

Volume 38  
Edition 6  
June  
2020



# CROSSROADS



Bull Run Unitarian  
Universalists

## Rev. Charlotte's Word-Weavings

### *O Lord, How Come Me (We) Here?*

Lament, complaint, petition... each of these are a form of prayer. Psalm 13, for example, is a probably a personal complaint. The first lines are:

How long, O Lord, wilt thou quite forget me?  
How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?  
How long must I suffer anguish in my soul,  
grief in my heart, day and night?  
How long shall my enemy lord it over me?

These days we are all asking, how long? How long are we going to be unable to meet in-person? How long are we going to be restricted in our movements and our expressions of loving human kindness? How long will our jobs be impacted? How long will our young people be out of school? How long before I can travel to see the faces and places I am longing to see without a screen to connect us?

(continued page 2)

(Word-Weavings, continued from page 1)

My parents had a vinyl LP in their record collection of the gifted coloratura Marian Anderson singing spirituals, one of which asked “O Lord, how come me here?” – sometimes written as “O Lord, how come we here?” This question or its variant might be one that is on the lips of more of humanity than African Americans these days, although it doesn’t have the same deep and traumatic roots for us. And it cannot be pointed out too often that black, people of color and indigenous (BIPOCI) are disproportionately more impacted by the pandemic than we who have white-skinned privilege.

How come we here? Coronavirus (COVID-19) is laying bare – on an enormous scale – how broken our American socioeconomic systems are. There is no equity in our employment and health insurance. There are deep-seated problems with how our democracy functions from the act of voting, to how legislation is enacted, to the conduct of elected officials at all levels.

Many of us have recognized these systemic issues for quite some time. We’ve been doing our best to call attention to the brokenness of our American social systems and the economy of privilege that they support. The questions now have to do with: are those who have been unaware and in denial coming around to face the grim realities? And, what are we going to do to make changes for the better?

Despite the requirements of social distancing, people of conscience are still needed to address the three levels of social justice: directly meeting the basic needs of marginalized and oppressed communities for food, shelter, health and safety, funding and implementing services that provide assistance, and changing laws and systems to create greater equity for all.

We are adapting to the demands and to the changes necessary to stay healthy and safe. It’s exhausting. There are losses we need to recognize and grieve as such. Adaptation is going to require investments of time and money. We will likely need to re-tool many things.

All this and being a caring, compassionate, and joyful spiritual community in virtual meeting spaces for the foreseeable future.

Stay healthy and stay safe,

*Rev. Charlotte*

**5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Special Collection on May 31<sup>st</sup> – UUA COVID Response Fund**

Our 5th Sunday Special Collection this month will support the UUA’s COVID Response Fund. According to the UUA’s webpage [Supporting Our People and Our Communities](#), donations to the fund will provide grants to support congregations and UU religious professionals and administrative staff based on need resulting from the pandemic.

Two UUA funds will be used to distribute these grants: the UUA Disaster Relief Fund and the Living Tradition Fund. Grants awarded via the Disaster Relief Fund will provide assistance in communities to people who are at significant risk to health and livelihood because of COVID-19. The Living Tradition Fund will disburse grants to meet extraordinary financial needs of ministers, religious professionals, and congregational staff impacted by COVID-19.

Please designate your offering donation on May 31<sup>st</sup> by indicating 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Special Collection in the memo line.

FMI: <https://www.uua.org/giving/areas-support/funds/covid-19-response>.



## BRUUsers invited to Artistic and Creative Action

BRUU members and friends and their children are cordially invited to submit original writings or art, based on experiences, observations and thoughts related to the Covid-19 pandemic to be considered for inclusion in a book of inspiration and reflection during times of confusion and upheaval. We are seeking entries consistent with themes of resiliency, faith, love, fear, joy, stewardship, and mindfulness. They can be written, photographic, or artistic. They can be serious, reflective or even humorous. A guideline is provided for those interested in submitting their work for consideration.

For more information, please review guidelines available on BRUU Net. Questions or entries along with required waivers should be submitted to both leaders of the BRUU Book Team: Angie Carrera ([dancingjoyfully@gmail.com](mailto:dancingjoyfully@gmail.com)) and Scott Maile ([scottamaile@gmail.com](mailto:scottamaile@gmail.com)).

## BRUU has a new arrival!

Maybe you have heard about our Little Free Library to “Take a Book or Share a Book.” NOW we have a Little Food Pantry to “Give What You Can - Take What You Need.” This box is also in the courtyard and was supported by a grant from the “No Child Goes Hungry” program and a little from our BRUU food pantry. This can help the immediate need of hungry persons.

There are some special instructions of what will go in it. Nothing perishable and some folks may not have access to a can opener, stove, or cooking utensils. We are asking for donations that can be dropped off in room 208 or added to the box yourself. Some options are flip top cans of soup, tuna, and vegetables. Single serve items like fruit cups, mac and cheese, or peanut butter and crackers are also welcome. Granola bars, water bottles, and drink boxes will go quick! If you have any of those packages with plastic utensils and a napkin in them, this is a good place to drop them off.

This project is a great community outreach and it will feel good to donate food! It is a bit of heart in Old Town Manassas at a time when we need to feel better!!

My special thanks go to Jon Kostik and Reverend Charlotte for their help and efforts with this project.

Amy Hamilton



## Calendar of June Meetings at BRUU via ZOOM

Please note: BRUU staff team meets weekly on Tuesdays from 11 am – 12 pm;  
Adult Choir meets weekly on Wednesdays from 7 – 8:30 pm.

*Please also see RE news for schedule of all RE classes that are being offered on-line.* This includes the weekly Tao class facilitated by Richard Demeret, which is open to all.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Who may attend?</u>
6/3	Seasoned Souls	12:00 am – 1:30 pm	Open to all
6/3	COSM	4 – 6 pm	(closed, committee only)
6/5	Evensong	7:30 – 8:30 pm	Open
6/7	Annual mtg	11:15 am	BRUU Members
6/10	BRUU Happy Hour	4 – 6 pm	Open to all
6/14	Finance Cmte mtg	11:30 am – 1 pm	Open
6/17	Grief Support	11:30 am – 1 pm	Open to all
6/21	Program Council mtg	11:30 am – 1 pm	Open
6/25	Board mtg	6:30 – 9:00 pm	Open

To participate in an “open” or “open to all” BRUU Zoom offering: if you haven’t already done so, download the free Zoom app at <https://zoom.us> (go to “Download the Zoom Client in the top right under “Resources”) OR go to your smart phone or tablet’s App Store and download to app for iPhone, iPad, Mac or Android.

To join a meeting, enter the BRUU meeting ID and password using the appropriate link (audio and video) or phone number (audio only):

- Computer, tablet, smart phone: <https://zoom.us/j/8487866672>
- Regular phone: dial 646-558-8656. When prompted, enter the BRUU meeting ID number – 848 786 6672

We are using security measures to limit access; you’ll need to request the password.

## June 2020 Sermon Descriptions

**June 7:** *Flower Communion* (Rev. Charlotte) – Our traditional flower communion only it will be done on-line. We recognize new members, note membership milestones, and express appreciation for our RE teachers. The congregation's annual meeting follows immediately after the service ends. Find more information and details on how to participate elsewhere in the Crossroads newsletter and in Round-Up.



**June 14:** *Music Sunday* (Annease Hastings) – Our end of year music service but held on-line. The same great talents but different format.

**June 21:** *TBD* (pulpit guest/Worship Committee) –

**June 28:** *UUA All-Virtual General Assembly Sunday Worship* (Worship Committee) – Rev. Joan Javier-Duval preaching. The worship service will include a collection for the Tomaquag Museum, an indigenous museum featuring an extensive collection and archive of Southern New England tribal communities (<https://www.tomaquagmuseum.org/>).

Rev. Javier-Duval serves as Minister of the Unitarian Church of Montpelier, VT. She is the daughter of immigrants from the Philippines, mother of a kindergartener, and spouse of a proud Vermonter. Beauty, gratitude, and love are at the heart of her faithful striving for collective liberation and a thriving planet.

## Board Action Report May 28, 2020

Present: Rev. Charlotte, O. Davies, T. McClure, A. Muirhead, M. Cole Luman, R. Freed, P. Malarkey, S. Kehoe, C. Sexton. Absent: None.

Non-Board Members: Cathy Ring, Martha Muirhead, Gretchen Almstead, Tom Cook, Rita Romano, Deborah Buckingham, Tony Main, Faye Sledge.

### COSM Annual Report

The Committee on Shared Ministry (COSM) presented its annual report to the Board. COSM held cottage meetings, wore ribbons on their nametags to invite conversation, put articles in the newsletter, spoke at Town Halls, and created metrics for assessing all different aspects of BRUU involvement. They looked at statistics on attendance at church services, RE, and ALE. They evaluated Rev. Charlotte as part of her preliminary fellowship. COSM created a self-evaluation tool and a vision statement. COSM interviewed Michelle Cole Luman in relation to the Young Adult group, who rejuvenated that group last Fall, met with immediate past president Art Muirhead, and met several times with Star Muir to discuss communications. COSM enlisted Twila Johnson's expertise as well.

This church year, the COSM focused on Communications at the Board's request. COSM soon realized that communications was a common thread in all of BRUU's activities. Three areas arose across various activities of the church: documentation of policies and procedures, external advertising, and attracting and maintaining members of the congregation. COSM is also interested in gathering demographic data to improve BRUU's diversity.

COSM also met with the Program Council about what would be the ideal Communications Committee. From that, COSM encouraged committee chairs to do their own self-assessment. COSM recognizes it has a long way to go to capture all of BRUU's institutional knowledge.

COSM is leaning toward picking another area for next year to concentrate on: Congregational attraction and retention. This will work with a CoCo sub team on publicizing. The Board and COSM discussed how to gather data, and which data should be gathered. How will the pandemic affect how we do things? How do we "keep the content coming" not only with live content but also things that are archived? How do we create a sense of community with people who have never set foot in our building? Rev. Charlotte reports receiving contacts from people since the COVID-19 shut-down.

### When will we know when it's time to reopen?

There's no ability to put a significant percentage into the building with social distancing. We have a large percentage of high-risk people. Phase 1 for religious institutions under the Governor's orders allows 50% of the nominal capacity, which may be much more than can be accommodated with six-foot distancing and it doesn't jibe with CDC guidance. The Governor's guidance does recommend a health coordinator or health equity team. Reading the Governor's Phase 1 guidance together, the Board was struck by how difficult it would be to do church. (continued page 7)

(Board Report, continued from page 6)

The Board discussed drive-up church, Zoom services (Zoom fatigue is real), small groups doing Zoom, and other creative opportunities. We are all grieving the loss of our normal worship and coffee hours. For now, we're planning to be on Zoom through June, but we're concerned about people who don't have good Internet access. Martin invited members and friends to contribute ideas to any Board members and to contact BRUU if they do not have good Internet access, so we can bring those ideas to the Board.

Cleaning of the building is also a concern, not only logistically but also in terms of budget.

For future planning, we considered various timeframes to consider: the fall, the end of calendar year 2020, and through May 2021 (which is the UUA's suggestion). We recognize the desire to get back into the building but that will not be possible soon in the prevailing climate of uncertainty about public health risk.

**Randy Freed moved that we maintain our current building access for the foreseeable future (closed except for essential functions), that the Board reevaluate this policy at our August meeting, and that we communicate this position to the congregation. Chris Sexton seconded. Passed on voice vote.**

#### Leadership Development Team's Future

There is a grant involved with two steps of \$10,000 each. Cathy Ring suggested that the deadline may need to be extended. The Board referred this matter to the LDT to inform the Board how much they've spent out of the first grant, where they are with regard to their program, and what their new leadership structure will be. **Cathy Ring is to follow up with LDT.**

#### Capital Campaign

Electronic outreach is going to cost some money. We don't have enough information at this point, before the Vision Statement action at the annual meeting. The Board put this matter off to the June meeting. We should maintain contact with our potential consultant; **Art will touch base with Heather Berthold regarding this matter.**

The Board will conduct a dry run of the annual meeting at 4:00 Sunday May 31. Email [president@bruu.org](mailto:president@bruu.org) if you'd like to participate.

#### Unstructured Discussion

Randy reported: Matt Brauer is interested in putting tables outside for dining. Needs to be safe and not interfere with Food Pantry. **Randy to remain in contact with Matt.**

New City Fellowship (NCF): Randy pinged them last month, and NCF felt it was still planning to leave. **Randy will inform them of the Board decision.**



## NOTES FROM ANNEASE

We offer 2 music services this month. Join us on June 5 at 7:30 for evensong "Creating a better future." The adult choir will offer a music service on June 14 "songs for the seasons of life." Please check round- up for invitations

Annease Hastings, Music Director



### **BRUU Reverend Emeritus Greg Ward Candidate for Settled Ministry in California!**

A great big round of socially distant applause for [our former Interim Minister, Rev. Greg Ward](#), who was recently selected as the candidate for settled ministry at the [Mission Peak Unitarian Universalist Congregation](#) (MPUUC) in Fremont, CA  
Congratulations and all good things Rev. Greg!!

## President's Column: Annual Meeting Vote on Vision Statement for BRUU

Q: What are we voting on?

A: We're voting on a Vision Statement to guide our church over the next few years.

Q: What will we do with the Vision Statement?

A: The Board and committees will turn the Vision Statement into concrete action through policies and strategies.

Q: How did we get the candidate Vision Statements?

A: The Vision Team started with World Cafes, distilled our ideas down to some vision statements, considered feedback from the congregation, and recently put them forward for ranked choice voting.

Q: How many Vision Statements are we voting on?

A: We're going to have either one Vision Statement at the end of the process or no Vision Statement at all.

Q: How many candidate Vision Statements are we going to consider?

A: We are going to consider, one at a time, two candidate Vision Statements: the Vision Statement that wins the ranked choice voting contest, and the runner up.

Q: How will the vote happen?

A: First we'll vote on the Vision Statement that won the ranked choice voting. If it wins a majority, that'll be our Vision Statement for BRUU. If it fails, we'll vote on the runner up. If it wins a majority vote, then that'll be our vision statement for BRUU.

Q: Will we be able to make amendments from the floor?

A: Yes, members will be able to propose amendments from the floor. We ask that you type up the proposed amendment, clearly showing the deleted language and added language, before the meeting, and provide it to the President and Secretary so we can display it to members during the voting. If an amendment passes, we will then vote on the Vision Statement as amended. Note: Amendments must comply with Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, which governs our meetings.

Q: What if the Vision Statement as approved needs some minor editing to clarify its intent without changing its substance?

A: The Board can make minor adjustments to that effect, so please don't offer an amendment that changes "the" to "that" (for instance).

Q: Can we offer "friendly amendments"?

A: No. Once an amendment is made and seconded, it belongs to the body as a whole and can only be modified by further motion to amend.

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Q: What happens if the Congregation does not adopt any Vision Statement?

A: If that happens, then the Board will take up the matter at a future meeting. The Board's options will include referring the matter back to the existing committee (if it's willing to take that on), constituting a new committee to work on it, and deferring action to a later date.

Q: What if I have a question you didn't answer?

A: Please contact the president at [president@bruu.org](mailto:president@bruu.org) and/or the parliamentarian at [bpace@erols.com](mailto:bpace@erols.com).

## FROM THE DRE...

Wow! Religious Education Teachers, Parents and the Children & Youth made an amazing shift these last two months with great success. We were able to continue our connections with each other and our individual faith exploration with relatively little hiccups thanks to everyone's dedication, flexibility and patience. That last one (patience) especially for navigating the extra security measures taken for RE zoom meetings.

We end the RE year with our congratulations to graduating Senior Ian Tisler, and the Coming of Age youth. All of their statements from the Bridging Service will be available in a booklet soon. Excerpts from that service appear in this newsletter. Make sure you attend the Flower Communion Service on June 7 to recognize the RE Teachers and Mentors that have been leading the children and youth all year long.

While my Wholehearted Wish is to hold RE classes in person this fall, I do not have any answers at this time. Please know that we will make decisions about reconvening small groups slowly and deliberately. Classrooms or other spaces will only be used once the necessary cleaning procedures have been taken. The "rules" for being together will be established under the guidance of public health officials and will err on the side of caution. In the meantime, like all my professional peers, I am exploring how to adjust the planned program to stay safe and fulfill all our needs.

While RE normally takes a break for the summer, our Amazing Teachers will continue to be available on this schedule:

**Explorers:** Will zoom monthly Sundays June 28, July 26, August 23 at 3:30 pm. Explorers will receive packages of activities that families can do on their own time. Packages will include ways younger elementary children can experience & practice the principles; with projects to interact with their classmates and teachers. We'll show and tell during our zoom gatherings, as well as share our joys and concerns.

**Questers:** Will zoom bi-monthly Sundays June 14, June 28, July 12, July 26, August 9, August 23 at 2:00 pm. Every other week the Questers will come together to create! We will share fellowship and work on crafts & active projects in real time together.

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**Seekers:** Will zoom bi-monthly Sundays June 14, June 28, July 12, July 26, August 9, August 23 at 1:00 pm. The Seekers will co-create their summer based on the interests, skills and initiative taken by the participants. We will always check in. Other content might be a craft project, movie discussion, question of the day, who knows? Come ready to share!

**Senior Youth:** Will zoom bi-monthly Sundays June 21, July 5, July 19, August 2, August 16 at 1:00 pm. Generally, our meetings will be to check in, support each other and have some fun. Rising 9<sup>th</sup> graders will be sent zoom invitations to join us.

All currently registered children and youth will be given zoom links to the above group sessions. If you are not receiving the correct log in information, contact Kristin at [dre@bruu.org](mailto:dre@bruu.org).

**OWL (Our Whole Lives):**

OWL classes for grades 4-6 and 7-9 had to abruptly end with the physical closing. For safety and privacy, OWL will not be held on zoom. A Parent/Child zoom meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 30 at 6:30 pm to update participants on our plans to keep everyone feeling supported until we can meet again in person. This will include parent education opportunities and anonymous check ins for youth.

The OWL K-1 program was being offered during Sunday morning RE, and we will re-start the curriculum when we meet again in person. Our Adult OWL classes had to end, too, but know that they will return. Only current participants in these OWL groups will be given the zoom links to group sessions regarding OWL. Contact Kristin at [dre@bruu.org](mailto:dre@bruu.org) if you believe there is an error.

**ALE (Adult Life Enrichment):** Our Spring session is up and running on Zoom! Please see the website for course offerings and how to attend.

## Excerpts from Bridging:

I play piano and violin and have an interest in historical aircraft and the preservation of these aircraft. I really want to be a curator or at least work at an aircraft museum in the future.

My family and I started attending BRUU in 2006. We attended BRUU for the next few years, and while there, I became friends with many kids my age, and while I don't remember much of anything from my time here, I just have this feeling of acceptance.

Let me tell you where I see myself in the future; If I could jump forward ten years I would like to be working as a curator in a museum for aircraft. I so far have no plan on how to get to this objective, especially due to how this pandemic has thrown everything into disarray with school ending abruptly. So as of right now my future is uncertain.

- Ian Tisler

I believe that we need to forgive. At some time in your life, someone has done something to offend you or hurt you. You have every right to be upset. But don't keep a grudge. Hate only brings us down. Forgiving is sometimes very hard, but it's the right thing.

I believe that it's okay to not have it all figured out. Plenty of adults I've talked to found what they believed in much later, or are still searching for truth.

- Alexandra Davies

My biggest job right now is to figure out who I want to become. To do that I have to pinpoint my biggest belief which is that everyone deserves to be accepted no matter their background or where they have been. The next step is to figure out my values. I call them my tools.

- India Stephenson

Being a UU has taught me no matter what a person's race, religion, or sexuality is, it doesn't make them a bad person. It just means that they are human, and that every human is different.

I don't find myself introducing my friends to other people by saying, "Here is my Muslim friend so and so, or here is my Jewish friend so and so." I just introduce my friends as my friends.

- Ally Kroon

I do try to live the seven principles, but after that, where am I to look for direction? I just really listen to myself, or ... my Inner Compass. The inner compass comes to me as a voice. Some others have this voice, you may call it god or your spiritual guide or other names but mine comes in the form of me. I imagine the other me as the better version or the version of myself that I want to become.

- Greenley Stobo

To be present in every living moment is my definition of happiness, being here, now, and enjoying the small things in life. If I don't enjoy the small things, then most of my life will be wasted. Opening your window, to feel the fresh cool breeze in your room, and appreciating a deep comfortable sleep that makes you wake up with a smile on your face.

- Delenn Main

The water cycle, much like the circle of life, is ever-flowing, and always changing. The evaporation of water allows water to form and fall again elsewhere, just as the death of one organism allows for the creation and life of another. This also means every step of every circle is important, and each being has a purpose in the world and circle.

- Anna Stewart

... Even though I may not believe in your divine, I still think they have power, simply because (you) believe in them. I believe it is important to respect each other and our gods and goddesses. I think you can believe in science, and scientific method and facts, and still practice honoring Persephone's trip to the underworld and her metamorphosis from the spring maiden to queen of the underworld.

- Hope Djinn

## Resources to Address and Prevent Elder Abuse

The social isolation necessary for containing the spread of COVID-19 during this global health crisis results in disproportionate impacts on older adults and communities of color. We know that isolation is a risk factor and weapon of abuse. We have heard about the rise in domestic violence that occurred with state-mandated stay-at-home/shelter-in-place orders. Elder abuse is on the rise.

The **Manassas Department of Social Services** notes that, ...older victims are 3 times more likely to die prematurely than those who are not abused. Older adults are most likely to be abused by someone they know and trust, such as family or a caregiver. ...When family, ombudsman, and others cannot visit facilities, neglect and abuse of residents may increase. And the worsening economic crisis may increase financial exploitation as family members and others take advantage of increasingly isolated older adults and stranger scams offer fake cures. Opportunities to reach out for help decrease as isolation and abuse increase.

### *What can you do?*

Reach out to older family members, friends, neighbors and community members. Ask questions privately and refer to services.

Help older adults who are experiencing abuse in accessing resources when they cannot do so safely on their own.

Keep this list of resources readily available:

- National Elder Care Locator: 800-677-1116
  - Virginia Adult Protective Services Hotline: 888-832-3858
  - Long-term Care Ombudsman (<https://elderrightsva.org/>)
  - Virginia Area Agencies on Aging (<http://vaaaa.org/>)
    - Prince William Area Agency on Aging: 703-792-6374
    - (<https://www.pwcgov.org/government/dept/aaa/Pages/default.aspx>)
  - Listing of local domestic and sexual violence agencies:
    - ACTS Prince William County (<https://www.actspwc.org/services/sexual-assault>)
  - State-wide listing – ([https://www.oag.state.va.us/images/DomViolence/DV\\_VAOrganizations.pdf](https://www.oag.state.va.us/images/DomViolence/DV_VAOrganizations.pdf))
- 
- National Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-799-7233 or 800-787-3224 TTY

July Crossroads submissions of articles (no more than 400 words) or photos that relate to BRUU activities are due to [newsletter@bruu.org](mailto:newsletter@bruu.org) by midnight, June 25<sup>th</sup>.

Short submissions for the weekly Round-Up go to [communications@bruu.org](mailto:communications@bruu.org) by Tuesday midnight.

To include an announcement in the Order of Service, send to Tina at [office@bruu.org](mailto:office@bruu.org) by Tuesday midnight.