

June 2024

BUUC Newsletter

Brookfield Unitarian Universalist Church
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"The Little Stone Church That Rocks"



"You Have Been a Gift"

What to say to a place that has meant so much to me in such a short amount of time? It's hard to even know where to begin. Though measured against the lifetime of this church, our time has been brief, I am honored to add my list to the names of ministers who have served this beloved community.

This is a first ministry for me, and you all have been a gift that I feel I almost do not deserve. You have taught me that a group of people can be in community with one another and act with kindness, warmth, and openness. You have taught me that it is possible to be creative with worship and have a group of people experiment alongside you; you have taught me to expand my thoughts around the role and importance of music during a worship service; and you have taught me that it is possible to have a good goodbye with a beloved group of people.

Though we may soon part, you all will always hold a special place in my heart. I am grateful for all the ways you all welcomed my family and me, supported me and my ministry, and, most importantly, cared for one another. You are a gift to each other and to the surrounding community and I hope you do not lose sight of that. What a light you are to Brookfield and the surrounding areas, and I hope with time you let your light shine even brighter. People out there need you and the ministry you can provide them with—I hope you never forget that.

It is with deepest gratitude that I thank you for welcoming me and showing me what shared ministry can truly be. I will miss you dearly, but I have faith in the strengths of your bonds to one another and I cannot wait to watch from afar where this congregation will go.

Alyssa Lee,
Minister

*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



The end of the regular church year will soon be upon us. Sadly, we will be saying goodbye to Alyssa, wishing her well in her new settled minister position. That church is incredibly lucky indeed to have hired her as they will soon find out.

As some of you may know, we had four ministerial candidates for the upcoming church year. None of the candidates worked out for us for a variety of reasons. The Search Team didn't want to hire someone just for the sake of our having a minister. That right someone hasn't revealed themselves to us yet.

Right now we are trying to work out the logistics of balancing trying to hire a minister with filling the pulpit. By the time this newsletter comes out I am sure that all of this will have been decided.

If I had a choice, I would choose for us to have a minister, but obviously that choice isn't mine. But when I look around at our community I realize that we will be just fine without a minister. Our Worship Committee is prepared to fill the pulpit for the entire church year. Exec makes sure that issues both big and small are addressed, keeping things running smoothly. Our treasurer pays our many bills. The collector keeps tracks of every penny donated. Then there are ushers, coffee hour hosts, flower donators, and many more who volunteer in their own significant, unique ways. We help and support one another and the church in a myriad of ways.

My only true area of concern is the potential need for pastoral care once Alyssa's contract ends July 31st. We are working on coming up with a solution for this right now. I will keep you apprised about the goings on about the above matters. But I have no fears at all about any of them. Our community is healthy and strong, and I am sure it will be even stronger still at the end of the next church year. With everyone's participation, I have no doubt we will succeed in having a gratifying church year.

Happy summer!

Robyn

Potluck Luncheon

Please join us on *Sunday, June 16th*, to wish Rev. Alyssa good luck on her next adventure. There will be a potluck luncheon directly following the service. Any help setting up or cleaning up will be appreciated.

There is a sign-up sheet in the parlor. Please bring your favorite dish to share. Any questions, contact Barb Hale at b.lambert.hale@gmail.com.



Summer Solstice Evening

Please join the Women's Alliance for a celebration of the summer solstice on *Thursday, June 20 at 7:30* in person at the church.

We will welcome the solstice with readings and thoughts on the turning of the season. All are welcome to share a welcoming fire and refreshments.

Music Notes



As the regular church year winds down, it is a good time to say "Thank You" to all the musicians who have added so much to our worship this year.

First of all is the choir who has sung for more than half of our services. There were several "extra" services that weren't on the choir calendar, and most of the choir members participated in each. We sang for the choir festival in celebration of First Unitarian Universalist Society of Newton's 175th anniversary. We sang as a choir for the Christmas Eve Morning service at the UU Fellowship in Storrs, CT, which is the congregation that Rev. Craig Nowak served at the same time as serving BUUC. We were well received and appreciated. Easter was an "extra" this year as well, with a treble choir with added instruments, and an original composition by choir member Kurt Staven, sung by him and Dave Yutzler. The choir has garnered compliments all year long from our congregation and also from visiting worship leaders and guests, who almost always express surprise at the quality of the singing. The choir rehearses Thursdays (except holidays) and does take a break from mid-June until mid-August. If you might like to sing in the choir next year, now is a good time to talk to me. We also enjoy our Intergenerational Choir which includes youth, and also adults who aren't in the regular choir—a way to participate without committing to the rehearsal and performance schedule of the regular choir.

We are also blessed to have a number of musicians from the congregation, as well as a few guests, who contribute their musical talents. The variety is enriching. If you sing or play an instrument (or are learning to) please let me know. There is almost always an opportunity to contribute, if you are willing. Our annual Celtic Music Sunday is worth noting when we have all levels of participation. (You can already mark your calendar for March 16 next year.)

If you appreciate BUUC music, please, if you can, take time to thank the musicians for all their work and for sharing.

And to the musicians, I say a heartfelt THANK YOU! Without you, the BUUC doesn't have the music program we are so proud of!

Musicians at BUUC:

Choir: Emily Foster, Nubia Peña, Cara Wales, Stacey Mikesell, Donna Sullivan, Sarah Swift, Alyssa Yutzler, Tara Browne, Dave Yutzler, Jamie Bishop, Kurt Staven, Aras Bellahcene; and rehearsing, participating and supporting on Zoom: Bob Swift and Jo Ann Pierce.

IG Choir, and solo and ensemble singers: Brigid Choiniere, Jared Adams, Jessica Adams, Jenny Adams, Zoey Adams, Gary Blanchard, Mary Feathers (Christmas Eve and Storrs, CT), Tom Adams, Avery Adams, Cruger Johnson Phillips, Sofia Agyare, Roxann Smith, Rob Adams, Rick Condee

Instrumentalists: Rick Condee, Gary Blanchard, Jared Adams, Kite Upton, Roxann Smith, Linda Friedmann, Emily Foster, Jamie Bishop, Kurt Staven, Rob Adams, Matt Meyer, Lucy Colwell and Susan Kirchausen, Camille Lovell, and Russell Killough-Miller

Lila M. Farrar,
Music Director



Worcester Winds Concert

3:00 Sunday afternoon, June 9th, at BUUC. A free concert by Worcester Winds, a Dectet (2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons and 2 French horns). A refreshing sound! worcesterwinds.org/

Donations will be accepted for Partners In Health, which provides health care where it is needed most.

BUUC Plants

The plants which add beauty and healthy air in the basement throughout the church year need temporary homes during the summer. If anyone is interested in taking one or more, please see Lila Farrar, chair of the flower committee. lilamfarrar@gmail.com or 508-864-5978.

Notes from the Director of Religious Exploration



"After nourishment, shelter and companionship, stories are the thing we need most in the world." —Philip Pullman

Stories make beautiful beginnings. They are also marvelous in the middle and excellent at the end. In fact, stories are the basis of my teaching style — both as a homeschooling parent and when planning Sundays as the Director of Religious Exploration. No matter the topic, stories captivate in a way few other tools do.

This year, in the children and youth's Religious Exploration program, we have been grounding ourselves in the stories of the BUUC community. This work started last year when I asked members and friends to submit their stories of the building, the community, and Unitarian Universalism as a whole. I received a good number—thank you so much to all who shared!

I selected a few of the stories to match our theme for the month or what we were working on developmentally at the time. We heard Sarah Swift's story about the Bowl for our Joys and Concerns, and John Kennison's journey from Baptist to Unitarian Universalist, learning to accept other faith traditions along the way.

January and February are months designated for a deeper dive into a world religion. This year, Unitarian Universalism kept coming up when planning with Explorers. This was perfect for our "grounding" year, and we continued using stories from our congregation.

We heard about what BUUC means to Robyn Vincent, and Donna Sullivan's reluctance/panic about attending church. We talked about what it means to be a church without creed or dogma and learned about the importance of covenant.

These stories will join us again and again, like old friends continuing to ground us in the years to come. We are blessed with so many beautiful stories that I couldn't even use them all this year! Their time to be shared will come, as planning for next year's story has already begun.

Cara Wales,

DRE

June RE Events

- June 9: RE Family Walk
- June 16: Intergenerational Stone Communion

CESA News

Fiber Collection: CESA is sponsoring a clothing drive through Helpsy, the largest textile collector in the Northeast. Textile waste is a fast-growing problem and occupies nearly 5% of all landfill space, but 95% of unwanted clothing can be reused, repurposed, or recycled. Only 15% currently is.

This drive is both a chance for all of us to get rid of our old textiles responsibly and it is also a fundraiser for the church. Last year, we collected over 5,000 pounds of textiles. Let's top that this year! Spread the word to your family and friends.

On *July 16th through July 20th*, the church will be open between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. so you can bring your old clothing (including slips, bras, underwear, socks) and certain other acceptable items, such as shoes, accessories (including hats, bags, belts, scarves and jewelry), luggage, stuffed animals and linens (including sheets, blankets, curtains, table linens and quilts). All items in any condition are acceptable if they are clean, dry, and odorless and in plastic bags. The list of acceptable items will be available at church on the CESA table in the parlor.

Rainbow Child Development Center: CESA is collecting donations for the Rainbow Child Development Center. This organization services 400 under-served Worcester area children from 6 weeks to 13 years old daily. Their 3 programs — Family Child Care, Preschool and Extended Learning School Age Program — enhance the lives of children and their families. A current need is providing backpacks and water bottles to 35 preschool children who will be entering kindergarten. CESA will be collecting donations each Sunday for the remainder of the church year. The cost to provide each child with a backpack and water bottle is approximately \$25. Any donations you are able to provide will be greatly appreciated.

Vote Forward: CESA is starting up another Vote Forward campaign to send letters to under-served populations encouraging people to vote. Informational literature is on the table at the CESA bulletin board in the parlor. Our hope is that we can be writing letters over the summer. When we get back to church in September we will have a "mailbox" poster in the parlor to track our progress up to the November election. This is an incredibly important election. Getting out the vote is critical.

Small Town Pride

BUUC will have our very own booth at the Small Town Pride event in North Brookfield, *Saturday, June 29th!* The event last year was joyous and well-attended, despite inclement weather, and BUUC is honored by the invitation to participate this time around!

We will be providing informational literature about our church and Unitarian Universalism, info about committees and projects, free goodies, and above all, love and support for those in our community.

Volunteers are still needed to help occupy the booth. If you are interested in taking a shift, contact Emily Foster at buuc01506@gmail.com.



June Services*

Sunday morning services are held at 10:30 am.

June 2: "A History of Lay-led Services"

Worship Leader: Jared Adams

Music: BUUC Choir & IG Choir

June 9: "Gather the Spirit"

Worship Leaders & Music: Helen Wolfson
& Eric Thomas

June 16: "Finding Our Way Back Home"

Worship Leader: Minister Alyssa Lee

Music: BUUC Choir

June 23: GA Virtual Sunday Worship "Weaving Our Lives"

"We are all tangled up together in a great web of life that is woven with beauty and hardship, love and loss, thriving and struggle. How do we tend well to the weaving so that all of us are held in care?"

Worship Leader: Rev. Molly Housh Gordon

Music: 15 UU choirs and artists from across the US

*A Note About Worship

Currently we are holding hybrid services (in-person and streaming) as often as tech volunteers are available. For those who wish to stream the service (attend online) a link will be provided via email.

BUUC Website

Do you or your committee have a section on our website? Please review it and let me know if you have any changes for me to work on this Summer. Please email changes to c.l.c.wales@gmail.com.

Minister's Office Hours

In lieu of regular office hours at the church, Alyssa has set up a Calendly link. Simply visit <https://calendly.com/buuc-alyssa> and you should be able to set up a phone or Zoom call. If you have any issues, give Alyssa a call at (978) 310-1303. You can also call or email buuc.alyssa@gmail.com to set up a meeting. She would love to chat with you.

Announcements

Stone Soup

Wednesday, June 5th at 11:30am. Come catch up with friends and have lunch together. Attendees are invited to bring their lunch. Coffee and tea will be provided.

CESA

The next meeting of the Committee for Ecology and Social Action will be Wednesday, June 5th, at 6:00pm on ZOOM. If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Penny Blum at quabbinquilter@gmail.com

Annual Meeting

Monday, June 10th at 7:00pm on ZOOM. BUUC Members will vote to elect officers and trustees; adopt the budget for the following fiscal year; to hear officers', Minister's, and committee reports; and to act on any articles or motions.

Book Club

The BUUC Book Discussion Group will be meeting via ZOOM on Tuesday, June 11th at 7:00pm to discuss *The Glass Hotel* by Emily St. John Mandell. Please feel free to attend. A complete list of this year's books can be found on our website at www.buuc.org/events. If you have any questions, please contact Barbara Hale at b.lambert.hale@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.

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.

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 our minister Alyssa Lee at buuc.alyssa@gmail.com.

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

Alyssa Lee

Director of Religious Exploration

Cara Wales

Music Director

Lila M. Farrar

Office Assistant

Emily Foster

Executive Committee

Ex-Officio member

Alyssa Lee

President

Robyn Vincent

Treasurer

Colleen Groner

Clerk

Amy Frisella

Members-at-Large

Fritzi Foster, Christine Holbrook

Collector

Dave Yutzler

Committees and Groups

Committee on Ministry

Mary Frisella, Roxann Smith, Donna Sullivan

Worship Committee

Barb Hale (chair), Roxann Smith, John Kennison, David Yutzler

Flower Committee

Lila Farrar (chair), Judy Trifone, Donna Sullivan

Membership Committee

Joanne Hamerly, Donna Boyea, Penny Blum, Alix McNitt, Robyn Vincent, Karen Goudey

Nominating Committee

Joanne Hamerly, Donna Boyea, Karen Keough-Huff

Women's Alliance

Donna Boyea, Barb Hale, Joanne Hamerly, Laurel Hemmer, Laurie Magnuson, Sharon Smith, Donna Sullivan, Judy Trifone, Diane Mossa

Committee for Ecology and Social Action (CESA)

Penny Blum (chair), Joanne Hamerly, Donna Boyea, Laurel Hemmer, Sarah Swift, Barb Hale, Lila Farrar, Emily Foster, Alix McNitt, Kathleen Walker

Trustees

Doug Smith, Roxann Smith, Kirk Upton

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>.

**BROOKFIELD
UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST CHURCH**

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