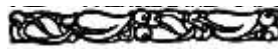


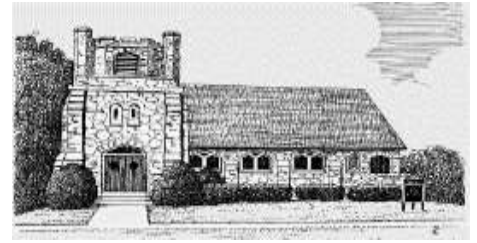


March 2023



BUUC Newsletter

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



"The Little Stone Church That Rocks"



Dear Friends,

It seems like it wasn't so long ago that we stood on the threshold of what some call, "the most wonderful time of the year." With that annual holiday season having now passed from anticipation into history, we find ourselves at another threshold.

The threshold of what many a church member might consider the most awkward time of the year: the annual canvass. And just for the record, it's no picnic for your minister either.

So, why do we engage in this annual event that no one particularly looks forward to?

Quite plainly, because we have to.

We have to to keep the lights on and the heat running.
We have to to maintain the building and tune the piano.
We have to to pay the staff and minister.

But we also canvass because we want to.

We want to to keep this liberal faith tradition present and available in the community.

We want to to maintain this community that has been there for us and sustained us through good and hard times.

We want to to pay back and pay forward in appreciation of those whose gifts of time, talent, and treasure made BUUC available to us when we were seeking a spiritual home, and in anticipation of those who will themselves seek a religious community like ours in years to come.

The annual canvass is a fact of life for congregations like ours. And the fact is, the more we raise, the more we can focus on the reasons we want to support BUUC through the canvass rather than the reasons we have to, which in the end might very well make this whole annual ritual a little less awkward, and perhaps even a little more wonderful. And wouldn't that be nice?

Canvass is coming. Let's make it wonderful.

Thank you, as always, for your generosity of spirit, as well as time, talent, and treasure. You are the reason why BUUC—"the little stone church that rocks"—rocks!

Peace and blessings,
Rev. Craig

*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

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

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

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

Notes from the President



I needed a home for my faith. In 2010, I gave the church of my youth one last try. It was a failed experiment. Then, serendipity struck. I attended a wedding here at BUUC. The ceremony was beautiful; the words touched me; the two ministers were warm and joyful for my friends who were marrying. I wondered to myself if this church could have a place for me.

Fast forward twelve years, and somehow, some way, I am president here. These twelve years have been transformational for me. When I began attending services here, my faith was on a rocky foundation. The concept of being a sinner at birth weighed heavily on me. Discovering a faith community that accepted me as I was, with no judgment, profoundly changed how I looked at myself and others, and also how I experienced my sense of holiness. I took the Seven Principles to heart.

I love our services. The affirmation deepens my sense of community. The music uplifts me. Joys and Concerns remind me of how safe and supported I feel. The sermons remind me to be open minded to new ideas, and they always provide me food for thought. Taken all together, our services feed my soul, allowing me to experience a sense of holiness that I feel nowhere else.

I have my fair share of bad habits. So, I am ever grateful for my healthy habit of attending services each Sunday. I can't begin to imagine my life without BUUC, so I try to do my small part to keep BUUC running. As Rev. Craig says, the church exists only because we share our time, talent, and treasure. I gladly pledge each year, as my life would be less meaningful, less connected, and I would feel adrift without BUUC. This church buffers me from the challenges and sometimes chaos of daily life. It offers me a home that I truly treasure. May you all feel the same way.

As we prepare to kick off our annual canvass, I invite each of you to consider your own sentiments and relationship with BUUC and give accordingly. Thank you for your generosity.

Robyn Vincent,
President

Music Notes



March is the month of our annual Celtic Music Sunday. Exactly how this started is a bit vague. I know I planned some Celtic music on the Sunday before St. Patrick's Day early on, but one year, perhaps when the holiday landed on a Sunday, I decided to include as many people as possible. We called it Celtic Music Sunday. It was a hit, and when people started asking me, "When is the next Celtic Music Sunday?" I realized we had a tradition on our hands! And so, usually the Sunday before St. Patrick's Day, but this year, the Sunday after, we designate as Celtic Music Sunday, when some, if not most or all, of the music is from the Celtic tradition.

Although we think of St. Patrick's Day as Irish, Celtic music also comes from Scotland, Wales, England, the north western part of France, as well as a diaspora which includes North America. We include as many different Celtic traditions as we can, ranging from the very old to contemporary; many tunes that can only be listed as traditional, as well as ones with known composers, such as the 18th

century Irish harper O'Carolan, and Christy Keevil, the American composer of "Spring Will Come Again" (our postlude).

On Celtic Music Sunday we want to include everyone! Unfortunately this year we will still be limited to instruments which can be played with masks, but if you can play even one note or one chord on a non-wind instrument, we want you! I did write about this in the February Newsletter hoping to spark interest, and by the time you are reading this, if I have an inkling of your interest, I will have been in touch. If I haven't, please contact me right away so we can determine practice times as needed. I can be available after church or other times during the week, for rehearsal or coaching time. All are invited to participate in the prelude and postlude and some percussion instruments will be provided for last minute joiners. If you are a bit more accomplished and want to participate in some of the other offerings, please let me know ASAP. Dancers are also welcome. Questions? I love to talk about it, so don't hesitate to contact me.

See you Celtic Music Sunday! 🎵 (March 19)

Lila M. Farrar,
Music Director

Reminder: Check the parlor organ for music-related info and community music and arts events, especially those involving BUUC community members.



Notes from the Director of Religious Exploration



What are the stories that anchor your congregation during the course of the year?

This was a question posed recently in a class for Religious Educators called Dimensions of Faith Development. For reference, here is the class description from the UUA Website:

Natalie Briscoe has authored groundbreaking work for a new look at the Dimensions of Faith Development, as the field of Human Development has evolved past the traditional theories of the 1960s and 1970s, which are problematically rooted in colonial, patriarchal, and racist systems. In this series, religious educators and other leaders will explore the idea of a counter-cultural narrative of Faith Development which knits together all of these areas of the congregation into a holistic view of multicultural transformation.

At the conclusion of the class, we were encouraged to create concrete next steps to act on our learning, keeping in mind that acting in small steps is the best way to begin. As I seek to create a more cohesive program for our children and youth, I would love to have a collection of stories from our congregation so that we can:

- ❖ Welcome and introduce new Explorers to the BUUC
- ❖ Identify as an important part of the BUUC
- ❖ Invite curiosity surrounding our faith tradition
- ❖ Nurture our ties to the BUUC community

Here's the part where I need your help. **What are the stories that lift your experience of Unitarian Universalism?** Responses can be:

- ❖ Personal Stories
- ❖ Stories from our church
- ❖ Stories of UU history or individuals

I welcome these stories via email, which you can send to me at c.l.c.wales@gmail.com. You may also write or type them out and hand them to me on Sunday, or make an appointment so I can record your verbal stories.

Over the years, I have heard so many wonderful tales from so many of you. Please do not be shy in your sharing!

Cara Wales,

Director of Religious Exploration

Flower Donations

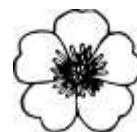
Do you enjoy and appreciate having flowers on the altar each and every Sunday? It is another area of opportunity for members and friends of BUUC and there are several ways to contribute. If you sign up on the flower sign-up sheet in the parlor, you will get an email reminder (or if you don't have email, be sure to list your preferred method of contact). You would bring the flowers well before church starts; at least by 10:15 is good but earlier is fine too. And you are responsible for taking them when you leave. If you don't want flowers at home during the week (some people have told me their cats knock them over or eat them!), some suggestions are to give them to someone else at church to take home, to take them to a friend or to a nursing home, or you can enlist a member of the Flower Committee to assist you. I have found nursing homes to be eager recipients of flowers, sometimes leaving them in common areas and sometimes dividing them up into smaller bouquets to be distributed to folks who don't have many visitors.

Likewise there are several ways to bring flowers. You can go to a florist or grocery store and buy an arrangement, or a bunch of flowers that you arrange yourself, or you can solicit help with arranging from a committee member (arrangements should be made ahead of time). Flowers from your own garden or road right of ways are equally welcome.

If you would like to bring flowers some Sunday, please find the sign-up sheet in the parlor on the same table as the coffee hour sign-up sheet. Put your name clearly, and indicate if you want the flowers to be in memory or in honor of someone and contact info if your preferred contact info is not in the directory. Or simply talk to Lila. All members of the committee are happy to answer your questions.

Your Flower Committee is, at this time, three people: Donna Sullivan, Judy Trifone and Lila Farrar, chair (lilamfarrar@gmail.com, 508-864-5978). When no one else has signed up, one of these three people brings the flowers.

Thank you for thinking about the flowers.





Food Offerings

For the next 2 months we would like to focus on 4 items that the food pantry is in need of. When you make a donation, please bring these items:

- ❖ Coffee (except decaf)
- ❖ Soup (except chicken & tomato)
- ❖ Cereal (except corn flakes & rice crispies)
- ❖ Baked beans (except vegetarian)

Monetary donations are also welcomed.

Generosity Abounds!

Thank you to all who donated to, bought, and sold calendars for this month's calendar fundraiser!

Nursery Volunteers Needed

We are looking for volunteers to work in the nursery. You will go downstairs after Joys and Concerns. A CORI must be completed ahead of time (BUUC will provide that service).

If you are interested, please see Robyn Vincent or email robynbuuc@yahoo.com.

Trash Pickup

We have neither trash pickup nor recycling pickup at BUUC. We rely on the goodwill of church members to take trash and recycling home to dispose of them.

If people could share in these chores by checking the trash and recycling occasionally, it would be greatly appreciated.

Volunteers Needed for Hybrid Worship

Our ability to hold hybrid services (in-person and streaming) depends on having volunteers able to start and monitor the laptop at church during worship.

If you are interested in volunteering please contact Robyn Vincent at robynbuuc@yahoo.com.

Legacy Giving

Over the years members and friends have included BUUC in their wills or estate plans to help ensure our faith and this church will be here for future generations. You can, too. Gifts to BUUC's Trust help secure a place for liberal religious values in an increasingly illiberal world.

Contact Rev. Craig at revcraignowak@comcast.net for more information.

Supplies Corner

Each month this will be the place where you can see what supplies our church needs.

Donations may be placed in the first recycling bin in the kitchen.

- ❖ Snow melt — 6 large containers
- ❖ Sand

Thank you for your continued generosity.

March Services*

Sunday morning services are held at 10:30 am.

March 5: "A Covenant of Reciprocity"

Worship Leader: Rev. Craig M. Nowak

Music: Linda Friedmann, harp

March 12: "A Waste of Time"

Worship Leader: Barb Hale

Music: BUUC Choir

March 19: "Spiritual Besties"

Intergenerational Celtic Music Service

Worship Leader: Rev. Craig M. Nowak

Music: "BUUC Celtic Band"

(everyone who wants to play—
see Music Notes in this newsletter)

March 26: "The 'Interweb' of Things"

Worship Leader: Dave Yutzler

Music: BUUC Choir

*A Note About Worship

With increasing rates of respiratory illnesses, we ask that if you feel ill at all, please stay home and take care of yourself. We want all of us to be in community, just not with communicable diseases. Thank you.

Rev. Craig's Office Hours

First Wednesday of the month 1—2pm at the church.

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

Stone Soup*

Stone Soup is back at the church!

Wednesday, March 1st at 12pm. Come catch up with friends and have lunch together.

*At this time attendees are invited to bring their lunch. Coffee, tea, and a dessert will be provided.

Food for Faith: Adult Religious Exploration "Creation as a Spiritual Practice"

Afternoon Group: Monday, 3/6 @ 1:30pm

Evening Group: Tuesday, 3/7 @ 6:30pm

Women's Alliance

The Women's Alliance will be visiting Tower Hill Botanic Garden on Friday, March 8th. Contact Laurie Magnuson (508-867-3763).

Book Club

The BUUC Book Discussion Group will be meeting via ZOOM on Tuesday, March 14th at 7:00pm to discuss *Two Old Women* by Velma Wallace. Please feel free to attend. If you have any questions, please contact Barbara Hale at b.lambert.hale@gmail.com.

CESA

The Committee for Ecology and Social Action is now meeting the third Wednesday of the month. Our next meeting is Wednesday, March 15th, at 7:00pm on ZOOM. If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Penny Blum at quabbinquilter@gmail.com

Journaling Group

The BUUC Journaling group is open to anyone interested in keeping a journal. We gather monthly on Zoom to journal quietly with some suggested prompts. While we usually chat a little, we do not discuss our writings. Please feel free to join us! Our next meeting is Monday, March 27th at 7:00pm. If you have any questions, email Cara Wales at c.l.c.wales@gmail.com.

Choir Practice

7:00-8:30pm each Thursday.

Contact Music Director Lila M. Farrar at lilamfarrar@gmail.com or 508-864-5978.

Executive Committee

First Monday of the month at 6:30pm.



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

Robyn Vincent

Treasurer

Colleen Groner

Clerk

Gary Blanchard

Members-at-Large

Christine Keough-Huff, Fritz Foster,

Amy Frisella, Laurie Magnuson

Collector

Dave Yutzler

Committees and Groups

Committee on Ministry

Mary Frisella, Roxann Smith,

Donna Sullivan

Flower Committee

Lila Farrar (chair), Judy Trifone,

Donna Sullivan

Membership Committee

Joanne Hamerly, Donna Boyea,

Penny Blum, Alix McNitt, Robyn

Vincent

Nominating Committee

Joanne Hamerly, Donna Boyea,

Karen Keough-Huff

Trustees

Doug Smith, Roxann Smith,

Kirk Upton

Women's Alliance

Laurie Magnuson, President

Worship Committee

Barb Hale (chair), Roxann Smith,

John Kennison, 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 <http://www.buuc.org/community-resources.html>.



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