

# BUUC Newsletter

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



I am not sure why, but for some reason every year when we start talking about canvassing, my mind is drawn to the image of the persimmon. Perhaps it is because Buddhists often use the imagery of the persimmon to symbolize transformation, and I can think of no better word to sum up the canvass time of year than transformation.

The church's annual stewardship campaign is one of the few times of year that we get intentional about how we want to be as a church and how we might grow and transform ourselves, our congregation, and even our community. We get to decide how we want to be in relation to one another and to the wider world around us, and if we want that relationship to transform from what it has been into something else.

Do we want to be larger? Not just in the sense of membership, but in how we are showing up for one another as well as our community. Can we see ourselves as an unripened persimmon that people don't quite know what to do with yet, that grows into something more? Something sweet, something that brings people joy and nourishment.

And what do we want to ripen into? This month would be a good time for us all both individually and collectively to think about what we want to ripen into as a community, in addition to thinking about whether the way we are allocating our budget is affording us the opportunity to do what we want to do.



Furthermore, it is a good time for you to think about how you are allocating your personal budget to give to the congregation. We all have finite financial resources, and housing is expensive, many of us have student loan debts or are saving for retirement—or are currently retired. Money is a limited resource and I know it can sometimes be difficult to determine where your giving might best be utilized.

I hope you will spend some time this month thinking about the good that your pledges to BUUC do in the world. To remember what BUUC has meant to your own life as well as those you care about and give accordingly.

*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.

Let's also think about if we might want to transform this community and what that may mean for us both collectively and individually. To that end, we may need to have some important conversations about who we want to be as a congregation and how our financial stewardship is being utilized to create the worship and community environment we want to live in as well as create a legacy we want to leave for generations yet to come.

Alyssa Lee,

Minister

## Notes from the President



Besides hopefully bringing us signs of spring, March also brings us our annual Canvass Campaign. As I write this we haven't yet decided on the exact format. We have tried various methods over the years. But they all come down to each member being asked to make a pledge for the upcoming church year.

Deciding how much to pledge is a very personal issue. Monetizing how much BUUC means to you can be very challenging, especially in this financial climate.

For me, BUUC is a central part of my life. It brings deep meaning to my life. UU values have become my own. There have been many situations where I have wondered, "What would a UU do?" Our Mission statement in part states, "...by nurturing spirituality, intellectual growth, diversity of belief, and our ties to one another, we seek to inspire lives of passion, compassion, and community." I fervently believe in these words. They motivate me and challenge me to live a better life in so many ways. Yes, I could go on a very nice vacation with what I pledge. But BUUC offers me sustenance every week, not just entertainment for a week or two during the year. I hope that you, too, find that BUUC is an essential part of your lives.

Our biggest expense is our minister's salary, which is \$55,429. The UUA puts out salary guidelines based on location, cost of housing, size of the congregation, etc. The UUA's suggestion is that the lowest salary we should offer is 90% of the minimum recommended salary. And because of our budget, that is what we can offer. Frankly, we may have lost ministerial candidates because of our inability to offer a higher salary. Obviously the only way to increase our offered salary is to have increased pledges.

I know this is a lot to ask. But I ask you to let your appreciation of BUUC and what it means to you guide you during our Canvass Campaign. And I thank you in advance for your continued generosity.

Robyn Vincent,

President



## Music Notes



The traditional way to learn Celtic music is by attending a seisiún or session where a bunch of musicians sit around playing tunes. Someone suggests a tune or simply starts playing a tune and others who know it join in. If you didn't know it beforehand, you perhaps listen a bit, then depending on your skill level you start adding a note here and there, perhaps a drone and before long you are adding more. Eventually, as more and more people know the tune the person who started it may not have to play all the time in order for the tune to keep going, they may drop out to listen, or back off to play harmony (that drone) or may add embellishments. But it starts with adding one note or two (hence our motto "some of the notes, some of the time").

A few years ago I realized what a perfect metaphor this is for a church such as ours. In order for the church to function, you need some with experience and skill to take the initiative, and you also need folks who join in to make it strong. But you also must have people who slowly get involved taking tiny steps to gain skill and experience until they too can assume leadership roles. And just as not everyone plays the same instrument nor, perhaps learns all the tunes people in church bring a diverse set of talents to make the whole. And we are all richer for it.

For many years now, we have celebrated Celtic music on a Sunday in March. This year it falls on St. Patrick's Day, March 17. So on that day, perhaps you will be motivated to consider your skill sets and whether you want to lean in to one you already have, or learn a new skill. And please do literally join in the music making, if you have an instrument on which you can play two notes. If you have any questions, see me at church or contact me one of the ways listed below and in all newsletter and orders of service.

Here is an incomplete list of traditional Celtic instruments: fiddles (violins, violas, cellos string basses) guitars, mandolins, and banjos, concertinas and accordions, all kinds of dulcimers and harps, flutes, recorders, penny whistles and pipes, bombards, and bodhrans. For the postlude, I can tell you which one two or three notes will work, and there will be a few extra instruments available at the back or on the side. Please do join in. Dancing in the aisles is also encouraged!

Lila M. Farrar,

Music Director

[lilamfarrar@gmail.com](mailto:lilamfarrar@gmail.com) / 508-864-59788

## Religious Exploration Family Walk

On the second church Sunday of the month, a monthly Religious Exploration Family Walk is open to children of all ages and their adults. We will not meet at the church but at a changing location for a casual opportunity to chat and appreciate nature with a short program for all ages. The date of our next walk is *Sunday, March 10th*. If you have questions, please email the Director of Religious Exploration, Cara Wales, at [c.l.c.wales@gmail.com](mailto:c.l.c.wales@gmail.com).

## Notes from the Director of Religious Exploration



As a Director of Religious Exploration, I take classes offered by the Unitarian Universalist Association and the Liberal Religious Educators Association called Renaissance Modules\* (or Ren Mods for short) at least annually. Administration as Leadership is one of the classes suggested to take in the first year or two. However, it has been undergoing a rewrite, so I had to wait to take it. I was thrilled when I checked to see what was available in January and February and saw the opportunity to try out the pilot of the new class.

As of the writing of this piece, I have just submitted my last assignment, and I am breathing a sigh of relief. These classes are a lot of fun and provide plenty of food for thought, but they are also a lot of work on an already taxed schedule.

This class covered:

- Administration as Personal Leadership
  - Covenant
  - Land Acknowledgement
  - Personal Professional Mission Statement
  - Administrative Pitfalls
  - Appreciative Inquiry
- Administration as Welcoming Leadership
  - Returning to Covenant
  - Returning to the Mission Statement
  - Racial Equity Principles
- Administration as Community Leadership
  - Calling In
  - Covenant, Conflict, and Communication
  - Returning to the Mission Statement
- Administration as Functional Leadership
  - Safe Congregations
  - Returning to the Mission Statement
  - Evaluation
- Ad-Ministry: Administration as Transformational Leadership
  - Final Revision of the Personal Professional Mission Statement
  - Final Project Presentation
  - Course Evaluation

Please feel free to catch me at coffee hour or email me if you have questions about the above. The class started slowly, but as I started the third week of work in preparation for the live class, everything began to come together. Overall, I enjoyed it and look forward to mulling over my notes as I plan for the new church year.

Cara Wales,

DRE

\* A new name that is less Euro-centric is in the works.

## Thank You from 'Kids in the Congo'

Kids in the Congo would like to send a big THANK YOU to the BUUC for the support this year!

During the first 6 months of our fiscal year, the KIC has sent \$8,825.00 directly to the DRC (Democratic Republic of Congo) to support tuition for 37 students (who otherwise would not be able to afford school) and to make a downpayment for future farming land for a graduate students' agricultural project. Our future goal, in addition to tuition support, is to pay for a new classroom in a small rural town in need of an additional learning facility space. We appreciate the BUUC's and CESA's continued support and for helping us make a difference "one can at a time"!

## CESA News

CESA is going to be partnering with ACE (African Community Education) in Worcester with our Welcome Blanket project. We will be making quilts, shawls, and other items of comfort to be given to immigrants to welcome them to this country. We are so excited about this partnership. We are planning a community quilt where folks make single blocks and they are all put together to make a quilt. We are also making items on our own.

Please check out the bulletin board in the parlor for more information. If you are interested in participating or contributing fabric or yarn, please contact Penny Blum at [quabbinquilter@gmail.com](mailto:quabbinquilter@gmail.com) or anyone on the CESA committee. Thanks!

## Flower Donation

Flower donors are always welcome. The sign-up sheet is in the parlor. If you have questions, ask Lila Farrar, Donna Sullivan or Judy Trifone.



## Benefit Concert featuring Jeff Warner

2:00 pm, Sunday, March 24, 2024

Jeff Warner is among the nation's foremost performers/interpreters of traditional music. His songs from the lumber camps, fishing villages and mountaintops of North America connect 21st-century audiences with the everyday lives—and artistry—of 19th-century North Americans. His songs, rich in local history and a sense of place, bring us the latest news from the distant past.

Jeff has performed widely, from large festivals in the UK, to clubs, festivals and schools across America. He plays concertina, banjo, guitar and several "pocket" instruments, including bones and spoons. And "he inhabits a song in a way which few singers can do" (Royal Oak Folk Club, Lewes, UK).

There is a suggested \$20 donation at the door, and all proceeds go to benefit BUUC.

## March Services\*

Sunday morning services are held at 10:30 am.

### March 3: "The Many Voices of Transformation"

Worship Leaders: Amy Frisella, Doug Smith,  
Alix McNitt, & the BUUC Religious Explorers

Music: Dave Yutzler; Jamie Bishop;  
Jared, Jessica, Jenny, and Zoey Adams;  
Emily Foster; Linda Friedmann

### March 10: "The Story of Us"

Worship Leader: Minister Alyssa Lee  
Music: BUUC Choir

### March 17: "The Transforming Power of Consequential Strangers"

Worship Leader: Emily Miller-Mlcak  
Music: BUUC Celtic Band (see Music Notes)

### March 24: "Designing Our Future"

Worship Leader: Minister Alyssa Lee  
Music: BUUC Choir

### March 31: Easter Sunday

"A Chance for Renewal"

Worship Leader: Minister Alyssa Lee  
Music: Kurt Staven, trumpet;  
a small BUUC Vocal Ensemble;  
Dave Yutzler & Kurt Staven, vocal duet

### \*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.

## 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](mailto:buuc.alyssa@gmail.com) to set up a meeting. She would love to chat with you.

## 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](http://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

Wednesday, March 6th at 11:30am at the church. Come catch up with friends and have lunch together. Attendees are invited to bring their lunch. Coffee and tea will be provided.

### Book Club

The BUUC Book Discussion Group will be meeting via ZOOM on Tuesday, March 12th at 7:00pm to discuss *His Majesty's Airship* by S. C. Gwynne. Please feel free to attend. A complete list of this year's books can be found on our website at [www.buuc.org/events](http://www.buuc.org/events). If you have any questions, please contact Barbara Hale at [b.lambert.hale@gmail.com](mailto:b.lambert.hale@gmail.com).

### Poetry Night

Join Alyssa Lee for another Poetry Night on ZOOM! Wednesday, March 13th at 7:00pm.

### CESA

The next meeting of the Committee for Ecology and Social Action will be Wednesday, March 20th, at 7:00pm on ZOOM. If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Penny Blum at [quabbinquilter@gmail.com](mailto:quabbinquilter@gmail.com)

**"You Call That Talent?" Spectacular!** – 7:00pm Friday, March 22nd at BUUC. Come one, come all, to the best talent show around. No matter your level of "talent," you're welcome to perform! Songs, stories, skits, and more! All ages welcomed and encouraged. If you plan on showcasing your talent please sign up with Laurel or in the sign up sheet in the parlor. And remember, we need audience members too! The more the merrier. Back in person for the most fun experience ever! Appetizers and desserts welcome to make intermission more enjoyable. Contact Laurel Hemmer at [laurelsquilts@msn.com](mailto:laurelsquilts@msn.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 Wednesday, March 27th at 7:00pm. If you have any questions, email Cara Wales at [c.l.c.wales@gmail.com](mailto:c.l.c.wales@gmail.com).

### Choir Practice

7:00-8:30pm each Thursday.

Contact Music Director Lila M. Farrar at [lilamfarrar@gmail.com](mailto: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 our minister Alyssa Lee at [buuc.alyssa@gmail.com](mailto: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

#### 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>.

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