



Unitarian Universalists of DeLand

JULY 2025 NEWSLETTER

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DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS

UUA Condemns U.S. Military Action Against Iran

The Unitarian Universalist Association condemns U.S. military involvement in the expanding conflict between Israel and Iran. The involvement of the United States will only escalate a deepening crisis of war in the region, lead to an even greater loss of life, and prevent diplomatic resolution to the region's geopolitical challenges. . . . We renew our opposition to attacking Iran in the wake of this action. Unitarian Universalists will continue to work for a world where our shared values of pluralism and interdependence are realized, and where the inherent dignity and worthiness of all people are recognized. (July 21, 2025) See this link for the entire statement and resolution:

<https://www.uua.org/pressroom/press-releases/uua-condemns-action-against-iran>

Southeast Unitarian Universalist Summer Institute (SUUSI), July 20 – 26, Radford, VA. <https://www.suusi.org/index>

UU DELAND GROUP MEETINGS

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.



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.

Green Team

Our mission is environmental stewardship through education, outreach and fun. Presently we are on our annual summer break. The next meetup is **October 14th, 9:30 a.m.**, in our Social Hall. For further information, contact Joyce Palmer, Facilitator, at joycepalmer68@yahoo.com or call/text 907/727-7655.

- **Green Tip of the Month:** Only buy new as a last resort. Make good use of things you have. Repair—versus replace—them when possible. Buy secondhand when it's time to replace them.
- **Vegan Falafel Recipe:** [\(7\) Vegan & Plant Based Recipes | Vegan falafels: | Facebook](#)
- **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/>. If you have already signed it, please encourage your family and friends to do so as well.

Men's Discussion Group

Every Tuesday at 7 PM in the Social Hall. Contact **George Crofts** at joricrofts@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!

- **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!*** There are two protests planned for July:
 - **July 4: Free America**, Weekend of Community Events
 - **July 17: Good Trouble Lives On**, National Day of Action

At the time of this writing, there were no 50501 protests planned in Volusia; there are some in other Central FL counties. This may change, so stay tuned with their link: <https://www.fiftyfifty.one/>

- **Regular Saturday Protests** occur at Woodland Blvd./New York Ave. every Saturday from 10-12. Protest signs are provided. Bring your voice, water, hat, and chair (if needed). See you there! Join us in saving democracy!



Song Circle ON SUMMER BREAK!

We are taking a **summer break and will resume in September** on the **3rd Thursday** from **7-9 PM**. Members and friends are welcome to bring their voices and instruments or just come and listen to our group's talent. Contact Paul Garfinkel at 904/323-5655 or paulgarf53@gmail.com.

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

CONGREGATION INFORMATION

Help Shape the Future of UU DeLand Leadership!

The Nominating Committee invites you to complete our **Leadership Interest & Nomination Survey**. Whether you're interested in serving, want to nominate someone, or simply want to share your thoughts—we want to hear from you!

Deadline is October 24th. 📧 **Complete the survey online here:** <https://forms.gle/6XA5EamXpr8Se7wx8>. **Prefer paper?** Printed copies will be available in the sanctuary and social hall. Let's work together to build a more transparent, inclusive, and collaborative leadership process at UU DeLand!

Pledge Team

- Spirit of Life,
You who pulse in every act of kindness,
every offering of time, care or coin
remind us that generosity is not just a good idea,
but a holy practice.
By Rev. Tandi Rogers
- **Sunday Service Offerings/Pledges.** Do you like to drop cash or checks into the offering plate on Sundays as part of your annual pledge to support UUDeLand? While these funds are GREATLY APPRECIATED, we have no idea who you are and how to give you credit towards fulfilling your 2025 stewardship commitment. Please consider putting these monies into the white envelopes provided in the pews and marking "Pledge" and "Your Name" on the outside. We want to acknowledge your contributions! From your Pledge Team: Joyce Palmer, George Crofts, Phoebe Crofts, Linda Newman, John Cupak, Jody Williams, and Charles Bose. From your Pledge Team.



The Bridge Dinner Prep, 5th Thursday of Month. UUDeLand provides dinner for our homeless community at The Bridge, 421 S. Palmetto Ave., DeLand. If you are interested in participating, contact **Karen Wolf** at 763/213-2403 or karenwolf64@gmail.com

UU DeLand's By-Laws and Policies and Procedures: <https://www.uudelnd.org/member-resources>

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

Unsubscribe. To be removed from this email list, reply to this email with "Remove from newsletter mailing list."

SUNDAY SERVICES 10:30 AM

Zoom Meeting Link: <https://zoom.us/j/98531898667>
Refreshments are served in the Social Hall after service.

Zoom ID is the same each week: 985 3189 8667

7/6/25 **Black Lives Matter**

This service is a vigil honoring Black lives lost to police violence, locally and nationally. **Ella Shepherd** will personalize a “Black Lives Matter” sermon by Seth Carrier-Ladd. We’ll name victims from DeLand and beyond, examine systemic injustice, and reflect on how white supremacy operates in ourselves and our institutions. Together, we’ll recommit to anti-racism and the sacred work of justice. Born and raised in DeLand, community activism was instilled in **Ella** from a young age by her first teachers: her parents, Barb and Jeff Shepherd. She began her work in social activism at age 16, while campaigning for a presidential election and realizing that too many voters were disenfranchised. In 2022, she was drawn to the UU Discussion Group and has been an active member of the UU community since.

7/13/25 **Go the Extra Mile: Learn to Recognize "Jesus-Speak"**

No study of Jesus can ignore his social teachings, cryptic sayings, and apocalyptic discourses. But how does Jesus speak? What are his key rhetorical strategies? This lecture contrasts Matthew's gospel, mainly the “Sermon on the Mount,” with other (non-)biblical sources, those attributed to Jesus or mimicking his communication style. Our speaker, **William Chavez, PhD**, is an Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at Stetson University. He studies the doom and gloom of religious imagination. He specializes in legacy media (film, comics, television) and new digital media (video games, social media, and online fields of play), employing ethnographic fieldwork and discourse analysis in his research and pedagogy.

7/20/25 **Music: What Happens When We Really Listen?**

Dr. Yohann Ripert, a Juilliard-trained concert pianist and philosopher, will share his musical expertise to help the audience reflect on how they listen to great music. With live performance and thoughtful commentary from the piano bench, **Dr. Ripert** will guide listeners through the art of listening—revealing how music speaks to the mind, heart, and soul. **Dr. Ripert** is an Associate Professor of French and Francophone Studies in the Department of World Languages and Cultures, as well as Director of the Honors Program, at Stetson University. At Columbia University, he earned a PhD in French and comparative literature and an MA in French and romance philology. At The Juilliard School, he earned a BM in piano performance.



7/27/25 **The Person in the Mirror: Reflections on our Biases**

Through gentle self-inquiry and spiritual reflection, we’ll explore how embracing change can soften the unconscious biases we all carry. Together, we’ll consider how awareness, humility, and a willingness to grow can deepen our connections and help us live more fully in our shared humanity. Two of our beloved UU members will co-present this service. **Patti Rausch** is a local marriage and family therapist and UU DeLand's Social Justice Chair. **Ella Shepherd** is a local mental health therapist specializing in children. The founder of Endeavors Counseling and Community Yoga and Dance (a donation-based studio), Ella’s passion for social action, accessibility, and justice compel her to offer mental health therapy and yoga. **Patti** and **Ella** are both fierce advocates for marginalized communities.