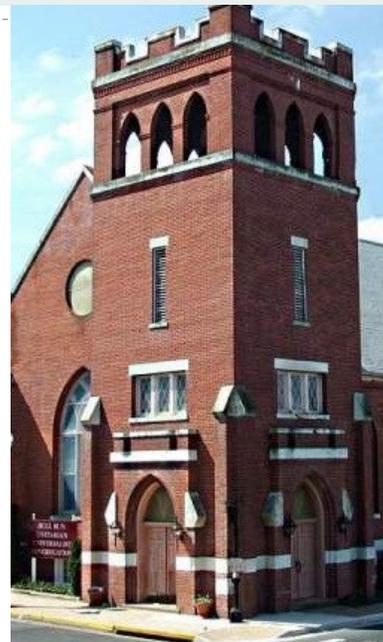




December 2021
Volume 39, Issue 12

Crossroads

The monthly BRUU Newsletter
Thanksgiving @ BRUU



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BULL RUN
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS
DECEMBER SERMON DESCRIPTIONS

December 5 : Teachings of the Tipi Poles: Love

(Rev. Charlotte Lehmann)

Mary Lee, a Cree Elder enumerates the teachings of the 15 poles used to construct a Cree tipi.

According to the Cree, the fifth pole symbolizes Love.

It seems like this teaching is similar to our 3rd Principle of UU-ism: acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth.

December 12: Music Service: Follow the Star

(Annease Hastings, Music Director)

For thousands of years, people have been guided by the stars. In the Biblical Christmas story, wise men and shepherds followed the star to find new life and hope.

Where will the star lead you this holiday season and what will you discover?

This month's **2nd Sunday Split-the-Plate** recipient is **The Matthew's Center**.

December 19: Teachings of the Tipi Poles: Faith

(Rev. Charlotte Lehmann)

Mary Lee, a Cree Elder enumerates the teachings of the 15 poles used to construct a Cree tipi.

According to the Cree, the sixth pole reminds us to live our faith on a daily basis.

The **3rd Sunday Split-the-Plate** benefits **BRUU's Community Assistance Fund**.

December 24: Christmas Eve

(TBD)

Friday at 7 pm... stay tuned for more information.

Special offering collection benefits the BRUU Community Assistance Fund.

December 26: TBA
(Janette and Star Muir)

Back by popular demand, Star and Janette bring their annual (it is nearly) New Year's Eve reflections.

It is sure to be nourishing for your soul at the end of 2021 and good preparation for the New Year of 2022!

ADVENT, THE WAITING SEASON

The Advent season has begun. It's almost as early as it can get for the start of it (next year it will be one day earlier), which means it is almost as long as it can be this year. And it feels to me like the Christmas holiday is a long way off. I'm not "ready" for Christmas. I don't even want to think about Christmas... or New Year's either, for that matter...

Advent is about waiting. I'm tired of waiting. I know you all are tired of waiting, too. Waiting for the chance to resume all-the-things that got put on hold starting in March 2020. Waiting for the supply chain to move smoothly. Waiting for prices to come back down a bit. Waiting to be able to make plans. Waiting to travel easily. Waiting to see friends and loved ones.

So much waiting we've been doing. So much patience has been required of us. Easier for some, than others. Sometimes easier said than done.

I loved Advent when I was a kid. We always had an Advent calendar. We took turns opening the doors each day of December. We also had a very simple Advent "wreath" with four candles; one new candle was lit each Sunday. And, in the German tradition of my father's family, we put up the Christmas tree, decorated it, and exchanged family gifts on Christmas Eve. When we were little, Dad – who was not particularly religiously inclined, but loved the rituals – would read aloud the "Christmas Story" of Jesus' birth from my mother's confirmation bible (King James Version). Before going to bed, we hung our stockings on the fireplace mantel – each one, one of my father's big gray boot socks with our name safety-pinned to them – and put out a glass of milk and a couple of cookies for Santa Claus. Christmas Day began with finding our stocking – stuffed with a big apple, a big orange, a bunch of nuts in their shells, and a few other small items – and the gifts that Santa had left during the night. Later, we would drive across the Mississippi River to my grandparents' house for an extended-family dinner. And the Christmas tree stayed up until Twelfth Night or Epiphany (January 6th).

That was Christmas for me for most of my life.

Advent is a season of hope. The colors associated with it are blue, purple and rose. Faith, hope, joy, peace and love are present in its celebration.

And something that I didn't know before is that, historically, Advent has been a season for fasting.

I am struck by this spiritual practice of ritual deprivation as part of the preparation for the incarnation of those positive states of being: faithfulness, hopefulness, joyfulness, peacefulness and loving human-kindness. We have been living with deprivation for a long time as a result of the pandemic. We have been "fasting" from so many things that nurture and sustain us.

For me, Christmas 2020 was rather pared down and bare bones. I'm not sure what it will be like this year. But I do know this, I'm getting my picture taken with Santa Claus because I need something to brighten my Advent this year.

Wishing you a Happy Hanukah, a Merry Solstice, a Blessed Christmas, and a Happy New Year!

Yours in faith,

Rev. Charlotte



BULL RUN

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Greetings BRUUsers!,

I trust that everyone had a wonderful time gathering with family members and friends for Thanksgiving! I will be making an apple pie for the dinner that Bill and I will be having with my son and granddaughters along with his wife and her family. We will be going to Washington, VA, which is the town that The Inn at Little Washington is located. For those of you who don't know, this is a very famous French restaurant. In 2019, The Inn at Little Washington became the first and only 3 Star Michelin restaurant in the Washington DC metropolitan area. But, alas, that is not where I will be eating. But if you are looking for a very, very, very special place to eat, you should check it out.

The most interesting board news is that at the time we last met, October 28th, it looked like infection rates for COVID-19 were beginning to trend downward. Remember, we set a guideline of infection rates being below 10 per 100,000 population for a 4 week time period before moving to have members back in the sanctuary. We were also going to take into consideration statistics for surrounding jurisdictions where a fair amount of our members come from. At that point in time, along with the fact that the vaccine had just been approved for children ages 5 and up, we were hopeful to open the sanctuary for services the beginning of January. That may have been premature because the trends have started to rise again. At the time I am writing this (October 23), according to the COVID ActNow website, Prince William County had 16.8 new cases per 100,000 population. Our next board meeting is Dec. 2, just around the corner, so stay tuned.

The board continues to refine our goals for this year. We are interested in increasing the diversity of our membership. Membership has designed a form entitled Additional Demographic Information that we would like members to fill out so that we have a good understanding of

our membership and a baseline to measure our success. But before we do so, we want to make sure our database is as secure as possible and so the board spent some time talking about this and have asked Jon Kostik to audit our system.

Other building projects continue to be worked on. The improvement of our AV system and Wi-Fi network, the heating and air conditioning system for the third floor, the installation of doors for the courtyard and the repair of our stained-glass windows that were damaged by rock throwers. There is nothing solid to report at this time, although we have some very good news regarding our windows. Thanks to some good work by Rev. Charlotte, our insurance company will cover the cost not only for the replacement of the windowpanes that were broken, but also for the necessary repair work that needs to be done to better secure them and the installation of safety glass to protect them. This is over \$7,000 of repair work and all we will have to pay is our \$1,000 deductible fee. I'd say this is quite a silver lining to this unfortunate vandalism! Thank you Church Mutual!

Although not board business, I have to express my joy at how well the auction went this year. What fun we had! I believe we exceeded the \$20,000 goal by \$7,000! Thanks to all who worked on making this such a success and to those who donated and purchased auction items!

I continue to be impressed with the number of people who give of their time and talents in so many ways to care for our building and our congregation. BRUU is an exceptional place, and it is all due to the wonderful people in this community. How very thankful I am to be a part of it.

Warm Regards,
Rita Romano



**BRUU
Auction
2021**

Gratitude
is overflowing as
we celebrate the
success of this
year's Auction

There were a few fits and starts and readjustments based on covid issues, but through the amazing generosity of BRUU donors and bidders, and a stellar auction team that never gave up – we did it. And we have much to celebrate.

First, BRUU folks were able to offer and bid on 121 hikes, dinners, adventures, arts/crafts/items and services that helped those previously lonesome calendars fill up. Hooray for greater community and delicious moments together.

Second, we learned that we could completely change our technological approach in a short amount of time and actually make things work pretty smoothly. Yippee for greater efficiencies and saving paper.

Third, most everyone who figured the system out, seemed to enjoy the experience. Ease of bidding, ability to monitor items and payment processing made the system fun to use. Yowza for finding silver linings to make this experience as meaningful as we could for all.

Fourth, this year's challenges surfaced a way of working together that was thoughtful and organized in terms of figuring out what could be possible. Tons of love to the people who made it happen – please send them virtual hugs when you can:

Tech Team: Terrie McClure, Randy Freed, Trish Freed, Tony Main, Barb Perlik, Jennifer Porter

Auctioneers: Heidi BruMar, Evelyn BruMar, Martin Crim, Kelly Muzzin, Star Muir, Janette Muir

Communications and Music Planning: Kathy Sobrio

Game Room Leaders: Evelyn BruMar, Heidi BruMar

Musicians: Kelly Muzzin, Martin Crim, Bill Stejskal, Star Muir, Janette Muir

Advisors: Dianne Lane, David Lane, Bruce Roemmelt

Organizer and Overall Fretter: Janette Muir

FINALLY, we really didn't know how well things would go this year given so many uncertainties. We celebrate the great financial success BRUU had, surpassing our \$20,000 goal to end with a final result of

\$27,397

Holy Cannoli, that's pretty terrific.

THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR MANY GIFTS.

WHAT ARE THE TASKS ASSIGNED TO THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE?

When we were in the Sanctuary, Greeters welcomed visitors, members and friends in the foyer. We introduced BRUU to visitors with a packet which included Welcome letters from the Choir Director, Religious Director and President of BRUU.

Parents and children were informed of and guided to Sunday School classes. We invited them to the coffee hour following services and would meet them there to make introductions. During the next week we sent a personal note offering to answer any questions they may have. The packet also contained a short pamphlet about Unitarian Universalism. Today, we connect online answering questions from our Face Book Page, and emails. We make ourselves available in the breakout room for visitors and follow up.

Keeping in touch with visitors, member and friends is one of our major tasks. We do this by updating contact information through Connection Cards and printing the Directory. (It takes a lot of time and effort to encourage people to update their ten year old pictures and remember to send us their new email address.) This also requires keeping the data base updated. The Directory contains annual changes to the Board, and committee chairs and how to contact them.

Twice a year, Rev. Charlotte and the Membership Committee conduct an Explore BRUU Class. The Chairs of each committee are invited to share their role in keeping BRUU running and alive. We talk about UU history, our Principles and Sources, and what BRUU has to offer. At this time we encourage people to become members by signing The Membership Book and we recognize them during one or two services throughout the year.

Another part of the database that we maintain is the number of members and friends. We report these to the Board and UUA on a regular basis. (We do not have access to the financial side of the database.)

When I first joined BRUU I volunteered to be a Greeter. What a great way to meet people with, “I haven’t met you before, I’m Faye.” And, of course, I had to learn a lot about BRUU to guide visitors around.

BRUU's hybrid services on Sunday mornings include people in the Sanctuary in addition to Rev. Charlotte, if they have a role in the service for readings, music, etc. The audiovisual team is working hard in the balcony, after setting up microphones earlier in the Sanctuary.

But yes, the pews still look pretty empty.

RE classes are hybrid too. If teachers/children want to participate online rather than in person, contact Kristin Worthington at dre@bruu.org

What is BRIC and why did they donate \$10,000 to the BRUU Community Assistance Fund?

BRIC is the Bull Run Investment Club and was formed by about a dozen BRUU members in 2001 to learn about stock investing and to have some fun. BRIC is part of the National Association of Investing Clubs (NAIC) which is a community of over 100,000+ investors in 4,500+ clubs across the country. BRIC currently has 16 members and has enjoyed working with 33 former members. Over the intervening 20 years BRIC partners learned a lot about stocks, picked more winners than losers, and enjoyed the journey.

We learned that the power of our club is in the diverse investing views of our partners which enabled our investing success. BRIC had another great year in 2021 and learned that the BRUU Community Assistance Fund (CAF) was out of resources so we voted at our November meeting to donate stock with a market value over \$10,000 to the CAF as a charitable gift. The stock transfer was recently completed so the CAF is now well funded.

BRIC members are very pleased to know that our financial contribution will help out so many deserving people in Manassas and Prince William County.

Are you interested in learning about stock investing and having some fun with the BRIC members? If you are please contact the BRIC President, Sterling Rush, at wsrush@aim.com.

BRUU DIRECTORIES ARE HERE IN THE BRUU CONFERENCE ROOM

Find the one labeled for your family. Feel free to contact someone living nearby and arrange to pick up their copy for hand-delivery. You can meet another BRUUser in person, save someone a trip through traffic, and "be green" by reducing emissions from car trips.

If your contact information is correct: Place a check mark by your entry in the Directory Copy on the Conference Room desk. If the contact information is incorrect: Make corrections by your entry in the Directory Copy on the Conference Room desk.

on the beautiful campus of Western Carolina University

in-person from July 17-23

SUUSI 2022

OUR THEME THIS YEAR WILL BE “GRATITUDE.”

All attendees at SUUSI 2022 must be fully vaccinated in accordance with current CDC recommendations at the time SUUSI is held.

Interested in giving a workshop? Log in to SOLIS, the SUUSI Online Information System, at <https://solis.suusi.org> to propose a workshop or apply for staff positions.

LOOKING TO HELP THE AFGHAN REFUGEES? GIFT CARDS for GROCERIES

BRUU reached out to Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area (LSSNCA) and asked how we BRUUers can help the poor Afghan refugees still scrambling to get resettled. Here’s what LSSNCA told us:

We have a great *immediate* need for gift cards for groceries. Here are the highest priorities:

1. Unrestricted Visa (for halal meat purchase)
2. Giant
3. Safeway
4. Target
5. Uber



Please include a note with a point of contact with the gift cards and mail to LSSNCA @ 8922 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax, VA 22031

PLEASE NOTE: If you would like to get your gift cards purchased and sent to LSSNCA thru a BRUUer, email Kathy Sobrio at dksobrio@verizon.net or Jennifer Porter at jprumtum@gmail.com to make arrangements.

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

THE PUZZLER

November's Puzzler

CORNY WORD SCRAMBLE

(GET IT.....CORN)

E H M O	-----	HOME
G R Y V A	-----	GRAVY
Y K R T U E	-----	TURKEY
L F A L	-----	FALL
R C V A E	-----	CRAVE
A F I M Y L	-----	FAMILY
P R E A D A	-----	PARADE
A S A L D	-----	SALAD
T W A H E	-----	WHEAT



CONGRATULATIONS

GLEN MACDONALD

Great job on the perfect responses!

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Minister

Rev. Charlotte Lehmann
minister@bruu.org

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2021-2023

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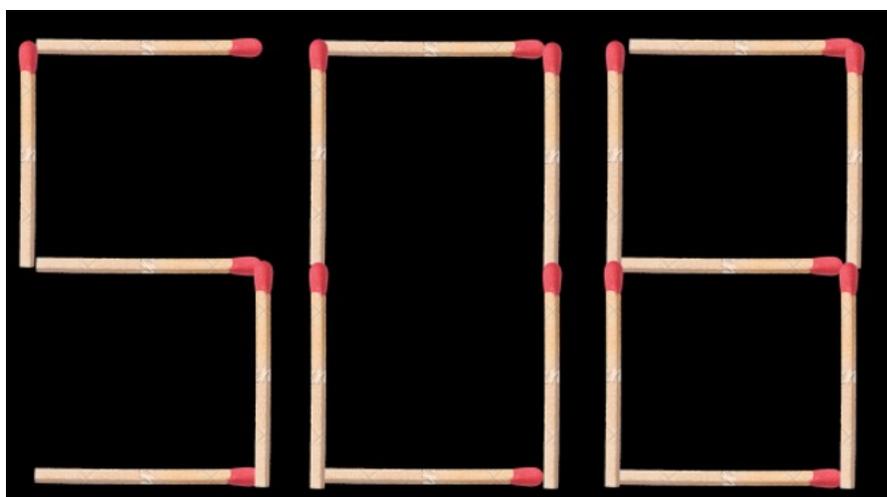
Office Assistant

Tina Cox, office@bruu.org

THE PUZZLER

December's puzzler

SUBMITTED BY LAST MONTH'S WINNER
Thanks Dee Brown and Glen Macdonald
for this months' Puzzler



If you can only move two matches,
what is the biggest number you can make?

Please email your answer (s) to -

newsletter@bruu.org

Use the *Subject Line* - **BRUU PUZZLER**

From the correct answers, winners may be chosen to be featured in the newsletter and awarded bragging rights of course. Good Luck!