



BULL RUN
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS

August 2025
Volume 43, Issue 8

Crossroads



17 BRUUs joined in the Southeast UU Summer Institute (SUUSI) community on July 20-26. The crowd from BRUU was one of the largest from any congregation to attend our regional UU "church camp."



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The monthly BRUU Newsletter

August Services

The Worship Committee has arranged a variety of programs for our summer services, most on our theme of Spiritual Travelogues – places where congregants have found inspiration, a connection to the divine, or felt changed by the people and places they visited. Each week will showcase how spiritual experiences can be found in every corner of the world, even in our own backyards if we are open to it.

August 3: We rearranged the calendar a bit to deliver our stuffed Back Packs on time for the first day of school, so August 3 has become our “5th Sunday Service Sunday.” Here’s how to participate:

1. Sign up for donation items: <https://tinyurl.com/BRUUBackpack2025>
2. Drop off your items the week of July 27 – August 2nd to Room 108 – Elementary room next to Nursery.
3. Join us Sunday August 3rd to Stuff Back Packs! A multigenerational activity benefitting Sinclair Elementary families. Thank you!

August 10 our guest speaker will be Rev. David Brown from the Fredericksburg UU church on The Power of Prayer.

August 17 will be a panel of our congregants speaking on their peak experiences when visiting Machu Picchu, Peru. There will be pipes and pictures.

August 24 Andrea & John Calvin will share the spirit of New Orleans, their former home.

August 31 Laura Crown will reflect on her trips abroad and cultural differences that create epiphanies for her.

From the President's Desk

Josh Rachford, President, Board of Directors

Where Seeking *Becomes* Service

I'm writing this from the Southeastern Unitarian Universalist Institute (SUUSI) at Radford University, where UUs from across the Southeast have gathered to create a week-long intentional community centered on our shared values. Being here has been energizing and inspiring, reminding me that BRUU is part of a much larger movement of people working for justice, equity, and beloved community.

We made it to SUUSI thanks to our own BRUU community - Cathy Ring and Charlie Grymes donated this experience to our auction last year, and my family was lucky enough to win alongside Heather Tsuffis's family. I highly encourage anyone who hasn't experienced SUUSI to bid on this opportunity at our next auction. It is powerful to see our UU principles lived out in an intentional community for a full week.

Building on Strong Foundations

SUUSI reinforced something I wrote about last month: we have the right people and the right values. I'm seeing this leadership in action at BRUU in ways both large and small.

Josh LaRosa stepped up to chair our Ministerial Search Committee, and their work has officially begun. You can reach the committee at search@bruu.org with any input or questions. This kind of willingness to take on significant responsibility for our shared future exemplifies the leadership pipeline we're building.

But leadership shows up in everyday moments too. After the recent cooking-focused ALE class, Becks and Oscar Sosa, Mike Freeland, Mark Hempen, and John Sunda jumped in to help clean up dishes - nobody asked them to, they just saw what needed doing and did it. That's the spirit that makes BRUU work.

President's Desk, continued

Josh Rachford, President, Board of Directors

Our Membership Committee is also seeing new energy, with several people taking on roles as greeters and age-group liaisons. These volunteers are the first faces newcomers see and the connections that help people find their place in our community.

At least one important role is still open. We need someone to take on the role of Worship Chair. This position can be limited to two years, is highly impactful, and there are resources available to support whoever takes it on. It's a chance to shape the spiritual heart of our community.

Our Board retreat on July 12 helped align our leadership team around these opportunities, discussing how we can work together most effectively to lead BRUU toward our shared vision: a community where seeking *becomes* service and service becomes justice - a community that is sustainable and thriving for decades to come.

Preparing for an Important Conversation

Coming out of the Board retreat, the Board believes that the congregation faces choices that will influence BRUU's trajectory for the next decade. The minister is one of these decisions – but not the only one.

These types of decisions require the kind of serious study, deliberation, and discernment that strong communities are capable of. It also requires us to practice direct, honest communication. We can't make good decisions if we avoid difficult topics or rely on assumptions about what others think.

In response to concerns raised by members and staff, the Board is also forming a task force dedicated to building safety at BRUU. If you have expertise to contribute and can make an intensive but short-term commitment, please contact board@bruu.org.

President's Desk, continued

Josh Rachford, President, Board of Directors

Looking Ahead

The energy I've experienced at SUUSI and at our Board retreat convinces me that BRUU has what it takes to navigate whatever decisions lie ahead. Our August 10 Town Hall will start – but not conclude – this important conversation. I encourage everyone to attend - either in person or virtually. Collective decision-making works best when we all show up to engage. We'll also create ways for those who prefer to share thoughts privately rather than speaking publicly to give input.

Your Role

I urge you to show up to the Town Hall. Ask questions. Share your perspective. Trust that we can handle whatever conversation we need to have. The moment is still now. The people are still here. Let's continue choosing to trust each other's capacity to serve, to grow, and to make the decisions that will strengthen our beloved community.

In service and solidarity,

Josh Rachford

President, BRUU Board of Directors

Board in Action

Board in Action, August 2025

Serving Our Shared Mission

BRUU's Board serves BRUU by guiding our vision and direction, supporting our operational assets including staff, monitoring our institutional assets like our building and endowments, and establishing policies that further our mission. July's meeting focused on several key areas where we're fulfilling these responsibilities on your behalf.

Key Decisions This Month

Building Our Future Together The Board will be asking the Endowment Committee to help fund a replacement for our roof at an estimated cost of \$51,000. We're also beginning a comprehensive evaluation of our building's long-term needs, starting with a task force on safety upgrades but ultimately including accessibility, aesthetics, parking, and other needs.

Investing in Our People We approved a well-deserved salary increase for our sexton, combining both a cost-of-living adjustment and a performance-based raise. This reflects our commitment to fairly compensating the people who keep BRUU running day-to-day and is in line with the previously approved budget.

Responding to Safety Concerns After hearing concerns from staff about feeling unsafe in our building, the Board immediately began forming a safety task force to address these issues.

Celebrating Generosity

Our Ministerial Search Committee received an anonymous \$15,000 donation to support their important work. This extraordinary generosity reflects the investment our members are making in BRUU's future. It also means our search process can move forward without financial constraints.

Board in Action, Continued

Get Involved

Join the Safety Task Force: We need members with relevant expertise who can make a short-term but intensive commitment. Contact board@bruu.org if interested.

Share Your Building Thoughts: As we evaluate our facilities, your perspective matters. Come to the Town Hall ready to engage.

Support the Ministerial Search: The committee is at search@bruu.org if you have input to share.

BRUU Annual Auction

SAVE THE DATE! **BRUU's 2025 Annual Auction:** ***It Takes A Village***

The Live Auction will be held at BRUU on **1 November**, and we plan to start accepting donations around Mid-September.

The theme for the 2025 Auction is *It Takes A Village*.....it is the combined effort, the merging of our talents is what shapes BRUU and makes our *Village* special; and so, it is with the Auction. It takes a village to prepare, donate and participate.

There are so many reasons that The Auction is such a great event. The Auction is an opportunity to strengthen & build connections within our community, an opportunity to generate resources for our congregation, and the Auction reflects what can be achieved when our village works together.

So many questions to answer, things to do and things and things to think about:

- Who will be offering dinners, activities or vacay lodgings?
- When will the Sign-Up sheets get posted?
- What items will be available (jewelry?, instruments?, LEMON CURD?)

Details for this fun and exciting event will be available soon via Crossroads & Round Up!

Please contact Scott Maile if you are interested in being part of the Auction
Planning Team

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Thanks to Randy Earl for the past 2 years of service as membership chair. In studying up on my new responsibilities I've signed on for, I am finding a wealth of upkeep that he monitored so well.

We have a full **Greeter** schedule so thanks go to Amanda, Colin, Martha M, Faye, Zarina, Heather B, Martha W, and Bridgett! We are working up a convenient way to let us know you are coming if accessibility is an issue for you. The new temporary parking across the street is a godsend and we can come help you.

We will be holding a **New Member Orientation** 8/17 at 11:45 in the conference room. Please contact the membership committee membership@bruu.org if you wish to attend.

We have been requesting updates to your information to the **DIRECTORY** so check your listing AND send us a recent picture, please! We will be publishing a limited number of hard copies so put in your request if you prefer paper like me and Margaret.

We have requested a **New Member Recognition** time from the worship committee during a service in September so if you are a fairly new member and have not yet been publicly welcomed and introduced, please send your name/contact to membership@bruu.org.

We have designated specific liaisons for you to connect: **Kaylee Rachford** for parents with children and **Theresa Scalzo** for "older" young adults

September we will be resuming our official monthly meeting time 4th Wednesdays at 7pm on Zoom. Join us?

New chair Nina Lomax, Terrie McClure, Robin Fegeas, Cathy Ring, Kaylee Rachford, Bridgett Wilson

BRUU Sangha

What Would the Buddha Say?

On August 7th Ann Deschamps will lead the BRUU Sangha. August the floor is yours! Bring your questions, ideas, challenges, and life experiences, and together we'll explore how mindfulness can meet them. No set topic — just open, supportive conversation inspired by the question: “What Would the Buddha Say?” Come as you are, and let's reflect, inquire, and practice together.

The discussion & meditations led by Ann will start at 7:00 PM and will be in the Flamingo Lounge. Please arrive several minutes before the start time of 7:00 PM. If you have not attended a prior BRUU Sangha gathering, please send an email to Sangha@BRUU.ORG to express your interest in attending and to get necessary information for access to the building.

A dana basket will be there for generosity to the Sangha. Online generosity can be expressed at Zell using bookkeeper@bruu.org or Paypal using the following link <https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/BullRunUU>. In the memo lines note BRUU Sangha.

If you want additional information, send an email to Sangha@BRUU.ORG.

BRUU Sangha,

Randy Earl



BRUUsers Enjoy SUUSI

Counting family members and fellow travelers, 17 BRUUsers joined in the Southeast UU Summer Institute [<https://suusi.org/>] (SUUSI) community on July 20-26. The crowd from BRUU was one of the largest from any congregation to attend our regional UU "church camp." (We managed to gather most of the attendees for the picture... can you spot one that was photoshopped in?)

There was lots of music, workshops (ranging from "Live Your Values" to "Ballroom Dancing"), worship services, more music, nature trips, and conversations with the other 500 or so UU's on the Radford University campus. BRUUsers led mushroom walks, organized Nightlife activities (including the guitarist gathering that started at 11:30pm), taught knots... we're part of the SUUSI team.

Two BRUU families attended for the first time in 2025. The next Auction on November 1 will once again include the opportunity for people who have never attended a SUUSI to bid on a discounted registration for SUUSI at Radford on July 19-25, 2026.



Events At & Around BRUU

Koffee & Kitchen Krewe Seeks Assistance

If you enjoy our BRUU Fair Trade Coffee and fellowship time after our Sunday service consider volunteering. Just one Sunday a month you could help to keep the pots brewing & the cups clean. If you can arrive by 9:30am to set up OR plan to stay a little after the social hour to clean up your help would be appreciated. It's a Sunday only team effort – there are NO committee meetings to attend! NO previous experience required, on the job training, AND aprons are provided. What's not to like about donating your time & talent to this BRUU activity. Contact Kitchen@BRUU.org to apply.



BRUU's Quaker Friends Meeting

Please come join us on Tuesdays, from 7-8pm, for BRUU's Quaker Friends Meeting. Contact David for more info: music@bruu.org.

Info videos:

<https://youtu.be/hxjH4sa2RFI?si=CcdZWEborVEnPooK>

https://youtu.be/CMH3OqFh_dM?si=s093tg9Ou1s210Lz

BRUU's Biblical Discussion Group:
AUGUST 3, SUNDAY, 9:00 AM in the Flamingo Lounge



BIBLICAL PROPHECY for HERE & NOW

**What did the Biblical prophets say
about the future, like *now* in the 21st century?**

Who is "a prophet"? What does it mean to be one? What did the Biblical prophets say about *us* in modern times? Can we relate to what they said & to the whole idea of prophecy? Come join the discussion of this intriguing topic under Martin Crim's leadership.



Mark your calendar for
Biblical Discussion Group
1ST Sunday of every month,
9:00, Flamingo Lounge



ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Sunday, August 31, 2025 11:30 am
Join us for ice cream and mingling
Bring your favorite ice cream and toppings

POC Mary Kadlubowski
Fellowship@Bruu.org





YOGA

QI GONG

Mondays
6:30 - 7:30 pm

Thursdays
6:00 - 6:50 pm

Class will meet
July 7
July 21

taking a break
for August but
will resume in
September

Taking a break for July

Class will resume
August 7

Contact dre@bruu.org
for questions or to register

BRUU Midweek Coffee Hour - 10am Wednesdays



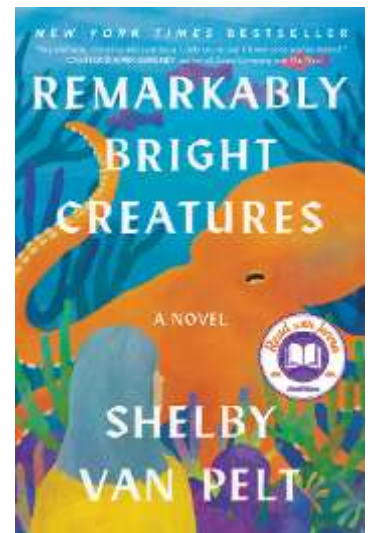
- Visit with old friends and make new ones
- Share your joys, concerns and insights
- Discuss serious topics and not so serious ones.
- Start your day off with a smile and a laugh or two!

10am-11:30am every Wednesday on Zoom. Feel free to drop in at any time. Contact Gordon Ward for links at midweekcoffee@bruu.org.

Join the BRUU Book Group!

On August 18th, at 3:30, we will be discussing "Remarkably Bright Creatures" by Shelby Van Pelt.

We meet via Zoom on the third Monday of each month. New members welcome, including people who are not members of BRUU. To get the Zoom invitation, contact us at 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 and let us know if there is a need within our community, so that we may coordinate with caring volunteers within BRUU.

See Something? Report It!



Notice anything in or around the BRUU building that needs maintenance or repair?
Please report it by using this link:

www.bruu.org/www2/building-repair-request-form

This will provide a quick opportunity for you to contact the Building & Grounds folks and alert them to the situation that needs attention.

Deadlines



To better serve the BRUU community, late submissions for BRUU publications will not be accepted, except in extreme circumstances. Please note the following deadlines for BRUU publications:

Round-Up: 11:59pm on Tuesday night

Crossroads: 11:59pm on the 24th of the month

Order of Service items (incl. announcements on the back): 11:59pm on Wednesday night

Items received after these deadlines **will not be included**, except in extreme circumstances.

Please contact office@bruu.org or pastpresident@bruu.org with any concerns. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in this matter.

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

9350 Main Street
Manassas, VA 20110-5150
703-361-6269

BRUU Board of Directors

President

Josh Rachford (2025-27)
president@bruu.org

Vice President

Dr. Michelle Fegeas-Foster (2025-26)
vicepresident@bruu.org

Secretary

Sandra Fox (2024-26)
secretary@bruu.org

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Heather Berthold (2025-27)
treasurer@bruu.org

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Ralph Giffen (2025-26)
John Sunda (2025-27)
director@bruu.org

Youth Representative

Sashka Visnevski (2025-26)

Program Council

Mary Kadlubowski (2025-26)
programcouncil@bruu.org

Ex-Officio (Immediate Past President)

Angie Carrera-Earl
pastpresident@bruu.org

BRUU STAFF

Director of Lifespan Religious Education

Kristin Worthington
dre@bruu.org

Director of Music

David Maley
music@bruu.org

Office Administrator

Taylor Johnson
office@bruu.org

Sexton

George Monroe
sexton@bruu.org

BRUU OFFICE HOURS

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