

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



Sun., Sept. 2	<i>The Participatory World</i> , The Rev. Munro Sickafoose
Wed., Sept. 5	Women's Group, 6:00 p.m.
Sun., Sept. 9	Sharing Circle: <i>Food</i>
Wed., Sept. 19	Men's Group, 4:30 p.m.
Sun., Sept. 16	<i>A Brief History of Stuff</i> , The Rev. Gary Kowalski
Sun., Sept. 23	Sharing Circle: <i>Healing</i>
Sun., Sept. 30	Special Music: Jimmy Stadler

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

### **Voting Our Values**

The Rev. Munro Sickafoose

The 2018 midterm elections are coming up fast, and will be here sooner than we expect. More than one observer has called them the most important midterm elections in a generation. They promise to be highly contested, with record levels of spending on campaigns and political advertising.

Control of the House, and possibly the Senate, hangs in the balance. If progressive allies can gain regain control of these two bodies, we can stop the packing of our courts with conservative extremists; we can get back on track in the fight against global warming; we can more effectively resist racism and other forms of systemic oppression; and so much more.

But it won't be easy. We can no longer take victory for granted in previously "safe" states or districts. Many elections are being decided by a few hundred votes or less. Each of us needs to vote, and help get out the vote, making calls or giving rides if need be. Advocate, educate, and partner with community organizations that are working on issues we care about. It's time to mobilize!

While a congregation can't endorse any particular candidate or party, I can urge you to vote for those whose actions, platforms, and promises support our UU principles and values. In particular, we can be guided by five of our seven principles when we vote for candidates or ballot initiatives.

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our Congregations and society at large

*(Continued on page 2)*

### **Notes from the President**

Barbara Scott

#### **UUA Board Leadership Training**

Your UCOT Board of Trustees spent the day on Saturday, August 4, at the beautiful new Unitarian Church of Los Alamos, thanks to the UUA Pacific Western Region, which created a workshop for UU congregations in the Southwest. Sarah Millsbaugh led the training, and Christine Robinson (former first minister from First Unitarian Church of Albuquerque) facilitated the groups. From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., we received various training in leadership, including ideas from our peers over lunch. At the president's table, I learned that we were to a person anxious about this country but invigorated by our congregations. I especially enjoyed time spent with members of our board, each of whom is full of heart, cares deeply about our church and its members, and serves a vital role in building community within and beyond our congregation.

If you think you might be interested in future opportunities in leadership, let one of us know so that next time we receive an invitation, we can include you.

We thank the UUA for putting our membership dollars to work for us, and we'd also like to acknowledge the hospitality of the generous Los Alamos folks. Maybe sometime in the future, we can reciprocate!

#### **Our Outreach Committee**

Recently, Secretary of the Board Emily Gillispie sent me a copy of the minutes from the July 31 meeting of the Outreach Committee. I was impressed by what I gleaned just from reading the minutes. Headed by Mimi Owensby, the committee has

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Voting Our Values

(Continued from page 1)

- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part

And we must never let ideological purity become the enemy of the good. Sometimes we have to be pragmatic and vote for the lesser of two evils, even if we don't agree with them 100 percent. Voting for unelectable third-party candidates can siphon off those few critical votes that can mean victory for a desperately needed moderate or centrist candidate.

Every victory, no matter how small, helps moves us closer to a better world. This election will make a difference, and we can make a difference. Make America Generous Again!

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### News from the Outreach Committee

For two afternoons a week, children in the Gusdorf low-income housing development have a safe place to learn and play. This free program, called SmArt House, began in April as an after-school program and, with hours adjusted, has continued this summer. Activities include art, tutoring, writing, using computers, and playing games. We will be having a drive to collect materials – particularly art materials – beginning Sept. 2 and continuing throughout September at both the services and the circles.

#### Supplies needed:

- Brushes – watercolor and acrylic – all sizes, bristle and foam
- Hot glue sticks
- Large-size heavy paper for tempera and acrylic painting
- School glue (2-gallon container)
- Fabric ink for silk screening and marbling fabric
- Silk-screen supplies – frames and screens, tools, etc.
- Cotton T-shirts – assorted sizes, plain, white and black – for silk screening
- Beading supplies – beads, string, wire
- Sculpey and/or other modeling material that can be air dried or hardened in the oven
- Dawn dish soap for bubbles and washing
- Books for ages 3–16
- Educational games
- Puzzles that promote learning

## Notes from the President

(Continued from page 1)

11 members, and they collectively decide where to donate the funds we budget from the money you donate for outreach. This year, that figure is \$3,000. The committee also conveys to the congregation information about the volunteer needs among those organizations. If you haven't noticed, one committee member a month gives a short presentation about a specific recipient of funds so that you can learn about where your donation dollars go. Our thanks to Mimi and the committee!

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### The UU Women's Group

The Women's Group September meeting is Wed., Sept. 5th, 6 p.m. at the Bridge Club.

The focus of this session will be on the first half of David Whyte's book *Consolations*. He describes his poetry and philosophy as based on "the conversational nature of reality." His work is widely read, and there is much about him available on the internet. You are encouraged to read the first half of his book in order to have a context for this session.

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### September 9th Sharing Circle: Food

You are what you eat, or so they say. "Eating is an agricultural act," as Wendell Berry said. It is also an ecological act, and a political act, too. What one can and cannot eat is often determined by religious or ideological beliefs. There are issues with eating itself. In addition to feeding our bodies, there are also psychological aspects to what we eat, why we eat it, when and where we eat it.

Join us on Sept. 9th as we share our own approach to eating and learn from others.

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### September 23rd Sharing Circle: Healing

Physician Rachel Naomi Remen writes: "Wounding and healing are not opposites. They're part of the same thing. It is our wounds that enable us to be compassionate with the wounds of others. It is our limitations that make us kind to the limitations of other people. It is our loneliness that helps us to find other people or to even know they're alone with an illness. I think I have served people perfectly with parts of myself I used to be ashamed of."

Come share your personal experiences around healing and listen to what others have to share.

## UUA Justice Campaign gets a New Name: 'Side With Love'!



Twenty-nine of us gathered on July 29th as we focused on “Reproductive Justice” and reviewed the historic and current challenges for UU’s who want to “be an active force” to “better our congregation, Taos community, and the world beyond” (from our 2016 Mission Statement).

Slide #28 from that program had this information:

### **Unitarian Universalism: Side With Love**

- *UU’s affirm unconditional, universal love as a foundation to ground our actions in the world.*
- *We strive to be of service to our communities.*
- *We advocate for change — local, state, national, and international*

We discussed how to “recognize, support, and enhance our individual Justice Ministry,” which so many of us do with our time, talents, and treasure — outside our congregation as well as within. The ‘Side with Love’ Program is an invitation and a challenge to each of us to firmly name what we are for and against, in the name of UUism as a religious and moral voice of our congregation and tradition, as well as individuals in the secular realm. Eighteen of us gave in-depth feedback about the above, and also about how we might better fulfill our congregational mission. The board will review that feedback and consider next steps. Keep tuned in!

### **Call on Our Ministers in Times of Need**

Pastoral care is offered to those in need of emotional and spiritual support. If you are going through a crisis (or even a hard time), feel free to reach out to our ministers — they’re here to help.

The Rev. Gary Kowalski:  
gary.kowalski@gmail.com, (505) 257-5014

The Rev. Munro Sickafoose:  
munrosickafoose@gmail.com, (970) 946-2814

## Sunday, September 2 The Participatory World The Rev. Munro Sickafoose

What does it mean to really be aware of the complex webs of relationship that flow around us and through us? What would it mean to truly participate in that web, with all of its mutuality and reciprocity? Join us September 2nd as we explore the participatory world.

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## Sunday, September 16 A Brief History of Stuff The Rev. Gary Kowalski

Last spring the world mourned Stephen Hawking, the brilliant physicist known for his verve and intellect. But the public’s fascination with Hawking was due in part to how his personal predicament — active mind trapped inside a useless body — mimicked the more general problem of scientific materialism. Human beings have increasingly come to feel they inhabit a physical universe indifferent, blind or even hostile to mortal hopes, dreams, values and purposes. This morning our minister Gary Kowalski suggests a new Creation Story may be needed — not one that restores the discredited deity of yesteryear, but one that can still provide a sense of orientation, meaning and participation in a cosmos where, as Hawking said, we would be wise to look to the stars rather than toward our feet.

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### **Music Committee News**

*Special music: Sunday, September 30  
Jimmy Stadler*

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



*Happy September  
birthday wishes to...*

Linda Aubrecht  
September 17

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### **Group Contacts**

Women’s Group  
Carol Doughty, lccdoughty@gmail.com  
Men’s Group  
Terry Surguine, tsurguine@gmail.com