



BULL RUN
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS

March 2024
Volume 42, Issue 3

Crossroads



*From the annual Youth Service,
"The Youth Service is in Session!"
February 25, 2024*



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The monthly BRUU Newsletter



March Sermon Descriptions

March 3: Generosity of Heart (Rev. Charlotte Lehmann) – Through our generosity we serve the greater good in the world. This morning we kick off our annual budget drive. Your generosity fuels BRUU’s ability to fulfill its mission and vision to be a safe community for seeking and service and to create a world where peace and justice prevail.

March 10: A Ramadan Primer (Rev. Charlotte Lehmann) – We will learn about the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, its practices and teachings. The service will include the sharing of personal experiences by a young adult woman.

This month’s 2nd Sunday Share-the-Plate recipient is Rainbow Therapeutic Riding in Haymarket, VA (<https://www.rainbowriding.org/>). “Changing Lives One Hoofbeat at a Time: Rainbow Therapeutic Riding Center is a place where individuals with special challenges come together, and where victories – some dramatic, some modest, but all significant – are joyously celebrated.”

March 17: The Life of Saint Patrick (Rev. Charlotte Lehmann) – On this Saint Patrick’s Day, we will learn about this foremost patron saint of Ireland. We’ll enjoy Irish music from our choir and musicians. As they say, we are all a little bit Irish on March 17th!

The 3rd Sunday Share-the-Plate benefits BRUU’s Community Assistance Fund.

March Sermons, Continued

March 24: The Value of Our Beloved Community (Canvass Team) - When each of us first entered these doors, we came ready to see what BRUU had to offer. Our reasons may have been different but many of us came for a sense of community. As members and friends, we've all been nurtured in so many ways, been able to do good, and develop valuable friendships. We understand that, like other faith and nonprofit communities, these opportunities would not exist without the support of its members and friends who invest their time, talent and treasure. Come join us as we celebrate these experiences and explore how to effectively secure this vibrant connection with our beloved community.

March 31: 5th Sunday Social Justice Service: Resurrecting Our World (Kristin Worthington & Rev. Charlotte Lehmann) – For our celebration of Easter this year, we are going to be engaging in activities that contribute to resurrecting our natural ecosystems. Following a short opening program in the sanctuary, those who would like to go to Merrimac Farm Wildlife Management Area, part of the Prince William Conservation Alliance, in Nokesville to plant native bushes will do that while those who remain at BRUU will make “seed bombs.”

There will be a special collection for UU Ministry for Earth (<https://www.uumfe.org/>), a UU affiliate organization which has the following mission and vision: being “a seedbed for spiritual grounding and education that inspires deep practices of Earth care, justice and flourishing for all.” And visioning “a world in which reverence, gratitude, and care for each other and for the living Earth are central to the lives of all people.”



Minister's Column



Denominational Affairs are Our Affairs

Rev. Charlotte Lehmann

The Article II Study Commission (A2SC) has released news about the ongoing process for revising the UUA's by-laws as required by those by-laws. The news pertains to which of the recent proposed amendments met the requirements to be included in the agenda at our upcoming General Assembly in June.

You can read the proposed language which was approved by the delegates in June 2023 here: <https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/article-ii-study-commission/final-proposed-revision-article-ii>. After this was published in October 2023, the A2SC – as per the prescribed process – opened up an amendment process that had a February 1, 2024 deadline. I've just learned that amendments proposing two additional values will be up for debate and vote in June 2024. In addition, if I understand correctly, there are some less substantive amendments relative to one of the values already included in the proposed revision language; that has to do with the value of "Equity."

The two additional values that are proposed to be added are "Peace" and "Reason." I explored the proposal to include "Peace" as one of our values in a worship service on February 4th. You can listen to that service here: <https://www.bruu.org/www2/services/peace-a-uu-value-video/>. I had not previously seen or read about the amendment proposing that "Reason" be added to the list of values about which we would covenant. It reads, "Reason. We search for truth and meaning, informed by reason, evidence, and the results of science, motivated by wonder curiosity, and compassion. We covenant to listen to and respect the views of others, and to remain open to new ideas." I'm not particularly surprised that "Reason" met the criteria for inclusion on the final agenda. I will explore this UU value further during a worship service on May 19th; so stay tuned.

Minister's Column, Continued

Before then, Martin Crim will be offering an ALE discussion on how the UUA's governance pertains to its member congregations, the rules governing its by-laws revisions, and what impact these kinds of revisions have on us. Please check the RE calendar or contact Kristin Worthington, our DLRE, or Martin for further information.

These denominational affairs really are our affairs – we are a member congregation of the UUA – and what happens at General Assembly (GA) matters to all of us. BRUU still needs to identify delegates to represent us during this all-virtual GA, which is June 19-23. You can attend from the comfort of your own home. A delegate registering for “business only” may attend free of charge, although a donation is requested. If you'd like to have access to GA programming, you'll need to register for the full adult package. Youth (10th grade through 18 years old) who are BRUU members may also serve as delegates. Fees increase after March 15th, so act now: <https://www.uua.org/ga/registration>. BRUU can cover at least a portion of your registration fee through our Leadership Development Fund.

Participating in our denominational affairs is one of the ways that we live our current 5th Principle of UUism: “The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.”

May your year be blessed with hope, peace and love as we together work for justice and build Beloved Community for all.

Rev. Charlotte

P.S. Don't forget to exercise your right to vote on March 5th during the Super Tuesday Primary here in Virginia!

From the President's Desk

Angie Carrera, President, Board of Directors

With so much going on with our Reorganization moving steadily forward, I have been reviewing my own work to make sure that I have accomplished some of the things on my to-do list for BRUU. One of those tasks is to keep focused on the health and vitality of the organization as it relates to BRUU operations and engagement. As I learned more about BRUU's inner workings in my first few months, I'd given this a lot of thought.

Having created or updating over 20 volunteer position descriptions (VPDs) for submission to the Board and Knowledgebase (our online filing cabinet of operational material), it seemed natural, for me to examine our assets and areas for improvement, such as our levels of engagement, our staff-board relations, our employee job satisfaction, and (last but certainly not least) our volunteer satisfaction.

Our greatest resource is easily recognizable: Our volunteers (members and friends) without whom nothing could happen! Every one of you, from those helping with wonderful activities and program offerings or stepping up to deal with pop-up challenges in whatever role is appropriate; to our board members who are constantly in motion focused on the BRUUs operational, physical, and financial health, make us better. Your contribution of time, talent and treasure is the lifeblood of BRUU.

I've also been very focused on three areas of improvement, so I've been:

- Encouraging strong lines of communication between myself/our board and individual members of the congregation and ensuring that we follow appropriate practices to deal with issues as they become known to me/board;
- Recruiting a "second" individual for any critical task in which we were relying on one overworked volunteer (such as door-code assignments, access to BRUUnet, etc.) so we don't end up clueless when (not "if") that one volunteer/staffer is no longer available to take care of a significant problem; and
- Developing SOPs, or having others develop SOPs, for Knowledgebase to ensure that information is not siloed or inaccessible, especially if/when no one knowledgeable person is available due to "life" or another natural or man-made emergency (like the pandemic, etc.).

From the President's Desk, Continued

Reorganization is greasing our wheels, prompting new ways of looking at things and ways of doing things as well. Core committees have taken shape and things are popping! Taking advantage of this movement, I've recruited teams to energize and move some critical tasks forward. These folks have shared their thoughts on what they see/feel about our process, commented on what we're doing right and ways to improve are all important to our continued development as a congregation. Even better, they've stepped up to respond to challenges with effective and often innovative actions needed to make a positive change for BRUU. Among them are:

- A Canvass Team, which will meet over the next few weeks to modify our prior canvass practice, so you will be hearing from this team soon!
- A Right Relations Team, which will be part of the Covenantal Relations Core Committee. is an initiative that will help us better understand the importance of living our BRUU Covenant. You can check this document out (again, if it's been a while) in the Sanctuary and accept my invitation to participate in the process, sharing your thoughts with me about how this team can help us grow and thrive.

Please feel free to communicate with me and other members of the Board with ideas on how we can continue to grow and thrive.

Together for BRUU,

Angie Carrera, President, Board of Directors

PS: Please don't forget that Board Matters is in a separate box for a summary of items discussed at the most recent board meeting. Check it out!

Board Matters

The Board meets on the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the BRUU Conference Room and is available on Zoom.

The Board reviewed the Consent Agenda with reports from the President, Program Council Chair, Minister, and Membership Chair, which were approved. Anyone interested in further information about the meeting may contact the President at President@BRUU.org.

- The 7 Core Committees have been established with good progress in clarifying leadership and agendas for these groups. The Board agreed to schedule a Town Hall for March 17* after the service, and the reorg will be one of the discussion topics.
- Our Letter of Intent (LOI) requesting a grant from Partners for Sacred Places will be sent by the deadline of February 29. The Feasibility Study, which will help determine if we are ready for a Capital Campaign, will begin in early March with interviews of BRUU congregants and local community. Its detailed report will come to the Board for review and a summary will be presented to members at the Annual Congregation Meeting on June 2* for your voice and vote as necessary.
- Board members agreed in principle to move ahead with the hiring of a Sexton (facilities manager) to begin duties at the onset of the next fiscal year (FY25).
- Board members discussed the FY25 Aspirational Budget Draft but needed more information. Angie will arrange a Zoom session soon to go over pending details.
**
- The Ministerial Assessment Team has met several times and will begin collecting member feedback in the very near future.
- Maia Malos provided her assessment of BRUU's Facebook and other social media presence and recommended ways in which we could improve our outreach to the demographic groups we want to target visitors and future membership.

Board Matters, Continued

- The Board approved a proposal by the City of Manassas to install a one-bike bike parking rack at the corner of Main and Church Streets in front of BRUUs front doors.
- Angie Carrera noted that she will be meeting with a group of members who are willing to take the lead for this year's canvass campaign. She will keep the Board updated.

*Please mark these events on your calendar to be in the know about outcomes and plans.

**A special board meeting on the Aspirational Budget was held on Sunday, February 25. Special thanks to Finance Chair Dave Hamilton for his assistance and attendance.

After approval by the Board, the full minutes of each meeting are available in BRUUnet KnowledgeBase.



I'm Going Green!: Building a Backyard Habitat Creates a Haven for Wildlife

Larry Underwood

Now is the time to start planning our Spring Gardens. Spring is here! The daffodils are blooming. Birds are singing more and more each morning and we can expect the arrival first bird migrants anytime now. So the Green Team is encouraging you to consider converting at least a part of your yard into a background habitat. Your backyard habitat can be a sanctuary where nature and wildlife thrive harmoniously alongside human habitation. By intentionally designing and maintaining a backyard with wildlife-friendly features, you can contribute to biodiversity conservation, promote ecological balance, and experience the joy of coexisting with nature right outside your doorstep.



Creating a Wildlife-Friendly Backyard: To build a backyard habitat that supports local fauna and flora, several key elements need to be considered and incorporated into the design:

1. **Native Plants and Trees:** Wherever possible choose native plants and trees that provide food, shelter, and nesting sites for local wildlife. Native vegetation is adapted to the local climate, soil, and wildlife species, making it a valuable resource for supporting biodiversity.
2. **Water Sources:** Include a water feature such as a birdbath, pond, or small stream to provide drinking water and habitat for amphibians, insects, and birds. Water sources are essential for supporting a diverse array of wildlife in a backyard habitat.
3. **Shelter and Nesting Sites:** Integrate natural and artificial shelter options like bushes, shrubs, trees, birdhouses, bat boxes, and insect hotels to provide habitats for various wildlife species to raise their young, rest, and seek refuge.
4. **Food Sources:** Plant a variety of flowering plants, fruits, berries, nuts, and seeds to attract pollinators, birds, butterflies, and other wildlife that rely on

I'm Going Green!: Building a Backyard Habitat, continued

these food sources for sustenance. Consider providing bird feeders or installing bee-friendly plants.

5. **Wildlife-Friendly Practices:** Avoid using pesticides, herbicides, and chemical fertilizers that can harm wildlife and their habitats. Embrace sustainable gardening practices like mulching, composting, and natural pest control methods to promote a healthy ecosystem in the backyard habitat.

Benefits of a Backyard Habitat: Building a backyard habitat offers numerous benefits to both humans and wildlife:

1. **Conservation of Biodiversity:** Backyard habitats create corridors for wildlife movement and contribute to preserving and enhancing local biodiversity.
2. **Educational Opportunities:** Observing wildlife in a backyard habitat provides valuable learning experiences for children and adults about ecology, conservation, and the interconnectedness of all living organisms.
3. **Mental Health and Well-being:** Spending time in nature-rich environments like a backyard habitat has been shown to reduce stress, anxiety, and promote overall well-being.
4. **Wildlife Watching and Enjoyment:** Building a backyard habitat invites various wildlife species to visit and inhabit the space, providing endless opportunities for wildlife watching and enjoyment without leaving home.

Conclusion: In conclusion, building a backyard habitat is a rewarding endeavor that allows individuals to connect with nature, support local wildlife, and contribute to conservation efforts in your own backyard. By implementing wildlife-friendly features, sustainable practices, and native vegetation, you can create a vibrant and thriving ecosystem that benefits both humans and wildlife alike. Start today and transform your backyard into a haven for biodiversity and natural beauty. Need more information? Plan to attend the First Friday event at BRUU on April 5. Details to follow.

Join BRUU's VOICE Team!

Charlie Grymes

At BRUU, we have an effective group of activists organized as the VOICE Team - and we're looking for more BRUUers to join us. VOICE is offering training this Spring for VOICE Core Team members (see <https://voice-va.org/events/coreteamtraining/>) and *you* are invited to join BRUU's Core Team.

Mike Freeland and Charlie Grymes are the Core Team "conveners" at BRUU. Contact current VOICE Core Team members at voice@bruu.org and come join the Core Team.

Why? Because one of us can make a little change happen, while a bunch of us can do big stuff...

VOICE has power - not "top down" dictatorial power, but "relationship power" based on our connections with other congregations and our record of working together as members of a team. Elected officials pay attention to VOICE. Leaders of financial and business organizations pay attention to VOICE. VOICE makes social justice happen.

With members from over 40 congregations in Northern Virginia and a track record of success since 2008, VOICE does big stuff. Seen the news stories about a new mental health crisis receiving center opening near Potomac Mills? In 2023, VOICE got Governor Youngkin to come to our county. In the meeting at Zion Baptist Church in Triangle, he committed to prioritize funding for that first-of-its-kind-in-Virginia facility. The Governor's proposed 2025-26 state budget included the funding.

About once a year VOICE has an "action" where we fill an auditorium with 300-500 people to make clear to powerful officials that there is real grassroots interest in a social justice issue. That's how Governor Youngkin knew the public demand for a Crisis Receiving Center was deep, beyond just a few activists.

BRUU has been a member of VOICE since the beginning in 2008. We serve on the regional strategy team; BRUU helps to steer the boat. VOICE selects about three issues at a time on which we focus to create changes in government policies or funding priorities. Because there are so many theological and cultural "voices" in that decision process, the VOICE issues always have broad public support across the political spectrum.

BRUU's VOICE Team, continued

For example, Prince William County traditionally paid public prosecutors far more than public defenders. To balance the expertise in the courtroom so justice is the goal rather than convictions, VOICE is pressuring for equal pay. (We're almost there...)

If you join the VOICE Core Team, you'll help recruit people - including any non-BRUUsers you may know; they are welcome too. Main jobs of the Core Team: 1) share information about progress on VOICE's chosen social justice issues, 2) ask people to show up, sit in a chair, and be counted (without having to speak) once or more each year, and 3) identify the next issues for VOICE to address.

VOICE Core Team gathers intermittently during the year. Meetings are scheduled when there is a specific purpose - planning an event, choosing what issues VOICE should tackle, mobilizing a crowd.

Archimedes said "Give me a lever long enough and a fulcrum on which to place it, and I shall move the world." VOICE is that lever. Come put your hands on it, and help pull for social justice.

Core Team Training

- How to Build and Run a Successful VOICE Core Team
- Community Organizing Foundational Skills

 **February - July 2024**

 **8-12 hr of training**

- 2 prep sessions for core team conveners
- 4 sessions for core team members

75% IN PERSON
25% VIRTUAL



ALE Events



The February ALE workshops and taco dinner brought in over 60 participants! Topics included Divination, Macrame, and The State of Our City and State.



BRUU's ALE workshops are brought to you by fellow BRUUsers. Is there an area of study, art form, craft, or other topic you would be willing to present to others? BRUU members and friends are encouraged to contact Kristin at dre@bruu.org if interested in facilitating a workshop.



Adult Life Enrichment (ALE) Monday

Monday, March 18

Dinner starts at 6:00 pm—Workshops at 7:00 pm

RSVP by email for dinner & materials planning. dre@bruu.org

Our ALE program is provided in its entirety by volunteers willing to share.

Contact Kristin with your ideas dre@bruu.org



“The Intersection between Climate Justice and Human Rights,”

with Larry Underwood and Randy Freed

“Introduction to Druidry,”

with Michelle Luman



“Asian Decoupage Eggs,”

with Dee Brown

What's for Dinner? Corned Beef and Cabbage!

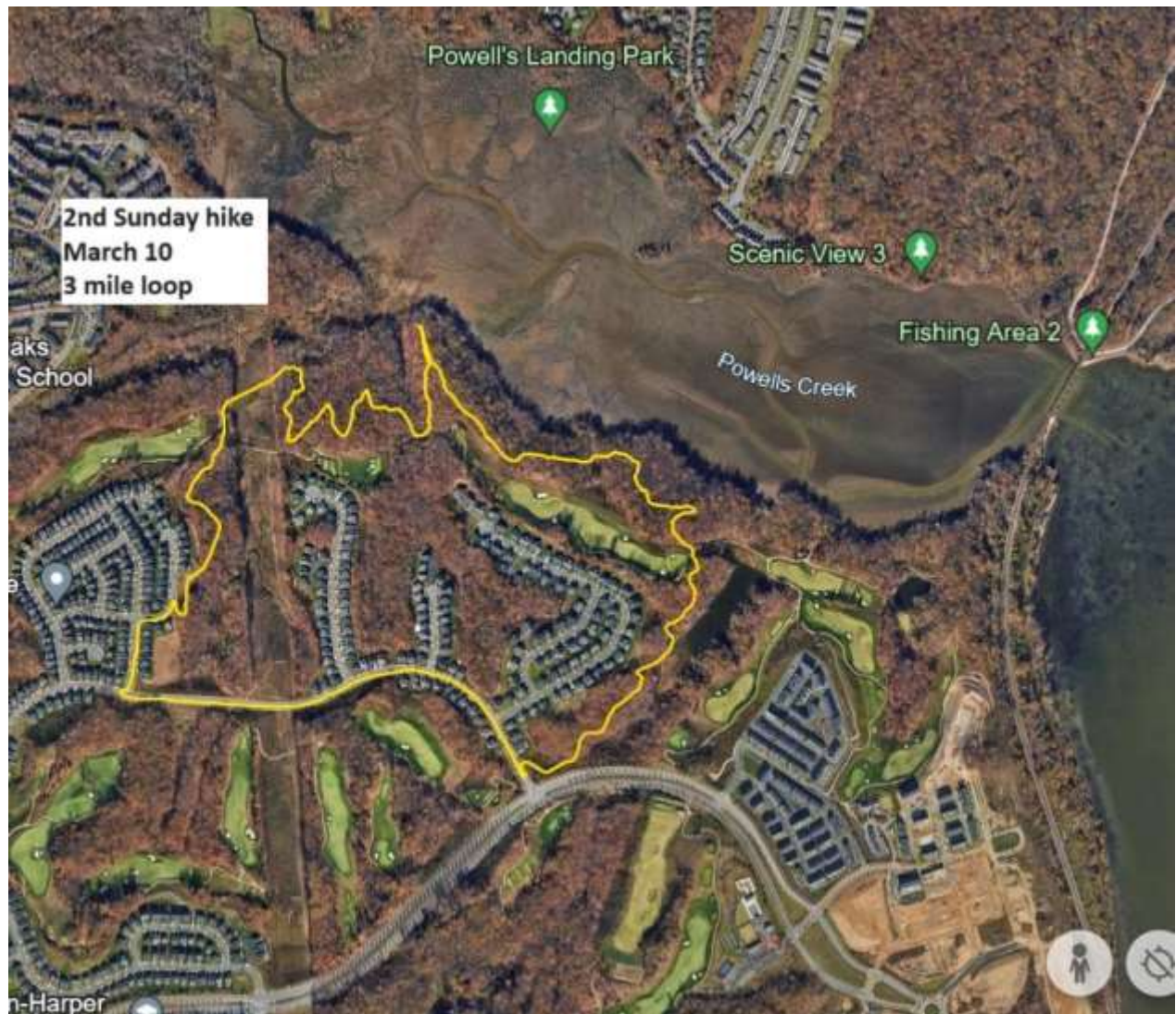
Events at BRUU

March 10: Second Sunday Hike, 1:00-3:00pm

We will explore trails along Powells Creek in Potomac Shores from 1:00-3:00pm on March 10 while the leaves are off. The view is good enough now to see across to the other side. Soon, pesky green things growing on twigs will block the vista.

Hike distance: 3 miles (see yellow route on graphic).

Please register at <https://tinyurl.com/e27h4m8s> to get details, including the location of the starting point. Registration will allow us to notify you if the hike is postponed or cancelled because of weather conditions.



PASSOVER SEDER

Sunday, April 21

5PM Sharp, BRUU Fellowship Hall



The most celebrated and beloved of the Jewish rituals, the Seder will include reading from a Haggadah, stories, songs, and a fantastic dinner of **specifically designated** traditional Jewish foods. Passover marks the escape of the enslaved Israelites from Egypt to freedom and reminds us of the potential for a just and peaceful world.

Gefilte fish, tzimmes, kugel, charoset, and matzah ...a fancy table is set per person so **RSVP is a must**. There are a few rules such as no unleavened bread and 4 mandatory glasses of wine (grape juice for the kids)!

Call or email Nina Lomax for reservations, your food assignment, and Jewish questions at ninalomax@comcast.net. If you can cook, take a Jewish dish. If you don't cook, you can have an easy assignment like matzah or juice. If your dish needs heating, come by 4:30-4:45.

Chrysalis Concert Series: Pat Wictor

pat wictor

"...plays like the only begotten son of
Bonnie Raitt and Chris Smither.."

- Jim Motavalli, WPKN (CT)

"Watch out for this guy.
He's a terrific new talent."

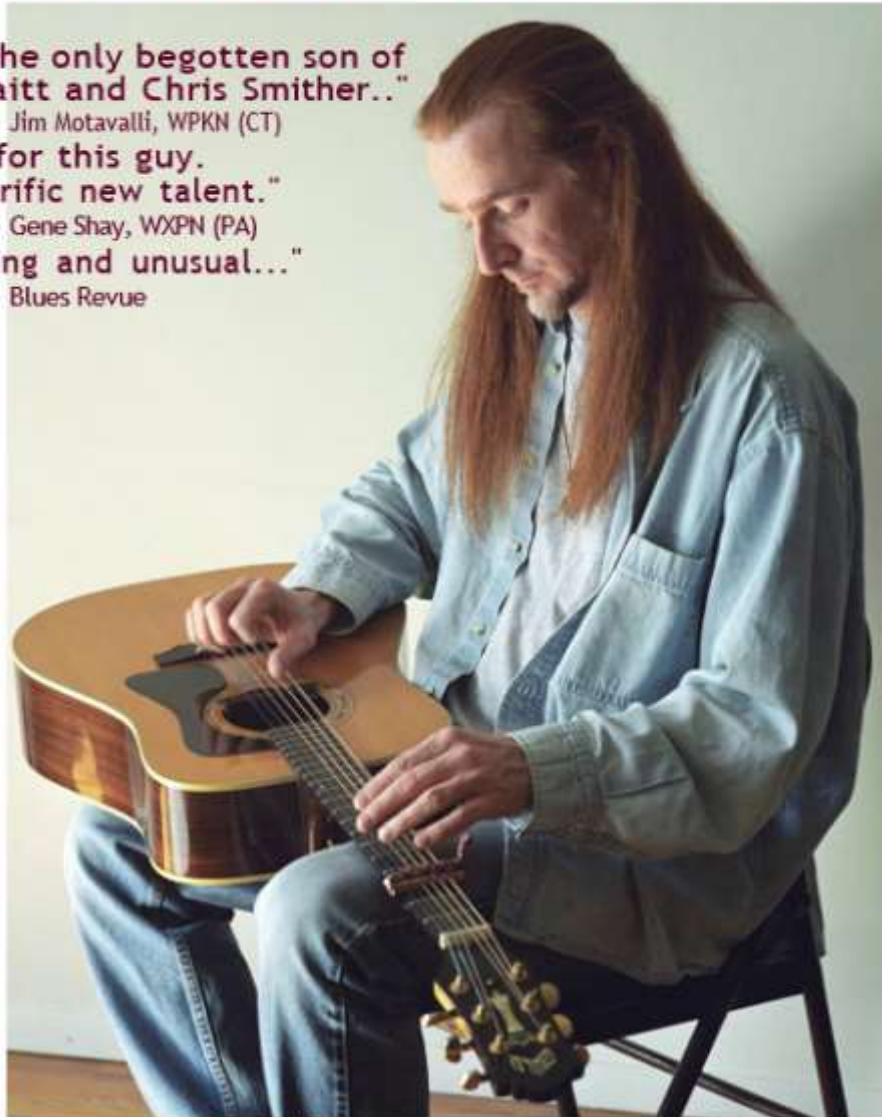
- Gene Shay, WXPB (PA)

"...daring and unusual..."

- Blues Revue



Visit the
website for
Schedule,
CDs, and
blog



www.patwictor.com

Photo Credit: Lisa Kimball

Chrysalis Concert Series

Bull Run Unitarian Universalists

March 15th, 2024, 7:30 pm

Southeast UU Summer Institute (SUUSI) 2024



The Southeast UU Summer Institute has been an "intentional community" for 50 years. In 2024, we are returning to Radford, Virginia.

Join about 500 other UU's for a incredibly rewarding week of making new friends, building connections, learning, discovering new perspective at various workshops and worship services, and exploring the outdoors in a wide variety of nature trips. The Youth program is powerful. SUUSI is a memorable intergenerational fun time together. It's that rare family time that families remember forever, with joy.

Oh, and the music! SUUSI is 24-7 with acoustic roots music and song. There are experienced touring artists, emerging wannabes, and lots of "I play for fun, You're a pro, I'm not – let's play together anyway" musicians.

You want to party with barbecue at 2:00am? Want to play games and do puzzles quietly over coffee? Hey, come to SUUSI. We celebrate diversity.

For details, check out <https://www.suusi.org/index> or talk to the Muirs, Mike Freeland, Cathy Ring, or the dozen other BRUUsers who have gone regularly to SUUSI.



2024 SUMMER AT THE HARRIS PAVILION



www.manassasva.gov/harris pavilion

ACOUSTIC TUESDAY CONCERTS

@ 7 PM

May 7 – Shane Gamble Duo
May 14 – Jason Teach
May 21 – Grayson Moon
May 28 – Patty Reese
June 4 – Chris Compton
June 11 – Chesapeake Sons
June 18 – Jason Masi
June 25 – Shane Gamble
July 2 – Joe Downer
July 9 – Timmie Metz Duo
July 16 – Travis Tucker
July 23 – Scott Kurt
July 30 – Shane Gamble
August 6 – Garrett Mabe Duo
August 13 – Kimberly Burke
August 20 – Mackenzie Ryan Duo
August 27 – Rook Richards
September 3 – Shane Gamble

FRESH MUSIC FRIDAYS

@ 7 PM

June 21 – The Still Runners
June 28 – The Twangtown Paramours
July 12 – Jon Mitchem
July 19 – Bad Press Band
July 26 – Speakeasy
August 9 – Nitehawks
August 23 – Blue Bottleneck Band



Current as of February 1

Scan the QR code for
the most up to date
schedule!

Dates are subject to
change due to unforeseen circumstances.



SATURDAY NIGHT CONCERT SERIES

@ 7 PM

June 8 – Earls of Kent
June 22 – Beatlegacy
August 3 – Special Occasions
August 10 – Mike Parker
September 14 – Silver Tones Swing Band

SUMMER SOUNDS CONCERT SERIES

Brought to you by ARTfactory

@ 6:30 PM

July 13 – TBA
July 20 – TBA
August 17 – TBA
August 24 – TBA



SUNDAY FUNDAY CONCERTS

@ 3 PM

June 23 – Community Band Festival
July 7 – Navy Band Country Currents
July 14 – Carleigh Jane
July 21 – Kings Park Concert Band
July 28 – Navy Band Commodores
August 4 – Prince William Community Band
August 18 – Manassas Balalaika Society
August 25 – Manassas Symphony Orchestra

OTHER FUN EVENTS

June 14 (Friday) – Fools! Improv Comedy 7 pm
June 26 (Wednesday) – Reptile Show 1 pm
July 10 (Wednesday) – 257th Army Band 7 pm

PARKS, CULTURE & RECREATION

703-368-1873

Yes, You Can Subscribe to BRUU's Social Justice Mailing Lists

Want to know what's happening locally regarding VOICE, affordable housing, or environmental issues and activities? Get plugged in by subscribing to the voice@bruu.org, housing@bruu.org, or GreenTeam@bruu.org mailing lists. Expect 1-4 messages per month. Discover what's happening, and opportunities to engage with others at BRUU who share similar interests.



Hunting for information—"Why is the sanitizer not working?"

No need to hunt for what's happening with social justice at BRUU; you can have info delivered to your inbox automatically. To get added to a mailing list, send a request to cgrymes@gmail.com.

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.



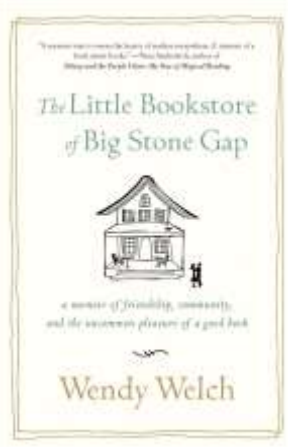
Fair Trade Organic Coffee, Tea and Chocolate!



The Social Justice Green Team sells Equal Exchange (fair trade & organic) products during the coffee hour after the church service. Proceeds from our sales will benefit not only the small farm coops and families around the world, but also help negate BRUU's carbon footprint impact through the TerraPass program.

Look for the rolling cabinet and the smiling team member who will be delighted to help you with your selection. For information on volunteering or to place a special order let Susie Eastridge know via her email: susanneastridge@gmail.com

Join the BRUU Book Group!



Our next book club meeting (via Zoom) will be at 3:30pm on Monday, March 18. We will discuss "The Little Bookshop of Big Stone Gap" by Wendy Welch.

New members welcome. To get the Zoom link, contact Susan Gregorio at susang100@comcast.net.

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.

It takes a village (aka congregation)!

BRUU

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

Minister

Rev. Charlotte Lehmann
minister@bruu.org

BRUU Board of Directors

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Office Administrator

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BRUU OFFICE HOURS

M-F 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

THE PUZZLER

February's Puzzler

Here is the answer to last month's
Puzzler:

February

March

September

**Congratulations to
Rev. Charlotte
Lehmann!!**