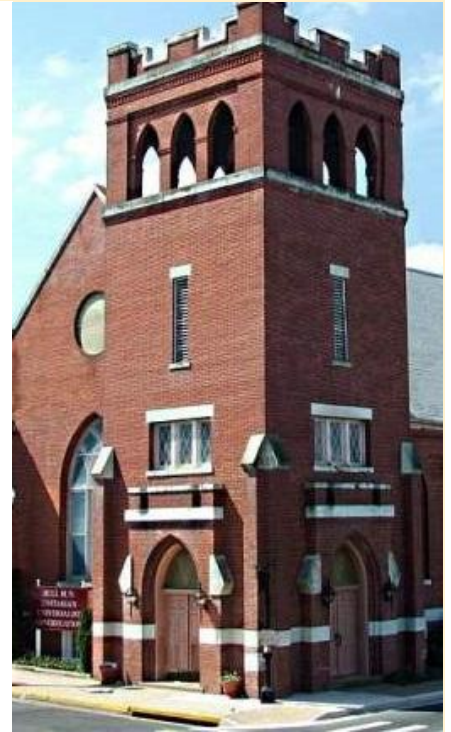




**BULL RUN**  
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS

May 2026  
Volume 44, Issue 5

# Crossroads



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*Courtesy of Tom Miller—more photos:*

<https://www.flickr.com/gp/bullrunuu/631h05gZ86>

The monthly BRUU Newsletter



# May Services

## **May 3: I See Dead People**

**Rev. David Brown**

Who is haunting you? Are there people who scare you? People who need something from you? How can we handle people from our past? What makes some people so difficult to love? Or even, like? Let's talk about the difficult people in your life.

## **May 10: Mother Earth - A Mother of an Opportunity**

**Larry Underwood and Charlie Grymes**

most people realize that climate change is a serious problem that deserves our attention and best efforts. But what about other “existential“ threats, such as human population growth, and mass extinction? Fortunately, there is good news in both areas. Today's service will focus on the seriousness and the hopes in these areas.

## **May 17: Listening the Circle Wide**

**Rev. Kimberley Debus**

Deep listening is a key to drawing the circle of love wide. How do we make space for the truths of another's experience?

## **May 24: More Love**

**Billy Jonas**

With homemade “industrial re-percussion” instruments, plus guitar, piano, and voice, Billy Jonas loves creating community through song and story. It's all about bridging divides, to help mend rifts within ourselves, our families, and the world. Learn more at [billyjonas.com](http://billyjonas.com).

## **May 31: Social Justice Sunday**

**Kristin Worthington**



# Healthy Congregation Team

Mike Cleary

## The Practice of Covenant

The Healthy Congregation Team is charged with **promoting the Covenant** across the BRUU congregation. To this end, we are going to facilitate the congregation in reviewing and reaffirming our Covenant, making changes as necessary. We'll do this through a **series of small group meetings** – coffee klatsches, dinners, workshops, classes, conversations – to clarify what the congregation wants in our Covenant. Details to come. Meanwhile, it helps to review some basic principles about the practice of covenant.

So how do we “**covenant**” with each other? This is the tricky part we might not have understood. Think of it this way: John Fletcher Moulton, Lord Moulton, a 19<sup>th</sup> Century English judge and parliamentarian, suggests we imagine two domains: the domain of law and contracts on one side, and the domain of complete freedom on the other.

In the domain of Law, our actions are limited by law. The goal of this law, the highest value in this society, is to encourage group conformity. Consequences are set for anyone who transgresses the law, and these consequences are enforced by authorities. Authorities police society and monitor behavior, in order to ensure compliance. The important thing in this society is to know the rules and adhere to them.

In the domain of Free Choice, on the other hand, the highest value is individuality. Accordingly, there is complete freedom of action. Individuals themselves determine what they will do, not any external authority. There is no external authority, therefore no oversight or monitoring. People rely on their own individual preferences to choose their actions, and understand that all others do the same.

The domains of Law and Free Choice, between rules and autonomy, both have their virtues and disadvantages. They are in tension with each other. For example, we believe in individual aspiration, but also in the need for rules to keep our community safe. Lord Moulton says there is a third domain in between them which aims to harmonize the other two domains and avoid their excesses. This is the domain of Covenant, and it is where Unitarian Universalism also aims to resolve the tension between the domains of rules and autonomy.

Moulton characterizes this domain as “obedience to the unenforceable.” Individuals in this domain agree on shared values, and take responsibility for upholding these values when interacting with each other. Moral behavior is ensured by self-discipline above all, although this is reinforced by the community. The key to living within this domain is to understand what everyone agrees is moral behavior.

To live in Covenant, to be our whole selves, means acknowledging everyone else’s whole selves in Covenant. It requires us to be fully present, to bring our authenticity and our vulnerabilities, to bring our culture with us. And it requires to be fully present to each other: to listen to each other, to honor everyone else’s authenticity, culture, and vulnerabilities.

# Green Up Prince William and Manassas

Charlie Grymes, BRUU Green Team



## Second Sunday Hike

On **May 10**, we'll explore another local trail in Prince William County Manassas or Manassas Park. It's a joyful experience to walk through a green tunnel of trees with tweedy birds singing in May. We'll find flowers - but also look for roots and rocks in the trail.



Our Second Sunday Hikes are **1:00-3:00pm**.

Please register at <https://tinyurl.com/e27h4m8s> to get details, including the location of the starting point.

Questions? Contact Charlie Grymes at [cgrymes@gmail.com](mailto:cgrymes@gmail.com)

Green Team members have lots of suggestions on how to enhance habitat at your home and reduce energy use. Want to get involved? Contact us at [greenteam@bruu.org](mailto:greenteam@bruu.org)



## Chrysalis Concert Series: Music, Community, and Connection



Janette Muir

BRUU's Chrysalis Concert Series **is an invitation**: to slow down, listen deeply, and enjoy an evening of exceptional music and thoughtful songwriting. **Don't let the cost of a ticket keep you away**, we are always looking for volunteers! Please reach out to learn more about how to get involved ([chrysalis@bruu.org](mailto:chrysalis@bruu.org)).

### Upcoming Concert...

#### Billy Jonas, May 23rd

For over thirty years, Billy Jonas -- performer, singer-songwriter, composer, multi-instrumentalist, and educator -- has perfected the art of the neo-tribal hootenanny with audiences around the globe.

You won't want to miss this soul inspiring event! Email [chrysalis@bruu.org](mailto:chrysalis@bruu.org) for tickets or scan the QR code!



IN CONCERT

**Billy Jonas BAND**  
FUNKY FOLK MUSIC

FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

"... witty, smart, raw."  
- New York Times

"... irresistible. ...my face hurts from smiling."  
- Alison Krauss

NEWEST CD

[www.BillyJonas.com](http://www.BillyJonas.com)

Live at BRUU - May 23, 2026  
7:30 pm.

Sponsored by the Chrysalis Concert Series

# Social Justice Plans & Activities

Cathy Ring

## Social Justice 2.0

BRUU members met by Zoom on Easter Monday in anticipation of resurrecting some of the aspects of our initiatives, having been somewhat dormant over the winter. The discussion was also open to new areas of activity. The major discussion about organizing POCs for each area of engagement. The plan is to set up an **SJ ACTION-ALERT** email group for quick notifications to “**make good trouble,**” like contacting legislators, showing up at a rally and/or demonstration, or providing some emergency assistance efforts. Sign-up info will be available in the next month for these notifications.



At this point we are seeking folks interested in furthering the promotion of our UU Values in education and actions in the areas of...

- Virginia UU State Action Network (VUUSAN) [SEE Facebook Group]
- the Healthcare for All initiative
- Domestic & Gun Violence Prevention efforts,
- immigrant assistance
- and other projects the SJ members endorse as appropriate for BRUU support. Send your ideas to: [SocialJusticeAdmin@BRUU.org](mailto:SocialJusticeAdmin@BRUU.org)

**Food Pantry** is alive and functioning well. In addition to contributions to the Sunday Collection Plate, volunteers are always welcome to help with food set up on the **2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Monday** of each month. **POC** is Len Clark [[FoodPantry@BRUU.org](mailto:FoodPantry@BRUU.org)] with Gretchen Almstead & Ralph Giffen as the set-up duo.

**Green Sanctuary Team** will be presenting the **May 10<sup>th</sup>** Sunday Service. The sale of Fair Trade coffee & other items during Fellowship Hour is continuing to fund environmental efforts, such as our building's annual carbon offset from TerraPass. The monthly hikes in local natural areas are organized for all who register to participate {See separate article}.

**POCs:** Larry Underwood & Susie Eastridge [[Green@BRUU.org](mailto:Green@BRUU.org) ]

**VOICE** (VA Organized for Interfaith Community Engagement) Our BRUU membership keeps us actively supporting the annual goals, Affordable Housing and Creating & Maintaining Crisis Care Centers. Register for the **May 20<sup>th</sup> 7pm** Zoom training on Pervasive Power for Housing Justice [[VOICE-Va.org](http://VOICE-Va.org) ] **POCs:** Mike Freeland & Charlie Grymes [[VOICE@BRUU.org](mailto:VOICE@BRUU.org)] (continued)

**LGBTQ+ & Trans Respect & Rights Advocacy** The local PFLAG meetings are hosted in our building. In conjunction with the Fellowship Committee, BRUU will be participating in the PRIDE Day Festival on **May 16<sup>th</sup>**. [SEE article in the Round Up]

**POC:** Luther Saylor [703.999.1430]

Notes from the meeting are posted on **BRUUnet.org**

Next SJ Zoom meeting is open to all interested folks, **Monday May 11<sup>th</sup> at 7pm.**

Email **SocialJusticeAdmin@BRFUU.org** for the link.

## Events At & Around BRUU

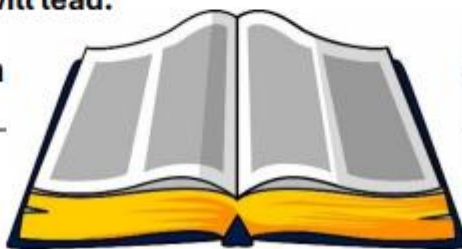
**BRUU's Biblical Discussion Group**  
**MAY 3—SUNDAY---9:00 AM---Flamingo Lounge**

### THREE DINNER PARTIES



Jesus told a story about a dinner party that appears in 3 versions in 3 different books: Matthew and Luke and even the Book of Thomas, which didn't make it into the standard Bible. At this Sunday's session of Biblical Discussion Group, we'll look at all 3 versions and try to figure out what Jesus really said. Come, let's sleuth together! Martin Crim will lead.

Come join



the discussion!

### BRUU Midweek Coffee Hour - 10am Wednesdays



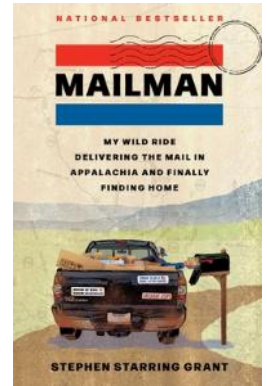
- Visit with old friends and make new ones
- Share your joys, concerns and insights
- Discuss serious topics and not so serious ones.
- Start your day off with a smile and a laugh or two!

**10am-11:30am every Wednesday on Zoom.** Feel free to drop in at any time.

Contact Gordon Ward for links at [midweekcoffee@bruu.org](mailto:midweekcoffee@bruu.org).

## Join the BRUU Book Group!

On Monday, **May 18 at 3:30**, we will be discussing "**Mailman: My Wild Ride Delivering the Mail in Appalachia and Finally Finding Home**" by Stephen Starring Grant. New members are welcome. Discussion can still be stimulating even if life got in the way and someone has not read much of the book. To get the Zoom link, contact us at [bookgroup@bruu.org](mailto:bookgroup@bruu.org)



## Pastoral Care

*One of our strengths as a congregation is how we care for one another.*



Please reach out to us at [pastoralcare@bruu.org](mailto:pastoralcare@bruu.org) and let us know if there is a need within our community, so that we may coordinate with caring volunteers within BRUU.

## Shared Vespers Service at All Souls (Washington, DC)

On **May 13 at 7:30 p.m.**, singers from Bull Run UU (BRUU) and Accotink UU will join the All Souls Choir for a special evening service at All Souls Church Unitarian in Washington, DC.

This **contemplative Vespers service** mirrors Taizé-style worship, with an emphasis on silence, sacred words, prayer, and singing, and also incorporates meditative traditions such as yogic singing and Buddhist chanting.

Join in the main sanctuary or participate online. All are welcome to this peaceful, collaborative worship experience.

More info: <https://www.all-souls.org/calendar#event=78120777;instance=20260513193000>



All year our young members have been contemplating the deeper questions in life, building connection to others, and having a great time! Come see what they have been up to on

**Sunday, May 17th, 11:30 am.**

Grab some coffee and visit with each of our classrooms, on the 1st and 3rd floors.

Email [dre@bruu.org](mailto:dre@bruu.org) for more information.

## Join BRUU Sangha:

# Living Awake: Applying Buddhist Wisdom in Daily Life



Over the next several months, the BRUU Sangha will be exploring an enriching theme: **Living Awake: Applying Buddhist Wisdom in Daily Life**. Ann Deschamps & Anna Penna will lead the BRUU Sangha in this journey. This series is designed for anyone seeking greater peace, clarity, compassion, and steadiness in the midst of everyday life. Whether you are new to meditation or have practiced for years, you are warmly welcome.

Using classic mindfulness techniques drawn from the Buddhist tradition, we will focus on a path of growth that moves through four key stages: stabilizing attention, understanding experience, transforming unhelpful patterns, and living with wisdom.

We begin where all mindfulness practice begins—with awareness of the present moment. By learning to steady attention through breath, body awareness, and gentle concentration practices, we create a foundation of calm and balance. From this place of greater steadiness, we can begin to see more clearly how the mind works.

As our awareness deepens, we explore how stress and suffering often arise in ordinary life through craving, resistance, worry, and habitual thought patterns. Rather than blaming ourselves, we learn to observe these patterns with kindness and curiosity. This insight helps us respond more wisely instead of reacting automatically.

A central practice in this series is learning to witness thoughts and emotions rather than becoming completely identified with them. We begin to notice that thoughts are events in the mind—not absolute truths—and emotions can be held with awareness rather than fear. This shift can bring greater freedom, emotional balance, and inner peace.

We will also gently examine the common sense of a fixed and separate “**self**.” As we loosen rigid ego habits, many forms of defensiveness, stress, and reactivity naturally begin to soften.

Because wisdom and compassion belong together, we will practice loving-kindness and compassion meditations that strengthen resilience, warmth, and care for ourselves and others.

Finally, we will focus on integration: bringing mindfulness into daily decisions, relationships, communication, and stressful moments. Each week includes practical tools that can be used immediately in real life.

Come join us as we learn together how to live more awake, more compassionate, and more fully present. If you have any questions, please contact the **BRUU Sangha** at [Sangha@BRUU.org](mailto:Sangha@BRUU.org)

Randy Earl, BRUU Sangha Facilitator



# Chrysalis Concert Series at BRUU

## October 2025-September 2026 season



### Sam Robbins - 10/17/2025

Transport yourself back to the golden era of singer-songwriters with the soulful tunes of Sam Robbins. Hailing from Boston, Sam's music draws inspiration from legends like James Taylor and Neil Young, blending timeless melodies with a contemporary twist that will captivate your heart.



<https://samrobbinsmusic.com/>

### Nothin' Fancy - 12/6/2025

Experience the magic of a live performance by Nothin' Fancy in the heart of Manassas! Join us for an unforgettable evening filled with soul-warming Bluegrass music that will leave you feeling uplifted and inspired. This is an opportunity to witness the phenomenal talent of a beloved band that has captured the hearts of audiences everywhere. Don't miss your chance to be swept away by the incredible sounds of Nothin' Fancy - it's an experience you'll remember long after the final note fades away.



<https://www.nothinfancybluegrass.com/>



### Greg Greenway - 1/10/2026

Greg is a cherished performer in many UU communities, and especially at BRUU. His talents defy categorization as he seamlessly blends musical genres and shares poignant insights on global events. Greg's performances serve as a reminder that we are all interconnected as citizens of the world. Come be inspired to embrace our ability to effect change. Don't miss this extraordinary opportunity to experience his artistry once again.

<https://www.greggreenway.com/>

### Amy Space - 2/27/2026

Get ready for an enchanting musical experience with the talented Amy Space. Known for her soul-stirring lyrics and captivating performances, Amy's music has the power to take you on a transformative journey. With heartfelt songs that resonate deeply, Amy Space's live performance promises an unforgettable evening filled with beauty and emotion.



<https://www.amyspace.com/>

### Joe Jencks - 4/10/2026

Spend an evening with award-winning musician Joe Jencks, a favorite performer in many UU communities. Joe was the opening performer for the Chrysalis Concert Series back in April 2023 and we're delighted he's coming back to see us again. Joe's profound music is sure to leave a lasting impact offering a night filled with beautiful melodies, social consciousness, and spiritual exploration.



<https://joejencks.com/>

### Billy Jonas - 5/23/2026

Join Billy Jonas on a musical journey that began around a campfire in 1972 and has since blossomed into a profound experience of connectedness and musical camaraderie. Through his soul-stirring vocals, mesmerizing guitar skills, and innovative use of industrial re-percussion, he creates an unforgettable performance that resonates with audiences of all ages. Don't miss this opportunity to be part of the Bucket Brigade and immerse yourself in the beauty of live music that touches the soul and brings people together in harmony.



<https://www.billyjonas.com/>



### Circle of Toads - 8/15/2026

Embark on a fun musical ride with Circle of Toads - a favorite BRUU band that brings together a unique and diverse mix of talents. Dave, Bill, Kel, and Mike have been playing together since 2023, combining their individual musical backgrounds to create a one-of-a-kind sound that resonates with audiences all around Manassas. Experience an eclectic blend of folk, rock, and original pieces that are sure to captivate your senses. A great way to wrap up the summer.

<https://www.facebook.com/p/Circle-of-Toads-61565700088114/>



### Chris Haddox - 9/15/2026

Help us welcome this talented artist from West Virginia. With heartfelt lyrics and soulful melodies, his performances are a blend of tradition and contemporary flair that captivate audiences of all ages. Prepare to be taken on a rollercoaster of emotions as each song is a testament to Haddox's ability to weave intricate yet relatable stories that resonate deep within the soul. Join in on the experience and let the music speak to you in ways you never imagined.

<https://www.chrishaddoxmusic.com/>

Get your tickets here:



**From the  
Treasurer's Office**

*Links for donating to BRUU*



BRUU can receive online charitable donations via Zelle, Stripe or Paypal. You can use these services for your pledge payment (supporting our operational expenses), food pantry or community assistance donations, capital fund contributions, Sunday and split-the-plate, or any of our special collections and fundraisers. When donating online, you may use the comments section to specify your designation.

If you have questions or concerns just send us a note. Thanks!

Heather Berthold, Treasurer,  
[treasurer@bruu.org](mailto:treasurer@bruu.org)

Robin Fegeas et al, Bookkeepers,  
[bookkeeper@bruu.org](mailto:bookkeeper@bruu.org)

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**Office Administrator**

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**BRUU OFFICE HOURS**

M-F 10:00 am – 2:00 pm  
2nd and 4th Tuesdays 12:00 pm-2:00 pm