learn what you valued most about UCOT. Then your UCOT Leadership spent the late summer putting together new programs to bring you more of what you want!

We looked at all of your ideas, determined which ones were achievable in the 2027 congregational year and created a budget to support these ideas.

Our annual pledge campaign is the source for 90% of the income needed to pay our minister, staff, rental, insurance, and all of the other things that keep UCOT running. This will be a special year, when we will ask you to stretch a just bit to help us fund the programs you asked for.

Cottage Meetings Summary

Four Cottage Meetings were held over the spring and summer using the Appreciative Inquiry style. With **60% of the membership attending**, discussions focused on UCOT's strengths, challenges, and future aspirations to inform planning and budgeting. A central theme emerged: how to grow while preserving the intimacy and inclusivity members value.

What Members Value Most

- **Reverend Diana's leadership:** Praised for stimulating sermons and personal support, though members noted UCOT must avoid over-dependence on one minister.
- **Sense of home:** The congregation offers refuge, belonging, and an intellectually stimulating environment.
- **Authenticity and inclusivity:** Members pride themselves on nonjudgmental acceptance and want this communicated externally.
- **Community involvement:** Local charity work, interfaith initiatives, and Pride programming are strong sources of pride.
- **Small groups:** Intimate circles are highly valued for spiritual growth and deeper personal connections.

Most Prominent Priorities

Grow and integrate membership: Attract new visitors and intentionally

- **Increase visibility:** This was the strongest recurring aspiration, focusing on outreach, advertising, and radio publicity.
- **Grow and integrate membership:** Attracting new visitors and intentionally transitioning them into engaged members and leaders.
- **Cultivate leadership:** Better utilizing members' talents and increasing lay-led worship opportunities.

- **Upgrade facilities and technology:** Improving AV/sound systems and finding a more suitable physical presence in Taos.
- **Expand programming:** Offering music and diverse programs outside Sunday worship, potentially replacing open-topic sharing circles.
- **Strengthen faith development:** Focusing on adult faith formation so UCOT maintains its spiritual core alongside its social aspects.
- **Build financial capacity:** Utilizing fundraising, open money conversations, and endowment development to support long-term goals.

Key Tensions and Challenges

- **Growth vs. Intimacy:** Balancing a larger membership with the close relationships current members cherish.
- **Minister- vs. Congregation-Centered:** Nurturing lay leadership so UCOT's future does not rely solely on Reverend Diana.
- **Building vs. Programming:** Deciding whether to invest heavy financial resources into a dedicated physical space or into ministry and programs.
- **Social Connection vs. Faith Development:** Ensuring UCOT maintains its spiritual growth focus rather than becoming strictly a social organization.

To view the full report, [click here](#).

High Road Mission Tour Celebrating 250 Years, Saturday, October 10



Travelers along the High Road to Taos are always struck by the large adobe church in Las Trampas, sitting in quiet dignity out of all proportion to the modest village that surrounds it. What is its story, people ask, and what does it look like inside? Alas, the church is almost always locked, and so travelers pass on by.

This tour will be conducted by organizers Mike Wilson and Julian Spalding. We will be hosted at each church by its mayordomos. A donation of \$15 is requested at each mission to support the upkeep of these fragile adobe buildings.

The tour will begin at the parking lot behind the Taos Visitor Center, corner of Paseo del Pueblo Sur and Paseo del Cañon East, at **10:30 am on Saturday, Oct. 10**. We will caravan; carpooling is encouraged. We will finish our tour with an **optional lunch** at Sugar Nymphs in Peñasco. We should return by 4 p.m.

[Julian Spalding](#) is a contact for this tour.