

Volume 38
Edition 2
February
2020



CROSSROADS



Bull Run Unitarian
Universalists

Rev. Charlotte's Word-Weavings

Making a Commitment

Happy Imbolc!

Imbolc or Imbolg, also called Brigid's Day, is a Gaelic traditional festival marking the beginning of spring. It is held on February 1st, or about halfway between the winter solstice and the spring equinox.

St. Brigid's holiday is a celebration of hearth and home. In that vein, I have some exciting news to share with the congregation this month. I've been holding off sharing because I wanted to be absolutely certain not to jinx anything, but I've been holding this news close since the winter solstice: *I am delighted to be buying a house in Manassas, closing is set for Valentine's Day, and Lisa and I will be in the process of moving down the street between then and the end of March.*

Late last year, a number of things came together to make this possible; I wasn't even looking for a house to buy, but then a for-sale sign went up and I thought, "well, maybe I'll just take a look at it and see..." What we saw felt right. We are still in the same neighborhood, I can still walk to work, the house has had significant updates in the last two years, and the price was right.

It is a good time to invest in real estate in Northern Virginia. It has been a couple of decades since I've owned my own home. It's the right time, and this is the right place. We are making this our home for the foreseeable future. I am, and we are, committed to staying in this community for a very long time.

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February 2020 Crossroads

(Word-Weavings, continued from page 1)

Many of you know that making such a big commitment isn't easy. But it is a commitment I am making that includes being committed to the Bull Run UU community and our shared ministry together. I have felt truly fortunate that BRUU called me as your settled minister; it's a mutually good fit and taking this step of setting down roots in Manassas is confirmation of that sense of this being a right place for me to be.

As we plan and prepare for the annual budget drive that begins in early March, I wanted you to know about the deeper level of commitment I am making to being your minister for what I hope will be many years to come. I hope you will consider what commitments you will make to ensure that BRUU has a healthy future and a solid presence in Old Town Manassas for many more decades to come.

We welcome the first signs of spring as we pass the half-way mark between solstice and equinox. May your days and nights be bright with hope and overflowing with love for all of Creation,

Rev. Charlotte

February 2020 Sermon Descriptions

February 2: *Imbolc* (Rev. Charlotte & Janette Muir) – The ancient Celtic holiday of Imbolc celebrates the turning of the wheel of the year from Crone to Maiden as the Sun-god is born once again signaling the return of spring in the northern hemisphere.

February 9: *What's Next?* (Rev. Charlotte) – Auction sermon topic chosen by the Freeds: an exploration of beliefs about reincarnation and the afterlife in the world's religions.

February 16: *Some UU Presidents* (Rev. Charlotte) – Out of 45 U.S. Presidents, 4 (or 5 if you count Thomas Jefferson) have been UUs. That is about 10% from a relatively small

WORKDAY

Saturday, February 15th
9:30 AM – 4 PM

In addition to the usual cleaning and repairing tasks, we need lots of people to help pain the studio/chapel on the third floor. This is a large room that hasn't been painted in many years. Supplied provided.

For more information, contact Christine Sunda. Sundas3@aol.com

OWL (Our Whole Lives) Adult Sexuality Education

Sexuality and Communication
Monday February 10, 6:30-9:30 PM.

Sexuality and Aging
Monday February 24, 6:30-9:30 PM



Sign up through ALE on the BRUU website

Birds, Trees, Bugs, Fish, and Much Much More at BRUU

On the third Thursday of every other month, BRUU hosts a public meeting of the local Master Naturalist chapter.

We talk about the plants and animals in the area - life cycles of the different species, how to identify butterflies, why coyotes have come to town, the impacts of purposely burning fields at Manassas Battlefield... fun stuff about nature.

Six natural resource management agencies in Virginia created the Master Naturalist program as an outdoor parallel to the successful Master Gardeners program.

BRUU's Green Team is supporting the effort by making space available for various meetings, including the next Basic Training Class that runs from April-August.

We are creating a savvy corps of citizens who understand the environment, and can talk with confidence about "why is this happening" and "what should we do."

Ideally, smarter citizens will ensure more-constructive conversations about hunting, tree harvest, and other tools to manage natural resources. Bambi is cute, but we have too many deer. It is a problem we gotta fix somehow.

Interested? Talk to Lois Montgomery, Randy Freed, Charlie Grymes, or check out <http://www.virginiamasternaturalist.org/>



MUSIC

FROM ANNEASE

Evensong service - February 7 at 7:30 "A Legacy of Love"

Pericles said "What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others." What kinds of legacies do we want to leave our children, grandchildren and future generations of the world? How do we live our lives to create them? Join us for a contemplative service of music and personal reflections.

Annual BRUU variety show is Feb 29 (7-9). All ages and all types of family friendly acts are welcome. Sign up during coffee hour or contact music@bruu.org

Annease Hastings, Music Director



Talk with members of the Music Committee for more information about this fun evening Dean Luman (ludluman@gmail.com) or Mary Sherman (woodpoppys@gmail.com). Talents can include poetry, skits, storytelling, music, and more!



Board members, leadership team, committee chairs attend district workshop Resilience: Leadership Development for the 21st Century Photo courtesy of Nina Lomax

BRUU Board Report

At the January 23, 2020 meeting of your Board of Directors, the Board discussed long-range plans for personnel, focused on these questions: What are our budget needs? On that hopefully far-off day when Annease retires, how would we maintain our excellent music program? On that hopefully far-off day when Tina retires, what role should the Office Assistant position play, and should the position be combined with, for instance, a paid bookkeeper position? What would successful transitions look like? If a transition is unsuccessful, what would be the likely causes? It was a good discussion. Taking a cue from Dan Hotchkiss's book "Governance and Ministry," we are getting out way ahead of the issue and didn't reach any decisions.

We also appointed a nominating committee, but I haven't had a chance to contact them yet so I'm not putting their names in this column. Please remember that if you're contacted by a member of the Nominating Committee asking you to serve in a leadership role, that means they think you can do it, and you should sincerely consider whether you can serve the congregation in the way they're asking.

Art Muirhead reported on the BRUUNet Task Force, which is proceeding apace.

Your Board discussed the Mission, Vision and Covenant. Discussion centered on the time frame for revisiting each of those documents. BRUU's original Mission Statement was adopted circa 2001, and the current one dates from 2010. Our covenant is just a couple years old, and the Vision Team is working hard on crafting our first Vision. Look for one or more Town Halls on these issues next church year (2020-21).

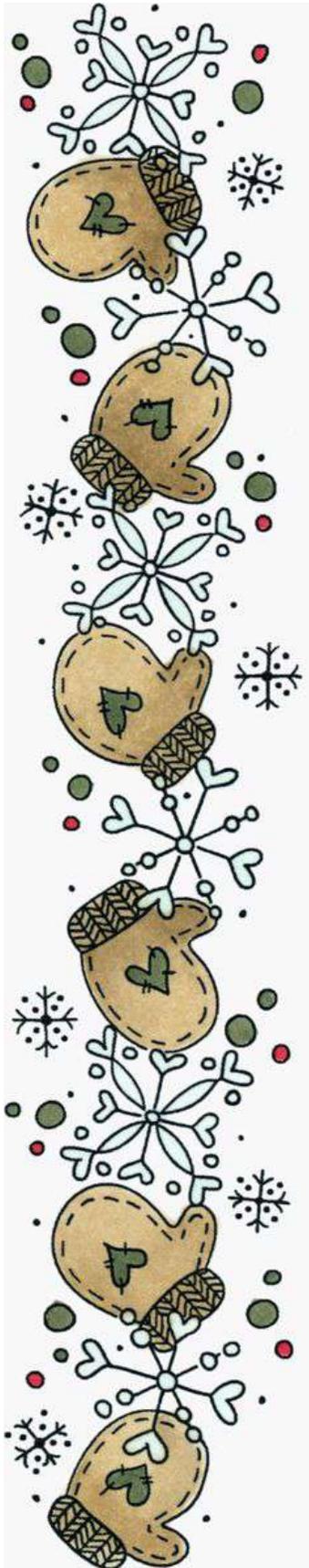
We also updated our calendar for future discussions. In February, we will revisit the alcohol policy, possibly discuss the elevator situation (although we covered that pretty well in January - see the President's Column), follow up on a walk-through we're doing with our insurance company on January 31, possibly discuss the Right Relations Committee again, and follow up from the Town Hall meeting of January 26.



14 BRUU youth, mentors and staff gathered at Shenandoah River National Park for a Coming of Age Retreat January 24-26th to explore spiritual practices.

We experienced a wide range of forms utilizing a variety of senses and concepts – yoga, chanting to visioning, an arrow ceremony, nature walks, meditative hymns, affirmations, guided meditation, prayer beads, and emotional intelligence training. Good food, shared responsibility, fellowship, fun, challenged thinking, building skills, memories and relationships in the beautiful wooded area.

(photos courtesy of Gretchen Almstead and Eric Trumbull)



Family Calendar

February 2020

Sunday, 2/22 - Youth choir
11:15-12:15

Saturday, 2/8 - "Second Saturday Social" for junior and senior high youth. Activity to be determined. Host Needed.

Sunday, 2/9 - Children's choir
11:15-11:45
Youth choir 11:45-12:15

Sunday, 2/16 - Children's choir
11:15-12:15 (lunch to follow)

Sunday, 2/27 - Youth choir
6:30-7:30

Just As Long As I Have Breath

About the Elevator...

Technically, what we have is an assisted lift, not an elevator. We love the new lighting and the cheery new sign in it (if you haven't seen it, check it out and thank Dave Feser). But the assisted lift dates from 1987 and has some problems, both from its size and its age. For one thing, it doesn't provide access to the third floor of the education wing. For another, it's a bit balky and not very user friendly. For a third, it has a weight limitation that generally only allows one or two people and one wheelchair. In some quarters, the assisted lift has an undeserved poor reputation, but let's be frank: It's past time for a modern elevator at BRUU.

I've had at least five conversations with BRUU members recently about the need for a modern elevator in BRUU. One person actually provided a sketch plan for the foyer showing a complete redesign of the stairs and the installation of an elevator in place of one of the two staircases. (Locally prominent architect Albert Speiden designed BRUU's building, and the staircases in the front lobby are known as "Speiden's Folly." I'd like to get rid of those stairs too--how about you?)

So, what are the issues with regard to an elevator? They break down into How, Why, When and Where.

The How is primarily "how will we pay for it?" A modern elevator will cost between \$200,000 and \$300,000, all told, as a rough estimate. That is obviously out of reach for the annual operating budget, which this year is \$448,400. One possibility is to seek grant money, and that topic has come up. Another possibility is a capital campaign, which is a fundraiser from members and friends in addition to the annual canvass, and which will have to wait at least until after BRUU adopts a Vision. A third possibility is some combination of grant funding and capital campaign. Discussions are ongoing.

The Why is easily answered: Because we want to live our values. If BRUU is to be a safe community for seeking and service, as our tag line says, it has to be safe and accessible for all who would come to us, including people with mobility limitations. We have no way of knowing how many people won't come to BRUU because of the lack of a quality elevator, but we have heard some anecdotes from people about how they heard the assisted lift was scary and poorly lit (it's not). As our congregation ages, the need for an elevator will only grow.

The When question depends in large part on the How, but as I said, it's past time for a modern elevator so we should not delay. I'd like to have a plan for its installation during my term as President (which ends June 30, 2021).

And as for Where, there are a few possibilities and we'll need to work with an architect (luckily, BRUU is well supplied in that area). I've heard three possibilities, and this is not an exhaustive list: (1) In the courtyard, (2) replacing Speiden's Folly (see above), and (3) along the Church Street side of the building. All have their advantages and disadvantages, and we are far too early in the process to commit to a location. Ultimately, price may be the controlling factor as to location.

It's important to bear in mind that we are in a historic building in a historic district under Manassas's zoning ordinance, so any exterior changes will require approval from the Architectural Review Board of the City of Manassas.

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Also to be borne in mind is how our architecture speaks to us and how it will speak to us in the future. For one thing, our assisted lift is around the corner from the main entrance, requiring people with mobility limitations to come in a different entrance than people without mobility limitations. Avoiding that "second-class entrance effect" is a consideration for the ultimate location of an elevator. The location of the elevator also will inevitably affect how we move around the building, and we want to give some thought to the best location from that perspective.

I'm interested in your thoughts, so please share them with me or any member of the Board of Directors. Please wait until we have something more concrete to analyze before taking a hard and fast position. Right now, we're in the phase of thinking about what columns should be on the Pro and Con analysis. If I missed an important consideration, be sure to let me know.

Respectfully submitted,

Martin Crim, President, BRUU Board of Directors



A rockin' good time was had at BRUU when "Zac Quintana and the Sages" played at BRUU. By splitting the proceeds with the band, BRUU raised \$350 at this lively event.

Save the Date for the next fundraiser at BRUU: An evening of Irish food and music. Saturday, March 14th.

A.L.E. Winter Catalog is Now Available and Online

Free Adult Life Enrichment Classes



To see the catalog, click [HERE](#)
To register click [HERE](#)

Shared Ministry Committee Update

COSM (Committee on Shared Ministry) has been busy. After we completed Rev. Charlotte's preliminary ministerial fellowship evaluation in October, we dove into a balcony view assessment of BRUU communications. It's a topic that came up frequently at last year's cottage meetings, and the Board asked us to focus our efforts in this area for the remainder of this church year. Communication ties into everything in the congregation.

We collated all of the communication-related ideas and suggestions that came out of the cottage meetings, together with feedback from multiple interviews with staff and committee chairs over the past several months. We then identified recurring themes to arrive at a few clusters for ongoing focus: organizational (policies/procedures/how to guides), outreach/external advertising, and attracting/maintaining new members. Concurrent to our efforts in this arena, Brian Pace, announced that he was stepping down from his many years of service to BRUU as chair of the Communications Committee. After a reorganizational meeting in early January, Star Muir agreed to take the reins of Coco (communications committee).

To further our information and idea gathering, we met with Program Council to solicit their imagined view of what ideal, well-functioning communication at BRUU would look like. Suggestions raised in that setting included ideas such as better advertising and outreach to the public, email reduction, use of web-based platform system like SharePoint, projecting announcements prior to the service, BRUUnet refinement or replacement, and expanded use of social media platforms. We will be sharing these gathered ideas and creating a resource list.

Feel free to share your comments, questions or concerns with any of us on the COSM team. Look for the red ribbons on our name tags that say, "Committee on Shared Ministry." COSM consists of Gretchen Almstead (chair), Tony Main, Martha Muirhead, Rita Romano, Deborah Buckingham, and Tom Cooke.



Martha Muirhead, in her role with Shared Ministry Committee, facilitated a conversation with Program Council members about ideal internal and external communication at BRUU.

February 2020

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|------|---|------|---|
| 2/01 | Finance Committee 9 A
Effective Meetings ALE | 2/21 | USDA Food Pantry, noon
Legislation Update, 11:15 A
Program Council, 11:30 A |
| 2/02 | Crane Making, 11 A | 2/17 | Mindfulness ALE, 7 P |
| 2/04 | UupBeats, 12:45 P | 2/18 | UupBeats, 12:45 P |
| 2/05 | Tao Te Ching, 10:45 A
Seasoned Souls, noon | 2/19 | Tao Te Ching, 10:45 A
Grief Support, noon |
| 2/07 | Evensong, 7:30 P | 2/22 | Canvass Gala 5:30 P |
| 2/08 | First Aide Training, 9 A
Exploring BRUU, 10 A | 2/23 | Membership Committee, 11:15 A |
| 2/09 | Finance Committee 11:15 A
BRIC, 11:30 A
RE Committee, 11:30 A | 2/24 | Adult OWL, 6:30 P |
| 2/10 | Adult OWL, 6:30 P | 2/25 | Food Pantry, 9:30 A |
| 2/11 | Food Pantry, 9:30 A | 2/26 | Tao Te Ching ALE, 10:45 A
Moms Demand Action 6:15 P |
| 2/12 | Tao Te Ching, 10:45 A | 2/27 | Board Meeting, 7 P
Master Naturalists, 7 P |
| 2/13 | Worship Committee, 7 P
Master Naturalists, 6:30 P | 2/29 | Safety Training, 9 A
Canvasser Training, 1 P
Talent Show, 7 P |
| 2/15 | Workday at BRUU | | |
| 2/16 | Soup Sunday, 11 A | | |

From the Treasurer's Office

Financing BRUU's day-to-day Operations

BRUU's operating budget covers our day-to-day-operation costs. This includes full-time and part-time staff salaries, routine maintenance of our building and landscaping, RE materials, worship and music materials, UUA and social justice program dues, administration expenses like copiers and software - even coffee at fellowship hour. For detailed line items check out the budget report that is posted each month on BRUUnet: <https://www.bruunet.org/page/budget-reports>.

How much does it cost to run BRUU and how do we pay for it? This year's total operational budget (from July 2019 – June 2020) was set at \$448,400.00. We receive money from rentals of our sanctuary and classrooms, from leasing our commercial building next door (Grounds Central), and from fundraising efforts like concerts and other events. But, the largest portion of our income comes from pledges and contributions from our members and friends.

In appreciation, the Stewardship Canvass Team led by Robin Fegeas is hosting a **Thank You Dinner** on **Saturday, February 22** (5:30 – 7:30 PM) in the BRUU fellowship hall to honor all our members and friends who have contributed to keeping BRUU running over this past year. Mark your calendars and look for more details to come. Hope to see everyone there!

If you have any questions about our annual operating budget or this year's stewardship canvass you may contact Terrie McClure, treasurer, at treasurer@bruu.org, Robin Fegeas, stewardship chair, at canvass@bruu.org or Henry Hastings, bookkeeper, at bookkeeper@bruu.org.

Terrie McClure, Treasurer

UU Youth Pilgrimage Trip to Romania

The UU Pilgrimage is a two weeklong camp for Unitarian youth in Transylvania, Romania. The trip includes religious education, service, partnership development, and fun! One of the goals for the trip is to engage in meaning and spiritual deepening at pilgrimage sites showcasing the depth and perseverance of UU faith across centuries of persecution. This is meaningful for me because this year in our Youth class we have explored what our faith means to us, and what we presently believe in.

The process began when Ms. Kristen, our DRE (Director of Religious Education), shared all of the information about this trip. When I heard about it I thought it would be a great opportunity to expand my horizons and meet new people. I had to fill out an application and write up lengthy answers to various questions, like why do you want to go on this trip? And what does this mean to you? After filling out the forms and submitting them, I was accepted to do an over-the-phone interview with one of the organizers for the trip. It was a very stressful ten minutes! But afterwards, I found out that I was one of the 15 lucky people from across the U.S. who was going to get to experience this once in a lifetime trip.

This trip means a lot to me personally, but it's also a chance to connect to a wider world and meet other UU youth not only from our little community, but from all over America and Europe. I love languages and other cultures, so to be able to experience living in Romania for two weeks and getting to know a wave of new people all at once is exciting, and yet it pushes me out of my comfort zone just the right amount.

I hope to share with our community at BRUU my experience and spiritual growth in going on this journey. Not everyone is given this opportunity to grow as a person and to go to a different country to meet new people. It's such a wonderful blessing to be able to do this, and I want to be able to share a little of that with all of my friends at BRUU. Thank you all so much for supporting me in this! Delenn

Dear UUPCC Supporters,

I enthusiastically invite you to join us in making our Faithify campaign for the 2020 International Youth Pilgrimage a success! We need to raise \$10,000 by the beginning of March. This will pay for two-thirds of the international flights for the 15 youth we've selected. These North American youth who live coast to coast are a remarkable group of people. Your support will help them have a life-changing experience and become part of the next generation of UU Partnership.

Making a pledge takes less than five minutes. Don't procrastinate--we need your support now so the goal will feel doable. Click on this link--<https://faithify.org/projects/international-youth-pilgrimage/>--and pledge away!

If you'd rather mail in a donation, make checks payable to 'UUPCC' and please write "Faithify Intl. Youth Pilgrimage" in the memo line. To count toward our goal, checks should be mailed no later than February 21--and the earlier, the better. Our mailing address is: 483 E Lockwood Ave., Suite 109 St. Louis, MO 63119-3169.

Thank you for your generosity! In peace and partnership,
Rev. Roger Bertschausen, Executive Director, Unitarian Universalist Partner Church Council

The BRUU Vision Town Hall & Beyond

On Sunday, January 26, we held our first BRUU Vision Town Hall and had 52 attendees. It was our way to “Get Out the Visions” to the congregation. This was done for each of the 5 categories (a.k.a. “Centers of Energy”) that stemmed from your input at our Vision Café’s held late last year. Over the past month stakeholders have worked to identify a Vision statement related to their category. The Town Hall was then the representative stakeholder’s opportunity to present their Vision statement while defining their category and helping to describe how the statement came about.

These are the Vision statements for each of the categories!

1. **Stronger Congregational Community** – BRUU is widely recognized as an inclusive congregational community fortified by the strong interpersonal ties among its members, as well as effective collaborations with other faith and nonprofit organizations in service to our local community.
2. **Physical Environment** -Our vision is to foster a welcoming, safe, accessible and eco-friendly environment for all
3. **Outreach To the Wider Community** – Connecting to new audiences through events, social media and content creation
4. **Building Spiritual Community Through R.E.** -The heart of BRUU is comprised of the people; together, we will build a larger spiritual community for seeking wisdom while promoting diversity, independent thought and thriving spiritual growth
5. **Social Justice** -BRUU is recognized as a leader in social justice reform and charitable giving in Prince William County and beyond

So, where do we go from here?

Between now and our next Vision Town Hall in April, we will collate the comments received at the Town Hall and continue gathering information from the congregation. We will also continue working with stakeholders to identify and build connections between the Visions. By bringing them together, we intend to construct the framework of a congregational Vision. Working with the congregation and stakeholders, we can flesh this out into a final shared vision for all of BRUU! At the Town Hall in April, we hope to present a shared Vision that the whole congregation can get behind.

REMEMBER what the Vision statement is striving for, as it is meant to be aspirational. It should be clear, concise, inspiring, and memorable, not weighed down with details. It is the dream of what BRUU can become in 5 years and should set the direction in which the congregation as a whole will go. Together we’re going to embark on a vision that will be **amazing** for everybody!

We want our vision to enable someone to answer three questions:

- What does the vision mean to individual members?
- What does the vision mean to the congregation as a whole?
- What does the vision mean for BRUU’s place in the larger community?

Why is it again that we need a Vision?

According to the UUA, it is extremely important as one of the three pillars meant to help a congregation thrive and stay healthy. The other two pillars are the Mission statement and the Covenant. BRUU’s Covenant defines “How we agree to be together and what we hold dear.” BRUU’s Mission statement, “A safe community for seeking and service”, defines our “Core Values” and “Who we are and why we exist.” And BRUU’s Vision statement defines our “Aspirational Values, our Dream.” Please help us to avoid teetering on the edge of stability. Let’s solidify our footing for a bright BRUU VISION of the future together! We welcome your comments, suggestions, questions, concerns, excitement -- anything you would like to share about any aspect of the BRUU Vision. Please don’t hesitate to contact a Vision Team member and let us know: Mike Cleary, Laura Coates, Angie Carrera, Kathy Sobrio, or Tony Main.

Family Retreat

Friday, May 1—Sunday, May 3, 2020

Activities will be organized for ALL AGES plus free time for fellowship

Held at Pocahontas State Park

Chesterfield, VA

visit dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/pocahontas

Cost is estimated to be \$ 50.00 per person
Includes lodging, 5 meals, all retreat activities.

A deposit of \$50 per family due now.

For more info see Kristin dre@bruu.org

Toward a More Equitable & Inclusive Society Workshop with Dr. Michael Baran

Saturday, February 29, 2020, 10am-1pm

UU Congregation, 4880 Elmer Derr Rd., Frederick

- If almost everyone wants to be a good person, why do exclusion & inequality persist?
- Learn tools to reduce our biases, interrupt problematic behavior, & grow as individuals.



Tickets: **\$15 at frederickuu.org/baran** (or \$20 at the door)

Cost includes a pre-release copy of Dr. Baran's new book *Subtle Acts of Exclusion: How to Understand, Identify, & Stop Microaggressions*.

All proceeds benefit Justice Jobs of Maryland (justicejobsmd.org).



Dr. Baran has taught courses on race and identity, Latin America, child development, and research methodology at Harvard University and the University of Michigan. He received his B.A. from Emory University and his M.A. and Ph.D. in cultural anthropology with a certificate in Culture and Cognition from the University of Michigan. He is fluent in Spanish and Portuguese.

For more information, contact Carol Antoniewicz
301-606-9235 • ecacres@comcast.net

March Crossroads submissions of articles (no more than 400 words) and or photos that relate to BRUU activities are due to newsletter@bruu.org by February 25th.