



# Unitarian Universalists of Deland

## MARCH 2025 NEWSLETTER

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### SUNDAY SERVICES 10:30 AM

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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

#### **3/2/25 Soil Communion**

UU Deland will engage in a new ritual: a Soil Communion. By recognizing and honoring soil, we hope to uncover how planting our spiritual roots in this common—yet essential—live-giving gift can help reconnect us to our true selves and nourish the life of our congregation and the greater community. Please bring a cup of soil from a special place, where you find peace, power, and joy. We will add it to our communal soil, which will be used to nourish plantings under our new church sign. UU members **Patti Rausch** and **Cheryl Kellogg** will conduct the service.

#### **3/9/25 The Ten Commandments: A Closer Look**

In the news and on the walls of public schools, the Ten Commandments are more than meets the eye. Despite the image of Charleton Heston coming down from Mount Sinai, many don't believe that they were written in stone. **Rabbi Merrill Shapiro** will take us on a deeper dive into this meaningful and influential text. **Rabbi Shapiro** was Pres. of the National Board of Trustees of Americans United for Separation of Church and State (AU) and founding President of the Atlantic Coast FL Chapter of AU and Chair of FlaglerLive.com. He resides with his wife, Robyn, in Palm Coast.

#### **3/16/25 CATALYST (Children and Adults Together Achieving Leadership, Inspiration, Success and Trust)**

CATALYST founder and CEO **Felicia Benzo** will talk about this organization that is committed to creating programs and initiatives that mobilize adults to inspire children and youth to greatness. When children are provided with social, leadership and emotional tools to be all that they can be, they learn that their circumstances alone can no longer define them. **Ms. Benzo** will review its 15-year history of mentoring and youth development. We will see the results of our community's support for our youth as she will bring a college, high school and/or middle school student.

#### **3/23/25 UU Martyrs and Heroes**

UUs have a history of human rights support. **Mel Browning** will recall UU Rev. James Reeb and Viola Liuzzo, who died in Selma campaigning for the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and Eliot Richardson, who did the right thing during Watergate. **Mel** has a B.S. in history education from Bowling Green State University and a J.D. from Southern Illinois Univ. He retired as Senior Staff Attorney at Ohio's Sixth District Court of Appeals. TRIGGER WARNING: Violent themes and racist language!

#### **3/30/25 Presence is a Gift**

Medical research shows that our brains absorb about half of what we are exposed to. Companies thrive on capturing and holding our attention. These strategies mean that our attention is bombarded by phone alerts, social media, TVs, etc. **Ella Shephard** will lead us in mindfulness practices to exercise brain muscles that help us choose where we place our attention. **Ella** is a local Licensed Mental Health Counselor specializing in children, founder and instructor of Yoga Studio.

## UU DELAND GROUP MEETINGS

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### **NEW!!! UU DeLand SONG CIRCLE!!!**

In-person on the **3rd Thursday** of each month from **7-9 PM**. Members and friends are welcome to bring their voices and instruments or just come and listen to our own group's talent. Contact Paul Garfinkel at 904/323-5655 or [paulgarf53@gmail.com](mailto:paulgarf53@gmail.com).



### **Adult Discussion Group**

In-person on the **2nd and 4th Sundays 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](mailto:jorjcrofts@gmail.com).

### **Board of Directors Meeting**

In-person on the **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](mailto:melbrowning@cfl.rr.com).

### **Book Discussion Group**

In-person on the **4th Friday of each month at 10:30 AM** in the Social Hall. Contact **Karen Wolfe** at 763/213-2403 or [kwolfk99@aol.com](mailto:kwolfk99@aol.com).



### **Green Team**

Come join our environmental group to help our planet and have fun outdoors. We meet on the **2nd Tuesday** of the month at 9:30 a.m. in the Social Hall. Some upcoming activities include a MUU-vie Night with vegan snacks and games (date/time TBA), trail maintenance at Long Leaf Pine Preserve Saturday, April 12th, at 2 p.m. and an Earth Day Sunday Service on April 27th with spring bonfire to follow that evening in our parking lot at 5 p.m. All are welcome! For more information contact Co-Faciliators: Joyce Palmer, [joycepalmer68@yahoo.com](mailto:joycepalmer68@yahoo.com) or call/text 1.907.727.7655 or Teresa Lake, [tereann2@yahoo.com](mailto:tereann2@yahoo.com) or call/text 1.772.708.1970.



### **Men's Discussion Group**

In-person **every Tuesday at 7 PM** in the Social Hall. Contact **George Crofts** at [jorjcrofts@gmail.com](mailto:jorjcrofts@gmail.com).

### **Poetry Group**

In-person on the **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 [kwolfk99@aol.com](mailto:kwolfk99@aol.com).

### **Program Committee**

In-person on the **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](mailto:sewdamnhappy@gmail.com).

### **Social Justice Team**

In-person meetings on the **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!

**3/9, Truth Seekers: Black History Class, 2 – 4 PM, Social Hall.** Rowena Waters teaches this class for middle school through college students, keeping Black History alive. The congregation and extended community is invited to attend.

### **Banned Books Drive**

The Deland Quakers collect and give away books that may be banned or difficult for students to obtain in FL schools and libraries. Please support this ongoing effort by sending them books by African Descendant Authors, LGBTQ+ Authors, History of African Descendants, Indigenous peoples, and LGBTQ+ persons. Contact: [DelandQuakers@gmail.com](mailto:DelandQuakers@gmail.com).

**The Bridge Dinner Prep, 5th Thursday of Month.** UUDeLand provides dinner for our homeless community at The Bridge. **Karen Wolfe** plans the meals and coordinates with several members to divide up the preparation. We drop the food off by 4:30. If you are interested in participating, contact **Karen** at 763/213-2403 or [kwolfk99@aol.com](mailto:kwolfk99@aol.com)

**Food Donations for the Neighborhood Center.** On the **1st Sunday of each month**, please bring non-perishable food items (including for dogs and cats) and place in the designated basket in the Sanctuary foyer. Contact **Mara Whitridge** at [marwit@bellsouth.net](mailto:marwit@bellsouth.net).

## **OTHER GROUP MEETINGS**

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### **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. Its vision is to create an equitable, inclusive world where every LGBTQ+ person is safe, celebrated, empowered and loved. The meetings are confidential and largely for support purposes. Contact **Carol Dries** at 818/522-5469.

### **Volusia Buddhist Fellowship, Wednesdays, 7 PM, Social Hall**

## **DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS**

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### **2025 General Assembly Registration, June 18 – 22, Baltimore**

Register early for UUA's General Assembly in Baltimore, save money and have a choice of hotels. Our congregation will be sending two delegates, so if you are a member and interested in attending in person or on ZOOM, make your wishes known to our Board of Directors. For more information click on this link: [General Assembly Registration | General Assembly | UUA.org](#). Please contact Joyce Palmer, Team Leader, Denominational Affairs, at [joycepalmer68@yahoo.com](mailto:joycepalmer68@yahoo.com) or call/text 1.907.727.7655 or Dawn Taggbloom at [UUDawnmail@gmail.com](mailto:UUDawnmail@gmail.com).

### **2025 FL UU Women's Retreat—Generate JOY! April 11 – 13, DaySpring Conf. Center, Parrish, FL**

UU women are invited for a weekend of learning to generate the joy we need to flourish in these times. Shelley Graff will present Singing in a Sacred Circle and an amazing group of UU women will offer creative, enriching, and joyful programs. Register now to reserve your space. Complete and mail the registration form and check to the address on the

bottom of the form. A small deposit by January 31 will hold your spot with the balance due February 28; also full payment with registration is appreciated. Check out DaySpring here: <https://dayspringfla.org/>. Questions? Email [Retreat@FLUUwm.org](mailto:Retreat@FLUUwm.org).

## CONGREGATION INFORMATION

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### **AUCTION FUNDRAISER! Mark your calendars: Saturday, March 29, 5:30 – 9 PM!**

We will be hosting an auction to raise funds for our building, programs, and community outreach. This event is for our congregation only (members, friends, and attendees). You do NOT have to be present to donate. There will be a live auction in the Sanctuary and a silent auction in the Social Hall. Some suggestions for donations are “services/events” such as a dinner for 4, lessons, boat ride, hotel stay, and/or “items” such as gift basket, artwork, bicycle, décor, furniture. If you are donating more than one service/item, please complete a separate form for each. Here is a link to the sign-up form: <https://forms.gle/Cry7ijP1iLC5buJw8>



### **BILL PAY YOUR PLEDGE?**

Several of our UU members and friends are already using **Bill Pay**, a simple way to make pledge commitments. It is easy peezy . . . just contact your bank, credit union or other fiduciary to issue a check to “The First Unitarian Universalist Church of West Volusia” (avoid our marketing name, UUDeLand) on a weekly, monthly, quarterly or even other regular basis for an amount you designate towards your yearly pledge. There is *no charge*, unlike a credit card or other payment system and the bank even pays the postage!

Additionally, the Pledge Team wants to again thank all members and friends who made our 2025 Pledge Drive last fall such a success. Thanks for your commitment to sustaining our liberal faith in these times and ongoing contributions that help keep the lights on for everyone! Your 2025 Pledge Team: Charles Bose, Linda Newman, Jody Williams, John Cupak, Phoebe Crofts, George Crofts and Joyce Palmer.



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

**Newsletter Submissions Deadline is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month.** Please email submissions to [mdykes@stetson.edu](mailto:mdykes@stetson.edu) and include in the Subject line, “UU Newsletter” and the topic.

**Unsubscribe.** To be removed from this email list, please reply to this email and include in the Subject Line, “Remove from newsletter mailing list.”

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