



Unitarian Universalists of Deland

OCTOBER 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

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

10/5/25 **Roots, Hold Me Close**

"Unitarians and Universalists have always been heretics," reads a UUA pamphlet. Many of us embrace this description. However, today's sermon by UU Minister **Rev. Rod Richards** suggests that, while this has positive and historical validity, we might be holding onto it a little too tightly. Maybe it is time to loosen our hold on that identity to more effectively respond to the times in which we live. **Patti Rauch**, active UU Deland member, will present his sermon. **Rev. Richards** was the minister of the UU San Luis Obispo, CA who retired in 2025. **Cheryl Kellogg** will be our service leader.

10/12/25 **Wala'au: A Hawaiian Talk Story with Kameanani**

Indigenous Peoples' Day is a holiday (in a few states) that honors Indigenous American peoples' histories and cultures. Our speaker, **Kameanani Blackman**, will touch on the history of Native Hawaiians, current challenges facing them, as well as Kameanani's personal experiences living in the diaspora. **Kameanani** is Kānaka 'Ōiwi (indigenous people of Hawaii) of mixed ancestry, a decolonial and scratchboard artist, natural science and fantasy illustrator, and on the Volusia Pride Board. Passions include research, justice, healing, and birding. **Ella Shephard** will be our service leader.

10/19/25 **The Origins of Samhain**

Samhain is the Gaelic festival marking the end of harvest season and the beginning of winter. Samhain is the basis of modern-day Halloween. Our speaker, **Rick de Yampert** is a freelance writer, sitar player, artist, and lecturer on sacred and metaphysical subjects. He has been following a Pagan spiritual path since the early 1990s. His book, *Crows and Ravens: Mystery, Myth, and Magic of Sacred Corvids*, was released by Llewellyn in March 2024. **Mara Whitridge** will be the service leader.

10/26/25 **Ghosts, Zombies and Demons of Asia**

Dr. Christopher Bell will take us for a spooky spin across the globe to ghosts in Tibet, China, and Japan. We'll explore Tibetan demons, Chinese zombies and fox spirits, and Japanese vengeance ghosts. An associate professor of religious studies at Stetson, he received his BA and MA from Florida State and his PhD from the Univ. of Virginia. In addition to teaching at Florida State and the Univ. of VA, he taught at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. Awarded a Fulbright Fellowship, he completed extensive research in China, Tibet, and India.

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

The Green Team will have a planning session on **Tuesday, October 14th, at 9:30 AM** in the Social Hall. Following our summer "recess," we'll be planning activities for the fall, winter and spring. 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:** Rather than throw food away, consider composting it. When food is thrown in a landfill, it doesn't decompose like it would in a compost pile. Instead, it gets trapped with the rest of the trash and emits gases, adding to the carbon footprint. Store food properly, use your freezer, compost scraps and avoid overbuying in the first place.
- **Recipe of the Month:** [Vegan Pho Bo \(noodle soup\) Recipe](#)
- **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.) The next nationwide protest is **October 18**. 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. In the 1980s, when the word “welcoming” became a code word for LGBTQ+, the UUA launched a Welcoming Congregation Program to help us learn how to undo homophobia—and later, transphobia—in our hearts and minds, our congregations, and our communities. UU DeLand is a Welcoming Congregation and has actively promoted inclusivity in our services and connections with PFLAG and Volusia Pride. Please contact Mitzi Dykes at mdykes@stetson.edu or Margaritte Johnson at 516/547-5231 (she prefers texts) if you want to join this colorful team!

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

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

UUA Faithful Defiance of Authoritarianism, a Call to Action: Reaffirming Our Covenant for Democracy and Freedom,

2025 Action of Immediate Witness, September 12, 2025. Here is the link to the full statement: [Faithful Defiance of Authoritarianism 9.12.25](#). Be sure to scroll midway down to “THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT we, the 2025 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), call upon the UUA, its member congregations, and congregants, as appropriate, to . . .”

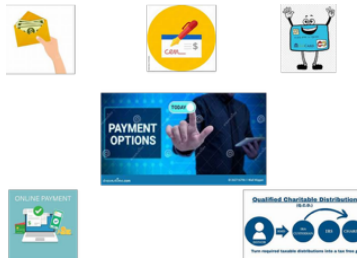


UUs for Social Justice statement, “We Denounce the High Court Ruling on Racial Profiling: This takes our republic back to the precipice of Jim Crow, in one step.” Here is the link for the article: [Statement: UUSJ Denounces Supreme Court Ruling In Favor Of Racial Profiling](#)

CONGREGATION INFORMATION

Pledge Team Kick Off!

The Pledge Team is kicking off our 2026 Stewardship Campaign, "You Plan So We Can Plan," in October. Members and friends of the congregation are asked to consider pledging a comfortable monetary amount to support our liberal religious home, UUDeLand. This information will allow your board to cover expenses with enough income during the coming year. These funds sustain our building and grounds, provide engaging Sunday Programs, pay utilities and insurance, cover repairs, contribute our fair share to the UUA, expand social justice outreach and many, many other activities. Pledge cards will be available through the mail, in the sanctuary pews and Social Hall, and at our website: <https://www.uudeland.org/>. See below for various convenient ways you can make a contribution:



Nominating Committee Recruits for Board

We are still recruiting for President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, 3 At-Large Members and 2 positions on the Nominating Committee. Opportunities abound! It's a wonderful way to get a "bird's eye" view of how our congregation operates on volunteer "steam." Mentoring is always available from previous board members and others. You can complete the UU DeLand Leadership Interest & Nomination Survey (see link below or go online at UUDeLand.org) or contact any member on the team: Joyce Palmer, joycepalmer68@yahoo.com or call/text 1.907.727.7655, Betty Pasquale, espasquale718@yahoo.com or call/text 1.716.622.4011, or Ella Sheppard, ellashep09@gmail.com. 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 24. Complete the survey online here: [Nomination Survey](#). Prefer paper?** Printed copies are available in the sanctuary and social hall. Let's work together to build a more transparent, inclusive, and collaborative leadership process at UU DeLand!

Sunday Service Offerings/Pledges. Members and Friends, please help us identify your **cash** offerings by placing them in the white envelopes found in the pews and writing "Pledge" and your name on the outside, so we can count them toward your pledges.

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

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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