



February 2021  
Volume 39, Issue 2

# Crossroads

The monthly BRUU Newsletter

IN MEMORIAM...

*DEAR FRIENDS AND FAMILY OF JIM THOMPSON*

Join us on Sunday, February 7<sup>th</sup> at 3 pm (Eastern) to Celebrate the Life of Jim Thompson

Charter member of Fairfax UU congregation (1955-2000)

and member of Bull Run UU (2000-2021)



James Richmond Thompson

May 4, 1930 – January 13, 2021

Manassas, Virginia

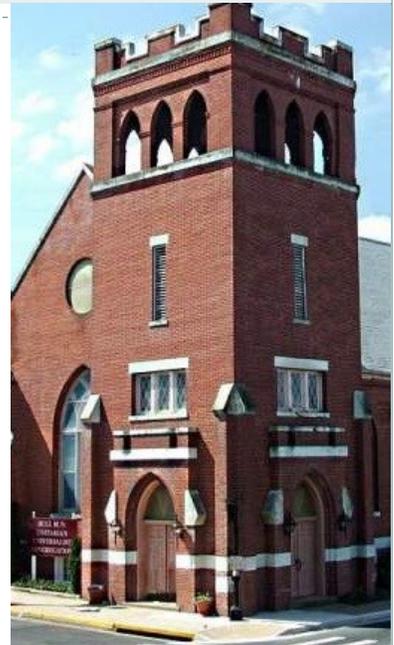
Please use the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/JThompsonMemorial>

If you are unable to connect via computer or smart phone and-or need to phone in for the service, please contact [bruumemorial@bruu.org](mailto:bruumemorial@bruu.org) to obtain the necessary information.

With deep sympathy,

*Rev. Charlotte Lehmann*

Minister, Bull Run UU



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Words from Rev Charlotte .....	2
Feb Sermon Descriptions .....	3
Caring Bridge.....	4
Coffee Ordering Changes.....	4
News from the DRE.....	5
BOD Report .....	6
COSM News .....	7
Music News.....	7
BRUU VOICE.....	7

## SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS IN THIS ISSUE

• Orientation Class.....	8
• Puzzler.....	10

## FROM REV CHARLOTTE—ON THE PULSE OF THIS NEW DAY

Twenty-eight years ago, Maya Angelou ended her inaugural poem for President William Jefferson Clinton and Vice President Albert Arnold Gore Jr. this way:

*Here on the pulse of this new day  
You may have the grace to look up and out  
And into your sister's eyes,  
And into your brother's face,  
Your country,  
And say simply  
Very simply  
With hope –  
Good morning.*

Twenty-eight years... was it really that long ago?

We certainly had no idea what we would go through during the next quarter of a century.

And in this year of 2021 – after nearly a year of onslaught by the twin pandemics of anti-black racism and COVID-19, we heard the words of another powerful Black woman poet, a young adult this time, speaking about “The Hill We Climb.” Amanda Gorman closes the inaugural poem for President Joseph Robinette Biden III and Vice President Kamala Devi Harris with the following challenge:

*When day comes we step out of the shade,  
aflame and unafraid  
The new dawn blooms as we free it  
For there is always light,  
if only we're brave enough to see it  
If only we're brave enough to be it.*

And we do need to be brave. Brave enough not just to see and name the wrongs of the past, but brave enough to take responsibility for those wrongs and the repair and restoration that need to take place. We must be brave in the face of trauma that is generational and is in this moment in time.

I made a note to myself about what to write for the February newsletter just after the insurrection and coup attempt on January 6th. My note says: pay attention to trauma.

On that day, whether we were tuned into media all day or not, we were all traumatized. We didn't have to see the awful images to be traumatized. The very fact that the values we hold dear were being trampled on, that the United States Capitol Building – the People's House – was being desecrated by the intentional incitement of fear and enactment of violence, was traumatizing.

We need to continue to pay attention to the trauma held in our bodies and psyches, not just from the insults to and the assaults on our cherished democracy, but also from the coronavirus pandemic. This global health crisis has created physical trauma and death on a scale that exceeds any of which we have living memory. It has also exacted emotional trauma through an overwhelming amount of grief, which has barely been acknowledged until now. The economic trauma of job losses, business failures, and lack of resources are intertwined with the physical and emotional trauma. Our social systems are strained.

You know how to climb this hill. You do that as a beloved community. When one of us is sick or heart-broken, you reach out in love and care. You offer help, you offer solace, you offer solidarity. Apply those skills to the healing and repair that we must do to become the beacon of freedom and truth that our nation's founders aspired us to be.

Be brave blessed ones. Keep on moving forward. Keep caring for all people. And don't forget that we still need to practice this saving mantra: Wash your hands, maintain safe physical distance, and wear a mask.

With courage,

Rev. Charlotte



## FEBRUARY SERMON DESCRIPTIONS

---

**February 7:** *Finding Radical Hope in Revolting Times* (Rev. Charlotte Lehmann)

How can we counter the kind of extremism that led to the January 6<sup>th</sup> insurrection and coup attempt? What forms of non-violent resistance can we engage in to buffer against incendiary speech and immoral actions? What does it mean and what does it take to belong to a Beloved Community?

**February 14:** *The Second Source of Unitarian Universalism* (Rev. Charlotte Lehmann)

This year we are exploring the seven principles and the six sources of Unitarian Universalism as they are currently enumerated in Article II of the UUA Bylaws. In this worship service, we consider the second source: “words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love.” (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday split-the-plate = The Arc)

**February 21:** *The 8<sup>th</sup> Principle Project* (Rev. Charlotte Lehmann)

The 8<sup>th</sup> Principle Project has proposed adding the following to our list of promises to each other, “We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.”

Our 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday split-the-plate benefits BRUU’s emergency food pantry.

**February 28:** *TBA* (Special Guest: Matt Meyer)

UU Musician Matt Meyer has led worship for hundreds of congregations, traveling the country sharing a message of love and justice, through rhythm and song. Matt is a modern circuit-rider, bringing a model of embodied and heartfelt worship to congregations across the country. Matt’s worship leading offers a dynamic experience of music’s enduring power to teach us about ourselves and each other. Engaging worship is about building the kind of Beloved Community we know is possible. Matt’s services inspire congregants to a new relationship with each other and with our shared purpose of love and justice. This is worship that invites the mind as well as the heart to grow in love.

You can learn more about Matt through his website: <https://www.rhythmrevelations.com/>.

## CARING BRIDGE: CHECK IT OUT—BEFORE YOU NEED IT

Your Pastoral Care Team (PCT) recommends the use of the CaringBridge.org website. This website, run by a non-profit organization, provides a very helpful service, creating a cyber space for folks to post/share critical ongoing personal or family health situations. When using CaringBridge.org the individual/family in crisis can choose how much of their information they want/need to share. The result is that it reduces the amount of time needed to repeatedly explain the situation to all your concerned friends and extended family. By using the features on the site, the family can seek volunteer help with transportation to appointments, caretaking assistance, and providing meals.

BRUU is a large and growing congregation and it is often difficult to keep everyone connected when any of our members need support during health and emotional challenges. Beside providing information, CaringBridge.org also allows those who read the updates to offer comments and words of encouragement, in addition to signing up to volunteer help.

CaringBridge.org is a FREE service, and BRUU makes an annual contribution towards the upkeep of the site, which is why PCT encourages using Caring Bridge.

Please familiarize yourself by visiting the CaringBridge.org site while you are in good health, to see how easily it could be set up, by you or by asking a close family member should you not be well enough. While you are on the site you can check up on your friends' posts, now.

## CHANGES TO THE PROCEDURE FOR ORDERING COFFEE, CHOCOLATE OR TEA FROM GREEN TEAM SALES

A year ago, would we have believed we would still be dealing with a closed building, mask wearing and physical distancing today? Well, it has been a challenge for all of us, which brings us to now to this decision to ramp down our method of selling our Green Team Fair Trade products. The team has faced the reality that traveling the long distances to make deliveries is not in the best interest of cutting our carbon pollution footprint.

Local delivery will still be possible, based on coordination with Susie Eastridge. She will make trips to BRUU to collect and deliver coffee, based on local orders received via her email. You can place your order at [susanneastridge@gmail.com](mailto:susanneastridge@gmail.com). If you want a list of products and prices the file can be sent to you as a Word file attachment. She will coordinate all details with you, including the total cost and availability of your order. You will no longer use the GoFundMe site for this. Your payment will need to be mailed to the treasurer of BRUU, or by some other means.

Needless to say, you will need to place your order well before you need the items. If you are uncertain if you can be considered "local" simply coordinate with Susie anyway. Ann Hempen has volunteered their house, which is a few blocks from the church, as a pick-up point. You will be able to arrange to get your order there.

We want to do everything we can to support Equal Exchange Fair Trade partners, as the world-wide pandemic continues to put extreme pressure on their survival. Please continue to buy and use these products.

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A PEOPLE OF BE-LOVED COMMUNITY?

Henri Nouwen, the treasured catholic teacher, activist and pastor, once described beloved community as “the place where the person you least want to live with always lives.”

On its surface it seems to be a straightforward reminder not to expect perfection from the communities we join. And not to expect perfection from others. Indeed, it’s a plea to stick with those troublesome others. Forgive them. Accept them. Stay open to the whole of who they are, not just the caricatured sliver of them that makes it easy to write them off.

Besides the obvious calls to commitment, conflict resolution and hard work, there’s also a hidden call to hope woven into Nouwen’s words. To stay in community we have to hold on to hope. We have to believe that better selves exist and will eventually show up. We have to have faith that the benefit of the doubt is worth it.

It’s a tall order. This kind of hopefulness and generosity toward others is not easy.

But here’s the catch, Nouwen doesn’t stop there. Right after that first sentence he adds another. Here’s the whole quote:

*“Community is the place where the person you least want to live with always lives...That person is always in your community somewhere; in the eyes of others, you might be that person.”*

Ouch! Nouwen doesn’t pull his punches. Just when we were starting to feel good about being the ones who are magnanimous with these annoying and offensive folks, Nouwen reminds us that we are actually among them! *Continued on page 6*

## STARTING IN MARCH: UU WELLSPRING

UU Wellspring offers participants an opportunity for spiritual deepening that leads to more joyful living, increased congregational leadership, and faithful justice making in their lives and in their communities.

UU Wellspring gives spiritual power to UU communities that will sustain and strengthen UU identity and justice work through small group connections, spiritual practices, deeper knowledge of UU history and theology, and putting UU faith into action.

Please view this short video on others’ experiences in Wellspring:

<https://youtu.be/acKwZ7Lm5LI>

### (ALE) Adult Life Enrichment

Check the website for full descriptions and to register for these amazing offerings:

***“How to be an Antiracist”***  
a book study

***“Understanding Pronouns”***

***“Emotional Intelligence  
EG and UUs”***

***“Faith Like a River:  
Diverse Community”***

***“Exploring the Hymnal”***

***“Beyond the Explainable”*** a  
new on-going group

## BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT JANUARY 2021

The Board met with Mark Ewert of Stewardship for Us on its regular meeting date of January 21, so we will not have a Board report in time for the newsletter. Look for that in an upcoming Roundup instead.

There is a lot going on at BRUU. Amidst national and personal troubles, we carry on with our mission. When one leader must step aside, another comes forward to pick up the banner. We have some big roles that need volunteers soon, including multiple Board positions and Endowment Committee members.

The Board will appoint a Nominating Committee on January 28, so please give serious consideration to how you can step up to a leadership role. If you are asked to serve, please accept if you can. If you cannot serve in the role you are asked to take, think about what other role you could take over. BRUU always needs volunteers.

Some volunteer jobs are front and center, while others are behind the scenes. Some are one-time tasks and others are multi-year commitments. Some require strategic decision making and others let you just handle manual tasks. There's a job for you at BRUU, and maybe more than one.

Respectfully submitted,

Martin Crim (Board President)

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A PEOPLE OF BE-LOVED COMMUNITY?

*Continued from page 5*

But don't get so caught up in this message of humility that you miss how Nouwen is also using this to call us to an even greater hopefulness.

By adding us to the mix of the unwanted, he's pointing out that beloved community requires us to believe not only that others are worth our effort but also that we will be worth the effort in the eyes of others!

It's an insight that we must not miss this month. We human beings run away from community not just because others let us down, but also because we doubt that others won't step up when we let them down. Beloved community stays at arm's length not just because it is hard to build, but also because we don't trust that it will be there for us.

It's all one big reminder that the work of beloved community is bigger than we usually imagine. It's not just about building a better world; it's also about building up each other's faith. We are in a battle not just against the division between us, but also the doubt within us.

What we really need to hear about beloved community is not just that we can create it, but that we can count on it.

This month, may we make sure we all bless each other with both of those messages. (Katie Covey)

## A MESSAGE FROM RITA ROMANO COSM CHAIR

So, we are at the halfway mark of the church year and I wanted to let everyone know that the Committee on Shared Ministries (COSM) has been continuing to meet virtually, just as all other congregational committees have been doing. To refresh everyone's memory, COSM is a relatively new committee that is about 2.5 years old now.

The Vision of COSM is: To have healthy and successful BRUU ministries and the Mission is: To assess the effectiveness of our ministries and to identify areas of improvement. We do this through the examination of key data elements and through open and appropriate communications between the congregation, the minister, BRUU staff, and the Board.

One responsibility that we completed this year was an evaluation form that was needed for Reverend Charlotte's Application for Renewal of Fellowship. In order to do so, we did our best in this time of virtual services and fellowship, to gather information from all of you in order to make our responses reflective of the congregation. In general, we gave Reverend Charlotte high marks. Based on information we gathered we are very pleased with Reverend Charlotte's performance as our minister. She has been a stabilizing force in our congregation and has proven herself to be a very competent and caring minister. However, there is always room for improvement, and we also discussed with her recommendations along these lines.

Last year COSM focused on Communications in the congregation. We held a number of cottage meetings to gather information from our membership. In COSM we focused primarily on improving communication within the church. Although some ideas, like the Little Library, grew out of these discussions and had to do with communication outside of our congregation. This year, our area of focus is Membership Attraction and Engagement and we have spent more time focusing on communication with our greater community. More specifically, we have taken some time trying our best to put ourselves in the position of someone new to our congregation who is looking for a spiritual home. This has had to start with a close look at our BRUU website, asking ourselves is it clear and welcoming. Whereas we think the website is very attractive in many ways, we made a number of recommendations improvements for the Communications Committee to consider.

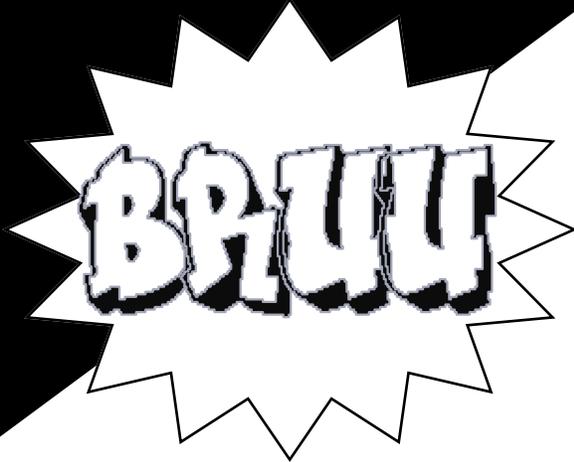
***Continued on....page 9***



## “FOOD FOR THE SOUL” EVENSONG SERVICE FEB 26

AT 7:30 (SAME LINK AS FOR SUNDAY MORNING)

However you define soul, it goes to the core of our being. Dorothy Day said “food for the body is not enough. There must be food for the soul.” Through music and readings, we’ll reflect on how we nourish our souls.



Do you...

- Have questions about BRUU?
- Want to learn more?
- Want to get more involved?
- Want to become a member?

**JOIN  
REV. CHARLOTTE  
AND BRUU LEADERS**

INFO/REGISTER/CONTACT

[membership@bruu.org](mailto:membership@bruu.org)

# **ORIENTATION CLASS**

**ALL are invited to**

*Exploring Unitarian  
Universalism and  
BRUU Membership*

**Sunday, Feb. 21  
1:00P - 3:00P**



## A MESSAGE FROM RITA ROMANO COSM CHAIR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

We have also been examining the process of engaging a person who has made connection with the congregation. This could be an email, a phone call, or attendance at one of our virtual services. Again, asking is the process working well and are newcomers feeling welcomed. This process has proven to be very complex and we are still working out the details of how best to make suggestions for improvement on the process.

We have also made the recommendation to the Board that we feel it is important at this time to have better information about our members. In our efforts to be welcoming to all, we need to make sure we are attracting people who represent the diversity in our community and who will contribute to the congregation's sustainability. In particular, young people, people of color and of various gender identities and sexual orientations. In order to gather this information, we have recommended that a census of the congregation be conducted. We also are recommending that this information be gathered at the point of a new member joining the BRUU congregation. Recognizing that this may be sensitive information, it would of course be optional for a member or new member to supply it.

So, these are some of the things that we have been up to this year. If you have any questions, concerns or feedback for us regarding our committee, please do not hesitate to reach out to me or one of the members of COSM-Martha Muirhead, Tony Main, Tom Cooke, Betsi McGrath, Wade Stephenson or myself. We would love to hear from you!

This year of COVID-19 minimization/protection has been stressful for all. We are so very proud of our staff and members for rising to the challenge of providing services and other ministries virtually. We also are delighted that services are now being live streamed and recorded! This will make it so much easier for newcomers to check us out to see what we are all about and for members of our community to benefit from our services.

Namaste,

Rita Romano

COSM Chair

---

## BRUU VOICE

The BRUU VOICE team welcomes **Liam Arne** who is joining **Mike Freeland, Art Muirhead, Robin Fegeas** and **Joan Cantor**.

The team has signed up for a series of training sessions, beginning in late January, to help them be more effective in reaching out to the larger community.

## BRUU

9350 Main Street  
Manassas, VA 20110-5150  
703-361-6269  
Fax: 703-392-7995

### **Minister**

Rev. Charlotte Lehmann  
minister@bruu.org

BRUU Administrative Board

### **President**

Martin Crim  
president@bruu.org

### **Vice President**

Randy Freed  
vicepresident@bruu.org

### **Secretary**

Michelle Luman  
secretary@bruu.org

### **Treasurer,**

Terrie McClure  
treasurer@bruu.org

### **Directors at Large**

Chris Sexton  
Susan Kehoe  
Owen Davies  
director@bruu.org

### **Program Council**

Pat Malarkey  
programcouncil@bruu.org

### **Director of Religious Education**

Kristin Worthington  
re@bruu.org

### **Director of Music**

Annease Hastings,  
music@bruu.org

### **Office Assistant**

Tina Cox, office@bruu.org

# THE PUZZLER

## JANUARY'S PUZZLER

Each and every word in this list has the same unusual uniqueness in common.

Here are the words:

Assess  
Banana  
Dresser  
Grammar  
Potato  
Revive  
Uneven  
Voodoo

Congratulations to our randomly chosen winner!!!

**BARBARA PERLIK**

*"If you move the first letter to the end,  
you have a palindrome"*

**That is CORRECT!**

Thanks to everyone that submitted answer, we have some smart cookies out there!

What's the answer? What do they all have in common?

## FEBRUARY'S PUZZLER

### WHAT'S THE NEXT NUMBER IN THE SERIES?

Write this series of numbers down.

335 443 554\_

So there are nine numbers followed by a blank.

**What's the blank, and why?**

*And that's the hint!*

Please email your answer to -

newsletter@bruu.org

Use the Subject Line - BRUU PUZZLER

From the correct answers, one random winner will be chosen to be featured in the newsletter and awarded bragging rights of course. Good Luck!