



# CONNECTION

**Join us for our Sunday 10 am service live in our Sanctuary  
Or online at [www.uucov.org](http://www.uucov.org)**

## Minister's MUUsings



The new year is approaching, and I can feel it the way you feel the ocean before you see it: a change in the air, a loosening of what has been, an opening in what will be [Click here to read more](#)

## Message from the Board of Trustees President



Happy Holidays to all. Eileen and I sincerely wish you all health and happiness for the New Year and beyond.  
*Steve Leapley*

## Meeting Highlights

### Coordinating Council Meeting Dec. 2nd

- Since April, we've welcomed six new members who have signed the membership book.
- Our recent Food Drive was a wonderful success, thanks to everyone's efforts!

### Board of Trustees Meeting Dec. 18

- A new program, "Checkpoint," will be launched soon for new members.
- Unsung Hero suggestions are being collected. More information on page

To access all meeting minutes, please visit our [website](#)

## Meet Our Congregants:

### Barbara Pierce



Barbara was really involved with the UU Fellowship of Port Charlotte for a good few years before she recently moved to Venice. [Click here to get to know her!](#)

# LOOKING BACK, MOVING FORWARD

*2025 challenged us in many ways, and this community responded. We faced loss, welcomed new people, shared joyful moments, and kept choosing to stay connected. In a world that often felt uncertain and heavy, this congregation became a place to pause, breathe, and remember our shared values.*

*During times of change and challenge, we supported each other. We listened more, cared more, and found strength in coming together for worship, conversation, service, and just being present. By doing this, we didn't just make it through the year; we became closer.*

*As we start a new year, we feel both grateful and hopeful. Whether you come every week or just once in a while, you are part of this community.*

*Let's keep gathering, staying curious, caring for each other, and together building what comes next*



# CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

## Flowers for the Pulpit

Enhance the beauty of our offerings by donating flowers. This is a wonderful way to honor a loved one. Please bring hypoallergenic flowers.

[Click this link for some hypoallergenic flower suggestions.](#)

If you have any questions, please contact Jean Barlow at [Jean.ISeeTheWorld@Hotmail.com](mailto:Jean.ISeeTheWorld@Hotmail.com)

## Call for Nominations: Unsung Hero Award



The Board of Trustees invites nominations for the Unsung Hero Award, recognizing volunteers who enhance the UUCOV community without seeking recognition. Suggestions should be sent to Board Secretary Barbara Buehring at [uucovsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:uucovsecretary@gmail.com) by January 10. Let's honor those who selflessly contribute to our community!



## Fellowship Group Facilitators

UUCOV Fellowship Group Facilitators are scheduled to gather on Monday, January 19, 2026, at 10 a.m. in Waters Hall for the second of three meetings during the 2025-26 season.

Please RSVP by contacting Wendy Voigt at [wendywv1126@gmail.com](mailto:wendywv1126@gmail.com).

### January Green Tip

A recent NPR 1A episode featured Marc Berman, an environmental neurologist, discussing the positive effects of spending time outdoors on brain function and behavior. Engaging with nature can enhance physical and mental well-being. The Green & Garden team invites you to experience these benefits while helping maintain UUCOV's natural surroundings. For more information, contact Donna Jewett, Kim McHugh, or Olga Hebert.

# CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

## Cookies, Coffee & Conversation



Join us after Sunday service for Coffee, Cookies & Conversation to connect and enjoy fellowship. Help with setup, cleanup, or cookie donations is welcome. If you would like to help or bring a treat, please contact Eileen Leapley or Jean Barlow.

## Call for Nominations for Special Offerings



It's time to select the six 501(c)(3) organizations that UUCOV will support via monthly special collections next fiscal year. Please pick up a nomination form on the lanai or email Janet Knudsen with your recommendation(s) of charities to support. Our focus is on local organizations that would benefit the most from our donations. Deadline for submissions: January 11

## Calling all UUCOV Authors



UUCOV is excited to honor our authors on Saturday, February 28th, as we officially unveil our newly refreshed library with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. If you have written a book, please reach out to Cathay Keough at [away2gether@proton.me](mailto:away2gether@proton.me).

## Now Welcoming All Auction Donations!

Do you have an item or service to donate to UUCOV's auction on February 20?

Janet Knudsen and Judy Heipel are soliciting auction items from UUCOV's members and friends. Please see Janet or Judy for a donation submission form.



# CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

## Checkpoint: A Welcome for New Members Jan 11, 11:30 am



We invite you to join us for an engaging session tailored for anyone interested in learning more about our community. This is a wonderful opportunity to connect, share ideas, and get involved in various activities that positively impact everyone around us. Light refreshments will be provided. For further details or any questions, please contact Anne Harrison. We look forward to seeing you there!

## Meatless Monday



Join us for Meatless Monday vegetarian potluck on **Monday, January 5, at 5 pm**. Bring a dish to share!

## Rummikub & Hugs Learn/Play

**New Group!** Join us for games, conversation, snacks, and lots of fun! First and Third Thursday every month, between 12:30 and 2:30 pm. Make new friends and share some laughs. Questions? Contact Jean Barlow at [jean.iseetheworld@hotmail.com](mailto:jean.iseetheworld@hotmail.com) for more information

## Death Cafe Jan. 24, 2pm



A group-led discussion on the topic of death and dying, in a supportive and gentle setting. Light refreshments will be available. All are welcome! Contact Cathay Keough for more information.

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## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

### Support South County Food Pantry on Jan. 11

Our special offering on January 11 will benefit the South County Food Pantry. South County Food Pantry provides food for families in need in Venice, Nokomis, Laurel, and Osprey. They currently serve about 1,200 people per month, including 250 children and more than 100 senior citizens.

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### SPARCC Says Thank You!

Thank you for the outpouring of donations for SPARCC during last month's lanai collection. The organization was overjoyed with the abundance of UUCOV's generosity. Thank you to Marian Sawicki for filling her vehicle to the brim and making the delivery.

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### Special Food Drive on Jan. 11

We are continuing our special food drives on the second Sunday of every other month. Please place your food donations in the bins situated at the front of the sanctuary. These contributions will assist our neighbors in greatest need, especially those who may lack access to a food pantry. Sarasota UU is organizing the collection and delivery of these items. We also welcome monetary donations, which are greatly appreciated. Click the link below for a complete list of items needed.

[Donate and make sure no neighbor goes to bed hungry](#)

# UPCOMING EVENTS

**“The Times They Are a-Changing: An Evening of Music, Love, and Learning.” Jan 31 at 3:30pm in our Sanctuary.**

Join us for this FREE event featuring reflections from Rev. Dr. Amy Petrie Shaw, Ayleen Howe, and an amazing performance by Karlus Trapp

uucov.org  
 Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Venice  
 1971 Pinebrook Rd., Venice FL 34292  
 Jan 31 • 3:30 PM

## The Times They Are a-Changing: An Evening of Music, Love, and Learning



3:30 PM

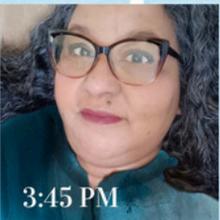
Rev. Dr. Amy Petrie Shaw  
 From Nationalism  
 to Inclusion:  
 Changing the Way We Think

*featuring*



4PM

Karlus Trapp



3:45 PM

Ayleen Howe  
 From Invisible to Valuable:  
 Changing Who We See

# An Evening of Music, Love, and Learning

# JANUARY CALENDAR

All meetings and gatherings take place in Waters Hall, unless otherwise noted

- **Mat Makers:** Jan 3 & 17 - 10 am
- **Blue Lotus Meditation:** Every Saturday- 10:30 am (Sanctuary)
- **Meatless Monday:** Jan 5 - 5 pm
- **Freethinkers of Venice Secular AA Group:** Every Tuesday - 6:30 pm
- **Death and Grief Support Group:** Jan 7 & 21 - 1:30 pm
- **AA Meeting:** Every Thursday - 5:45 am (Sanctuary).
- **Choir Rehearsal:** Every Thursday - 4 pm (Sanctuary).
- **Around the World in 12 Religions (VOTI):** Jan 6 - 4 pm
- **Around the World in 12 Religions (UUCOV):** Jan 7 -4 pm
- **Men's Open Group:** Jan 10 & 24- 10:30 am
- **Book Club:** Jan 8 - 1 pm
- **Checkpoint: A Welcome for New Members:** Jan 11 - 11:30 am
- **Mahjong Learn & Play:** Every Thursday - 1 pm.
- **Venice Area Historical Society Lecture:** Jan 13 - 7pm (Sanctuary).
- **Rummikub & Hugs Learn/Play:** Jan 15 & 29 - 12:30 pm.
- **Bridge Brushup and Play:** Every Friday - 1pm.
- **Death Cafe:** Jan 24 - 2 pm.
- **SPECIAL EVENT:** The Times They Are a-Changing: Jan 31 - 3:30 pm.



## Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Venice

*A welcoming, caring community encouraging spiritual growth, seeking meaning, and pursuing justice.*



(941) 485-2105

1971 Pinebrook Rd.



Office@UUCOV.org

Venice, FL 34292-1563



www.UUCOV.org

Services are Sunday at



www.UUCOVboutique.com

10 am at our Sanctuary,  
or live on our [website](#) or



[YouTube](#) page

