



# CONNECTIONS

The Newsletter of All Faiths Unitarian Congregation  
A member of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations

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**PRIDE**  
*Cape Coral*

**Saturday, March 1 and  
Sunday, March 2, 2025  
3 P.M. Kick Off!**

**Visit [pridecapecoral.com](http://pridecapecoral.com)  
for full schedule.**

## SPRING FORWARD WITH PHOTOGRAPHY

*Photo Exhibit/Sale hosted by the Fort Myers Camera Club*

*Saturday, March 8, 2025 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. - Save the Date!*



## The Year to Save the Earth

**Save the Date! Sunday, March 30, 3-5 p.m.**

A concert by Jim Scott, singer-songwriter and composer  
in the genres of jazz, classical and folk music. Tickets \$20

## NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

**Election of Board Members & Nominating Committee**

**Revision of Bylaws, Presentation of 2025-2026 Budget**

**SUNDAY, MARCH 16, 2025 at 9:30 a.m.**

(Budget Q&A Session Sunday, March 9, 2025 at 9:30 a.m.)



Our Theme for February was: The Practice of Inclusion. It was appropriate since we celebrate Black History Month annually in Feb. We celebrate the contributions of Black artists, scientists, writers, makers, and leaders.

Unfortunately, we also have to call out the growing movement to censor Black history and the celebration of Black culture, in the classroom and beyond which I believe was the impetus to dismantling DEI and the advent and fear of the word WOKE.

We have witnessed in this country what happens when white men and yes some women become fearful and feel threatened ...they turn into spoiled, privileged bully

boys and bully girls. We know them...the Karen's and friends.

It is apparent that their Social Identity is at risk. Their state of being shaken and they might just wake up and become woke.

That's where All Faiths can make a difference.

Last month, I attended a Small Group Facilitator workshop. It was a refresher course for me.

We here at All Faiths will be resuming Small Groups, called Small Group Circles.

In order that we live our Values out loud during these perilous times, we can also provide the love and support we are known for.

By becoming familiar with the term Social identity refers to... an individual's knowledge of belonging to certain social groups, along with emotional and valuational significance of that group membership, in our case it's the white wealthy privileged groups that are fac-

ing fears of devaluation of their social group.

We can help to mitigate threats: by providing reassurance, avoiding confrontation or encouraging self-affirmation ("DEI is about everyone").

We can provide space for open dialogue about what happens when people encounter information that challenges their assumptions, and need space where they can engage in a process of deep reflection. By questioning their beliefs and seeking out new perspectives, individuals can develop more accurate, inclusive interpretations of themselves and others. And creating a strong diversity climate — where differences are valued, and conversations about identity are encouraged

I believe open dialogue across perspectives, requires a psychological safety net: people need to feel secure enough to express their views, even when those views are incomplete or flawed. More importantly, these conversations

don't always have to occur between dominant and marginalized group members. Dialogue with other dominant-groups who have already reflected on their identities can also provide valuable insights. (Women/LGB/POC/Trans)

We can respect and support incremental progress. Because people may initially engage in surface-level reflection, revisiting specific assumptions without challenging deeper systems of inequality and inequities. Over time, they may progress to deep-level reflection, critically analyzing the foundational beliefs that shape their identity. Small Groups support this incremental progress by recognizing small steps and encouraging continued learning.

And lastly expect Discomfort: It's not always a bad thing, instead consider it a heads up to make a change...A powerful motivator for change

Right now the backlash to DEI efforts has been framed as

*(continued on page 3)*

## Mission Statement

All Faiths Unitarian Congregation is committed to Justice, Equity and Compassion.

## Vision Statement

Recognizing our role as each other's keepers, we strive to be an inclusive, loving, spiritual community working to bring harmony to the world.

## All Faiths Collection Schedule

### Monthly Share-the-Plate & Special Collections

*(Please write organization and amount in the memo line of your check.)*

**March** - Operation Joy

**April** - SWFL RESET Center (Climate Action Team)

**May** - St. Matthew's House Women/Children Shelter (Heart for the Homeless)

**February Share the Plate raised \$1,581 for the Minister's Discretionary Fund!**

*Your generosity directly benefits our community all year long!  
We are grateful!*



evidence that the initiative is failing, but it can also be understood as a natural part of the learning process.

Social identity threat is uncomfortable, but it can serve as a powerful motivator for change when the right tools and support are provided.

Ignorance is not the way. To ignore backlash risks deepening resistance and undermining goals of inclusion. However, embracing discomfort as

an opportunity for growth can transform lives and provide safe spaces where we are not only more inclusive but also more reflective, empathetic and engaged.

I think this can be a new start—it's the beginning of a conversation.

We are on this journey together, let us hold on tight.

*All aboard...Destination Joy Love, Minister Albie*

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## JOYS & SORROWS

*With our apologies for any omissions, here are the joys & sorrows expressed by our members in January.*

**Ann Batal** was hospitalized for diagnostic testing. We are happy that her results were good.

**Michelle Gemma** had cataract surgery and expressed great joy at the wonderful results.

**Alberita Johnson** celebrated her 65th birthday. We are delighted that she is doing so well and that she shares her energy and spirit with all of us. She also celebrated her mother's 98th birthday.

**Carole Latino's** nephew died at the age of 50. We extend our sympathy to her and her family.

**Michael Pierre** is having chemo treatments for esophageal cancer. We hope that they are successful in continuing to prolong a good quality of life.

**Nicole Racine** had a second hip surgery. We hope that the results are more beneficial this time.

**Wayne Reece** reported that in an emergency situation he was able to deliver a baby. He has had a life experience as a nurse in caring for others.

**Carol Siferd** recovered well in rehab and was able to return home. We are happy that she is doing so well and hope that she continues to thrive.

**Founders** – We celebrated the 24th anniversary of our founding in 2001. Of the original 98 founders, the following ten members still attend All Faiths when possible: Donalie Benyak, Charlotte Blitt, Shea Fierro, Jan Guardiano, Frankie Jennings, Nathalie Hahn, Carol Siferd, Fran Way, Jackie Wendorf and Joyce Ramay. Thirteen others have moved or are unable to visit, but remain in contact.

*Joyce Ramay*

*Care and Support Coordinator*

*The Board meeting was held Feb. 19, 2025, at 1pm.*

I have enjoyed serving as the Board Chair this year. I am grateful that we have been able to sort through All Faiths Articles of Incorporation, the Congregational Manual and the Bylaws. The Articles of Incorporation are now posted on the website for all to see. The reviewed and revised Congregational Manual was approved by the Board of Directors at its February meeting. Amendments to the Bylaws will be presented to the congregation at its Annual Meeting on Sunday, March 16. There is nothing radical being proposed in the bylaws amendments.

As we transition into the next fiscal year, we will need to continue bringing more members into the activities of the congregation beyond Sunday services. I have held the place as head of Building and Grounds while we wait for somebody to step forward. We also need a skilled audio technician. Participation in the work of our social justice teams is always welcomed.

As this fiscal year draws to a close I particularly want to single out a few congregants who have carried the load in support of our mission and our staff. *John Conrad* has not only been our Treasurer, but also our projects manager, including seeking bids for replacing our fence and sign and locating an architect to assist us in outlining plans for a small building expansion. *Barb McFarlane* and *Michelle Gemma* have led our program support. *David Donovan* has helped to re-envision our Social Justice Out-

reach. *Brian Bigelow* has toiled away in our gardens. Thanks to everyone who has found a way to serve the congregation and its mission.

Thanks to all for responding to the call from our Stewardship Team led by *Ken Malkin*. The response was met with adequate pledges to spur us on into the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

Thanks to our outstanding board of directors. Members often find themselves in the role of a board member without ever realizing they wanted to serve on the board. It is the nature of our kind of organization to give members an opportunity to serve in areas they never dreamed of serving.

I especially want to thank *Regina Kilmartin* for her outstanding management of our complex organization. She finds herself at the center of all decision-making in this organization. I applaud her for her adaptability in the face of an ever-changing population of volunteer members.

Thanks too to *Jose Gayton*, our Sexton for his contributions to the care and maintenance of our facility.

Thanks to *Carlos Garcia* for engaging members of our congregation in our Sunday Services and to the nurturing of our choir.

Thanks to *Sharon Heinrich* for keeping of Child and Youth Program alive.

And to *Albie* a wish for a wide acceptance of her ministerial philosophy. She is truly a person who wears her authentic self with pride.

Thank you.

# Happening at All Faiths

## Happy March Birthday to you!



- March 1 Eileen Moran
- March 3 Charlotte Blitt
- March 4 Frankie Jennings
- March 12 Diane Chernow
- March 14 Jane Levin
- March 23 Bob Moore
- March 24 Lorene Noe

### And Coming Up...

- April 1 Carol Heilsberg
- April 3 Bill Snider

*If you are missing or see someone who is missing from the birthday roster, please let Regina know.*

## Happy St. Patrick's Day!



### Solos Luncheon

**Saturday, March 1, 2025  
1:00 p.m.**

**Clas Azul Mexican Restaurant**  
3326 Del Prado Blvd S,  
Cape Coral, FL 33904  
*check your email for details.*

**RSVP to: Annelly Hudanick,**  
[annelyblue@hotmail.com](mailto:annelyblue@hotmail.com)

### The All Voices Choir Practice

**Meeting on Saturdays at 11:00 a.m.**

The choir welcomes new members. You do not have to be a professional singer or read sheet music to join. Go ahead, give it a try. Contact: Carlos Garcia, [ceegeefm@gmail.com](mailto:ceegeefm@gmail.com).

### McGregor Clinic Collection

**Every 3rd Sunday of the Month at Service**

The McGregor Clinic is a non-profit health care clinic designed to provide an integrated and holistic approach to patient and community care. Your donations of *men's and women's clothing, and non-perishable foods*, benefit people with HIV/AIDS and their families. Contact: David Donovan, [ddonovan722@gmail.com](mailto:ddonovan722@gmail.com)

### Book Club

**Meeting on the 3rd Monday of the Month at 12 p.m.**

The book club is casual and fun. No assigned books, just show up and be prepared to talk about an interesting book you've read or are reading. Contact: Diane Chernow, [dianecher@comcast.net](mailto:dianecher@comcast.net)



### Climate Action Team Workshop

**Sundays at 9:15 a.m. (Starting 3/23 - 7 Weeks)**

*Save the Planet, Save Ourselves.* That's the theme for these sessions - it's not hyperbole. However, this will not be a "doom and gloom" workshop, but one filled with hope, realistic possibilities and positive action plans for the future. Contact Joan Marshall at [fjmdbm@yahoo.com](mailto:fjmdbm@yahoo.com)

### Mexican Train Dominoes

**Meeting on the 2nd & 4th Friday of the Month at 2 p.m.**



Join in on this fun and popular dominoes game. Don't know how to play? Come and we'll teach you -- it's easy. Contact Ken Malkin at [kennethmmalkin@gmail.com](mailto:kennethmmalkin@gmail.com) to get on email distribution list.

### ACMA Songwriters Circle

**Meeting on Sundays 2:00 - 5:00 p.m.**

The circle is for Acoustic Songwriters of all levels. Songs and experiences are shared in a non-judgmental, casual atmosphere. All are welcome to come and play or just listen. ACMA is secular and is all about original music. No Membership required. We support Americana/Folk, Singer/Songwriters and provide a venue for performing original music.

# MARCH 2025 CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						<b>1</b> <b>11am</b> Choir Practice  <b>1pm</b> Solos Lunch (Pg. 4)  <b>3-10pm</b> <b>CC PRIDE</b>  <b>7pm</b> ACMA Concert (Pg. 9)
<b>2</b> <b>9:15am</b> News Talk <b>10:30am</b> Service & CYP  <b>3-10pm</b> <b>CC PRIDE</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> <b>10am</b> Sun. Service Mtg.  <b>1:30pm</b> Climate Action Team Zoom Mtg.	<b>5</b> <b>6:30pm</b> Fort Myers Camera Club  <b>7pm</b> Vespers via Zoom (pg. 6)	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> <b>11am</b> Choir Practice  <b>1pm-5pm</b> Fort Myers Camera Club <b>Photography Exhibit/Sale</b>
<b>9</b> <b>9:30am</b> Budget Q&A Session  <b>10:30am</b> Service & CYP  <b>12 pm</b> Rainbow Connection	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> <b>10am</b> Racial Equity Meeting  <b>11:30am</b> Social Action & Outreach	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> <b>10 am</b> Finance Mtg.	<b>14</b> <b>11am</b> Membership Committee Mtg.  <b>2pm</b> Dominoes	<b>15</b> <b>11pm</b> Choir Practice  <b>7pm</b> ACMA Concert (Pg. 9)
<b>16</b> <b>9:30am</b> <b>ANNUAL MTG.</b>  <b>10:30am</b> Service & CYP  McGregor Clinic Collection	<b>17</b>  St. Patrick's Day  <b>12pm</b> Book Club	<b>18</b> <b>10am</b> Care and Support Mtg.	<b>19</b> <b>1pm</b> Board Meeting  <b>6:30pm</b> Fort Myers Camera Club	<b>20</b> <b>1pm</b> Homeless Team Mtg.  <b>7pm</b> Tamiami Tale Tellers	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> <b>11am</b> Choir Practice  <b>3-6pm</b> Building Unavailable
<b>23</b> <b>9:15am</b> CAT Workshop <b>10:30am</b> Service & CYP	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> <b>2pm</b> Dominoes  <b>7pm</b> Listening Workshop	<b>29</b> <b>11am</b> Choir Practice  <b>7pm</b> ACMA Concert (Pg. 9)
<b>30</b> <b>9:15am</b> CAT Workshop <b>10:30am</b> Service & CYP Animal Shelter	<b>31</b> <b>3-5pm</b> Jim Scott in Concert (Sunday)					

Check the online calendar at: [www.allfaithsuu.org](http://www.allfaithsuu.org) for post-printing updates

## MARCH 2025 SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES THEME: THE PRACTICE OF TRUST

**In-House & Live on Facebook at 10:30 a.m.**

Recorded services can be viewed at [www.allfaithsuu.org](http://www.allfaithsuu.org)  
or on our YouTube channel.

### March 2 – The Practice of Trust

Speaker – Alberita Johnson

Worship Associate – Susan Meissner

Music by Carlos Garcia

Life of Congregation Report – Frank Geltner

### March 9 – Ramadan

Guest Speaker – Julian Ramirez, QLC

Worship Associate – Alberita Johnson

Music by Carlos Garcia

### March 16 – Purim: Trusting the Queen

Speaker – Marge DiGalbo

Worship Associate – Annelly Hudanick

Music by Carlos Garcia

McGregor Clinic Collection

9:30 a.m. Annual Meeting –

Elections, Budget and Bylaws

### March 23 – Equinox: The Promise of Spring

Speaker – Helen Dixon

Worship Associate – Michelle Gemma

Music by Carlos Garcia

### March 30 - The Strength of a Woman

Speakers – Joyce Ramay & Alberita Johnson

Worship Associate – Regina Kilmartin

Music – Joan Marshall & Carlos Garcia

### News Talk - 9:15am in the Sanctuary

News Talk is a facilitated group that offers a time and space for you to discuss the weekly headlines.

### The Rainbow Connection

Meeting every 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday at Noon

Contact Frank Stephens – [fdinfla99@gmail.com](mailto:fdinfla99@gmail.com)

A space for the LGBTQ community and allies to gather in fellowship, plan activities and offer support.

## CHILD & YOUTH PROGRAM NOTES

by Sharon Heinrich, CYP Director

This month “Trust” is the faith practice that we will explore. What does trust mean? What makes someone or something trustworthy? How do we fix broken trust? What does it mean to trust our inherent worth? Weekly wisdom tales and stories along with games and art activities bring the concepts to life.

**Opening:** We are here together with love at our center. We will think with our minds, love with our hearts, create with our hands.

**March 2:** Trusting Yourself: “The Little Engine That Could” Puzzles - I can do hard things!

**March 9:** Trusting Others: “Trusting a Queen” (the story of Queen Esther) Trust Games

**March 16:** Trusting Life: “Lost in the Desert” Participate in Purim service

**March 23:** Fixing Broken Trust “The Broken Pot” Japanese wisdom tale

**March 30:** Trusting Our Inherent Worth “The Lion and the Mouse”

**Closing:** As we make our choices each day, may we make them with love at our center.

I would like to encourage our congregation to share talent, skill and knowledge with our young people. Please let me know if you would like me to schedule a short time on a Sunday morning for you to share with the young ones.

*Sharon, CYP Director*

REGISTER AT: [www.allfaithsuu.org](http://www.allfaithsuu.org)



## ALL FAITHS' VESPERS

1st Wednesday Monthly 7:00

*A time of evening prayer,  
meditation and contemplation*

**Zoom Meeting ID: 852 1697 7661**

**Passcode: 485483**

What to Expect: We may experience sacred readings, crystal and Tibetan bowls, flute, violin, harp, lite drumming, poetry, quotes, testimonials, storytelling, chanting and movement. Each service is different but will always include prayer, meditation and contemplation.

For more information email: [office@allfaithsuu.org](mailto:office@allfaithsuu.org)

# RAINBOW CONNECTION NEWS

by David Donovan and Carole Latino, Co-Chairs



The Rainbow Connection team held a get-together at Cruisers Bar in Cape Coral after our regular team meeting on February 9th. This was a time for members to socialize and get to know each other better. It was well received, and we may do this again later in the year.

The next major event for the Rainbow Connection is Cape Coral Pride Festival and Parade, which will be on Saturday, March 1st. This will complete one of the five practices of being a Welcoming Congregation. The goal of this practice is to give generously of our gifts and resources and make a sizeable donation to a local or national organization that uplifts the dignity of the LGBTQ+ community. Through the generosity of our amazing members, Julie and Patty and 2 other couples, All Faiths is the MAJOR SPONSOR of the Cape Coral Pride for the 2nd straight year! We encourage anyone that can participate to please sign up and show your support for their donation and the hard work of the Rainbow Connection team.

The next Welcoming Congregation Service that we will recognize is International Transgender Day of Visibility. We will celebrate that day during an upcoming worship service. We are also planning to show a movie called “Will and Harper” to help educate the congregation on trans issues. The date is for late March as well. The movie is about the comedian and movie star, Will Farrell, and his dear friend of nearly 30 years, Harper Steele. It turns out that Harper is coming out to Will as a Trans woman and the story finds them on a cross country journey which allows them to re-explore their relationship in light of this revelation.

## LIFE NEWS & UPDATES

by Robert Bennett, Team Leader

At the LIFE (Lee Interfaith for Empowerment) meeting earlier this month, 14 board members representing 11 difference churches, discussed how LIFE will concentrate its efforts this year to build its “people power.”

This includes inviting more congregations to join LIFE so that our people power will be even larger in numbers. It also includes strengthening its financial foundation so it can hire a new lead organizer to help the organization achieve its ultimate goals of changing discriminatory and harmful laws and procedures.

Over the past two years, LIFE has overcome many obstacles — embezzlement and the resulting problem with IRS, not to mention three recent hurricanes and the destruction of church facilities and congregants’ homes — but LIFE is now back in the black and

heading for a robust balance sheet for the year.

Why are these two goals important? Before returning to the task of identifying new injustices and fighting for change, LIFE’s board members agreed to build its people power first.

LIFE’s “people power” is the foundation of its strength, as it has learned that politicians will show up and listen only when LIFE shows up with hundreds of Lee County citizens who want to see justice prevail. Once LIFE again has a strong foundation, it will resume the important work of collecting and sharing congregants’ concerns about injustices, prioritizing research on solutions, and urging politicians to change their laws and behaviors to end the injustices.

## LISTENING SKILLS WORKSHOP

Friday, March 28, 7 pm – 9 pm.



Hi! I am Frank Stephens and *you* are invited to an evening devoted to communication. We will define what Listening Skills are and explore how to utilize them in our daily lives as well as how they can enrich our All Faiths congregation.

How am I qualified to facilitate this workshop: I volunteered at “The Listening Line” in Bloomington, IN, during the mid 80’s while I was a student at Indiana University; a phone service for the community where people could call (old fashioned land line) to talk and be listened to about any subject. I attended and facilitated/presented training sessions for new volunteers three times a year, as well as answered the phone during weekly shifts. The experience has shaped my approach to other people as I have continued to utilize the skills in all aspects of my life.

Why this workshop is relevant to the All Faiths congregation: Members of All Faiths attended a webinar about Growing your Congregation some months ago. The facilitator, Peter, included a discussion about how to engage visitors with the intent of enabling those people to return. The foundation of his guidance was centered on Listening Skills. I had not been attending to my Listening Skills for several years; my prowess in utilizing them had decreased due to negligence. The first thing I focused on when I began attending All Faiths has been my Listening Skills while interacting with members and friends but especially visitors. My efforts have not always been effective, though I am improving. It is my hope to use the strength of teaching/learning, giving/receiving, with those of you who choose to attend, to improve the effectiveness of my and your Listening Skills and thereby the strength of our congregation.

*With gratitude and anticipation, Frank Stephens.*

## RACIAL EQUITY TEAM NEWS

by Frank Geltner, Co-Chair

The Racial Equity Team has decided to throw its energy into developing an outreach activity with the Southwest Florida Quality Life Center (QLC). Members of All Faiths are welcome to join the Racial Equity Team at 6 p.m. on Monday, March 3 as we have a short 30 minute meeting with busy parents at the Quality Life Center.

We have proposed developing a mutual relationship with the QLC. We hope this partnership will satisfy our need to become more active allies in the community and to become stronger, more informed and better equipped to address the problems we identify.

*What to Expect in 30 Minutes with Parents:*

*A short, engaging activity – A chance to share what you love about your community and what you'd like to see change.*

*Real talk, no speeches – We want to hear from you about issues that affect your families and neighborhood.*

*Next steps, your way – No commitments, just a conversation to see if working together could be helpful for you.*

Our team has been engaged in Dunbar for many years, from advocating for environmental justice to pushing for better infrastructure and resources. But we don't want to assume – we want to listen.

## “THE YEAR TO SAVE THE EARTH”

*A Multimedia Experience by Jim Scott*

*Sunday, March 30, 3-5pm - Tickets \$20*

Mixing powerful songs and beautiful PowerPoint projected images, Jim Scott's lyrical melodies and outspoken poetry take us from grieving to celebration, and from protest to positive vision for the planet. As well as hard reality, the program's message is one of optimism with many invitations to join in the singing.

Jim has played at more than 700 UU churches; over four decades of travels, and his songs are in the UU Hymn Books (Gather the Spirit). Jim was awarded an NEA grant to develop and present his multimedia concert, “The Year to Save the Earth”, in Worcester, MA. He's taking it on the road across the US, and will be at All Faiths on March 30.

One of the originators of the UU “Green Sanctuary” program, Jim also compiled the "Earth and Spirit" Songbook, an anthology of 110 songs of Earth by many contemporary composers. He has toured the world, recorded nine CDs of original music and published a growing line of choral works.

Get your tickets at Sunday services or at the door.

## ♥ FOR THE HOMELESS TEAM

by Barb McFarlane, Co-Chair

The Heart for Homeless Team continued to collect and deliver bikes to North Shore Alliance Church for repair and distribution. The team has donated 284 bikes over the last six years for people experiencing homelessness.

St. Matthew's House Women's and Children's Shelter in Fort Myers was the recipient of the team's Share-the-Plate collections in 2024. Staff from St. Matthew's presented to the congregation in October 2024. All Faiths members have signed up to serve a monthly meal at the shelter.

The team organized the presentation of the documentary *Razing Liberty Square* in January 2025. It was well attended by All Faiths members, LIFE congregations, and members of the community.

For the sixth year, All Faiths members worked on a Habitat for Humanity House in January 2025.

The team purchased gloves and stocking hats for the county's street outreach teams. The congregation collected insect repellent for the outreach team to distribute in May 2024. Team members handed out the Homeless Coalition's little green (now white) resource books to people in need.

A speaker from Lutheran Services Refugee Resettlement program met with the team. As a result, a few team members donated school supplies and a congregant donated furniture to newly arrived families.

Robert Bennett and Judy Alberda have volunteered to co-chair the team for the coming year. We appreciate their participation.

*Thank You* to Barb McFarlane for leading the Heart for the Homeless Team over the past several years. Your contributions to the unhoused in our local community have been significant and are greatly appreciated.

~ The Board and Congregation





## NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

### Election of Board Members, Secretary, and Nominating Committee Members; Approval of 2025-2026 Budget & Proposed Bylaws Changes

**SUNDAY, MARCH 16, 2025 at 9:30 A.M.**  
**Before Service in the Sanctuary**

Members of All Faiths Unitarian Congregation are encouraged to attend our Annual Meeting, which will be held in the sanctuary prior to Sunday service on March 16. Items on the agenda are:

- Election of Board Members, Secretary & Nominating Committee Members
- Highlights of Minutes from Last Year's Meeting
- Approval of the Budget for 2025-2026
- Approval of Proposed Bylaws Changes

Members may register and obtain ballots at a table outside the front door prior to the start of the meeting. Absentee ballots may be obtained on the first two Sundays in March at the All Faiths office or by emailing [office@allfaithsuu.org](mailto:office@allfaithsuu.org). Signed absentee ballots must be returned to All Faiths prior to the meeting and will be counted in the quorum.

**NOTES: An Annual Report, including reports from various congregational leaders, the Budget, and Nominees for the Board, and proposed changes to the Bylaws will be distributed electronically before March 9. Hard copies will be available for congregants not having an email address.**

**There will be a Q&A Forum held at 9:30 a.m. prior to service on March 9, 2025.**

**Voting will be at 9:30 a.m. prior to service on March 16, 2025.**

/s/ **Barb McFarlane**  
Secretary, Board of Directors



## Ice Cream Social

After Service  
Sunday, March 30, 2025  
Sponsored by Lewis Robinson

## CLIMATE ACTION TEAM NEWS

by Joan Marshall, Co-Chair



2024 has now been officially declared Earth's hottest year on record. Indeed, the ten years since your Climate Action Team was formed in 2015 now constitute the hottest decade ever recorded. What does all this mean and what can we do about it? These are the questions CAT will explore with you in a series of seven Sunday morning workshops beginning at 9:15 on March 23rd.

That's right. We're asking you to set your alarm an hour earlier for seven Sundays in a row and invest those seven hours in exploring how to "Save the Planet, Save Ourselves." That's our theme for these sessions and, unfortunately, it's not hyperbole. However, this will not be a "doom and gloom" workshop, but one filled with hope, realistic possibilities and positive action plans for the future. You need to be there... for your sake and for the sake of future generations.

The next ten years will be pivotal in determining the impact of climate change on our planet over this century. What will our legacy be for our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren? Come join us in exploring how our actions today can make a huge difference in the world of tomorrow. Come be a part of our seven week Earth Day celebration workshops.

Knowledge is power. Help generate the power we need to truly make a difference.

## ACMA LIVE MUSIC SCHEDULE!

### Saturday, March 1 - 7:00pm Concert

Hank Woji & Friends in Concert  
Bill Frey opening

### Saturday, March 15 - 7:00pm

Patchouli in Concert  
Mary Dahl opening

### Saturday, 29 - 7:00pm

Rod Abernethy in Concert  
Bill Burket opening



**The Listening Room at All Faiths**  
2756 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers, Florida  
General public \$18/Member discount \$12  
Donations at the Door

# TREASURER'S REPORT

by John Conrad, Treasurer

## Cash Assets – January 2025

First Horizon Checking	\$ 15,973
Raymond James Legacy	5,234
Live Oak Operating Reserve (CD)	23,002
First Horizon Capital Reserve	4,867
Live Oak Capital Reserve (S)	31,330
Live Oak Operating Reserve (S)	42,449
Live Oak Legacy (CD)	21,740

<b>Total</b>	<b>\$144,595</b>
Prior Month	<u>144,552</u>
<b>Net Gain/Loss</b>	<b>\$ 43</b>

## January 2025 Profit & Loss

Operating Income	\$ 20,267
Operating Expense	<u>20,724</u>
<b>Net Gain/Loss</b>	<b>(\$ -457)</b>

## Revenue/Operating Income and Expenses:

When we entered the 2024-2025 fiscal year on April 1, 2024, All Faiths budgeted \$200,200 for pledge giving; to date, actual pledges have totaled \$185,160 (92.5%).

Our Pledge Goal for the months of April to January was \$166,834; and \$139,308 was received (83.5%). However, before April 1, 2024, \$24,757 was received in paid pledges towards the new year. Taking this into account, we have received a total of \$164,065 towards the current year total pledge drive goal of \$200,200 (82.0%).

No unusual expenses incurred in the General Fund Operating Account during January, other than the \$3,474 Flood Insurance bill was paid.

Interest, as a result of accounts moved to online banking last March, are reflected in the figures listed above. January's Interest Income was \$411.

The January monthly transfer/deposit of \$1,530 to the Live Oak Capital Reserve account was made. No Capital Reserve expenses were incurred. However, contracts were authorized to repair the fence on the west side of the property and to replace the sign; both were damaged during Hurricane Milton.

In January, \$330 was collected for the Quality Life Center (Racial Justice Team).

## SPRING FORWARD WITH PHOTOGRAPHY!

Photo Exhibit and Sale hosted by the Fort Myers Camera Club

Saturday, March 8, 2025 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. - Save the Date!



The Fort Myers Camera Club (FMCC) is thrilled to present a photo exhibit at All Faiths Unitarian Congregation. The Exhibit titled "**Spring Forward with Photography**" will be on display Saturday, March 8, 2025, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the community room of the church. Everyone is welcome to celebrate this Exhibit that will also include wine and cookies as refreshments.

## YARD SALE COMING SOON!

Save the Date! April 12, 2025

7-8am Setup — Sale 8-1pm



Start cleaning out your closets! It's time for another Junk-in-the-Trunk yard sale.

Vendors donate 50% of their proceeds to support All Faiths' general operating budget.

There will be Grilled Burgers & Dog, Baked Goods and Beverages for Sale.

Spots reserved on a first-come/first-serve basis. Room for approximately 20 cars. Sign up on the bulletin board.

# GODSCIENCE: THE CONSCIENCE AND SCIENCE OF GOD

*A Voluntary Review with Frank Geltner, Author*

Anyone interested in participating in a discussion of a book I am writing is invited to send me an email to <frank@newportnet.com>. The title of the book is **Godscience: The Conscience and Science of God**. There will be a gathering of interested folks on Thursday, March 6 at 7:00 p.m. If you are not able to attend this meeting, let me know in your email what would be the best meeting time for you to participate. I may just alternate between an evening and a daytime meeting. I will not be sharing any printed materials due to copyright concerns. That may change further along. I share what I share below in confidence. I trust you will understand my concerns. I will be scheduling a meeting every few weeks. The format will include my reading from the book followed by a question and answer session. If you have any questions, you are free to call me at 541-961-1482.

The following is the opening of the “Introduction” to the book:

For thousands of years, people have looked to the stars, the earth, and each other, trying to make sense of life's biggest mysteries. This quest has taken many forms, from the myths of ancient storytelling to the logos of rational inquiry.

Mythos refers to the intuitive, symbolic, and often spiritual ways of understanding the world, while logos represents the logical, analytical, and scientific approach. Together, these two modes of thought have shaped humanity's search for meaning—not as opposing forces, but as complementary acts of creation.

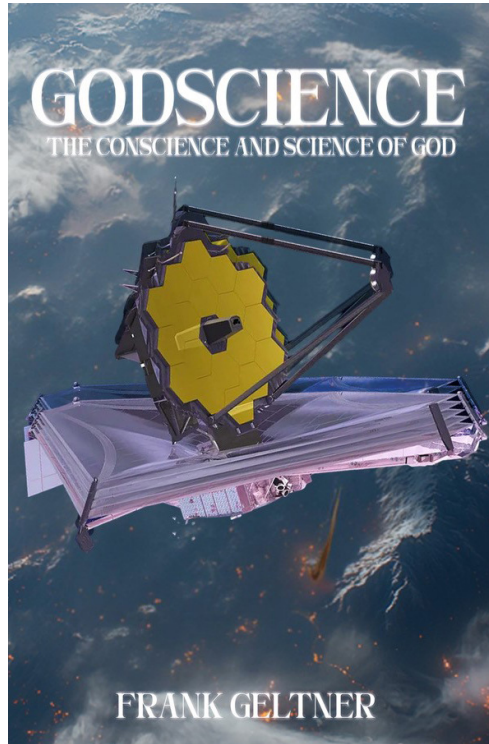
It is through mythologizing, the weaving of experience into symbolic narrative, and logopoiesis, the crafting of structured meaning through reason, that humanity gives form to its deepest insights. Godscience arises at the confluence of these creative impulses, where the intuitive and the rational, the seen and the unseen, unite in the pursuit of truth.

This innate sense that in the absence of a God, we find ways to make god through the crafting of structured meaning.

But beneath all these inquiries lies an even deeper question: Who or what is doing the asking?

The search for knowledge is not just a human endeavor—it is the work of universal consciousness itself, reaching through science and conscience to understand the nature of

its own existence. If consciousness is fundamental to reality, then Godscience is its unfolding process—an awareness seeking to uncover its origins, to explore how we came to be, and to grasp the underlying intelligence that gives rise to life.



Thus, Godscience is more than an intellectual pursuit; it is the very fabric of the cosmos thinking through us, questioning through us, discovering through us. Whether through the disciplined rigor of science or the moral intuition of conscience, we are participating in a vast, interconnected field of intelligence, striving to know itself.

[Skipping to a later portion of the Introduction]:

## The Conscience of God

The Conscience of God represents the shared ethical principles found across spiritual traditions. These principles guide humanity toward love, justice, and harmony, transcending individual beliefs to emphasize the interconnectedness of all life. A key example is the universal tenet of the Golden Rule, urging us to treat others as we wish to be

treated. This moral compass is reflected in diverse cultures and traditions, demonstrating a collective understanding of humanity's role in fostering a just and compassionate world.

In Buddhism, for instance, the principle of Ahimsa, or non-violence, emphasizes living in harmony with all beings, fostering respect for life in every form. Christianity teaches compassion and selflessness, encouraging individuals to care for others and prioritize love as a guiding principle. Indigenous cultures around the world highlight the sacred relationship between humanity and nature, promoting reciprocity and stewardship of the Earth. These traditions reflect humanity's shared aspiration to live ethically, nurturing relationships with one another, the environment, and the divine forces that sustain existence.

## The Science of God

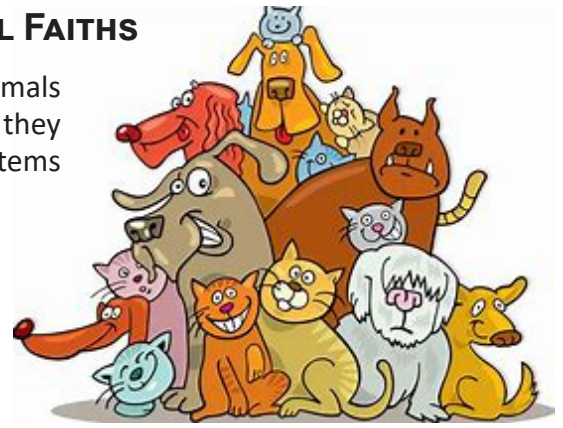
While the Conscience of God addresses humanity's moral and spiritual dimensions, the Science of God reveals the divine intelligence inherent in the physical universe. Scientific discoveries consistently uncover a level of intricacy, order, and beauty in nature that inspires awe and challenges the limits of human understanding.

# ANIMAL SHELTER COLLECTION SUNDAY, MARCH 30

## DROP SUPPLIES OFF AT ALL FAITHS

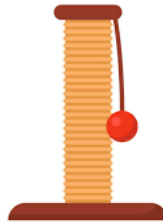
Shelters provide a safe and nurturing environment for homeless animals until they can find a forever home. To help them in their mission, they would appreciate donations of pet food and treats, and any of the items listed below.

For more information contact: Sharon Gray at [geema1@yahoo.com](mailto:geema1@yahoo.com) or (239)565-2474.



### SHELTER WISH LIST

Cat Food (dry and canned)  
Dog Food (dry and canned)  
Cat Litter (clay and scoopable)  
Contractor grade trash bags  
Towels, large & small



Blankets, Comforters,  
Pillow Cases, Sheets  
Clorox Wipes, Tissues, Paper Towels, Bleach  
Gift cards (from Petsmart, PetCo or  
Pet Supermarket or other local pet stores)



## All Faiths Unitarian Congregation

2756 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers, Florida 33901

Phone: (239) 226-0900 – Email: [office@allfaithsuum.org](mailto:office@allfaithsuum.org) – Website: [www.allfaithsuum.org](http://www.allfaithsuum.org)



**Executive Board:** Frank Geltner, Chair; Dick Scudder, Vice Chair; John Conrad, Treasurer; Barb McFarlane, Secretary.

**Directors:** David Donovan, Carol Heilsberg, Rosalie Kuehn, Ken Malkin, Lewis Robinson.

**Ex-Officio, Non Voting:** Marge DiGalbo, Past Chair; Alberita Johnson, Minister; Regina Kilmartin, Cong. Admin.

**Staff:** Regina Kilmartin, Administrator; Sharon Heinrich, CYP Director; Carlos Garcia, Music Director; Joe Gayton, Sexton.

**Commissioned Lay Minister: Alberita (Albie) Johnson**

#### Communications

*Newsletter*  
Regina Kilmartin  
*Proofreaders*  
Weezie Close/Joyce Ramay  
*Social Media & Website*  
Regina Kilmartin/Becky Ross

#### Sunday Service Team

Joyce Ramay

#### Hospitality

Frank Stephens

#### Program Support

Michelle Gemma/Barb McFarlane

#### Member Services

Dottie Mayol/Carole Latino

#### Greeters

Dick Scudder

#### Care and Support

Joyce Ramay

#### Finance

Joyce Ramay

#### Stewardship Committee

Ken Malkin

#### Nominating Committee

Sharon Gray

#### Sound Technicians

David Donovan/Brad Davidson

#### Livestreaming

Regina Kilmartin/Sharon Gray  
Brad Davidson

#### Building and Grounds

Frank Geltner/Brian Bigelow

#### Social Action & Outreach

*Climate Action Team*  
Joan Marshall/Carol Heilsberg

*Heart for the Homeless*

Barb McFarlane

#### Racial Equity Team

Nicole Racine/Frank Geltner

#### L.I.F.E.

Robert Bennett,  
Barb McFarlane  
JoAnn Hilliard

#### Mano a Mano

Charlotte Blitt

#### Operation Joy & Solos Group

Annely Hudanick

#### Animal Ministry

Sharon Gray

#### Rainbow Connection

David Donovan

**Founding Minister:** The Late Rev. Dr. Wayne A. Robinson



Deadline for the **March** Issue of *Connections* is **February 18**

(Brief announcements may be accepted later, and will be included *if* space and time permit.)



OFFICE HOURS: 9am to 4pm, Monday–Thurs;  
9am to 12pm, Friday & Sunday.  
Congregational Administrator: Regina Kilmartin