

September 2017

BUUC NEWS

Brookfield Unitarian Universalist Church
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Dear Friends,

My husband Kevin and I spent part of the summer traveling in Italy with some friends. While driving through the countryside in Piedmont we stopped at what, as best we could tell, was a restaurant, though we weren't entirely sure. There was a sign along the roadside, but the building, set back from the road, looked like a private home. Under a wide covered terrace there were a few tables and people seated at one or two of them. As we approached the terrace, an elderly man came out of the house and began to speak to us in Italian. Now, collectively, Kevin, our friends and I know perhaps a dozen words in Italian. And it seemed the man speaking to us knew less English than we knew Italian. We faced a decision. Either disengage and leave or engage more deeply by finding a different way to communicate. We chose the latter and ended up having one of the best meals of our entire trip.

I share this story because it reminds me a lot of what it's like to be part of a church community. While on one level there's a certain familiarity of form...the building in which we meet, the structure of the worship service...on another level there's much that is less familiar...from religious language and theological concepts to perspectives on life and living that reveal the limits of our usual approach to others, our personal situations and the world. And so we're left with a choice. To continue as we always have, avoiding the unfamiliar by disengaging. Or to embrace it and engage more deeply. Our church covenant calls us as individuals to the latter as does our mission as a congregation.

To that end, our worship themes for the church year will consist of religious language or theological concepts that may be unfamiliar or just vaguely familiar or words and ideas that many of us may have a fixed understanding of. Exploring these themes (worship, miracles, grace, heresy, seekers, prayer, faith, transition, salvation and evangelism), affords all of us, including our guest preachers and myself, the opportunity to embrace the less familiar and/or engage more deeply with these ideas and concepts.

Another opportunity to embrace and engage more deeply the less familiar is this fall's Food for Faith adult religious education program, "Practicing Spiritual Practices". You can read more about below under Adult RE Offering Fall 2017.

Even as we embrace the unfamiliar, we also honor a long cherished tradition. On September 10th at 10:30am we will again gather to mark the start of the church year (our 300th!) with an intergenerational service and stone communion (don't forget to bring a small stone). See you then.

Peace and blessings,
†Rev. Craig



"The Little Stone Church That Rocks"

A Welcoming Congregation
and a Green Sanctuary

We are a fellowship of seekers
after truth, bound by no dogma,
restricted by no creed.

Our Affirmation

HERE: We unite in an atmosphere of care and support to foster spiritual health and growth.

HERE: We focus on sharing our ideas and histories, with warmth, hope, loving friendship and an open mind.

HERE: We nurture stability for our daily lives and seek motivation to reach out to the larger community.



Worship Schedule

Sunday morning services are held at 10:30 am, unless noted.

September 10:* "Beyond Words"
Opening Sunday with Stone Communion
(Remember to bring you stone) –Rev.
Craig Nowak; Music –Choir

September 17: "What Is a Sacred Reality?" –John Kennison;
Music –Mackenzie Morrell, flute; Kim
Burdon, voice

September 24: "Becoming" –Rev. Craig
Nowak; Music –Choir

*intergenerational service

Upcoming Events

Unless indicated, all events are at BUUC.
More detail can be found on page 2.

September 26, 6:30 pm: SMOC
dinner, Gilbertville, MA

October 4, 12 pm: Stone Soup
Luncheon

October 7: Executive Committee will
be participating in Brookfield's Apple
Country Fair, selling Fair Trade Coffee
in front of the church.

Rev. Craig's Contact Info

Phone and Email
860-916-9261
revcraignowak@comcast.net

Office Hours

Wednesdays 9:15–10 am and 1–3 pm
Other times by appointment

BUUC Cares: If you or someone you know at BUUC might need pastoral support, please contact Rev. Craig (contact info above).



HELP! BUUC needs two nursery care providers this church year September-June. Sundays 10:15am - 11:45am, \$15 (each person). Must love babies. Contact Amy 508-344-2108.



Dear Friends,

When Mary and I were planning our wedding, we both wanted to get married in a church but we quickly discovered we had very few options. As I recall, I phoned four churches requesting a lesbian wedding ceremony. The first call I was literally laughed at - that was the church I was raised in. That one stung a little. On my second call, I was asked, "are you joking" and told something to the effect of - that would never happen here. That one didn't surprise me. The third church I found in the yellow pages (that's old-folk talk for "google"). The minister of the third church kindly suggested I "try the UUs". So, I called the UU church in the very small town of Chester, Vermont. (Civil Unions had just been legalized in Vermont so it was the only state in which we could get something that resembled a marriage license.) The minister there told me he had never had this request before and would need to bring it to his board for a vote. Just a few days later, we were told they would love to host our wedding. The only expectation was that we make a donation of flowers by leaving them on the altar for Sunday's service the following day. Fast forward 17 years and the UU church has become our family's religious home. And, asking for donations for my UU church has become my avocation. I share this story as one example of why I think our little church in the country is so important. After all these years, I still find refuge in the compassionate, welcoming, kindness that makes our community so uniquely relevant. And, like my marriage, my participation creates a deeper joy in my life every year. Welcome Home.

See you in the Pews,
†Amy
President



Flowers

Flowers on the altar add such beauty to worship; you are invited to sign up to provide flowers for a service. There are many options; go to your favorite florist, pick from your own garden or yard, buy from a farm stand, farmer's market, or grocery store. There are plenty of vases at church, or you can provide your own. Someone from the Flower Committee can even help with arranging if you like.

The flower donor sign-up sheet is in the parlor. You will receive a reminder the week before your date. If you have any questions, please ask Lila Farrar, Donna Sullivan, Mary Ann Adams or Judy Trifone.

"Cakes for the Queen of Heaven"

The Women's Alliance will be presenting Part I of "Cakes for the Queen of Heaven". The curriculum is from the UUA and this course introduces the pre-patriarchal goddesses of prehistoric and early historic times, their early power and their ultimate loss of power as patriarchy became the established social structure. It will be presented beginning on Wednesday, September 20 from 7-9 PM and will continue for the next 4 consecutive Wednesdays (9/27, 10/4, 10/11, and 10/18) at the BUUC. All are invited!

In Our Community

Book Club

Second Tuesday of the month, 7pm JOIN US for an all-inclusive (men and women of BUUC and beyond welcome), exhilarating (maybe a little strong but we're really excited) BUUC BOOK CLUB. We hope to create a group that will generate meaningful conversations about a variety of books, authors and topics. Contact Amy Frisella at amyfrisella@hotmail.com or Barb Hale at blambert.hale@gmail.com for more info.

Choir Practice

Every Thursday, 7pm

Committee for Ecology and Social Action (CESA)

Once a Month, Date and Time TBD For information, contact Mary Ann Adams at maryannbuuc@gmail.com.

SMOC Dinner-

Last Tuesday of the month, 6:30pm Come join us as we provide a monthly meal for residents of the SMOC sober house in Gilbertville. Contact Wendy Newhall, circle_dancers@yahoo.com or Christine Holbrook, holbrookchristine1@gmail.com for details.

Stone Soup Luncheons

Oct – June, first Wednesday of the month, 12pm. All are invited for Stone Soup, where your presence is the secret (and most important) ingredient. We provide the soup and coffee/tea; you bring something to share (bread, juice, appetizer/dessert).

Women's Alliance

Second Wednesday of the month, 7pm. Contact Laurie Magnuson (508-867-3763).





RE Notes

Hello Everyone!! I hope your summers were just what you wanted them to be!! I got to visit Colorado again. This time doing more site-seeing along with spending time with our daughter and her family. How easy it is to find awesome heart-filling moments while sharing views of open sky, gurgling creeks, rivers flowing deep in ravines, cuddling and doing projects with two sweet little ones, receiving sweetness from the Great Pyrenees and a work out from the Chocolate Lab! And here we are looking toward Fall and transitions and our Ingathering.

This year, as with the last two years, RE will follow the monthly BUUC community ministry themes. Unlike the last two years, RE will be using curricula from the UUA's Tapestry of Faith, woven into BUUC RE session favorites.

With each new church year different challenges pop up in RE. With our small group, attendance numbers dictate how many groups we break into. During the last few years, we planned for three groups and actually have 1, 2 or 3 groups on any given Sunday. This year we hope to hold three groups: preK-Gr3, Gr 4-6 and Jr-Sr (Gr7-12) Youth. As in the past, there will be special sessions/events where the RE-ers will be all together! Lots of fun, of course!

DATES to NOTE:

September 17, 9:30: Jr.- Sr. Youth Meet up at BUUC to attend service at BUCC followed by a tour of Foster Hill area, home of original church 1717. Sign up with Laurel B. on Sept 10.

October 15, 9:00: PreK-Gr. 3 Breakfast with Rev. Craig
—Adult Helpers Needed

November 5, 9:00: Gr. 4, 5, 6 Breakfast with Rev. Craig
—Adult Helpers Needed

Enjoy the last few days of Summer!!

See you in Church.

†Laurel Burdon
Director of Religious Education

Community Resources Page

At the heart of Unitarian Universalism is a deep recognition and respect for the interconnectedness of life. As a faith community, Brookfield Unitarian Universalist Church seeks to foster spiritual health and growth, but we also recognize that it is equally important to encourage and empower one another to lives of physical, mental, and emotional health and well-being. To that end, we have launched our Community Resources page. To access the page visit www.buuc.org and click on the "Community Resources" tab on the side menu.

We Rise: Social Justice Resources Page

For those who feel called by our faith to take the side of human worth and dignity through social action. Go to www.buuc.org and click the tab "We Rise: Social Justice Resources" on the menu at the left side of the page.

THERE ARE ALLERGIES AMONG US

Please limit your use of scents and chemicals, and leave as much latex as possible at home.

ADULT RE Offering Fall 2017

Food for Faith: Practicing Spiritual Practices

This program is premised on the assertion personal spiritual practices are the engine of faithful living. Participants will be asked to "try" different daily spiritual practices for one month each and to keep a journal to record observations, insights, and questions that arise from engaging in the practice. These will be shared with other participants when we meet at the end of each practice cycle. For the final practice cycle, participants will create their own daily practice.

Preparation Required:

No specific preparation or experience is required other than an openness to potentially unfamiliar and/or challenging spiritual practices.

Meeting Dates:

Sun. 10/1 @12pm: Introduction to the program and first practice

Sun. 11/5 @12pm: Check In and Sharing; Introduction to the second practice

Sun. 12/3 @12pm: Check In and Sharing; Introduction to the third practice

Sun. 1/7 @12pm: Check In and Sharing; program conclusion

Sign Up:

To sign up, email Rev. Craig @ revcraignowak@comcast.net or use the sign-up sheet in the parlor.



Music Notes

This church year will be an exciting one for the music program. We plan to have all the usual things we've come to expect--choir half of the Sundays, Musical Offerings from a diverse array of singers and instrumentalists, including our famous Celtic Music Sunday with the "some of the notes, some of the time" BUUC Celtic Band. We will invite children and adults to join in the Intergenerational choir a few times, as we did last year. But we also have something special this year.

Many of you may be aware of "Ten Amendments in Eight Motets; The Bill of Rights" by Neely Bruce. The BUUC choir has already sung The First Amendment several times, and also The Fourth and Fifth. This year we are embarking on a project to do the whole thing, singing roughly one movement a month as part of regular morning worship, culminating in a full performance of the entire work on June 3, 2018, both as part of morning worship, and in a public performance in the afternoon.

The piece has been composed in the style of William Billings, our first American born composer. This style will be familiar to long time BUUC attenders as we have sung several pieces by early American composer contemporaries of Billings. You may enjoy listening for the various clever ways the composer has found to bring out the meaning of the text. In the Tenth Amendment which is about states' rights, he used the compositional technique of a Quadruple Fugue to illustrate how different ideas (melodies) can retain their individual identity and yet fit together to make a whole. The Fifth Amendment is where our so called Miranda Rights -the right to remain silent- come from, and he illustrates that by incorporating long silences in the music. The Eighth Amendment prohibits the use of excessive bail or cruel and unusual punishments. Listen for his depiction of "excessive" and "cruel and unusual"!

Please put June 3, 2018 on your calendars now, and help spread the word. We will be looking for help with publicity and also for help with hosting the concert. See me for more details or questions.

†Lila M Farrar
Music Director

From the Treasurer

BUUC closed the books on our 2016-17 fiscal year on July 31, and as your Treasurer I am pleased to report that it was an outstanding financial year! We did not need to use BUUC trust earnings or retained grant funds to help pay for our operating costs, a feat not achieved in at least the past 21 years! There were many reasons for this: we ended last year with a surplus rather than the deficit we had estimated; we had much lower facility, speakers, and fuel expenses than budgeted; and income, particularly donations, pledges, and special offerings, was substantially above budget. While we should congratulate ourselves for essentially operating within our means last year, we also should recognize that we will continue to experience major financial challenges in the years ahead. Our 105 year old building continues to need major maintenance and we desperately need to improve our accessibility for those with mobility challenges. A summary of the as yet unaudited Treasurer's Report for the year ended July 31 is below- please reach out to me if you have any questions.

Most of all, thank you all for your sustained commitment to the BUUC!

†Doug Smith
Treasurer

Who's Who at BUUC

Staff

Minister

Rev. Craig M. Nowak

Religious Education Director

Laurel Burdon

Music Director

Lila M. Farrar

Office Assistant

Angie Ellison

Executive Committee

Ex-Officio member

Rev. Craig M. Nowak

President

Amy Frisella

Treasurer

Doug Smith

Clerk

Colleen Groner

Members-at-Large

Robyn Vincent, Laurie Magnuson,
Donna Boyea, Betsy Azarowski

Collector

Christine Holbrook

Committees and Groups

Committee on Ministry

Mary Ann Adams, Mary Frisella,
Roxann Smith, Donna Sullivan

Ecology and Social Action (CESA)

Mary Ann Adams, Chair

Flower Committee

Lila Farrar, Chair

Membership Committee

Debbie Ennis, Chair

Nominating Committee

Barbara Hale, Laurie Magnuson,
Donna Sullivan

Trustees

Carla Schirm, Roxann Smith, Kirk
Upton

Women's Alliance

Laurie Magnuson, President

Worship Committee

Wendy Newhall, Chair

Ultimate Team

Ruth King, Diane Mossa,
Judy Trifone



From the Treasurer (continued)

	Actual	Budget	Difference		Actual	Budget	Difference
INCOME	\$ 93,927	\$ 105,718	\$ (11,791)	EXPENSES	\$ 91,059	\$ 105,718	\$ (14,659)
Estimated deficit from prior year	\$ 3,206	\$ (4,300)	\$ 7,506	Facility	\$ 11,771	\$ 23,835	\$ (12,064)
Budgeted Use of Building Fund	\$ -	\$ 4,000	\$ (4,000)	Ministry	\$ 6,279	\$ 7,575	\$ (1,296)
Budgeted use of MA Historical Grant	\$ -	\$ 3,494	\$ (3,494)	Outside Charity	\$ 954	\$ -	\$ 954
Donations	\$ 5,950	\$ 4,000	\$ 1,950	Salary	\$ 72,056	\$ 74,308	\$ (2,252)
Fund Raising	\$ 1,311	\$ 1,200	\$ 111				
Interest	\$ 88	\$ 20	\$ 68				
Ministerial Benevolence Fund	\$ 747	\$ -	\$ 747				
Plate Offerings	\$ 2,882	\$ 2,000	\$ 882				
Regular Pledges	\$ 74,614	\$ 71,600	\$ 3,014				
Special Offering	\$ 5,130	\$ 2,700	\$ 2,430				
Trust Funds	\$ -	\$ 21,004	\$ (21,004)	Net Difference:	\$ 2,868	\$ -	\$ 2,868



Book Club

The BUUC Book Group will be meeting at 7 pm on Tuesday, September 12 at the church. This group is open to anyone who would like to attend even if you haven't yet read the book but would like to know more about it.

The book we are discussing at our September meeting is *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis* by J. D. Vance. The New York Times review says this about the book: "[A] compassionate, discerning sociological analysis...Combining thoughtful inquiry with firsthand experience, Mr. Vance has inadvertently provided a civilized reference guide for an uncivilized election, and he's done so in a vocabulary intelligible to both Democrats and Republicans. Imagine that."

If you would like to read ahead, we are reading *A Tale for the Time Being* by Ruth Ozeki in October and two books by Sy Montgomery in November: *The Good, Good Pig* and *The Soul of the Octopus*. Read either or both.

Please come to the meeting with suggestions for the rest of the year and why you think your books are worthy candidates for us to share. If you can't make it to the meeting, but would like to suggest a book for the group, please email Barb Hale at b.lambert.hale@gmail.com with your suggestion prior to the meeting.

Our Mission

Our mission is to support and promote the principles of Unitarian Universalism. By nurturing spirituality, intellectual growth, diversity of belief, and our ties to one another, we seek to inspire lives of passion, compassion, and community. We do this for ourselves and for the larger world.



OUR COVENANT

As we share our lives in this place of blessed community, we promise to unite in an atmosphere of care and support, provide a spiritual home for ourselves and our children, and work together in our search for truth and caring ways to be in community with each other, both within and beyond these walls.

We seek to embody a welcoming community of **CARING, SUPPORT, AND SERVICE**

We therefore promise to

- * Treat each other with respect, trust, and compassion;
- * Actively listen to all points of view on important issues;
- * Create an open environment for nonjudgmental participation;
- * Honor dissenting views, agreeing to disagree;
- * Make decisions with as much participation as possible;
- * Accept that we will make mistakes, forgive each other, and move on;
- * Express gratitude for the efforts of others;
- * Work together to live by our Covenant; and
- * Try to the best of our ability to live by our Unitarian Universalist Principles and Purposes, affirming our tradition of service and justice for all.

Adopted by the members of BUUC

May 20, 2012

Interested In Membership at BUUC?

Unitarian Universalism is a covenantal faith making membership in our community both simple and challenging. It is simple in that to become a member all that is generally required is signing the membership book. It is challenging because that is not all that is asked of our members. In addition to honoring our congregational covenant, as a member you would be asked to :

- Worship in community regularly
- Work faithfully on your own spiritual development
- Be involved in a ministry of service to others
- Share your financial resources as stewards of the present and future of this religious community
- Continue to learn and connect to the wider movement of Unitarian Universalism
- Assume responsibility for offering the genuine hospitality of this community to all who come here

Visitors and friends curious to know more or who are considering becoming a member of BUUC are invited to contact Rev. Craig.



**BROOKFIELD
UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST CHURCH**

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