

Volume 37
Edition 11
November
2019



CROSSROADS



Bull Run Unitarian
Universalists

Rev. Charlotte's Word-Weavings

Fall Harvests

The change of seasons is, at long last, in evidence as summer heat has been replaced by cooler days and cooler nights. There is freshness in the air - a pause between the use of air-conditioning and heating systems allows for open windows during the day, and the final blooming of fall flowers and harvest of late fruits and vegetables invites us to enjoy the outdoors.

Autumn is a good time to take stock, to reflect on our lives, express gratitude and begin dreaming and planning for the future. The vision cafés are all about harvesting the experiences of the past and dreaming BRUU's future.

During November we'll celebrate the lessons and blessings in challenging times, the bounty of creation, and the gifts we share in this beloved community. We'll do this through Sunday worship services, during our learning and faith formation offerings, and in the Vision Cafés (part of our year-long visioning process).

Not to be missed this month is a visit by Rev. Mark Kiyimba, a UU minister and leader in the fight for LGBT rights in Uganda. He will be at BRUU during the weekend of November 9-10. Look for more details elsewhere in this newsletter.

I am **looking for people to help** with the multigenerational Harvest Communion worship service on November 24th. I'd love to have some additional service participants to do readings, and of course we need people to contribute cornbread (gluten and gluten-free) and cider for the communion. Please get in touch with me via minister@bruu.org or the Worship Committee at worship@bruu.org.

(cont. page 2)

November 2019 Crossroads

There are so many ways to be involved and to share our resources with the people in this community. I am grateful for each of you and your contributions to BRUU's congregational life. I am grateful to be with you and among you as your minister doing this work.

May your days and nights be blessed,
Rev. Charlotte

Help needed for Harvest Communion on Sunday, November 24th:

Contributions of cornbread – Gluten-Free and traditional recipes – and apple cider for the communion portion are needed for this multigenerational worship service on the Sunday before Thanksgiving. We will be exploring gratitude practices, including the Cider and Cornbread Communion. If you can provide cider or cornbread or help with serving them during the service, please contact Rev. Charlotte (minister@bruu.org).

November 2019 Sermon Descriptions

November 3: *Finding Pennies in the Dark* (Rev. Charlotte) – I have a talent for spotting coins hidden in the soil or the darkness of night, which is suggestive of the paradox of finding the silver lining in challenging situations. As Parker Palmer says in a meditation on “Autumn,” our preference for either-or thinking makes difficult holding opposites together in the complexities of paradox. What is more, it denies the opportunity for growth and change. During this service we will explore how healing it can be to bring opposites together into wholeness.

November 10: *The Importance of Our Unitarian Universalist Faith*, (Rev. Mark Kiyimba). Rev. Kiyimba will preach about his work, and the importance of our UU faith in the mission to affirm the worth and dignity of all people in Uganda. (See below, and continuation on page 3 for more detail about our guest).

November 17: *Surviving the Holidays* (Pastoral Care Team) – The Pastoral Care Team offers reflections and strategies for coping with the myriad of feelings any of us might experience during the winter holiday season.

November 24: *Harvest Communion* (Rev. Charlotte) – We will explore the abundance of gratitude practices and their benefits during this multigenerational worship service, as well as celebrate and give thanks for the bounty of blessings and nourishment we receive from Creation.

Mark Your Calendars for Nov 9-10: Side with Love with Rev. Mark Kiyimba, UU Minister and LGBT Activist from Uganda!

We are thrilled to announce that we will be welcoming a very special pulpit guest to BRUU on the weekend of November 9-10: Reverend Mark Kiyimba, founder and leader of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Kampala, Uganda.

Rev. Kiyimba has been a vocal opponent of Uganda's (newly revived) Anti-Homosexuality Bill. He has traveled extensively throughout the US raising awareness of this issue, including how American evangelical churches are spreading anti-LGBTQ+ intolerance in Uganda and elsewhere.

In 2010, he organized a conference in Kampala called “Standing on the Side of Love: Reimagining Valentine’s Day.” In 2012, the National Education Association awarded him its Virginia Uribe Award for Creative Leadership in Human Rights. His church also runs an orphanage and a school for children infected with HIV/AIDS and who have lost parents to the disease. You can learn more about Rev. Kiyimba here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5mEjhjhtqk>

(Read More about Rev. Kiyimba on Page 3)

We will be hosting Rev. Kiyimba for two exciting events:

- On **Saturday, November 9**, join Rev. Kiyimba at BRUU from 10 AM - 12 PM for a screening of the documentary "God Loves Uganda", an eye-opening look on how American evangelical churches and missionaries have been complicit in promoting religious bigotry that threatens the lives of LGBTQ+ Africans. The film will be followed by a discussion and a lunch outing for interested participants. Please contact us if childcare is needed.

- On **Sunday, November 10, The Importance of Our Unitarian Universalist Faith** Rev. Mark Kiyimba. Rev. Kiyimba will preach about his work, and the importance of our UU faith in the mission to affirm the worth and dignity of all people in Uganda.

As of October 23, 2019, **we are still looking for Home Hospitality** for Rev. Kiyimba **Friday Nov 8 - Monday Nov 11**. We are still looking for someone to host Rev. Kiyimba for 3 nights, from Friday (when he arrives from NYC) to Monday (when he departs out of Dulles). Stay tuned to RoundUp for announcements about Transportation Help Wanted for the weekend. Let's show Rev. Kiyimba some real BRUU hospitality!

BRUU Saturday Morning Breakfast

By
Peter Smolens

Although there are many committees at BRUU that meeting regularly, there is one weekly meeting that is not a committee. It's just a group of BRUU members that get together every Saturday morning at Great American Buffet for good food and interesting conversation/discussions.

According to one of the original members, Ed Davis, there is no official name that is commonly known to the regulars as the Saturday Morning Breakfast, it's always been a casual affair. It started when a couple of BRUU members decided to have coffee after a weekly meeting. From simple beginnings, the group got bigger and moved to breakfast on Saturday morning. Great American Buffet was selected for central location (Rt. 234 across from Manassas Mall) and the multiple choices of food.

Although the made to order omelets are to die for, and enough of a reason for me to be a regular, there is a large salad bar. However, eating is not a requirement for joining in on the conversations. If all you want is a cup of coffee (with unlimited refills), the conversation goes on before and while we're eating. These conversations touch on all areas. From politics (of course), BRUU activities, life, and the environment, all the way to Star Muir reading items of the "News of the Weird" newspaper. It's amazing what happens to people in this world, and this newspaper seems to find it!

Although there is misperception the Saturday Morning Breakfast is a men's only group, everyone is welcome. Women are always welcome. Jesse often brings her father, Jim Thompson. She stays for a cup of coffee then goes grocery shopping. Coming back, she has another coffee before taking her father home. My wife, Linda, is always invited and has joined me a few times. Reverend Charlotte made an appearance during "Candidating Week" in June 2018 (sorry, I missed that Saturday) and is always welcome.

Be a regular attendee or casual guest, come, enjoy the food and conversation. If you're not careful, you might even learn a thing or two!

HUGE CRAFT SHOW AGAIN THIS YEAR

The Craft Show is back for a seventh year! On Friday, December 6th through Sunday, December 8th, we are again having a craft show in the Fellowship Hall! New this year we are adding Friday evening to take advantage of the Historic Manassas "First Friday". Come to town to see the lighting of the tree and see Santa, then shop with us! Saturday is the large holiday parade that goes along Center Street, so again, come and see the parade and shop at the craft fair! Lastly, on Sunday we will be open after the service for your shopping convenience. The fair is free so please encourage your friends and family to come! This is a BRUU fundraising event so PLEASE come and see all the wonderful items for sale.

Back again this year is our white elephant table. You may donate upscale items that you didn't get to donate to the auction! Or if you have your own handmade crafts, we will have a 50/50 table where we will split the proceeds with you.

We are also looking for BRUUers willing to help with this event especially in setting up the white elephant table (pricing, organizing, selling etc.). In addition, we could use help with set up or break down.

If you want to sign up, donate, or have further questions, contact either Dorothy Greenhouse or Christine Sunda at sundas3@aol.com or 703-631-3291. If you are a crafter and would like to get a table, contact Michelle Sunda at sundame@gmail.com.

OUR NEXT WORKDAY NOVEMBER 16! 9:30 A- 3 P

Let's get the building in shape for both the Auction and the holiday season! (Yay Auction & holidays!). We have, as usual, light cleaning, painting, and other tasks we need done with an emphasis on the Fellowship Hall. Please come for any length of time you can. A free pizza lunch will be provided. Responsible young people are always welcome. For more information contact Christine Sunda at mac@bruu.org.

CRAFT SHOW

SPACE IS STILL AVAILABLE

Come be a part of our annual Craft Show on December 6, 7, & 8th (Fri 6-9pm & Sat/Sun 11-2pm) at BRUU in the Fellowship Hall. This is the weekend of the Manassas holiday parade that goes right by the church and a First Friday Evening where the streets are only open to pedestrians & it's the annual tree lighting!

Space is filling up, but we still have room for crafters. You can participate in all three days or just some of the days.

Prices are very reasonable. The whole weekend is only \$60 for a 6' table or \$30/day and \$15 for Friday evening! If you are interested, please contact Michelle Sunda at sundame@gmail.com.

Why the Fire Drill?

Several of you might have been in the service in May when we conducted our first ever BRUU fire drill. The Safe Congregation Committee (SCC), in the run up to the drill did an assessment of risks, prepared the building, the procedures, and most of all the congregants for the event. Radios were put in service, exit signs installed, procedures written, evacuation routes planned and posted, and awesome commitments were made by a host of people who committed to the effort.

Every day there are a number of people in the building, most often on Sundays but there are other events as well. No plan works if there are no people there to activate it. So, the first item on the agenda was to get commitment from SCC, Worship, and Fellowship as well as the RE program, because those folks will be in the building.

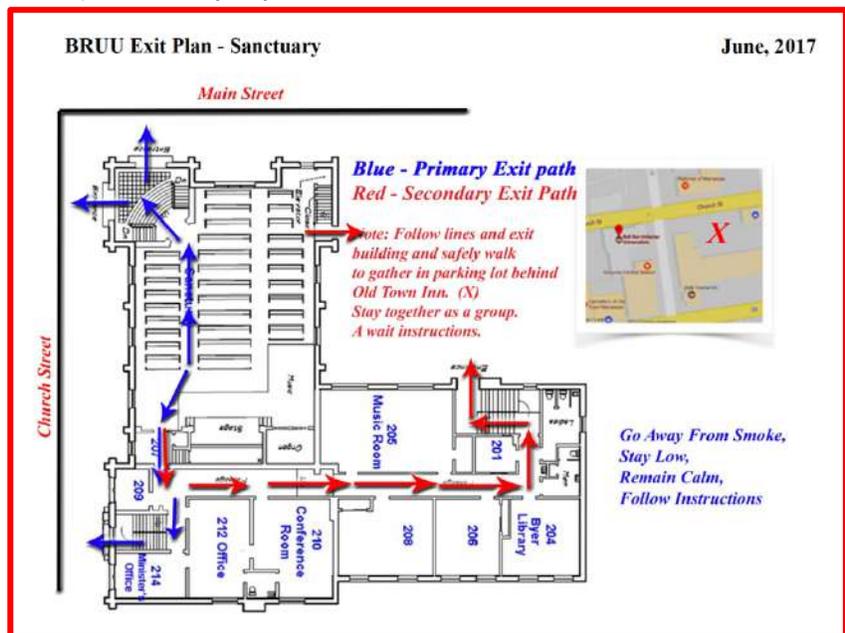
The drill was planned and took place, largely as designed, but the most

successful part of the drill was the identification of problems and the implementation of improvements. Priorities were given to the most vulnerable in our community, the young and the old, and shaped our reactions to identified issues.

There were some communications issues with the RE evacuation and a critical issue was identified with one exit door. A door that would be the main exit from the sanctuary, the top floor and the Fellowship Hall (the "Office" entrance/exit on Church Street) was a real problem. One of the two doors in that exit were bolted to the door frame. Not often used, the latch was even a struggle for me to open, but in an emergency, the second door would probably not be open and there would be a bottleneck as the people capacity of the building is based on the width of the exit door opening. That bottleneck would be especially problematic if someone tripped and others piled up behind them. Thanks to the Facilities Manager (Mike), the most awesome Christine Sunda and the MAC group, money was found, and John Sunda and crew found and installed the hardware on September 28.

The picture here has the magic bar (AKA panic hardware) that will open when pushed (green arrow) and the red arrows point to where the original bolts were. So, security is maintained, and safety is enhanced.

RE communication is a work in progress as current teachers leave and others replace them. We're working closely with Kristin to manage this.



(continued on p. 6)

November 2019 Crossroads

A total team effort and my thanks to all, now on to what's next. Emergency medical equipment is in place (two Automatic External Defibrillators [AED's] and multiple Stop the Bleed kits are on site and accessible on the sanctuary level outside the treasurer's office and the same location one floor down in the Fellowship Hall).

We're in the process of training RE Crew, Worship Associates, Ushers, Greeters and SCC first but are going to be offering AED, One person CPR, and Stop the Bleed training to people who can commit to be part of the SCC. Contact me for more information.

Now here's your first task. When you're in our building, where is your closest exit and where is your secondary exit? Bonus question: Where are the two AED cabinets and Stop the Bleed kits?

Bruce Roemmelt, SCC Chair safety@bruu.org

Save the Date! **NOTHIN FANCY** playing at BRUU

Six-time award winner – Society for the Preservation of Bluegrass Music Association (SPGBMA) – **Entertaining Group of the Year**

Friday, December 13, 2019
7:00pm doors open, 8:00pm showtime



FROM ANNEASE

As you plan your auction items (and the rest of your social life), please make sure that each of these already scheduled 2020 BRUU events are taken into consideration:

Feb 7	Evensong
Feb 22	Canvass gala
Feb 29	Variety show
April 17	Evensong

BRUU received a Chalice Lighter Grant of \$20,000 for Capital Improvements in 2016 to be awarded in \$5,000 increments upon documentation of building improvements. \$15,000 of that has been received to date. Gwen Talbot is again generously donating \$5,000 as a matching grant to compensate for the building repair funds that had to be cut to balance the Operational Budget for 2019-2020. Our century-old building has ongoing maintenance, repair and improvement expenses. Our furnace is due for replacement. We, members and friends of BRUU, are asked to contribute to this MATCHING grant. Please donate and specify that the monies go towards the matching capital improvement fund. Thank you!

Annual Auction Approaching – November 23th!

This annual event is family friendly and packed with all kinds of things to enjoy for all kinds of prices. Our earnings from the Auction go into BRUU's general fund to support the good work of our community. Plus, we get to engage in events throughout the year that deepen our many connections.

We are running the auction in three phases this year. The first phase will be online where items worth at least \$50 can be posted for bidding. The online auction will open October 31st and run until Thursday Nov 21, 9:00 pm. At that time, any item that doesn't have a minimum bid will be entered into the silent auction on the 23rd. Most will be miscellaneous items, but there might also be a surprise or two, so stay tuned. Items worth less than \$50 can be donated to the Craft Fair booth, or saved for the Yard Sale.

Phase two of the auction is the Big Night – where we feature both a live and silent auction. This is a fun time with good fellowship and excellent food to keep us nourished as we contemplate all our bidding. Many hands are needed to make the event a success, so please sign up to help by calling donors, collecting donations, set up and tear down, database entry - please let Janette know if you can help out (jmuir@gmu.edu).

Phase three happens the day after the auction - where we will open the online auction once again to allow those who couldn't join us to also have an opportunity to bid on other items. This auction phase runs from November 24th until December 8th.

The Auction will be held on Saturday, November 23rd and food will be Potluck UU Auction style! Please bring an entree, side, or dessert with 8-12 servings. Drop off at the kitchen as you arrive and we'll put it out for you. Serving dinner at 6:00 p.m. If you'll be a little late for the Auction events, please bring a dessert, being served at 7:30 p.m. Please email Jessie Thompson (thompsonjf@hotmail.com) directly, if you can work 30-60 minutes in the kitchen between 7:30-9:30 p.m.

If you want to be involved please contact the auction Czarina, Janette Muir (jmuir@gmu.edu) for some ideas or sign up at the auction table during fellowship time. Thanks! Hope to see you there!

Scenes from Celebrate the Cycle of Life and Death Service October 27



BRUU's First Vision Café

There were questions and coffee, conversations and laughter, doodles and scribbles, and – above all – yellow sticky notes everywhere.

More than 20 people attended an animated Vision Café on Sunday, Oct. 6, in Fellowship Hall. Everyone had gathered to talk about what they valued about BRUU and where they saw the congregation going in the next five to ten years.

Participants wrote more than 140 separate comments and outlined several possible visions of the future of BRUU. The Vision Team has reviewed these comments and grouped them to see what people are thinking about most. We hope to post them on BRUUnet soon.

The biggest initial finding is that we value our congregation as our community. We value the acceptance we find and the support we give each other. We value the chance to pursue our individual spiritual paths or exchange ideas with others who may not see things our way but accept us anyway.

While that informs what we want to preserve as we go forward, other comments were aimed at what we can do in the future. Two of the main visions here include a more vibrant religious education program and doing more to work for social justice. One related idea was to work more with other congregations and surrounding communities.

There were several visions about the character of our congregation – more intergenerational, more diverse, more socioeconomically inclusive, a stronger youth and young adult program, even just having more fun. Numerous comments aimed at increasing our volunteering or preventing burnout.

Of course, there were visions for our building – making it "green" or environmentally friendly, making it accessible for the differently abled or without transportation, even moving elsewhere for the sake of more parking, a playground, etc. Or spinning off part of the congregation into a satellite church. There's a lot to explore. Some of these visions complement each other. Some visions force choices. We'll ask different questions and look deeper into the possible visions in our second Vision Café.

But while participants offered several different visions, everyone agreed that the Vision Café was engaging, enlightening, and fun.

Here's how it worked: Everyone gathered at tables and discussed five questions about what we value about BRUU and what direction we want the congregation to pursue. Each table discussed a different question for about 20 minutes, then split up to go to different tables and new questions. There were three rounds of discussion in all. One person remained behind at each table to let new people at the table connect with the table's previous conversation. Participants jotted down notes during the conversation. By the time we were done, we had over 140 comments on more than 100 separate post-it notes, all grouped with their questions.



You can participate in creating a vision for BRUU by coming to one or more of the BRUU Vision Cafés. All will take place in Fellowship Hall, on the following dates:

- Saturday, Nov. 2, 11 am – 1:30 pm
- Sunday, Nov. 10, 11:30 am – 1 pm (new time! more convenient!)

Childcare will be available both dates.

You can sign up to attend

at: <https://doodle.com/poll/gzis5u5qxz3uavrz>



November 2019

- 11/02 Vision Cafe, 11 A
11/03 White Fragility ALE, 11:30 A
11/04 Neurological Basis 4th Principle, 7
11/05 UupBeats, 12:45 P
11/06 Tao Te Ching, 10:45 A
Seasoned Souls, noon
Personnel Meeting, 7 P
11/07 Master Naturalists, 6:30 P
11/09 LGBTQ Discussion, 10 A
11/10 Vision Café, 11:30 A
Endowment Committee, 11:15 A
Finance Committee, 11:15 A
BRIC, 11:30 A
White Fragility ALE, 11:30 A
11/11 SASS, 1:30 P
Plants Before Humans ALE, 7:30 P
11/12 Food Pantry, 9:30 A
Master Naturalists, 6:30 P
11/13 Tao Te Ching, 10:45 A
11/14 Master Naturalists, 6:30 P
11/15 USDA Food Pantry, 9:30 A
11/16 Workday, 9:30 A – 3 P
11/17 Soup Sunday
Program Council, 11:30 A
New UU, 11:30 A
11/18 Intro to Mindfulness ALE, 7 P
11/19 UupBeats, 12:45 P
PFLAG, 7 P
11/20 Tao Te Ching, 10:45 A
Grief Support, noon
11/21 Pastoral Care Team, 3 P
Master Naturalists, 6:30 P
Board Meeting, 7 P
11/23 Auction
11/24 Membership, 11:15 A
RE Committee, 11:15 A
11/26 Food Pantry, 9:30 A
11/27 Tao Te Ching, 10:45 A
Moms Demand Action, 6:15 P



Candle-light Christmas Eve Service, December 24th at 7 pm
This year, there will be one Christmas Eve service. Format will be readings, stories, music and carols appropriate to the holiday. Join us for hot chocolate and cookies afterwards in the Fellowship Hall.

- ◆ If you have a favorite Christmas story or reading, please send it to Rev. Charlotte (minister@bruu.org).
- ◆ If you'd like to be a reader during the service, please contact Rev. Charlotte.

Volunteers are also needed to donate and-or serve the cookies and hot chocolate.

FUNDRAISING UPDATES:

From Dorothy Greenhouse & Christine Sunda

Fundraising is working hard to bring you fun events while raising money for BRUU. **Oktoberfest** was a huge success made possible by help from many people. A big thank you goes to each and every one of those helpful people. All the costs haven't been submitted yet, but we think our net profit will be over \$400! Not bad for a first-time event.

Our next event will be the **Annual Craft Fair December 6-8**. The times are: Friday from 6-9pm, and Saturday and Sunday from 11am-2pm. Please read the separate article about it and make plans to attend! Encouraging your friends to also attend brings in outside people to BRUU—so please spread the word! For example, if you have friends or neighbors attending the tree lighting on Friday the 6th or coming to the Manassas Holiday parade on Saturday, December 7th encourage them to stop by BRUU too. The more foot traffic we get, the more the crafters are willing to come again next year. Also, if you have friends who craft, we need more crafters.

Just a week after the Craft Fair we have another event: the annual **Nothin' Fancy Concert!** This will occur on **Friday, December 13th** starting at 8PM. And remember to bid at the auction for them to perform your favorite song during the concert!

In January we are working on a **Grateful Dead Tribute Concert on January 18th**. More information will be coming. On **March 14th** we are again having the very fun **St. Paddy's Day** dinner so mark your calendars now!

There are other concerts and events in the planning now for next year, so stay tuned!



From the Treasurer's Office Your Contributions Make a Difference!

Thank you for your generous support of the work of our congregation. This fiscal year to date you have contributed **\$121,244.15** through your pledges, donations, and contributions to BRUU. This includes:

Your Split-the-Plate and donations benefitting our community:

School Supplies	\$1,486.60
Project Mend a House	\$777.00
Beacon	\$418.97
Worthy Now	\$360.50
Food Pantry	\$647.00
Community Assistance	\$1,000.00

Your additional fundraising and donations benefitting the work of BRUU:

Oktoberfest	\$771.00
Online Yard Sale	\$96.06
Leadership Development	\$220.00
Coffee Fund	\$64.00
Adult Retreat	\$3,725.00

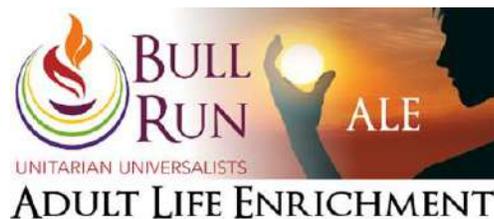
Your contributions for future renovations of our building:

Capital Campaign Fund	\$5,450.00
-----------------------	------------

Our BRUU Annual Auction event will be held Saturday, November 23. This is a big and fun way to contribute to our FY Operating Fund. Last year's auction raised **\$27,912.71!** If you are unable to attend in person – you can still participate by proxy.

Our complete budget report is posted to BRUUnet each month (<https://www.bruunet.org/page/budget-reports>). If you have any questions about our congregational budget or how to set up a pledge or contribution you may contact Terrie McClure, treasurer, at treasurer@bruu.org or Henry Hastings, bookkeeper, at bookkeeper@bruu.org

Terrie McClure, Treasurer



White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism, Part 2 and 3 of 3 part discussion. Sunday, Nov. 3 and 20, 11:30 Sanctuary

“Loving” – The Movie The story behind the U.S. Supreme Court civil rights case. Can you marry. Saturday, November 9th, 6:30 PM at Sobrio's home. Call 703.361.2690 for space available.

From the DRE...

Saturday Socials: Fellowship for Junior and Senior High Youth

In September, several youth visited Thomas Jefferson Unitarian Universalist in Charlottesville, VA to begin their year of spiritual practice. A member of their Labyrinth Ministry guided us through the church, giving opportunities to engage with mindful practices, especially their permanent outdoor labyrinth.

After, the group visited a nearby pumpkin patch – checking out each of every one, of course, in order to find just the right one. Many thanks to Tony Main, a chaperone and driver for the day. In November, we go for a hike!

Religious Education Volunteer Spotlight: Jim Healy

Jim’s outgoing personality and sincere caring for our children makes him a great fit! “I just want to let you know what a great fit Jim Healy has been in the Explorer’s classroom. He has such a great way with our kids. He is gentle, patient and attentive. What a great model for positive masculinity. He engages each child on their level, supporting and appreciating each unique personality. I am so delighted he has joined us.” (Note from co-leader, Mary Kadlubowski)



What does Jim say? “These BRUU kids have been nothing but pure joy for me. When I am around them, I get swept up by their wonder. The kids are very helpful with and towards each other. They actually *rejoice* in their own fun qualities and gifts, but then they also delight in and affirm the creative things their peers are doing. They rarely seem to overthink, and often jump right into action when making or doing things. Mistakes don’t slow them down. They are often eager, and yet (so far) not impatient. In fact, their *patience* with and their “*caringness*” towards each other (at such a tender age) are probably the two things that have struck me the most. “Thank you, Jim for being involved with our young people!



Family Retreat: Sign up now!

May 1 -3, 2020 is our all ages family retreat will be held at Pocahontas State Park, south of Richmond, VA. Fun, worship, fellowship and more fun will be planned for all ages. Estimated cost is \$50 per person, includes lodging, meals with final cost depending on number of participants. A deposit of \$50 per family is due November 15. See Kristin for more details.

Peace Cranes: Multigenerational Art Installation

Elaine Cash and Wanda Ruffin, under the tutelage of DJ Dee Jay, got us started on our goal of 1000 Cranes. The project was inspired by the story of Sadako Sasaki and the Children’s Peace Monument/Movement and a beautiful exhibit at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax. When admitted to the hospital at age 11 with radiation poisoning (from the dropping of the atomic bomb in Hiroshima 2 years earlier) she learned of a legend that says if you fold 1000 paper cranes, your wishes will be fulfilled. Her wish was to return to health.

Here at BRUU, our wish is to encourage peace and human interaction that may prevent acts of violence from occurring. Please join us in creating an art project of our own hand folded 1000 paper cranes, which will be displayed in our building. As you fold your cranes, infuse each one with wishes of non-violence, healthy communication and peaceful resolution to conflict. Materials, and helpful instructors will be available in Fellowship Hall after service on a regular basis (minimum once a month) until the project is completed. We hope that every member and friend will create at least one crane, making this a true full congregation effort.



COSM doings....

For the past couple of months, we’ve worked towards completion of Rev. Charlotte’s preliminary fellowship evaluation, reflecting broad congregational input across multiple areas of ministry. Both the Board and Committee on Shared Ministry will have a second opportunity to formally evaluate her ministry next year using the same UUA assessment document.

The Committee on Shared Ministry was recently asked by Bruu’s Board of Directors to focus our energies on assessing internal and external communication at BRUU, something that affects every aspect of BRUU. Challenges around communication has come up repeatedly in our cottage meetings and interviews. We’ll be looking at what’s working, how communication systems flow, identify issues and choke points, and look for opportunities for improvement that can then be shared with appropriate committees, staff and board members. We’re still in the very early stages of planning this analysis. To do justice to this work, it will be a yearlong process, so stay tuned.



Family Calendar

November 2019

3 - Youth choir 11:15-12:15
OWL Grades 7-9

9 - Second Saturday Social

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

16 - Coming of Age Mentors Training 11:00 -
noon

17 - Senior Tea
Children's choir 11:15-12:15 (followed by
lunch)

24- OWL Grades 7-9 and 4-6

Just As Long As I Have Breath

Series Title: First Principles

Column Title: Living Our Values

In my speech accepting BRUU's vote to make me President, I spoke of stewardship, accountability, planning for a range of possible futures, vision, living our values, and love. This is the fifth in the series, on the subject of living our values.

In my previous column, I wrote, "What would BRUU be if we made it the best that it could be?" One might expect that the follow-up to that question would be encouraging everyone to be the best individual they can be. However, that's not where I'm going with this.

My work and life experience have led to see that an organization is more than the sum of its members. Institutions and groups have their own personalities and character, if for no other reason than the fact that they attract people who feel comfortable there. Another driver of an organization's personality, though, is its structure.

BRUU has changed its Board and its committee structure many times, but it has never produced the ideal structure and never will, because each structure serves only the present needs. As we think about living our values, we should keep in sight the principles of the democratic process but also the mission and vision of BRUU.

In the Dan Hotchkiss book that the Board is reading together, "Governance and Ministry," we learn that the Board does not serve the Congregation itself, but rather the mission of the Congregation. As we live our values, we live them as individuals, as members of the various structures of BRUU (committees, teams, choirs, and krews), and as servants of our mission to create and sustain "a safe community for seeking and service."

Martin Crim, President, BRUU Board of Directors

The Board of Directors did not meet this month. Instead, we used the time to read several portions of the Dan Hotchkiss book "Governance and Ministry." I found it to be fascinating and helpful in terms of how we govern ourselves and who the Board serves. One might think that the Board serves the congregation, but actually, Hotchkiss argues, the Board serves the mission of the church.

The Board held its first Town Hall of the church year and had a good discussion with folks. We focused on the auction, the Visioning, the Committee on Shared Ministry's work, and the 20th anniversary of our presence in our current building, which is tied to the creation of a permanent memorial. All these engendered good discussions. We also put in a plug for the family retreat, which is going to be May 1-3 at Pocahontas State Park (\$50 deposits will be due soon so look for an announcement elsewhere in this newsletter).

As a result of our joint reading of "Governance and Ministry," I expect future Board meetings to be even more high-level and focused on the overall functioning of the church in fulfilling our mission. We want decisions to be handled at the committee level, subject to policies that have been agreed to by the Board. I encourage committee chairs to look at their existing policies to determine where there are gaps, inconsistencies, and outdated provisions that should be taken care of.