

Volume 38
Edition 3
March
2020



CROSSROADS



Bull Run Unitarian Universalists

Rev. Charlotte's Word-Weavings

Living Our Vision

This year we have been working on crafting a congregational vision statement. Those who attended the January 26th Town Hall meeting got a glimpse of what centers of energy had emerged from the three Vision Cafes held last autumn and the numerous conversations with various leaders and committee members over the first half of this winter. Since then the Vision Team – lead by Mike Cleary and including Angie Carrera, Kathy Sobrio, Laura Coates, and Tony Main – has been refining and coalescing these bright lights into a single beacon for our future as Bull Run Unitarian Universalists in Manassas. The congregation will vote on adoption of the final vision statement at the June 7th Annual Meeting.

The theme of our annual budget drive (a.k.a. annual canvass or stewardship drive) is “Living Our Vision.” The reality is that we will need to fund this vision through our annual operating budget as well as any future capital fundraising campaigns for major projects.

What does it mean to live one's vision? It means that we make the dream real. This year, we've been allowing our imaginations to freely dream what we want BRUU's purpose to be, what we want to be known for in this community. After we adopt the vision statement, we will want and need to take actions that feed the energy at the core of our vision.

(continued on page 2)

March 2020 Crossroads

(Word-Weavings, continued from page 1)

That means funding our programs – music & worship, life-span faith formation, social justice, and congregational community – so that they will thrive and continue to attract guests who will become friends and members of the congregation. Paying all of our staff fair compensation based on years of experience and the value of their contributions as well as maintaining our building and facilities are the biggest portions of financially supporting these programs.

Think about your own life and what actions and sacrifices you have made in order to live the vision you have had for your self and for your loved ones. If BRUU is important to you and your life, I hope you will afford (provide) this year's stewardship campaign a pledge that supplies the funds needed to live into our vision in 2021.

May the days ahead bring fullness of spirit and blessings beyond measure; may the beauty of the spring season stir us to share our abundance.

Rev. Charlotte

March 2020 Sermon Descriptions

March 1: *Plot Twist!* (Rev. Scot Hull) – Our lives and the way we live them are the text of our Resistance, our testament to resilience, our manifesto against cynicism and despair. Our stories are all we are. How we write them matters.

March 8: *Living Our Vision* (Rev. Charlotte) – What will it take for BRUU to live the congregational vision we have been working on this year.

March 15: *Resilience & Soul Food* (Pulpit Guest TBA)

March 22: *Margaret Fuller* (Rev. Charlotte) – Margaret Fuller (1810-50) has been called the “mother of the feminist movement.” We will explore her life and legacy.

March 29: *The Promise and the Practice* (Rev. Charlotte & Ellen Badgley) – As materials for “The Promise and the Practice” explain this worship service “is a turning moment; a choice to listen deeply to the stories in our movement that have not been heard, and taken to heart, by all Unitarian Universalists. It’s a lamenting of what our Unitarian Universalist tradition and congregations have lost by being – unable or unwilling – to center people of color (or even, at times, to merely include them) [and] ...a celebration of our shared commitment to live into a new chapter in the story of our UU faith.”

This service will include dedication of children. The 5th Sunday Special Collection will be for Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism (BLUU).



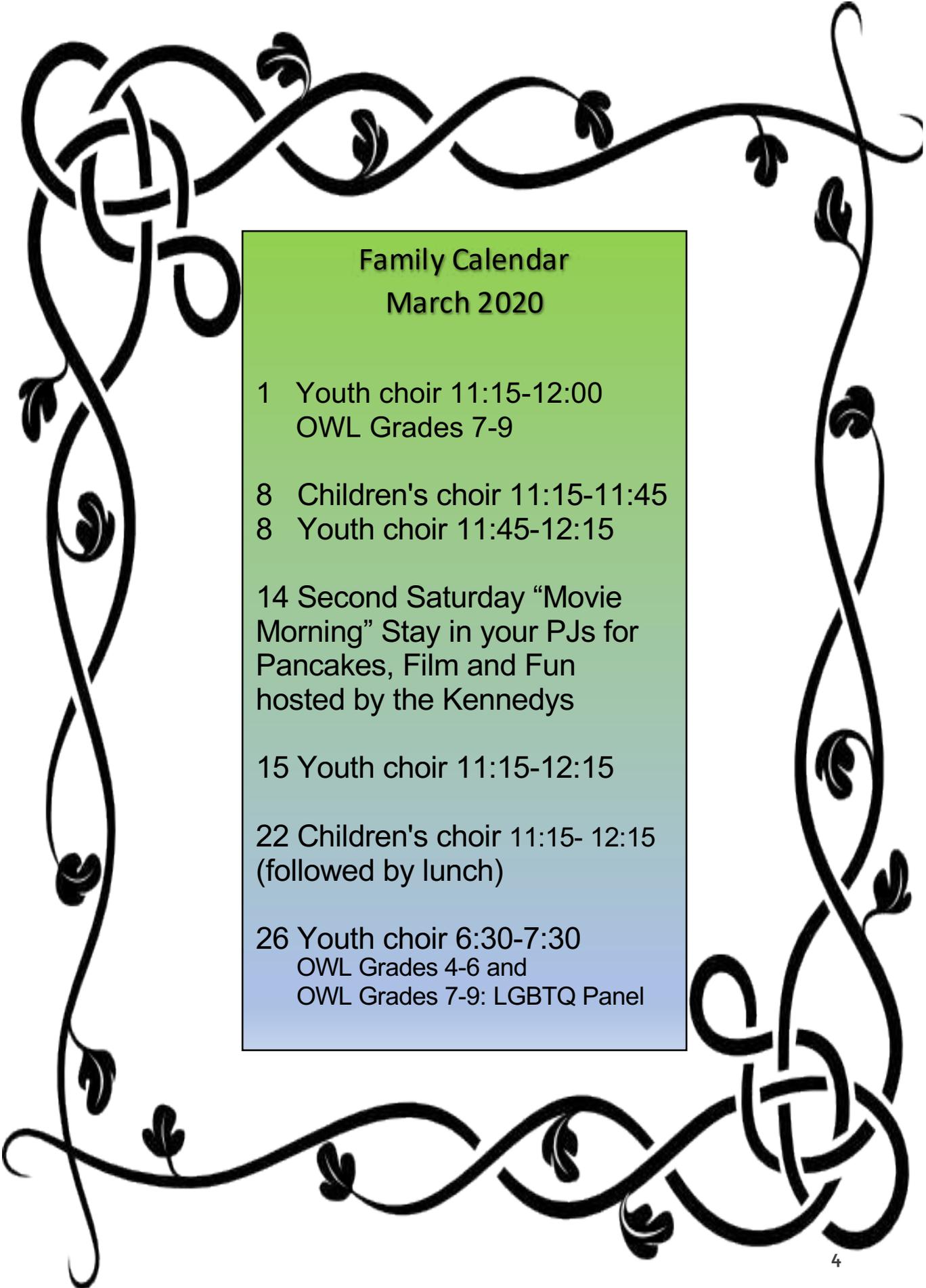
Many thanks to Jon Kostik for building this beautiful and serviceable cabinet for the kitchen hallway. Check it out when you go down to the Fellowship hall.

Society of Audacious Silver-haired Sisters

Just to let you know, BRUU has a sisterly, fun fellowship gathering that is open to mature women seeking a creative and thoughtful opportunity to be together during the day. They meet at 1:30pm on the second Monday of every month in the lower level Lounge at BRUU. Join others to go to lunch prior to the meeting, by arriving on the front steps of the main front doors (Church & Main Streets) @ Noon to walk to a nearby restaurant. First time attendees will need to get an access code to use the Admin Office door to get in the building for the meeting. Contact the Office Assistant by emailing (Office@BRUU.org) or calling 703.361.6269 a week in advance to request a security code. Bringing a finger food snack/sweet to share is optional - but always welcome! Contact Helen Elkin at OmaHelen@gmail.com for more information and/or to be put on the group email list for meeting reminders and details.



Scene from Time for All Ages during February 23rd's Youth Service on Mystery



Family Calendar
March 2020

1 Youth choir 11:15-12:00
OWL Grades 7-9

8 Children's choir 11:15-11:45
8 Youth choir 11:45-12:15

14 Second Saturday "Movie Morning" Stay in your PJs for Pancakes, Film and Fun hosted by the Kennedys

15 Youth choir 11:15-12:15

22 Children's choir 11:15- 12:15
(followed by lunch)

26 Youth choir 6:30-7:30
OWL Grades 4-6 and
OWL Grades 7-9: LGBTQ Panel



MUSIC

FROM ANNEASE

Evensong service on Feb. 7 asked us to think about what kind of legacy we want to leave and how to live our lives accordingly. Here's a word cloud depicting the legacies that those in attendance identified.

You matter!
Familial support
Leave a better world for all our children
One with all!
The value of community
Love of nature
My children, their children, their children, their children, their children, & their children
A flame of eternal light
Keep moving & learning
We are love!

Loving human kindness
the worth of each individual
You are always doing the best you can
I like you just the way you are
Love of nature
My children, their children, their children, their children, their children, & their children
A flame of eternal light
Legacy of love & light
After I die, I would like for people to say of me, "He had a lot of love in his heart, and always had a kind word for everyone he met."

A passionate, loving & honest life
Love of family
Loving & healthy earth for our children & our children's children
Love of quiet moments
A love of nature and a desire to preserve it
... that the people around me can find joy making music, no matter, if they think they're "good"

We are one!

(thanks to Beth Roemmelt for the word cloud)

Annease Hastings, Music Director

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



Living Our Vision! -- this year's Annual Pledge Drive theme

It's that time of year again – our annual Canvass Pledge Drive! As the current visioning process is giving us energy and hope in general, we expect it will do so for our Pledge Drive as well. We are growing both in numbers (18 new members since January 2019!) and in the evolution of our vision!

This year our Canvass Pledge Drive will kick off Sunday, March 8, 2020 and extend through Sunday April 5, 2020. Members and friends of BRUU will be asked to make a commitment toward the next fiscal year (July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021) operating budget. The most rewarding part of this "ask" will be one-on-one meetings between canvassers and members and friends. In addition to helping with pledging, these meetings give us a chance to build relationships, hear concerns and better understand the needs of BRUU and BRUUs.

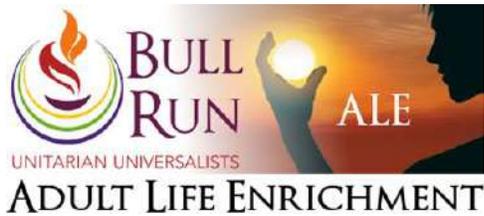
Prior to hearing from a canvasser, members and friends should receive a canvass packet either Sunday, March 8 following service, or in the mail (if you do not receive a packet, please ask!). Electronic versions of packet materials will also be available on BRUUnet (at <https://www.bruunet.org/page/canvass>).

Why do we pledge? BRUU belongs to each of us. We pledge to fund daily operations and to ensure that the church and its resources are here for us and for others now and in the future.

What is the money used for? Pledge and other revenue sources (rentals/leases, fundraising, and donations/offertory) allow us to “keep the lights on,” maintain and make repairs to our 100-year-old building, compensate our staff (minister, administrative assistant, music director, and director of religious education), support our worship, music, and religious education programs, BRUU community programs, community outreach, social justice and connections to Unitarian Universalism. Our budget reflects our mission and vision. Financial details are posted on BRUUnet.

How much should I pledge? Plan to contribute a percentage of your annual income. Fair Share Giving Guidelines (included with the canvass packet) suggest what you might give. Note that the average annual pledge needed to “keep the lights on,” etc. in FY20-21 is estimated to be about \$2,700. Also note that we will NOT be doing a 2nd call as we have in the past, so please “max out” your pledge now as much as you can.

For more information, please contact our canvass team at canvass@bruu.org .



The NEW UU Newcomers and Old Timers discuss UUism
Sunday, March 1 – 15 and 29 at 11:30 AM, Conference Room

Relating Our Wired Brains to UU Principle 7 (How our brain's wiring relates to the larger web or all existence. Monday, March 2-9 and 16, 7:30 PM, Sanctuary

Let's Make 1,000 Origami Peace Cranes (Look for our table at coffee hour. Folding directions and supplies provided. Sunday, March 1 at 11:00 AM, Fellowship Hall



Come to the Amazing Saint Patrick's Day Dinner, Concert, AND Dance!

In just two weeks, on Saturday, March 14th, starting at 6 PM, we will again have the annual Saint Patrick's Day dinner. For a mere \$20 you can have a wonderful Irish dinner of either Irish stew or corned beef cabbage (vegetarian options upon request) with many sides. During and after dinner there will be live Irish music by our own BRUU musicians. After dessert we will have a dance (American music). So come drink some green beer or wine (bring your own food coloring), eat wonderful home cooked food, listen to great music and dance! Childcare is available upon request and children under 12 cost only \$5. To get your tickets go to BRUU.org and click on the event or buy your tickets in the Fellowship Hall after the service. Get them soon because the price goes up on March 12th. If money will keep you from attending, see us for other ways to defer the price—this is true for all fundraising events. See Dorothy Greenhouse or Christine Sunda for more details.

UPCOMING FUNDRAISING EVENTS:

April 18th -- Mystery Dinner Theater

May 23rd -- Trett Fure Concert—she's a wonderful folk singer

Summer -- Yard Sale, date TBD

October 3rd -- Roy Zimmerman Concert—original political satirist music

October 17th -- Second annual Oktoberfest

December 4th-6th -- Annual Craft Fair

Just As Long As I Have Breath

Getting Crowded Around Here...

Have you noticed that the sanctuary is getting pretty full every Sunday? If you don't get there early, you may have trouble finding a place to sit. It's a good problem to have, because it means that we are bringing people in week after week, many of whom have decided to make the commitment to be a part of our community.

We've been here before, and looked at all the possibilities, but we're a different group now and the circumstances have changed, so it's time to look at the possibilities again. I'll be blunt: My preference is to share the good news of Unitarian Universalism with as many people as are ready to hear it. That means making people feel welcome in BRUU when they come in, even if they're a few minutes late to the service. We don't want people to look around, decide there's no place to sit, and leave. Which has, unfortunately, happened.

Right now, there are things you can do to contribute to making the good news of Unitarian Universalism available to as many people as possible, just by where you sit on Sunday morning. If you can climb stairs easily, please consider sitting in the balcony. If you feel comfortable doing so, sit up in the front row, which are really the best seats in the house. If you sit in the middle set of rows, please move to the middle of the pew so people can come in and find a place to sit on the end. If you have to sit at the end (due to choir or another role in the service), please stand up to let people move to the middle rather than have them move past you--these pews are closer together than movie seats.

Regardless of where you sit, please hang your coat up downstairs, where we now have a coat rack as well as hooks. If you are sitting with family, try to make your group compact. If you're going to be leaving to teach RE, take a less desirable seat, or stand at the back of the sanctuary with me.

Our tagline is "A Safe Community for Seeking and Service." Think about who the community is safe for. Is it just for you, the people reading this column, or is it also safe for people who haven't even found us yet, but will find the courage to walk through our doors someday soon? To ask the question is to answer it.

Martin Crim, President, BRUU Board of Directors

Come On In

Your Usher team would like to ask everyone to Enter, Rejoice, & Come Into the Sanctuary - and make space for those who come after you! Please take your Order of Service and move through the doors to the Sanctuary, so there is not an unsafe build-up of folks at the top, and down the stairs, of the main foyer. In addition, the Ushers request that when you choose your seating in the Sanctuary that you move to the center of the pews, when at all possible. That way we will all be mindful, considerate, and welcoming to our visiting newcomers. That does mean attempting to leave spaces that don't require crawling over you and your family members. Options are being considered of other ways we can accommodate first time visitors and the occasional latecomers. Thanks for thinking of those who come after.

BRUU Board of Directors Meeting February 27, 2020 Report to Congregation

Randy reported that BRUU is now carbon neutral!

We have six new members: Daniel Cora, Sandra Fox, Jessica Hruska, Jerome Hruska, Brock Hudson, and Annalise Trommatter. New member total 218.

Susan Kehoe volunteered to work with the Safe Congregations Committee to update the alcohol policy. We're concerned that not all of it is being observed and that it does not cover all the things it should to protect kids from access to alcohol.

Amy Hamilton presented on the concept of a Little Free Library for outreach. The construction would be done in the Spring, located in the courtyard near the assisted lift door facing the sidewalk leading to the metal stairs, paid for out of the Byer Memorial Library funds. We looked at roughly \$650 option from the Little Free Library itself as well as a home-made alternative by Sterling Rush or Jon Kostik. We also discussed a food box from No Child Goes Hungry. One risk involved is vandalism. The Board approved expenditure from the Byer Memorial Library funds up to \$650 for the Little Free Library and to ask Amy to coordinate the No Child Goes Hungry box to be constructed by volunteers.

The Board discussed elevator options. We postponed this discussion until Vision work is done.

The Board discussed the tasks listed in the walk-through January 31 with a representative from our insurance company Church Mutual, which identified many physical issues that need to be remedied. Many of them should be put on the work day agenda.

The Board discussed the Right Relations Committee (RRC), which has not been set up. Martin's idea is to try to make peace using the Covenant and direct communication first, followed by informal discussion, and only then looking to have a mediator come in and try to work things out. The current policy says that the Committee on Shared Ministry (COSM) provides a member of the RRC, which COSM does not see as part of its role, so the policy will need to be revised. The Board discussed using Central East Region (CER) resources, which include Good Officers to support the minister and staff. The UU Ministers' Association is working on training for some right relations issues. Martin to amend policy to remove the representative of COSM and circulate it to the Board by email.

The Board discussed the January 26 Town Hall on the Vision and the five centers of energy presented there. The Board would like to see a Vision that unites the congregation and "makes a beautiful mosaic" by synthesizing the uniting ideas and principal themes gathered from the congregation. Rev. Charlotte and Martin are meeting with Mike Cleary on Sunday to discuss.

The Board discussed retaining a firm to provide bookkeeping services on contract. Randy Freed has sent out a request for proposals to seven firms and has followed up with answers to questions asked by one of the firms. Five firms do intend to bid and a sixth was interested but not until after tax time, which isn't a real option. Right now, Terrie and Trish are doing the work. The deadline is March 12, award of contract is scheduled for March 27, with start date April 1. The evaluation committee consists of Rev. Charlotte, Terrie McClure, Cathy Ring and Randy Freed. The Board approved the recommendation of Dave Hamilton, Chair of the Finance Committee, to fund the contract through the end of the fiscal year (i.e., through June 30, 2020) from the operating fund reserve, which currently stands at \$38,000. All ayes, the motion passed. Randy will circulate the selected proposal by email to the Board.

The Board discussed the good problem of having a crowded sanctuary. We could put a red velvet rope across a couple pews to reserve it for latecomers. Martin to look into acquiring such an item. Watch for further communication on this. We will also look at live-streaming to the Fellowship Hall on a regular basis, which will require additional volunteers for A/V, chair set-up and break-down. We also discussed more permanent solutions. The Worship Committee enthusiastically took on this project, which may also allow live-streaming via the Interwebs.

Randy Freed presented on revised leases for the two music studios and escalating rent plans. The translucent glass in the Sexton studio door will be replaced. The Muzzin studio lease will also include a third-floor room. Both leases will be rewritten with escalated rents and 3% escalators per year going forward. Prior escalators were not applied to the leases, but the Board agreed not to pursue the difference that should have been billed and collected in past years. Rental rates for other leases will increase by 3% per year rounded up starting from July 1, 2020.

The Board is putting an auction item, the Smorgas Board, on March 21 for about 40 people. Randy will be absent. Martin is bringing a cheese board. Michelle will make a dessert board. Owen will make a protein board. Terrie will do beverages. Susan and Martin will contribute adult beverages. Susan will provide breads and crackers. Pat will bring appetizers.

Randy Freed reported the Endowment Committee's action to move its investments to the UU Common Endowment Fund (UUcef.org). The Endowment Committee has \$421,000 invested. UUCEF invests in a socially responsible way and has a portfolio that is slightly more heavily weighted toward stocks (60% stocks/ 40% bonds) than the portfolio previously chosen by the Endowment Committee (50% stocks/ 50% bonds).

A higher speed modem is being installed at BRUU! See if the WiFi is better.

Michelle will establish a perpetual calendar for insurance renewals, lease terms and such.

BRUU Goes Carbon-Neutral!

BRUU has been a Green Sanctuary since 2005, when we completed a series of tasks required by the Unitarian Universalist Association to earn that designation. Led by our Green Team, we've been working ever since to reduce our environmental footprint, and to raise awareness among our members and friends of what each of us can do to honor UU's seventh principle, *Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part*. In many ways, climate change is the biggest threat to the interdependent web. It's also an enormous social justice problem – the risks are disproportionately borne by the world's poor, and we're leaving a much less hospitable world for future generations.

Because carbon emissions from energy use are the primary cause of climate change, we've been on a multiyear journey to improve our energy efficiency and reduce our carbon footprint. We commissioned an energy audit in 2016, and – thanks largely to the efforts of Mike Freeland, John and Christine Sunda, and others – we've been implementing the main recommendations of the audit. As a result, we're using more efficient lighting, we've installed insulation, we're in the process of replacing the least efficient elements of our HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) system, and we've tested many other measures to cut down our consumption of electricity, fuel oil, and natural gas.

March 2020 Crossroads

Despite those measures, we still have a significant carbon footprint. Using a carbon calculator (<https://www.terrapass.com/carbon-footprint-calculator>) and information on BRUU's energy consumption, we determined that we're responsible for emissions of about 60 metric tons of carbon per year. We'll continue doing what we can to reduce our energy consumption, so we can make our carbon footprint smaller.

But meanwhile, there is a way for us to go carbon neutral, that is, to "zero out" our carbon footprint: we can purchase carbon offsets. Emission reduction projects – like capturing greenhouse gases that would otherwise be emitted to the atmosphere, or generating electricity from clean energy (e.g., wind) and thereby reducing the use of fossil fuels – generate 1 offset for every ton of carbon they reduce. The offsets are sold on a market (after they're certified to make sure that there really is an emission reduction). In effect, an individual or organization that wants to reduce their carbon footprint can buy emission reductions from these projects; this makes the projects financially viable and reduces the total carbon emissions going into the earth's atmosphere.

BRUU has bought 60 metric tons of offsets from an offset broker (Terrapass) at a price of \$660, so we're now officially carbon-neutral! The money for the offsets came from your purchases of coffee and chocolate at the Green Team table in the fellowship hall after our services, so thanks for making this possible! By going carbon-neutral, we're doing our part to slow the pace of climate change. And we're demonstrating an approach that can easily be used by our members and friends at the household level to go carbon-neutral. We'll talk about this at the upcoming Green Team service on April 26, and we plan to have a short A.L.E. class immediately after the service to demonstrate how to use a carbon calculator. Meanwhile, if you have questions, please talk to Randy Freed or Larry Underwood.

March 2020

3/01	Crane Making., 11 A The Last Dream film discussion, 11 A The New UU, 11:30 A	3/16	7 th Principle ALE, 7 P
3/02	7 th Principle ALE, 7 P	3/17	UupBeats, 12:45 P
3/03	UupBeats, 12:45 P	3/18	Tao Te Ching, 10:45 A Grief Support, noon
3/04	Tao Te Ching, 10:45 A Seasoned Souls, noon	3/19	Pastoral Care, 3 P Master Naturalists, 6:30 P
3/05	Master Naturalists, 7 P	3/20	USDA Food Pantry
3/09	Finance Committee 11:15 A BRIC, 11:30 A RE Committee, 11:30 A	3/22	Membership Committee, 11:15 A RE Committee, 11:30 A
3/09	SASS, 1:30 P 7 th Principle ALE, 7 P	3/23	Adult OWL, 6:30 P
3/10	Food Pantry, 9:30 A	3/24	Food Pantry, 9:30 A
3/11	Tao Te Ching, 10:45 A	3/25	Tao Te Ching ALE, 10:45 A Moms Demand Action 6:15 P
3/12	Worship Committee, 7 P	3/26	Board Meeting, 7 P Master Naturalists, 7 P
3/14	St. Patrick's dinner dance 6 P Mental Health Training, 9 A	3/28	Safe Congregations, 9 A
3/15	Soup Sunday, 11 A Program Council, 11:30 A New UU Class, 11:30 A	3/29	Town Hall, 11 A New UU, 11 A

******Save the date****
friends and family**

**PASSOVER SEDER
Friday April 10 7:00 PM sharp
BRUU fellowship hall**

The most celebrated and beloved of the Jewish rituals for all ages, the seder will include reading from a haggadah, stories, songs, and a fantastic dinner of specifically designated traditional Jewish foods. Passover marks the escape of the enslaved Israelites from Egypt to freedom and reminds of us of the potential for a just and peaceful world. This is great reinforcement of our religious education curriculum!!

Gefilte fish, tzimmes, charoset, kugel, and matzah... a fancy table is set per person so **RSVP is a must**. There are a few rules such as no unleavened bread and 4 mandatory glasses of wine (grape juice for the kids)!! Witness your BRUUers show off their Hebrew.

Call or email Nina Lomax for reservations and Jewish questions at
571-247-2811 or ninalomax@comcast.net

for your **specified food assignment**. If you can cook, take a Jewish dish. If you don't cook, you can have an easy assignment. If your dish needs heating come by 6:30-6:45.

Last Chance – Master Naturalists 2020 at BRUU

The 2020 class to train a new batch of Master Naturalists is scheduled to start on April 18, and end in early September. We are short, at the moment, of the minimum number of participants to hold this year's training. If you're interested, now is the time to sign up. Talk to Lois Montgomery, Randy Freed, or Charlie Grymes if you need more info.

Indoor training sessions are typically held on Thursday evenings at BRUU. Most time is spent outdoors on weekends looking at plants, rocks, streams, bugs, birds... you name it, we explore it. Classes are fun and entertaining, while everyone gets dangerously smart about the natural world around us.

The model is the Master Gardener program. To become a certified Master Naturalist, you must attend at least 40 hours of training and then complete 40 hours of volunteer work in the next year. The Virginia Master Naturalist program is sponsored by seven Virginia agencies that deal with natural resources management, and locally run by the Merrimac Farm Chapter. For details and to sign up, see <https://merrimacfarmvmn.wixsite.com/mysite>

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

Short submissions for the weekly Round-Up go to communications@bruu.org by Tuesday midnight.