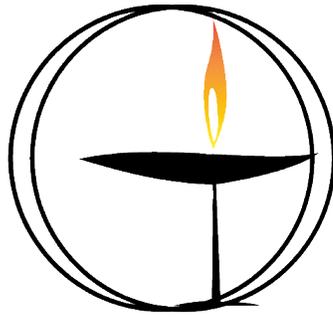


The Unitarian  
Congregation of Taos  
**June 2018**  
Bulletin Board



Sun., June 3 *All Together Now*,  
The Rev. Munro Sickafoose  
Wed., June 6 Women's Group, 6 p.m.  
Sun., June 10 Sharing Circle: *Intuition*  
Sun., June 17 *Celebrating Our Humanity*,  
The Rev. Doug Inhofe  
Wed., June 20 Men's Group, 4:30 p.m.  
Sun., June 24 Sharing Circle:  
*Comfort Zone: Saying Yes, Saying No*

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

Have you ever had a mystical moment?

When the Pew Research Center for Religion and Public Life asked a statistical sampling of Americans that question, about half (49 percent) reported that they had indeed experienced an instant of "religious or spiritual awakening." Surprisingly, this is about twice the number who reported mystical experiences fifty years ago. And while the United States overall is becoming a nation of non-church-goers, 30 percent of those who describe their religion as "none" are also closet mystics (which could explain why many people who say they do not believe in God also testify that they have sometimes felt "close to God.") Politically, liberals and conservatives are equally subject to the sensation that life is good, that the universe is deeply trustworthy, that separateness is an illusion while unity is the deepest truth.

When Abraham Maslow, the psychologist, wrote his famous study on *Religions, Values, and Peak Experiences*, in 1964, he proposed that human beings have an innate hunger and capacity for transcendence; yet he also noted, in an aside, that Unitarian Universalists tended to be a denomination of "non-peakers." I suspect he was right at the

*(Continued on page 2)*

### Notes from the President

Barbara Scott

(finaleyes@icloud.com, 758-4846)

### July 4 Picnic

We don't yet have a place to hold the July Fourth picnic this year. Ray Taylor will coordinate the potluck, but we still need someone to host it. If you're willing, please let me know. If we can't find a place, we can most likely hold it at the Lodge, but we'll need to make that decision within the next couple of weeks so we can reserve it.

### Emergency Preparedness

As announced at the May 5 service, Cristy Holden and I went to an interfaith "active shooter" workshop at UU Santa Fe, which turned out — rightly so — to be more about emergency preparedness. At our own congregation, we really need to implement a few changes (I made a list of 17) to make our space and our members and friends safer in emergency situations — whether medical, fire, or worst-case scenario. I'd like to have one or two other people to collaborate with to draft a workable plan, so please call or email me so we can work on this together.

### Spiritual Listening Workshops with Eileen Wiard

We are planning two covenant-type spiritual-listening workshops in the future, most likely to be held on two Saturday afternoons, possibly one in June and a follow-up in August. The workshop, led by spiritual director Eileen Wiard, will be designed especially for those who are currently serving on the caring community, so that if the need arises, they can offer spiritual comfort to those who are ill or going through a crisis. It does not involve

*(Continued on page 2)*



Happy June  
birthday  
wishes to...

15 Michael Martinez  
16 Carol Doughty

## On My Mind

(Continued from page 1)

time, when our faith was characterized by rationalism and a left-brain, cerebral approach to worship. Today, I suspect Unitarians are as prone to feelings of awe and ecstasy as anyone.

Some doctors think mystical experiences originate in the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex, or may be linked to increased levels of serotonin. The mushroom psilocybin also seems to do the trick. But mystical moments often come naturally on the heels of crises — in my own experience, when the world seems to have lost its meaning. When the shadows are darkest, the light has a way of breaking through, as in the well known story of John Newton.

Raised without any particular religious convictions (common in that “age of reason”) he was press-ganged into service in the Royal Navy in 1744, where he was flogged, put in irons, then dishonorably discharged to serve aboard the slaver Pegasus, where he was treated little better than the other human cargo. In a violent storm off the coast of Ireland in 1748, he awoke in the middle of night to find the ship half filled with water. That near-death episode began his transformation into a Christian crusader against the slave trade.

*Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a  
wretch like me.*

*I once was lost but now am found, was blind but  
now I see.*

Newton would eventually join forces with William Wilberforce and live to see the abolition of the British slave trade in 1807.

Providing people with mystical moments is one of the most important ways congregations like ours can change the world — maybe more important than circulating petitions or passing resolutions — changing hearts and minds one by one. And while everyone is susceptible to inner transformation, those who participate weekly in some form of worship, Pew finds, are indeed twice as likely as those who seldom attend religious services to find the mountaintop.

Have you had a mystical moment? Lately? See you on Sunday.

— Gary

## Notes from the President

(Continued from page 1)

counseling but does involve caring, and it will be valuable in our personal lives in every way. The board has voted to cover half the cost, and participants will be asked to cover the other half. It should be quite affordable. Let me know if you think you'd like to attend.

### Be a Part of Our Film Crew!

We just bought a brand-new video camera and projector, so we could videotape special presentations and Sunday sermons. David Owensby is willing to train a few people to switch hit behind the camera on service Sundays and fifth Sundays. If enough people get trained, it won't fall to just one person. You may not win an Academy Award for your work, but you'll receive your reward in the form of everyone's appreciation. Thank you to David O for his generosity!

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### Music Committee News

We think the congregational singing is improving as we become more familiar with many hymns and with Martha's solid accompaniment. The guest musician lineup for the remainder of 2018 is as follows:

**June 3** — Julie Greer and Jennifer Peterson (vocals) and Elaine Nelson (saxophone) performing the music of Leonard Cohen.

**July** (date TBA) — Young Artists from the Taos School of Music

**August 19** — Christine Autumn, jazz singer, returns  
**September 30** — Jimmy Stadler returns for an hour of singing

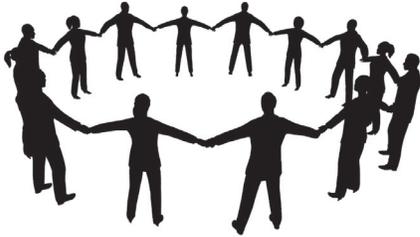
The Music Team — Dianne Frost, Martha Grossman, Joe Mazza, Gael Minton, Bette Myerson, and Mimi Owensby — welcomes any and all feedback, in person or in writing, from members, friends and visitors about what you like and suggestions for improvements.

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



**Sunday, June 3**  
**All Together Now**  
**The Rev. Munro Sickafoose**

Even though it may not always look like it, our congregations and fellowships contain an enormous amount of diversity. How do we forge community from that diversity while still honoring it? How do we strike the balance between the individual and the collective? Join us as we explore this ancient dynamic from a slightly different perspective.



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**UU Women's Group**

The UU women will meet at 6 p.m. at the Taos Bridge Club (behind Enterprise Car Rental) on Wednesday, June 6th. The topic will be parts 1, 2 and 3 of *The Untethered Soul*, by Michael A. Singer. While reading this first half of the book would be helpful, it is not required, as summarizing handouts will be emailed prior to the meeting.



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**Coming Attractions: The Question Box**

On Sunday, July 1, Gary Kowalski will base his remarks on questions from the congregation. Please send him your puzzlers a week prior to the service, by June 24 (email [gary.kowalski@gmail.com](mailto:gary.kowalski@gmail.com)). The more curious the question, the more extraordinary the response. Should we tolerate intolerance? Why do mirrors reverse reflections right to left, but not up and down? Put your wondering hats on and let the conundrums commence.

**Nonviolence Works**

The Unitarian Congregation of Taos has supported Nonviolence Works LLC for the last two years. This organization is 12 years old, having originally started as a small group of men mentoring boys. Gradually the community requested more services, and we now have the largest staff of behavioral health licensed and credentialed clinicians in northern New Mexico.

In 2017, we served 1,012 clients through 1) GRIP — our classroom based gang prevention program, 2) the Art of Nonviolence, a public art exhibition, 3) students in counseling and support groups and after-school therapeutic programs, 4) Off-campus suspension, 5) summer youth day camps, 6) supervised visitation for parents, restorative parenting and fatherhood classes 7) individual, couples and family therapy.

While about 70 percent of our work is with youth — we actively serve families and consistently respond to new requests from the community. We serve those residents of Taos who need support to enhance their emotional and social skills in order to perform at school and in the community.

We have just moved to new quarters at 105 Bertha, Suite B to reduce our unneeded space and streamline our presentation to the community as a safe, confidential service.

We are still pursuing plans with the county to develop a residential treatment program for adolescent boys and are in negotiation for property to establish a residential treatment haven for veterans. In all our endeavors, our insurance reimbursements, contracts and grants provide only about 70 percent of our financial needs. We are actively soliciting donors and board members who share our vision.

For questions, suggestions and donations contact Mary Gray at [mcphailconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:mcphailconsulting@gmail.com) or call her at 575-779-3126.

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**Group Contacts**

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Men's Group  
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