



FEBRUARY, 2005 Crossroads

THE MONTHLY NEWSFORUM OF THE BULL RUN
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS MANASSAS, VA

Upcoming Services Sunday at 10:00 a. m.



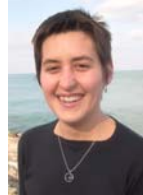
February 6th – What Do You See When You See Me? Rev. McDonald. **ALL CHURCH** This year's auction sermon is based on "The Iron Giant", a 1999 film adaptation of Ted Hughes contemporary classic tale "The Iron Man." The story is of a seemingly unlikely friendship between a very little boy and a very big robot. Auction winner Duncan Shea couldn't have chosen a better topic. Sometimes the things that seem the scariest at first are the very best things of all.

February 13th – Grace Notes. Rev. McDonald. This sermon on the day before Valentine's Day given by your soon-to-be-married minister promises not to be gushy (unless it is completely necessary). No, I mean it. No fawning vapid romance poetry here. Rather, we'll look at how romantic love interrelates with often-overlooked relational must-have's like commitment, responsibility, and mutuality. Responsible relationship makes the world go 'round? Maybe...

February 20th – Liberal Religious Ethics II. Rev. McDonald. How do we act ethically when the rules are not spelled out? This three-part sermon series (one each month from January to March) will examine several aspects of Liberal Religious Ethics including but not limited to the following: being good without God, moral relativism, an ethic of good intentions, and the social ethics that have influenced Unitarian Universalism over the course of the last century.

Feb. 27th – Welcoming Congregation Service: PFLAG. Attend this service and get the "straight" scoop on being gay. PFLAG stands for Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays and works to help the former understand the latter. A representative from the National Capital Area PFLAG will describe what the group offers, how it works, and answer questions BRUUers may have.

March 6th – Becoming Ourselves **ALL CHURCH.** Rev. McDonald. There's no overlooking the fact that ours is a vibrant and deepening congregation. There is astounding energy at BRUU that I think most all of us have noticed, but we are also a congregation in the midst of dramatic change and change isn't always easy. How might we become even more ourselves as we continue to deepen into our mission in the coming years?



Formations

Recently I've started sitting over by the piano when the choir sings. It serves the dual purpose of getting me out of the way and giving me a front row seat, two things that serve both me and the choir well as we try to get through the sometimes-complicated choreography of the Sunday morning service.

In my chair over by the piano I have the choir in front of me, the organ to my left, and the congregation stretching out to my right. It all comes together to create quite a cozy little corner that get all to myself, a corner with one of the best vantage points in the house. What makes the view from my corner so great is that from there I can see both the choir singing and the congregation listening. I can see both cause and effect, both those ministering and those being ministered to. I'm right in the middle of it, watching worship unfold. Lately I've been sitting in my corner feeling deeply honored to be a part of it all.

From my corner, any careful observer could witness the beautiful progression that takes place during an anthem or a choral meditation. It starts with waiting. For the first few moments, the congregation is waiting; waiting to decide what they are hearing, waiting to decide if they like it, waiting to decide if they are going to be moved. And then, somewhere after those first few seconds, I can see from my little corner that your faces change. You stop waiting and you start being. You stop thinking and you start listening. About that time my brain turns off too and even I give up the analysis and start hearing the sound of a community joined in praise. That's when I get a little weepy. That's when I remember how it feels to be a worshipper, and that's when I feel the most honored to be a minister among you.

Every week brings a slightly different collection of faces to watch. Every Sunday brings together a slightly different community than the Sunday before it, but no matter which of you fills the pews in front of me, every Sunday I watch the same thing happen. The progression from thought to experience, the movement from questioning to feeling, it all moves right along on faces both new and familiar every Sunday.

Ours is a growing congregation. The faces that stretch out in front of and behind us on Sunday morning number more than they used to. The number of hands there for each of us to grasp number more than they used to. If you've been here awhile, you might not know every single person who shares the sanctuary with you. Even the person in the pulpit is new.

In the middle of all this change, when the person to your left or to your right is someone you have not yet met, remember that the beloved community is big enough to include us all if only we let it. I sit there in my corner and I don't see the faces of those who've been here for years responding any differently to our shared worship than the faces of those who've just arrived. Rather, I see a community united in shared experience, forming each other anew every single Sunday. We are so lucky to be together.

Peace,
Nancy

Presidentia



Photo by Tom Miller

I remember when I was little and went to the Baptist church with my parents. After sitting through Sunday School and then an entire, dreadfully long, church service, I would count the minutes until I was free to wiggle, run, laugh and do the usual things that energetic children need to do. Now, as a parent who brings my children to BRUU, I continually think about what makes BRUU such a special place for them. I also think about the problems and occasional frustrations that my daughter, Caitlin, is quick to inform me about from the "kid perspective."

BRUU is faced with the wonderful problem of growth. We see that each month with new people signing the membership book and pews filling even on colder days. What we sometimes forget to also consider at this time is the growing population of children and what BRUU should do to meet their needs.

One concern that must be considered for the children is the proper amount of staffing and oversight in the Religious Education program. Did you know that we currently have almost 100 children registered for RE and a part-time staff member to handle their needs, as well as direct a dedicated group of RE teachers? A major undertaking for this year is to clearly understand the extent of the RE needs and make some budget recommendations that will help us meet this growing concern. The RE committee is gathering data within the next few months that will help us make some good recommendations. The Long-Range Planning Committee is also looking at this issue for the long-term needs of BRUU. So, should an RE survey pass your way, please make every effort to fill it out and give us your honest appraisal of

Children's RE at BRUU.

Another area of concern for our children is the coffee hour and the wonderful chaos that comes with being in the fellowship hall. Hungry, energetic children definitely increase the energy level in the Hall to the point that some people find it difficult to carry on conversations or walk around without running into little ones. As parents, we need to be mindful of safety issues in the hall and do our best to curtail running and screaming. And, we should feel okay asking other parents' children to move more quietly. I would hope that anyone who sees my children adding too much to the chaos would feel comfortable asking them to slow down a bit.

At the same time, however, the BRUU adults should also remember the challenges of being a little kid with pent up energy. This is often the only time these children see their BRUU friends during the week so it is natural to want to be exuberant with their buddies. This speaks to a greater long-term concern – what do we do with our children after the service is over? RE instructors are ready to relax and enjoy their coffee and tea, we don't have a playground children can run around in, and the rooms where they might choose to hang out are now filled with after service meetings. So, what's the solution?

In the short term, we can offer quiet time in the sanctuary for those who would like to engage in lower-energy conversation. We can also review acceptable behaviors with our own children and bring quiet activities for them to do after the service. And, as an intentional community, we can be more mindful of BRUU's wonderful children in our long-range planning and take their needs into greater account as we build this community.

This is, really, a wonderful problem to have.

Blessings, Janette

Want to learn more about Unitarian Universalism?

Join Nancy McDonald and the "UU In a Nutshell" class on from 9-12 on February 19th for a short introduction to this free faith that will get us talking about the history of our movement, the structure of our congregation, and the things commonly practiced among Unitarian Universalists all over the world. In one morning, we can only dip our toes into a very deep pool, so come ready to begin an exploration. This class is ideally suited for new members and those exploring Unitarian Universalism, but long-standing members are certainly welcome as well.

Sign up in the BRUU hall or contact Nancy at Revnancy@bruu.org for more information.

Interested in a deeper look at Unitarian Universalist History?

On Thursday evenings from February 17th to March 10th (7:00-8:30, room TBA), Nancy will be teaching a class called **Unitarian Universalism: A Historic Faith**. This four-week class will give us the opportunity to discuss the origins of Unitarian Universalism in greater depth. Unitarianism and Universalism were separate faiths until their merger in 1961, and each of them had roots in both Europe and America. Our denominational and theological history is complicated but full of wonderful stories. Some of them may surprise you, while others may help you to see more clearly just why we UU's are the way we are! Sign up in the BRUU hall or contact Nancy at Revnancy@bruu.org for more information.

SHOW YOUR LOVE - DONATE A HYMNAL

For \$28 you can purchase a hymnal and show your appreciation to someone special in your life. Watch for order forms this month at church. For more information see "Notes from Annease"

BRUU is a Welcoming Congregation which celebrates and supports the lives, the relationships, and the individual and group contributions of its lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender members and friends. We affirm and promote their full participation in the life of the congregation and community. We pledge our congregation's commitment to continue dismantling the belief that heterosexuality is the only normal, acceptable, and healthy sexual orientation.

Soup & Bread Lunch

December's Soup & Bread Lunch for SERVE brought it \$114!! Pretty good for an "off" Sunday!!! That brings this year's (04-05) total to \$484. A huge thank you to the soup-makers. The new set-up worked well, so it will be self-serve again on January 30th, with someone available to help out & answer questions.

~Sharon Castonguay

Find It in the BRUU Yellow Pages!

Looking for professional or other services? Need employment or employees? Have services or products to sell? A hobby or interest to share? BRUU members and friends have lots of talents that we could be sharing. Look for our BRUU Yellow Pages/Professional Services Directory at the Membership Information Table in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday. Bring your business cards and slip one or several into the plastic "unifill". Handmade/homemade cards are welcome, and blank ones are available in the book for your use. Hoping to see you and your card on Sunday!

Martha Walsh, Membership/Fellowship Committee

Split the Plate for SAVAS

The Social Justice Committee has chosen the Sexual Assault Victims' Advocacy Services (or SAVAS), to receive January's 5th Sunday Split-the-Plate collection. SAVAS is a non-profit volunteer group organized to help sexual assault and rape victims in Prince William, Manassas and Manassas Park. SAVAS provides a 24 hour help line through which volunteers accompany victims to legal and medical facilities. The organization also sponsors support groups for survivors of rape and adults molested as children and a teen support group for survivors of sexual assault. All services are free of charge to victims and their families. On the prevention end, they offer RAD (Rape Aggression Defense) and RadKids self defence classes for girls and women.

2500 Years of Liberal Religion!

The Monday Night Spirituality Study Group will sponsor a 12 week course, starting on January 31, reviewing 2500 years of liberal religion. All are welcome from 7:30 to 9:00 pm. The course will utilize tapes by UU Minister Davidson Loehr, a Jesus Seminar scholar with provocative positions on liberal religion and a great sense of humor. He teaches that liberal religion is the opposite of literal religion. Reading sacred scriptures liberally rather than literally means reading them symbolically, metaphorically, looking past the literal nonsense and supernaturalism, to the deeper insights into the human condition. POC Wanda Ruffin or Larry Underwood.

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Un-elected volunteers

Newsletter Editors

Ellen Percy Miller & Tom Miller
703-754-2301



Minister's Weekly Schedule

Monday: Day off

Tuesday: 9-5

Wed: 2-5

Thursday: 2-5

Friday: In and out day

Nancy's telephone number is
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Email: RevNancy@BRUU.org

Office Administrator Hours:

Monday 12-4

Tuesday 8-2

Wednesday 12-4

Thursday 8-2

Email: office@bruu.org

Yes, BRUU, There IS a Balcony!

Did you know that there is seating for 40+ people up in the balcony? For those of you who are seasoned BRUU members/friends, please consider sitting up in the balcony during Sunday services, to provide more space for newer members and visitors. There's a really good view from up there!!

AIDS Pantry

Don't forget the AIDS Pantry is always in need of non-perishable foods. Please place your donations in the AIDS Pantry Crate, downstairs across from Kitchen. Thank You to all who regular donate. BRUU remains the only year-round donator.

Out of the BRUUm closet

UU and Pagan, or Pagan and UU?

Unitarian Universalism encompasses many beliefs and many paths; in fact, one of our guiding principles is that each person is entitled to the “free and responsible search for truth and meaning” on their spiritual path. So the realization that there are Pagans within the congregation should come as no surprise. Pagans also hold dear the idea that no one else tells them what to believe. Then how does Paganism compare to UU-ism within the framework of the 7 UU principles? You might be surprised how closely Pagans do follow them.

The first principle deals with the inherent worth and dignity of every person and the second is justice, equity and compassion in human relations. These can be grouped together if you realize that for most Pagans, everything and everyone is sacred. I personally believe that the Divine created the Universe and is participating in it. I also believe that the Divine gives off sparks of its essence and that we are each one of these sparks—so we ARE the Divine, if only a tiny piece of it. If I truly honor the Divine and the sacredness is around me, I cannot treat others as less than the sparks of the Divine that they are. Most Pagans also accept the idea of the three-fold law, which says that any energy you send out (in other words, everything you do) will come back to you at least three-fold. Makes one stop and think about what’s going out, since it will return in greater portions. Besides, it just takes too much effort to be nasty.

Pagans also are tolerant of other’s spiritual paths. We have to be, because in any group of Pagans you will have as many definitions of Paganism as you have people. Even among people who follow similar paths, like Wicca, there are individual interpretations that may not be quite identical. We also encourage each other to grow spiritually. There is an enormous upsurge in websites and other public forums for Pagans to learn from each other, to share our experiences and to meet like-minded people. It may seem like there are suddenly many Pagans around—it’s not that they weren’t there before, but the general atmosphere of our society is much more open to the acknowledgement of belonging to Pagan religions. It is, quite literally, safer to

announce this path now than ever before.

We have determined that Pagans definitely believe in the free and responsible search. For them, it should be an ongoing process for each one, regardless of their status within their Pagan group. Even the highest High Priest should always be asking questions, always checking to see if what he believed last month still holds true for him, or has it taken on a new and better meaning? I do not believe that there is a point where any Pagan can say that they do not need to seek out knowledge, to learn more. This is a lifelong process and should be for everyone, regardless of religion affiliation.

Pagans also hold with a democratic process, although it can look more hierarchical within traditional groups. If a group has a power structure--High Priestess, Priests and Priestesses, Initiates and Novitiates--it can look quite stratified, and the HP/s probably does have a fair amount of decision-making power. In a healthy group, that power is not abused and the actual decision-making is done more democratically with the HP/s merely announcing the group’s consensus. As with any group of humans, the potential for a Little Hitler does exist, but is generally more the exception than the rule. In an eclectic group (non-traditional), the democratic process is the most efficient method of reaching a decision that will please most of the members.

I think Pagans have a really good grasp of world community as an ideal. We tend to find each other in all sorts of places, and because everyone is sacred, then peace, liberty and justice are only logical consequences of that holiness. There seems to be less division with Pagans as can be found with any other religious group. As a Pagan, I am accepting of all other Pagans, and do not think that they aren’t “real” Pagans just because they do not believe exactly as I do. I have personal experience with Baptists who think that Catholics aren’t even Christian. Hasidic Jews do not recognize most American Jews as being Jewish. And how many groups of Muslims are out killing other Muslims in the name of Allah?

As for respect for that great, interdependent of all existence, hey, the Pagans originated that idea! Most definitions of Paganism include as a primary phrase that they are Nature-based. Our holidays

are based on the cycle of the seasons, the sun and the moon. Many Pagans check the star positions and moon phase before working any ritual, since everything influences all. Or all influences everything, whichever way you want to look at it. Like the allegory of the pebble tossed in the lake, everything you do, everything you are creates ripples in the Universe. You cannot step outside of this; you cannot be an observer without changing the situation merely by being present. We are all connected, each and every one of us, regardless of the adjectives we use to describe others or ourselves. We are all connected to Mother Earth and to Her creatures and living things, whether we care for them or abuse them. We have an impact on the Universe—which is very busily having an impact on us.

So here I am, a Pagan who is also a UU only by virtue of being a Pagan first before finding BRUU. This means that when asked about my spiritual path, I have a long explanation. I have to take a deep breath and tell people that I am a solitary, eclectic Wicca/Pagan who follows the Egyptian pantheon with strong Chinese influences as well as attending the local Unitarian Universalist congregation—because they do accept me as a solitary, eclectic Wicca/Pagan, etc. What can we learn from each other?

~Kate Ellis-Aquilina

Super Bowl Sunday, February 6th

Don’t forget that Rita Romano & Bill Stejskal will be hosting the Super Bowl party this year at their new home in Riverview Estates. We will have access to the private park that is located on the Occoquan River that is own by the Riverview Estates HOA. The park has plenty of room for football players and observers alike. There is also a playground for the kids and a brick barbecue where we could build a fire. Football players and observers should plan on arriving between 3 and 3:30 pm. A potluck dinner will follow at 6 pm. Rita & Bill will make a big pot of chili. Kickoff for the Super Bowl game begins around 6:45 pm. BYOB. Any questions, call Rita or Bill at 703-670-5919. Their home is located off from Davis Ford Road. Coming from Manassas, it is the first right after crossing the Occoquan River.

Iraq Update



I have been deployed to Iraq as an augment to the Third Marine Aircraft Wing since the end of September. This is one of a continuing series of articles meant to share my observations and experiences with my UUCMP and BRUU families. If you are interested in more frequent updates, visit <http://mysite.verizon.net/res8mk5r/uublog/>.

~ Greg

Thanks to everyone who sent me cards and presents. I will be moving again soon, so it's better not to send anything more.

Thanks again.



Ah, January. It's good to see the New Year! Actually, I had my own personal celebration of renewal and change on December 21, the Winter Solstice. I performed a simple, yet powerful ritual where I marked the moment of the Solstice by moving over a line in the gravel, symbolically leaving behind the old ways of being and relating, and welcoming the new.

It was nice to have a holiday season away from the hyper-commercialized pseudo-Christian oppression of a typical American Christmas. No fighting crowds at the mall! No tinny carols repeated ad nauseum! No... smiling happy faces of my children, aglow with the magic of the season...that I certainly DID miss.

Nothing much has changed in my daily routine, but I did finally manage to get over the cold that made my life miserable for five full weeks. I was very thankful to wake up one day and think "hey, I feel pretty good!" It was very nice to get back in the gym, too.

I have really begun to appreciate the "joy of meditation as nourishment" for mind, body, and soul, to quote Thich Naht Hanh. I have been meditating every day for almost two months and it has led me to a place of mindfulness, peace, and presence unlike anything I've ever experienced before. I will definitely be making time in my "real" life to continue that practice.

Reading and writing also continue to give me great pleasure. I am usually reading about three books at a time – right now it's Don Quixote, War is a Force That Gives Us Meaning, and New Testament Fundamentals. I continue to write for hours a day both in a journal and for my weblog. It is a great gift to have so much time to dedicate to my own personal growth.

As my time in Iraq grows shorter, I am growing eager to return home to friends and family. See you soon!

Maj G.W. Rouillard, USMC
MWHS-3 G-3
UIC 41006
FPO AP 96426-1006

First Friday Food & Film Night

February's First Friday Food & Film Night will be held on February 4, 2005, in the BRUU Hall. The night's feature film is "The Sum of Us." This is a father-son movie that's slightly askew. In this movie, the father, Harry, has a problem with his gay son: Harry thinks his son needs to find a mate! With a loving push out of the nest – and into the gay bars of Sydney – he becomes his son's biggest cheerleader. But it's Harry's secret romance with an attractive but judgmental divorcée that puts father and son at odds...and prompts them to discover that acceptance is a two-way street! The evening starts at 7:00 with dinner; movie at 8:00; discussion and dessert after the movie.

A Vegetarian Dinner Club is forming to exchange food, recipes and support for breaking the addiction to today's rich food. Please contact Ellen Percymiller at 703-754-2301 for more information.

And the game goes on . . .

February's Fourth Friday Fun Bridge will take place on Friday, February 25 at 7:30, at the Manassas-area home of Claire Smith. We play contract bridge, all experience levels are welcome. An RSVP would be appreciated for planning purposes but is not necessary. If you don't RSVP, call before coming over to make sure the game is on. BYO if you enjoy relaxing with alcohol, other beverages and light refreshments will be provided. For more information or directions contact Claire at 703-393-8646 (home phone) or by e-mail at:

clairesmith@comcast.net

Welcoming Congregation

Is our church gay? Questions, no doubt about it, will come. Questions that reflect a child's curiosity about sexual orientation. Questions about homophobia, as your child spends time in the neighborhood and classroom, reading the newspaper and watching TV. Questions that try to make sense of a complex world. Questions that may make you squirm.

There is not correct answer for any question. But thinking in advance about your child's concerns and needs may help you to provide more helpful answers to difficult questions. Whether you are a gay, bisexual, lesbian, transgender, or straight-but-not-narrow parent, it is helpful to know that you're not the only one being put on the spot by inquisitive children – and that your Unitarian Universalist faith can help you give accurate, compassionate responses.

Since 1970, the UUA has actively affirmed the inherent worth and dignity of every person, regardless of sexual orientation. Many of our congregations have officially declared themselves to be Welcoming Congregations for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender people.

Unitarian Universalism is one of very few religions that ordains openly gay, lesbian, bisexual, and/or transgender people into the ministry. Our ministers may be the only clergy in town to perform services of holy union for same-sex couples. Many gay groups have used Unitarian Universalist churches for meetings.

As children grow up, they become aware that Unitarian Universalism's accepting attitude toward people of varied sexual orientations is different from that of many other institutions and individuals. They will need reassurance, information, and good listening from trusted adults

as they sort through these discrepancies and many others between Unitarian Universalist values and the values of society at large.

When young people ask questions, always begin by listening carefully. Clarify what they are asking and find out (unobtrusively) who or what prompted their questions. Depending on their ages, questions, and reasons for asking, they may be seeking very different responses from you.

At different stages of development, you'll need good, clear answers for your child's questions. In the next several Welcoming Congregation columns, some conversations that can serve as examples for discussions with children of different ages can be used to help you frame your own discussions when your children ask questions.

If you are uncomfortable about issues related to sexuality and sexual orientation, you might benefit from attending BRUU's First Friday Food and Film Nights where discussion about issues related to sexual orientation are informal and flexible. In addition to the food and film nights, members of the Welcoming Congregation Committee are available to talk with you one-on-one. Also, be sure to attend this month's Welcoming Congregation Committee sponsored service on February 27 when BRUU will hear a guest speaker from the Parents and Friends of Gays and Lesbians (PFLAG) organization.

(Most of the text of this month's column is from a UUA pamphlet authored by the Reverend Meg Riley of the UUA Washington Office for Faith in Action. Questions, insights, comments, and submissions for or about this column, or about the Welcoming Congregation itself, may be sent to wchair@bruu.org or placed in the Welcoming Congregation mailbox located in BRUU's administrative office.) ~J. Amaral, WCC Point of Contact.

Notes from Annease



Now that our membership has increased to over 200, we need more hymnals so that everyone can lift their voice and sing on Sunday mornings. In keeping with the spirit of showing love this month, why not show your love for someone and donate a hymnal. You might purchase a hymnal in honor of a choir member, a family member, an RE teacher, a board member, a friend... and the list goes on. Or you could give a hymnal in memory of someone. I have special book plates that will go inside the hymnals, and the name of the person being honored or remembered will appear as well as the donor's name. The cost of a hymnal is only \$28; certainly a bargain for the wealth of music and readings therein. Last year UU President Bill Sinkford charged the UU Musicians' Network with creating a supplement to the hymnal. That work is in progress, and the supplement should be ready by 2006. If the donations exceed the number of hymnals needed, I will use the excess to purchase the new supplements (which will still have the special book plates inside). During the first three Sundays in February we will distribute order forms. If you wish to donate a hymnal, complete the form and return it with your check (payable to BRUU) to me or any member of the Music Liaison Committee (Chuck Beigle, Helen Elkin, Dorothy Greenhouse, Amy Hamilton, Jennifer Privee). I will place the order at the end of February.



A quartet from The Woodbridge Flute Choir will accent our service on February 13. It is a great opportunity to get a small sample of what you might hear at their next concert on March 13 to be held at Manassas Baptist Church.

Green Corner

Earth Warming: Good News and Bad News

by Jack Harper

The bad news about Earth warming is that it is coming on faster and with consequences more serious than forecast. The good news is that we have the means, though not yet the political will in the United States, to bring it under control.

Carbon dioxide, the major greenhouse gas, continues to pour into the atmosphere principally from the burning of fossil fuels in our homes, our cars, and power plants. The atmospheric concentration now stands at 379 parts per million (ppm) up from 280 ppm at the start of the Industrial Revolution. The annual amount of carbon dioxide added to the atmosphere is growing and now stands at over 2 ppm.

Hotter Yet

The average temperature of the Earth has already risen more than one degree Fahrenheit and is expected to rise from 2.7 to 10.4 degrees F. more during this century, according to the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change (IPCC). This international body composed of 2500 scientists had recommended in its 2001 report that to avoid catastrophe we must not allow the Earth's temperature to increase beyond another 4 degrees F.; however, the report's authors have recently lowered that limit to 3 degrees F. in light of the serious effects of Earth warming now becoming apparent around the world.

The 10 hottest years recorded have occurred during the past 15 years, with 1998 being the hottest. A record heat wave in 2003 caused 27,000 deaths in Europe, 11,000 in France. A heat wave in southern India with temperatures up to 120 degrees F. in May 2002 caused the highest recorded one week death toll. In 2001 Afghanistan had its warmest winter on record. Tibet had its warmest decade in 1000 years while Mongolia had its warmest century in the past 1000 years.

Encroaching Disease

The warmer weather has allowed mosquito-borne diseases such as malaria and dengue fever to be extended to new areas and has lengthened the seasons of susceptibility. One North American mosquito species has genetically delayed its winter dormancy by 9 days. In Bangla-

desh the prevalence of cholera has been linked to the stronger and more frequent El Ninos, the warming of the equatorial Pacific Ocean.

Spring has been arriving earlier. There are worldwide reports of earlier thawing, blooming, leafing, and animal migration. In Washington the cherry blossoms are blooming a week earlier than 30 years ago. In Europe spring events in nature occur 6 days earlier and fall events 5 days later.

Looming Extinction

Many animals and plants have begun to shift to higher elevations and latitudes. Polar bears have been stressed by a hunting season cut short by two weeks. Robins and Barn Swallows have been seen for the first time in Inuit (Eskimo) territory. Biologists project that 25% of all plant and animal species may become extinct this century due to Earth warming. It's not the temperature averages that drive species and ecosystems to extinction but the extremes of temperature and moisture arising from more variable weather.

Sea levels have risen 4 to 10 inches over the past 100 years and are projected to rise another one to three feet this century. Flooding is predicted for low lying areas such as Florida, Louisiana, Micronesia, and Bangladesh. Warming ocean waters have caused massive coral reef bleaching particularly during the El Nino years of 1997-1998. Bleaching episodes have occurred since off Fiji and the Galapagos and half of the bleached corals may never recover. Most coral reefs are not expected to survive Earth warming and other depredations this century.

Melting Glaciers

Most of the world's glaciers will melt this century because of the warming. Greenland's ice sheet is rapidly melting. The ice on Tanzania's Mount Kilimanjaro will be gone in 15 years. Earth warming is readily apparent at the poles. In the Arctic polar ice is thinner by 4 feet and is decreasing by 7% per decade. It is becoming increasingly difficult for the survival of polar bears, ice-living seals, and the Inuit culture. In Antarctica the 1,250 square mile Larsen B ice shelf disintegrated in 2002.

More precipitation is expected worldwide with a 25% increase projected for the mid-Atlantic states. Record flooding has recently occurred in southern California, Argentina, and Norway. However,

Earth warming is at the same time causing wide-spread drought with 30% of the world's land area in severe drought compared with 10-15% in the 1970's. Record drought has been reported in Tajikistan, Pakistan, Korea, and Kenya.

Devastating Consequences

The consequences of not taking action at once to control our greenhouse gas emissions will be large scale and irreversible, such as the melting of the Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets, the slowing or shutting down of the Gulf Stream thus leaving much of northern Europe uninhabitable, or the massive release of greenhouse gases from permafrost and dying vegetation.

Princeton University scientists have proposed to avoid the most dangerous effects of Earth warming by capping emissions at current levels, then stabilizing CO2 concentrations at 500 ppm. Current technologies such as wind power, hybrid cars, carbon dioxide sequestration in geologic strata, and reforestation would be employed.

Action Needed Now

We in the United States who emit 25% of greenhouse gases should join the 132 signatory countries of the Kyoto Treaty which takes effect in February 2005. The Kyoto Treaty is but a first step toward accomplishing the 60-80% reduction of greenhouse gases necessary to bring this growing threat to mankind and nature under control. The United States and other governments should promote renewable energy, invest in public transportation, regulate and subsidize energy efficiency, and tax consumables for the real environmental costs to society. The result of inaction will be the loss of millions of lives and livelihoods and much of the natural world.

What You Can Do

You can play a vital role by letting the President, your Congressmen, and our state and local governments know that you are deeply concerned about the very serious consequences of Earth warming if steps are not taken immediately. Personally, you should operate a fuel-efficient car, get a house energy audit, unplug that little-used freezer, look for the Energy Star in buying appliances, change to fluorescent lighting, and plant a tree.

Announcing the New UU Coaching Network Website

BRUU Member, Emily Cameron, is proud to be a founding member of The Unitarian Universalist Coaching Network. The UU Coaching Network was established in 2004 as a resource to educate UUs about the emerging field of life coaching and to offer the services of UU coaches who support the spiritual, personal and professional growth of UU members and friends worldwide. The mission of the UUCN is to provide education to Unitarian Universalist members, friends and organizations about professional life coaching, to promote the personal, professional and spiritual growth of Unitarian Universalists, and to educate, support and promote Unitarian Universalist Coaches.

The backbone of the non-profit UUCN is its membership of life coaches who uphold the UU traditions of compassion, integrity and inclusion. Each UUCN coach meets specific requirements for coaching education to ensure a high quality of service to UUs and those who resonate with UU principles.

If you are considering hiring a coach and want to learn more, you'll find a wealth of information about coaching, its scope and benefits within the pages of the website as it evolves.

If you've already decided coaching is something you'd like to try, check the searchable directory of UUCN coaches. You will find suggestions on hiring the right coach for your needs, desires and expectations.

Look for our ad in the UUWorld and visit this website at www.UUCoachingNetwork.org.

Stand Up For BRUU – Stewardship Message

Deep within each of us lives the desire to bring our greatest talents and gifts to the world. We all want to live a life of meaning and purpose. To do this we must develop the courage and confidence to step into the light. During the upcoming Stewardship Campaign we will be examining what it is to be a leader in our own lives and community. BRUU offers so many opportunities for us to express ourselves in every way. Each individual is given the opportunity to shine their special light on their individual spiritual path and quest for “giving back” and contribution. Last month’s volunteer fair was a shining example of all the levels of involvement a member/friend can take advantage of within BRUU at any time. The fair also presented one of the many opportunities at BRUU to give on a global scale. The bake sale raised money for the victims of the Tsunami and raised the spirits of those of us who wanted to “do something.” The alternative gift initiative this past Christmas was a gift to us all. I don’t know about you, but I get confused by all the charitable needs and worry that my limited resources don’t go where I intend. I trust the members of the Social Justice Committee to do their homework and to give me viable opportunities to choose from. After all, it is their passion and mission to promote justice and equity and lead us to the worthy needs of our world. Passion and commitment such as this is

what membership at BRUU is all about. As we enter this Stewardship Campaign season I challenge us all to stand up for BRUU!

As of this writing, we have half the canvassers we need for a successful canvassing effort. If 50 BRUUers volunteer to visit two other BRUUers, then the work will be more than manageable. If you are relatively new to BRUU and have an adventurous spirit, you can volunteer to help out with the canvassing. You will be paired up with long-time-comers who will share their historical perspective of BRUU with you as you share your present experience of BRUU. In next month’s newsletter, more will be written about what the Stewardship Campaign is – briefly it is how we raise at least 70% of BRUU’s operating budget through member/friend pledges. We have a celebration dinner before the actual canvassing begins – it’s more than a dinner, there’s entertainment and dancing too. So, if you are wondering what this is all about, ask someone on the Board, the Finance Committee (Nancy Winters, Paul Galvin, Henry Hastings, Emily Cameron) or on the Stewardship Committee (Emily Cameron, Satya Chase, Ed Davis). At the very least put April 9th on your calendar for a fun evening of fellowship and fun!

Emily Cameron, Stewardship Chair

BRUU’s Storm Policy

When does BRUU cancel Sunday activities during the winter? Hopefully, never! But, there are those occasional Sundays. So, how do we determine whether or not to cancel the service? The main issue is how clear the parking lot is for people to park. If there is no parking available, we have to cancel. In the case of our most recent snowstorm, Sterling and Helen Rush (thank you!) were responsible for going over to BRUU in the early hours to check out the parking situation and to shovel the sidewalks.

So, what happens if we do decide to cancel? Notification will be provided in the following ways:

- Message on BRUU phone
- Message on front door
- Message on website
- Message through BRUU broadcast.
- Notice on cancellations.com

In most cases, should BRUU shut down on a Sunday, all other BRUU activities will be cancelled for that day as well.

Green Sanctuary Update

Have you seen **Susie Eastridge's** Green Sanctuary logo in the BRUU Foyer? It represents a tree growing from a chalice with recycling arrows at its roots, a fitting symbol of BRUU's advancement to certified Green Sanctuary status, 20th in the United States.

Thank you for buying fair-trade, shade-grown, organic coffee at the BRUU coffee hour where the same coffee is served. One dollar from each bag sold goes to our summer camp program for disadvantaged children. Let the Green Team know if you would like fair-trade tea, chocolate, or cocoa.

~ Jack Harper

The Jesus Seminar on the road comes to St. Mark's on Capitol Hill.

Join others from the Washington area in a workshop entitled "The Future of Faith" on February 18 - 19, 2005. Robert W. Funk, founder of the Jesus Seminar, and Thomas Sheehan, Professor, Department of Religious Studies at Stanford University will lead the workshop. Friday's program, entitled "Christianity at the Crossroads" is from 7:30 - 9:00 pm and Saturday's sessions are from 9:30 am to 4:00 pm. The morning workshop is entitled "The Great Divide in the Churches" and the afternoon session is "Rituals and Symbols for the Twenty-first Century." Cost is \$45 before January 28th or \$50 afterward. Register on-line at www.westarinstitute.org or toll free 877.523.3545. More information is available on the St. Mark's website www.stmarks.net or from Rairford Gaffney at Rgaffneydc@aol.com or 202.543.8930.

Classy Kids Resale

Classy Kids Resale is having its first sale at BRUU March 7-14. It is a twice a year baby, children's, maternity resale of gently used clothing, toys, and furniture! This event will be huge so check your closets, clean out the toy boxes and join us.

Consigning is a win-win for everyone. You make some extra money recycling your children's outgrown clothes and toys and you are able to buy what they need at incredible savings! Join us as a consignor, a volunteer or just come to shop. Classy Kids Resale you will discover is an event you will never want to miss again!

For more information call Mona Tisler 703-878-7777 or log onto www.classykidsresale.com

RENTAL IN MANASSAS:
3 BR, 2 1/2 BA,
like new end unit townhouse,
in Campbell's Trace,
close to I66 and Omni bus stop.
\$1,500/mo. + SD + util.

Call Kay
703.598.9867.

A Mom's Surprise

When the Tsunami hit Asia, it also struck a chord in Maggie McGrath's and BRUU's heart. While we expect capable adults to feel a call to action and ask themselves, "What can I do to help?" we don't hold the same expectations for our children. But sometimes they surprise you in wonderful ways.

When Maggie heard about the Tsunami disaster, she organized a bake sale at BRUU to help fund the relief effort. She solicited donations from BRUU people, her neighbors and some local businesses.

She created a flyer on the computer that explained what she was doing. She visited stores like Costco, Giant, Barnes & Noble. Navigating the bureaucracy of the larger chain stores was a challenge which didn't actually bear any fruit. She persevered and after many outings, received donations from Milwaukee Frozen Custard and Cold Stone Creamery.

Asking for help, especially from business owners is an uncomfortable thing for anyone to do, but to do so when you are twelve is quite uncommon.

We also marveled at the outpouring of support from BRUU. "I can't believe how much people donated", said Maggie while she worked during the bake sale.

In total, BRUU raised \$1230.00 for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's Tsunami fund.

I'm very proud of Maggie's and BRUU effort. I want to thank everyone involved who helped make this a huge success and for confirming, Maggie's hope that she and BRUU might be able to do something to make a difference.

~Betsi McGrath

BRUU Sanctuary Redesign Committee at Work!

The Sanctuary Redesign Committee was formed several months ago as an initiative by the Worship Committee and approved by the Board to begin the process of updating and reconfiguring the sanctuary to enhance space, acoustics, and usability. And we have been making progress!

The Committee has defined short-term and long-range goals, as follows:

Short-Term:

- Painting of sanctuary
- Replacement of green carpet
- Minor remodeling of front space for better choir access
- Cleaning out of storage space next to balcony and creation of a "box seat" area with comfortable chairs for first-come/first-served.

Long-Range:

- Removal of organ
- Renovation of front space for more versatility of use and improved acoustics
- Possible removal of pews and replacement with comfortable interconnected chairs (can fit more people)
- Refinishing of floor

All of the short-term actions can be done with current operating budget money. The long-range actions will require capital funding and will be subject to formal congregational input and vote.

Currently the Committee is obtaining bids for painting the sanctuary (no major change--sprucing things up a bit) so expect to hear about that in the near future.

If you would like to be involved with this Committee, or you have suggestions or inputs, please call any of the members:

Jan Cook, Martin Crim, Mary Kadlubowski, Sterling Rush, Cathy Ring, and honorary member Nancy McDonald

Blessings, Jan



FEBRUARY, 2005 Crossroads

THE MONTHLY NEWSFORUM OF THE BULL RUN
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS MANASSAS, VA

Did you know that the BRUU newsletter is available electronically? Using this delivery option saves BRUU publication costs, postage, paper, and volunteer labor. You also receive the newsletter much sooner because it is delivered instantly to your e-mail inbox and arrives in vivid color in Adobe Acrobat format (PDF). You can sign-up for electronic delivery at the following address:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BRUU_Newsletter/



Read how Maggie McGrath raised \$1,230.00 for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's Tsunami Fund on page nine of this newsletter.

Congratulation Maggie on your huge achievement!

Photo by:
Betsi McGrath

The Bull Run

Unitarian Universalists

Bull Run Unitarian Universalists exist to nurture ourselves, our children, our community, and our natural world in the pursuit of spiritual and intellectual growth. We give expression to our mission through celebrating our diversity and giving of our talents and resources with justice, equity and compassion. We work toward our goals through an open democratic process, respecting the views of each individual and seeking to protect the interdependent web of life.

















Return Service Requested.
9350 Main Street
Manassas, VA 20110-5150



February 20th is the deadline
for the March Newsletter!
Newsletter@bruu.org

We're on the Web at
www.bruu.org

February 2005

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 	2 	3 	4 	5 
6 	7 	8 	9 	10 	11 	12
13 	14 	15 	16 	17 	18 	19
20 	21 	22 	23 	24 	25	26
27 	28 					

Visit www.bruu.org for more calendar information!

2/1 Earth in Crisis, Globalization, 7-8:30 PM, Library
2/2 Adult Choir, Music Room, 7 - 8:30 PM
2/3 Course in Miracles, 7:30 PM, RE Office
2/4 First Friday Food and Film Night, 7 - 10 PM
2/5 Voluntary Simplicity, 9:30 -11:30 AM, Library
2/5 BRUU Auction Lunch and Tour POC Ron Bracy 1 -4 PM
2/5 Imbolc, the Festival of Lights, 5:30 - 9 PM
2/6 Children's Choir, 11:30 AM
2/6 Membership/Fellowship Committee Meeting - 11:30 AM -12:30 PM RE Office
2/6 Worship Committee meeting, 11:30 AM -12:30 PM, Library
2/6 Youth Choir, 5 PM
2/7 Spiritual Study Group, 7:30 - 9 PM, library
2/8 Earth in Crisis, Consumption, 7-8:30 PM, Library
2/8 Social Action Committee—Library, 7:30 PM
2/8 PAGAN Discovery/Discussion Group, 7:30 PM, hall
2/9 Board Meeting at 7:00 PM, RE Office
2/9 Adult Choir, 7 - 8:30 PM, Music Room
2/10 Course in Miracles, 7:30 PM, RE Office
2/11 DYSC sponsored Spring youth conference Planning, Fellowship Hall, 8 PM
2/13 BRUU Men, 9:00 AM, library
2/13 Green Sanctuary Committee, 11:15 AM, Library

2/13 Bull Run Investment Club (BRIC), 11:30 AM, lounge
2/13 Youth Choir, 11:30 AM
2/14 Spiritual Study Group, 7:30 -9 PM, library
2/15 Earth in Crisis, Sustainability , 7-8:30 PM, Library
2/16 Adult Choir, 7 PM
2/17 Course in Miracles, 7:30 PM, RE Office
2/18 "Goddess Path" Study Group, 7-10 PM, Room 305
2/20 RE Committee, 11:30 AM, RE Office
2/20 Children's Choir, 11:30 AM
2/20 Newsletter Deadline for January Items, 6 PM
2/21 Spiritual Study Group, 7:30 -9 PM, library
2/22 New Testament Class, 7:30 PM
2/23 Adult Choir, Music Room, 7 - 8:30 PM
2/24 Course in Miracles, 7:30 PM, RE Office
2/24 Book Group, 7:30 - 9:30PM
2/27 Jesus Seminar, 7:30 PM
2/27 BRUU Men, 9:00 AM, library
2/27 Communications Committee Meeting, 11:15 AM, RE room
2/27 Soup and Bread Lunch - SERVE Fundraiser, 11:30 AM
2/28 Spiritual Study Group, 7:30 -9 PM, library