

# Water Voices

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High Springs New Century Woman's Club  
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*Many thanks to Robin Frey and Helms Briscoe for their support of this session of Water Voices.*  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **“Ethics, Faith & Water” Is the Subject of “Water Voices” on Sept. 14, 2015**

The public is invited to “Ethics, Faith, and Water: A Confluence,” a free panel discussion and public conversation to be held 7-9 p.m. Monday, Sept. 14, 2015, at the High Springs New Century Woman's Club, 40 NW First Avenue, High Springs, Florida 32643. The event is the third session of the “Water Voices” series that is designed to increase public awareness of and dialogue about water issues in North Florida. The panelists are:

- Cynthia Barnett, an award-winning journalist and author of the water books “Mirage,” “Blue Revolution” and “Rain.” Barnett writes about water ethics and has worked with churches on water sustainability as an article of faith.
- Sister Patricia Siemen, Esq., a Dominican Sister and attorney who also holds master's degrees in public affairs and culture & spirituality. Siemen is the director of the Center for Earth Jurisprudence at Barry University Law School in Orlando.
- Jim McFarlane, a retired educator who served on the Florida Annual Conferences of the United Methodist Church's Creation Care Task Force and has been a presenter at the UMC Southeast Jurisdiction Caring for Creation Conference.
- Robert E. Ulanowicz, Ph.D., an ecosystems scientist who is professor emeritus with the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science and courtesy professor with the University of Florida Department of Biology.
- Lucinda Faulkner Merritt, a writer who serves on the Ichetucknee Alliance Board of Directors. Merritt holds a master's degree in public administration and a bachelor's degree in anthropology.

Barnett, who will moderate the panel, will talk about the idea of a Florida water ethic and the key role of churches to advance such an ethic to the state's "caring middle."

Siemen will frame the ethics of water and climate change and discuss the environmental encyclical, "Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home," recently issued by Pope Francis.

McFarlane will talk about hands-on creation care opportunities in congregations and the work done by Gainesville's Trinity United Methodist Church to preserve a large natural area and springs—the headwaters of Possum Creek—on church property.

Ulanowicz will describe how he helped to create a "green church" program at his Catholic parish in Maryland.

Merritt will discuss the Buddhist idea of interdependence and demonstrate how messages from Tibetan Buddhist leaders dovetail with the Pope's recent encyclical.

The panel will consider opportunities for ethics to inform public water policy as well as barriers to the public adoption of a water ethic. A question-and-answer session with audience members will follow the panel discussion and there will be time at the end of the program for people to have one-on-one conversations with the panelists.

"Water Voices" is organized by the Ichetucknee Alliance and co-sponsored by the Alliance, Our Santa Fe River, and the High Springs New Century Woman's Club. This session of "Water Voices" also receives support from Robin Frey and Helms Briscoe. Information about the sponsoring organizations will be available at the event.

For more information, call Ichetucknee Alliance Secretary Lu Merritt, 386-454-0415.

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