



BRUU

Crossroads

Volume 28, Issue 6

February, 2010

The Monthly Newsforum of
The Bull Run Unitarian Universalists, Manassas, VA



Upcoming Services
Sunday at 10:00 A. M.

Formations

February 7th – “Ready to Walk,” Rev. Nancy McDonald Ladd. This is a service about walking, or at least about moving forward a little bit at a time. Able-bodied or differently-abled, walking forward both physically and spiritually can be an enriching.

February 14th – “Love,” Rev. Nancy McDonald Ladd. To love is one of the most difficult things a human being can do, and yet love is the one thing that connects us to the deepest sources of meaning. How do you love and how are you striving to love more fully?

February 21st – “In Praise of Offensive People,” Rev. Nancy McDonald Ladd. I love people who offend me because they have the power to shake up my thinking and keep me on my toes. How can we, as a community, commit to being in relationship with one another even, perhaps especially, when we offend each other?

February 28 – Youth Service, the BRUU Youth Group. Join us for our annual BRUU Youth Sunday service. This worship promises to be creative, musical, and spiritually significant.

March 7th – “The Ocean is the Beginning: A Maidu Native American Creation Story,” Rev. Nancy McDonald Ladd. This creation myth tells of a great sea-turtle who brings up the first bits of earth between his toenails. All of creation extends from the first thing to float upon the waters. What does this story have to tell us?



The most popular church community is indeed holy. Paul reading chosen for wedding services is from Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians. You probably know it. It’s all about how faith, hope and love abide and “the greatest of these is love.” I must have read those words aloud in front of hopeful couples and their teary families several dozen times by now, and every time I do, I try to remind myself just who Paul was actually writing that letter to.

The fact is, Paul wasn’t writing to a blissful wedding couple preparing to embark on their lifelong commitment to marriage. He wasn’t writing to what our society has come to think of as “lovers” at all. He was writing it to a church. That’s right – a church family.

It just so happens that the church in Corinth was a troublesome sort of place. The congregational leaders kept fighting with one another and nobody could quite agree what it was Jesus had said or who was in charge of what.

They were church family in chaos and Paul wrote them to remind them that, among them, there abided faith, hope and love above all other things. Love, he said, was by far the most important thing of all.

In the presence of love for one another, we can forgive. In the presence of love for one another, we can offer challenge and care when they are needed most. In the presence of love for one another, we can be vulnerable and honest.

Love is the pre-requisite for holy work, and the work we do together as a

church community is indeed holy. Paul was writing to his friends in Corinth to remind them that their love for one another was more important than their differences or their agendas, or even their personal successes or their shared service to the world. Love, he said, was the source of all the service. Love was the reason for the community to exist in the first place. If they forgot that, they moved too far away from their mission and their potential.

Even today, love remains the reason for a community like the Christians in Corinth or the UU’s in Manassas to come together. Underneath it all, we come here to learn to love and to be loved. This Valentine’s Day, let me leave you with Paul’s words to that church family who gathered together all those years ago. Might that message speak to us as clearly as it spoke to the Corinthians. Love is the reason we come together. This month, let us make a special effort to live out that love.

“If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.”

With Love,

Nancy

From the President's Corner



Recently, the Board decided to apply for a Joseph Priestley District-related program (lots more on that if we get it!). As part of the application process, we had to answer several questions about ourselves in a very small amount of space. There's one I'm stuck on, though. We were asked what the three greatest strengths of our congregation are. How do you narrow it down to three attributes? Here's what we came up with, after some discussion:

1. We are relentlessly optimistic. Regardless of what the actual background facts are at a given time, to a person the congregation believes that we're growing, that we're doing more and being more, and that these are laudable things to have happen.

2. We are involved. Our congregation has made a concerted effort to be involved in the community in teaching English to recent immigrants, providing food to the hungry, being active civically, and donating space and energies for needed programs which benefit the larger community.

3. We are energetic. Once we make the commitment to do something, we enthusiastically follow through. Recent examples include the county's first Gay-Straight Alliance Prom, held in 2009 and slated to continue in 2010, our food pantry which distributes over 1200 lbs of food per month to the hungry, and our maintenance and facilities crews which continually coax an 80 year old building into high functionality. Once the BRUU enthusiasm train leaves the station, it typically picks up steam fairly easily.

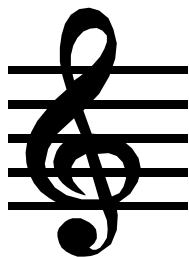
Do these resonate with you? Did we leave something vitally important out? Hopefully you see yourself in a little bit of at least one of these. More important, though, I think is the question they didn't ask us: What are the three biggest weaknesses of our congregation? It's easier for

us to comment in all the areas we rock than it is to admit all the areas where we, well, don't. I don't have answers written up for that yet, but I'd love to hear what y'all think. Even better, what are the three biggest weaknesses of our congregation, and what ought we do to improve those weaknesses? And then, how?

Best, well thought-out answer by phone, email or in person gets a complimentary pot of homemade Cincinnati chili.

~Brian, President@bruu.org

Notes from Annease



For those who missed hearing our good news – BRUU is sending three singers to the national UU children's choir this summer. They are Soleil Becker, Katherine Crim and Abby Muzzin.

Our girls will travel to Minneapolis, where they will live and rehearse with 73 other young UU singers from all over the country. The choir will give a concert at GA and sing for closing ceremony. This honor does come with a cost - \$400 plus travel expenses for each person. During the month of February, we will have a change jar out during fellowship time. If you have spare change in your pocket, we could certainly use it to help defray expenses for these families.

We will have an intergenerational evening service on February 12 at 7:30 PM. In addition to the children's choir, there will be stories, dance, video presentation, and vocal and instrumental music. Children and those young at heart are invited to wear their pajamas for this service that celebrates the comfort of nighttime. Fellowship time will follow the service.

BRUU is hosting our first district wide event on February 27 – the annual worship arts festival. If you are willing to help with set up, clean up, registration or offer home hospitality please let me know.

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.

New BRUU Members

A warm welcome to the new members of our BRUU community:

- Joel and JoLynn Ibanez
- Moire Jewell, and
- Lois Ann Montgomery

Minister's Office Hours

(subject to change, so please call ahead to make an appointment)

Tuesday 9:30 AM - 4:15 PM
Wednesday 2:00 AM - 4:15 PM
Thursday 9:30 AM - 4:15 PM

Office Assistant's Hours:
 9:30 AM - 2:30 PM
 Tuesday through Friday
 Email: office@bruu.org

Emergency Pantry News

I'm writing this on January 12. We just served 64 families today (320 individuals or 2,880 meals), and as always, it required a great effort on the part of many people, starting with those of you who donate money or goods.

Monday, I drove to the Capital Area Food Bank (CAFB) in Lorton. Elaine Philip's grandson Ben, a friend of his, and Elaine drove their truck. I had preordered "bargain buys" online so there was a pallet of cases on the dock. From 9:00-9:30am, I shopped in their "donation shelves" for separate cans at \$.12 a lb. I go for the free produce first, and today was lettuce, kiwi, and some sweet potatoes. I spent the rest of the time racing around the warehouse in a timed shopping spree. We also had room for 3 huge cartons of pre-bagged food donated by Shoppers customers containing 2 lb of rice, 1 lb pasta, 1 can sauce, 1 lb pinto beans, 1 can green beans each. Ben and friend loading the truck made it easier than usual. Back at BRUU, Chuck B, DeeJay D, Ann H., and Ed Davis waited to help us unload. Again youthful strength wowed the rest of us, who spent our time shelving after the young men lugged stuff to the 2nd floor. The pantry was overflowing, the hallway was full of the Shoppers bags, and we left early for a change, at about 2:00pm.

When we arrived at BRUU today between 8:30-9:00 am, there was already a line of clients waiting in the freezing weather. Everyone scurried around to prepare the tables, and at 9:30, we opened the doors. Clients lined up for James Thompson to give them a number, then went to room 208 to wait for their turn. Liz was waiting to sign in people. She makes scripts with the Spanish phrases we need to learn for each station we cover.

One table displayed sweaters and winter coats. Rosie Jones started a drive for winter coats last week, which were gone after Friday's USDA distribution. Today there were more and they went quickly. DeeJay monitored the bread table, ran errands, and double-bagged grocery bags so they'd be ready to use. People riffled through bin loads of toiletries at another table. Liz had her children's table ready with coloring books and stuffed animals. People chatted noisily as they waited for their turns.

The Flaherty's donated fresh apples, oranges, eggs, and carrots which Rick distributed along with the produce from CAFB. When that was gone, Rick distributed dia-

pers and wipes.

I started out helping clients select food in the pantry, in Spanish or English. Mary K and I tried to help the line move faster by working together in the pantry, but that proved too crowded, so I left to keep things moving, to call down the hall for more bags, to open more cartons as needed, and to tear down empties. We all doubled-bagged every chance we got.

By the end of the day, we were about wiped clean of food, except for the Shoppers bags. Fortunately, we had many of these, so we gave extras out at the end of the day. Our goal is for each family member to have 3 meals a day for 3 days minimum. A thin man asked today for Ensure (a nutrient drink), and he looked as if he might also be suffering from cancer. I will try to find him some by next distribution.

Some clients carpooled, many had little children or small babies, a few had to wait an hour for a ride. People helped each other and thanked us often. There was much laughter as we all corrected each other's Spanish or English. By 2:10pm, we were done, having logged a total of 78 volunteer hours for one distribution day.

~Marilyn Truxal-Hamburg

Save the Date!

The 19th Annual "Strikes for SERVE" Bowl A Thon is coming! This family friendly fundraiser will be held on Saturday, March 13, 2010 at Bowl America, 9000 Mathis Avenue in Manassas. As always, bowlers can form teams of five (5) participants, and each bowler is asked to raise a minimum of \$50.00. All bowlers will receive three (3) free games of bowling, free rental of a bowling ball and bowling shoes, a "Strikes for SERVE" t-shirt and the chance to win exciting door prizes and raffles. For more information, please contact Karen Horowitz at 703-367-6726 and her email is khorowitz@nvfs.org.

Interim RE Coordinator Hours

Wednesday, 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Thursday, 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

You can contact Chris McCann at re@bruu.org

BRUU

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Un-elected volunteers

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Toward Community and Sustainability

Descent from Peak Oil

by Jackson Harper, PhD
Environmental Biology & Public Policy

World oil production is expected to begin its terminal descent in the coming decade according to a growing number of petroleum analysts and the chief economist of the International Energy Agency. The United States is particularly vulnerable to oil scarcity given its hundreds of millions of cars, trucks, locomotives, ships, and aircraft dependent on liquid fuel.

The looming oil crunch would cause major social disruptions, food shortages, and potential rationing. Dr. Robert L. Hirsh who wrote the ground-breaking peak oil study for the Department of Energy in 2005 estimates that every 1% decline in oil supply would result in a 1% decline in World Gross Product presaging economic instability. Portland Oregon's Peak Oil Plan estimates that fossil fuel use would drop 50% in the 20 years following the peak. Since emergency services would get full fuel ration, the ordinary citizen would be allotted only about a third of the gasoline now used.

The Worldwatch Institute in its "State of the World 2010" report states that we need a complete cultural transformation rejecting consumerism in order to save human civilization. "From Earth's perspective, the American or even the European way of life is simply not viable." Already 40% over carrying capacity, the planet's life support system for humanity cannot tolerate further resource demands for long. The goal for developed and developing countries must be sustainability, not consumerism.

Citizens, communities, and nations all have parts to play in forging cultural change. First, citizens must cut back, then stop their uses of liquid fuel. Use public transit, carpool, or telecommute. Move closer to work and shopping. Walk and bike to work and shops. If you must drive, get a plug-in hybrid or electric car. Replace oil furnaces at home with heat pumps or wood stoves or fireplace inserts. Refrain from air travel and long distance auto trips. Use the train and bus. Eat less meat. Grow a vegetable garden. End frivolous consumption. Simplify your life and accumulate friends instead of stuff.

The individual will not be able to make the cultural transition without a resilient

and cohesive community. We need to gather our friends and neighbors to discuss the tasks ahead in preparing the community for life in an era of scarce and expensive oil. The community should concentrate on transportation, food, and energy, but also education, health, and skills. An inventory of community skills should be undertaken to assess reskilling needs. Skills sought might include light construction, gardening, and sewing. Organic agriculture and permaculture could be promoted in community gardens. The localization effort could be enhanced by using a local currency to promote local products. Lives of simplicity as described in a collection of essays by Cecile Andrews in her recent book "Less is More: Embracing Simplicity for a Healthy Planet, a Caring Economy and Lasting Happiness" illuminate those who have rejected the relentless pace of consumerism for more satisfying and rewarding human and community interactions.

The United States must acknowledge that peak oil is a reality and should be discussed openly and dealt with decisively. We must support massive development of renewable energy - wind, solar, geothermal, tidal, and biomass. Transportation must be electrified. High speed trains and light rail must be a high priority. Electrical transmission networks must be extended to wind and solar farms and upgraded to smart grids.

Cultural change is difficult to institute. Even the economic collapse of Argentina, the Soviet Union, and Iceland did not provoke wholesale social change. Though we Americans have lived well, even lavishly, during the oil age, we have been exceptionally wasteful and largely indifferent to the environmental and social consequences. In the difficult transition ahead we will need to muster all of our vaunted resourcefulness and adaptability to create healthier, happier, more equitable, and just cultures enveloped by sustainable environments that reject the pitfalls of the oil age.

Join Jackson Harper for a workshop on "Preparing for Life after Peak Oil" at the Fairfax UU Church in Oakton on Saturday, February 6th at 10 am. This UUSJ program also features Mike Tidwell, Director of the Chesapeake Climate Action Network.

First Thursday Nature Tales

February 4, 7:30-9:00 PM

The Gaia Hypothesis

Speaker: Martin Ogle, Chief Naturalist,
Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority

The Gaia Theory is a scientific way to view the Earth as a single living system. It is taught as Earth System Science in many universities, but sometimes still dismissed as New Age religion by some.

Join Martin Ogle to learn about this tantalizing idea as he explains, in layman's terms, the science, history and societal implications of Gaia Theory.

How do oxygen and methane persist in stable concentrations in the atmosphere of the Earth? How have Carl Sagan, William Golding (author of "Lord of the Flies") and Vaclav Havel all contributed to the theory's development and use? How does Gaia Theory speak to global challenges ranging from climate change to energy use?

Bring your questions and thoughts. First Thursdays are cosponsored by the Green Sanctuary Committee and the Prince William Conservation Alliance.

Nature Hike to the Occoquan Bay Wildlife Refuge

It was a beautiful fall day. On October 25th, last year, a group of six Green Team BRUUsers toured the Occoquan Bay Wildlife Refuge with no aim in mind, except to enjoy the day. The birds were none too cooperative; the summer residents had departed for points south while the winter residents were still on their way. But the late-fall wild flowers were in full bloom, the trees were turning, and the pesky deer flies had gone to wherever they go when life is over. The air temperature was delightfully between warm and cool. More such trips are planned. In addition to its primary function to inform us how to curb global warming, the Green Team conducts nature tours to experience the gentler, more natural parts of that web of existence we are all a part of. Join us when you can.

~Larry Underwood



VALENTINE'S DANCE

FEBRUARY 13, 2010

7:30~11:30

*SOUTHLAKES CLUB HOUSE
5070 HIGGINS DRIVE
MONTCLAIR, VA 22025*

*Famous DJ, Mark Harman,
Door Prizes, Costume Prizes,
Beverages (\$1 / glass)
Delicious Hors d'oeuvres
Join the fun!*

*Come as a famous lover(s) from
History, Movies, Literature, Mythology,
and more!*

*Tickets per Person
Give from Your Heart!*

Crushes: \$20

Cupids: \$30

Heart Throbs: \$40

Red Hot Lovers: \$50

*This event is open to
BRUU members and guests
Space is limited. Purchase tickets from
Tina Cox*

Suzanne Gupta

JoLynn Ibanez

Susan Sinclair

Susan Wood

First Friday Food & Film Night

(Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual,
Transgender Focused Film)

February 5, 2010

Shock to the System



Shock to the System is a 2006 gay-themed mystery film. It is the second film adaptation of a Richard Stevenson novel featuring fictional detective Donald Strachey, a gay detective who investigates the apparent suicide of a college student who was involved in an ex-gay psychology group. This movie is rated R the MPAA and is rated "15 and older" by the British Board of Film Classification.

The film will be hosted by Nate King and Ron Bracy who have cats.

Dinner will be from 7:00 to 8:00 and the movie will start at 8:00.

Please bring a dish to share such as pizza, salad, subs or dessert. A discussion of the film follows the movie. As always the film is open to all BRUU members, friends and guests.

For more information contact Ron Bracy at wc@bruu.org or 703-476-4488.

MAC Work Day Goes Sunday!

If you haven't come to a MAC work day because it was on Saturday, now's your chance! Our next work day will be on Sunday, February 21st from 11:30 AM until 4PM. We chose this Sunday because we want to spiffy up the building before the JPD music event being held at BRUU the following weekend. We need people to clean and remove marks and tidy up. We also want to work on painting and getting the conference room in order. Our goal in having a Sunday work day is to attract more people to work days, where we're 'keeping up appearances' of our church! If you have any questions, please contact Christine Sunda—I'm in the directory.



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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/



Members of the BRUU Green Team visit the Occoquan Bay Wildlife Refuge

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 21st is the deadline for
the March Newsletter!
Newsletter@bruu.org

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

February 2010

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						

<p>2/1 MIME Rehearsal, 6:30 PM, Sanctuary 2/1 BUC Meeting, 7 PM, Room 210 2/1 Spirituality Group, 7:30 PM, Library 2/2 Board Meeting, 6:30 PM, Room 210 2/2 BEACON ESOL Classes, 6:30 PM, Hall 2/3 NVC Practice Group, 6:30 PM, Senior Youth Room 2/3 Adult Choir, 7 PM, Music Room 2/4 UuP Beats Choir, 1 PM 2/4 MIME Rehearsal, 6:30 PM, Sanctuary 2/4 Course in Miracles, 7 PM, Library 2/4 First Thursday "Nature Tales", 7 PM, Hall 2/4 Building Your Own Theology, 7:30 PM, Conference Room 2/5 BRUU Homeschoolers, 10:30 AM, Hall 2/5 First Friday Film, 7 PM, Members Home 2/6 Leadership Day at Accotink UU</p>	<p>2/11 MIME Rehearsal, 6:30 PM, Sanctuary 2/11 Course in Miracles, 7 PM, Library 2/11 Building Your Own Theology, 7:30 PM, Conference Room 2/12 USDA Food Distribution, 11:30 AM, Room 208 2/12 Evensong, 7:30 PM, Sanctuary 2/13 Valentines Day Dance, 7:30 PM, off-site</p>	<p>2/21 Christian Communion Circle, 11:45 AM, Chapel 2/21 TVM Rehearsal, 2 PM, Hall 2/21 Woman's Chalice Group, 4 PM, Library 2/21 Basketball at the Boys and Girls Club, 4:30 PM 2/21 Crossroads Newsletter Deadline, 6 PM 2/22 Spirituality Group, 7:30 PM, Library 2/23 Food Pantry, 9:30 AM, Room 208 2/23 BEACON ESOL Classes, 6:30 PM, Hall 2/23 BRUU Book Club, 7:30 PM, member home 2/24 Adult Choir, 7 PM, Music Room 2/24 Parenting Chalice Group, 7 PM, Senior Youth Room 2/25 MIME Rehearsal, 6:30 PM, Sanctuary 2/25 Youth Choir, 6:30 PM, Music Room 2/25 Course in Miracles, 7 PM, Library 2/25 Building Your Own Theology, 7:30 PM, Conference Room 2/27 JPD Worship Arts Festival, all day</p>
<p>2/7 Family Worship, 9:15 AM, Chapel 2/7 Sunday Service, 10 AM, Sanctuary 2/7 Activity Room, 11:15 AM, Lounge 2/7 Children's Choir, 11:30, Music Room 2/7 Membership Committee, 11:30 AM, Room 305/707 2/7 Worship Committee, 11:30 AM, Library 2/7 Children's RE Meeting, 11:30 AM, Room 208 2/7 CUUPS Service - 12 PM, Chapel 2/7 TVM Rehearsal, 2 PM, Hall 2/7 Super Bowl Party, 3:30 PM 2/7 Woman's Chalice Group, 4 PM, Room 305/707 2/7 Basketball at the Boys and Girls Club, 4:30 PM 2/8 Spirituality Group, 7:30 PM, Library 2/9 Food Pantry, 9:30 AM, Room 208 2/9 BEACON ESOL Classes, 6:30 PM, Hall 2/10 Adult Choir, 7 PM, Music Room 2/10 Parenting Chalice Group, 7 PM, Senior Youth Room</p>	<p>2/14 Men's Group, 8:30 AM, Library 2/14 Family Worship, 9:15 AM, Chapel 2/14 Sunday Service, 10 AM, Sanctuary 2/14 Activity Room, 11:15 AM, Lounge 2/14 Social Justice, 11:30 AM, Room 208 2/14 Youth Choir, 11:30 AM, Music Room 2/14 Writers Group, 11:30 AM, Conference Room 2/14 Christian Communion Circle, 11:45 AM, Chapel 2/14 Basketball at the Boys and Girls Club, 4:30 PM 2/15 Spirituality Group, 7:30 PM, Library 2/16 BEACON ESOL Classes, 6:30 PM, Hall 2/17 NVC Practice Group, 6:30 PM, Senior Youth Room 2/17 Adult Choir, 7 PM, Music Room 2/17 BRUU YA Game Night, 7 PM 2/18 UuP Beats Choir, 1 PM 2/18 MIME Rehearsal, 6:30 PM, Sanctuary 2/18 Course in Miracles, 7 PM, Library 2/18 Building Your Own Theology, 7:30 PM, Conference Room 2/21 Family Worship, 9:15 AM, Chapel 2/21 Sunday Service, 10 AM, Sanctuary 2/21 Activity Room, 11:15 AM, Lounge 2/21 Children's Choir, 11:30, Music Room 2/21 Coffee with Minister, 11:30 AM, Office 2/21 Green Sanctuary Committee, 11:45 AM, Room 210</p>	<p>2/28 Men's Group, 8:30 AM, Library 2/28 Family Worship, 9:15 AM, Chapel 2/28 Sunday Service, 10 AM, Sanctuary 2/28 Soup and Salad for SERVE, 11 AM, Hall 2/28 Activity Room, 11:15 AM, Lounge 2/28 Writers Group, 11:30 AM, Conference Room 2/28 Drumming Circle, 11:30 AM, Sanctuary 2/28 Hakuchis Native American/Inca Spirituality Group, 1 PM, Room 105 2/28 Basketball at the Boys and Girls Club, 4:30 PM</p>