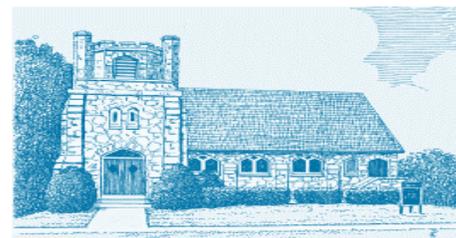


September 2021



"The Little Stone Church That Rocks"

BUUC News

Brookfield Unitarian Universalist Church
9 Upper River Street, P.O. Box 386, Brookfield, MA 01506
buuc01506@gmail.com, www.buuc.org, 508-867-5145

*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.



Dear Friends,

Recently while looking up religious holidays from various traditions, I fell down the internet rabbit hole and wound up on a site for a National Day Calendar. That's a calendar that lists all those "Today is National ... (whatever day)" that you hear about or see posted on social media. After learning that the last Friday in April is **National Hairball Awareness Day** and July 13th is the far more pleasant **National French Fry Day**, I decided to see if September 12th, the date of our first Sunday service of the church year was any particularly unusual or interesting national day. Turns out, among other things, September 12th is **National Just One Human Family Day**. According to the site the observance is intended to "encourage us to reflect on the human race as a single family who share just one planet." Given all the strife and division we learn about, experience, and sometimes participate in, even before the pandemic, it is hard to imagine a more fitting observance to coincide with the start of the new church year as we begin the transition toward post-Covid community.

During the transition we may not always be unified in the precise timing or extent of the transition. Some may think it too slow, others too fast; and others may simply be unsure at this point. Still, as we stand betwixt and between what was and what will be holding different ideas and degrees of readiness to step into what's next, we can all take solace knowing we are unified in purpose as expressed in our mission:

...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.

As our mission reminds us, we are in this together and not just for ourselves individually or even for our hundred or so fellow members and friends of this community, but for the larger world. And while BUUC may be small, its mission isn't. Indeed, BUUC's presence in the world, be it virtual, in-person or some combination of each has, throughout its history, been and continues to be a life-line in one way or another to people seeking and in need of community; the breath of life for religious ideas and ideals silenced and persecuted in other

religious and secular communities; and a spiritual home where adults, children, and youth can come, explore, and practice, in the words of James Luther Adams, "what it means to be human."

As we work through this transition time together and experience the inevitable tension that comes with all change, I encourage you to feel what you must feel, but to also remain mindful of and reflect on what unites us as a community.

I look forward to seeing you all in-person and/or online, Sunday, Sept. 12th to start off the new church year. And don't forget to bring your paper "stone" from June or a new blank crumpled paper "stone" for Stone Communion.

Peace and love,
Rev. Craig



Notes from the President



Dear Friends,

I hope you have all had a wonderful summer despite the rain, the hot weather, and the pandemic.

The Executive Committee and staff met in August and we discussed opening the church for in-person services on September 12 or remaining on Zoom only for our Sunday services as the pandemic continues. After a lot of conversation, we made the decision to start this church year in person with an option of live streaming on Zoom for those who are uncomfortable with meeting or unable to attend in person.

This will entail some adjustment for us. I hope that all of you, who are medically able to receive the vaccine, have done so. In any case, while we will not be asking for proof of vaccine, we do expect all who attend services in person to wear a mask and to keep a proper physical distance from others who are not in your immediate "family" or "pod." We will be sending a more detailed communication out about this closer to September 12, the first Sunday of the church year.

So many of us would like to return to "normal" and to go back to church in September without thinking about masks and distancing. But unfortunately, things are still far from normal. We hope that our return to providing safe in-person services with an option for those who feel the need to remain away from being with other people will bring a little normalcy back into our lives.

In any case, we intend to continue our Zoom social hour on the third Wednesday of the month so I hope to see you there. It's a heck of a lot of fun.

Live long and prosper.
Barb Hale, President

Music Notes



CALLING IN ALL HYMNALS: First of all, please bring back any and all hymnals you borrowed in the past couple of years (or before!). And please either hand them to me directly, or place in a designated box at the back of the sanctuary, and inform me that you have returned it/them. All of the hymnals in the sanctuary were sanitized and covered during the time we weren't using the building.

If you have become attached to the hymnal you borrowed, please note that you can buy your own copy(!) from inSpirit, the UUA bookstore, at www.uuabookstore.org. Besides the gray hymnal, *Singing the Living Tradition*, both supplements as well as a plethora of other inspiring books and other items are available there. It is a good place to visit, in any case. I see that *Desmond Gets Free*, the delightful children's book by Matt Meyer, which he introduced to us on Zoom worship in June, is now listed. Also available for preorder is a new book by Roxann Dunbar-Ortiz, the author of *An Indigenous People's History of the United States*, which many of us read last year. The new title due out by the end of August is *Not 'a Nation of Immigrants': Settler Colonialism, White Supremacy, and a History of Erasure and Exclusion*.

On the subject of combating the history of Erasure and Exclusion:

For a number of years we have looked to include more ignored and underrepresented composers in our worship. Recently, I have increased my efforts to seek out Black and POC composers. By doing this I am hoping to raise all of our name recognition in the "classical" category.

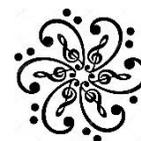
Perhaps you already recognize Florence B Price, John W. Work III, William Grant Still, all composers you have heard at BUUC in the past two years. This year I had hoped to increase our repertoire significantly, but Covid-19 has added a snag to this along with the endless list of things you already know about. Most of the Black composers are recent enough that their work remains under copyright and thus we cannot stream them without a special broadcast license. While the actual spirituals of the Slavery period would be considered public domain, arrangements are under copyright by the arranger. Black composers in the 18th century and early 19th century are hard to come by. One exception is Ignatius Sancho (c.1729-1780) who was either born on a slave ship as is popularly reported, or in Africa as he wrote in later life. His mother died in his infancy (perhaps on that slave ship?) and his father committed suicide rather than live in captivity. Sancho was enslaved in London as a 2 year old child and managed to escape as a young adult. He was a writer, storekeeper and composer. He was the first known person of African descent to vote in British elections. He self-published some minuets and *Twelve Country Dances for the year 1779; set for harpsichord*. Listen for them to be used somewhere during services this year.

As of this writing, the choir has commenced rehearsing with myriad safety precautions in place; wearing special singing masks with an extra liner, sitting 6 ft apart from each other, singing for 30 min at a time—all with the hope and plan to sing in church when we resume with services in the building. It is not comfortable or easy, but it is wonderful to hear them singing together, and so we persevere. Of course the Covid-19 situation

has been changing often, so who knows what will actually happen between the deadline for writing for this newsletter, and whenever you are reading it, or by Sept 12, or how it may change after that, but we all are working with the goal of the choir singing twice a month, as in the past.

In services in the church, we can use any music we own legally, but if we sing or play pieces that are still under copyright, we can't share them over Zoom, unless we have permission from the copyright holder. So occasionally there may be times when you will hear a piece only if you are present in the church building; not if you are listening on Zoom. But for Sancho and other composers from before the early 20th century, and contemporary composers who self-publish whom we can contact directly, we will be able to share with all. Thank you for your support and understanding as we continue to make our way in this new world.

Lila M Farrar,
Music Director



Notes from the Director of Religious Exploration



A new church year begins, and with it the excitement of a new year for the BUUC's Religious Exploration Program. At the end of the 2021 church year, a committee created a Vision Statement for the Religious Exploration Program. This type of work is generally done when there is a new staff person, when RE participants have mostly cycled out, or habitually every five years. As the new DRE, it seemed like the perfect time to create a focus for the next few years.

Many thanks to Jessica Adams, Jared Adams, Amy Frisella, Colleen Groner, Laurel Hemmer, and Nicole Jyringi for your contributions to the process. Thanks also to Barb Hale, who gave us a Zoom room to meet in.

As we move forward in the new church year, I look forward to implementing the Vision as laid out by our church community.

Cara Wales,
Director of Religious Exploration

Vision Statement for the Brookfield Unitarian Universalist Church's Religious Exploration Program

The purpose of the Brookfield Unitarian Universalist Church's Religious Exploration Program is to discover our values and beliefs, and to cultivate our identities as Unitarian Universalists.

To do this:

- We nurture respect for others as we thoroughly explore and engage with the ideas from world religions and Unitarian Universalism.
- We are supported through Intergenerational events and activities to create relationships across generations and directly with our minister.
- We impact the community and the world by living our values at home, at church, and in the world at large with the support of our BUUC community.
- We engage with the spiritual to become wholly integrated – head, heart, and hands.

Food for Faith: Adult Religious Exploration

Picture This: Bible Study Through Art (October 2021—March 2022)

Long before social media influencers were a thing, there were images. Images have long been used as a means of communicating information and expressing ideas. Likewise, images also influence and can limit or expand what we know and how we think about the things depicted visually. In this program we will explore select Bible stories through images. We'll examine things like what's being communicated or omitted, ways in which an image reflects or deviates from the text, and what, if anything, else a given image helps us see or understand about the story depicted. Sessions will run approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour.

Meeting Date/Time(s):

Afternoon Group: *First Wednesday of the month at 1:15pm*
10/6, 11/3, 12/7, 1/5, 2/2, 3/2

Evening Group: *First Tuesday of the month at 6:30pm*
10/5, 11/2, 12/1, 1/4, 2/1, 3/1

Materials Needed:

- Internet Connection: We will be meeting via Zoom. (If you need technical assistance accessing or using Zoom, please contact Rev. Craig to be connected to a BUUC member or friend who can help.)
- Your imagination and an open mind

Registration Required:

Email Rev. Craig at revcraignowak@comcast.net to register.



Volunteer Request

Teachers are needed for the 2021/2022 church year. Help for a month, every other month, half the year, or the whole year!

Interested or want more information?
Email c.l.c.wales@gmail.com.

Journaling Group Coming This Fall

During coffee hour last year, there was a discussion centered on journaling with interest in a Journaling Group.

The Journaling Group will meet via Zoom once a month starting in October, and I will provide some prompts and facilitate conversation about journaling. Come with a writing implement and paper, or use your tech. All are welcome, from beginners to experts.

My question to you is whether Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday evening works best. Please let me know!

-Cara Wales c.l.c.wales@gmail.com

Generosity Abounds!

Thank you to those who take care of the "little things" that are not little at all.

Like Kirk Upton and Laurel Hemmer, who have updated the church directory; and Robyn Vincent working on the community resources page on our website. Like Jo Ann Pierce, who updates the outdoor sign; and Doug Smith and Sean Mulligan, who look in on the building during inclement weather. Like Lila Farrar, who checks the thermostats and windows; and Sarah Swift communicating with the folks painting the kitchen.

To all named and unnamed who give time to our church community, thank you!

September Services*

Sunday morning services are held at 10:30 am.

September 12 "Neither Here Nor There"

Worship leader: Rev. Craig Nowak

Music: BUUC choir

Opening Sunday with Stone Communion (Remember to bring your paper "stone" from June's Stone Communion or a blank crumpled paper "stone.")

September 19 "Transformation and Growth"

Worship leader: John Kennison

Music: Rick Conde, flute

September 26 "The Shapes of Life"

Worship leader: Rev. Craig Nowak

Music: BUUC choir

*A Note About Worship

Currently we plan to hold hybrid services (in-person and streaming) beginning Sept 12th. Information about attending in-person will be sent to members and friends before Sept 12th. For those who wish to stream the service (attend online) a link will be provided weekly via email.



Rev. Craig's Office Hours Through December 2021:

-Sundays at the church when he's in the pulpit immediately following the service until 12:30pm.

-Via Zoom, Facetime (for iPhone users), and telephone.

Email him at revcraignowak@comcast.net, or call 860-916-9261 to schedule a time.

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.

Announcements

Virtual Stone Soup (Through Dec 2021)

Stone Soup luncheon and conversation will continue this church year but will continue to meet for the time being via Zoom until we can safely resume in person social gatherings at the church. 12:00pm on the first Wednesday of the month starting in October. A link to attend will be sent out via email to members and friends each month.

Virtual Social Hour

Third Wednesday of every month on Zoom. The next social hour will be September 15th, at 7:00pm. Contact Barb Hale at b.lambert.hale@gmail.com

Aging As A Spiritual Practice

The Aging and Spirituality discussion group will meet via Zoom on Sunday, September 19th, at 12:00pm. If you are not already receiving meeting invitations and would like to be included, please email Joanne Hamerly at jmh2ndchapter@gmail.com or Cruger Johnson Phillips at cruger.johnson@gmail.com.

Book Club

The BUUC Book Discussion Group will be meeting via Zoom on Tuesday, September 14th, at 7:00pm to put our reading list together for the coming church year. Please feel free to attend. A complete list of the books we will be discussing this year will appear online on our website at buuc.org/events. If you have any questions, please contact Barbara Hale at b.lambert.hale@gmail.com.

Choir Practice

7:00 each Thursday. Contact Music Director Lila M. Farrar at lilamfarrar@gmail.com or 508-864-5978.

Membership Committee

Due to the success of our spring outing to Bemis Nursery in Spencer, we are offering a fall opportunity to create a beautiful fall planting to grace your porch. Cost is \$35 to be paid in advance. Deadline to sign up is September 19th. If interested, please email Joanne Hamerly at jmh2ndchapter@gmail.com or call 508-826-3377.

Executive Committee

First Monday of the month at 6:30pm.

Women's Alliance

To be resumed when able. Contact Laurie Magnuson (508-867-3763).

Quiet Gathering in the Spirit of the Quakers

To be resumed when able. Contact Cruger Johnson Phillips, cruger.johnson@gmail.com.

Sanctuary LGBTQ Coffee House

To be resumed when able.

Community Supper

To be resumed when able.

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 at revcraignowak@comcast.net

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**

Who's Who at BUUC

Staff

Minister

Rev. Craig M. Nowak

Director of Religious Exploration

Cara Wales

Music Director

Lila M. Farrar

Office Assistant

Emily Foster

Executive Committee

Ex-Officio member

Rev. Craig M. Nowak

President

Barbara Hale

Treasurer

Doug Smith

Clerk

Gary Blanchard

Members-at-Large

Helena Paez, Sarah Swift, Christine

Keough-Huff, Fritz Foster

Collector

Dave Yutzler

Committees and Groups

Committee on Ministry

Mary Frisella, Roxann Smith, Donna Sullivan

Capital Campaign Committee

Amy Frisella, Kim Burdon, Tim Boon

Flower Committee

Lila Farrar, Chair

Membership Committee

Debbie Ennis, Chair

Nominating Committee

Amy Frisella, Joanne Hamerly, Donna Boyea

Trustees

Tim Boon, Roxann Smith, Kirk Upton

Women's Alliance

Laurie Magnuson, President

Worship Committee

Roxann Smith, John Kennison, Fritz Foster, Jo Ann Pierce, David Yutzler

Community Resources

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.



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