

The Unitarian
Congregation of Taos
April 2018
Bulletin Board



Sun., April 1	<i>Holy Fools and Crazy Wisdom,</i> The Rev. Munro Sickafoose
Sun., April 8	Sharing Circle: <i>Reconciliation</i>
Wed., April 11	Women's Group, 6 p.m.
Sun., April 15	<i>Who Killed Martin Luther King Jr.?</i> The Rev. Gary Kowalski
Wed., April 18	Men's Group, 4:30 p.m.
Sun., April 22	Sharing Circle: <i>Grace</i>

Services & Circles begin at 11 a.m. at the Masonic Lodge, 124 Camino de Santiago, at the intersection with Gusdorf Road.

On My Mind

The Rev. Gary Kowalski

In South Africa in the 1990s, white rhinos were disappearing, being murdered not by human poachers but by young male elephants gone berserk. The perpetrators, it turned out, were mostly orphaned, left fatherless by excessive herd culling in the Kruger National Park. The way to stem the violence was to restore populations of older, male elephants who could socialize the teens and teach them what it meant to be a pachyderm bull.

These thoughts occur to me in the wake of more school shootings and the rise of the #MeToo movement, extreme examples of men behaving badly. Amid the talk of guys, guns, power and privilege (all part of the deadly equation), there is less focus on the crisis in masculinity, which raises the question: Where are the bull elephants in our society teaching our young boys manners, morals and what it means to be a gentleman?

Casting men in the role of perpetrators may be a self-fulfilling call if we fail to see how boys are also victims: three times more likely than girls to drop out of school, five times more likely to be labeled hyperactive or special needs, four times more likely to commit suicide. Men age 18-19 are 16 times more likely to be in prison, 20 percent less likely than their female cohorts to be entering a four-year college.

As a personal disclaimer, I was reared without any "bull elephant" in my life. My dad died when I was five, and my mom did a pretty terrific job of being both parent and provider. (Though as a woman of her generation she worried excessively that, without a father figure, her two boys might grow up to be gay!) Stable families are necessary ingredients. But stability can take many forms.

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Stewardship/Finance Committee

The Unitarian Congregation Board of Trustees has given Bette Myerson, treasurer, the charge to create a Stewardship/Finance Committee. Four people have already volunteered. The committee shall consist of three to five members appointed by the Board, including the Treasurer. (The Treasurer of the Congregation shall not serve as chair. S/he handles the financial details of the congregation: pays bills, deposits money, acts as bookkeeper, keeps track of pledges, sends year-end acknowledgment letters and year-end tax statements to those employed by the Congregation, and other financial details.)

The Committee's duties include:

1. Developing a long-range plan and programs to develop a "culture of stewardship and generosity" in the congregation.
2. Work with all committees and members of the congregation with fiscal responsibilities to develop the annual budget and propose it to the board.
3. Review and recommend possible improvements to the Treasurer and the Board regarding record-keeping, protocols, and technology for budgeting, pledges, bookkeeping and finance.
4. Develop plans, processes and personnel commitments to ensure effective communications and campaigns for member "Three 'T' responsibilities (time, treasure and talent), pledging, tax-benefit giving, and other or additional fundraising.
5. Review the monthly Treasurer Reports regarding income, expenses and pledge payments.
6. Make regular reports to the board and to members of the congregation.
7. Recommend policy to the Board on financial management (e.g., "excess," reserve funds, or "endowment").

Bette will make an announcement soon on the committee's makeup and direction.

On My Mind

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What is the solution, then? The temptation is strong to apportion blame: Entertainment and gaming that glamorize violence. The paucity of male role models (with the ultimate Bad Boy occupying the White House). The isolating effects of social media. A gun industry run amok. All probably bear some responsibility and need to be fixed.

But beyond tinkering with social reform – along with the need for more Big Brothers, Little League coaches, Scoutmasters and Sunday-school teachers – men as a class need to ask themselves some hard questions about what makes us feel manly, where we derive our self-worth, what lessons (and mistaken messages) we absorbed about being tough, and what teachings about sexual prowess and mutuality we want to pass on to our sons and daughters. There is a male dysfunction in our culture, not mentioned by the pharmaceutical industry, that no quick pill is going to fix. Thoughts and prayers are indeed in order, not as a substitute for gun control but in the form of close attention, support, guidance and encouragement for our boys and young men. They need all the help they can get.

And that's no bull.

UU Women's Group

The UU women will meet on Wednesday, April 11th, at our new time, 6 p.m. Barbara Martinez will host, in order to have a TV and DVD player available, as we view more of Joseph Campbell's "The Power of Myth," followed by sharing. Please RSVP to Barbara at bsmithmtz@outlook.com if you are planning to attend. Those wishing to carpool are encouraged to meet at the Bridge Club parking area, located by Enterprise.

Bylaws Committee Forming

Our bylaws represent one of the foundations of our church, and it's important to keep them current. As time has gone by and our congregation has grown, we've found that certain elements of our bylaws need updating and/or clarification. Please contact Emily at emily.gillispie@hotmail.com if you are interested in helping to do this important work!

Happy April birthday wishes to...

- 3 Sid Bender
- 22 Marianne Furedi
- 25 Bette Myerson
- 28 Margarita Denevan



Shared Ministry

The Shared Ministry Development Team (Joe Mazza, Chris Westover, and Chuck Fawns) is completing the compilation of surveys that were distributed to the congregation over the past few months. These surveys are an attempt to assess the congregation in six areas: 1. Sunday Programs, 2. Sense of Community, 3. Outreach to Community, 4. Religious Education, 5. Crisis Support/Member and Pastoral Care, 6. Financial.

If you have not yet participated in this feedback to the committee and would like to, please contact Chuck Fawns at Kyspirit@taosnet.com or by phone at 575-758-1887 by March 31. The team welcomes your input about these or any other issues you may have.

If you have an interest in serving on the permanent Shared Ministry Team, please let us know that as well. Our "Development" Team will complete its work on April 30, so we would like to know of your interest by early April.

Sunday, April 1 Holy Fools and Crazy Wisdom The Rev. Munro Sickafoose

Religious and spiritual traditions around the world have long cherished holy fools, tricksters, and sacred clowns. What can we learn from these people and archetypal figures? Join us on April 1st and explore some crazy wisdom!

Sunday, April 15 Who Killed Martin Luther King, Jr.? The Rev. Gary Kowalski

Fifty years after his death, Martin Luther King's America remains separate and unequal, divided by race and class, celebrating Dr. King's name and memory while betraying his legacy of justice and nonviolence. This morning, the Rev. Gary Kowalski reminds us of how radical Martin was regarded in his time by examining the role the U.S. government played in his assassination on April 4, 1968.

Music Committee News

Singing practice with Martha at 10:30 a.m. on the 1st & 3rd Sundays.
All are welcome; attend when you can.