



The Channing Connection

CHANNING MEMORIAL CHURCH
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

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Inside:

Care Team	2
Minister Emerita Presentation.....	2
Congratulatory Email on Channing's 25th Anniversary.....	2
President's Column	3
Save the Date - Town Meeting.....	4
Men's Group	4
Board Bits.....	4
Soul Matters	5
The Joy of Good Record Keeping.....	5
OWL: Sexuality Education for Adults	5
Looking Ahead	6
Special Thanks!.....	6
Stewardship Corner.....	6
Quest Discussion Forum.....	7
Fair Share Congregation	7
Recorded Sermons	8
Eleanor Roosevelt is Coming to TUUC	8
Faith Forum Conversation Circles	9
Gala Organ Concert.....	9
February Calendar	10

We are a Welcoming Congregation



Wayside Pulpit

What is the use of a house if you haven't got a tolerable planet to put it on?

—Henry David Thoreau

Interim Minister's Column

I write this column from the balmy Florida location where the UU Ministers Association "Institute on Excellence" is being held. Much of what we're working on is transforming our ministries to be relevant to the future, rather than being bound to the past. We're also confronting the structural systems that are still injurious to our mission of being a religion open to all, especially in relation to the continued perseverance needed in anti-racism and dismantling white supremacy.

The Soul Matters theme turns us from January's "Intention" to February's "Perseverance." Sometimes we just need to keep going. What is it that gives us the strength to do that, rather than give up after our first or second effort? What is the life lesson that gives us that sense of continued focus? Who helps us feel sustained, or even how are we serving in that ministry for each other (and is that including our church family especially)? These are not necessarily the topics of discussion in this month's packet, but what I ponder as a minister, your Interim Minister.

I am grateful to Ostara H. for stepping forward to help the Soul Matters discussions continue. During the next couple months I'm not going to be the leader... the task is now shared, and that will give you all a chance to persevere in your spiritual growth and learning, knowing this is the work of the congregation, and a gift for all of you.

We are not alone in our mission and vision, we have the ministry of each other as we go forward.

See you in church.

— Rev. Bob Renjilian, Interim Minister

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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 March issue of *The Channing Connection* to newsshare@channingmc.org by 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, February 25.

Care Team Honors Rev. Bob's Father

The Channing Care Team made a donation in honor of Reverend Bob's father to the New Town Forest Association, which is a community group his parents were active in.

--Maggie Nebel, Chair

Minister Emerita Presentation To Rev. Susan LaMar Sunday, February 4, 2018

At a special congregational meeting held on Sunday, October 15, Channing Memorial Church passed a resolution to grant the designation of Minister Emerita to the Rev. Susan G. LaMar, in recognition and deep appreciation of the contributions she made to the life and vitality of Channing Memorial Church throughout her 13 years of ministry. On Sunday, February 4, Rev. LaMar will guest preach, and we will present the Minister Emerita proclamation to her.

We will share in a potluck luncheon after the service.

Congratulatory Email on Channing's 25th Anniversary

Channing has received the following email from James Shumacker, who was Channing's settled minister from 1995-1997:

As preparations are made for Channing's 25th anniversary, I wanted to take the opportunity to thank all the tireless workers who have put in a quarter of a century of effort to continue the Channing dream. I am very proud to have been its first settled minister, and I hope your celebration is everything you expect on such a momentous occasion. It is through the dedication and vision of families like yours that any church prospers, and may Channing's next twenty-five years be bright. Best wishes to all, and happy anniversary!

James

President's Column



Thank you to Ken G. and John M. for preparing the slide shows on Sunday for our 25th Anniversary celebration, to the H./V. family for the rap version of our history, to Heather and Amira for the video testimonial preview, and to all who brought goodies to enjoy. As one of the founding members of Channing Memorial Church, it is always gratifying to hear appreciation expressed for the vision we shared of a new UU church in Howard County 25 years ago. But as I listened to Rev. Bob's sermon and watched the slide show and the videos, I was struck by the number of people who have confirmed and added to that vision over the years. It would be impossible to name them all, but I will attempt to point out a few highlights.

Worship has always been the primary focus of Channing's mission, and we have always had capable lay worship leaders in addition to full time professional ministers. But our current Worship Associates have been trained and provide a worshipful spirit that is beyond most lay led worship services that I have seen at other churches. Music was an important element right from the beginning, both choral and instrumental. Furthermore, the entire congregation joins in the hymns with a spirit that emphasizes their importance as part of worship.

Our founders understood the importance of providing quality programming for children, and we have always had a capable team of professionals and volunteers to shape our Religious Education program. Not always satisfied with the curricula provided by the UUA, volunteers have devoted many hours to writing or modifying UU curricula. In addition, new elements like our annual multi-generational game

day and Loving Hearts, Helping Hands have become long-standing traditions here at Channing. Our annual craft fair started out as an opportunity in early December for the children in the congregation to buy inexpensive gifts for their families. But it has taken on many forms over the years, sometimes combined with a fund raiser, sometimes held in combination with the Martin Luther King Day of Service. Our R.E. volunteers have also led the congregation in stream cleanups and pet cemetery cleanups. And one of the highlights of the year is always the worship service led by the Coming of Age class.

Financial support for Channing has also evolved slightly over the years. The initial plan was to rely completely on contributed income. Fund raisers would be too much of a distraction. When the first Auction was proposed, some of us had our doubts. But our annual auction has become not only a major source of income, but also a great evening's entertainment (and food) as well as a means of connecting with each other throughout the year. Other fundraisers have also served to help develop volunteers and leaders, in addition to raising money and just being fun.

In the early years, the major source of publicity for Channing, and most Howard County organizations, was the *Columbia Flier*. Our primary means of communication was the telephone. Now, most people find us through our web page. Email and text messaging provide an opportunity for an almost immediate response (if our inboxes are not so full that they take ½ day to go through). And even the threat of a snow storm did not prevent the Board from meeting recently through the miracle of Skype.

Small group ministries have also added

(continued on p. 4)

SAVE THE DATE!

TOWN MEETING

Mid-year review of Channing's Finances
Sunday, February 18, 11:30 a.m.

This is your chance to ask questions and provide input about Channing's financial health.

(President's Column - continued from p. 3)

to Channing's strength. *Mysteries* and the Drumming Circle are two that come to mind which are no longer active, but were very well done and attracted a large following at one time. The Covenant Circle and the Men's Group were both formed about 15 years ago and continue to gather together on a regular basis. Quest and the LGBTQ+ group have reached out to the larger community in addition to providing a means of support and spiritual exploration for members of the Channing family.

While Channing's mission and core values have remained the same since its founding, we have grown and evolved in many ways. May we continue to do so for the next 25 years and more.

Faithfully yours

Evelyn

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, February 1
and Saturday, February 17

Board Bits



The January Board meeting was held on the 16th at 7:00 p.m. There were three main points of discussion. Rev. Bob led the Interim Focusing discussion, with a strong emphasis on religious

education. Rev. Bob shared current trends about where religious education is headed at churches in general, and ideas that could work well at Channing. We need to engage the congregation in a discussion about RE.

Evelyn led the Stewardship and Finance discussion. Planning for the annual canvas is in full swing, and Evelyn brought the Board up-to-date on the Stewardship Committee's recent meeting activities, and how the Board will engage the canvass.

Ostara, with Pam E., led the continuing discussion of leadership roles, responsibilities, and lines of authority. Ostara presented a new draft chart detailing the church structure in concentric circles.

-- Dan V., On-call Board Scribe

Soul Matters



Please consider joining us for our monthly Soul Matters discussion on Wednesday, February 7th, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. All are welcome! Our theme for February is "Perseverance."

Here are a few of the questions we'll consider:

- It is said that mastery requires persevering through *10,000 hours* of practice. If you are feeling like you are failing or not good enough, might it be time to consider that you are only 5,000 hours in?
- What if the way through your pain is to feel it? It is said that people who persevere don't just struggle through their pain; they share and tell stories of their pain. Others then respond with their own stories of pain and struggle, leading to the discovery that we are not as alone as we thought. So is it time for you to be a storyteller, not just a survivor?

Packets on "Perseverance" can be found in the church lobby; or contact Rev. Bob Renjilian if you'd like a PDF version sent by e-mail.

--Ostara H., *Worship Associate*



The Joy of Good Record Keeping

Each January, your Membership person submits information to the UUA about Channing, including number of members, weekly attendance, financial information and more. The interim period gives us an opportunity to do an honest assessment of our church, including ensuring that we have accurate records. It may not seem exciting, but our efforts will help us be ready for a new minister, and that is pretty dangd exciting! Thanks to all who help with this effort.

Our Whole Lives (OWL): Sexuality Education for Adults

February 25, 2018, 12:30 p.m.

**Unitarian Universalist Society
of Howard County (UUCC)
7246 Cradlerock Way
Columbia, MD 21045**

Have you found yourself stumbling when trying to give honest, age-appropriate answers to questions asked by your children or grandchildren? Do you falter when you try to explain your values around human sexuality? How does sexuality change as we age? Our Whole Lives (OWL): Sexuality Education for Adults helps you explore sexuality through your values and experiences. Enhance communication skills as you increase your understanding of healthy relationships, sexual diversity, and sexuality throughout the life cycle.

A teaser session (to build interest) will be held at UUCC on Sunday, Feb. 25, 2018. The tentative time is 12:30 p.m., allowing Channing Memorial Church folks to grab a bite to eat right after Sunday service and head over to the Owen Brown Center. Rev. Bob Renjilian was trained as a leader, and will be assisting the class. Questions? - ask Rev. Bob!

Looking Ahead

It is that time to start planning for the 2018/19 church year. Next year will be especially exciting with the arrival of a new settled minister. This is also a time when we give special thought to the financial resources needed to support Channing Memorial Church's mission and programs throughout the year.

This year's annual pledge drive will be a little different. In honor of our 25th anniversary year, we will observe *SILVER SUNDAY* on March 5. Details are being worked out, but an informational canvass packet will be emailed in mid to late February. Either during or right after the worship service on March 5, we will all have an opportunity to place our pledges of financial support for the coming year in a special pledge box. Newcomers will be contacted for a stewardship visit beforehand so we can answer any questions you may have. Anyone else who would like can also meet with someone from the stewardship team.

There will also be an exciting addition to this year's canvass drive. Increases to existing pledges will be matched up to a limit to be determined, so pledge increases will have a double impact on our operating budget. Stay tuned for further information.

Special Thanks



The entire congregation is thankful to the Communications Committee for spear heading the video testimonials and coming up with the questions for the interviews. A special thanks goes out to Amira E. and Heather V. for recording the testimonials and producing the final video for our web site. They ran a very efficient and professional operation.

We would also like to thank all the folks who participated in the testimonials:

Cathy F., Evelyn G., Pam E., Jodi D., Ken H. Kathleen R., Deanna G., Kris M., Carla S., Lynne S., and Diana M.

-- *Leadership Development and Nominating Committee:*

*Dan V., chair
Ken G.*

Stewardship Corner

Required Minimum Distributions and Qualified Charitable Distributions

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requires most people to start taking withdrawals from their retirement accounts, including IRA's, at age 70½. These withdrawals, called **Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs)**, must meet or exceed a specific dollar amount each year as determined by an IRS formula, and must be taken by December 31 each year. (Note: RMD requirements do not apply to Roth IRA owners, but do apply to Roth IRA beneficiaries maintaining Inherited Roth IRAs).

In early 2017 I received a letter from the trustee company that holds my IRA account telling me I would need to withdraw an RMD amount during tax year 2017. I wanted to find ways to make good use of the RMD check I would be receiving from my IRA account. I started

(continued on p. 7)

(Stewardship Corner - continued from p. 6)

hearing the words **Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD)**. I called the company holding my IRA account and they sent me some forms to fill out and return to them.

In 2017 I paid part of my annual church pledge via a Qualified Charitable Distribution. The trustee company who holds my IRA account wrote 2 checks directly to Channing. One was for my 2016-17 pledge, and one was for my 2017-18 pledge. These pledge checks will not be counted as income on my 2017 tax returns. They are also not counted as a charitable donation on my 2017 taxes. Using the Qualified Charitable Distribution option will provide a tax benefit for me because it lowers my adjusted gross income.

See more explanations about relevant tax forms in the following IRS website link: <https://www.irs.gov/retirement-plans/retirement-plans-faqs-regarding-iras-distributions-withdrawals>.

I don't know all the rules for IRAs, RMDs and QCDs. Please contact the company that holds your IRA and remember to consult your tax adviser concerning tax implications.

-- Diana M.

Fair Share Congregation

Have you noticed the certificate hanging on the wall between our classrooms and the kitchen? (Thank you to Jodi for framing it so nicely). The certificate signifies that Channing Memorial Church is, once again, a “fair share” congregation; that is, we have contributed the suggested annual fair share amount to the Unitarian Universalist Association Program Fund. Not only does our contribution to the UUA qualify us for services (such as guidance in our search for a called minister), it contributes to the health of Unitarian Universalism as a whole. As stated by Bill Clontz, Consultant at *Stewardship for US*:

“We give to Unitarian Universalism because we value the hope of our denomination in these perilous times. We UUs are called to stand in love and justice, to be present and accounted for, to be a safe place for vulnerable people, to be a source of strength and love, to stand up to hate and bigotry and fear. This is why we come together, this is why we give generously – to pool our resources to bring about the world we seek.”

Quest Discussion Forum

Fourth Thursdays, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Next Forum: February 22

Quest is a safe place for Channing members and friends to dive deeper into personal spirituality. Expect wide-ranging discussions on a variety of topics. Contact Jodi D. for more information.



Recorded Sermons Are Available on the Website

Audio recordings of the weekly sermons are available on the Channing Memorial Church website. Use them to listen again to sermons that touched you, to hear things you may not have heard the first time through, or to hear sermons you have missed. The website and recorded sermons are also a great way to introduce Channing to folks who may be interested in the church and want to better understand who we are. To access the recorded sermons, go to the home page (www.channingmc.org) and click the link to *Worship*, which is located in the menu on the left side of the page, then select *Sermons Past and Future*.

Eleanor Roosevelt is Coming to Towson Unitarian Universalist Church (TUUC) on February 17th

A performance depicting the life of Eleanor Roosevelt is planned for 7pm on Saturday, February 17th at Towson Unitarian Universalist Church. TUUC is located in Lutherville, Maryland at 1710 Dulaney Valley Road. Professional actress Jane Van Boskirk, visiting from her home state of Oregon, will perform her signature role in this one-woman performance titled, **“Eleanor Roosevelt – Across a Barrier of Fear.”**

In the words of playwright Sharon Whitney, “Eleanor Roosevelt was at one time the most loved woman in the world, and the most despised. She was an aristocrat who believed in ‘vision and bigness of soul,’ the author of books and magazine columns, the wife of four-time President Franklin D. Roosevelt, and a diplomat

and tireless worker for universal human rights. Nevertheless, she began life an ‘ugly duckling,’ painfully shy and lonely. Our play tells how she ultimately achieved greatness, ‘across a barrier of fear.’”

Tickets are being sold through the TUUC website (www.towsonuuc.org), or may be reserved by calling the church office (410-825-6045) Monday-Friday from 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$15 for full-time students and seniors (65+), and \$12 for children (under 12).

Purchase Gift Cards Through Channing Memorial Church



Support Channing Memorial Church while doing your weekly grocery shopping! Grocery gift cards are available for Giant, Safeway and Weiss. See Maureen Hayes to make a purchase.

A percentage of each gift card that you purchase through Channing goes to help support the church.

**Support
Channing Memorial
Church.**

When you shop at smile.amazon.com,
Amazon donates.

[Go to smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)

Faith Forum Conversation Circles
Tuesday, February 27, 7:00 - 8:45 p.m.
Courageous Dialogue About Race

The first meeting of the Faith Forum Conversations on race is scheduled for Tuesday, February 27 at 7:00 p.m., and subsequent meetings will be held on the fourth Tuesday of the month, through May 22. The culminating event will take place on Monday, June 4, at 6:30 p.m. at St. John Baptist Church, hosted by Congressman Elijah Cummings. Meetings will be held at several locations throughout Howard County:

- **Glen Mar United Methodist Church**, 4701 New Cut Rd., Ellicott City 21043
- **St. John Baptist Church**, 9055 Tamar Drive, Columbia 21045
- **Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Columbia**, Owen Brown Interfaith Center, 7246 Cradlerock Way, Columbia 21045
- **Beth Shalom Congregation**, 8070 Harriet Tubman Lane, Columbia 21044
- **St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church**, 10431 Twin Rivers Rd., Columbia 21044
- **Maryum Islamic Center**, 9150 Rumsey Rd., Suite A4, Columbia 21045

For more information, contact Kathleen R.

Gala Organ Concert

*Sponsored by the First Unitarian Church of Baltimore
and the American Guild of Organists*

Sunday, February 11 at 4:00 p.m.

*Sanctuary of the First Unitarian Church of Baltimore, Charles and
Franklin Streets*

Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Jim Houston, First Unitarian's
Music Director




&

The 125th Anniversary of the Newly Restored Niemann Organ



Ticket Prices: Students - \$5 Adults - \$20

February 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Men's Group 10:00 am - 12:00 pm	2	3 RE Meeting 8:30 am
4 Rev. Susan LaMar is guest minister and will be presented with Minister Emerita honor 10:00 - 11:00 am (intergenerational) followed by potluck	5 Computer Security Workshop 7:00-8:30 pm Choir Practice 7:30 - 9:30 pm	6 Stewardship/ Finance Meeting 7:00 - 8:30 pm	7 Soul Matters 7:00 - 8:30 pm	8	9	10
11 Worship Service & Children's RE 10:00 - 11:00 am Organ Concert at First Unitarian Baltimore 4:00 pm	12 Money Matters Webinar 7:00 - 8:30 pm Choir Practice 7:30 - 9:30 pm	13 Transition Team Meeting 6:00 - 7:30 pm LDNC Meeting 7:00 - 9:00 pm	14 Valentine's Day 	15	16	17 Men's Group 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
18 Worship Service & Children's RE 10:00 - 11:00 am Town Meeting 11:30 am - 12:30 pm	19 Choir Practice 7:30 - 9:30 pm Presidents' Day 	20 Board Meeting 7:00 - 9:00 pm	21	22 Quest Discussion Forum 7:00 - 8:30 pm	23 Groceries to Westside Shelter 6:00 - 7:30 pm 	24
25 Worship Service & Children's RE 10:00 - 11:00 am Snow Date for Town Meeting OWL Session 12:30 pm at UCC	26 Choir Practice 7:30 - 9:30 pm	27	28			

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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Unitarian Universalist
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