



VOL. IV, ISSUE 12  
DECEMBER 2025

BIMONTHLY  
ISSUE

VOL. V, ISSUE 1  
JANUARY 2026

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Charlotte County  
1532 Forrest Nelson Boulevard, Port Charlotte, Florida 33952  
941.627.4303 – [www.uufcc.org](http://www.uufcc.org) – [www.facebook.com/uufcc](https://www.facebook.com/uufcc)

# COMMUNIQUE

Can you say kuh-myoo-nuh-kay?

UUFCC—founded in 1969

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM  
promotes

## SEVEN PRINCIPLES

as strong values & moral guides:

### 1<sup>st</sup> Principle

The inherent worth and  
dignity of every person;

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Principle

Justice, equity and compassion  
in human relations;

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Principle

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

### 4<sup>th</sup> Principle

A free and responsible search  
for truth and meaning;

### 5<sup>th</sup> Principle

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

### 6<sup>th</sup> Principle

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

### 7<sup>th</sup> 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](https://www.youtube.com)

## A MESSAGE FROM THE UUFCC BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### A New Year's Resolution for Becoming a Better UU in 2026

In 2026, I'm making a deliberate commitment to become a better Unitarian Universalist—not just in belief, but in how I live day to day. Being UU isn't about intellectual agreement or good intentions; it's about practice. It's about showing up, staying engaged, and letting our values shape real choices, even when that takes effort or humility.

A key part of this commitment is living a more balanced life. For me, balance isn't retreat or self-indulgence—it's sustainability. I can't serve my community, nurture my spirit, or act for justice if I'm running on fumes. In 2026, I'm choosing to honor rest, joy, and connection alongside responsibility and service. A healthier rhythm makes me a more present worshipper, a better listener, and a more reliable partner in shared ministry.

Within the Fellowship, I plan to engage more intentionally in worship and community life—listening deeply, volunteering where I'm needed, and doing the quiet, necessary work that keeps a congregation alive. I want my participation to be thoughtful rather than habitual, grounded rather than rushed.

Beyond Sunday mornings, I'm committing to live our principles with more integrity. That means examining my assumptions, staying open to learning, and acting for justice even when it's uncomfortable. It also means knowing when to step back, recalibrate, and return with clearer purpose.

Becoming a better UU in 2026 isn't about doing more for the sake of doing more. It's about doing what matters—steadily, honestly, and with enough balance to make the work meaningful and lasting.



Robert Moran, President 2025-2027  
Joseph Fenty, Vice President 2024-2026  
Shelly Canterbury, Treasurer 2025-2027  
Laura Anderson, Secretary 2025-2027  
Lorrie Douglas, Trustee 2025-2027  
Mike Krzyzkowski, Trustee 2024-2026  
Laura Liermann, Trustee 2024-2026  
Doug Mattick, Trustee 2025-2027  
Alex Pritchard, Trustee 2025-2027

# A YEAR FOR REVOLUTION

Three points merit some mention at the start of January.

**First:** The American Revolution is still a work in progress.



**There is still a need for “No Kings Day” demonstrations. And there is still a need to fight for democracy and in support of pluralism and religious freedom.**

Systemic racism, economic justice, misogyny, homophobia, and the other forms of oppression were problems in the past. Big government, big corporations, and big religious organizations have tried to manage humanity. Many battles have been fought and many have won, but the resistance to injustice continues.

**Second:** Don't dismiss the old folks. They're needed.



**It's the aging hippies, radical elders, & angry grandmothers who are especially active in voter registration work and in defending homeless people & undocumented immigrants, in part because the old folks know how to resist oppression.**

They registered voters in the 1960s and they marched for peace and women's rights.

The people who have to “downsize,” the people who live with disabilities and chronic medical problems, and the people who are constantly being scammed and manipulated are vulnerable.

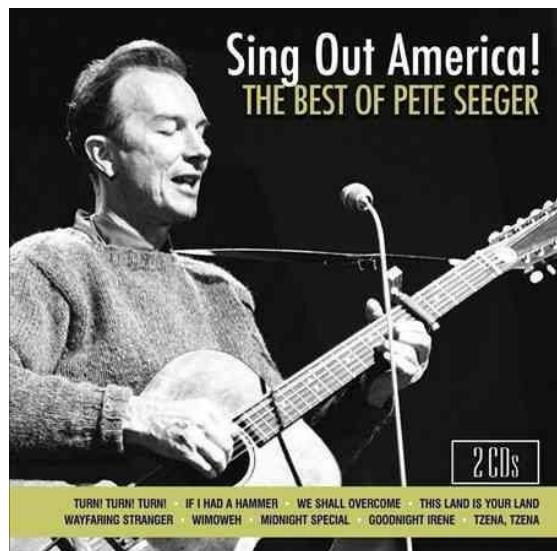
They know they are vulnerable.

**Third:** Yes, there's a need for charity and good government, but these things alone won't create “the beloved community.”



**There's also a need for participatory democracy, mutual aid, and lots of support and affinity groups that teach neighbors how to take care of each other.**

The lesson will be learned, again, during the twenty-first century.



Pete Seeger explained the situation:

**“If there's a world here in a hundred years, it's going to be saved by tens of millions of little things. The powers-that-be can break up any big thing they want. They can corrupt it or co-op it from the inside, or they can attack it from the outside. But what are they going to do about ten million little things?**

**They break up two of them, and three more like them will spring up.”**

Keep these points in mind for the new year.

It's a year for revolution.

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





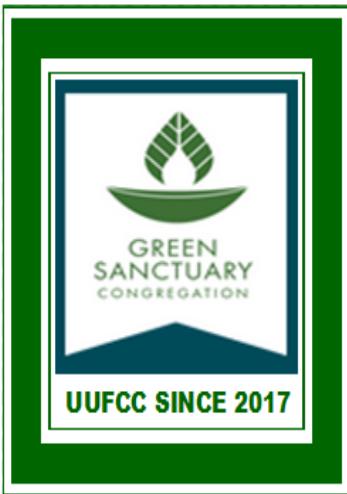
**Trudy Gerhardt** has been a UUFCC member since 2012 and is a UUFCC Art Committee volunteer. She graduated from San Francisco State University with a degree in geography and a teaching credential. Trudy subsequently moved to Florida where she renewed her interest in art, taking art classes at the Cultural Center and later at the Art Guild in Punta Gorda. She is currently the Punta Gorda Visual Arts Center Portrait Studio Coordinator. Trudy is a former member of the Southwest Florida Pastel Society. She has received several awards for her art in Punta Gorda.





#### UU 7th PRINCIPLE

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



**Our UUFC  
GREEN SANCTUARY  
ACCREDITATION  
requires promoting  
eating less meat.**

## EMBRACE THE VEGAN BOOST

### NOURISH YOUR HEALTH WITH PLANTS!

Curious about exploring a vegan lifestyle? One of its most rewarding benefits is the powerful boost it can give your well-being! By focusing on a colorful variety of whole plant foods—think crunchy vegetables, sweet fruits, hearty beans, and nutty whole grains—you fuel your body with nature's finest nutrients. This way of eating is naturally rich in fiber and antioxidants and contains zero dietary cholesterol. Many people discover they feel lighter, manage their weight with greater ease, and enjoy more steady, vibrant energy throughout the day.

The advantages extend far beyond daily vitality. A plant-based diet is wonderful for heart health, helping to maintain healthy blood pressure and cholesterol levels. It's also excellent for balancing blood sugar, which is key in preventing and managing type 2 diabetes. Research also suggests this lifestyle can lower the risk of certain cancers and promotes superb digestive health, thanks to all that gut-loving fiber.

### JOIN OUR COMMUNITY: **THE VEGAN FUN CLUB!**

At the Vegan Fun Club, we celebrate this journey together. Founded in the summer of 2025, we are a welcoming community of vegans and the vegan-curious who share a love for delicious plant-based food, socializing, and having fun. Our mission is to inspire and support plant-based living through community, education, and shared experiences.

We gather to explore fantastic vegan cuisine, learn from each other, and cultivate an inclusive space where everyone—from the newly curious to long-time vegans—feels welcome and uplifted. Our vision is to nurture a more compassionate world where plant-powered living supports our health, protects our planet, and builds connections rooted in kindness and joy.

### COME CONNECT WITH US!

Over the past several months, we've enjoyed potlucks at the Fellowship, shared dinners at Ephesus Mediterranean Grill and Swaad – The Authentic Taste of Indian, and even participated in a lively karaoke night at Heaven Kava. Our meetups often feature fun trivia games, recipe swaps, personal stories, and helpful nutritional insights.

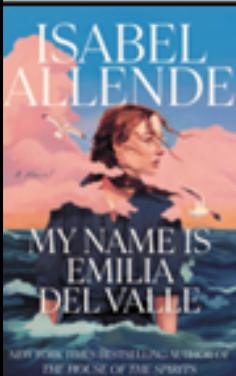
Ready to learn more or join the fun?  
Have questions about the Vegan Fun Club?  
Please reach out to me.  
We can't wait to connect with you!

Joseph Fenty  
[membership@uufcc.org](mailto:membership@uufcc.org)



## UUFCC BOOK GROUP 2025-2026

Usually meets **2:00 PM ON THE LAST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH** in the UUFCC Fellowship Hall. But dates may change so check the schedule. And then join us! Get to know Fellowship members & friends, and explore a variety of topics & genres.



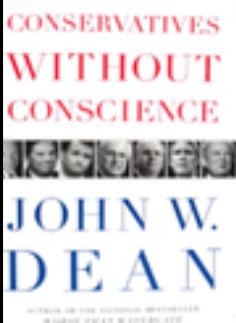
**10-28-25 — Fiction**  
**MY NAME IS EMILIA DEL VALLE**  
by Isabel Allende

1866 San Fran nun has a daughter who becomes a journalist covering Chile's brewing civil war and meets her estranged birthfather.

**02-24-26 — Sci-Fi Classic**

**FAHRENHEIT 451**  
by Ray Bradbury

Fireman's job: destroy books and houses where hidden. Wife spends day w/TV family. Neighbor intros him to past where folks didn't live in fear and they got their ideas from books, not mindless TV.



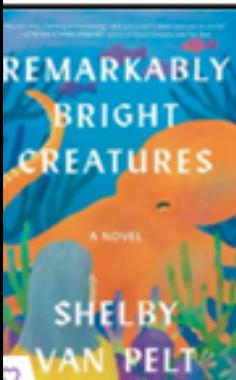
**11-25-25 — Nonfiction**  
**CONSERVATIVES WITHOUT CONSCIENCE** by John Dean

Denounces political conservative practices, charges current Admin with using religious morality and propaganda-like tactics to promote big business & silence alternatives at U.S. Constitution's expense.

**03-31-26 — Nonfiction**

**A CHOSEN FAITH: AN INTRODUCTION TO UU**  
by John Beuhrens & Forrest Church

Exploration of six dimensions of this religious denomination. UU as an appealing alternative to religious denominations that stress theological creeds over individual conviction & belief.



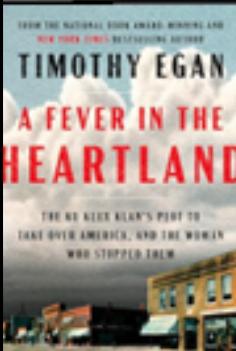
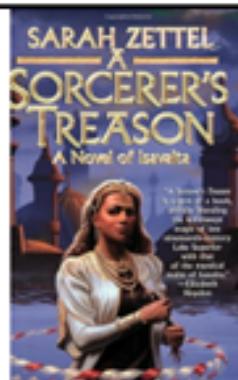
**12-30-25 — Fiction**  
**REMARKABLY BRIGHT CREATURES**  
by Shelby Van Pelt

Widow working night shift at aquarium becomes acquainted with its Giant Pacific Octopus who helps her discover what happened 30 years ago when her son disappeared.

**04-28-26 — Fantasy**

**SORCERER'S TREASON**  
by Sarah Zettel  
Author grew up UU

1899, Sand Island, Wisc.: Lighthouse keeper sees boat foundering, rescues occupant who tells her about a world where magic reigns, & where she is destined to play a role.



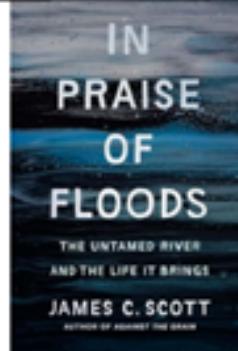
**01-27-26 — Nonfiction**  
**A FEVER IN THE HEARTLAND**  
by Timothy Egan

Riveting story of KKK's rise to power in 1920s, the cunning con man who drove that rise, & the woman who stopped them.

**05-26-26 — Nonfiction**  
**Environmental Science**

**IN PRAISE OF FLOODS**  
by James C. Scott

Examines a particular river's life history, its heartland, how life depends on rivers, & impact of human efforts to control/tame natural process.



# common sense

[kom-uh n -sens] noun • *English*

the ability to think and behave in a reasonable way, a rare form of intelligence that an estimated 1 in 50,000 are born with.

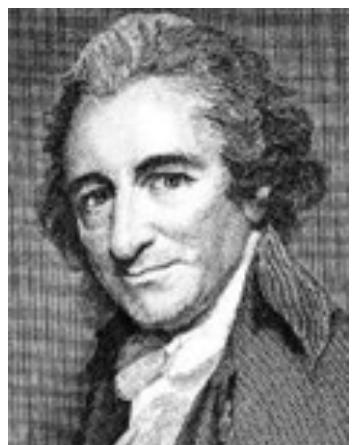
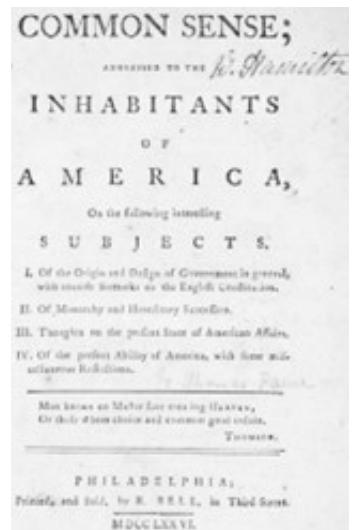
On January 10th, 1776, a patriot by the name of Thomas Paine wrote and published a tract which outlined his vision of a united government. Key themes included:

1. No one has a natural right to rule over others (a reaction to British birthright to govern).
2. Government should be based on the consent of the governed with government formed by the people.
3. The sole purpose of government (a necessary evil according to Paine) is to protect life, liberty and property and should be judged solely on the extent to which it accomplishes this goal.

I was required to read the above document more than once during my school years. Perhaps it's because I am a baby boomer and during my elementary school years, I was taught what it meant to be an American. Raised in a racially and religiously diverse area, I learned to respect and listen to other points of view including racial, religious and that women were more than homemakers. (I can only recall one African American mother who fit the stereotype.)

There always have been conflicts, a natural part of human interaction, such as misunderstandings, differences of opinion and moments of irritation.

—Stephanie Garrett



**COMMON SENSE**  
is not so  
**COMMON**  
-Voltaire

**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](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UnitarianUniversalism)

**Common sense.**

# *The* THOMAS PAINÉ HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

## **thomaspaine.org**



The Thomas Paine Historical Association (TPHA) website provides articles on Paine, a vast collection of known and some soon-to-be-known new works, and much else. TPHA was founded to correct the record on Paine, and rescue it from the negative propaganda and slander perpetrated against him by most historians in the 19th century. Success! TPHA is now on the threshold of making public the findings on Paine's complete writings, after twenty years of research, thanks to the work of the Editorial Board for the Collected Writings of Thomas Paine, staffed by the leading Paine scholars in the world.

In 2025, the US-based Thomas Paine National Historical Association and the UK-based Thomas Paine Society merged to form TPHA, an international consortium and membership association dedicated to Paine's powerful writings and ideas and issues that are as relevant today as they were over 200 years ago.

The Thomas Paine Memorial Association (TPMA) and a coalition of leading secular, historical, and humanist organizations invite the public to the annual celebration of the birth of one of America's most influential Founders — Thomas Paine.

**Thursday, January 29, 2026 at 7PM EST**

### **THOMAS PAINÉ AND THE 250th ANNIVERSARY OF COMMON SENSE: “THE TIMES THAT TRIED MEN’S SOULS — THOMAS PAINÉ’S SERVICE DURING THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR”**

**Attendance is FREE, but pre-registration is required at:**

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/ga-dvEPuR0iLzT5LA45B0w>**

#### **Event Highlights**

Distinguished Opening Remarks from Members of Congress Jamie Raskin and Victoria Spartz, with a special appearance from Benjamin Franklin.

Keynote Presentation from acclaimed historian and author Jack Kelly — whose book *Tom Paine’s War* explores Paine’s firsthand experiences during the Revolution.

A Veteran’s Perspective: Gene Jones of Florida Veterans for Common Sense will speak about Paine’s heroism, the challenges he faced after the war, and why Paine remains a powerful symbol of principled military service today.



## CIW CO-FOUNDER LUCAS BENITEZ LETTER RE TURNING 50 AS CIW CELEBRATES 30th ANNIVERSARY

— Excerpted by Theodore Zawistowski with CIW permission

See full letter at: <https://ciw-online.org/blog/2025/11/lucas-benitez-ciw-co-founder-turns-50-as-ciw-turns-30/>



Dear CIW friends and supporters,

Today, while at home with my beloved wife ... and ... children ..., we started talking, and without even realizing it, our conversation turned to memories from my 50 years of life — a birthday I will celebrate this coming November 23. And yes, how time has passed since I was that child born and raised in Arcelia, a remote town in the state of Guerrero, Mexico, in a family of campesinos.

When I left my town, I knew things would be difficult, but I believed I was prepared. I had only one goal: to find work so that I could help my family. When I arrived in Immokalee, I did find the long-desired job I was looking for. I knew farmwork was hard and heavy, and I thought, I'm ready for this. And so I began working in the tomato and orange fields of South Florida, and along the ... East Coast in the summer season.

Not long after, I realized that the work came with a whole package of human rights violations. I couldn't believe that I was in the United States. It was time to look for solutions to these abuses. And at just 17 years old, I joined with other workers to try to change that imbalance of power. After many meetings of reflection, building awareness, and strengthening commitment within our community, we set out to create our own workers' organization — what we all know today as the CIW, the Coalition of Immokalee Workers.

That is how we began our struggle: with work stoppages, marches that crossed our beautiful Sunshine State, hunger strikes, local marches in Immokalee to end physical violence in the fields, etc., etc., etc. All of that eventually led to the launch of our Fair Food campaign ... which opened the door to a national campaign — one many of you

remember or even had the chance to join.... [T]hough we have achieved many changes, there is still so much more to do.

Through all these years, I truly didn't notice how quickly time passed, or how quickly [my] children ... became young adults. I still remember ..., how we spent their childhood weekends traveling across Florida — and other states — for protests, and how they would say, **“We’re going to demand justice.”** A childhood very different from that of other kids.

... [L]ife ... filled me with satisfaction: being part of nine investigations to put an end to cases of modern-day slavery and helping send more than a dozen abusive employers to jail; ending physical violence in Florida's tomato fields; launching the Fair Food campaign and signing the first Fair Food agreement with Yum! Brands; and later, signing the first grower agreement with one of the oldest and largest tomato companies in the United States, Pacific Tomatoes, marking the beginning of our historic partnership with farmers that has expanded to over 50 growers in more than 20 states and has built “the best working environment in US agriculture.” And now, seeing 14 of the largest corporations in the world implementing these agreements; seeing how this “vaccine” we created here in Immokalee to end the most extreme human rights violations is now spreading across the world — from South Africa, Europe, India, Chile, and Ecuador, and here in the United States across other industries.

[T]hank all of you for being — and continuing to be — here with us in the struggle ... in person, ... in spirit, or through ... financial support....

— Lucas Benítez



Breakfast, lunch & dinner  
801 Tamiami Trail South, Nakomis FL 34275  
941-412-4334



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



315 Taylor St, Punta Gorda FL 33950  
(941) 205-8092



Separate vegan menu.  
Only open for  
breakfast and lunch.  
301 W. Dearborn ST  
Englewood FL 34223  
941-681-3500



Pronounced *lee-lah*:  
fun, whimsical & creative.  
Healthy, organic  
vegetable-centric.  
Over the top scrumptious!  
1576 Main Street  
Sarasota FL 34236  
941-296-1042

V  
E  
G  
A  
N  
S  
E  
A  
T  
O  
U  
T  
T  
O  
O!



1032 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte FL  
941 979 9265



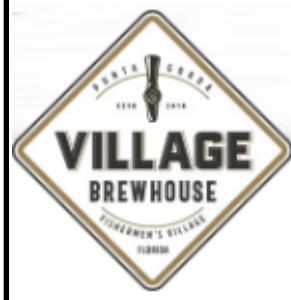
Chef's Thai Sushi Bar & Grill  
Near UUFCC  
2150 Tamiami Trail  
Port Charlotte FL 33948  
941-883-6800



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



Upon request,  
they will use  
vegan sauce &  
vegan cheese.  
Lots of veggie toppings!  
4560 Tamiami Trail  
Port Charlotte FL 33980  
941-235-2424



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

**CENTER FOR ABUSE AND RAPE EMERGENCIES INVITATION TO A **FREE** EVENT**

C.A.R.E

January  
2026**January  
Event****Human Trafficking  
Symposium**

ONE FIGHT. MANY FRONTS. UNITED IMPACT.

***Human Trafficking Symposium*** Thursday, January 15, 2026 8:30 am – 1:00 pm at Charlotte Harbor Event Center, Punta Gorda

Join us for a powerful, community-driven symposium Thursday, January 15, 2026 bringing together law enforcement, outreach organizations, advocates, and service providers to address the complex realities of Human Trafficking. This event will feature expert speakers and is presented by the Center for Abuse and Rape Emergencies.

Whether you are an attendee looking to learn and connect, or a vendor offering resources or services, your presence helps strengthen our shared mission: to bridge the gaps and build a united front against human trafficking.

**Let's make an impact—together.**

Enjoy complimentary refreshments and a light breakfast.

[Click here to reserve your seat.](#)

1/2026

<https://www.ticttailor.com/events/centerforabuseandrapeemergencies/1866643>

# ENDOWMENT FUND

**“From you I receive and to you I give,  
together we share, and from this we live.”**

— “From You I Receive,” Hymn #402, Singing the Living Tradition

The UUE Trust was established in 1991 by two nonmembers of our Fellowship. The initial \$500 donation was to grow through contributions from members and friends in honor or memory of those who have transitioned and for general support of the Trust Fund.

In 2025, the following individuals provided gifts to the Endowment in memoriam: Mary Holly Allison, Stephanie Garrett, Lenora Good, Mary Howard, MaryLou Proudfoot Kennedy, David and Florence Martin, Maureen Peters, Linda Quinn, and Nancy Weaver.

**Funds For General Support:** Recognition for Contributions Greater than



\$1000: **DONALD COURTSAL** (b.1929; d.06-18-2025), our recently deceased UUFCC member (2001) and later UUCOV member, was known for having a gift of understanding math and finances. Don served as a member of the UUFCC Finance Committee and was a member of our choir. He introduced us to the recorder with the Doodlers, a musical group of members and nonmembers who provided musical interludes periodically during Sunday service. Don was also a Trustee of the UUE Society, comprised of those who over time contributed over \$1000. He generously provided, through his estate, a major donation in support of the UUE purpose and principles.

**Thank you from the UUFCC Endowment Fund of Charlotte County Trustees**

MaryHolly Allison, Ken Brennen, Stephanie Garrett,  
Mary Howard, and Delmar Wooden

## UUFCC BYLAWS ARTICLE X PURPOSE OF UU ENDOWMENT

**To use the yield on investments,  
while preserving the corpus, to  
assure the financial future of the  
Fellowship and to further the  
principles and practices of UU.  
UU Endowment Fund operates  
under its own bylaws as an  
independent affiliate of UUFCC.**



## CONTRIBUTIONS

**Honoring Beloved Fellowship  
Members and Friends may  
be made in their name to:**

### UUFCC ENDOWMENT FUND

**Write “In Memoriam of ...”  
on the check memo line.**

**WHAT IS AN ENDOWMENT?**

\$\$\$ → Safe Investments → % → Fellowship

Donations      Safe Investments      Interest      Fellowship

**IT'S A GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING**

## IN MEMORIAM

**"To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die."**  
— Thomas Campbell

## REMEMBERING FELLOWSHIP MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

**SHARON K. WHITEHILL — 07/21/1938—05/31/2025**

Born in Milwaukee WI but said she was from Michigan as that's where she lived, married, had & raised three daughters. Sharon earned a Masters & Ph.D. and was an English Prof for 30 years at Grand Valley State Univ. She was a poet (nearly 150 poems in literary journals & four chapbooks). A UUFCC member since 2001, Sharon often spoke from the pulpit, served on the Board & various committees including the Worship Associates, sang in the choir, taught adult (Elderwise, etc.) classes—Remember her & beloved hubby Jeff Meloy's *Happiness Class!*—and she loved spending time with family and friends.

**JAMES QUENTIN "QUE" BURGESS — 02/14/1929—08/19/2025**

Born in Louisa KY and a veteran of the US Navy who taught others to use electromagnetic equipment, Que attended Ohio State University and spent his career as an engineer. He was active in PFLAG, supporting gender equality for all. He is survived by children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and his wife, Susan "Sue" Archer Burgess. Que was a longtime UU and a member of UUFCC since 2006. He frequently spoke from the pulpit, participated in the UUFCC Mystical Experiences Group, and was instrumental in starting and coordinating the UUFCC Conversation Among Friends group before Sunday services.

**ROBERTA "BOBBIE" COLE — 02/02/1933 — 10/25/2024**

Bobby found UUFCC a welcoming community. She volunteered outside helping maintain the grounds. On Sundays, she was always found cleaning the front patio and chairs. Fearless: If necessary, after high winds, she would even climb on our roof to dispose of any debris. Best loved for her great sense of humor, quick wit and directness. A UUFCC Member since 2013.

**JONATHAN SCOTT PANZER — 07/10/1944—06/21/2025**

Born in Long Island NY. Served in Air Force, lived in Boston MA & upstate NY. M.Ed. from SUNY Cortland. Loved sailing, skiing, swimming (NYS Empire Games Over 40), gardening, poker, pickleball, yoga, music, dancing. Political activist for civil & women's rights. Motorcycled across country at 78. Survived by daughter, grandsons, siblings & loving partner Maureen. UUFCC Friend. Conversation Among Friends & Men's Coffee Group participant.

**JOHN RONALD VACHA — 08/31/1942—05/09/2025**

Chicago born. Survived by loving partner Sunny. Loved traveling: the world (for years and often by backpack); the seas as a liveaboard on his sailboat; the Americas (in converted minivan camper). Best known and loved for his honesty, directness, quick wit, generosity, hypocrisy detection, and authenticity. Staunch overpopulation advocate. Unofficial UUFCC Friend; generous UUFCC donor; UUFCC Conversation Among Friends participant.

**Beloved Fellowship Members and Friends may be honored with:**

- **AN ENGRAVED PAVER for the UUFCC PEACE GARDEN.**  
See order form in the UUFCC Weekly Update.
- **A CONTRIBUTION PAYABLE TO THE UUFCC ENDOWMENT FUND.**  
On check memo line, write "In Memory of [Beloved's Name]."



## 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>

## FROM OUR PASTORAL CARE SPECIALIST

**Caring for one another is a core spiritual practice for UUs. Pastoral care is the term we use for the way we offer support and compassion to each other in community.**



**Rev. Ann Barker, D. Min.**  
Pastoral Care Specialist  
941-235-0269 –or–  
revannbarker@gmail.com

Following a meeting this morning, I found an envelope on the table with my name on it. It was a birthday card with a hand inscription thanking me, and my wife, for what we do at the Fellowship. Did I really deserve a card since I am paid for what I do? Maybe not but it sure did feel good. This is just one of the myriad of wonderful things happening day after day, week after week at the Fellowship. I see volunteers working hours and hours to keep the gardens beautiful, make electronic equipment function properly, decorate the interior for the topic of the month, and working the kitchen serving coffee and goodies. I know the office staff goes beyond the call of duty to make sure everything goes well.

### It takes a village to create this beloved community.

I have the privilege of sharing in people’s lives when they meet with me or when we talk after service.

**The Women’s Group** meets twice a month to talk about things pressing on their minds and to strategize responses. I take pride in knowing women who regularly witness to the concerns they have about the direction of the country by carrying signs and marching for democracy.

**The Goddess Group** meets every week to learn about the deities of other countries and cultures. Again, the discussion is rich and interesting with many perspectives shared.

**The Caregivers Group** meets on the last Saturday of the month to share the struggles of meeting the daily needs of people dear to them at a personal sacrifice and offer strategies that might prove helpful to others.

Though it can be tiring, or stressful, or painful sometimes:

**I love my job!**

# GO VEGAN



COMPASSION



NONVIOLENCE



FOR THE ANIMALS



FOR THE PLANET



FOR THE PEOPLE



## VEGAN ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE & COOKBOOK

**Finally, You Can Celebrate Without Compromise!**



As a vegan, have you ever felt like you're seen as the enemy of fun?

Have you ever gone to a dinner party and felt like your presence put a damper on everyone else's food orgy or been made to feel like you ruined Thanksgiving, the office holiday party and, well, basically everything else with your pesky vegan ways?

Or maybe you are trying to cook for a vegan — or more vegan for yourself — but you're unsure about what to cook that tastes amazing?

**Vegan Holidays for Everyone**  
to the rescue!

Available in ebook form for just \$5.99: <https://payhip.com/b/ujin>

# LOOK AT THIS **AMAZING!** UUFCC GENEROSITY!



## SECOND SUNDAY SECOND HELPING

During season (Oct-Mar), on the Second Sunday of each month, a second basket is passed to collect for a worthy community organization, to intentionally support that organization's good work. During non-season (Apr-Sep), the UUFCC Social Justice Committee may provide special volunteering and benevolent giving guidance, etc., like telling us about:

<https://5calls.org/>



**WHAT IT IS:** "5 Calls" is an app to help citizens contact elected officials about important issues by providing a curated list of current issues, contact info for relevant officials, & suggested scripts for calls.

**PURPOSE:** Empower citizens to participate in democracy by making it easier to contact representatives.

**FUNCTION:** ID pressing issues, automatically connect users with House, Senate, & local reps, & provide scripts to help guide conversations.



## 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]"

## 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**



**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 considerate, respectful, and genuinely caring way.



Co-Chair Lorrie Douglas

**NEWS FROM THE WORSHIP COMMITTEE**

**Worship Associates (W.A.)**  
meet at 4pm on the  
2nd Tuesday each month



Co-Chair Shelly Canterbury

**On Sunday morning**, the Worship Associate arrives early—not because they are especially holy, but because they like a few quiet minutes before everything begins. The sanctuary is calm, the chairs cooperative, the chalice waiting without judgment. Already, this feels like a small victory.

**They set the order of service on the podium** and glance around, thinking, "I can do this." And they can. Being a Worship Associate isn't about having the perfect words or a theology degree. It's about showing up and being willing to help hold the hour.

**As people arrive**, there are smiles, nods, and the subtle UU ritual of checking the coffee situation. Announcements are written to read aloud, microphones checked, the choir warms up, and the visiting speaker finds their seat.

**When it's time to speak**, the WA steps forward to read words that matter—words about compassion, justice, and hope—discovering that the microphone is less intimidating than expected and the Fellowship is rooting for them. Always. This is a community that applauds courage, not polish.

**Joys and Concerns are quietly powerful:** the WA slows things down. They make room. They hold silence without rushing to fix anything. It turns many people already have this skill—they just didn't know it counted as leadership.

**When the chalice is extinguished**, there's relief and pride. The service flowed. The world didn't end. Something meaningful happened because they said yes.

**Later, putting away papers or heading for coffee**, they hear, "You were great up there." They smile and realize this role isn't reserved for the chosen. It's learned by doing, supported every step of the way, and surprisingly joyful.

**The next WA** taking a turn leading feels invited rather than taking a leap.

**THE BOOK OF LIFE****For ANNOUNCEMENTS to be read from the pulpit Sunday mornings:**

1. Email [bookoflife@uufcc.org](mailto:bookoflife@uufcc.org) by 5pm Saturday before the service; or,
2. Write up the announcement and hand it to the Worship Associate before the service.

**To SHARE JOYS, SORROWS & MILESTONES during Sunday morning service:**

1. Come forward to the pebbles & water dais when asked & reflect silently or share aloud; or,
2. Before service, write in the **Red Book** at the back of the sanctuary for the WA to share; or,
3. Send in a **Red Book** entry by 5pm the Saturday before service for the WA to share; and,
4. Place a pebble in the water, thereby sending reflection ripples into the world.



**12/03** Carole Burkett  
**12/04** Joseph Fenty  
**12/11** Jane Bodine  
**12/13** Florence Martin  
**12/15** Marti Rosenberger  
**12/24** Lisa Roberts  
**12/26** Laura Liermann  
**12/30** Peggydawn Moran

**06/06** Kathryn Ferry  
**06/06** John Lee  
**01/12** MaryLou Kennedy  
**01/26** Sandy Telander

For Birthday Shoutouts, contact:  
**[office@uufcc.org](mailto:office@uufcc.org)**

### Weekly Events

<b>Sundays</b>	<b>09:00 am</b> Conversation Among Friends
	<b>09:30 am</b> Choir Rehearsal
	<b>10:30 am</b> Worship Service
<b>Tuesdays</b>	<b>08:00 am</b> Men's Coffee
<b>Wednesdays</b>	<b>05:00 pm</b> Choir Rehearsal
	<b>06:30 am</b> OA
	<b>07:00 pm</b> Happy Hour with John Lee
<b>Thursdays</b>	<b>04:30 pm</b> Buddhist Meditation
	<b>06:30 pm</b> AA

## JANUARY 2026 EVENTS

01/01 Thu 10:00am LULAC meeting  
 01/03 Sun POTLUCK SUNDAY  
 01/06 Tue 02:00pm Women's Group  
 01/09 Fri 04:00pm Art Reception  
 01/10 Sat 09:00am Democratic Club of Charlotte  
 01/11 Sun 11:45am Social Justice Committee  
 01/12 Mon 02:00pm Joanne Collins Chalice Circle  
                   06:00pm PFLAG Pride Committee  
 01/13 Tue 01:00pm NAACP Criminal Justice Cmte  
                   04:00pm Worship Associates  
 01/14 Wed 10:00am Caring Committee  
 01/15 Thu 08:30am Human Trafficking Symposium  
                   01:30pm UUFCC BOARD MEETING  
 01/17 Sat 10:00am LULAC meeting  
 01/19 Mon 10:00am Art Committee Zoom  
                   06:00pm PFLAG-PC Support  
 01/20 Tue 11:00am Laughter for Wellness  
                   02:00pm Women's Group  
 01/24 Sat 10:00am Caregivers Group  
 01/25 Sun 03:00pm Secular Community  
 01/26 Mon 02:00pm Joanne Collins Chalice Circle  
 01/27 Tue 02:00pm Book Group



### UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS

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

**[www.uua.org/beliefs/who-we-are](http://www.uua.org/beliefs/who-we-are)**

### 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](mailto:bookoflife@uufcc.org)** by Saturday night

**MISSION:** UUFCC is a liberal religious community committed to justice, a place where spirituality, diversity, reason, compassion, service, and fellowship meet. *(Adopted at 03-24-24 Annual Meeting.)*



**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:** Using our Covenant as a guide, we will provide expanded opportunities for ministries, programs and fellowship that inspire and support our life journeys. We will affirm: Love is the spirit of this Fellowship, and service is its law. This is our aspiration: To dwell together in peace, To seek truth in love, And to help one another. In the larger community, we will continue to be a strong, relevant voice serving justice and equality. *(Adopted 03-24-24.)*

**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: FOUNDED IN 1969.]

#### NEWSLETTER 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

[artcommittee@uufcc.org](mailto:artcommittee@uufcc.org)

[board@uufcc.org](mailto:board@uufcc.org)

[bookgroup@uufcc.org](mailto:bookgroup@uufcc.org)

[bookoflife@uufcc.org](mailto:bookoflife@uufcc.org)

[buddhistmeditation@uufcc.org](mailto:buddhistmeditation@uufcc.org)

[caring@uufcc.org](mailto:caring@uufcc.org)

[choir@uufcc.org](mailto:choir@uufcc.org)

[hospitalityandsocial@uufcc.org](mailto:hospitalityandsocial@uufcc.org)

[membership@uufcc.org](mailto:membership@uufcc.org)

[office@uufcc.org](mailto:office@uufcc.org)

[patientadvocacy@uufcc.org](mailto:patientadvocacy@uufcc.org)

[pflag@uufcc.org](mailto:pflag@uufcc.org)

[president@uufcc.org](mailto:president@uufcc.org)

[socialjustice@uufcc.org](mailto:socialjustice@uufcc.org)

[sundaytech@uufcc.org](mailto:sundaytech@uufcc.org)

[worship@uufcc.org](mailto:worship@uufcc.org)

#### UUFCC

**COMM **UU** NIQUÉ**

Can you say kuh-myoo-nuh-kay?

#### EDITORIAL BOARD

Stephanie Garrett

MaryLou Kennedy

300-word limit articles.

Due 1-wk before last day of month:

[editorialboard@uufcc.org](mailto:editorialboard@uufcc.org)

Photos from Tom Deuley, and

Clipart from Creative Commons, unless otherwise indicated.