

Volume 35

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August 2017



CROSSROADS



Bull Run Unitarian
Universalists

In the Interim....

Repent! And Sin No More!

We Unitarian Universalists haven't spent much time talking about sin in recent years, but more and more, this is coming up among our clergy, on social media, and in conversation. It even came up in a few questions in the recent Question Box service. Which was a bit of synchronicity, because I'd just that morning been thinking about putting together a couple of services on sin and atonement for August.

"Sin?" I hear you ask. "But we're Universalists! We believe in Universal salvation!" Yes. Yes we do. But even the most fervent Universalists of old didn't give up on the concept of sin. They just believed that God was far too good to condemn anyone to eternal damnation, and that God's goodness would eventually rub off on all of us. Not that we are free from sin, but that we would be moving closer and closer to God.

So what does that mean for us now? Well, first it might be helpful to understand that I'm not talking about Original Sin here. And if you grew up in a so-called Hellfire and Damnation church, I'm not talking about that, either. I'm not talking about never using four-letter words, and I'm not talking about stealing a loaf of bread when you're hungry. So what am I talking about?

(Continued on page 2)

August 2017 Crossroads

In the Interim, continued from page 1

Most religions have some concept of sin, whether it's spoken of in terms of "sin" or not. In Buddhism, for example, there's no sin as such (if we think of sin in terms of violating a rule or covenant), but there are undesirable actions, or actions that will take one off the path, such as putting obstacles in the way of another's spiritual path. If we consider sin as missing the mark, this would definitely be missing the mark.

Why consider sin and atonement at all? We're Universalists? Well, the world as it is currently is less than ideal. We have elected officials who wish to remove healthcare from millions of people. There are still people without enough food to eat or adequate shelter or water, while others of us have an over-abundance. People hurt each other. Genocide still exists. How do we allow these things to continue?

For me, this is worth considering. It's not enough to say "be better" if we don't examine how it is that we keep doing the same old things. In the same way that Nancy Reagan's "Just Say No" policy had no effect because it didn't address the reasons people turned to drugs, we cannot address our failure to reach our aspirations until we address what is holding us back.

So. Let's talk about sin. It's OK. We're Universalists. There's salvation at the end of this!

In shalom,

Rev. Madelyn



Liturgical Calendar August 2017

- 1 Lammas (Christianity)
- Lughnassa (Wiccan/EuroPagan)
- Tish B'Av (Judaism)
- 7 Raksha Bandhan (Hinduism)
- 15 Feast of the Assumption (Catholic)
- Krishma Janmashtami (Hinduism)
- 26 Paryushana Parva begins (Jainism)
- 31 Waqf al Arafa – Hajj Day (Islam)

Notes from Annease

For those who like to plan ahead - here are dates you might want to save:

September 29 - evensong service at 7:30 in sanctuary

November 10 - evensong service at 7:30 in sanctuary

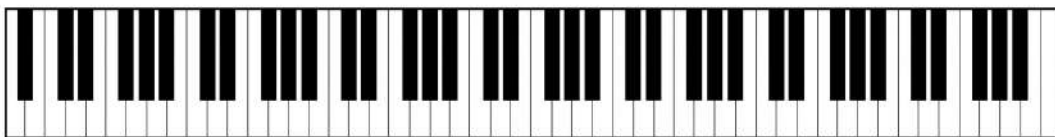
January 26 - evensong service at 7:30 in sanctuary

February 10 - variety show 7-9 in fellowship hall

March 16 - evensong service at 7:30 in sanctuary

May 11 - evensong service at 7:30 in sanctuary

Annease Hastings, Director of Music



From the DRE....

What I did on my summer vacation...



Star Island is our annual favorite place to be. I'm told BRUU has heard about Star before, but in case you missed it, Star Island is among the Isle of Shoals an hour's ferry ride off the coast of New Hampshire. The island holds a historic hotel, several cottages, gathering buildings and a stone chapel that makes up a UU/UCC retreat center. There are a variety of conferences during the season, and I and the kids have attended Lifespan Religious Education (LRE) Week the past three years.

Star Island is truly a magical, one of a kind place. Meals are served family style, and may be the only time a parent sees their children. The rest of the time, children and youth meet in age grouped activities, explore the car-less island, catch crabs for the marine lab, and generally travel in packs towards one adventure or another.



Raegan and friends won this year's third annual duct-tape regatta! (If I was the bragging sort, I'd mention that Greenley and friends won years 1 and 2.) Greenley was in the Junior Youth Group this year. She participated in a Bridging, sending off her older friends to the Senior Youth Group.

I spent my mornings in the Worship Renaissance Module, taught by Jessica York of the UUA Faith Development Office and Rev. Daniel Gregoire. (A Renaissance Module is a class developed by the UUA for Professional Development.) We spent the week storytelling, discussing the elements of a worship service, and the UUA's move towards Multigenerational Worship as the norm.

Evening activities include island ghost tours, talent shows and a nightly chapel service. I was privileged to ring the chapel bell one evening!

The 2017 LRE Conference theme was *Beacons of Hope: Growing Unitarian Universalists in a Changing World*. "Inspired by the story of David and his five smooth stones, Unitarian Universalist minister, James Luther Adams, articulated the basic principles of liberal religion and identified the sources of power through faith. We examined the values which help us meet the challenges we face today and to prepare us in the fight for truth, justice, and freedom for all": Curiosity, Mutuality, Justice, Accountability, and Co-creativity.

Of most benefit is the opportunity to share experiences and learn a multitude of new ideas from peers across the country. Directors of Religious Education, Religious Education Teachers, Youth Group Leaders, Ministers, UUA Staff, Leaders of Professional Associations, and Youth Ministry leaders all gather at this conference to share and grow our faith and ministries together. I hope you might join us next year!



My Blessed Pack: Dawn, Geraldine and Cynthia

Blessed Be,

Kristin Worthington, Director of Religious Education

The Way I See It

I'm deeply honored to have been chosen to serve as President of BRUU's Board of Directors – I will try to do my level best to listen, learn, and help lead us in the direction that you as a congregation want to go. And I'm very excited at the prospect of being here at a time when BRUU has the chance to call a settled minister and maybe, just maybe, head into a period of stability, growth, and being the best we can be. I believe I am channeling the feelings of just about everyone in the BRUU community when I say we are tired of being in transition, and want to get on with life. And I say this with no disrespect for Reverend Madelyn, who has challenged us to confront the past and to consider thoughtfully what we want to be in the future, as a good interim minister is supposed to do – we love and respect all of her efforts, but we also just want to be done. So I'm elated that our very talented search committee is up and running, and I hope you will join me in giving them all the support they will need for the formidable task ahead.

One of my favorite movies of all time is "The Year of Living Dangerously," which stars Mel Gibson (before he got weird) as a young reporter trying to get the inside scoop on the brewing revolution in Indonesia against the Sukarno regime; it also features Sigourney Weaver as a British diplomat who becomes Mel's love interest, and Linda Hunt as his photographer sidekick. Try to catch this great flick if you haven't seen it. Now you probably have a crick in your neck from the sudden change of direction in the narrative, but bear with me, there's a connection here. I'm not proposing a similarity between BRUU and the plot of the movie, I only want to appropriate the title. And I'm not looking for us to have a year of living dangerously (some of you may argue we've been there, done that), but rather that we aspire to a "Year of Living Intentionally."

In the spring of next year, we will want to call a capable, dynamic minister to lead our vital, vibrant and committed congregation of UUs. That individual will want to know who we are and how we see ourselves as a faith community making a difference to lives in Manassas and beyond. So let's be prepared to answer that question the best way we know how. The BRUU Board is putting together a calendar of discussion topics for its meetings during the coming year that will focus on evaluating our programs and activities. We want to be satisfied that we're doing the things we truly want to do, and that we're doing them the best way we can. We'll publicize this schedule once it's been drawn up, and then we'll want to hear from the members of BRUU – you have the answers to what our future should look like. Let's choose what we intend to do, and put our hearts into doing it right.

That's the way I see it, let me know what you think.

Art Muirhead, President, BRUU Board of Directors

president@bruu.org, 703-266-1949

July 24, 2017



BRUU Board of Directors: July 2017 Meeting Highlights

We welcomed new Board members Heather Berthold, Michelle Luman, and Kathy Sobrio.

With reference to the Board Book Club reading of “Governance & Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership” by Dan Hotchkiss, we discussed Chapter 10 and its relevance to BRUU, especially regarding committee charters, policies, standard operating procedures, and the task of periodic review.

The Program Council Moderator reported on the new bulletin board information that’s now in place and which shows some great organization. The next Program Council meeting will be conducted virtually in August.

We heard the report of the writing task force that’s drafting a proposed Congregational Covenant. The task force is seeking additional input and anticipates presenting a draft to the congregation by early September.

We discussed developing a Board calendar to provide direction and vision through the course of the year, which is especially important while we are in search. This calendar should serve the objectives of helping the Board remain accountable, promoting an intentional agenda, and setting out a plan for reviewing programs and activities that are significant to us as a congregation. A draft Board calendar will be discussed at the August meeting.

We discussed the location, duration, and content of the annual Board retreat, which is tentatively scheduled for August 26.

The next Board meeting will be held on August 8, 2017 (2nd Tuesday) at 7 pm.

Contact me if you have questions or concerns at president@bruu.org or 703-266-1949 (home).

Art Muirhead, President, BRUU Board of Directors



Summer fun with RE friends at Nina's.....games, swings, sprinklers, and a Tug of Peace!

Photos courtesy of Nina Lomax

FALL ADULT RETREAT OCTOBER 27-29, 2017

The Fellowship Committee (BRUU-FC) has been able to reserve 21 rooms at the Cacapon State Park Lodge (PARK). The scenic PARK is located 8 miles from Berkeley Springs, WVA. The BRUU-FC started the lodging quest at the end of March 2017. We recognized that there was high demand for PARK facilities. Quick action was required to obtain an October 2017 date with rooms in the PARK Lodge. So, we acted and have reserved the LAST 21 rooms.

Your BRUU-FC facilitators, the Muirs and Shermans, have been at the PARK and are quite impressed with the facilities, and what the PARK has to offer an Adult Retreat Group. Briefly, the PARK has 6,000 acres of exciting getaways. It provides golfing, lake activities and hiking opportunities. Along with a first class lodge and restaurant, there are lounges, meeting rooms, shelters with cabins, and so forth.

In order to cover costs, the BRUU-FC has come up with a \$250 cost per room for the 3 day retreat. This will cover lodging, a meeting room, a shelter, GROUP BUFFET Saturday evening, with soft drinks to include coffee and tea, and a variety of snacks. Each room accommodates at least two folks.

YOUR JOB;

1. Visit Cacapon State Park WVA online and view the many pictures of the facilities along with applicable narratives. You will discover that the PARK is a little under 2 hours driving time from BRUU in Manassas.
2. Send our Treasurer, Henry Hastings, a \$125 deposit to reserve your place, along with a note stating "Adult Retreat Room Deposit." Please specify Single, Two Singles (with names), or Couple. The room balance of \$125 will be due by August 31, 2017. If you so desire, you can pay the full \$250 up front.
3. We hope to be able to accommodate single folks without a roommate, by finding other BRUU singles for room mating.

We have to operate on a first come, first served basis. So, we have room for 42 BRUU folks, and possibly a few more. We have a mixed group of rooms, which we can allocate when we know who will be coming.

We feel that this will allow us to spend quality time together, and enjoy memorable moments. We believe it to be a very good value. Please join us. We are going to have a GREAT TIME October 27,28 and 29! For folks new to BRUU, the Fall Retreat could be a good way to meet fellow BRUU folks.

We will have at least one follow-up meeting for interested parties to discuss details, TBD

Worship Services in August

- 8/06 "My Relationship with the Bomb" Pat Malarkey
- 8/13 Sin - What Does Sin Mean for Universalists? Rev. Madelyn Campbell
- 8/20 Atonement – Do you have a theology of atonement? Is it even necessary? Are you an Ultra-Universalist, a Restorationist, or something else all together? And if atonement is necessary, how do we do it? Theologians have been wrestling with these questions for millennia. Maybe we can make a start today. Rev. Madelyn Campbell
- 8/27 "What Happened at GA Anyway?" Hear from BRUUsers who attended General Assembly in New Orleans on what it's all about. Rev. Campbell with Bev Reusser and Richard Firth

August 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		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	29	30	31		

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|------|-----------------------|------|-------------------------------|
| 8/03 | Transition Team, 6 P | 8/16 | LGBTQ, 6 P |
| 8/06 | Social Justice, 9 A | 8/18 | USDA Food Pantry, 12 P |
| | Fellowship, 11:15 A | 8/19 | RE Teacher Orientation, 10 A |
| 8/08 | Food Pantry, 9:30 A | 8/21 | NuuNers, 11:30 A |
| | Board Meeting, 6:30 P | 8/22 | Food Pantry, 9:30 A |
| 8/13 | Membership, 11 A | | Worship Committee, 7:30 P |
| | Finance, 11:15 A | 8/23 | Equality Virginia Pizza Party |
| | BRIC, 11:30 A | 8/26 | Game Night, 6 P |
| 8/14 | SASS, 1:30 P | 8/27 | Soup for Serve, 11 A |
| 8/15 | PFLAG, 7 P | | |

