

Crossroads



One of the original architectural designs for what is today the BRUU building, shown here as a mural at the exhibit “Albert Speiden: Designing Manassas.” The exhibit is currently on display at the Manassas Museum.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

November Services.....2
 From the President’s Desk.....3
 Board Matters.....5
 Shining the Light and Storytime.....7
 2024 Annual Auction.....10
 BRUU Endowment Grant Request for Proposals.....12
 Thanksgiving Pitch-In.....13
 Staying Safe from Email Scams.....14
 Events At & Around BRUU.....16
 Chrysalis Concert Series.....18
 20% Off Ballet Tickets!.....19
 Notices.....20





November Service Descriptions

November 3—*Living Our UU Values in Changing Times* (Worship Committee and Friends)

Six congregants will share their perspectives about JETPIG (Justice, Equity, Transformation, Pluralism, Interdependence, and Generosity). How do they live their UU values, and how do they want to see these values manifested in our country's future?

November 10—*Okay, Now What?* (Dianne Lane and Charlie Grymes)

We will have new members of City Councils in Manassas and Manassas Park - oh, and a new US President - soon. We can do far more than celebrate or whine over the results from November 5. We can stand up and engage - living our values through action.

November 17—*Insects and Jainism* (Lois Montgomery and Christine Sunda)

November 24—*Harvest Communion (MG)* (Worship Committee)

From the President's Desk

Angie Carrera, President, Board of Directors

Dear fellow congregants,

By the time you read this, I hope you'll be busy checking or holding dates for any of the LIVE or ONLINE AUCTION events (a dinner here, a pool party there, a trip, a show, who knows!) or placing online bids for those amazing items that you need or that will bring joy to your heart or household.

I love the AUCTION experience because the event itself as well as the auction items (dinners, shows and family activities) offer ways to learn something new and provide much needed opportunities to connect and communicate with others, or maybe even a little deeper dive into the wonderful congregation of which we are a part. A great way to start the holiday season, the AUCTION is a fun way to support the many things we do here at BRUU. Special thanks to Scott Maile and the amazing team of volunteers that have worked hard to make AUCTION an experience to remember all year long!

Another important event is the BRUU Town Hall on November 10 after Sunday Services. The four Town Halls scheduled each year are in keeping with my mantra for my second year as President, Connecting and Communicating with Consistency. Town Halls are planned to ensure that you stay connected, and that you understand the power of your voice in our plans and determinations. They also prepare you for the Congregational Meeting in June at which all BRUU member votes are part of the important decisions made for the coming year and beyond.

I'm grounded in the belief that among our most important responsibilities as BRUU's governing board is keeping the membership well informed about the critical "what, why and how" of our Board governance. Each month the Board meets to share information, determine gaps and possible resolutions in policy

From the President's Desk, Continued

and practice. We know that an informed, committed and transparent board is the foundation for a healthy organization, which translates into an informed, committed and engaged membership, ready to provide well-informed input and feedback so the board can better serve our members, our lay-led congregation.

To support these efforts, we provide messaging through several communications vehicles, including this monthly article, the Crossroads newsletter, the weekly edition of Roundup and occasional BRUU Blasts. Last year, I incorporated BOARD MATTERS as part of this newsletter each month. Please note that the distribution of all of these informational items depend on the support of various committees/teams of volunteers, including the Communications Committee, and our staff, especially our office administrator Taylor Johnson.

So I ask you to stay connected by absorbing these messages, explorations, and decisions. They not only help us grow and thrive as a safe community for seeking and service, they also make you the member of a well-informed engaged and powerful stakeholding in BRUU's governance. Thank you.

We remain together for BRUU,

Angie Carrera

President, BRUU Board of Directors

Board Matters

This scheduled meeting was held on October 17 at 7:00 p.m. in the BRUU Conference Room and may be available on Zoom, There was no Closed Executive Session.

At this meeting, the Board approved the Consent Agenda and reports from the President, Program Council, Staff, and Membership, Attachments included: Financial Stewardship Core Committee Report, Endowment Committee Report, Receipt and Acknowledgement of Manual document (revised), and the Perpetual Board Calendar (revised).

Please see BRUUnet KnowledgeBase for Board Meeting minutes, as well as attachments in support of the agenda and/or the reports.

- 1st Quarter Financial Report: Terrie McClure reported that finances are on track. The Board voted to allow the Food Pantry to receive Share-the-Plate a third time each month (if no nonprofit is proposed for an open slot) and the Community Assistance Fund (CAF) at least once a month. President asked if the Pantry can order food specific to the Little House in our garden. The Treasurer says the Pantry can purchase portable food items for it. In response to a request that a Share-the-Plate be provided to a member's friends impacted by the NC hurricane (Share-the-Plate is established specifically for local nonprofits). The member has been advised to establish a personal Go-Fund-Me page (not as BRUUs) and invite BRUU members and others to contribute.
- Conditional contributions: Board members are researching current policy on conditional contributions as a member has expressed interest in donating to a specific program.
- Partnership with ACTS: The President will sign the revised Memorandum of Understanding to enter into partnership with local nonprofit ACTS so that collections for the Community Assistance Fund (CAF) will be directed to and distributed by the ACTS Emergency Assistance Fund. In this way, ACTS staff can deliver funds and more effective services to individuals and families in

Board Matters, Continued

need. For more information, please contact the President who is working on an SOP for CAF.

- Perpetual Board Calendar: Board members will review the revision and report changes and corrections to the President.
- Nov. 10 Town Hall: In preparation of the November Town Hall, the President asked the Board for agenda topics to be included in material for the congregation.
- Stewardship: Canvas begins at Feb Town Hall with an April 5 deadline for an income total for the Finance Committee's Aspirational Budget for Board approval as the Congregational Budget, which will be presented at the annual Congregational Meeting on the 1st Sunday in June. Special thanks to meeting convener Martha Muirhead and to the wonderful members serving on this Team.
- Building and Grounds: The Sundas are exploring a possible new roof for BRUU and chair lift possibilities.
- Personnel: The Receipt and Acknowledgement of the Personnel Manual form sent to staff has been revised by the Personnel Committee. The revised document was approved by the Board to be signed by the staff.
- Congregational Survey: Dianne Lane and Charlie Grymes continue to work on this process.
- UUA Relationship with BRUU: BRUU Board representatives will meet with UUA representatives (CER Sana Saeed and Megan Foley) on October 29th to discuss UUAs relationship with BRUU and other topics.
- Update on Vice President Position: We expect to fill this position by Nov. 21 and will update the congregation in the Crossroads newsletter.
- Guest: Music Director David Maley shared his position description and its requirements.

Shining the Light and Storytime

Kristin Worthington, Director of Lifespan Religious Education

Wait. Does it seem like the children and youth are leaving the service before the story? That is because they are. We have shifted when the congregation “Sings out the young people to Religious Education.” Why? Because the children, youth and teachers want more time in the Religious Education (RE) groups.

I have been a longtime advocate of all ages sharing the worship space. To those who wonder why the kids are in worship at all, I explain that participation in worship gives them a sense of community. Sharing sacred time together adds to the sense of self value we hold dear. Church is supposed to be one of those shelters where we can expect a warm smile, no matter our individual beliefs. By being in worship together, the younger participants are learning our rituals, witnessing how we declare our values, how to “do church.” They grow up witnessing the variety of ways we can express our faith, listening to the words of our members sharing the variety of journeys we are on. I strongly encourage the children to attend youth led services, to visualize their own future potential, to see people just like them in the sanctuary and at the front of the sanctuary.

The ongoing conversation, however, has been the balance between time in Worship vs. time in Religious Education. In the past, we have tried a variety of ways to keep the start of service succinct. But this approach has many failings. Sometimes there are a lot of things the entire community needs to know about. When planning worship, we are selecting each element – in its needed length – to add to the whole. Time after time, we saw that no matter how well intentioned, the young people were sung out of service later than needed.

What does it matter how long RE has? Because we have discussions to have, activities to explore, information to share! No matter what time the children are sung out to RE, the RE teachers experience delays in transitioning from sanctuary to classroom. Can you recall what it is like to get to a committee meeting following service? You need to leave a sacred space of contemplation, grab some coffee, but

Shining the Light and Storytime, continued

stop to greet the person next to you at the stevia. Then you may catch up with the person who just returned from vacation as you stop by the restroom. Another conversation occurs in the stairwell, and you finally arrive at the conference room, not the first person in the room, but not the last. And you check in with those persons too. While the procession to RE is a little more streamlined than that, the same thing happens with our younger ones. Leaving the sanctuary to join their friends is a much longer process than simply walking from one room to the next.

Once settled in, the children, youth, and adults in RE need to, wish to, and now, have demanded to have their full hour of time together also.

This shift in timing of our shared service has been a conversation many years in the making and the decision was not made without significant consideration. The bottom line is parents, children and teachers ALL urged less this change. We will do it this way for a while. We will see how it goes. We always have the freedom to shift again.

But what about the story? If the children are not there, should we even have Story as a worship element? Of course we should! From notes I made during a professional development course:

Stories are a powerful tool in worship, especially multigenerational worship. Laden with images, metaphors, playfulness, and truth, story provides a common language and shared experience across different generations and theologies.

Stories honor our imaginations. They let each listener fill in the gaps with their own experience, answering their own questions.

Stories contain images or themes that can be woven into the entire worship service. We have a practice of telling a story near the beginning of the service, to introduce the listener to the coming experience. A metaphor connects us to a meaning, and links to a more complex concept to contemplate.

Shining the Light and Storytime, continued

We have been comfortable reading children's books and viewing the illustrations as of late. And that suggests that the stories are only for children. That is mostly my doing. For many years, my drive was to share myths from a variety of cultures and faith traditions. I used those tales to tell of our shared human experience. The wisdom of our ancestors is truer and more relevant to our modern world than ever. The pandemic happened, and those of us planning worship had to reinvent the ways that we presented the experience. Story books on zoom became the most efficient way. When we returned to the building, those illustrations looked so good up on that big screen!

While the decision is made by each week's worship leader, story is absolutely a transformative opportunity for ALL ages and should be considered a key component of worship. Think of the opportunities this small shift in timing lends. Now the story does not necessarily have to be at the beginning of service. I recall a very special service, during which the story was broken up into parts and shared throughout the hour. While most children's books are actually perfect for adults because the authors have a knack for conveying a deep truth in simple to understand language, we do not have to be limited to them. There are volumes upon volumes of myths, folktales, and traditional tales to choose from. In our pursuits to live our values, listening to the experiences of others is an important skill to embrace. There are possibilities to create your own story! Stories are a form of art! It is an opportunity to read dramatically, play, express without words, to name a few.

So yes, we have created a moment to "Shine the Light," immediately following the Chalice Lighting. At that time, children and youth are Sung Out by the congregation to go to their RE adventures. The worship time will continue with meaning and creativity. And hopefully inspiring us to reconnect with all ages in our other interactions.

BRUU's 2024 Annual Auction: "The Power of Showing Up"

The Live Auction is on Saturday November 2nd. The creativity, the energy and all of the hard work demonstrates the Power of Showing Up and is an example of what we can achieve when we work together. It might be a bit late for final reminders or calls for volunteers, but it is never too late to extend my heart-felt appreciation. Thank you for all that you have done and continue to do, to make the Auction so successful.

This is also a good time to remind everyone of the rules that make the Auction function so well.

Item Donors:

- You will receive an automated email that lists the winners of your items
- Please coordinate a time and place to pick up/deliver the Auction Item

Bidders:

- You will receive an automated email that lists the items you have won
- It is important that Bidders settle their account and make final payment by November 15th
- If you can not attend an event, you may designate an alternate to attend in your place
- Please notify the Host to inform of the change in attendance
- If a scheduled event is canceled, you are entitled to a refund, or you can consider the value as a donation to BRUU

Hosts:

- You will receive an automated email that lists the winners attending your event
- Please ensure you send an email reminding the attendees of the event and any coordinating instructions
- If you are serving food, you should verify if attendees have any allergies or diet restrictions
- Please notify attendees if a scheduled event needs to be changed
- If an event needs to be canceled, please coordinate with the Auction Planning Team

BRUU's 2024 Annual Auction: Preview This Year's Door Prizes!



A special "Thank You" to BRUU Friends and Local Vendors for supporting the 2024 Annual Auction with your wonderful donations.

Local Vendors and Friends that have worked with Nina to provide an amazing array of Door Prizes include:

- Manassas Symphony (Family Concert : Reveries 12/14 3:30)
- Art Factory (Miracle on 34th Street 11/29-12/8)
- The Man Cave
- Calico Jack's
- Things I Love
- Trude Blomso
- Manassas Clay
- Lume Asian Fusion
- Foster's Grille Doug's Deli
- Ashby Jewelers
- Curves Hair Studio
- Caitlin Schneiderman

When you visit with these local vendors & friends, please extend our collective appreciation for their gifts.

Thank
You

BRUU ENDOWMENT: 2024-25 Endowment Grant Request for Proposals

The Endowment Committee is seeking innovative proposals for the 2024-25 grant cycle opening now. We are entertaining proposals for projects up to a total of \$25,000 for the cycle; however, proposals for more ambitious projects are also encouraged provided they meet Endowment Fund granting requirements. The three primary goals of the grants are:

- 1.To strengthen BRUU as an organization and enhance its long-term sustainability.
- 2.To enhance the impact of BRUU in the community.
- 3.To implement the principles and purposes of Unitarian Universalism.

Please note that proposals for funding items that are already listed in the capital budget will not be considered for funding through Endowment Committee funds. For more information, and for the proposal evaluation criteria and proposal form, please see the [grant application form linked here](#), or contact Endowment Committee at endowment@bruu.org.

https://www.bruu.org/www2/wp-content/uploads/=financial/2024-25_Application_for_Project_Grant.docx



Thanksgiving Pitch-In 2024



Date & Time: November 28th, 2024, 3pm-8pm

Link/Signup: <https://tinyurl.com/Thanksgiving-24> (or use QR code below)

Join us to celebrate Thanksgiving. If you can let us know how many are coming it helps us plan, but there's always room at the table. BRUU will provide the Turkey and stuffing, special dietary dishes as requested and hot/cold cider.

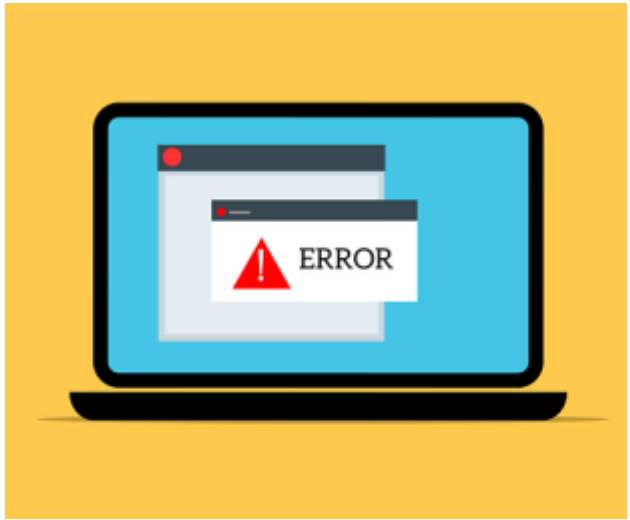
Again this year, if you can't make it to BRUU, email fellowship@bruu.org for a volunteer to deliver a take out box to you. If you can bring a fellow BRUUser a meal, there is a sign up slot to deliver. Include your zip code so we can connect to people on your way. As usual, you can stop by to pick up a to go meal if you need to.

Thank you!



Staying Safe from Email Scams

As we enter this holiday season, one way we can care for our community within and around BRUU is to safeguard our personal information and that of our neighbors. We've all seen the scams and some of us have fallen for them: Churches and nonprofits are often targeted by hackers or scammers posing Board members or other members of the community, asking for a copy of the directory as a favor, or asking the recipient to send money or gift cards.



BRUU and other churches have reported a significant increase in these scams over recent months. So how do we prevent them from affecting us or others in our community?

Here are a few tips for safer email habits:

- **Don't provide the church directory:** Anyone with access to BRUUnet has access to get a copy of the directory there, and copies can be printed in the office on request. Be cautious and **don't send the directory directly**, even if the request seems legitimate. Check with the person separately (like by phone or text) to verify whether they really sent the request.
- **Be wary of urgent requests:** Scam emails often reference sudden (false) emergencies to create a sense of urgency to pressure you into clicking links or providing information quickly. Scammers can pretend to be someone you know and claim to be injured or stuck somewhere, asking for emergency help.
- **Check sender addresses carefully:** Just because the email says it comes from "Angie Carrera," doesn't mean it's really from Angie! Always check sender addresses and verify that the email address actually belongs to someone within the church.

Email Scams, Continued

- **Verify requests with a phone call:** If you're not sure whether an email request is legitimate or not, contact the person by phone, or contact the church office to confirm the request.
- **Don't respond to suspicious emails (even to say "no"):** Even a simple reply can reveal details about you to the scammer and can lead to more spam or attacks. The best thing to do is to report the email as spam without interacting with it, and then check with trusted sources by a separate method (like phone, text, or in person).

We all want to help our community, but in order to do so safely, we must also be aware of the scams that would take advantage of our willingness to help. If you're unsure of whether an email is legitimate, err on the side of caution: Make a phone call or text the person directly. Those few minutes can prevent a lot of headaches later, and will strengthen the lines of communication that are so crucial to our community.



Events At & Around BRUU

A meditation teacher is coming to BRUU

On **November 7th at 7:00 PM**, Ann Deschamps will be coming to BRUU to teach meditation. Ann has been practicing meditation in the Vipassana tradition since 2000, and loves creating space for people to practice. She is currently in the Brown University Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) teacher Certification Program, and offers beginning mindfulness classes in Reston, VA., where she lives.

Ann will be coming to BRUU the first Thursday of each month to teach meditation. This is being organized by the Thursday Meditation Group, that meets every Thursday at 7:00 PM in the Flamingo Lounge. If you would like to attend on Nov 7th, please send an email to sangha@bruu.org to express your interest.



Second Sunday Hike is on Monday, November 11

We are taking advantage of the "fee-free" day at Prince William Forest Park, on Veterans Day. Hike is still 1:00-3:00pm, but on Monday instead of Sunday in November.

We will hike a four-mile loop starting at the Turkey Run Ridge Area. The hike is on natural surface trails, with tree roots and rocks in the trail, and hills. Please register at: <https://tinyurl.com/e27h4m8s>



BRUU Midweek Coffee Hour - 10am Wednesdays

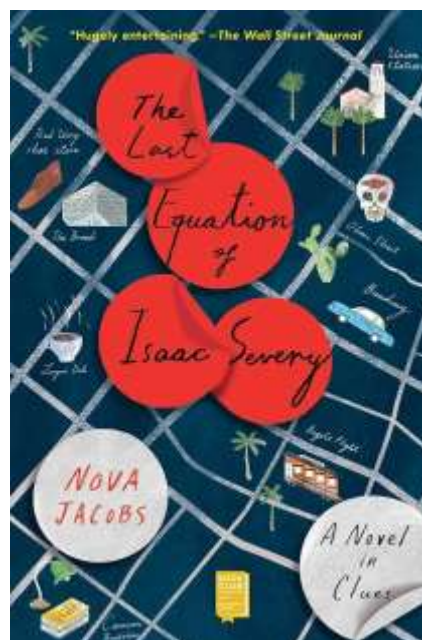


- Visit with old friends and make new ones
 - Share your joys, concerns and insights
 - Discuss serious topics and not so serious ones.
 - Start your day off with a smile and a laugh or two!
- 10am-11:30am every Wednesday on Zoom. Feel free to drop in at any time. Contact Gordon Ward for links at wardge@icloud.com.

Join the BRUU Book Group!

Our next book club meeting will be on Monday, November 18th at 3:30. We will be discussing "The Last Equation of Isaac Severy: A novel in clues" by Nova Jacobs.

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.



20% Off Tickets for BRUUers!

Use the code below for 20% off tickets to this event thanks to our friends at the Manassas Ballet Theatre.



MILLER & **Dominion Energy** present
TOYOTA.com
Manassas, Virginia

MANASSAS BALLET THEATRE

in **NUTCRACKER**

with the
Manassas Ballet Theatre Orchestra

December 18-23

Discount Code
FAM20 20% OFF

at the
HYLTON PERFORMING ARTSCENTER
10960 George Mason Circle, Manassas, VA

info: manassasballet.org
(703) 257-1811

for tickets:
www.hyltoncenter.org
703-993-7759

Manassas Ballet Theatre is funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Virginia Commission for the Arts, Prince William County, and the City of Manassas

XMB Photography



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: midnight on Tuesday night

Crossroads: midnight on the 24th of the month (so, by the 25th)

Order of Service items: midnight on Wednesday night

Items received after these deadlines **will not be included**, except in extreme circumstances. Also, if submissions are incomplete or require follow-up or editing that delays a final version beyond the deadline, such items **will be counted as late** and may not be included.

Early submissions are always welcome. If you are unsure about any details or your item has specific needs, please consider submitting your article or other content early, and/or contacting the Office for clarification.

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

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

BRUU Board of Directors

President

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

Secretary

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

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