



Unitarian Universalists of Deland

FEBRUARY 2026 NEWSLETTER

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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/1UUCoWV/>

Board Officers: Pres. Jade Hoke-Smith; VP Nancy Jacobsen; Secretary Ella Shepherd; and Treasurer Les Figueroa

At-Large Members: Jim Dries, Paul Garfinkel and Patti Rausch

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.

2/1/26 Universal-ish

Paul Garfinkel will read the sermon "Universal-ish" by **UU Rev. Lóre Stevens**, which explores the roots of "Universalism." **Paul** will add his own views on the relevance of this philosophy to these "interesting" times, our community and congregation. Sermon author, **Lóre Stevens**, is a queer Mexican-American atheist woman and minister at Oak Ridge UU Church in Oak Ridge, TN. A Harvard Divinity graduate, she is a recipient of the UU History & Heritage Society Research Prize and the Dana Greeley Sermon Award. **Paul Garfinkel** is a UUDelander member and our Music Coordinator.

2/8/26 Spirituality of Service

Carol Swarbrick Dries will present the "Spirituality of Service" sermon, with a ritual to honor the changing of UUDelander's Board. The sermon, by **Erik Wikstrom**, argues that people come to church not only for belonging but for transforming lives. He invites congregations to see lay leadership and committee work as spiritual practice, not mere administration. **Erik** is the Lead UU Minister at Thomas Jefferson Memorial Church in Charlottesville, VA and author of several books and curricula. **Carol** is a UUDelander member, actor and singer. **Joyce Palmer** will be our service leader.

2/15/26 Luminescence

The UU Luminescence service is a winter holiday celebrating UU identity, focusing on inner light, diversity, and spiritual growth through candle-lighting rituals that symbolize recognition, reflection, refocusing, and renewal. It is often held in late January/February, when the dark days of winter are replaced with the light of spring. **Sue Habel** will be the Service Leader and Presenter. **Sue** became a member of UU DeLand in 2014. Since then, she has served on the Programming Committee, Nominating Committee, and Publicity Committee.



2/22/26 **Braver Angels: Bridging America's Political Divide**

Our country is more divided than ever, with many of us isolated from those with different views. This division damages our communities, disrupts our families, and stops us from working together for the common good. **Braver Angels** is leading the nation's largest cross-partisan, volunteer-led movement to bridge the partisan divide and strengthen our democratic republic. Our speaker, **Chuck Tyler**, leads Braver Angels Florida as an organizer who turns community energy into measurable impact. **Chuck's** leadership brings LAPP (Listen, Acknowledge, Pivot, Perspective) skills to life, creating spaces where trust can grow and citizens can work together across differences. **Mitzi Dykes** will be our service leader.



CONGREGATION INFORMATION

Spring Equinox Party, March 21, 2 – 4 PM, 301 College Court, DeLand

Barb and Andy are hosting an ice cream social and seed planting party at their home. Make your own ice cream Sunday or cone. Ice cream, coffee and soft drinks provided. Since we are celebrating spring planting season, they will also provide planting soil and seeds. You bring a clay pot or equivalent. RSVP to Andy 386/490-2111 for planning.

The Neighborhood Center Food Donations, 1st Sunday of Month. Please bring nonperishable foods and place them in the basket in the vestibule of the Sanctuary. Contact **Mara Whitridge** at 386/846-9016 for more information.

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.

DeLand Quakers "Care Coordination Alliance," Ongoing

Our Social Justice team is working with the DeLand Quakers to provide food and essential items to our greater DeLand community. Please contact **Mary Schaperow** at 407/314-6746 or maryschaperow@earthlink.net.

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.

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

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 yorjcrofts@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

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 **2 PM** in the Social Hall. Our mission is environmental stewardship through education, outreach and engaging activities. All are welcome. Contact **Mary Schaperow** at 407/314-6746, schaperow@gmail.com.

- **Hike and Monthly Meeting**, Tuesday, 2/10 at 10 AM, Gemini Springs Park, 37 Dirksen Drive, DeBary (Meet at the parking lot by the dog park). Please bring your own lunch. We will conclude with our February monthly meeting at a park pavilion. Link: [Gemini Springs Park](#)
- **Congregational Yard Cleanup**, Tuesday, 2/17 at 2 PM. We will be trimming and bagging yard debris. Volunteers are welcome and appreciated.
- **Movie Night**, Monday, March 9th at 6:00 PM, Social Hall. We will show the documentary *Fighting for Florida*. Popcorn and soda will be provided.
- **Recipe of the Month: Tempeh and Veggie Sheet Pan Dinner | the best way to make roasted veggies!**
- **Explore:** Visit the D Ranch Preserve in Osteen, which It features 3.5 miles of scenic trails—perfect for hiking, birdwatching, and nature photography. Link: [D Ranch Preserve — Conservation Florida](#)
- **Create:** Make a mandala by creating beauty from foraged nature objects. Link: [Make a Nature Mandala](#)



Men's Discussion Group

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

Our Collective Play-Reading Group

1st & 3rd Mondays at 4 PM in the Social Hall. For people who want to be involved in dramatic experiences, but don't have the time to memorize or rehearse. The format and selections will be decided by the group. Sometimes you will read, other times you may be the audience, depending on the play. Contact **Jim Dries** at 818/522-5468.

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

2nd Thursday of the month at **2 PM** in the Social Hall. Planning of future church services. Contact **Mitzi Dykes** at 386/801-2615 or mdykes@stetson.edu.

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!

- **Protest Sign-Making Party**, Saturday, February 28 at 12 PM, Social Hall. We will provide the supplies and light refreshments. Get creative and make your statement. Extra signs will be donated to protest organizers.

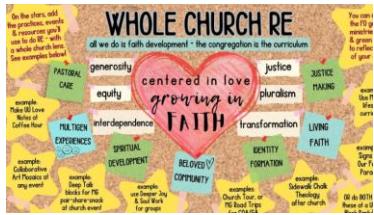
- **No Kings Protests** usually occur on Saturday from 10-12 at Woodland Blvd./New York Ave. (occasionally at Woodland Ave./International Speedway Blvd.) Protest signs are provided. Bring your voice, water, hat, and chair (if needed). See you there! Join us in saving democracy! **50501 (50 protests in all 50 states in 1 day)** is a national grassroots movement supporting democracy and opposing executive overreach. Link: [50501 Protests](#)

Song Circle NOTE DATE CHANGE!

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.

Religious Education Committee

2nd Sunday of the month, **12 Noon**, Yellow Room. We have several ideas for programs, but our priority is to hear from you about your hopes, visions, program goals, and concerns. Contact **Judith Hemphill** at judithwhemphill.com.



Welcoming Congregation Committee

Next meeting Sunday, 2/22, 12 – 1 PM, Yellow Room. UUDel is a certified Welcoming Congregation and actively promotes LGBTQ+ inclusivity. Snacks provided. Contact **Margaritte Johnson** at 516/547-5231 (text).

OTHER GROUP MEETINGS

PFLAG DeLand/Volusia, NOTE DATE CHANGE: 3rd Thursday of the month, 6 – 7:30 PM, UUDel Social Hall

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.

- **BIG ENTERTAINMENT! BIG LOVE! On Sunday, March 1st, 2 - 5:30, UUDel Sanctuary**

JJ Speights and Friends will entertain us for this fundraiser for our own PFLAG chapter. Put this on your social media sites, invite your friends and family, and join us for FUN, MUSIC and LOVE. Tickets are \$20 each. Limited seating so get your tickets early. See Jim or Carol Dries, Marguerite, or Nancy Jacobsen.

Volusia Buddhist Fellowship, Wednesdays, 7 PM, Social Hall

DENOMINATIONAL INFORMATION

UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMING, June 14-21, 2026

Mark your calendar if you are interested in attending the next UUA General Assembly: "Meet the Moment: Together Everywhere." Attend from home or gather up the congregation. Learn more about our larger UU community and its outreach. Check with our board members if you are interested in possibly being a UUDel voting delegate. Link for details: <https://www.uua.org/ga>. From your Denominational Affairs Team, Joyce Palmer & Dawn Taggbloom

