



The Channing Connection

CHANNING MEMORIAL CHURCH
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

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**We are a
Welcoming
Congregation**



Wayside Pulpit

The best things
in life
aren't things

Interim Minister's Column

January is a time of turning. We have time in the midst of winter to stretch ourselves towards the highest aspirations we hold, and work towards them. The theme for our sermons and Soul Matters discussion for this month is different from “resolutions”, it is instead the idea of “intention”.

We've been on the path of transition for nearly 18 months now. Back when we were just a few weeks into getting to know each other, Interim Minister and congregation, I preached a sermon at the Jewish High Holy days. Here is a part of what I said, after explaining khet (sin) as an archery term:

“So with this understanding of “sin,” “repentance” can be understood as turning, a turning so as to realign oneself with one's highest goal, one's best intentions, and aim better next time to hit the mark... As the Jewish people recognize, it is not just that it is harm to others that is the problem, but also the harm we do to ourselves.

Because if we are not facing our goals, our best possibilities, taking aim with all we can do, then we will not hit the mark ourselves and we will not connect with the joy of being the best that we can be. We are left with harm to ourselves... You are in the search process: you will be finding a new minister. I hope that at this new year time you will personally and collectively find a way to your goals. Whether or not you have a belief in something you might call “God” I hope you find the joy as you realign yourself with your highest goals and purpose, and heal within, that you may go forward...”

We have come far in these months together. This new year, 2018, will need the same focus on intention. I can remind you of your best goals, you can turn with intention to stretch toward them. And by summer we will be saying goodbye, well done.

See you at church.

— Rev. Bob Renjilian

Interim Minister:
Rev. Robert Renjilian
410-203-0474 (office)
minister@channingmc.org

President:
Evelyn Grim ('18)

Vice President: Maureen
Hayes ('18)

Treasurer: Ostara Hollyoak
('19)

Secretary: Jodi Davidson
('18)

Trustees:
Julie Fitzer ('19)
Anne Hart ('18)
Jason Grabelle ('19)

Newsletter Editor:
Ken Grim

To place an event on the calendar, in the Order of Service announcements, in the newsletter or in an allchanning email, send an email to:
newsshare@channingmc.org

Send submittals for the February 2018 issue by 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, January 24.

Let's Celebrate!



Please plan to stay after our worship service on Sunday, January 21, for a party celebrating our **25th Silver Anniversary** year. As some of you know, our original Articles of Incorporation were signed on January 23, 1993 and were filed with the State of Maryland on January 25, two days later. We will celebrate this milestone event with:

- a light pot luck luncheon (easy finger foods please). We will leave the chairs in place instead of setting up tables so that we can also enjoy--
- a nostalgic look at the past, featuring an old fashioned photograph slide presentation;
- a sneak preview of the new video interviews which have been prepared for our website;
- and maybe skits or songs from some of our more talented and creative church members.

See you there.

Soul Matters



Join us for our Soul Matters discussion on "Intention" on Wednesday evening, January 10, 2018, 7:00-8:30 p.m. We'll be pondering several questions, including: "Are you as good at assuming the good intentions of others as you are at defending your own?" and "How are you doing at the work of intentional authenticity? Are you succeeding at being the same person on the outside as you are on the inside?" All are welcome. Study packets are available in the lobby, or contact Rev. Bob Renjilian if you'd like a PDF version sent via e-mail.

— Rev. Bob Renjilian, Interim Minister

President's Column

It is amazing to realize that Channing Memorial Church, Unitarian Universalist, will be 25 years old on January 23. We have come a long way and, in spite of financial challenges and never enough time, volunteers, and energy to do all that we want to do, we are a remarkably strong congregation. We will celebrate this Silver Anniversary with a light pot luck luncheon and program following the worship service on January 21, and will look back with fondness and nostalgia at our last 25 years. But, more important, it is exciting to imagine what our next 25 years will look like.

As a small congregation, it is sometimes frustrating to realize that we can't do all of the things that we would like to do. There is hope that in calling a new minister, we will increase our membership and financial resources. However, over the past few years, I have become increasingly aware that we are likely to remain a small congregation. According to our Central East Region (CER) Lead, Megan Foley, in the UU Institute course on *Revitalizing the Small Congregation*, small congregations are the wave of the future. In a recent article in *The Baltimore Sun*, Jonathan M. Pitts reported that church membership is declining among all denominations except Muslim, Orthodox Judaism and Evangelical Christian. As church attendance across the country is declining, large, established churches and synagogues are merging in the Baltimore area.

So why am I optimistic about Channing's future and why did we, as a congregation, decide to seek a full-time minister instead of part-time, as so many UU churches our size have done? First of all, being a small church does not mean staying at our current membership level of about 60 members. We

can double our size and we will still be classified as a "small" church. Second, our demographic area ranges from Catonsville in Baltimore County to Western Howard County, and a large number of residents in that area fit the profile of Unitarian Universalists. Most important, there is a spirit here and a commitment to the future that bodes well for future growth. We are well-grounded in our Unitarian Universalist values and dedication to our congregation's mission, and that will not change.

But, as we try to appeal to millennials and future generations, we may have to be flexible in how we "do church." Sunday morning is not always an option for young families. Are there other ways we can serve in addition to Sunday morning worship and religious education? In comparison to other churches our size, I have discovered that our small religious education enrollment is not unusual. During this interim transitional period, we may do some experimenting with alternate religious education models.

Month to month financing will always be a challenge, but that is always the case for dynamic and growing congregations. Generally speaking, churches with balanced budgets are those whose membership and services are declining, but have enough older established members who continue to contribute at a level sufficient to cover expenses. As we grow, we will need to be creative in our fund raising appeals and learn to use technology to make it easier to give. And by educating ourselves in ways of Planned Giving, we can help to assure Channing's future.

Our future holds many challenges, but I think we are up to the task. So join me on January 21 and let us drink a toast (coffee?) to the next 25 years.

Faithfully yours,

Evelyn

Board Bits



The Board met on December 19th at 7:00 p.m. Present were Anne Hart, Dan Val-lone, Evelyn Grim, Jodi Davidson, Julie Fitzer, Maureen Hayes, Ostara Hol-lyoak and Reverend Bob.

The Board spent much of its time continuing to discuss Channing's leader-ship model. Our goal is to maximize our effectiveness through clear roles, structure for decision making, and by maintaining open lines of communica-tion. We will bring these discussions to the congregation in the coming months.

Channing is being recognized as a 2017 Honor Congregation based our fair share contribution to the Unitar-ian Universalist Association. The cer-tificate is being posted in the lobby area.

The fundraising budget was increased from \$1,000 to \$5,000 to reflect more accurately given that we have raised \$4,000 so far this year

And a special thanks to Maggie Nebel, Maureen Hayes and Nancy Hariani who are continuing to lead the Minis-ter Emerita project. Reverend Susan LaMar will receive this honor and guest preach at Channing on February 4, 2018. A motion was passed to cover her travel expenses.

Jodi Davidson
Secretary

Stewardship Corner

Let's Consider Planned Giving

If you are like me, you hold in your heart a desire to assure the future of Channing Memorial Church-- a community and a place where we invite seekers, connect souls, and ignite compassion-- for future generations. Particularly in this, our Silver Anniversary year, planned giving gives us a path to reflect on that commitment. Planned giving is a term used to describe a gift outside the annual pledge, at an amount generally larger than we might give out of our day-to-day income. The most traditional method is to include a specific bequest in our wills. I have already done that, and it was so easy. Other ways to give include life insurance policies and charitable remainder trusts. When daily worries about the economy, the political environment, and the cost of living make giving more out of ordinary income problematic, it is perhaps easier to think about including a more sizable be-quest as part of our estate planning. I en-courage everyone to give it some thought, discuss the possibilities with your estate or tax advisor, and see what you think! Please feel free to talk with any member of the Stewardship Committee if you have questions or thoughts about the idea.

-- *Lynne Schaefer*

Care Team Donation



The Channing Memorial Church Care Team has given a donation in memory of Steve Landen to the Small Miracles Cat and Dog Shelter, a no-kill rescue center where Steve adopted his dog Lucy three years ago

LH3 Collecting New or Gently Used DVDs



Loving Hearts/Helping Hands (LH3) has chosen to collect new or gently used DVDs for our next meet up on January 7th. We have been told that often things in the hospital disappear throughout the year. We are hoping you all will help us create a wonderful collection of movies to share with the teen rooms at Johns Hopkins. DVDs may be brought to the church.

We are asking for G/PG rated movies so they are ok for everyone to see. Target often has \$5 movies and Wal-Mart as well.

Thank you for all of your support in helping with LH3's community outreach projects. It warms our hearts to know you stand behind and support the goals of the group!

-- Loving Hearts/Helping Hands (LH3)

Elf Squad-- Thank you

Thanks so much to all who participated in Elf Squad this year. Thanks to donors who signed up for every last thing on "The Genius," even after I added a few more gift cards to the original list. Special thanks to Maggie Nebel, my brave HowCo Driving Elf, who crossed the Patapsco and even *entered a mall* to get the job done.

I know our family of eight will have a brighter holiday because of your efforts. See you next year!

-- Cathy Fu

Bring A Friend to Church in 2018

Do you know someone who might "need church" this year? Do you have friends who say, "If I were anything, I would probably be UU." when asked about religion? Invite them to Channing! Great sermons, supportive community, award-winning snacks-- it's all here on Sundays at 10 am. Invite a friend and help Channing reach folks who may need what we can offer.

-- Cathy Fu

SAVE THE DATE!



Rev. Susan LaMar will guest preach and we will present the Minister Emerita proclamation to her on Sunday, February 4, 2018.

Video Testimonials – Update



A special thanks to Amira El-Dinary, Heather Vallone and Holly Vallone for taking the lead on the video testimonial project. And much appreciation to all those who were willing to share their testimonials! Your testimonials will help our Channing story come to life through multiple communication channels including our website.

Quest Discussion Forum - Special Note - Date Change!

Quest is moving from the 3rd Wednesday to the 4th Thursday of each month, the time will stay the same. Join us for reflection, community, and heartwarming conversations from 7:00 – 8:30 pm on:

- January 25th
- February 22nd
- March 29th (5th Thursday)
- April 26th
- May 24th
- June 28th

If you've been thinking about trying out this small group discussion, check us out on January 23rd at 7 pm, our topic is **“Right Speech.”**



- What is “Right Speech?”
- Why is “Right Speech” important?
- What actions can we take to communicate in this manner?

Contact Jodi Davidson.

Mandala in the Making Event - Seats Still Available



**Saturday, January 20,
2018**

1 to 4 pm

**at Channing Memorial
Church**

Open to all - bring a friend!

Leaders: *Jodi Davidson* and *Barbara Kass*

Cost: \$30 per person - pay at the door (check payable to Channing Memorial Church, or cash - exact change please).

Join us in welcoming a new year of possibilities. This workshop will begin with a 30-minute meditation to help you set an intent for manifesting what you want to happen in your life: healing, a job, peace, abundance, anything that will help you grow. Take this special time for yourself as we in the community learn this special form of mandala making that expresses you. This workshop is designed for everyone - beginners and experienced artists. All materials are provided. Snacks and beverages provided at no cost.

We'll have some examples on display at Church the first Sunday in January - come check out Jodi's art!

Barbara is a licensed professional counselor who uses art to help people grow. Jodi is our Quest facilitator and works on diversity and inclusion initiatives for a large company.

No need to register again if you already purchased seats to this event at the Fall Fundraising Bazaar.

New Year's Resolution-A-Thon: Support Channing and a Recovering Diet Coke Addict



Julie Fitzer estimates she probably spends \$2 a day on Diet Coke, and it's not a healthy habit. Not to mention the environmental cost of the cans and bot-

tles. She's going to try to end her decades-long Diet Coke habit in the New Year, and she needs your support. Julie will enjoy half of the savings and donate the other half of the savings to Channing Memorial Church for the month of January. For each day that she stays away from the Diet Coke, she'll give \$1 to Channing and keep \$1.

To increase Julie's willpower, you can pledge a small donation to Channing (even 50 cents) for each day in the first month of the new year that she stays away from the Diet Coke and drinks water or sparkling water instead. Help motivate Julie with a pledge. Julie will report her statistics to you at the end of January, and then you can just send your check to Channing with "Resolution-A-Thon" in the memo line. It's simple, fun, and helps both Julie and Channing.

Men's Group

**1st Thursdays and 3rd Saturdays
10:00 AM - 12:00 p.m.
Bagel Bin at Enchanted Forest
Shopping Center**

**Next meetings: Thursday, January 4
and Saturday, January 20**

Thank You, Lorraine

After more than 10 years serving as editor or co-editor of *The Channing Connection*, Lorraine Hughes has retired from the post. It's been my privilege to work with someone as talented and innovative as Lorraine.

If anyone is interested in becoming involved with editing the newsletter, I would be happy to help them learn the process and the software. Please contact me at kengrim@verizon.net if you're interested or want more information.

-- Ken Grim

CHANNING
MEMORIAL
Church



January 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 	2	3	4 Men's Group 10:00 am-12:00 pm	5	6
7 Worship and Children's RE 10:00 - 11:00 am DVD Collection by LH3	8 Transition Team Mtg. 6:00-7:00 pm Money Matters Webinar 7:00 - 8:30 pm Choir Practice 7:30 -	9 Stewardship Meeting 7:00 pm	10 Soul Matters 7:00 - 8:30 pm	11	12	13
14 Worship and Children's RE 10:00 - 11:00 am	15 Martin Luther King Day Choir Practice 7:30 - 9:30 pm	16 Board Meeting 7:00 - 9:00 pm	17	18	19	20 Men's Group 10:00 am - 12:00 pm Mandala Workshop 1:00 - 4:00 pm
21 Worship and Children's RE 10:00 - 11:00 am Silver Anniversary Party after service	22 Choir Practice 7:30 - 9:30 pm	23 	24	25 Quest Discussion 7:00-8:30 pm	26 Groceries to Westside Shelter 6:00 - 7:30 pm 	27
28 Worship and Children's RE 10:00 - 11:00 am	29 Choir Practice 7:30 - 9:30 pm	30	31			

Channing Memorial Church
Unitarian Universalist
3220 Corporate Ct.
Suite C
Ellicott City, MD 21042

On the web:
www.ChanningMC.org

Channing Memorial Church, Unitarian Universalist

Our mission is to invite seekers into spiritual community, connect souls in mystery and wonder, and ignite compassion into action.

We are a church of liberal religious worship that inspires its members on their spiritual journeys. We derive inspiration from other world religions; promote religious education for all ages; create a welcoming, supporting, and caring community; and work together to build a better world.

Directions to 3220 Corporate Court: From Catonsville and east: Rt.40 West. Right on Pine Orchard Lane (one light after Bethany Lane). Turn right at first driveway. Suite C is in middle of building on right. Parking is available in front or at end of building and in back of building.

From Carroll County and west: Go east on I-70 to Rt 40 east; at 2nd light (Pine Orchard Lane), turn left. Take 4th right onto Corporate Court; Suite C is in middle of building on right. Parking is available in front or at ends of building and in back of building.

NURTURE Your Spirit.
Help HEAL The World.



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