VOL. 3 ISSUE 9 · NOVEMBER 2026

TRI-UU NEWSLETTER



November

Liana Barnes	11/03
Jolyn Joslin Burt	11/03
Trish Schwartzberg	11/03
Luci Rich	11/03
Trish Munz	11/07
Anne Simonson	11/18
Ginger Ryan	11/19
Linda Bobbitt	11/21
Dale Kenton	11/23
Drex Freeman	11/30

Upcoming Forums

November12-Bees/Pollinator with Maxine Hunter

January 14 - Green Burial with Heather Grove from Prairie Creek Conservation Cemetary

Deadline for submissions to December TriUU Newsletter will be November 23.

UU Pride 2026

UU Pride 2026 was an overwhelming success! Attendance grew from last year's Pride, with 49 people attending! Two UCC members were in attendance, p lus, 2 first-time visitors for Pride are interested in coming back to UU services!

The WelCon team would like to thank Maria Kelly for her beautiful chalk chalice and Rev. Kristina for her glitter blessings! Also, many, many thanks to Brenda, Deb and the many other members that helped with set up and clean up!

The Welcoming Congregation team and our TriUU LGBTQ+ members so appreciate our Chosen Family. Thank you Beloved Community.





Glitter Blessing



Maria's Chalice Circle

More on page 5



MESSAGES

Message from Reverend Kristina:



Fall is overall my favorite season, although there are parts of all them that I love. Some of my favorite people were born in November, which makes it even better. And this November we're engaging the spiritual theme of Healing. Maybe it's the years I spent working in hospitals, or the many more years I've spent on healing my own self, but I am looking forward to this theme.

In worship, we'll be honoring our beloveds who have passed, recently or not. We'll be considering how our work now might help shape the future. And we'll be celebrating our second annual Book Communion (on November 15)! Then we'll reflect on the importance of the practices we keep, and the rituals and covenants that hold meaning for us. Lastly, we'll hear stories about how kindness transcends borders.

Calvin Groover



Just What Does an Administrative Assistant Do at TriUU?

Calvin Groover has begun his work as TriUU Administrative Assistant in a flurry of housecleaning and organizing in the Conference Room and his office, marked by a sign above the door: ADMINISTRATION. While Calvin says that officially his work is a mix of cleaning and office work, he wants us to know that he has both a variety of skills and a willingness to do what is needed, as long as Reverend Kristina is doing the asking.

He wants us to note a clipboard on the door outside his office. If you come on a Sunday when he is not working, and you would like an appointment with him during the week, please put your name on the "Appointment Sheet" and he will get back to you. At this point, with only a few weeks on the job, his hours are not nailed down. You can call him on the TriUU landline (352-245-7944). He has also generously given us his own phone number: 828-361-9850. And you must ask him for his business card. Honestly, I didn't get it so he had to help me. From Calvin, "Just so you know, it's a jetpig with love at the center."



President's Message from Cindy Grossman:



Finding Balance in Our TriUU Community

Years ago, when I taught university freshmen and student leaders about resilience and wellness, I introduced them to something called the Wellness Wheel. The idea was simple but profound: wellness is about much more than physical health. It includes our intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual, environmental, and other needs. Together, these dimensions contribute to a balanced and fulfilling life.

I've been thinking about that wheel lately, and particularly about the role our congregation can play in helping us find that balance.

Consider the many reasons people come through our doors. Some come seeking spiritual nourishment. Others are looking for intellectual stimulation, meaningful friendships, opportunities to serve, or simply a place where they feel they belong. And often, what we discover is much more than what we originally sought.

A book club discussion may challenge our thinking while also deepening our friendships. Volunteering may give us a sense of purpose while connecting us with people we might never otherwise have known. A Sunday service may offer spiritual reflection, emotional comfort, and the impetus to experience the world as something larger than ourselves.

None of us shine in all areas, but together we provide a plethora of opportunities to radiate as a beloved community. One of the things I appreciate about Unitarian Universalism is that we recognize there is no single path to a meaningful life. We come with different needs, interests, abilities, and beliefs. We don't all find nourishment in the same places. Nor should we expect to achieve perfect balance. Life is constantly changing. Sometimes we need intellectual challenge; sometimes we need companionship. Sometimes we need to serve others, and sometimes we need to allow others to care for us. And sometimes, we simply need rest.

I believe TriUU offers something particularly valuable: the opportunity to care for ourselves while caring for one another. We have members who excel in their physical wellness and who are willing to provide opportunities for others to kayak, hike or do tai chi with them. We have other members that are very good at providing emotional support, for instance, in our grief group which is becoming a supportive community for those who have experienced loss.

(Cont'd on p. 4)





President's Message... cont'd

Every week we offer opportunities for social wellness in our coffee hours and lunch gatherings. By creating a solar-powered green sanctuary and by presenting forums like the one we are having on November 12 on.Bees and Butterflies and other pollinators, we are promoting our environmental wellness.

Perhaps the question we should ask ourselves isn't simply, "What am I getting out of TriUU?" but also, "How is this community enriching my life, and how might my presence and talents enrich the lives of others?"

As you think about your own Wellness Wheel, I invite you to consider which dimensions of your life are flourishing and which might need a little more attention? You may discover that an opportunity for greater balance is waiting right here, among people who are learning, questioning, growing, and caring right alongside you.

The 10:00 AM Wednesday morning Women's Coffee group that was meeting on Route 466 has a change of venue! To be more in-line with our UU values and to support a local, immigrant-owned business (that has great coffee and food), we're moving from Starbucks to Candelaria Eatery & Cafe in Oxford: 4059 Thomas St Unit A01. They're Colombian, so you can bet their coffee is good!
Come join us on a Wednesday morning!





Sacred Love, Visibly Lived

By Kathleen (Kacey) Coffey

At our UU Pride celebration honoring National Coming Out Day, October 11, we were invited to give a five-minute talk about ourselves, celebrating LGBTQ+ authenticity and visibility. Here I Am at 22, a young nun, beside the woman I Am Today.

Seeing these two images of my Self together touches my heart. So much Life between them. So much Learning. And an unfolding discovery that being a Lesbian belongs within my experience of Sacred Love.

Sally and Liz, a married couple, invited us to share photographs from before we recognized we were gay, along with a little of our stories. Sharing some of my early "Aha's" about my denial brought laughter. Today, I can meet that younger woman with Tenderness for all she had yet to understand.

One especially moving story came from Calvin, our best hugger. He shared the tremendous obstacles he overcame in his Coming-Out Journeys—first as a Lesbian and later as a Trans Person. His Honesty, Courage, and Resilience gave Hope a living face.

Liz, a teacher, also reminded us of the suffering LGBTQIA+ young people still experience. Celebrating Pride carries a deeper Purpose when we remember those who still need our Acceptance, Protection, and Advocacy.

As a Lesbian, I experience our capacity to Love as Sacred. Our lives and relationships deserve to be seen with the same Dignity we wish for everyone.

(Cont'd from p. 1)



When we gathered afterward for our Blessings, I felt a Collective Lightness of Spirit—a Loving energy so needed in today's troubled world. It Awakened that precious feeling of Belonging I first discovered with my gay Family of Choice, whose bonds extend beyond biology and the law.

With Gratitude for my TRI-UU Family, I celebrate the freedom to share my highest "I AM"—and the opportunity to help others feel welcome to share theirs. 💕🌈

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Meditative Journaling Questions

- What feelings arise when I look at a photograph of my younger self?
- Where do I feel Safe to be seen and known Authentically?
- How has my understanding of Love and Belonging grown?
- What can I do Today to make my circle more Welcoming?



We're Becoming an Internship Site Again!



We are delighted to announce that the boards of TriUU and UUCLC have voted to become a shared Internship Site for 2027. Dr. Jes Martinez-Hunt (they/them), who many of you know from worship services, will be spending time learning about congregational life through our two congregations. Rev. Kristina will be serving as their Internship Supervisor for the year.

More information will be shared as we continue to work out the details. In the meantime, starting in January, you can look forward to seeing Dr. Jes in the pulpit when Rev. Kristina is away. They will also be working alongside our boards, learning about congregational stewardship, and contributing to other aspects of congregational life.

As neither congregation has funds set aside to offer Dr. Jes compensation, we are getting creative to be able to offer a (very) modest stipend. If you have any questions, please reach out to Rev. Kristina or Cindy Grossman.

In gratitude and community,
Cindy Grossman
President of the Board of Trustees
(Email: cindytriuuprez@gmail.com)

Rev. Kristina Spaude
(Email: triuurev@gmail.com)

The Artist Within

From a young age, Tom had a special gift for art, winning a state art competition in the fifth grade. Influenced by his father, he set aside his artistic passion to pursue a career in the business world, where he became a successful businessman. Yet, through all those years, the artist within him never disappeared. Upon retirement, Tom returned wholeheartedly to his first love, devoting many years to oil painting and studying at the American Institute of Art and Design in Paris. Among the treasured highlights of his artistic journey was the extraordinary privilege of painting in Monet's garden—a place where one master's inspiration surely met another's creative spirit. Tom has been a Unitarian Universalist for 40 years.

Tom's journey is a beautiful reminder that some passions never fade;
they simply wait for the right time to bloom.





The Art of Living: Peace and Freedom in the Here and Now (2017, reprinted 2023).

"The happiness and joy of practicing mindful movements nourishes my body and mind. With each movement I do, I feel how wonderful it is that I can still do it. Exercising like this, I enjoy having a body; I enjoy being alive. I accept life and my b ody just as it is, and I feel so much gratitude." – Thich Nhat Hanh



The Season of Thanks is fast approaching us...I am feeling, in this moment, so grateful for the Meditation Group that meets every other week at TriUU. I am grateful for the use of the Bldg, for all the people responsible for the upkeep of the bldg inside and outside.

Practicing the principle of gratitude has sustained me through times in my life when I did not notice what to be grateful for.

In my practice now I go through all the parts of my body and say thank you. What joy that brings and reminds me how my body has served me over many years.

I recently stubbed my foot, ouch.. Hairline fracture in one toe...hmmm long recovery period. I have a choice, I can grumble about the inconvenience of this situation or I can be grateful my toe is not broken, that I can walk freely and confidently without aid. Gratitude is the foundation of all my practices.

Joyce Axelson

Meditation Schedule follows for remainder of 2026...

Thursday November 5th 10:30
Thursday, November 19th 10:30

Thursday, December 3rd 10:30
Thursday, December 17th 10:30
Thursday, December 31st 10:30

TRIUU FORUM

Thursday, November 12, 2026 at 4:00

Tri-County Unitarian Universalists
7280 SE 135th Street, Summerfield, FL | triuu.org

Bees, Butterflies, Bats: Why Pollinators Matter in Florida

Pollinators are responsible for one in every three bites of food we eat... but their populations are in critical decline.

Habitat loss continues to increase with urban development and land-use changes.

But hope is not lost!

There's more interest in pollinator gardening now than ever before!

Micro-habitats are proving to sustain pollinator populations!



"If the bee disappeared off the face of the earth, man would only have four years left to live."
~ Albert Einstein

Presenter:

Our presenter for our November forum is Maxine Hunter, UF/IFAS Extension Marion County Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent. Currently Maxine works with beekeepers, small farmers and the general public on pest management, animal health and natural resource issues. We're hopeful to also have a local beekeeper with us to share their lifelong love of pollinators.

Honey for sale! Proceeds benefit local 4H group.

Potluck to follow at 5:00 PM



Welcome to UUism !
Reverend Kristina

The Living Tradition

About a hundred years ago, Rev. Dr. Lewis Fisher, dean of Ryder Divinity School in Chicago, a one time Universalist seminary, wrote, “Universalists are often asked to tell where they stand. The only true answer to give to this question is that we do not stand at all, we move.”
Unitarians, Universalists, and now Unitarian Universalists have long been something of a restless people. As individuals and as communities, whether congregations or our institutions, we are a seeking people. Despite our faults and limitations, we do, at least in our minds, want to become better people and groups. We are people who ask hard questions and do not settle for easy answers. Our penchant for wordsmithing and talking things through (sometimes too far) reflects a desire to capture us at our best.
This may be, at least in part, because our theology, like the practice of our faith, is constantly in motion. The 20th century Unitarian-then-Unitarian Universalist theologian Rev. Dr. James Luther Adams wrote that “revelation is continuous” – framed today as “revelation is not sealed.” Not only do we want to be at our best, but we strive to keep moving “onward and upward forever” (a 19th century Unitarian slogan). There’re both humility and hubris caught in this phrase – a humility recognizing we don’t have it quite right yet, and a hubris that we might yet be able to achieve it.
Our theologians have then witnessed and articulated that we are in motion. For all these reasons, we have referred to our faith as a Living Tradition. Like individuals and our congregations, our religion grows and changes with time, as we seek to answer the questions of our time, both within and without our spaces. We are in active tense: becoming, evolving, living. Every year at our annual General Assembly, the national gathering of Unitarian Universalist delegates from UU member congregations to do the business of the UU Association, we debate on issues and changes to the UUA bylaws, Business Resolutions, Actions of Immediate Witness, and more.
In recognition of how our movement changes over time, most years at General Assembly also include the “Service of the Living Tradition,” where milestones for ministers, religious educators, and musicians are honored – at various points on the credentialing processes, retirement, and death. Like our congregations, our faith itself changes as people enter and others leave.
As always, if there’s something about our faith that you’d like to learn more about, let me know and I’d be glad to consider it for a column!





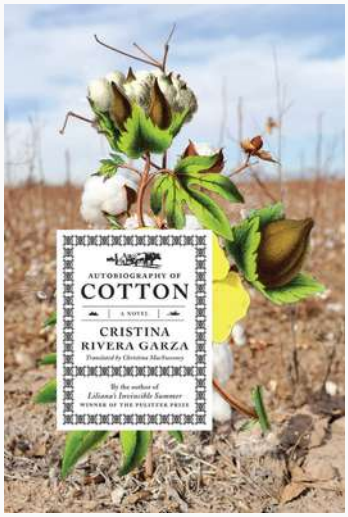
The TriUU Book Club

The TriUU Book Club meets the last Monday of each month at 1pm at TriUU. There will be no book club meeting in November. On December 28 we will be discussing Autobiography of Cotton by Cristina Rivera Garza. (2026, Fiction, 254 pgs.)
"A radical agricultural experiment promised prosperity. Reconstructed histories reveal the political and ancestral mythologies distilled by Mexico-US borderlands and how the peoples were duped."

All current and past book club titles can be found on our website, triuu.org.

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





HEALTHY RELATIONS TEAM

What are "Healthy Relations" in a Unitarian Universalist Congregation? Look for the Answer in our brochure in the Brochure Rack.
The Healthy Relations Team is available for Consultation, Team Building and Conflict Resolution.





TRIUU OFFERS A PEER GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

Every first and third Tuesday of the month a small group gathers around a table in our TriUU sanctuary at 11:00 AM for one hour..
Each person brings life stories, emotions, and their grief.
They honor each others experiences and feelings by listening and keeping what is said there confidential.
It means honoring grief from any of life's many ways that one can become grief-stricken.
The covenant says, "We are here to share and care, and to share our caring."
The brave and grieving members welcome you too.
For more information, please contact the group facilitator,
Trish Schwarzberg, Group Facilitator



Successful Fall Cleanup Day (October 6)

On October 6th from 9am to noon 15 members gave the building and grounds of TriUU a fall cleaning.

People working outside braved the rain showers to weed and trim in the Memorial Garden and under the stained glass windows while others were on ladders cleaning gutters.

Inside, the kitchen was thoroughly cleaned and reorganized, air conditioning filters replaced, wax and oil was removed from the chalice on the chancel and other housekeeping chores were done.

TriUU does pays for lawn mowing and major tree and shrub trimming and some of the interior cleaning. But in order to have the appearance of our buildings and grounds be optimal we need extra people power each quarter to do the things that keep our space pleasant to be in.

Thank you to everyone who volunteered. We couldn't do it without you!

Anne McCusker





The members pictured are Jeanie Powell, Brenda Nelson, Bill Nelson and Bruce Twiss.

PET BLESSING CEREMONY (October 18)

The Pet Blessing Ceremony during the October 18th Worship Service came off without a hitch. All the dogs behaved. All the cats stayed home. Probably for the best. Reverend Carole told the story about why God made dogs and cats. I guess she told it to us last year too. As she said, we probably didn't remember. These pictures tell a good story too.

















TriUU Social Justice in Action! (October 19)

Nine Tri-UU members attended the Town of Lady Lake Commission meeting on October 19. We were there to show support for Commissioner Treva Roberts. Commissioner Roberts has been verbally harassed at Commission meetings for the last year by a local Baptist pastor, Rev. Paul Harsh. Harsh and his "Biblical Christians" attend meetings and spout homophobic comments toward Commissioner Roberts because she is a lesbian and homosexuality is an "abomination." Commissioner Roberts eloquently expressed how very touched she was by the presence of so many supporters!

Tri-UU member Mike Connifey explained very well the removal of homosexuality from the Diagnostic Codes to describe mental illness. Tim McCusker also represented TriUU and was quoted in The Villages News! Village-News.com

Tri-UU members will continue to stand up for injustice and discrimination. Love is at the center of all we do!









Walk to End Alzheimer's! (October 24)

The Tri-UU Love Bugs had a great time at this year's Walk to End Alzheimer's. It was a beautiful day, and we had lots of fun! Team members Cindy Grossman, Lenore Mickleson, Nancy Solberg, Deb Anderson, Liana Barnes, and Liz Perdue walked.

The Tri-UU Love Bugs team raised $1,932.53 toward our $2,000 goal, but It's not too late to donate! Click this link to help Tri-UU raise even more to honor our family members and provide critical funds to bring an end to Alzheimers!





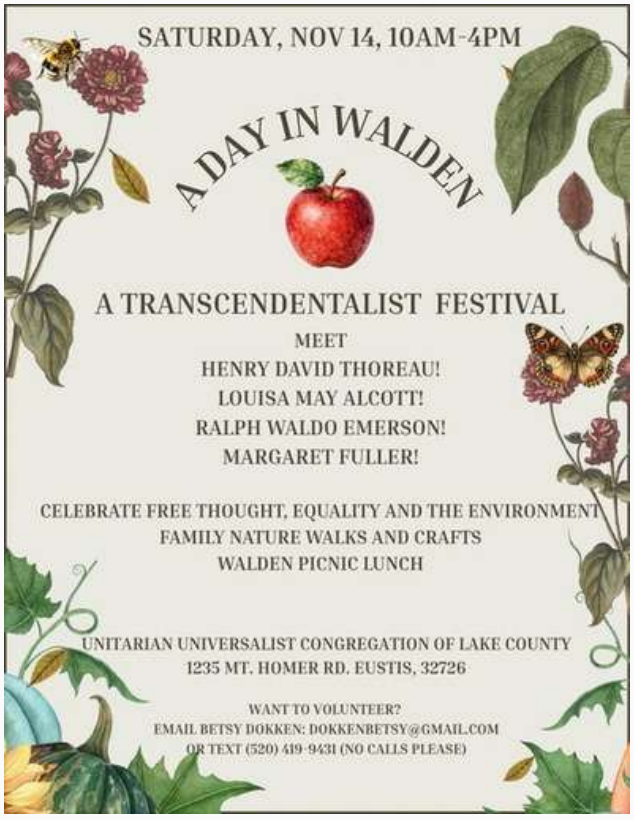


MLK Jr. Commemorative Committee Annual Breakfast

January 16th is coming soon! That's when the Tri-UU sponsored MLK Jr. Commemorative Committee will be having its annual breakfast at the Savannah Center. You'll learn more about the scholarships being awarded to area seniors later this month, when you'll have the opportunity to donate to this worthy cause as our Fifth Sunday collection. In the meantime, Helene Kirschbaum and Joyce Mills will be selling breakfast tickets before and after the service these next few weeks. Tickets are $25 each, which only covers the cost of the meal. You'll be able to sit with your Tri-UU friends, enjoy the catered meal, focus on MLK Jr's message, learn about the scholarship recipients, and even hear some of them share their plans for the future. If you ask anyone who's attended a previous ceremony, they'll tell you how inspiring it is to listen to these future leaders!


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SATURDAY, NOV 14, 10AM-4PM
A DAY IN WALDEN
A TRANSCENDENTALIST FESTIVAL
MEET
HENRY DAVID THOREAU!
LOUISA MAY ALCOTT!
RALPH WALDO EMERSON!
MARGARET FULLER!
CELEBRATE FREE THOUGHT, EQUALITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT
FAMILY NATURE WALKS AND CRAFTS
WALDEN PICNIC LUNCH
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF LAKE COUNTY
1235 MT. HOMER RD. EUSTIS, 32726
WANT TO VOLUNTEER?
EMAIL BETSY DOKKEN: DOKKENBETSY@GMAIL.COM
OR TEXT (520) 419-9431 (NO CALLS PLEASE)


Join Us for a
Thanksgiving Potluck!
Please join your Tri-County Unitarian Universalist community for a Thanksgiving potluck on
November 26 at 2:00 PM!
Thanksgiving is a time to gather, share, and appreciate the people who make our community special. Bring a dish or two to share. We may, or may not, have turkey! The most important thing is that we come together, enjoy one another's company, and celebrate the connections that make our congregation feel like family.
Please RSVP by November 23
to Helene at helenekirschbaum@gmail.com
or Trish at trish.schwartzberg@gmail.com.
Knowing how many to expect will help us set up enough tables and chairs for everyone.
We look forward to sharing a warm, welcoming afternoon of food, fellowship, and gratitude with you!
Good Food Good Company