

When it seems the norm to be driven by anger or fear, it is a wonderfully rebellious thing to act from love.

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## The monthly BRUU Newsletter

# February Services

**February 2**- **Lara Herscovitch: Italian Balconies: Reflection on Connection**—If we were to make a list of what keeps a human healthy, it would include sleep, physical activity, wholesome food, clean water -- and connection to others. We are wired for connection, but we're also more isolated and lonely than ever. This cultural moment has been named a national epidemic in the U.S., and a global health threat – all of it leading to harmful, dangerous individual and collective results. We gather together today rooted in the antidote – connection & community. As the saying goes, if you want to move fast, go alone – if you want to move far, go together.

**February 9**- **Bill Fogarty: Deeds and Creeds: A New UU Motto**—One unofficial UU motto is "deeds not creeds", but aren't our actions built on a foundation of beliefs? How do we navigate the world with our "moral compass" that guides our actions? Bill will explore these issues within the context of specific UU history from the 1950's, which has echoes in **our present time.** 

**February 16**- **Worship Committee and Friends: Celebrate Love Coffee House**—Join fellow congregants in celebration of love after Valentine's Day. Enjoy music, readings and poetry themed on the power of love. Coffee catered by Grounds Central Station!

**February 23**- **Senior Youth Service**—Come listen to our wise-beyond-their -years senior youth about a topic of their choosing. This annual service by our senior youth is always entertaining, yet enlightening!

# From the President's Desk

Angie Carrera, President, Board of Directors

Dear fellow congregants,

February is the month of love and I hope you are ready to jump into the LOVE shared among us in our mission for seeking and service this year.

It is my hope (and something I work at) that BRUU is a sacred space where you are spiritually and emotionally fed not just at Sunday services but everywhere when you are in the company of one or more BRUUers, feeling safe and secure, even as we tackle life's challenges ahead. I'd like to think that you and your family are having fun, too! Most of all, I want you to feel comfortable in speaking about your beliefs and interests as well as providing feedback to leadership on our goals and current activities and processes. In this way, you help our Board improve and enhance the health of our organization as we focus on governance and endeavor to effectively support staff, members, and congregants-not-yet-members.

By the time you read this article, the February Town Hall may have already happened. Each Town Hall is organized to provide important information to the congregation and allows for feedback so the Board can proceed with the work ahead. February's Town Hall will focus on the Congregational Survey, our current priorities (including Stewardship), and a UUA update. While this Town Hall will not be as long as usual, I hope that the information will give you time to consider what the Board is considering and let us know your thoughts.

One matter that I'd like you to think about is a social justice issue that is rearing its ugly head as we speak. Mass deportations are already being reported and we expect these will have an impact on our own local immigrants and their families. Gretchen Almstead asked me to share this concern with the Board but I was able to only do so recently as our move to our new home has taken up so

# From the President's Desk, Continued

much of my attention. However, she and Dianne Lane have already made connections with the Friends for Neighbors organization who are looking at this issue. If you're interested in attending a meeting, please mark your calendar for the 3rd Thursday at Georgetown South Community Center and contact Dianne or Gretchen for more info. It is the same night as our Board Meeting(s) so the Board won't be able to attend but we hope you will if you can. This critical topic is slated for the February board meeting to discuss how BRUU might proceed.

In the meantime, please take care of yourself and others in your orbit as you are able. Email or call me if you have any questions or need a listening ear.

Together for BRUU,

Angie Carrera

# Creating Beloved Community

#### Kristin Worthington, DLRE

The new administration has been busy in its first week, amplifying hate and displaying an approval of oppressive attitudes and divisive behavior. The ripples of this climate are palpable, manifesting in everyday spaces: grocery store aisles, waiting rooms, traffic lanes and even on our own neighborhood sidewalks.

What we desperately need is a safe sanctuary: a space where like-minded individuals can gather peacefully, sheltered from physical or emotional threat.

### Imagine a space where every exchanged glance carries genuine kindness, where mutual respect transcends our currently fractured social landscape.

This sanctuary—our church—holds transformative potential. It can be more than a physical space; it can be a crucible for individual and collective renewal. Our shared values of equity and justice, plurality and interdependence, generosity! are not mere abstractions, but living, breathing commitments that demand active cultivation.

In these challenging times, unity is not a luxury—it is a necessity. We must intentionally weave our collective hopes, drawing strength from our shared humanity. Our path forward begins with a fundamental commitment: to honor each person's inherent dignity, to listen with open and compassionate hearts, and to recognize the common challenges and aspirations that bind us.

Together, we can co-create a sanctuary of understanding, respect, and genuine human connection.

Our path forward starts with a fundamental commitment: to respect each other's humanity, to listen with open hearts, and to recognize our shared hopes and challenges.

Here are meaningful ways to show respect to others:

## Creating Beloved Community, continued

#### 1. Communication Respect

- Listen actively without interrupting
- Make eye contact
- Use a calm, even tone of voice
- Acknowledge others' perspectives, even if you disagree
- Avoid dismissive language or tone
- Ask permission before giving advice or sharing personal opinions

#### 2. Personal Boundaries

- Respect physical space
- Ask before touching or hugging
- Honor personal privacy
- Don't make intrusive personal comments
- Respect when someone says "no" or needs space
- Be mindful of cultural differences in personal interaction

#### 3. Verbal Respect

- Use people's preferred names and pronouns
- Avoid derogatory language
- Give genuine compliments
- Thank people for their time and effort
- Speak to others as you would want to be spoken to
- Validate others' feelings, even if you don't fully understand them

## Creating Beloved Community, continued

#### 4. Professional/Social Settings

- Be punctual
- Follow through on commitments
- Give credit where it's due
- Help others without expecting immediate return
- Be inclusive in group settings
- Treat everyone with equal dignity, regardless of their role or status

#### 5. Emotional Respect

- Validate others' emotions
- Don't minimize their experiences
- Practice empathy
- Offer support without judgment
- Listen more than you speak
- Recognize that everyone's feelings are valid



#### **Private Curator Tour**

Albert Speiden: Designing Manassas Sunday, February 23

11:45 am



Before it closes, get behind the scenes and ask questions about the museum's selections from the life works of Albert Speiden, a prominent architect who lived in Manassas and designed hundreds of buildings over his career, including BRUU

Following, we'll take the walking tour of Speiden buildings around town.

Sign up HERE to reserve your spot! Or email <u>dre@bruu.org</u>.





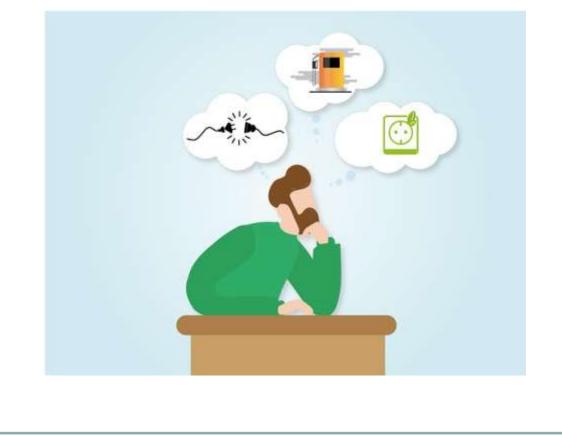
# Mike's Matching Grant Program

Thanks to anonymous donation of \$20,000 for the replacement of the HVAC system in the fellowship hall, I am offering a matching grant program to raise the additional \$20,000 needed to fully fund the replacement. I will donate a dollar for every dollar raised up to \$10,000.

If you would like to donate, please use any of the current methods – check, auto bank draft, appreciated stock or Zelle any of which do not incur a processing fee. You can also donate via credit card or PayPal. Please make sure you put "Infrastructure Reserves" in the memo line so it can be matched.

Please be generous and get us one step greener. Thanks, Mike F.

For details on the various ways to donate to BRUU, please head to <u>our "Donate to</u> <u>BRUU" page of bruu.org</u>, or contact <u>treasurer@bruu.org</u> or <u>bookkeeper@bruu.org</u> for more information.





### Betcha Didn't Know that BRUU has a...

**Health & Medical Lending Closet!** Many of our congregants have had temporary health situations over the years. Then, after the person with a health condition recovers they have donated items like crutches, walkers, shower chairs, and even knee scooters, to BRUU for others to use. These types of items have been stored in the top floor Supply Room, as available to be borrowed by other members

of the congregation.\* Starting this month, after the Work Day, the items will be stored in the (Harry Potter style) closet under the stairs to the Sanctuary balcony. This puts the items in a more secure AND more accessible location - right next to the elevator/lift. When you are in need of such items, contact the BRUU Office or a member of the Building & Grounds team, to get the closet key and arrange the details to borrow things. Simply indicate on the Sign-Out sheet who is



borrowing and an estimated date of return. If you have such items that you would like to donate/share, please contact <u>facilities@bruu.org</u>, to determine whether it is an item that can be stored and used – before bringing it to the building. Lastly, if you have borrowed, and finished using, but not returned any of the BRUU equipment please let <u>facilities@bruu.org</u> know when it can be returned and entered on the Inventory list.

\*Charlie & I would like to thank whichever "Ron" provided the walker for loan use following the recent knee replacement surgery.

# **Reflections on Stewardship**

#### A BRUU CANVAS MESSAGE FOR 2025

#### What is your Why?

We support BRUU for various reasons. It is a place for our children's spiritual growth. A home for our own spiritual exploration. A covenant of shared values, promoting justice and equality. For fellowship and community, sharing the highs and lows of our lives. It is a locus for community outreach. I came for all of these reasons, more than 20 years ago. Then they were made starkly more real in 2013 when I announced in Joys and Sorrows that I had just been diagnosed with breast cancer. Before Joys and Sorrows had ended another member of the congregation announced that there were many members of that "club" here and within weeks I had a robust, supportive network of survivors.

#### What is your Why?

#### Who is BRUU to you?

The greeters who first welcomed you at the door? The Kitchen Krew who makes sure we have coffee on Sunday and the kitchen is cleaned up after every event? The people who talk to you in the Fellowship Hall after services? The choir who fills our rafters with song? The Food Pantry elves who make sure those in need do not go hungry? The translators who make sure people are understood? The members who open their homes for dinner to raise money at auction? The auctioneers? The Religious Education teachers? The Aesthetics Committee, which completely redecorated the Flamingo Lounge and Conference Room? We are looking for a minister, but meanwhile, the work of the church goes on.

#### Who is BRUU to you?

## Reflections on Stewardship, continued

#### How does BRUU do it?

Time, money and spirit. Our budget this year is \$411k. The money comes mostly from pledges during the annual Canvas drive in March. We also collect money weekly during services and through our annual October auction. We also earn money from renting our beautiful, historic building for weddings and special occasions. And, from renting out the building next door, which we own. Every time you stop in at Grounds Central Station for coffee, it helps pay the rent. We also have volunteer work days for painting and cleaning.

#### How does BRUU do it? With you.

-- Carol Covin

# **BRUU Grief & Support Group**

Find Comfort and Connection in a Safe Space Monday, February 3, 6:30pm

Our BRUU non-denominational Grief and Support Group is a welcoming and inclusive environment for individuals navigating loss, mental health challenges, parenting struggles, or difficult situations in their lives. We aim to create a supportive community where participants can share their experiences, vent, and relate to others who understand.

This group meets at BRUU in person (virtual available) and the group kickoff session will be Monday evening, February 3 at 6:30 PM in the library. While not a professional counseling setting, these groups are led with compassion and care to ensure all participants feel seen, heard, and respected.

Key Features:

- A safe, judgment-free space to share and connect.
- Open to anyone experiencing personal struggles or loss.
- A topic or theme each session, but includes open, structured time for discussion.
- A foundation of mutual support, understanding, and respect.

The forum of this group will be focused on both a workshop topic for discussion provided by the facilitator and then an open dialogue to share any personal struggles or successes. Participants can expect to leave the sessions with thoughtful digest or even activities to practice in their personal lives. We aim to have this be as interactive as possible and value openness and vulnerability.

We invite you to join us and experience the healing power of community. This group is not intended to provide professional mental health treatment or advice but serves as a valuable space for connection and support.

Contact: griefsupportgroup@bruu.org

# Chili Cook off 2025 - Winners!

#### Mary Kadlubowski

What a fantastic chili cook-off we had! The spicy dishes brought warmth to our gathering during the chilly January weather, prompting us to order more compostable unbleached bowls. We had seven competitors and four non-meat entries, with Dixie cups available for tasting. This year's chili crown winners are:





Second Place-Brian Pace's Chili (#5)

### Third Place- Dee Brown's Ramen Chili (#7)

#### Congratulations to our champions!

A quick reminder: signing up for events is crucial as it helps us gauge how much to prepare. We had a new participant sign up but then withdraw when they were the only one. We understand that last-minute sign-ups and uncertainties happen, but we want to ensure there's always a spot for everyone while still allowing for proper preparation and support for newcomers.



#### Charlie Grymes

Ever see the movie "Cool Hand Luke"? Paul Newman's character is in a rural prison. He is not a model prisoner, and the warden struggles to dominate him. In frustration one day the warden says in his high-pitched voice "What we have here is a failure to communicate..."

At BRUU, we're always looking for better ways to communicate. We are now refining RoundUp distribution so first-time guests on Sunday mornings can see it, and discover how BRUU is an active community they might want to join.



RoundUp is distributed weekly by e-mail to 536 addresses (45% of which open the e-mail). Soon, a copy of RoundUp will be added each week to the same Dropbox folder with the Sunday morning Order of Service. That folder is accessed by the QR code posted at the entry to the Sanctuary, and posted on BRUU.org for Zoom attendees.

To maintain personal privacy, whenever someone invites messages to their personal e-mail account we will publish instead a "forwarder" e-mail address that ends in @bruu.org Responses will be forwarded to the personal inbox, but RoundUp won't advertise a personal e-mail address to the general public.

(Interested in improving BRUU communications? A gaggle of us meet each month via Zoom for about 30 minutes to discuss the opportunities. Let us know at <u>communications@bruu.org</u> if you'd like to join in.)

# **BRUU Sangha**

#### Self-Compassion and Loving Kindness Class & Meditations

On February 6th 2025 Ann Deschamps will lead the BRUU Sangha. Buddhism places profound emphasis on cultivating loving-kindness (metta) and selfcompassion as central practices for personal transformation and getting along with others. Loving-kindness, the unconditional wish for all beings to be happy and free from suffering, is a cornerstone of Buddhist teachings, encouraging practitioners to extend warmth and goodwill to themselves, loved ones, strangers, and even adversaries. Similarly, self-compassion, rooted in mindfulness and acceptance, teaches individuals to approach their own suffering with kindness and understanding rather than judgment or self-criticism. These practices are integral to the Buddhist path and help promote inner peace. We will practice both as we explore how to bring them into our everyday lives.

The class & meditations led by Ann will start at 7:00 PM and will be in the Fellowship Hall. 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 <u>Sangha@BRUU.ORG</u> 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 <u>bookkeeper@bruu.org</u> or Paypal using the following link <u>https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/BullRunUU</u>. In the memo lines note BRUU Sangha.

If you want additional information, send an email to <u>Sangha@BRUU.ORG</u>.

BRUU Sangha, Randy Earl



### Winter Work Day is Coming Very Soon!

On Saturday, February 1st, from 9:30-3pm we are having our large Winter Work

Day Party! We are going to have projects from easy to skilled. It's been awhile since we've painted the black chairs in the Fellowship Hall so that is one item. Even kids and non-painters can help there. We have several other paint jobs as well as cleaning and repairs. In addition, we need



a few strong people to move a couple items. But what we really need most is your participation!

Come for as long as you can, dress to make a mess and as always, pizza lunch provided. Point of contact is Christine Sunda.

PS It's always fun and gives everyone a great sense of accomplishment!



### Never-Ending Yard Sale....HAS ARRIVED!!

The Never-Ending Yard Sale will be hosted by Auctria and conducted 100% online. The "Pilot Project" starts now, and the website is ready to accept yard sale donations. Updates for the Never-Ending Yard Sale will be posted in Crossroads, Round Up & Facebook. Now is a good time to start thinking about the items you can donate!

#### Concept:

- Use Auctria to replicate the function of Facebook Market Place
- · Donors submit yard sale items, using a form (similar to Auction donation)
- Auctria auto-generates Yard Sale Catalog (100% Online)
- Items remain with donor, buyers coordinate pick up w/donor
- Set Up & Tear Down Fellowship Hall is not involved
- Accounts are settled via Auctria...all proceeds routed to BRUU

#### Check the website frequently to see what is available! https://auctria.events/BRUUOnlineYardSale

Please contact Scott Maile if you are interested in being a part of the Never-Ending Yard Sale Team (Yard Sale team will have the opportunity to learn about Auctria, QC catalog & assist with announcements!)



### Second Sunday Hike: Dove's Landing Park (February 9th, 2025)

We got snowed out in January, so we'll plan again to explore Dove's Landing Park on February 9, 1:00-3:00pm. We'll hike a loop of about 3.5 miles on natural surface trails winding through the woods of the Park and along the streams bordering it.

Please register at https://tinyurl.com/e27h4m8s so we can alert you if weather, a plague of frogs, or whatever forces another postponement.







Bull Run Unitarian Universalists

## Superbowl 2025



FC Fellowship Committee

Join other Bruuers on February 9th to watch the big game. A Potluck to share food and fun.

Many hands make light work. Click on the button to sign up. Thank you!

https://tinyurl.com/Superbowl-25



### "Creating Digital Paintings" Demo at BRUU Feb 11

Spend an evening with BRUU Member Peter Smolens as he discusses digital art based on his book "Creating Digital Paintings," at BRUU on Tuesday, February 11, 2025, at 7 PM. Like the book, the visual demo shows how to create digital paintings using your computer, a graphics tablet, and Adobe Photoshop.

"I'm finally fulfilling an auction item back from 2019." (Thanks, Covid.)

The "Creating Digital Paintings" Book Demo will be held in the Fellowship Hall, and there will be refreshments.







Bull Run Unitarian Universalists

### Hot Cocoa Warm your heart 2025

Fellowship Committee



Just in time. A reminder that there are many kinds of love to celebrate. You are loved, join us Sunday 11:00 am, February 23rd 2025, after service for a fellowship of love. Hot cocoa, flavors, mixins, and dippers will be available. Sugar-free, gluten-free, and vegan options will be provided. Point of Contact (POC) Mary Kadlubowski Fellowship@bruu.org

https://tinyurl.com/HotCocoa-2025

Please help me setup and clean up. Use the link to sign up. Thank you!

### BRUU Midweek Coffee Hour - 10am Wednesdays



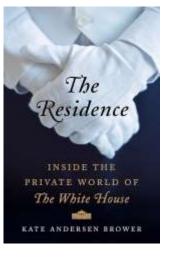
- Visit with old friends and make new ones
- Share your joys, concerns and insights
- Discuss serious topics and not so serious ones.

• 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 <u>wardge@icloud.com</u>.

### Join the BRUU Book Group!

Our next book club meeting will be on on Monday, Feb. 17th at 3:30. We will be discussing "The Residence" by Kate Andersen Brower.

New members welcome, including people who are not members of BRUU. To get the Zoom invitation, contact us at <u>bookgroup@bruu.org</u>.



### **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. CHRYSALIS CONCERT SERIES PRESENTS

ARA

ER

Lara sings & leads with authenticity, integrity, humor and heart, delivering performances that inspire, uplift and entertain....

Saturday, Feb 1, 2025 7:30 pm.

BULL RUN UU 9350 MAIN STREET MANASSAS VA 20110

CLICK OR CODE FOR TICKETS \$20 IN ADVANCE, \$25 AT DOOR

# Chrysalis Concert Series

#### FRICTION FARM - 10/12/2024

Friction Farm combines storytelling, social commentary, and humor to create songs of everyday life, local heroes, and quirky observations.



#### NOTHIN' FANCY - 12/7/2024

After 30 years together, Nothin' Fancy continues to grow in popularity performing at festivals all across the United States, Canada, and Norway.





#### LARA HERSCOVITCH - 2/1/2025

Lara's songs are soulful, poetic treasure maps that point to the wisdom, grit and joy of underdogs & misfits, connection & courage, love & loss, hardship & hope, resilience & transformation.

#### JILLIAN MATUNDAN - 3/15/2025

Jillian Matundan is a unique singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist who continues to win over audiences with her warm, resonant vocals. Her songs tell stories that are relatable, while her unique guitar-style, and inviting stage presence draws her audience into every performance





### KRAY VAN KIRK - 4/26/2025

A fine finger-style guitarist with a precise baritone, Kray Van Kirk has a Ph.D. from the University of Alaska, but he set science aside to write songs, tell stories and summon heroes.

#### KIYA HEARTWOOD - 6/28/2025

Kiya Heartwood is a modern-day American troubadour. She scours the nooks and crannies of history to find interesting tales of romance, injustice, danger and death. It's a simple show but it packs a powerful punch.





#### SAM ROBBINS - 10/17/2025

Often described as an "old soul singer songwriter," Sam is a Boston-based musician whose music evokes classic 70's singer songwriters like James Taylor and Neil Young, adding a modern, upbeat edge to the storyteller troubadour persona.



BULL RUN UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS 9350 MAIN ST. MANASSAS, VA 20110

### **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.





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 24<sup>th</sup> 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 <u>office@bruu.org</u> or <u>president@bruu.org</u> 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!

Terrie McClure, Treasurer, <u>treasurer@bruu.org</u> Robin Fegeas et al, Bookkeepers, <u>bookkeeper@bruu.org</u>

#### BRUU

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

#### **BRUU Board of Directors**

**President** Angie Carrera-Earl (2023-25) president@bruu.org

*Vice President* Josh Rachford (2024-26) vicepresident@bruu.org

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

**Treasurer** Terrie McClure treasurer@bruu.org

Directors at Large Allan Curlee (2024-26) Michelle Fegeas-Foster (2024-26) John Sunda (2023-25) director@bruu.org

> Youth Director Sashka Visnevski (2025) director@bruu.org

**Program Council** Art Muirhead (2023-25) programcouncil@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