



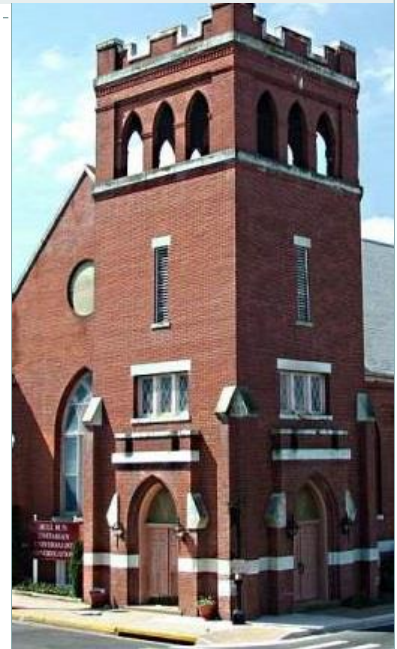
BULL RUN
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS

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Volume 43, Issue 1

Crossroads



In a season that can at times feel cold, bitter, and barren, you are as welcome as ever in the warmth of community at BRUU!



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The monthly BRUU Newsletter

From the President's Desk

Angie Carrera, President, Board of Directors

Dear fellow congregants,

Not sure if it was the election, another delay in our home move, or my mom's sudden petulance at taking her blood pressure medicine, but last month I was not really "feeling Christmas" very much. That is until amazing musical events orchestrated respectively by music director David Maley and the team of Kelly Muzzin and Martin Crim. These two shots of holiday spirit featured our wealth of BRUU talent and made my heart sing. Thank you!

Being with BRUUsers at these joyful events also helped me reflect on what I hold most dear. Besides my family and friends, there are BRUU members/friends, and staff, as well as those we serve, all of whom have filled my heart and fed my soul.

This recent LinkedIn message from a colleague resonated with me as BRUU President. "Leadership isn't just about metrics and strategies. It's about creating an environment where people feel supported enough to take risks and resilient enough to bounce back from setbacks. In other words, it's about building a family." This is exactly why I am so thankful for the BRUU board, staff, and committee chairs who took me at my word from the beginning of this fiscal year in June. I asked for two things.

The first was to be bold and innovative in their thinking and planning. Can we let go of traditions that no longer serve BRUU? What new ideas can we entertain? How can we better share and work with key stakeholders directly? I wanted to know how I could help make inclusive and effective changes, as necessary. This didn't mean throwing out the baby with the bathwater or change for changes sake but rather looking at the "how and why" of the way we do things here at BRUU.

From the President's Desk, Continued

The second was to let me know directly when I mess up or need to re-consider something. Even with my years of experience as President of other organizations, the first year here was truly a deep dive with so many gears turning simultaneously that affect or are affected by Board governance. The second year allows for more effectiveness grounded in a better knowledge base. I'm so pleased that folks have been honest and direct with me. To know more helps me do more and do it better.

Each of you is a leader in so many ways, whether by responding swiftly and with commitment to a critical call for action, by speaking up or out when called for, managing day-by-day operations for valuable programming, sharing valuable info, or by modelling covenantal behavior in the face of conflict. Please accept my thanks to each of you who have helped me be a better president as I look forward to a fruitful continued partnership with you for the health of BRUU for the coming year.

With you for BRUU to thrive in 2025, Best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year for all!

Angie Carrera, President

Reflections On Stewardship

WHY I GIVE

Author: Len Clark, Member of BRUU Stewardship Canvass Team for FY25/26

Throughout my working life the positions I held provided me the funds I needed to raise a family, purchase a home, and put money aside to support us in eventual retirement. However, what gave meaning to that work was never the money, it was knowing that what I did meant something to others. I would solve a problem, support a program, assist a co-worker or any of a thousand little things that gave value to my actions beyond a mere salary. When I finally did retire I found myself more and more isolated with a life which meant nothing to anyone beyond my immediate family.

It was then I stumbled upon BRUU. I wasn't looking for spiritual growth or a path to some god, just a community of people with whom I could connect and I certainly found that. More importantly, I found an opportunity to regain that sense that my life mattered to people I didn't know. That what I did had value. That feeling has a worth beyond money, but money does fuel the source. So, I give to BRUU what I can within my means. Not as an act of charity, because what I receive in exchange makes this a bargain at any price. It's just a repayment for something I'm not sure is possible to repay.



New Fund-Raising Activity: Never-Ending Yard Sale

The Never-Ending Yard Sale will be hosted by Auctria and conducted 100% online.

The plan is to “Kick-Off” a pilot project and start accepting yard sale donations by Mid January.

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

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!)

Yard Sale Categories:

- A Mens Clothes & Accessories
- B Womens Clothes & Accessories
- C Kids Clothing & Toys
- D Kitchen
- E Décor
- F Furniture
- G Electronics
- H Appliances
- I Instruments
- J Tools
- K Yard & Garden
- L Books (Fiction)
- M Books (Non Fiction)
- Z Curb Alert (Free Items)

DRAFT

BRUU Grief and Support Group

Find Comfort and Connection in a Safe Space

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) beginning Monday, February 3, 2025. While not a professional counseling setting, the group is 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 facilitator Rebecca Link 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.

BRUU Support Group, continued

Disclaimer for Grief and Support Group

*This group is intended to provide a safe and welcoming space for individuals to share their experiences and connect with others. I want to emphasize that I am not a licensed counselor, therapist, or social worker, and this is not a professional mental health or therapy setting. If you are experiencing a mental health crisis or having thoughts of self-harm or suicide, we strongly encourage you to seek immediate professional assistance. Please contact the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at **988** or visit their website at 988lifeline.org for support.*

Additionally, this group is built on mutual respect, kindness, and empathy. Animosity, judgment, or any form of negative or unsupportive behavior toward other participants will not be tolerated. Such actions will result in immediate dismissal from the group to ensure the safety and comfort of all participants.

By participating in this group, you agree to uphold the values of openness, respect, and confidentiality as we support one another through life's challenges.

Grief and Support Group

First Mondays of each month

6:30 pm

BRUU Library

Zoom link available, please contact Kristin at dre@bruu.org or Rebecca at rabell1983@gmail.com for more information

Adult Life Enrichment

Adult Life Enrichment (ALE) Monday

On Break for December

January 20, 2025

Dinner at 6 pm, Workshops at 7 pm

***Volunteers for set up and clean up are always welcome!
Contact Mary Kadlubowski at fellowship@bruu.org***

Monday ALE Coming ahead

January 20: Intro to Zumba

March 17: Ranked Choice Voting

Look for these in addition to Monday ALE

Sunday, January 19, 1-4 pm *The Blanket Exercise:* teaches the history of the colonization of North America from an Indigenous perspective.

Sunday, February 9, 11:45 pm *Curator Tour, Albert Speiden Exhibit* at the Manassas Museum

Religious Education Holiday Break

No RE classes will be held December 15, 22, 29 and January 5.

See you on January 12!

Senior Youth—Meet up at Crossroads following the Music Service, Dec 15th

Explorers—check in with your teachers for special craft days

Special ALE Offerings

The Blanket Exercise

Sunday, January 19, 1:00—4:00 pm

The Blanket Exercise is a learning tool first developed in Canada that leads a group of participants through 500+ years of Indigenous history that highlights our relationship with European explorers, colonial settlers, and the U.S. federal and state governments.

Events tell the story of American history from an Indigenous perspective. Participants stand on blankets that represent lands inhabited by First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people. The facilitator, playing the role of a European "settler", walks the group through a script, telling the story of the first contact between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. As the script progresses, blankets are folded and made smaller, representing the results of the loss of land by treaty and newly legislated reserves. People are asked to step off their blankets, symbolizing disease, war, and extinction. Blankets are removed or moved to other areas, showing the way land was taken and peoples relocated.

At the end of the exercise, only a handful of "survivors" are left standing on small squares of blankets, representing the small number of Indigenous people remaining on their traditional lands. The exercise concludes with the participants discussing the experience.

The United Tribes of the Shenandoah or simply the United Tribes is a tax exempt entity based in Virginia. Created to bring awareness, understanding, preservation, truth and recognition of Native American culture, traditions, and ceremonies to both indigenous and non indigenous people. The blanket exercise and the Blending of Waters being just two activities of the many that the United Tribes is actively involved in.

Sign up [HERE](#) to reserve your spot!



Special ALE Offerings, Continued

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!



Events At & Around BRUU

Second Sunday Hike: Dove's Landing Park

(Jan. 12th, 2025, 1pm)

We will 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.

Dove's Landing Park is located at:

9305 Doves Ln, Manassas, VA 20112

Start time: **1:00 pm**

Registration will allow us to track the number of participants, and notify you if the hike is postponed or cancelled because of weather conditions. Register here:



<https://tinyurl.com/e27h4m8s>

Next Work Day is Saturday, FEBRUARY 1ST



Note the new date! Bring out your calendars and set the date because on **Saturday, February 1**, we will have our winter work day. As usual we'll start at 9:30 am and go until 3-but come for as long as you can. We will need many hands as we have

many jobs. Even those you can't paint well can help paint the black chairs-even young kids! It's been awhile since we've touched the chairs up. In addition there are many other skilled and unskilled jobs. Jobs for those who can clean or paint and more, details to follow. Dress accordingly! As usual there will be a pizza lunch. Point of contact is Christine Sunda.

BRUU Midweek Coffee Hour - 10am Wednesdays

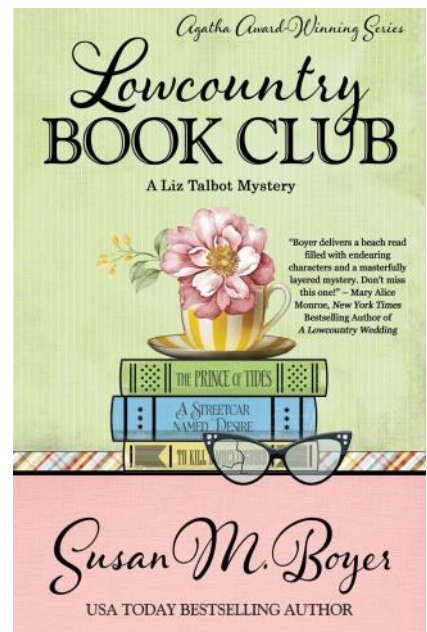


- Visit with old friends and make new ones
 - Share your joys, concerns and insights
 - Discuss serious topics and not so serious ones.
 - Start your day off with a smile and a laugh or two!
- 10am-11:30am every Wednesday on Zoom. Feel free to drop in at any time. Contact Gordon Ward for links at wardge@icloud.com.

Join the BRUU Book Group!

Our next book club meeting will be on Monday, January 20th at 3:30. We will be discussing "Lowcountry Book Club" by Susan M. Boyer.

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.



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.



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 president@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!

Terrie McClure, Treasurer,

treasurer@bruu.org

Robin Fegeas et al, Bookkeepers,

bookkeeper@bruu.org

BRUU

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BRUU OFFICE HOURS

M-F 10:00 am – 2:00 pm