



BULL RUN
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS

July 2026
Volume 44, Issue 7

Crossroads

WE ARE:

ALL CONNECTED

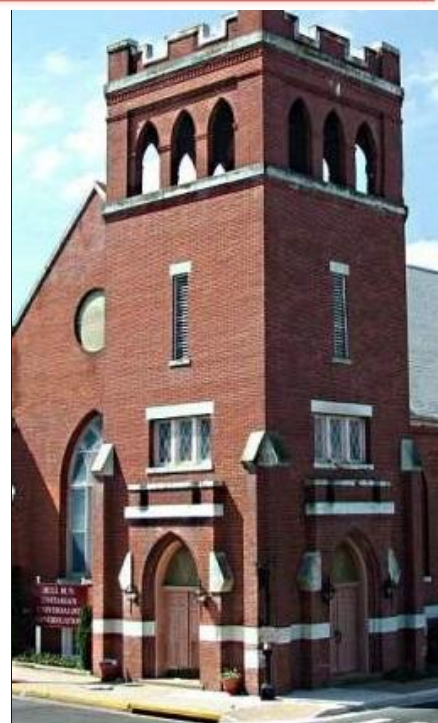
STRONGER TOGETHER

LOVE'S HANDS IN THE WORLD

CALLED TO CREATE JUSTICE

**RESPONSIBLE FOR ONE
ANOTHER AND THE EARTH**

UUA.ORG/IMAGES



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The Monthly BRUU Newsletter



Message from the President

To me the Bull Run Unitarian Universalists has been my place to learn, grow, and serve.

I joined BRUU in 1992 looking for a shared community of like minds and values in which to raise my daughter, Lacey. Playgroup (currently being resurrected) helped immensely as I traversed the arena of being a new mom. In religious education, I volunteered in the next older class to learn what was ahead. I joined the Religious Education Committee and became the director for 7 years which was a perfect fit form having graduated college with a BA in Education. I fulfilled the 10 Renaissance Modules including UU identity, Administration, Teacher Training, Youth Ministry, and Our Whole Lives sexuality program. As a lay person years later, I had the opportunity to be a mentor with the Coming of Age program to two of our youth. We taught friendship, how to navigate our way in the world, and peace. I loved this job.

I remember when Legos came out with a Star Wars line. It was a great collaboration, the ultimate dream for my son, Trevor. When I weight train to the Grateful Dead, to me that is the perfect mash up of my two passions. When recently Unitarian Universalism changed the principles to values, again I felt a mash up, more than ever, of what I felt “religiously” with my chosen community with which I participate and how I try to live my life.

And now, as President, I have a vision. Our building could be a hub of learning, education, excitement as we rebuilt our children/youth program that centers on love, transformative experience, and community partnerships. From this vision, we can be a haven for Manassas and Prince William County and truly make a difference.

I will be trying for as many one-on-one conversations/lunches with you as I possibly can in the coming months.

Love,

Nina



July Services

July 5 Power of Two

Rev. David Brown

What we need is a constant disruption in our life – a constant reminder of what is happening – an interruption that reminds us that we are not alone – that we don't have to manage this by ourselves – a reminder that there is more to life than me – a reminder that other people have needs – a perspective shift that takes me out of my head and let's me see life in a new way. That's what BRUU is all about.

July 12 Pursuit of Happiness

Rev. David Brown

Searching for happiness is a fool's errand - but living life with certain principles results in happiness. Let's discuss 8 principles for happy living

July 19 Three Thoughts on War

Lee Simon

Lee Simon will speak about why people go to war; why past, present and future wars are against their interests; and include an excerpt from the book Johnny Got His Gun, with additional quotes from famous thinkers and warriors. His goal is to increase our dedication to peace.

July 26 Five Remembrances

Rev. David Brown

The Buddhists have a teaching they call the Five Remembrances. It may seem counterintuitive, but when someone frightens us, we need to face it, explore it with curiosity, and ultimately accept it. Let's talk about the Five Remembrances.



The Food Pantry Turns 20!

For nearly two decades, the Bull Run Unitarian Universalist Church (BRUU) Food Pantry has been a reliable source of nourishment, support, and compassion for families throughout the Prince William community. Since opening its doors in **2006**, the pantry has worked tirelessly to combat food insecurity through partnerships with the **Capital Area Food Bank, Prince William Food Rescue, and the generosity of donors** both within and beyond the BRUU congregation.

What began as a local outreach effort has grown into a vital community resource. The pantry's longevity is a testament to the dedication of countless volunteers who have given their time, energy, and compassion to ensure that no neighbor goes hungry. Leaders including **Marilyn Truxal-Hamburg, Liz Alcauskas, Terry Lopez, Lois Montgomery, Martha Muirhead, Kathy Nichols, Dionne Stephenson, Osk Huneycutt, Laura Crowne, Ralph Giffen, and Gretchen Almstead** have helped build and sustain the program, coordinating a large volunteer team that continues this important work twice each month.

Today, the pantry is powered primarily by retired BRUU members whose commitment keeps the operation running smoothly. It takes many hands—and often strong backs—to unload delivery trucks, stock shelves, prepare the pantry for distribution, assist shoppers, and restore the space afterward. Len Clark manages shopper sign-in and serves as liaison with the Capital Area Food Bank, overseeing inventory and food orders. Angie Carrera-Earl maintains volunteer and customer data, helping secure grants and support for the pantry's continued operation.

The BRUU Food Pantry currently serves approxi-

mately **80 families** on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. Customers range from individuals carrying backpacks to large families of seven or more. The pantry strives to provide nutritious staples and fresh foods, including produce, meat, pasta, rice, canned fruits and vegetables, dried and canned beans, peanut butter, cooking oil, flour or masa, raisins, boxed milk, and cereal.

The continued success of this nearly 20-year ministry is made possible through generous donations received during Sunday services and throughout the year. These contributions allow the pantry to supplement free and reduced-cost food obtained through its community partners and ensure that local families have access to healthy, nutritious options.

As BRUU celebrates two decades of service, the need for volunteers remains strong. Several long-serving leaders are preparing to step down from their roles, creating opportunities for new volunteers to continue this important legacy of community care. Those interested in helping unload trucks, assist shoppers, or support pantry operations are encouraged to contact foodpantry@bruu.org. Food donations and reusable or plastic grocery bags are also welcome and may be dropped off at the BRUU Congregation Office Monday through Friday between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.



Green Up Prince William and Manassas

Charlie Grymes, BRUU Green Team



Second Sunday Hike

On **July 12th**, we will take advantage of the fee-free day at national parks and explore **Rocky Branch**! We'll check out the new bridge over Rocky Branch, replacing one that washed out several years ago.

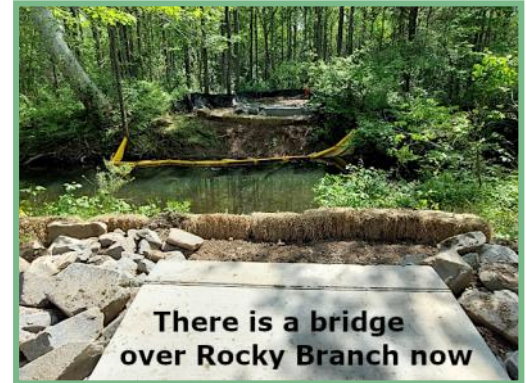
Our Second Sunday Hikes are **1:00-3:00pm**.

Hike distance will be about **2 miles** on well-maintained natural surface trails with some hills, roots and rocks. Well-behaved dogs on a leash are welcome.

Register online at <https://tinyurl.com/e27h4m8s> to get parking details, and notified in case weather forces us to cancel.

Questions? Contact Charlie Grymes at 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



BRUU's Online Presence & YOU!

BRUU's Facebook page is attracting new visitors on Sundays!

It's a great start to sharing what BRUU is all about and I could use your help!!!



Please share your photos, your events, your successes and your needs. And then like or comment on the post! <https://www.bruu.org/announcement-form/>

People who use social media like to see something they can connect to and a part of that is seeing that BRUU is made up of real people who care about the community and environment. So if you have anything to share, even if you think it's small, it could be meaningful to someone who sees it. Feeling a connection to a community viewed online will only drive people towards making actual connections in the real world. I am optimistic that all of these efforts will only enhance the BRUU Community and bring more like-minded people to the church.

Thank you, Kate, BRUU OA

Summer ALE

Cathy Ring

SUMMER SALADS & ALE TOPICS

This summer at BRUU we will be having two sessions of our Adult Learning Exploration (ALE) suppers. **Wednesday, July 15th** AND **Wednesday, August 12th**.

Each evening will begin with a potluck salad supper (any type, with enough to share). **Arrive** early, no later than **6pm**, as dining will begin promptly @ 6:15pm. **Topic Sessions will start at 7pm.**

There are **arrangements for childcare** - a parent must [email](mailto:RE.Adult@BRUU.org) [RE.Adult@BRUU.org] by the prior Sunday, July 12th, to provide names & ages. You will be home before dark! Come for this July communal meal (it's too hot to cook!) and/or a **Topic Session:**

- **Data Centers & Our Communities**

Insights on how data centers impact our environment, our communities, and our public health. There are misconceptions about the regulations in place, and the steps data centers have taken or plan to take to be responsible members of our communities. This session will shed light on current policy action in Virginia and how we can help make a difference.

Facilitators: Luther Saylor & a Rep member of the Chesapeake Climate Action Network (CCAN)

- **Come Sing a Song (or not)**

The UUA has a brand-new hymnal, Sing Out Love. Our Music Director would like to share some of the new music, with interested congregants, not just Choir members.

Facilitator: Dr. David Maley



- **BRUU Sanga Tools For Less Suffering**

Learn how meditation, mindfulness and the teachings of Buddha may help you live with more ease and avoid “suffering”. A Sangha provides an opportunity to practice meditation, mindfulness and learn Buddhist teachings. Sangha also brings in teachings about yoga, breath work and neural plasticity. Attend this ALE session and practice using the tools mentioned. This could help you decide if you want to continue to practice these tools in community with the BRUU Sangha group, which gathers every Thursday at 7:00pm in the BRUU Flamingo Lounge.

Facilitator: Randy Earl

- **CUUPS (Covenant of UU Pagans)**

For all who are pagan and pagan-curious, this class for you. From myths about witchcraft in media to how to perform magic in your own kitchen using ingredients from the grocery store. The BRUU CUUPS welcomes all who would like to take part in this ALE session, and potentially attend future gatherings.

Facilitator: Laura Tripp

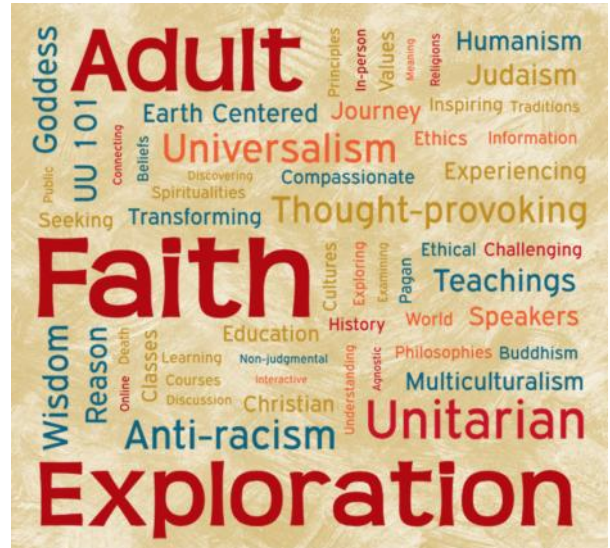
BONUS ALE SESSION – FRIDAY, JULY 17th @ 7:00pm

- **SOUND BATH in the BRUU Studio**

Join an hour-long deeply immersive, meditative experience where participants lie down & are "bathed" in sound waves & vibrations. Instruments like crystal singing bowls and chimes are used to help quiet the mind, release physical tension, and promote profound relaxation and nervous system regulation.

Facilitator: Kathy Sanchez

Watch for August Topics in the next CrossRoads.



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

Please reach out to us at 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.



Opportunity to Support the Food Pantry!

Your contributions to our dedicated Share the Plate collections make it possible for us to help feed approximately 80 local families. Donations of food (rice, beans, oil, canned corn or tomatoes, etc.) or bags can be placed on the metal shelf at the end of the downstairs hall by Room #104.

Here's another way to help. One of our newest volunteers, **Annalisa Dewberry**, has started making reusable grocery bags to help us have a couple for each food distribution on **2nd and 4th Tuesday mornings**. While we have a history of encouraging patrons to bring their own bags, there's always a few new customers, and those who need a reminder.

Scan the code for easy pattern options.

For those who might like to see an example of the bag being constructed, scan the code to watch the **YouTube video**: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BglMM_4cKlk , where a woman does a little variation on the "easy" version.

If you don't have a stash of sturdy fabric , "**Dabble**" across the street from BRUU's Church Street entrance has an array of affordable second hand option!



What will you be doing in 2027?

There's still time to register for the **2026 experience of SUUSI**, the Southeast UU Summer Institute, **July 19-25 at Radford University**. A veritable gaggle of BRUUer's will be there, creating an intentional community filled with fun, music, workshops, nature trips... and a wee bit of sleep.



If you need more time to plan ahead... then start planning for **SUUSI in 2027**. Never been? Then plan to bid at the **BRUU Auction this Fall** on a discounted registration package.

SUUSI is a one-week experience at the end of July each year. It's an opportunity to make friends quickly, chill out/get energized, learn new skills, eat BBQ at 2:30am, and connect with others.

This UU version of "**Church Camp**" is a true family experience. The kids and children make the parents and grandparents take them back year after year, while Young Adults arrange their vacation time so they can attend as well.

Questions? **Ask Cathy Ring, Star/Jeanette Muir, Mike Freeland** – and lots of others who planned ahead and have enjoyed this special week.

Staff Spotlight

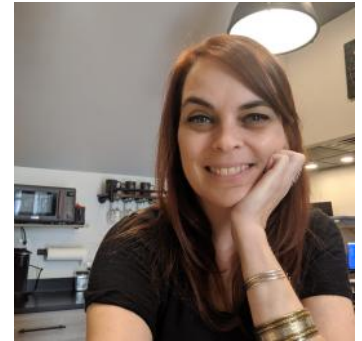


George Monroe, Custodian/Maintenance/Electrician

George has been with BRUU for about 2 years. Previously, George was a with Fairfax Water for 20 years where he maintained, inspected, and repaired electrical and HVAC systems. At BRUU, he's the one to go to for repairs, cleaning, and a good joke from time to time.

Kate Casey, Office Administrator

Kate started at BRUU a couple of months ago. Previously, Kate was the Director of Operations for a multi-office title company located in MD, DC and VA. At BRUU, Kate takes care of everything administrative such as the BRUU newsletters, Sunday Service order and presentations, rentals, social media and when she's not picking on George, she's updating the sign and website. Kate's always willing to help if she has the time.



You can find George somewhere in the building and Kate in the office from **10:00 to 2:00 p.m. M-F**. Stop by sometime and say "hi!"



Events At & Around BRUU

BRUU Midweek Coffee Hour - 10am Wednesdays



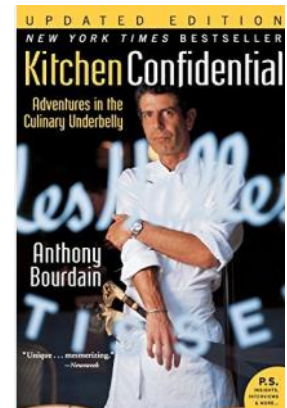
- Visit with old friends and make new ones
- Share your joys, concerns and insights
- Discuss serious topics and not so serious ones.
- Start your day off with a smile and a laugh or two!

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

Join the BRUU Book Group!

On Monday, July 27 at 3:30, we will be discussing "Kitchen Confidential" by Anthony Bourdain. 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



Pick up your RE Projects!!!

A number of art projects and photos from the Service Pathway are in the classrooms on the Third Floor. They represent hours of thoughtful work. Please pick them up after the Sunday Service.

Any projects and photos not removed by July 26 will be discarded.

Contact dre@bruu.org



First Friday will be on Friday, July 10th! Stop by BRUU for some fun!

BRUU's Biblical Discussion Group
July 5—SUNDAY---9:00 AM---Flamingo Lounge

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE DIE?



The Bible presents different stories about what happens when we die. Is it Heaven? Hell? Or something else? Let's look at what the Bible says rather than what people say it says. Martin Crim will lead.

Come join



the discussion!

Welcome Reverend Brown Potluck

Sunday July 12th after service

Bring a dish to share

<https://tinyurl.com/BRUU-Minister-Potluck>



Welcome Rev. Brown!

As contract minister, he strives to share with others that inclusiveness and the desire to keep learning about those things which transcend our day-to-day lives. David holds a BA in Music from the University of Missouri, an MA in Biblical Languages from Calvary Seminary, and an MBA in Information Systems from Northcentral University.

Contact Rev. Brown via minister@bruu.org.



We give thanks for this minister and all that he has given and will give to the living tradition we share.



Chrysalis Concert Series: Music, Community, and Connection



Circle of Toads

Local band **Circle of Toads** is known for their layered harmonies, clever takes on timeless classics, and original songs! They are pleased to be performing as part of the **Chrysalis Concert Series** on **Saturday, August 15**.



For ticket information, scan the QR Code or email chrysalis@bruu.org



Up Next...

Chrysalis Concerts
presents
LIVE
MUSIC

9/15—Chirs Haddox
10/31—Friction Farm

Contact Janete Muir
for more information,
chrysalis@bruu.org



'Moment in Time'

By Elizabeth Forbes

I stand here amongst the trees and grass
The pews and papers, the eyes and hearts
And before me, I behold - a flower.

Such a small thing in this vast world
Yet what joy it brings me in it's fascinating form
Each sculpted petal and raised stamen I know was not created for me
But for the creatures interwoven in the plant's design.

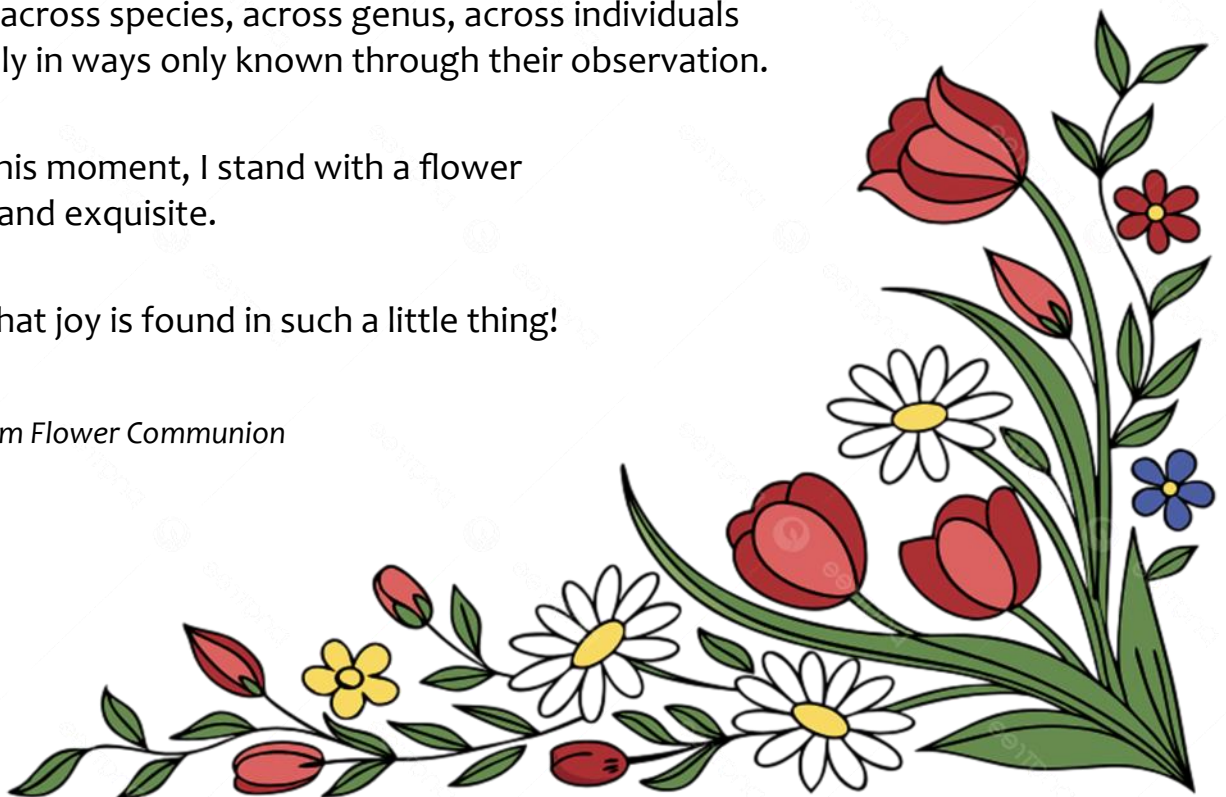
I just also happen to be able to see
To see color, to see light, to see structure and form
I get to share in this natural beauty!
And I also find joy in how this form will change
From bud to bloom to wilting away.

There is awe to be found in every stage
Just as every moment is unique
So is every flower
Different across species, across genus, across individuals
Each lovely in ways only known through their observation.

Thus, in this moment, I stand with a flower
Singular, and exquisite.

And O' what joy is found in such a little thing!

Excerpt from Flower Communion



**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

Robin Fegeas et al, Bookkeepers,

bookkeeper@bruu.org

BRUU

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Youth Representative

TBS

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Director of Music

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Office Administrator

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BRUU OFFICE HOURS

M-F 10:00 am – 2:00 pm