

## THE AUGUST TOWN HALL TOPIC: “What’s Next?”

At the August Town Hall, the congregation was invited to hear about the Board retreat and the resulting action items from our basic question, “What’s next?” On behalf of the Board, Vice President Annaliess Trommatter and I presented these action items to the BRUU members and asked for input and feedback during and after the Town Hall. Here is some basic information from that day and Annaliess will share her contribution to the day’s agenda via next week’s Roundup. A brief description of the purpose of Town Halls was provided and will be found on KnowledgeBase in the next few weeks.

Each year our Board of Directors meets to review BRUUs organizational health, along with our past and upcoming challenges. This year, we also invited the Chairs of the Worship and Finance Committees for this facilitated all-day session in Bristow, VA. During the morning, we shared our individual work styles to ensure effective communication and collaboration. In the afternoon, we reviewed our current human and financial resources; prioritized proposed action items to meet challenges in the years ahead; and considered ways to energize this congregation to participate in our democratic process. The agenda included:

1. The Board Retreat Outcomes
2. Action Items
3. Next Steps
4. Q&A and recap of input
5. Final Call to Action

Note: Issues related to Rev. Charlotte’s departure and a future Ministerial Search will be covered elsewhere in future communications (Roundup, BRUU Blast or Crossroads).

These Action Items are generally summarized but are hopefully detailed enough for adequate understanding of the issues.

**A. Human Resources:** We’re committed to supporting our staff whose work supports our mission and vision for the future and acknowledging our member-volunteers on the ground and in the trenches committed to seeking and service. You came to BRUU looking for something that you need/want in your spiritual life or in a safe community for seeking and service, perhaps wanting to make sense of things with others who care about families and neighbors near and far. We want to serve you in ways that are meaningful to you.

- B. Infrastructure:** We have an aging building that needs maintenance and upkeep to maintain the safety of the staff, participants and visitors, as well as provide updated accessibility to both space and faster internet. Despite paying off the mortgage within the next 2 years, we still have immediate needs that cannot be postponed. Our short-term issues: HVAC systems, Safety cameras, Internet cabling for improved access, Property maintenance and repair, Accessibility concerns, and Messaging vital to our external community. Our long-term issues are those that cannot be postponed for long, such as the Roof, Critical renovations, Accessibility for improved building navigation, and, of course, the unknown.
- C. Stewardship:** Plainly speaking, stewardship is more than just verbally supporting staff and the building. It's about how we take care of our people (staff, member-volunteers, friends and visitors), our programs and activities, and the building that is our safe refuge and spiritual home. Remember your membership begins with your commitment to share your time, talent and treasure. So, let's talk treasure.

Last year's budget was hard earned, but we survived due to the contributions of time and talent by a great group of canvass volunteers and a board making some difficult decisions. I've been educating myself on financial stewardship and am proposing a different way to do it this year in both timing and process.

It is my intention that a stewardship team be convened by mid-September to plan a canvass kickoff each February with a final tally of anticipated income by mid-April so the board can move forward with budget planning. As I indicated in the May Town Hall, I am anticipating 100% participation in this year's Stewardship Canvass; basically, that every member pledge and that every member be as generous as they can be. In this way we will be able to continue to grow and thrive as a beloved community. Money doesn't buy happiness, but it puts a roof over one's head (in this case our congregation's) and spiritually nourishes us and those we love, providing us a safe community for seeking and service.

"What makes BRUU different?" One way is that we are a lay-led congregation. This means it's the congregation (not a hierarchy, not the UUA, Pope or other administrative figure) that takes the lead in decisions and processes and develops and implements programs. This is different from the pastoral care or staff supervision provided by a minister. Lay-led means that we the congregation are also part of the worship process,

including sharing our experiences and truths in the pulpit. It also requires that the congregation commit to remain in covenant with one another.

Being lay-led empowers us to form a Right Relations Team to help us practice faithful communication and creative conflict based on values of mutuality and consent. Being lay-led also means that we are the drivers of the work for Social Justice, an opportunity for spiritually grounded activism.

This is where you come in! We're asking you to fully participate as a steward in the work we do at BRUU, and the financial support needed for us to grow and thrive.

### **CALLS TO ACTION:**

- We've changed over those 5+ years since the last survey. In the next few months, we'll be taking a deep dive into YOUR wishes for our community as our guide for moving forward. Knowing one size does not fit all, we're considering several ways to get your input. More about that soon!
- Our movement forward will be based on information about your hopes for your spiritual development and for keeping BRUU as a good place for you and your family to grow and thrive. Your participation in the work ahead will be key in determining the effective stewardship of time talent and treasure and how we will support the good work of BRUU. Thank you in advance for your support.

A half-hour Q&A was recorded on a flip chart, along with ideas and suggestions which will be published in the August 20<sup>th</sup> Roundup or as part of the August Crossroads.

I want to express my thanks to Annaliess, our fellow board members, and our wonderful AV team for helping with this Town Hall. Please email your questions or comments to [President@BRUU.org](mailto:President@BRUU.org) with a cc to [VicePresident@BRUU.org](mailto:VicePresident@BRUU.org) for an ASAP response.

Thank you for your time and attention,

Angie Carrera, President  
BRUU Board of Directors