

TRI-UU NEWSLETTER

September

Birthdays

• Pat Pacalo	09/04
• Bruce Twiss	09/04
• Erin Woodsome	09/07
• Helen Dohn	09/10
• Rose Maerkl	09/12
• Jeff Tatarka	09/14
• Phyllis Gelman	09/15
• Joan Herring	09/27
• Liz Perdue	09/28



Shelly holds some of the donations.

Deadline for submissions to October
TriUU Newsletter will be
September 25.

From Joyce Mills...

SUCCESS!!!



Thank you, congregants, for your generous donations of school supplies for the **MISSION: BUS BRIGADE** for children who are homeless or needy in our local communities. Past generations

used pencils, erasers, crayons, spiral notebooks filler paper, colored pencils, pens, composition books that filled our bookbags. Some of you did that this summer, filling bags and the basket at Tri-UU. Today, calculators, headphones, copy paper to print out computer lessons and poly duo-tang folders are used to individualize the learning tasks. Thanks to those who trusted me with your donations to get specific requests for teachers and students.

Sunday afternoon I had a full cart in the check-out line at Target. Ahead of me was a mother with two college age girls and three carts of dorm room items. That wait gave a couple of us customers time to chat. When my purchases of more school supplies were tallied, the customer behind me quickly put her card out and paid for them. It brought tears for me. Her daughter, a recent graduate of UCF walked me to the car and loaded the heavy bin and bags in the back seat. Since I still had some of your donated funds not spent Sunday, I returned Monday to fill another cart.

Your generosity has made a difference for many children, their parents and their teachers. Thank you for caring.

Joyce Mills, Tri-UU Social Justice Team



TRI-COUNTY
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS



SEPTEMBER SERVICES

The spiritual theme for September is Beginnings

September 6:

Rev. Kristina Spaude

Title: “Love at the Center”

The UUA has selected the recently published *Love at the Center* as this year's Common Read. This morning we will explore the themes that arise and how we might apply them in our lives. We will have an (optional) interactive component in this service as well.

September 13:

Rev. Kristina Spaude

Title: “The Blessings of Small”

Small congregations often fret about being small. Surrounded by a scarcity mentality of our wider culture, we sometimes struggle with the question, “Does size matter?” This morning we'll explore the blessings of small that we share.

September 20:

Helene Krischbaum

Title: “Yom Kippur — Forgiving and Atoning”

Inspired by the Jewish High Holy Days, we'll explore compassion, atonement, and the power of beginning again. We'll be invited to release resentment, forgive ourselves and others, and embrace new possibilities.

September 27:

Rev. Kristina Spaude

Sermon Title: “Seeking Common Ground”

This year the Right Reverend Mariann Edgar Budde offered the Ware Lecture at our annual General Assembly. During the Lecture, she spoke about some of the complexities of this moment, the “Outrage Industrial Complex,” and the imperative of treating one another with dignity. This morning we'll reflect on this wisdom.



President's Message from Cindy Grossman: The Work We Need To Do



My sister phrased it like this, “so you are telling me that you are spending hours working for free as a volunteer so that you could hire somebody to do this work for pay?”

It is true, I have put in countless hours, researching possibilities, writing the job description, conferring with leaders, and conducting interviews among other things, so that TriUU can hire an Office Administrator/Sexton. This has been a long-term goal of our Board of Trustees for years. Thanks to the generosity of our members and a lot of calculated planning, it is finally coming to fruition.

Another board member put it like this, “as we get older, most people prefer to pay for some work that we used to be able to do our ourselves.” Perhaps you no longer do intensive yardwork, some housekeeping, or climb on ladders to change lightbulbs, and smoke alarms? If you are in a position to pay for this, it makes complete sense to do so.

TriUU is in a position that we can pay a part-time employee to do and coordinate some of the routine work that is increasingly difficult to sustain through volunteer labor. Having a paid employee centralizes these routines, so that if you want to book a room for an event, for example, you do not have to go through five people who handle a unique aspect of the task to get it done correctly.

Our goal is to free up volunteers to focus on developing good programs that accomplish our mission. We need to raise up our leadership so that they're working on the most fulfilling part of achieving our goals; rather than burning out our leadership on little tasks! We need to make sure that we are consistently able to provide the outreach necessary to bring prospective members and future leaders into our congregation.

Let's face it, our congregation's median age is post-retirement. I know few people who retire in order to perform routine office work. Many of us do, however, yearn for meaningful ways of building our beloved community. It is the hope of our Board of Trustees that a paid employee will ease the frustrations of organizing programs so that the joy of volunteering is heightened.

My sister's remark made me laugh because it misses the distinction between work we need done and work we need to do. I don't volunteer because TriUU needs someone to process paperwork. I volunteer because there is deep satisfaction in doing something substantive that helps our community flourish and leaves something behind for those who come after us.

As I come into the last few months of my four years as president of TriUU's board, we are still laser focused on how we can expand our leadership capacity. What will it take for people to volunteer to do the work of our community?

(Cont'd on p. 4)



President's Message

(cont'd from p.3)

I think of the poet, Marge Piercy:

"The pitcher cries for water to carry and a person for work that is real."

With the support of a paid staff member supervised by our minister, I encourage all of our leaders, present and future, to roll up their sleeves and find the gratifying work that awaits them. We are living in a place and in a time where the message of our faith is more necessary than ever. The satisfaction of bringing that message to the world is payment in and of itself for all of us volunteers.

Let's get to work!

Cindy Grossman

"Membership in Tri-County UU Has Its Advantages"

On September 13th we'll be having our next New Member Ceremony! There are many advantages to being a Member of Tri-UU! According to our by-laws, members are eligible to:

- Vote on questions brought before the Congregation.
- Receive UUA publications (and Tri-UU newsletter).
- Serve on the Board of Trustees and chair committees.
- Have access without fee to services such as child dedications, weddings and/or commitment ceremonies, memorial services, and memorial stone dedication ceremonies.

If you're a seasonal attendee of Tri-UU, we don't make you choose which congregation you want to join; we offer "Associate Members" the same rights/advantages as Members (with a caveat as to two committees they can't head or join) and without duplicate UUA publications. If you've already taken our Nu to UU orientation class and have been contemplating becoming a Member or Associate Member, please see Helene or Andrea.



MESSAGES

Message from Reverend Kristina:

We are in the heat of August now, and Florida does not disappoint. It's hard to believe that it's time to plan for the upcoming program year -- that's how ministers and other religious professionals refer to the church year. For us, this runs September-October-ish through May-June-ish. It feels a little more structured back in Ohio, where I'm from, than here, where the heat drives many to travel away from here in the summer and early fall, but brings many to our state over the wintertime.

I have some ideas for worship planned out, and I'm excited about some of the topics I have in mind. If you have ideas about things you'd like to hear about, feel free to send me a message! I'm also looking for people who are willing to offer "A View from the Pew" — I'm glad to help you craft something if you'd like. triuurev at gmail.com.

A fair amount of the music at General Assembly was a mix of hymns from the new hymnal, Sing Out Love, and other songs from the Singing Resistance movement that gained visibility over the winter during the ICE occupation of Minneapolis. I'm hoping we'll be able to share some of those hymns with the congregation this coming year.

We have much to look forward to this year — our third together. Plus the congregation will have a new staff person -- an Administrative Assistant! I am very excited for this for all of us. The energy in the congregation has been great, almost like there's a tingling of magic in the air.



I'm grateful for all of this, for our growing relationship, and for the growing relationship y'all have with your sibling congregation and yoked partner, UUCLC.

I look forward to connecting with you soon!

MLK Jr. Scholarship Breakfast

It's still several months before our MLK Jr. Scholarship Breakfast at the Savannah Center. I just want to announce that the date of the awards breakfast for 2027 has been changed to the third Saturday of the month, which will be January 16th. I don't know if this change will be permanent or not, but I hope it won't affect your attendance and support for these wonderful students!

Thank you...Helene Kirschbaum



Building Better Balance



Building Better Balance with Wendy Bonvilla
Thursday, Sept 10, 4 pm
Potluck following

Having trouble with balance? You're not alone! One in three older adults fall each year. Join us to learn what you can do to reduce your risk of falling. This interactive presentation will include a demonstration of evidence-based exercises to improve strength, flexibility, and balance. If you would like to participate, please wear appropriate footwear.



MEDITATION

Buddhist Meditation Group

Blessings to you for ease of body, mind and spirit....because sometimes getting to ease takes effort..

The Buddhist Meditation Group has considered many of the 'teachings' of Buddha over the past three years of meditating together. Buddhism teaches me that the answers are within.

I was reminded of this recently on a walk through a park in Gainesville that has Buddhist Statues...On one of those statues Buddha is standing on top of the World...and the Inscription goes something like this....'Buddha appeared in this world to teach all sentient beings the way to their true nature by looking inside them'.

We are invited to go a little deeper, dive below the swampiness, and messiness, and pain to get to our true nature as we meditate...This takes time, commitment, practice, and then the subtle changes begin to happen. Often people expect changes immediately and that creates tension within, sometimes leading to giving up on Meditation.

Buddhist principles and studying them helps one to stay on course with meditation...and practice results in physical, emotional, and spiritual changes sometimes subtle, sometimes profound...and the ability to live with ease through the tsunamis of ordinary life.

My practices of sitting, moving, and listening meditation, and living the Middle Way, a Path that Buddha taught, gives me ease and direction in a time of unknowns.

I am feeling so grateful for the members of our TRIUU Buddhist Meditation Group who have contributed to the peaceful, sacred, Sangha that has evolved over the past three year.

Check the UU Calendar for dates, and if you would like to be included on mailings so that you remember the dates, please contact me at

Joyceaxelson607@gmail.com or be text at **617 285 8548**.

Blessings for ease of body, mind and spirit as you journey through the precious moments of your life...



MEDITATION IS HELD IN THE TRIUU SANCTUARY THE SECOND AND FOURTH THURSDAYS OF THE MONTH AND IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC



TRI-COUNTY
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS

I AM A PATRIOT

I am a patriot –
Not only an inhabitant of a house
Or a citizen of a state,
But blood and bone of the very earth on which I
stand.

I belong in this country.

This country is part of me.
This country is me,
My blood and bones arose from the very earth on
which I stand,
My literal father-land.

My body is built from the rain that fell
On rocks, ravines,
On grass and trees,
From calcium and cow shit
Scattered across fields I've never seen,
Becoming corn and wheat,
Eggs and meat.

America is what I am.
I am American.

But, look again!

I am a citizen of the world,
An indigene made up
Of Australian and Argentine wine,
Chilean raspberries,
Scottish clotted cream,
Yorkshire pudding,
Italian artichokes,
French oysters,
Strengthened by Stuttgarter sauerkraut,
Emboldened by Hofbräu Bier.

I cannot,
In all honesty,
Separate me from the world,
Or divide the world from me.

How can I say that I am only an American,
When so much of me emerged from all that I have
eaten,
Everywhere?

I do not bake my daily bread,
(others do it in my stead.)

I catch some fish and pick a few lemons and
grapefruit from time to time,
But mostly I depend on others I will never know,
Who worked while I slept or studied.

So when I say a silent prayer,
(a quiet "Thank You" in my head)
When I break my daily bread,
It is all that I can ever say,
In silent gratitude instead
To all those unknown others
Who are living or are dead.

You see,
My patriotism penetrates
Beyond superficial salutes
And ritual repetitions of allegiance pledges
To the very core of the universe,
Or multiverse,
Where the unimaginable meets me and you
In awful wonder and respect.

(cont. on p.9)



I AM A PATRIOT (cont. from p.8)

And when I die,
When my body dries
(as it surely will)
It will be interred
To turn again
Those parts of me
That I borrowed for a while,
Back to the earth from which it came,
To the world where I am a citizen.

I will always be loyal
To the soil from which I've sprung,
Uncoiled, and scoured and scavenged enough to
build a life
For one more day,
Or one more hour,
Or one more second,
One more heartbeat is my full measure.

And more is a bounty
That I share with geckos and geese,
With sea urchins and salamanders,
With my countrymen and countrywomen,
Who learned to live in snow and cold,
In sand and heat.

I am one with those who love this land,
Who finished their lives,
Here,
With me,
In my country,
My own father-land.

rfc
10/06/06

Roger F. Cooper
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The Villages, FL 32162
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Music Team September

Music Team- Peggy Roberts, Nancy Solberg, Tim McCusker and Diane Carlin. The choir has had a nice summer break, but we need you back at choir practice on Mondays from 3:30 till 5:30 PM. We start back on Monday September 14 in the sanctuary. Tom Zitkovic, our music director will be there with plans for some wonderful singing in the coming weeks. But we need new choir members as some of our members have moved or are staying up North way too long. Do you sing in the shower? Do you sing with Alexa or the radio? The choir can help you meet your singing needs. We do not require an audition, only your physical presence and willingness to practice and show up. Please come on Monday September 14 at 3:30. I know you won't believe this, but we'll love you more if you come sing with us!!
Song Leaders Needed!!!

Also, we are scheduling a song leader for each service. Their job is to get on the music director's email list for the next Sunday's hymn numbers, borrow or preferably buy both hymnals and practice the songs until the tune, words and music breaks are in your head and ears. (Some of you already know many of the hymns and won't have to practice that much). Tom Z will help you with the music part if you are unfamiliar with any of the hymns. Our song leader schedule is completed through December, but all of 2027 is available for your service. Think about it. Look at your calendars to see when you can schedule. I know we have some singers out there, just waiting to lead our hymns on Sundays. Talk to anyone on the music team above to sign up or ask questions.



Radical Chocolate and Fair Trade

By Kim E. Hummel

Imagine a square of dark chocolate that doesn't just melt on your tongue—it sparks an ethical revolution all the way from the steep, shade-grown canopies of Latin America straight to the post-sermon coffee hour at a Unitarian Universalist fellowship.



The chocolate comes from a system known as Fair Trade and through an organization called Equal Exchange, a U.S. company that joined forces with the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) in 2001 to bring Fair Trade products to UU congregations.

And now TriUU's Green Team is proposing to bring Fair Trade chocolate to the congregation as a fund-raising project and to promote the social justice and environmental aspects of the decades-old Fair Trade program.

The Green Team's primary mission is to promote practices to sustain and improve the environment by reducing single-use plastics, recycling, promoting solar power, gardening, using Fair Trade products, and other initiatives designed to help, restore, and protect the natural environment.

The Fair Trade system promotes economic, labor, and environmental justice by offering fair prices for cacao produced by small-scale farmer cooperatives. The earnings are invested back in the farm communities for development of infrastructure, schools, and other community facilities. The term, "radical chocolate," stems in part from a more recent economic movement to keep and process pure cacao at its point of origin rather than sell the cacao to a middleman, where added value (addition of sugars, milk powders, soy lecithin, and extra fats) brings the highest price for chocolate.

Instead, the radical chocolate movement rejects modern processing in favor of making craft chocolate from the raw flavor of the cacao bean.

Often, this means a product that is 100% cacao with no added sugars or emulsifiers. Fair Trade differs in that it works within the existing system of global supply chains and offers fair prices to cacao farmers for the raw beans. The processing – the added value – happens elsewhere, beyond the reach of farmers.

The radical chocolate movement takes things one step further by building chocolate factories in the home countries and creating added value on site. Under this system, farmers earn much more income because they control the entire process.

And now it is the decadent taste of chocolate produced in Latin America, Africa, and Asia that helps impoverished farm communities thrive in spite of the market price control in a world dominated by multi-national corporations.

While the early efforts of Fair Trade focused on handicrafts and coffee, other products – including chocolate – later joined the program as its influence spread.

Early Fair Trade chocolate products from the 1990s include Maya Gold – a popular dark chocolate made with orange and spices – and Divine Chocolate. Both are produced in the United Kingdom and remain available today through Fair Trade programs.

Ultimately, Fair Trade brings consumers and farmers closer together.

For those who prefer the pure, unadulterated product, there is radical chocolate.

Either way, you can enjoy chocolate as an amazing treat, while helping to promote social and economic justice in distant parts of the world.

TRIUU IN ACTION

♥ Save the Date! Walk to End Alzheimer's – Saturday, October 24th! ♥

The 2026 Walk to End Alzheimer's is happening on Saturday, October 24th at TV Polo Fields and the TriUU Lovebugs are ready to make a difference again!

We need walkers to join us and of course donations to support the cause! Last year, we proudly raised \$3,000, and this year, we're aiming to beat that goal — but we can't do it without YOU!

We're also working on carpooling options to make it easy for everyone to participate — so don't let transportation stop you from being part of something so meaningful and fun!

Want to join the team or learn more?

Contact Liz Perdue 352-256-2888

Let's show up with love, energy, and purpose — and show the community what the TriUU Lovebugs can do!



WALK TO END ALZHEIMER'S THE VILLAGES SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24TH

Registration: 10:30 :AM | Ceremony & Walk: 11:30 AM
POLO CLUB | THE VILLAGES

JOIN OUR TEAM!

Love Bugs



**WALK
TO
END
ALZHEIMER'S**
ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION

NOW IS THE MOMENT WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR. WITH NEW TREATMENTS EMERGING IN THE FIGHT AGAINST ALZHEIMER'S AND ALL OTHER DEMENTIA, NOW IS THE TIME FOR HOPE. NOW IS THE TIME FOR ACTION.



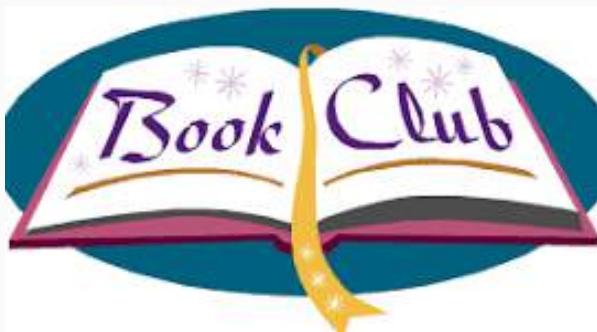
JOIN US

The TriUU Book Club

The TriUU Book Club meets the last Monday of each month at 1pm at TriUU. On September 28 we will discuss *The Tell* by Amy Griffin (2025, Non-fiction; 262 pgs.) A Memoir. The author relates her search to recover from buried childhood trauma and questions why so many women are driven to keep up appearances.

On October 26 we will discuss *The Great Shadow* by Susan Wise Bauer (2025, Non-fiction, 302 pgs.) *A History of How Sickness Shapes What We Do, Think, Believe and Buy*. The author illuminates the roots of today's anti-science and anti-reason movements.

If you would like to receive book club emails, please contact garrisonnancy@yahoo.com



Tri UU Camping and Kayak Club Update

October 26	Wekiva State Park
December 6 - 9	Anastasia
January 24 - 27	Paynes Prairie
February 21 - 23	Tomoka State Park
March 12 - 14	Will McLean

If you would like to join us for a future trip or have questions, feel free to email

Deb Anderson at Debbieraha@gmail.com (352-454-9353)
or Brenda Nelson at Nelsonbrenda164@gmail.com (352-446-5487)

Brenda Nelson



COMING SOON

Blessing Our Animals - Oct. 18

During our Sunday, October 18th service, the Rev. Carole Yorke will be blessing our animals. You are welcome to bring your well-behaved pets for the in-person (or animal?) blessing. You're also invited to send Ivett pictures of your current pets or those you've previously owned (or who owned you!) at ivettgarza@gmail.com to include in a PowerPoint presentation on that date. Please send Ivett your pictures no later than October 11th.

Thank you!

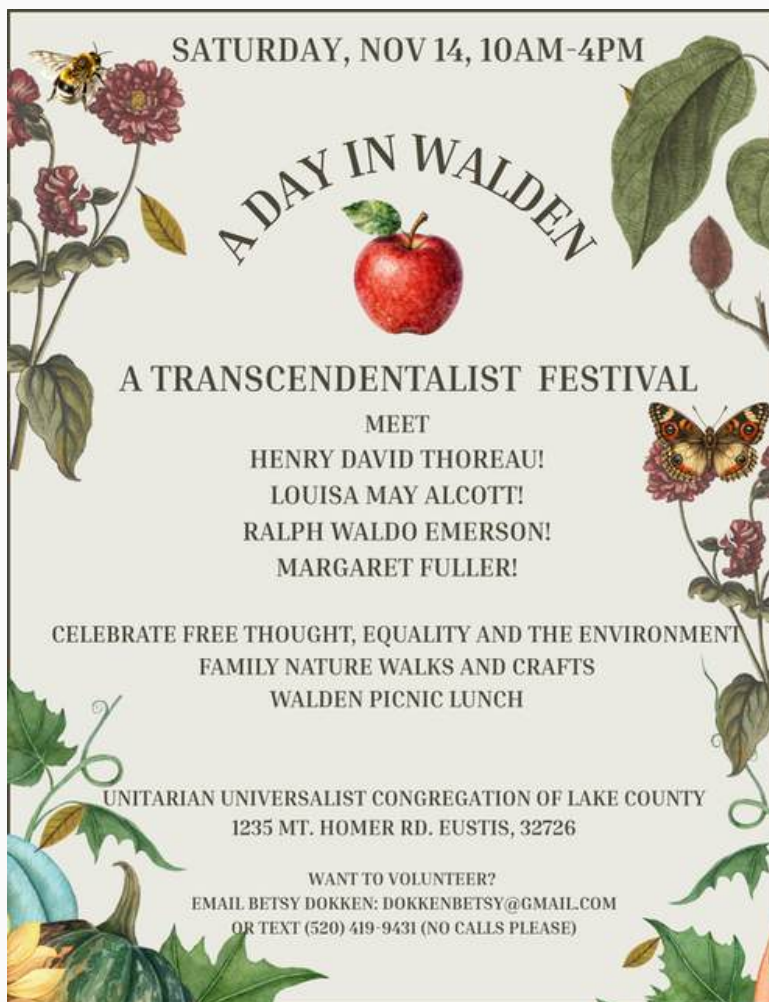
Beacon College Salon Series - Oct. 5

Hi everyone, I am Susan Zingale-Baird, a TriUU guest who has been visiting this summer. I recently moved to the southernmost area of The Villages. I previously lived in Lake County and was a member of UUCLC for five years.

Karen Frank from UUCLC has reserved seats for the Beacon College Salon Series on Monday, October 5, 2026, at 7:00 PM at the Venetian Center, 1 Dozier Circle, Leesburg FL 34748. The upcoming topic is "The Supreme Court and American History: Landmark Decisions that Changed the Nation's Course." Admission is free.

The Salon Series offers highly stimulating topics, and I know that TriUU members attended the Freedom Riders Salon earlier this year along with UUCLC. I am happy to coordinate and reserve seats for our group. The event includes a complimentary dinner.

If you would like to attend, please RSVP to szbaird@gmail.com.



TRI-COUNTY
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS



COMING SOON

Save the date for UU Pride 2026!

We are proud to announce that our TriUU Welcoming Congregation Team will be hosting the 2nd Annual Pride Celebration. To build on the success from last year, we have invited UUCLC to join in the celebration. All members from both congregations are invited!

Please join us Saturday, October 10th, from 10-12, here at Tri-UU.

We will celebrate **National Coming Out Day**, enjoy light snacks, and have an opportunity for conversation and community.

We will also need volunteers to assist with set up and provide snacks. There will soon be a signup sheet on the table behind the Media Team. This is a great way to contribute and show your support for our LGBTQIA+ community!

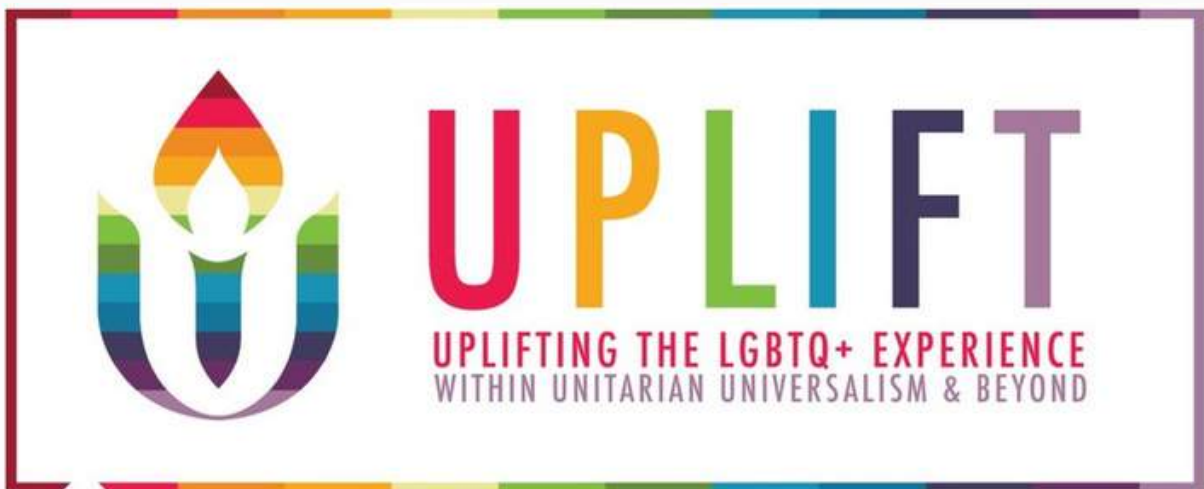
More info:

Liz Perdue 352-256-2888

Perdueea@gmail.com

Welcoming Congregation Team

Tri-UU Social Justice Team



Be An Informed Voter:

**Sunday, October 4, 11am
Tri-County Unitarian Universalists,
7280 SE 135 St.
Summerfield,
FL**



The League of Women Voters will Present Decisions 2026

Decisions 2026 explains the three constitutional amendments appearing on Florida's November ballot. All three measures involve budgets: one at the state level and two at the local level. This educational presentation aims to make a potentially dry and confusing topic clear, accessible, and engaging.

As often happens, the impact of passing an amendment can be more complex than it first appears. This presentation helps voters understand the three proposals that, if approved, could affect their daily lives for years to come.

Healthy Relations Team



WHAT ARE "HEALTHY RELATIONS" IN A UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION?

LOOK FOR THE ANSWER IN OUR NEW BROCHURE.

THE BROCHURES ARE ON THE BACK TABLE AND IN THE BROCHURE RACK IN THE FOYER.

THE HEALTHY RELATIONS TEAM IS AVAILABLE FOR CONSULTATION, TEAM BUILDING
AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION



Carolyn Bradley, Lenore Mickelson, Karen Fletcher, Healthy Relations Team