



Unitarian Universalists of Deland

NOVEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER

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Board Officers: Pres. Mel Browning, VP Jade Hoke-Smith, Sec. Cheryl Kellogg, Tres. Charles Bose
At-Large Board Members: Colleen Cunningham, Martha Jess, Donna Pepin

CONGREGATION INFORMATION

UUDeLand's Annual Meeting



Annual Meeting, Sunday, Nov. 16, 12:30 PM

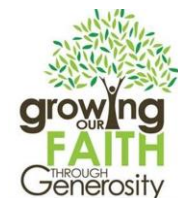
Our Annual Meeting, where we vote for a new slate of Board members, is Nov. 16 at 12:30. After the regular Sunday service, lunch will be served and consists of finger foods with meat and vegetarian options to include meat and cheese pinwheels, egg and tuna salad sandwiches, chips, raw vegetable tray, fruit tray and cookies. Vegans need to alert Jade if they are attending, so we have enough options for them.

The Nominating Committee is pleased to announce the following slate for our Board: President, Jade Hoke-Smith; VP, Nancy Jacobsen; Secretary, Ella Shepherd; Treasurer, Les Figueroa; At-Large Members: Jim Dries, Paul Garfinkel and Patti Rausch; Nominating Committee: Colleen Cunningham (3-year term) and George Stephenson (1-year term*).

*This is the remaining year on Morgan Southard's term, since he resigned mid-year. Note that there are no additional candidates for each position at this time, though nominations from the floor are possible during the Annual Meeting.

Pledge Team Update

Your 2026 Pledge Team has just concluded a Stewardship Campaign in October called "You Plan So We Can Plan." Our target goal was \$40K (70% of our proposed 2026 operating budget income). As of this date, we have received \$32,050 (80% toward our \$40K goal). Please be reminded that you can pay with cash, check, credit card (see our Treasurer Charles Bose), Qualified Charitable Distribution or a monthly bank draft. A bank draft is an easy way to remember to make your payment and adds no administrative cost to the church. The Pledge Team thanks all who have submitted their 2026 pledge to support UUDeLand, and we encourage others to consider stepping up.



Fall Bonfire Potluck, Nov. 8, 6 – 9 PM, 1550 Kuwana Way, DeLand

Mitzi Dykes and Ella Shepherd are hosting a bonfire, potluck (& BYOB) for our congregation. Soup and non-alcoholic beverages will be provided. Join us for warmth, food, good company and music (calling all musicians!). See flyer in Social Hall. No RSVP needed. Bring a favorite dish to share, a lawn chair and a flashlight.



The Bridge Dinner Prep, 5th Thursday of Month. UUDeLand provides dinner for our homeless community at The Bridge, 421 S. Palmetto Ave., DeLand. We need more volunteers please! Contact **Karen Wolf** at 763/213-2403 or karenwolf64@gmail.com for more info.

SUNDAY SERVICES 10:30 AM

Zoom Meeting Link: <https://zoom.us/j/98531898667>

Zoom ID is the same each week: 985 3189 8667

Refreshments are served in the Social Hall after service.

11/2/25 Gifts with Strings

Rev. Dr. Sandra Fees' sermon contrasts conditional giving with true generosity. It calls us to release the "strings" of obligation, status, and exchange, and instead give from love, abundance, and compassion. Rev. Fees is a poet and UU minister serving 20+ years at two congregations in PA. She is a former Poet Laureate of Berks County, PA. **Rev. Marguerite Jhonson**, who will present the sermon, has been part of UU DeLand for 12 years, bringing with her over two decades of ministry and chaplaincy experience in New York. **Cheryl Kellogg** will be our service leader.

The Meet the Candidates program will take place at 12:15 today following the service and social time.

11/9/25 Rescuing Thanksgiving

Rev. Dr. John Morehouse calls us to "rescue Thanksgiving" by moving beyond its false myths and commercialization. True Thanksgiving is both a remembrance of past injustices and a renewal of gratitude, respect, and covenant in building a beloved community. Rev. Morehouse, a fifth-generation Unitarian, has served congregations across the country for over three decades. A graduate of Meadville Lombard Theological School, he is known for growing and transforming congregations. **Deborah McShane** will present the sermon. **Jade Hoke-Smith** will be our service leader.

11/16/25 Annual New Member Recognition

Linda Newman will lead this program recognizing our new members. Linda has been a UU since 1989 and an active member of UU DeLand since 2004. Linda has served as our Pres., VP, and Member-at-Large, and chaired the Social Justice and Program Committees. She now leads the Congregational Life Committee, overseeing membership, caring, and hospitality. Originally from Atlanta, Linda moved to DeLand in 2000 and retired in 2022 after 23 years with MBI.

11/23/25 Standing in a Place of Love

Judith Hemphill, a UU DeLand member, will present a sermon written by her late husband. Standing in a Place of Love reminds us that beliefs can divide, but values connect. Through stories of friendship, justice, and Bob van Deusen's simple affirmation—"I think you're OK"—we are called to choose love over dogma. To be UU is to live our values and stand in a place of love. **Cheryl Kellogg** will be our service leader.

11/30/25 Lessons and Carols à la UU

Many congregations have the seasonal tradition of a Christmas "Lessons and Carols" service. We will have a UU version of this with music and readings from diverse faiths and cultural traditions, such as Bahai, Native American, Cuban Christmas, Buddhism and others. **Paul Garfinkel** will be service leader. He is our Music Coordinator, on our Social Justice, Programming and Green teams, and a F.A.I.T.H. Volusia Coordinator. With a degree in Government and Economics and a Masters in Health Science, he enjoyed a 40-year career as a health and research administrator and ethicist.

UU DELAND GROUP MEETINGS

Adult Discussion Group

2nd and 4th Sundays of the month at **9:15 AM** in the Social Hall or out on the deck – weather permitting. There is a different pre-determined topic for each meeting. Contact **George Crofts** at jorjcrofts@gmail.com.

Board of Directors Meeting

3rd Sunday of the month at **9 AM** in the Social Hall. UU DeLand members may attend.

Contact President **Mel Browning** at melbrowning@cfl.rr.com or Jade Hoke-Smith at sewdamnhappy@gmail.com.

Book Discussion Group

4th Friday of the month at **10:30 AM** in the Social Hall. Contact **Karen Wolfe** at 763/213-2403 or karenwolf64@gmail.com.

Connecting Women (Note: different days and times!)

1st Saturday of the month at **10:00 AM** and **3rd Friday** at **2:00 PM** in the Social Hall. Enjoy an informal gathering of female members and friends. Contact Linda Newman at 386/734-1117 or newmanlinda247@gmail.com.



Green Team

2nd Tuesday of the month at **9:30 AM** in the Social Hall. Our mission is environmental stewardship through education, outreach and fun. If this appeals to you, come check us out! All are welcome. For additional information, contact Joyce Palmer, Facilitator, at joycepalmer68@yahoo.com or call/text 1.907.727.7655.

- **Tip of the Month:** Consider carpooling, walking or biking.
- **Recipe of the Month:** [Vegan Chili](#)
- **Right to Clean Water Amendment**, ongoing. Let's help improve our drinking water and waterways by signing the 2026 primary election petition at this link: <https://www.floridarighttocleanwater.org/>.

Men's Discussion Group

Every Tuesday at 7 PM in the Social Hall. Contact **George Crofts** at jorjcrofts@gmail.com.

Poetry Group

2nd Sunday of the month at 12:30 PM at a member's home. Share a potluck lunch followed by poems read by each participant. Any poem. Contact **Karen Wolfe** at 763/213-2403 or karenwolf64@gmail.com.

Program Committee

1st Thursday of the month at **1 PM** in the Social Hall. Planning of future church services. Contact **Jade Hoke-Smith** at sewdamnhappy@gmail.com.

Social Justice Team

2nd Thursday of the month at **3 PM** in the Social Hall. Join us to get updates on local, state, and federal bills and proposals and find out how your voice can be heard!

- **No Kings Protests** usually occur on Saturday from 10-12 at Woodland Blvd./New York Ave. (occasionally at Woodland Ave./International Speedway Blvd.) Protest signs are provided. Bring your voice, water, hat, and chair (if needed). See you there! Join us in saving democracy!
- **50501 (50 protests in all 50 states in 1 day)** is a national grassroots movement supporting democracy and opposing executive overreach. We're not watching history happen—**We're making it!** Check out their link for future events: [50501 Protests](#).

Song Circle

3rd Thursday from **7-9 PM**. Members and friends are welcome to bring their voices and instruments or just come and listen. Contact Paul Garfinkel at 904/323-5655 or paulgarf53@gmail.com.

Welcoming Congregation Team, Next meeting TBA

UU DeLand is a Welcoming Congregation and has actively promoted LGBTQ+ inclusivity. Contact Mitzi Dykes at mdykes@stetson.edu or Margaritte Johnson at 516/547-5231 (text) if you want to join this rainbow coalition!

OTHER GROUP MEETINGS

PFLAG DeLand/Volusia, 4th Thursday of the month, 6 – 7:30 PM (location undisclosed)

PFLAG's mission is to create a caring, just, and affirming world for LGBTQ+ people and those who love them. The meetings are confidential and largely for support purposes. Contact **Carol Dries** at 818/522-5469.

Volusia Buddhist Fellowship, Wednesdays, 7 PM, Social Hall

Unitarian Universalist Multiracial Unity Action Council (UUMUAC) 3rd Wed. of the month (online)

Their mission is to foster activities for multiracial unity and to counter racism through worship, education, bearing witness, and other actions, and to find and engage like-minded individuals and groups. For more info: <https://www.uumuac.org/>

Universalist Convocation Vespers on Zoom, 1st Wednesday of the month, 8 – 9 PM

Their mission is to provide people with an opportunity to learn, explore, and celebrate their Universalist heritage and have instituted **Monthly Vespers Zoom** to further build community. Join here: [UU Convocation Vespers](#)

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

Message from UUA President, Dr. Sofia Bentancourt

As we all return from summer and move forward into a new congregational year amidst so much turmoil in the world, you may find these words from our President, Dr. Sofia Bentancourt, inspiring. This appeared in a recent online issue of the *UU Wayfayer* magazine. Here is a link to the YouTube video: [Messages of Welcome and Courage for the New UU Congregational Year](#)

UU DeLand's By-Laws and Policies and Procedures: [UU DeLand Member Resources](#)

Newsletter Submissions Deadline is the 15th of the month. Please email submissions to mdykes@stetson.edu.

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