



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Charlotte County
1532 Forest Nelson Boulevard, Port Charlotte, Florida 33952
941.627.4303 – www.uufcc.org – www.facebook.com/uufcc

COMMUNIQUE

Can you say kuh-myoo-nuh-kay?

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM promotes

SEVEN PRINCIPLES as strong values & moral guides:

1st Principle

The inherent worth and
dignity of every person;

2nd Principle

Justice, equity and compassion
in human relations;

3rd Principle

Acceptance of one another and
encouragement to spiritual
growth in our congregations;

4th Principle

A free and responsible search
for truth and meaning;

5th Principle

The right of conscience and the
use of the democratic process
within our congregations
and in society at large;

6th Principle

The goal of world community
with peace, liberty,
and justice for all;

7th Principle

Respect for the interdependent
web of all existence
of which we are a part.

SUNDAY SERVICES

are at 10:30 a.m.
Services are hybrid:
in-person and
on YouTube.
www.youtube.com
UUFCC Port Charlotte

Letter from the President

Dear Members and Friends
of UUFCC,

I am writing this letter with mixed emotions because my term as President of the Board of Trustees will end on March 31st. So this is the last time I will communicate with you in that role via this newsletter. However, I will continue to be deeply committed to our beloved community and am currently considering new opportunities for involvement.

In the meantime, there is much to do. We are currently conducting our **annual pledge drive** which must be completed prior to our annual meeting on March 24th. If you have already made your pledge, thank you! For those of us who are still considering how much to contribute, please complete the form and return it to the Fellowship as soon as possible. **PLEASE BE GENEROUS!**

Soon you will receive the packet which will prepare you for the annual business meeting. In addition to a ballot to elect several new Board members, it will include a proposed budget, and an annual report. Read the report carefully. It will concisely summarize the many things that have been accomplished during the past



**annual
MEETING
March 24th
2024**

year and refer to the continuing and new challenges we will need to address.

I assume that you know that our wonderful **Office Administrator, Mary Jane Williams, has resigned** her position after nearly five years of exceptional service. I find it difficult to express how much I appreciate her as a colleague and dear friend. I am sure that we would not be as healthy and strong without her consistent insights and guidance.

Finally, I want to express my sincere appreciation to my fellow Board members, **Laura Liermann, Laura Anderson, Dick Schwartz, John Lee, Robert Moran, Betty Barriga and Sharon Whitehill.** I have never worked with a more compatible and supportive group.

In faith and gratitude,
Dennis Shaw, President
UUFCC Board of Trustees

SPRING BREAK WITH BAYARD AND HARRY

March is the month for spring break in Florida. Back in 1964, hundreds of young people, and some older ones, came to Florida during their spring break to **help with voter registration**. The good work in support of democracy continues. The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Charlotte County had a beach party in January to offer encouragement.

Our January party started with a blast on a conch shell trumpet, followed by a Harry Belafonte song.

“Turn the World Around”
was our anthem.

The Sunday gathering ended with quotes from Bayard Rustin.

Bayard and Harry
were human rights activists,
both were musicians,
both loved a good party,
and both stayed active
for many decades.

During the 1950s, Harry Belafonte was the “King of Calypso Music.” Southern beaches were racially segregated, but Belafonte’s songs were popular and they were heard in many places. Harry gained fame and fortune. Inevitably, other genres developed and calypso music was no longer in fashion. Retirement was possible for Harry Belafonte.

It didn’t happen. Harry Belafonte supported voter registration drives during the 1960s. He was present for the 1963 March on Washington. After that, he stayed active in human rights work until he was in his 90s.



Rev.
Robert (Bob) Murphy
Unitarian Universalist
Community Minister
Florida



Harry Belafonte



Bayard Rustin

“Turn the World Around” was a Belafonte song written during the 1970s. It’s included in one of our Unitarian Universalist hymn books.

In effect, Bayard Rustin was Martin Luther King’s chief of staff for the 1963 March on Washington. He was a Quaker activist who has helped with a long list of social justice programs. He was also involved in same sex relationships, and, back in the old days, that made Bayard Rustin controversial. He was often pushed into the background. Books by and about Bayard abound, and a 2023 American biographical drama film, *Rustin*, is on Netflix.

March is the month when Unitarian Universalists in Charlotte County remember Harry and Bayard.

Harry Belafonte was born on March 1, 1937. Bayard Rustin was born on March 17, 1912. In a figurative sense, both men were long distance runners. We remember them for their courage and their creativity when they were young, and we remember them for their courage and their creativity when they were old. Nowadays, many young adults feel frustrated and confused because of what’s happening in American culture. Listen to the songs of the elders. The old folks are on the frontlines for human rights work and they know how to stay active during difficult times.

See and hear Harry Belafonte sing “Turn the World Around” on The Muppet Show (1979)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErhJikdIYfw>

Listen to the lyrics. More than a clever calypso-style song, it's one of Belafonte's best.

How could we not share these
CONGA LINE DANCERS
from
Rev. Bob Murphy's
Beach Party Redux Service
held
Sunday, January 28, 2024

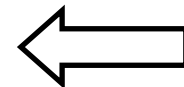


See below on
the far left.

Hey,
Mr. Tambourine Man,
Doug Mattick!



Check out the far right.



Conch Shell
Trumpet Blower
extraordinaire,
Robert Moran!



COMPOST 101

— Bill Stanwood



This countertop kitchen compost bin is just one of many available on Amazon.

The one I own we found at Habitat for Humanity. Target , Walmart, Lowes or Home Depot also have carried them.



- So, we are trying some new ways of reducing negative environmental impacts by keeping our food waste out of our trash. The compost bin behind the Fellowship has accumulated about 100 pounds of stuff people diverted from the landfill/ incinerator-not-good-option. But so many questions about how to participate have led to putting together some more visible answers. Let's talk.

Food waste for our bin can be anything that is or was alive.

One limit to that is NO animal stuff, like meat or bones or grease.

But paper like coffee filters is okay, just not plastic or wax coated, like cups and plates.

Biodegradable bags can go in, but regular plastic will not break down.

When a layer in the bin has too much/many flies and odor, a layer of dirt, paper scraps, or leaves will help.

- The can illustrated is a tool to help with collection. Insects, odors, and mold are especially troublesome in our warm area. We use a covered bowl near the sink that fills every day or two. We used to put stuff in a bag in the refrigerator but that requires space not available now.

Meat not edible goes in small pieces in the toilet.

Bones still end up in the trash.

- A formula for keeping compost healthy, wet, and warm estimates:

One part food waste, grass clippings, and nitrogen rich stuff to

Three parts leaves, paper, and carbon stuff.

But it will all come out dirt in three to six months reliably. So if you don't decide to start vermicomposting with a worm bin that can finish stuff in a month, let's do the good thing with patience.

And ask me whatever.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS DAYS IN MARCH



The 1973 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora prompted the United Nations’
WORLD WILDLIFE DAY — March 3rd
 Celebrate world wildlife. Focus on why wildlife and plants are crucial to all life. Address why loss of habitat is affecting their survival.
 This Year’s Theme:
**Connecting People and Planet:
 Exploring Digital Innovation in Wildlife Conservation.**
<https://wildlifeday.org/en>

THE BIG PLASTIC COUNT began in the UK where for one week schools, households, community groups, and businesses tally their plastic waste. In 2022, nearly 250,000 individuals participated, uncovering that close to two billion pieces of plastic packaging were discarded each week, spurring Greenpeace and Everyday Plastic to join. Participation equals evidence gathering, leading to global discussions, hopefully ultimately bringing an end to plastic pollution.



Take part. Sign up. Count your household plastic waste. Reuse, reduce, recycle!

<https://thebigplasticcount.com/>



Resources are finite. Recycling is important. What gets thrown away? What could be reused without taking more from the environment?

March 18th is GLOBAL RECYCLING DAY.

Check recycling facts and figures. See what can be done to look after the planet for future generations.

Follow Bill Stanwood’s lead and COMPOST!

<https://www.globalrecyclingday.com/>



Learn about the connection between water & peace. Focus on the importance of fresh water. Raise awareness of the world’s 202 billion people who do not have access to safe water.
 2024 Theme:

LEVERAGING WATER FOR PEACE

Do what you can to cooperate on water. Download resources to get involved.

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/water-day>

Unitarian Universalists include, but are not limited to, agnostic, atheist, Buddhist, Christian, earth-centered, Hindu, Humanist, Islam, Jewish, Muslim, Pagan, Taoism, believers in God, and more.

www.uua.org/beliefs/who-we-are

WELCOME

UUFCC WELCOMES OUR NEWEST MEMBER!

Let's introduce ourselves and say hello!

On January 27, 2024, the UUFCC Welcome Committee hosted a NEW TO UU BREAKFAST. Newcomers were invited for informal conversation and socialization. Committee members shared info about Unitarian Universalism, our Fellowship, and UU and UUFCC happenings and events. They also provided an opportunity to connect with other UUs.

Attending UUFCC and/or a New to UU Breakfast may lead to a desire to become a member. How?

“You need to sign the Membership Book. That's how people become official members.

We are not considered Unitarian Universalists by birth or belief, or even by shared practice.

We become Unitarian Universalists by the making and living of a freely-chosen adult promise to walk together in love, working to build and sustain the kind of trust that allows each person to fully belong.”

— Rev. Suzelle Lynch, semi-retired UU minister; Starr King School for the Ministry graduate; three decades of social justice activism; service to UU congregations in Washington, Wisconsin, Texas, and California; songwriter, including hymns, Christmas carols, and pagan chants (her core musical influences include Ella Fitzgerald, punk rock, and Emma’s Revolution)
<https://uucw.org/how-do-i-become-a-member-of-uucw/>



ALEX PRITCHARD

Alex signed our UUFCC Membership Book on Sunday, February 18, 2024.

Originally from Iowa, Alex has lived in other states including Nebraska and most recently Austin, Texas.

He enjoyed teaching debate.

I believe Alex will be a valuable addition to our Fellowship and I am pleased with his commitment.

— Lynn Ritchie, Chair UUFCC Welcome Committee



When we become a member, we are asked to change our postures from guest to host, visitor to steward.

As hosts, we make sure guests find a welcoming and nurturing community.

As stewards, we offer our time and money to sustain and grow our Fellowship.

As members, we agree to serve in these roles and more, in covenant with one another and with our own personal ideals.

MARY VIOLET LEONTYNE PRICE

Mary Violet Leontyne Price (born February 10, 1927) is an American spinto soprano who was the first African American soprano to receive international acclaim. From 1961 she began a long association with the Metropolitan Opera, where she was the first African American to be a leading performer. She regularly appeared at the world's major opera houses, including the Royal Opera House, San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and La Scala. At La Scala, she was also the first African American to sing a leading role. She was particularly renowned for her performances of the title role in Verdi's *Aida*.

Her 1955 televised performance of Puccini's *Tosca*, plus appearances at the San Francisco Opera as Poulenc's *Dialogues des Carmélites* and *Aida*, brought her to international attention. She went on to sing at many of the world's major opera houses with *Aida*, before her successful debut at the Metropolitan Opera (Met) in 1961, as Leonora in Verdi's *Il Trovatore*. Continuing her career there, she starred in a multitude of operas for 20 years, securing her place among the leading performers of the century. One of these works was Barber's *Antony and Cleopatra*, which she starred in for its world premiere. She made her farewell opera performance at the Met in 1985 in *Aida*.

A Lirico spinto (Italian for "pushed lyric") soprano, her musical interpretations were subtle but often overshadowed her acting. She was noted for her roles in operas by Mozart and Puccini, as well as playing Cleopatra in Handel's *Giulio Cesare* and *Poppea* in Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea*. However,



Price in 1981, by Jack Mitchell

the "middle period" operas of Giuseppe Verdi remain her greatest triumph; *Aida*, the Leonoras of *Il Trovatore* and *La forza del destino*, as well as *Amelia* in *Un ballo in maschera*. Her performances in these works, as well as Mozart and Puccini's operas, survive in her many recordings.

After her retirement from opera, Price continued to appear in recitals and orchestral concerts until 1997. After that, she would come out of retirement to sing at special events, including a memorial concert for victims of the 9/11 terrorist attacks at

Carnegie Hall, in 2001. Among her many honors and awards are the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1964, in addition to her 13 Grammy Awards.

Beyond her renowned husband, William Warfield, of interest are her relatives:

- Cissy Houston (first cousin)
- Whitney Houston (first cousin once removed)
- Gary Garland (first cousin once removed)
- Bobbi Kristina Brown (first cousin twice removed)
- Dionne Warwick (first cousin once removed)
- Dee Dee Warwick (first cousin once removed)
- Damon Elliott (second cousin once removed)



Herb Levin

Also interesting, there is a home rebuilding show, *My Home Town*, which we have watched for years, which takes place in Laurel, Mississippi, her birthplace. They have not once spoken of her.

See/Hear
"Deep River: Leontyne Price":

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z4DCxSnJqWA>

UU SOURCES OF OUR LIVING TRADITION

UU congregations “live out [their seven] Principles within a ‘living tradition’ of wisdom and spirituality, drawn from sources as diverse as science, poetry, scripture and personal experience. These are the six sources our congregations affirm and promote:

- “Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;
- “Words and deeds of prophetic people which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;
- “Wisdom from the world’s religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;
- “Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God’s love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;
- “Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit;
- “Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.”

<https://www.uua.org/beliefs/what-we-believe/sources>



BREASTS

Breasts. I wanted to have them so much that I filched from a visitor’s suitcase a pair of foam-rubber falsies.

Pinning them inside my blue Lycra swimsuit, my back to my mother to hide the sudden twin bulges under my shirt,

I left for the beach with a friend, sat for a while on the sandbar, lapped by the summer-warm waves.

Near the perch of the good-looking lifeguard, aware of his gaze as I got to my feet, I tugged down the back of my suit

and pulled up the straps at my chest—which carried my pointy new breasts nearly up to my neck.

Suddenly knowing myself as outlandish as a frilled lizard in courtship display, I plunged into the lake,

unpinned the falsies under cover of water, gave them up to the face-cooling waves that would carry me far down the shore.

by Sharon Whitehill

UUFCC IMMIGRATION JUSTICE COMMITTEE and CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST FUNDRAISER!

ALL FUNDS GO TO OUR UUFCC CAPAS FAMILY!

[CAPAS is Congregational Accompaniment Project for Asylum-Seekers.]

For tickets or info, contact Betty Barriga

MUSIC, LOVE, JOY, PEACE
AND REFRESHMENTS



Certified Beatleologist & award-winning performer -
"Fairie" Elaine Silver

CONCERT / SING-A-LONG

Imagine all the people -

SATURDAY, MARCH 16
3-5 PM

1201 Aqui Esta Drive Punta Gorda
The Congregational United Church of Christ

*60s attire
welcome*

\$25
FOR INFORMATION OR TICKETS:
IMMIGRATIONJUSTICEUU@GMAIL.COM



Fundraiser to support our CAPAS family. CAPAS helps asylum seeking immigrant families go through the arduous path toward permanency, citizenship, and productivity. Sponsored by the Immigration Justice Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Charlotte County and the Social Justice Committee of the Congregational United Church of Christ

**I say love, it is a flower
And you, its only seed.**

— from *The Rose* by Bette Midler



**Pianist Ryan Smith, Choir Director Janet Morrill
and Worship Associate/Choir Member Kay Azar**

OUR TRULY BELOVED COMMUNITY!

Explanations for this photograph abound but all are lovely.

“It was just a thank you gesture.”

“I think it was Bill who organized it, after Janet gave out some sort of thank you gift for the choir's hard work. Bill thought that was ridiculous and that it was Janet who should be thanked.”

“I've found over the years that there are two kinds of choirs: ones that treat each other really well and those that don't have much of a choir.”

"A flower does not think of competing with the flower next to it. It just blooms."

— *Unknown*

CONFESSIONS OF A REDNECK PREACHER

— **Rev. Robert (Bob) Murphy**

I'm a redneck preacher among the Unitarian Universalists. The first rednecks were Celts who were trying to live on the Caribbean islands and in the American South. The new arrivals worked as commercial fishermen, and they worked in the fields, and some were pirates and smugglers.

The Celts are famous for fair skins, and we're also famous for sunburns. I had terrible sunburns when I was a child and, in my old age, I may pay the price. I had my first skin cancer operation in February. I have some large bandages on my chest and a happy recovery is expected during the weeks ahead. My physician has given me information to share with my fellow rednecks and with other folks. Most skin cancer is caused by the ultraviolet radiation that comes from Sol Invictus. **Higher temperatures and the depletion of the ozone layer increase the risk of skin cancer.** Some medications and HIV/AIDS may complicate the situation. Proceed with caution.

My wife (Lyn Dalzell) and I are involved in **health equity ministry**. The goals for health equity ministry are easy to explain. People want to have control over their bodies. Health education, disease and injury prevention, and community empowerment are important. Suffering can be reduced, and, for many people, this is why organized religion exists. Neighbors can help each

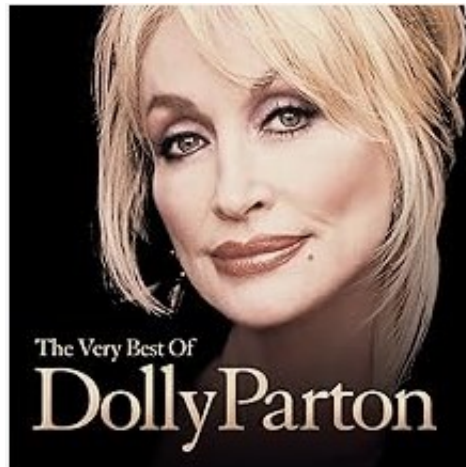
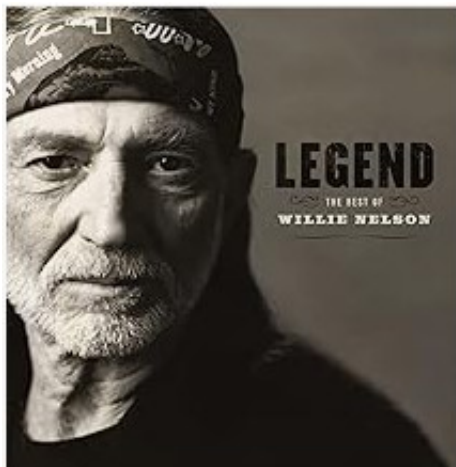
other. It's an old tradition in many places in the world.

The Celtic cultures are being shaped, and reshaped, in the twenty-first century. The month of March is the great month for Celtic holidays. **Saint Patrick's Day (March 17)** receives lots of attention. However, the Irish aren't alone among the Celtic peoples. **Saint David's Day (March 1st)** is an important holiday for the Celts in Wales. **Saint Piran's Day (March 5th)** is celebrated in Cornwall. Unitarians in the British isles are involved. In the American South, conversations about the Celtic cultures often connect to Scotch-Irish (Scots-Irish) experience in places like Appalachia.

As discussions about diversity, equity, and inclusion develop:

**Keep the rednecks in mind.
Many feel marginalized
in a changing environment.
Go easy on the ethnic jokes and
try to get beyond old prejudices.**

If you're trying to understand your redneck neighbors, country music is suggested as a starting place. Country songs are often driven by narratives and the stories are important. The Ken Burns' television series, "Country Music," is recommended.



HISTORY REPEATING ITSELF THE ARAB ISRAELI CONFLICT

— **Stephanie Garrett**

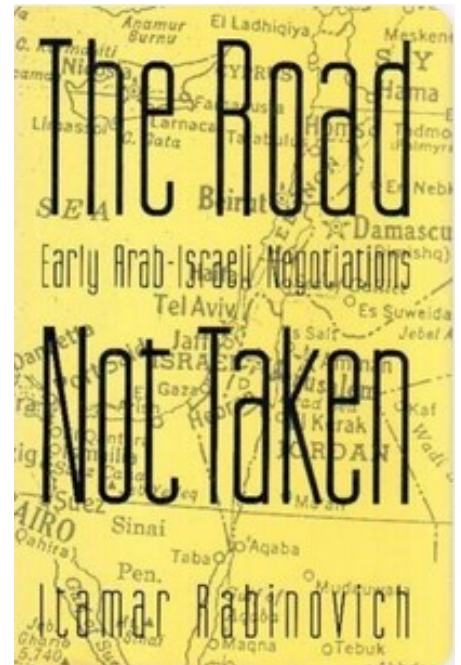
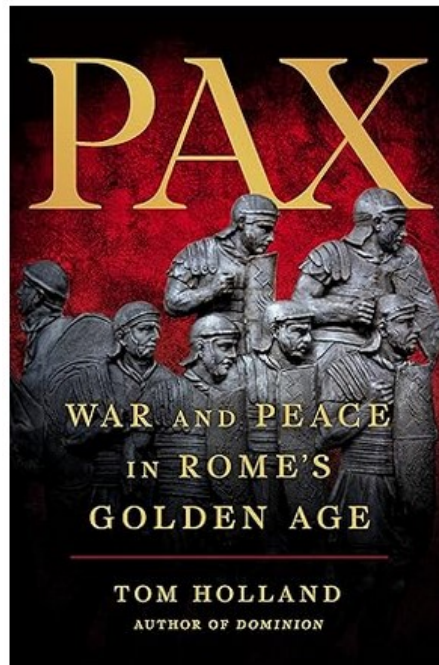
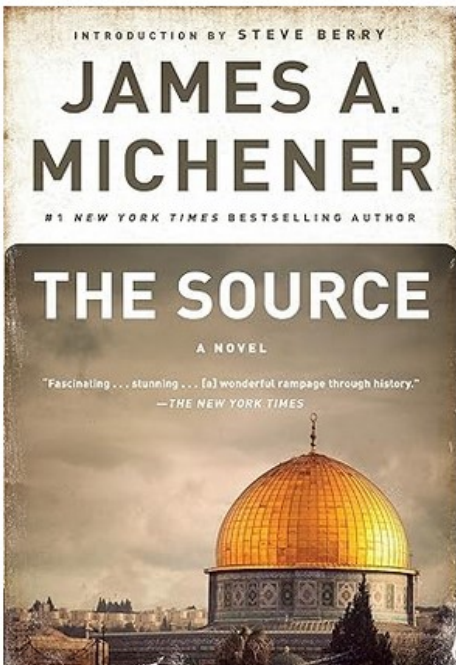
My Grandmother had an expression I still hear in my mind. History will repeat itself if lessons are not learned. Addressing her three grandchildren, it meant you do that again and there will be consequences. Consequences can be negotiated and could be a good thing. The choice is peace for all concerned or continuous discord.

Trying to get to the beginning of the Arab Israeli discord, I thought about what I already knew. One of the first books I read about Israel was “The Source” by James Michener. Very long fiction based on known history, it starts in the pre-monotheistic era and ends in 1948. Still available at bargain prices.

The next period explored was that of the Roman Empire which included Western and Central Europe, the Near East and portions of North Africa. A control for almost 500 years. The book: “PAX: War and Peace in Rome’s Golden Age” by Tom Holland. In the first and second centuries,

it seems that Rome and its powerful neighbor, successive Persian Regimes (ruling what is now Iraq and Iran), spent a lot of time at war. Rome trying to suppress a Jewish revolt and against Palestinian rule. Rome got to decide who was to rule its various territories. In the third century, the limited conflict between Rome and Persia broke down and they battled for almost 30 years.

Palestine is the birthplace of monotheism (Christianity, Judaism and Islam) and has been under the control of many including ancient Israel. Of most importance to the conflicts of today is an awareness of the rule of the Ottoman Empire, the British Empire, and since 1948 its lands were divided between the West Bank, Israel and the Gaza Strip. The conflict is about a common land, language (initially Arabic), and culture. A final recommendation is “The Road Not Taken: Early Arab-Israeli Negotiations” by Itamar Rabinovich, former Israeli ambassador to the United States 1993-1996.



PFLAG PORT CHARLOTTE CHAPTER HELD ITS FIRST FUNDRAISING EVENT

On February 17th, PFLAG Port Charlotte Chapter held its first fundraising event at Scotty's Kick Start Saloon in North Port. Three nonprofits benefited: Crestwood Circus Ranch, ARAY and PFLAG.

I recently heard that "isolation is the #1 health hazard in the U.S." These three nonprofits deal with this issue by reaching out to many groups of people.

Crestwood Circus Ranch started in 2017 with over 60 rescue animals and circus camps for kids. As owners of a senior moving company, they started the Olde Time Traveling Menagerie. They brought domestic and exotic all star animals to Southwest Florida Senior Facilities. The ranch has a unique Old West party and wedding venue and has the most requested community service program in Sarasota and Charlotte Counties.

The second nonprofit is ARAY (All Rainbow and Allied Youth). 70% of LGBTQI+ youth have been bullied at schools. ARAY provides a drop-in space for youth 20 and under to connect, have fun, paint, watch movies and more. A safe space without fear or judgment for LGBTQI+ youth and allies. So that means all are welcome.

The third nonprofit is PFLAG Port Charlotte Chapter, providing support and education for parents, friends and families of LGBTQI+ youth and adults. PFLAG National was founded 50 years ago.



PFLAG Port Charlotte meetings are at UUFCC



The local community was supportive with contributions for prizes.

We want to thank:

- Starbucks Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte
- Fred Astaire Dance Studio, North Port
- North Port Natural Florist
- Gilded Grape Winery & Bar, Punta Gorda
- Jets Pizza, North Port
- Sharks Fish House Restaurant, North Port
- Blue Tequila, North Port
- Tarpon Point Grill and Marina, Venice
- Beef 'O' Brady's, North Port
- BOM, Port Charlotte
- Yogurt Mountain, Port Charlotte
- Thai Bistro, Venice
- Panera, North Port
- Unwined, Punta Gorda
- Puttin' on the Ritz Color Street Nails
- Jeffrey Hyde, House Manager, Venice Theater
- John Lee

PFLAG is so appreciative of the support of UUFCC, of the LGBTQI+ community and allies. PFLAG plans to give back by planning social gatherings for all.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

**03-09-24, noon to 4 pm
PFLAG & ARAY BOWLING SOCIAL
at Treasure Lanes, PC**

**04-20-24, 7 pm
DRAG QUEEN BINGO
Scotty's Pub, North Port**

Moving forward with love,
PFLAG Port Charlotte Chapter
staff and supporters thank you all!

Patrick Eaton, President
PFLAG Port Charlotte

The UUFCC Book Group

will discuss
The Road Back
 by *Erich Maria Remarque*

1:30 pm, Wednesday, March 27th, at the Fellowship
Any and all are always invited and welcome anytime.

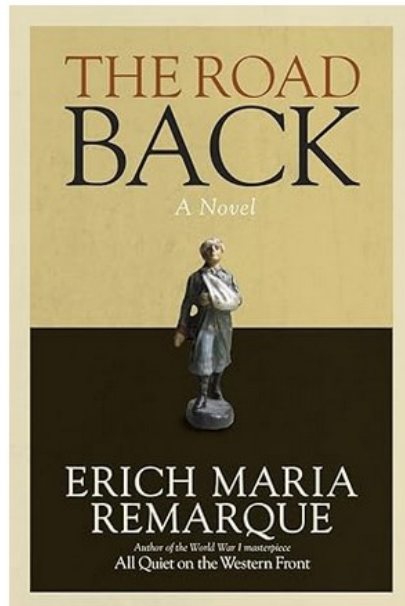


Mary Jane Williams
 UUFCC Office Admin. and
 UUFCC Book Group Chair

Per Amazon.com:

This is a sequel to the masterpiece *All Quiet on the Western Front*. *The Road Back* is a classic novel of the slow return of peace to Europe in the years following World War I.

After four grueling years, the Great War has finally ended. Now Ernst and the few men left from his company cannot help wondering what will become of them. The town they departed as eager young men seems colder, their homes smaller, the reasons their comrades had to die even more inexplicable.



For Ernst and his friends, the road back to peace is more treacherous than they ever imagined. Suffering food shortages, political unrest, and a broken heart, Ernst undergoes a crisis that teaches him what there is to live for—and what he has that no one can ever take away.

“The world has a great writer in Erich Maria

Remarque. He is a craftsman of unquestionably first rank, a man who can bend language to his will. Whether he writes of men or of inanimate nature, his touch is sensitive, firm, and sure.”

“Peace is not the absence of war, but the presence of justice.”

“War does not determine who is right — only who is left.”

— Erich Maria Remarque, *The Road Back*

An Elevator Speech
 Unitarian Universalists gather in community to support one another's individual spiritual journeys, trusting that openness to one another's experiences will enhance their own understanding of their own links with the divine, with history, and with one another.
 — UU Rev. Jonalu Johnston, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
<http://archive.uuworld.org/2003/06/affirmations.html>

The UUFCC Book Group Schedule Fall 2023 thru Spring 2024			
10-25-23	Circe	Madeline Miller	F
11-29-23	Under a White Sky – The Nature of the Future	Elizabeth Kolbert	NF
12-27-23	The Matzah Ball	Jean Meltzer	F
01-31-24	Book Woman of Troublesome Creek	Kim Michele Richardson	F
02-28-24	A Little Devil in America Notes in Praise of Black Performance	Hanif Abdurraqib	NF
03-27-24	The Road Back (sequel to All Quiet on the Western Front, but no need to read first)	Erich Maria Remarque	F
04-24-24	The Great Alone	Kristin Hannah	F
05-29-24	The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks	Rebecca Skloot	NF



THE IDES OF MARCH



I remember the phrase “Beware the Ides of March” from High School English class. Back in the last century, world classics, including Shakespeare, were required reading for many. I knew it was from Julius Caesar and had to do with war, a favorite Roman pastime. But what was the meaning or warning? I discovered that the term may not only have been used by Shakespeare, but originally referred to the full moon in ancient times. It occurred on the 15th of certain months, March being one. Seems in this Shakespeare tragedy a soothsayer warned Caesar that he would be assassinated on that day, and he was by his friend Brutus. One last thought, **March is named for the Roman God of War.** It was the time to resume military campaigns with winter ended.

The month of March also brings the **vernal equinox**, the beginning of spring and the return to daylight savings time for many of us. It begins **Ramadan**, the 10th day of the calendar, ninth month of the Islamic calendar and lasts until April 9th. It celebrates the revealing of the first verses of the Qur’an.

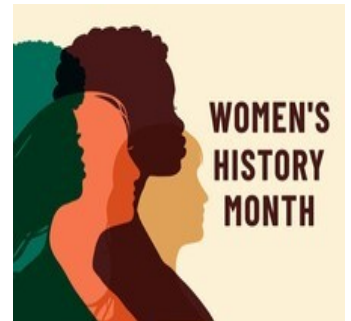
There is **Saint Patrick’s Day** on the 17th with the wearing of a shamrock used by the Saint to explain the trinity.

March 24th **Palm Sunday**, March 29th **Good Friday**, and March 31st **Easter** are Christian holy days depicting the last days of the prophet Jesus. Easter is also recognition of the **pagan goddess Estero**, giving Easter it’s name. She was the Germanic goddess of spring. March also brings **Women’s History Month** along with **International Women’s Day**, both of which recognize the achievements and progress towards women’s rights and continuing struggles. The status of women is still in a state of flux worldwide based on religion, politics, prejudice, culture and tradition, among other obstacles. Even in the drafting of our Constitution, the words of Jane Adams to her husband John, “Remember the ladies,” didn’t get any traction. Perhaps if Jane had cited **Matthew 15:21-28**, she would have shown that Jesus granted the wish of a Canaanite Woman (a Gentile) a miracle. She challenged him and won after he stated he was to feed only Jews referring to “her kind” as dogs.

In closing, March is the end of the fiscal year at UUFCC. **Annual reports** should be in by the time you receive this issue of our newsletter.



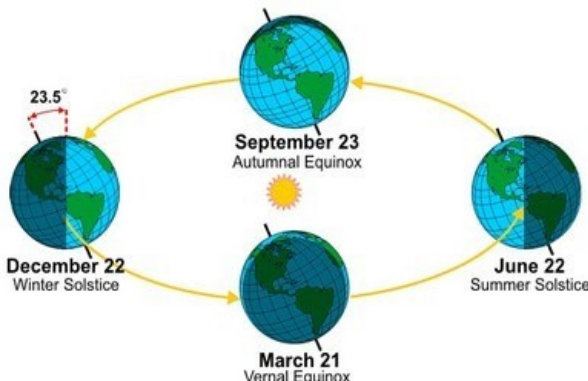
Stephanie Garrett



Unitarian Universalism is a liberal religion characterized by a free and responsible search for truth and meaning.

Unitarian Universalists assert no creed, but instead are unified by their shared search for spiritual growth, guided by a dynamic, living tradition.

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UnitarianUniversalism



COMPASS GROUP & FOODBUY VISIT CIW AS FAIR FOOD PROGRAM'S RAPID EXPANSION CONTINUES

Article from <https://ciw-online.org/>, reprinted with permission

— **Ted Zawistowski, Interim Chair, Social Justice Committee**

“As a long-standing participating buyer in the Fair Food Program [FFP] since 2009, **Compass Group** actively supports FFP in their goal to expand certification to more growers across the industry.”

“While this program started in the tomato fields of Florida, through the expansion of FFP certification, as it reaches and grows to new states and countries of origin, nothing is out of scope!”

“Representatives from **Compass Group USA** and its supply chain partner **Foodbuy** kicked off the new year with a visit to Immokalee FL, a farmworker community where the **Presidential Medal-winning FFP** was born, to see FFP in action and brainstorm ways to collaborate in FFP's ever-accelerating expansion. As a longtime Participating Buyer of FFP, **Compass is an invaluable partner in bringing FFP's industry-leading protections to thousands of farmworkers across the country.**”

“In Compass' own words, “**FFP harnesses the power of consumer demand to give farmworkers a voice** in the decisions that affect their lives, and to eliminate the longstanding abuses that have plagued agriculture for generations.” With a visit to a participating tomato farm — and not just any participating farm, but **Pacific Tomato Growers**, the very first major farm to sign a FFP agreement with **CIW** — as well as a presentation by FFP Standards Council, the third-



Coalition of Immokalee Workers
www.ciw-online.org



www.compass-usa.com



www.fairfoodprogram.org



www.foodbuy.org



www.sunripecertified.com

party organization that monitors and enforces FFP, Foodbuy and Compass representatives got to see FFP's transformative power up close. “

“Where before there was a climate of fear and silence for vulnerable farmworkers, now there is what one labor expert called “**the best working environment in American agriculture**” on FFP farms. When Compass first signed an agreement with CIW in 2009, FFP was still nothing more than a concept, an untested theory of change. Today, 15 years later, FFP protects tens of thousands of farmworkers harvesting over a dozen crops in ten states and three continents, with an unparalleled track record of change and thousands of more workers and dozens of more crops ready to be included in the near-future.”

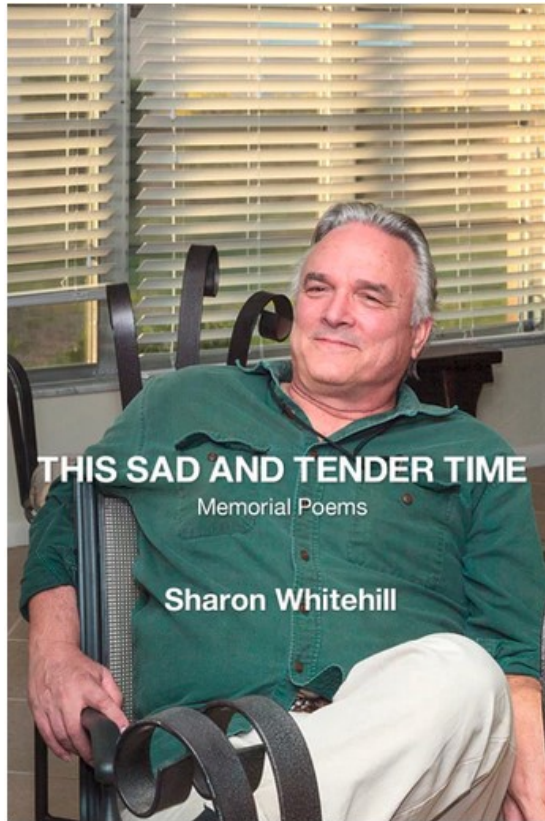
“Over that same period, FFP's Code of Conduct has continued to grow and evolve, constantly adding new standards to meet the ever-changing challenges facing the agricultural industry, from the COVID-19 pandemic to field safety issues to climate change, with industry-leading enforceable protections saving countless farmworkers' lives and helping growers and buyers alike meet their sustainability goals. For all these reasons and more, **FFP is recognized by the US Department of Agriculture as the highest level of human rights protection** (“Platinum Level”) in US agriculture for H-2A workers.”

POETRY READING AT UUFCC

On Sunday, January 28th, at 1 pm, author, poet and UUFCC member Sharon Whitehill read poems from her most recently published book. Sharon’s book contains memorial poems on her husband’s passing. It is for sale through her. There were about 30 in attendance.

A former English professor at Grand Valley State University in Michigan, Sharon retired to Florida with Jim Meloy, her beloved husband of 30 years and staunch supporter of her every endeavor. Her previous publications include two scholarly biographies and two memoirs.

In retirement, Sharon was finally able to indulge her long-deferred wish to focus on her own writing rather than on papers from her English classes. Most recently, poetry has become her favored mode of self-expression, resulting in two chapbooks and a full collection.



Jim Meloy, to whom this volume is dedicated, was that rare creature, a man who could (and did) willingly talk about his and others’ emotions. Though he was diagnosed with chronic fatigue syndrome just a few years after the couple met, and eventually had to give up on his beekeeping business, he never lost his quirky and ebullient manner. Generous, intelligent, funny, and kind, he remained grateful always for what he called “the gift of consciousness.”

The poems in *This Sad and Tender Time* were written during the year following Jim’s sudden death at age 73, in August of 2021. Sharon remains (and continues to write) in their house in Port Charlotte, Florida—alone but not lonely, as her daily companions are two big dogs and two cats.



Photos provided by Stephanie Garrett

RIGHT TO READ FESTIVAL — ALL BOOKS FOR ALL PEOPLE

On February 24, 2024, the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Venice and the Social Justice Alliance of the Florida Suncoast held a Right to Read Festival on the grounds of UUCV.



UUFCC's Myrna Charry ↑



More RIGHT TO READ, p.19



UUFCC's Ruth Volpe (on left) has a look ↑

RIGHT TO READ from p.18

Sponsors included UUA, UUCV, UUFCC, UU of Sarasota, and the Venice Interfaith Community Association.



Photos provided by Myrna Charry and Betty Barriga

More RIGHT TO READ, p.20

RIGHT TO READ from p.19

Speakers included James Abraham, Port Charlotte publisher and author;
 Martha Bireda, Punta Gorda writer and history reenactor;
 Tom Edwards, Sarasota County School Board member;
 Zander Moricz, social justice organizer for SEE (See Equity through Education);
 Kent Oliver (from Nashville) of the Freedom to Read Foundation/American Library Association;
 Rob Sanders (Tampa), award-winning LGBTQIA+ children’s book author;
 and, Carrie Seidman, journalist, Sarasota Herald-Tribune.



UUFCC’s Betty Munford stylin’ with her new face painting from Patrick Eaton, PFLAG Charlotte County President (and UUFCC member), at the Right to Read Book Fair.



WHAT:

COALITION OF IMMOKALEE WORKERS FIRST FARMWORKER FREEDOM FESTIVAL ARTS AND CULTURE IN CELEBRATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

A three-day celebration of farmworkers' human rights featuring:

- CIW's famed mobile Modern-Day Slavery Museum;
- A benefit concert featuring popular Guatemalan, Mexican and Haitian musical acts;
- An original farmworker theater;
- An art exhibition;
- A two-story tall, life-like, animated farmworker puppet named Esperanza walking the streets of Palm Beach, giving voice to the country's farmworker community in their ongoing fight for fundamental human rights.

WHEN: March 8-10, 2024 — Spanning three days

WHERE: Bradley Park, Palm Beach FL 33480 — in the heart of Palm Beach, home to many businesses and financial leaders with the power and responsibility to help expand FFP to new farms and friends.

HELP: DONATIONS ARE NEEDED TO OFFSET COSTS for shirts, flyers, buses, food and water for workers, allies and more who volunteer:

<https://secure.everyaction.com/glp1kkAkOUqAdTRX8Y1BNA2>

WANNA KNOW WHERE VEGANS GO?

CAFÉ EVERGREEN

Breakfast, lunch and dinner
801 Tamiami Trail South,
Nokomis, FL 34275
941-412-4334



CELTIC RAY PUBLIC HOUSE

Has a vegan entrée: Vegan Curry.
145 E. Marion Ave
Punta Gorda FL 33950
941-916-9115



CURRY AND KABAB (Indian)

Extensive vegan section on menu.
3492 Tamiami Trail
Port Charlotte FL 33952
941-979-8080



LILA'S

Over the top scrumptious!
1576 Main Street
Sarasota FL 34236
941-296-1042

MANGO BISTRO

Has separate vegan menu.
Only open for breakfast and lunch.
301 W. Dearborn Street
Englewood FL 34223
941-681-3500



MINT ASIAN CUISINE

She can make almost everything on the menu vegan: just specify!
209 W Olympia
Punta Gorda FL 33950
941-621-8259



NAN'S THAI NOODLE

Murdock Carrousel Shopping Center
1900 Tamiami Trail, #112
Port Charlotte FL 33948
941-624-0778

PIONEERS PIZZA

Upon request, they will use vegan sauce and vegan cheese. In addition, they have a ton of veggie toppings.
4560 Tamiami Trail
Port Charlotte FL 33980
941-235-2424

THE CHEF THAI SUSHI BAR & GRILL

Near UUFCC
2150 Tamiami Trail
Port Charlotte FL 33948
941-883-6800

VILLAGE BREWHOUSE

Has a few vegan dishes. In Fishermen's Village
1200 W Retta Esplanade, Unit G-36
Punta Gorda FL 33950
941-417-8764

Several other places serve impossible burgers or hummus.

GO VEGAN



COMPASSION



NONVIOLENCE



FOR THE ANIMALS



FOR THE PLANET



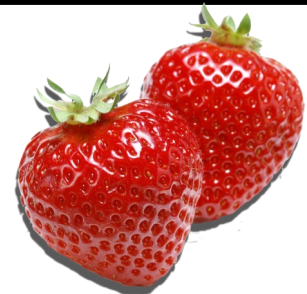
FOR THE PEOPLE

SPINACH-STRAWBERRY SALAD



Katherine Stanwood

**It's
strawberry
season!**



DRESSING INGREDIENTS

- 1/4 c sugar
- 2 TBSP sherry or white wine vinegar
- 1 1/2 tsp sesame seeds, toasted
- 1 1/2 tsp olive oil
- 1 tsp minced red onion
- 3/4 tsp poppy seeds
- 1/4 tsp Hungarian sweet paprika
- 1/8 tsp salt

SALAD INGREDIENTS

- 6 cups torn spinach (about 1#)
- 2 cups halved strawberries
- 2 TBSP slivered almonds, toasted

DIRECTIONS

To prepare dressing, combine all dressing ingredients in a jar, cover tightly, and shake vigorously.

To prepare salad, combine spinach and strawberry halves in a large bowl; toss gently. Pour the dressing over the spinach mixture, toss gently to coat.



**LOOK
AT THIS**



**UUFCC
GENEROSITY!**

**MAKE A
DIFFERENCE**

**SECOND
HELPING**

Your NOVEMBER 2023 Donations Totaled
\$855.00 which was given to:



**Free food & hygiene items for
those in need living with HIV/
AIDS and their dependents.**
chapsfoodpantry.com • 941-625-2552

Wow!

**PEACE GARDEN
ENGRAVED PAVERS**

Honor beloved UUFCC
members and friends
AND help UUFCC.

\$75 buys one paver of which
\$45 gets donated to UUFCC

Use **ORDER FORM**
in **WEEKLY UPDATE**



ENDOWMENT

Honor beloved Fellowship members
and friends *AND* help UUFCC.

Endowment funds assure
UUFCC's financial future and
further UU principles and practices.

Make contribution to:
UUFCC Endowment Fund
and on check memo line write
"In Memory of [beloved's name]"

In Memory

Of...



UUSC CAPAS

Congregational Accompaniment
Project for Asylum Seekers
and UUFCC are
assisting a Venezuelan
family seeking asylum.

YOU CAN HELP!

- Donate clothing, diapers, food, filing fees, etc.
- Provide transportation to school, appointments, etc.
- Translate for the host family.
- Plan a recreational outing.
- **DONATE MONEY!**



**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED**



SUNDAY SERVICES

March
Theme

TRANSFORMATION

SECOND SUNDAY SECOND HELPING

MARCH RECIPIENT
**ENVIRONMENTAL
CONSERVANCY
OF NORTH PORT &
SURROUNDING AREAS**
941-218-9775
Providing greenspace
for wildlife/native plants/
native trees to thrive.
NPconservancy@gmail.com

CONGREGATIONAL COVENANT

*"Covenant" is Latin for "walking together."
This Covenant is a living, dynamic document
describing how we intend to live the Principles
we value in our religious community.*

*We, the members of UUFCC,
covenant to support and cherish all
our members and friends and
encourage each other to honor these
high standards of relationship.*

*We value a free, open, and mutually
respectful exchange of ideas. We
honor all voices and encourage
thoughtful freedom of expression.*

*We respect each other's views,
backgrounds, and spiritual ideas. We
listen to each other without judgement
or interruption and speak directly with
a person instead of about a person.
We will address issues and behaviors,
rather than people and personalities.*

*We will be considerate but
courageous in name behavior that
diminishes our community. We offer
forgiveness and understanding and
expect that from each other. In all
situations, we strive to honor
everyone's dignity and wellbeing.*

*We trust this Covenant will help us
work well together to make decisions,
solve problems, and express
differences of opinion in a consider-
ate, respectful, and genuinely caring
way.*

03-03-24 THE BEAUTY OF OUR SOULS

Speaker: Rev. Ann Barker
Worship Associate: Laura Anderson

03-10-24 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVANCY OF NORTH PORT & SURROUNDING AREAS

(Second Sunday Second Helpings are for worthy organizations in our community to intentionally support their good work.)
Speaker: Edie Dreist
Worship Associate: Sharon Whitehill

03-17-24 TRANSFORMATION: WHEN A SCIENTIST GOES TO SEMINARY

Speaker: Chrystal Reichard
Worship Associate: Shelly Canterbury

03-24-24 I THINK I WILL NEVER SEE

Speaker: Rev. Amy Kindred
Worship Associate: Jackie Williamson

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING after service.

03-31-24 SURPRISES IN THE BIBLE

Speaker: Dave Martin
Worship Associate: Ryan Richardson

THE BOOK OF LIFE

Your Book of Life entries or announcements you would like read from the pulpit Sunday mornings are important. Make sure your entry or announcement gets read on Sunday morning; send it to:

If you have an emergent/urgent need to be announced after that, please call the worship associate directly. See info in Weekly Update.

bookoflife@uufcc.org

by 6:00 p.m. Saturday



Your
Worship
Associate
Committee



- 03/02 Trudy Gerhardt
- 03/10 Debbie Conrad
- 03/11 Trisha Lane
- 03/14 David Martin
- 03/18 Kenneth Brennen
- 03/31 Myrna Charry

For a Birthday Shoutout, contact Stephanie Garrett
editorialboard@uufcc.org

Weekly Events

Sundays — 09:00 am Conversation Among Friends

10:30 am Worship Services

Wednesdays – 07:00 pm Happy Hour with John Lee

Links

Use **UNIVERSAL ZOOM** for most activities
<https://zoom.us/j/93526372148>

To add to **SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS** or **BOOK OF LIFE**
 email bookoflife@uufcc.org by Saturday night

CONVERSATION AMONG FRIENDS
<https://zoom.us/j/95584243345>

CHALICE CIRCLES have their own Zoom links.

Azar Chalice Circle
<https://zoom.us/j/92886172999>

IMMIGRATION JUSTICE COMMITTEE
<https://zoom.us/j/97789863043pwd=c2tUenpGMmhjSExaUINOL3VHNIk5UT09>

UUFCC Social Group Sign-Up
social-uufcc@googlegroups.com

Spanish for Beginners
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81408957224pwd=cUhGejBuOVVRckU0L1R2SkM2SXhZQT09>

MARCH 2024 EVENTS

- 03/01 Fri 04:00 pm Art Reception
- 03/02 Sat 10:00 am Worship Associates
- 03/03 Sun Noon PFLAG-PC Steering Cmte Meeting
- 03/04 Mon 12:30 pm Williams/Whitehill Chalice Circle
- 04:00 pm Azar Chalice Circle
- 03/05 Tue 08:00 am Men's Coffee Group
- 03/06 Wed 11:00 am Membership Committee
- Noon Brown Bag Luncheon
- Noon Policies & Procedures Manual
- 04:00 pm Immigration Justice Committee
- 06:00 pm Choir Rehearsal
- 03/07 Thu 04:00 pm Buddhist Meditation
- 07:00 pm AA
- 03/08 Fri 01:00 pm Communications Committee
- 03/10 Sun 11:45 am Social Justice Committee
- 03/11 Mon 10:30 am Program Council
- 01:30 pm Shaw Chalice Circle
- 03/12 Tue 08:00 am Men's Coffee Group
- 03/13 Wed 10:00 am Caring Committee
- 01:00 pm Open Art Studio
- 06:00 pm Choir Rehearsal
- 03/14 Thu 08:45 am Port Charlotte Garden Club
- 04:30 pm Buddhist Meditation
- 07:00 pm AA
- 03/16 Sat Concert at Congregational United Church of Christ in Punta Gorda
- 03/17 Sun BIRTHDAY CAKE SUNDAY
- 03/18 Mon 10:00 am Art Committee (Zoom)
- 12:30 pm Williams/Whitehill Chalice Circle
- 04:00 pm Azar Chalice Circle
- 06:00 pm PFLAG-PC Support Meeting
- 03/19 Tue 08:00 am Men's Coffee
- 07:00 pm Sierra Club
- 03/20 Wed Noon Policies & Procedures Manual
- 04:00 pm Immigration Justice Committee
- 06:00 pm Choir Rehearsal
- 03/21 Thu 02:00 pm Board Meeting
- 04:30 pm Buddhist Meditation
- 07:00 pm AA
- 03/24 Sun **ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**
- 03/25 Mon 01:30 pm Shaw Chalice Circle
- 03/26 Tue 08:00 am Men's Coffee Group
- 03/27 Wed 01:00 pm Open Art Studio
- 01:30 pm Book Group
- 04:00 pm ARAY
- 06:00 pm Choir Rehearsal
- 03/28 Thu 04:30 pm Buddhist Meditation
- 06:00 pm NAACP General Membership Meeting
- 07:00 pm AA
- 03/31 Sun 03:00 pm Secular Community



MISSION: UUFCC offers a caring and diverse religious community. We are guided by reason and conscience, encourage intellectual inquiry, foster individual spiritual growth, and promote social justice and environmental responsibility. *UUFCC PPM.*

PURPOSE: UUFCC is a religious community committed to diversity and social justice where spirituality, reason, compassion, service and fellowship meet. *UUFCC Bylaws Art. III (Adopted 03-27-22).*

VISION: In five years, we, the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Charlotte County, will be a thriving, intergenerational, racially diverse, and Welcoming Congregation. We will have an inspiring minister, committed lay leadership, enhanced facilities, uplifting music and art and vibrant activities and programs that support our mission. *UUFCC PPM.*

WELCOMING: UUFCC strives to practice non-discrimination by embodying what UUFCC hopes to see in the world—a just, loving community in which people are free to be themselves fully and without fear. *UUFCC Bylaws Art. IV (Adopted 03.27.22).* [UUFCC was founded in 1969.]

SUBMISSIONS INFO

COMM **UU** NIQUÉ welcomes submissions of 300 words or less.

Submissions may be edited for spelling, grammar, punctuation, clarity, legal ramifications, length, or general taste at the editors’ discretion. Editors reserve the right to refuse to publish submissions for the same reasons. While acceptance rules are lenient, the editorial board will reject that deemed potentially libelous, racist, hateful, or a personal attack.

Anonymous submissions are not accepted.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT SUGGESTIONS & IDEAS

Yes, we’d like to get to know you if we could ... (Spanky & Our Gang flashback?)

Tell us about you. What is your background? Where are you from?

Tell us about your life journey. What brought you to Florida and when?

Tell us about your career paths. Accomplishments? Interests? Hobbies?

How did you come to UUFCC? What keeps you here?

Tell us about current and past UU roles or involvement.

Something else? You decide! You tell us what you want us to know!

UUFCC directory/archives picture is used unless another is provided.

REALITY CHECK — DISCLAIMER — THE FINE PRINT

Views and opinions expressed in submissions are personal and belong solely to the author/submitter.

Views and opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the official view, policy, Principles, Covenants, or positions of UUFCC or its newsletter editors.

Views and opinions expressed are not intended to malign any religion, ethnic group, organization, individual, or anyone or anything.

Guarantees are not made as to completeness, accuracy, usefulness, or timeliness.

SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER’S INDIVIDUAL SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS

Content is not intended to be negative, divisive, and/or diminishing.

Encourage and value a free, open, and mutually respectful exchange.

Uphold one another’s First Amendment right to free speech.

Take all content kindly and in the spirit in which it was intended.

Cherish our Beloved Community.

UUFCC CONTACTS

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bookoflife@uufcc.org

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choir@uufcc.org

hospitalityandsocial@uufcc.org

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president@uufcc.org

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sundaytech@uufcc.org

worship@uufcc.org

UUFCC

COMM **UU NIQUÉ**

Can you say kuh-myoo-nuh-kay?

EDITORIAL BOARD

Stephanie Garrett

Herb Levin

MaryLou Kennedy

300-word limit articles due

1-wk before last day of month:

editorialboard@uufcc.org

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Clipart from Creative Commons,

unless otherwise indicated.