



The Channing Connection

CHANNING MEMORIAL CHURCH
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

Volume 25, Issue 6

June 2018

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We are a Welcoming Congregation

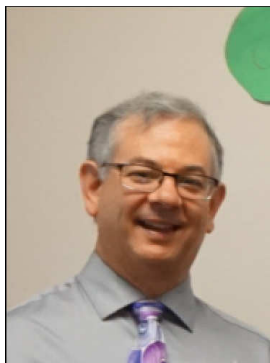


Wayside Pulpit

Live out of your imagination, not your history.

--Stephen R. Covey

Interim Minister's Column



It is time to pack up my books, even as I'm planning the final three worship services with you in June. The move of my bulky book shelves will have to wait until after I return from the UUA General Assembly at the end of June, but otherwise the office will slowly look more empty, less occupied. All this time my name plate has been taped to the glass, in an intentionally obvious temporary fashion, and the tape will be peeled off so

I can pack that too. Most of the posters with the workshop notes have gone into the recycling bin. Our work together is done... except for this final (and essential) ministry of saying goodbye.

I've still got appointment openings available between now and Father's Day (June 17, my last service) for any and all who wish to say goodbye privately.

How do you do goodbyes in your family? Do you rush through it, or plan to draw it out? Is it a simple handshake or lots of tears? Do you withdraw first, or make up a fight to avoid the goodbye itself? Each congregation I've left has shown me the variety of ways people respond to my invitation to say goodbye. Once, a member (and former leader) scheduled three separate appointments leading up to the goodbye event. Others sent an e-mail that they wouldn't make it to the final event, but wished me well. One took me out to lunch and asked if I'd still be available after I was gone (sadly, no, at least not unless there is a dire emergency in the early summer - for that I'll work with the Board for coverage by me or area ministers during my vacation). I realize this is like any good ministry, where I need to be responsive to folks "where they are" in the moment, but also keep to good boundaries. My time is done, and I'll get out of the way so your next minister has room to arrive and say "hello!"

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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 July issue of *The Channing Connection* to newsshare@channingmc.org by 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, June 24.

(Interim Minister's Column - continued from p. 1)

I came to you in 2016 excited to learn who you are. I will carry you in my heart as I go off to my next placement. Thank you for showing me what a sweet, small-but-mighty congregation can accomplish during two short years! Best wishes to you as you go forward into your future.

-- Rev. Bob Renjilian, Interim Minister

Rev. Bob's June Services

Sunday, June 3, 2018: *Coming of Age Recognition*

Sunday, June 10, 2018: *Flower Communion and New Member Recognition*

Sunday, June 17, 2018: *Farewell Service for Rev. Bob*

Soul Matters Wednesday, June 13 7:00-8:30 PM

Our discussion for the month of June is "Blessing." You are invited to reflect on deep questions and ideas, including surprises in your life. What was your biggest "unexpected blessing moment"?



William Ellery Channing

Sad News

We are sad to learn that Dunbar (“Mike”) Birnie, a founding member of Channing Memorial Church, passed away on Thursday, May 24.

Mike was deeply involved in the founding and continuing work of Channing. He and Rebecca joined Channing on its first Membership Sunday on March 28, 1993. Through the years, he was involved in many areas of church life. In later years, he has served as a Channing usher.

We will miss Mike’s smile, his sense of humor, and his genuine interest in and concern for others, both inside and outside the Channing community.

Plans for Mike’s memorial service will be announced.

President’s Column



As we approach the end of our church year, I am also approaching the end of my term as president of Channing Memorial Church. We have accomplished a tremendous amount during this interim period and the time has gone by amazingly fast.

It is hard to believe that Rev. Bob's time with us is also coming to an end. In two short years he has become a welcome member of our Channing family, guiding and challenging us through the interim process with wisdom and good humor. I would like to extend my best wishes to Rev. Bob and Christy as he moves on to his next church assignment.

Thank you to Anne Hart and Jodi Davidson, who will be completing their terms on the Board, and to Ken Grim who is completing his term on the Leadership Development/Nominating Committee. Thank you also to Pam E., Jodi D., Deanna G. and Kathleen R., who have worked as the Transition Team along with Rev. Bob to guide us through the first two years of our transition process. A special thank you to the Search team, Virginia V., Mel C., Tom D., David F., and Maggie N. for their tireless efforts to find the proper match for a settled minister and for taking up the search for an interim minister to serve in our third transitional year

As some people move on to other roles, I welcome Ken Hart and Kathleen Razmus to the Board and David Fu to the Leadership Development/Nominating Committee. Remember that with dedicated lay leadership, we will continue to reach out and grow regardless of who our minister is. In addition to the renewed ministerial search, we will continue our exploration of diversity issues, follow our welcoming congregation road map, continue our efforts to establish our religious education focus into the

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

future, and explore future space needs.

Thanks to all of you for the confidence and support you have provided during my term as president. It has been a joyful, if sometimes overwhelming, two years. Although we continue to face challenges, I look forward to the next two years with Julie Fitzer as our new president. Julie has the youth, energy, enthusiasm and leadership skills to lead us through the next two years and to help chart the path to our next 25 years.

Faithfully yours,

Evelyn

Board Bits



At its May 15 Board Meeting, the Board put the finishing touches on the Annual Meeting preparations. They also discussed the third year of Ministerial Search that we are now embarking on. Thankfully, the existing Called Search Team volunteered to become the new Interim Search Team.

For General Assembly this year Rev. Bob and Evelyn were approved to be Channing's delegates.

*Dan V.
Board Scribe*

Quest Discussion Forum Ends

We are indeed in a time of change, ripe for experimenting. Let's experiment in the way we come together as community.

For the past almost four years, it has been a pleasure to facilitate the Quest Discussion Forum, call it "small group ministry" where those who chose would gather monthly to explore life's big questions about topics like... Spirituality, Authenticity, Empathy, our "Inner Child", the list goes on. That being the case, attendance has been declining. Quest is tired and so at least for now, let's try something different.

We are looking at the option of an occasional potluck. We hope you will be interested in joining us at Channing or when weather permits perhaps we can have a picnic and enjoy nature. We can bring our favorite poems to share, play a game, experience a workshop together, or just hang out.

More information to follow. We hope you will join us!

Thanks,
Jodi



Farewell Celebration
Rev. Bob Renjilian, Interim Minister
June 17, 2018

Extended coffee hour following the service.
You're invited to bring festive food to share.
There will also be an opportunity for expressions of gratitude to Rev. Bob.

From the Transition Team: Reflections

The Transition Team wishes to extend our appreciation that the congregation entrusted us to serve in this capacity during this two-year interim period. In this second year of interim ministry, the Transition Team worked behind the scenes to help keep Channing's interim priorities in the minds and hearts of the congregation and church leadership. As we conclude our time as a team, we leave you with some reflections on how the congregation addressed our interim goals for the year:

Child and Youth Religious Education (RE) -- Perhaps the most visible transition focus area this spring was in Religious Education. In March, the congregation participated in a 3-week experiment of multi-generational religious exploration and worship. This trial, developed by the RE Committee and Rev. Bob (based on intensive study of the topic), was approved by the Board as a model of RE that might be more relevant to today's young families and more sustainable given our volunteer resources. The congregation was receptive, and participation was lively in each of the format options. The experiment succeeded in its primary goal of helping us stretch and try new things, preparing us to be open to new possibilities in the future.

Outreach and Growth -- Efforts for outreach and growth have come from a variety of sources. To further explore what growth means to our congregation and what we uniquely have to offer to the wider community, the Transition Team studied responses to the Search Committee survey, created a poster series, and led a Sundays After conversation. A video testimonial project, championed by some of our youth, made its debut at Channing's Silver Anniversary celebration. A website upgrade group has been working on ways to make our church website even more usable and inviting. Rev. Bob, the ushers, and others incorporated a few tweaks and reminders to address potential barriers to hospitality (such as coffee-hour crowding). We also took some small actions to be more visible and inviting, such as posting artwork in the front windows to highlight the vitality of our children's and youth programming.

Financial Stability -- During the annual canvas, the Board initiated a matching fund to encourage pledge increases, with the goal of fully funding next year's operating budget. The matching fund was a success, as "Silver Sunday" got pledging well underway. A few pledges still remain, and each pledge makes a difference in reaching our goals. Throughout the year, the Stewardship and Finance Committee also offered

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(From the Transition Team: Reflections - continued from p. 5)

a range of opportunities for creative ways of giving--making generosity possible even in times when we're feeling stretched thin.

Diversity -- This year, Channing addressed diversity on several fronts. A kick-off meeting of the LGBTQIA+ Team was attended by nearly half our membership! Even though the group itself was not as directly active the rest of the year (in the absence of a leader stepping forward), several actions were taken nonetheless. In August, Quest explored how to be LGBTQ+ allies. In the fall, Ken H. and Kathleen R. created a roadmap for deepening our Welcoming Congregation commitment. In October, volunteer youth and Rev. Bob provided a Coming Out Day worship service. In January, our youth hosted an LGBTQ-friendly social event. February through May, Rev. Bob co-facilitated an adult OWL (Our Whole Lives) course with UCC that interweaves LGBTQIA+ diversity among its topics; several Channing folks participated. As a congregation, we have also continued to explore other aspects of diversity. Abilities diversity was the topic of a July worship service and a February Quest discussion. Racial diversity was the topic of a January worship service and Sundays After discussion. Moreover, about 20% of our members have joined in monthly Courageous Conversations--on race, religion, and ethnicity--with neighboring religious groups.

One overarching message that we're learning about ourselves is that we are a congregation that responds best to direct invitations. As you can see, there was a great deal of congregational participation involved in achieving our goals. The work we began last church year--on social responsibility, community/denominational connections, leadership, identity and history--continued to weave through this year's activities. Many of these goals also came into play through creating a Congregational Covenant and honoring Rev. Susan LaMar with Minister Emerita status--both major accomplishments of the church year.

It seems like only yesterday that we were engaged in the work of getting acquainted--forming as a team, meeting Rev. Bob, and introducing him to the congregation. Now we are engaged in the work of parting--celebrating Rev. Bob's time with us and saying farewell. We hope everyone will join us for a farewell celebration after church on June 17, Rev. Bob's last Sunday in the pulpit as our Interim Minister. Please bring food to share for an extended coffee hour. There will also be an opportunity for expressions of gratitude to Rev. Bob. If the spirit moves you to share your thoughts, we hope you will do so. While our gathering will be informal, we wanted to let you know of this opportunity to share sentiments and recognize that some of us prefer to prepare remarks in advance.

As we say goodbye to Rev. Bob, our work as a Transition Team comes to a close. We are proud to have served the congregation in this capacity for the past two years during this interim ministry.

Pam E. (chair)

Jodi D.

Deanna G.

Kathleen R.

Thoughts on the Ministerial Search

As you may know by now, the search committee did not find a suitable match in the second round, and they now are searching for a new interim minister to carry us through the next year.

The search team members- Virginia V., Maggie N., Mel C., David F., and Tom D.- have poured their hearts and souls into this work. As the Board, we are proud that this group represented our church to the candidates. We are even more proud to witness their courage. They held high standards for their work and sought a candidate who would fit well with our congregation; they did not compromise and settle for a poor fit.

Channing Memorial Church has supported a full-time minister throughout its 25 years, a testament to the value we place on professional leadership. At the same time, we have had many talented and committed lay leaders, members, and friends who promoted our mission to *invite, connect, and ignite*. During our next interim year, we will celebrate the incredible power that we have when we all work together to make Channing grow and thrive.

Remember that our interim minister, Rev. Bob, said in a recent sermon that all ministers wear sneakers. One interpretation, he said, is that we are all ministers to each other even as lay people. Settled ministers come and go, with an average tenure of about seven years for UUA congregations. The true strength of our congregation rests on the enduring bonds we have with each other, as

sneaker-wearing (or other footwear of your choice) lay people.

*In love and faith,
Board of Trustees – Channing Memorial
Church, UU*

My Church Will Go On and On

It was the spring of 2002 when Rev. Vicki announced that she was leaving Channing. Unlike Rev. Susan, who gave the congregation plenty of time to prepare for her retirement, Rev. Vicki stunned us one Sunday, giving notice that she was leaving in the next few months.

David and I were pretty new to the church. We were chasing a preschooler and a toddler and baby Erica was on the way. This was my first church ever, and I was really thrown by our minister's unexpected announcement.

I'll never forget the long-time church member who came up to me at coffee hour and gave me a hug. "We'll get through this," he said. I looked at him and realized that even if I hadn't been through this before, the church had.

Lately it's occurred to me that many of our members and friends came to Channing during Rev. Susan's (way above average!) 13 years of ministry and haven't gone through the search process for a new minister. Finding a new minister is uncertain and can be a huge hassle, but what I know is that Channing is seen as a good church, and ministers *are* interested in coming here.

The fact that our search did not result in a match is unfortunate, but the minister is only part of what makes the church. The rest is us: exploring ideas, caring for children, singing with the choir, and bringing cookies for snacks. We're still here, and we'll get through this, together in love. So

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(My Church Will Go On and On - continued from p. 7)

cue the inspiring songs: "We're all in this together," and "I will survive." And, to borrow and alter a lyric from Celine Dion, "My church will go on and on."

Cathy F.
Membership

Special Thanks



The Leadership Development/Nominating Committee adds its thanks to the Ministerial Search Com-

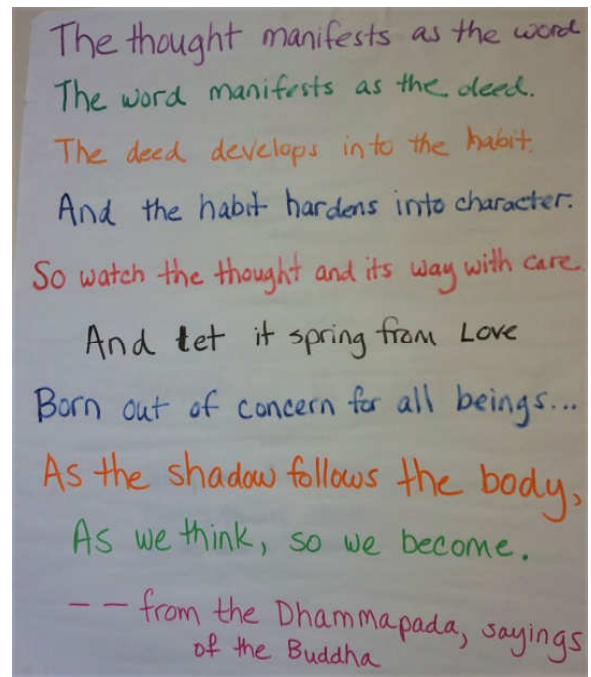
mittee for its untiring efforts during the past two years to evaluate potential candidates and to recommend a settled minister candidate to the congregation. Thank you to Virginia V., Maggie N., Mel C., David F., and Tom D. for this crucial work, and also for your volunteering to serve as the interim minister search team.

The LDNC also recognizes Lynne S. and Dan V. for hosting several fantastic fundraising dinners on behalf of Channing over the past few months. Many special thanks to Lynne, chef extraordinaire!

Leadership Development/Nominating Committee:
Dan Vallone, chair
Ken Grim

Channing's Youth

Chalice Lighting Words Chosen by Youth for RE Sunday



Leisure Time at the High School RE Classroom



Pride Week Participation Calendar

Week of June 4: One member of Channing Memorial Church will need to attend a meeting to receive final PRIDE instructions.

Thursday, June 7 at 7 pm: *PRIDE prayer service* at St. Ignatius Catholic Church

Sunday, June 10 at 11:30 am: *Pride Parade Organization Meeting* for Channing participants in the Elementary School Classroom after the worship service.

Tuesday, June 12 at 7 pm: *Annual interfaith PRIDE Celebration* at Temple Oheb Shalom

Saturday, June 16: *PRIDE parade* starts at 1 pm. Parade route this year is from 33rd and Charles Street to 23rd and Charles Street. More information to come about line up and such. Channing is marching this year with *Faith Communities of Baltimore With Pride*.

Sunday, June 17: *PRIDE Sunday celebration at Druid Hill Park*. There will be four 10 by 10 tents hosted by Faith Communities of Baltimore, where participating congregations can put out literature about their welcoming efforts and talk with festival attendees. There will be need for volunteers from the various participating congregations 8 am to 11 am for set-up, 11 am to 5 pm to staff the booths, and 5 pm to 6 pm for clean-up.

Faith Communities of Baltimore With PRIDE started in 2014 with 8 congregations participating with 100 marchers. In 2017, 27 congregations marched with 300 marchers and won the "Best Walking Group" award from the GLCCB. The goal this year is to top that 300 marchers number.

Those wanting more information can get in touch with *Julie F.*

Faith Forum Conversations

Meetings of the Faith Forum Conversations on Race were held for the last four months in Howard County. These were open, honest, professionally facilitated conversations with other members of the Howard County faith community about race, bias and privilege. The culminating event of this conversation will take place on Monday, June 4, at 6:30 p.m. at St. John Baptist Church, Columbia, MD, hosted by Congressman Elijah Cummings.

Men's Group

**1st Thursdays and 3rd Saturdays
10:00 AM - 12:00 p.m.**

**Bagel Bin at Enchanted
Forest Shopping Center**

Note: The Saturday gathering is being rescheduled to June 23 to avoid conflicting with the Pride Parade in Baltimore. Next meetings: **Thursday, June 7** and **Saturday, June 23**

All are welcome. Bring a topic to discuss, or just bring yourselves and enjoy the conversation, coffee and bagels!

**CHANNING MEMORIAL CHURCH
ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
May 20, 2018**

Minutes of the 2017 Annual Meeting were approved as corrected.

Election results:

The following nominees were elected at the 2018 Annual Meeting on May 20.

For the Board of Trustees:

President (2018-2020 2 year term): Julie Fitzer
Vice President (2018-2020 2 year term): Maureen Hayes
Secretary (remaining year of 2017-2019 term): Kathleen Razmus
Trustee-at-Large (2018-2020 2 year term): Kenneth Hart

Continuing for the second year of their two year terms are: Ostara Hollyoak (Treasurer) and Jason Grabelle (Trustee-at-Large). No candidate was identified to fill the vacancy for Trustee created by Julie's promotion to President.

For the Leadership Development and Nominating Committee:

Position for 2018-2021 term (full 3 year term): David Fu


Continuing for the second year of his three year term is Dan Vallone. No candidate has been identified to fill the vacancy for the remaining year of the third position on the Committee

Thank you to these dedicated members for accepting nominations to these positions!

Motion to adopt amended bylaws as submitted by the Board of Trustees was approved.

Motion to change the Building Fund to the Reserve Fund as submitted by the Board, based upon the Stewardship Team recommendation, was approved.

June 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Sewing and Crafting Retreat 8:00 am - 6:00 pm
3 Coming of Age Service 10:00 - 11:00 am	4 Faith Com- munity Con- versations Culminating Event at St. John's Bap- tist, Colum- bia, 6:30-8:30 pm Choir Practice 7:30 - 9:30 pm	5	6 Transition Team Meeting 6:00 - 7:30 pm	7 Men's Group 10:00 am - 12:00 pm	8	9
10 Worship Service and Children's RE 10:00 - 11:00 am Pride Organ- izational Meeting 11:30 am - 12:30 pm	11 Money Matters Webinar 7:00 pm Choir Practice 7:30 - 9:30 pm	12 LDNC Meeting 7:00 - 9:00 pm	13 Soul Mat- ters 7:00 - 8:30 pm	14	15	16 Baltimore Pride Pa- rade 1:00 - 2:00 pm
17 Worship Service and Children's RE 10:00 - 11:00 am Farewell Celebration for Rev. Bob 11:15 am - 1:30 pm Fathers Day	18 Choir Practice 7:30 - 9:30 pm	19 Board Meeting 7:00 - 9:00 pm	20	21  First Day of Summer	22 Groceries to Westside Shelter 6:00 - 7:30 pm	23 Men's Group 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
24 Worship Service and Children's RE 10:00 - 11:00 am	25 Choir Practice 7:30 - 9:30 pm	26	27	28	29	30

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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