



The Communicator

[Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Lake County](#)



Sunday Services

- December 5** Rev. Byrd Tetzlaff
"One Person's Efforts"
- December 12** Rev. Kathy Schmitz
"Joy and Blessings"
- December 19** Rev. David Crump
- December 26** Sally Westover
"Singing Bowls Meditation"

December Birthdays

Kit Tatum
Richard Province
Pete Reed
Carl Skiles

If you have not shared your birthday with us, please email christy.millat@yahoo.com so we can wish you a happy birthday too.

What Brings You Joy?

In the worship service on November 14, Rev. Kathy Schmitz invited people to share what brings them joy. Your input will be welcome until December 7th and will inform our worship service on December 12th. This link will take you to a simple and anonymous way to share: <https://bit.ly/uuclcjoy>. The more ideas we get, the more meaningful the service will be. Thanks for playing along!

UUCLC Information & Contacts

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Officers

Russ Littlefield, President
Janeane Reagan, Vice President
Henry Millat Secretary
Christina Wilkins, Treasurer
Chris Higgins, Asst. Treasurer

Trustees

Julie Twist
Pete Conde
Wendy Pacek

Committee Chairs

Membership – Julie Twist
WRaP (Sunday Services) – Val Conde
Building and Grounds – Christina Wilkins
Music – Kit Tatum
Finance – Chris Higgins
Social Justice/Environment – Barbara Hill
Communications – Christy Millat
Lifespan Faith Development – Christie Cleveland
Hospitality – Bernie Greenberg
Safe Congregation – Susan Moore
Care and Connect – Lois Sanford
Technology – Val Rosado
Technology Administration – Val Rosado
Library – Julie Champion

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Submit articles for the January Communicator by Wednesday, December 29.

President's Message

We at UUCLC have many blessings to celebrate during this holiday season. Among them is the ground-mounted solar array that will soon begin providing a substantial amount of power to our building. One of the people most responsible for the construction of this array was Barbara Marrow. In the article below, Barbara recounts the events that led up to this remarkable achievement.



From Dream to Reality: How Our Solar Array Came into Being

Back when we were building our new home, the dream of going solar was just that – a dream. Cost and structural concerns simply wouldn't allow it. "Someday," many of us told ourselves.

In early 2019, the newly resurrected Social Justice and Environment Committee (SJE) discussed how UUCLC could address environmental concerns. We determined our focus should be combating climate change. But how?

Barbara Marrow brought up Solar United Neighbors (SUN), a not-for-profit organization dedicated to helping community residents come together to learn about going solar and leveraging their combined buying power to solicit the best possible vendor and pricing for members who wanted to take the plunge. They did this by coordinating with local sponsors within a county to help organize and promote a "co-op" of interested residents.

SUN had been active in other Florida counties but had yet to find a sponsor for Lake County. "Maybe we could be that sponsor," said Barbara. Maybe UUCLC couldn't manage it, but this would be a way to find out for sure and to help others. The Committee agreed the idea had merit, but with other projects and limited resources, nothing came of the idea. Nothing, that is, until Chris Castro came to town.

In November, 2019, SJE hosted a 9:30 Sunday morning discussion showing of [Paris to Pittsburgh](#), a documentary about what some communities are doing to address climate change. The film featured Chris Castro, Orlando's Director of Sustainability and Resilience. That morning's service featured Chris as our guest speaker. It was his mention and ringing endorsement of Solar United Neighbors that motivated board members to learn more and ultimately sign on as a sponsor for a Lake County Solar Co-op. The rest, as they say, is history.

Now, two years later, thanks especially to our own intrepid Christina Wilkins' hard work and skillful negotiations, as well as our now more solid financial footing and the congregation's approval, we are about to "flip the switch" of our very own solar array. Timing, as they say, is everything. We will be celebrating this wonderful achievement with a special event Saturday, January 22, at 2:00 pm. You'll be hearing more about it in the coming weeks. Please plan to join us in marking this UUCLC milestone.



New Covenant Circle Beginning Soon

Day and Time to be decided by group

Covenant Circles are groups of 8-10 people who meet regularly, (bi-monthly for 4 months) to reflect on, listen, and discuss significant life topics we agree on covenants to clarify when and how we interact. Covenant Circles are for folks who are willing to make a commitment to attend each meeting, so that we have enough people to hear diverse ideas. (If you are not able to make that commitment, a better fit for you might be Graceful Aging, which meets the 1st and 3rd Mondays from 2:00-3:30 on a drop-in basis.) Small groups are great places to get to know other people, as well as yourself. Whether the group-selected topic is “joy,” “mindful living” or “letting go,” the conversation is respectful and caring, and leads to greater understanding. In each session, facilitated by a member of the congregation, all participants have opportunity to share their perspectives, tell their stories, and listen deeply. If you are interested in getting to know others more deeply and want to join, **please email Chris Cleveland at chrisclleveland1951@gmail.com. Once 8 people have signed up, we will have a meeting to agree on the day and time that our 8 meetings will occur.** Get together with some friends and sign up, so we can get started meeting. Meetings will be available both in-person and on Zoom. Open to all.



1st and 3rd Monday of every month, from 2:00-3:30 pm

Graceful Aging is a thoughtful conversation group, conducted by and for members and friends of UUCLC. It is an open group, which means folks are free to come and go as they wish. The drift of each meeting emerges from the concerns of those present. Zoom link is in Sunday Service Bulletin. Open to all.



Meditation for All

Every Monday 6:00-7:00 pm in UUCLC Sanctuary

The group meets for an hour of readings, discussion and meditation. Meditation is simply another word for concentration and is a way of getting in touch with your spiritual nature. Facilitated by members of the group. Be sure to wear a **KN95 mask and social distance**. Open to all.



Tai Chi Class Beginning December 6th

Every Monday 11 am – Noon, through April,

In-Person UUCLC Tai Chi class will be available again on December 6th. We will be learning Tai Chi for Arthritis, which was adapted by Dr. Paul Lam from the ancient Sun style tai chi. It is gentle, slow-motion martial arts movements done smoothly and mindfully. The class will be taught by Chris Cleveland, who has been trained by one of Dr. Lam's master instructors. Tai chi has been shown to improve one's immunity, blood pressure, balance, and focus. Loose clothing and thin shoes are recommended. Depending on the weather, we may meet outside under the portico or in the Social Hall. Be sure to wear a **KN95 mask and social distance**.

Open to all.



The Dharma Group

Meets each Wednesday, 5:30-7:00 pm (currently meeting via Zoom).
The group reads and discusses books related to Buddhism and practices meditation. Open to all.



FROM YOUR UUCLC TREASURER:

Special Tax-deductible Contribution for 2021

Ordinarily, individuals who elect to take the *standard deduction* cannot claim a deduction for their charitable contributions. For calendar year 2021 only, the law now permits single and married individuals filing separate returns to claim a federal tax deduction of up to \$300 for cash contributions made to qualifying charities (UUCLC). For married individuals filing joint returns the amount is raised to \$600 during 2021. Cash contributions include those made by check, credit card or debit card but do not include the value of volunteer services, securities, household items or other property. Individuals who *itemize* their deductions may claim a deduction for eligible cash charitable contributions up to 100% of their adjusted gross income in 2021, a significant increase.

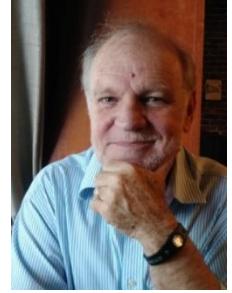
Please review your personal tax situation for 2021, and as always, consult with your tax preparer to confirm the benefits as they apply to you.

If you haven't already, please take advantage of this tax saving opportunity to make a donation to UUCLC before December 31st

A Message of Farewell

Dear UUCLC Family,

Some of you may have already heard that I will be retiring at the end of this month. Anticipating my retirement and considering the letting-go as well as the new opportunities that provides has led me to reflect about life. A few weeks ago as I worked in our garden, a song composed by Violeta Parra of Chile and made popular by the Argentine singer Mercedes Sosa came to mind and has become a focus for my reflection: "[Gracias a la Vida](#)" (Grateful to Life)¹. I remember back to my childhood, the faith and the mix of cultures and languages in which I was raised; parents, family, friends, acquaintances; experiences in work, study, play, travel; those who hold a special place in my heart examples and mentors along the Way – and I am deeply grateful! And for you, my UUCLC Family these last few years, I am truly grateful as well. For your hospitality and welcome, your affirmations and support, for being a place of an open and affirming faith and spirituality, for your vision and work for a better world, for your love – Thank you, Thank you!! In the coming months Isaura and I have some travel adventures planned. We will be leaving Mount Dora with hopes of eventually settling in Brazil. I will be speaking later this month, but then will be saying "good bye." If and when Isaura and my journeyings bring us back to Lake County, we will definitely stop in to see everyone again. Wishing you continued grace and many blessings.
Rev. David Crump



Sandhill Cranes at UUCLC

Picture taken by Russ Littlefield



A vertical rectangular image with a dark green border. The background is a winter scene at sunset or sunrise. A snow-covered hill is in the foreground, with a single evergreen tree silhouetted against the bright, orange and yellow sky. The sky transitions to deep purple and blue at the top. The text is overlaid on the image in a gold, cursive font.

Happy Solstice

*Even
The Darkest Night
Awakens in Sunshine*