



# The Channing Connection

CHANNING MEMORIAL CHURCH  
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

Volume 29, Issue 2

February 2022

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**We are a Welcoming  
Congregation!**

## Wayside Pulpit

Love spreads more quickly than any virus ever could.

*Christine Valters Paintner*

## Minister's Column



Dear Channing members and friends,

These are hard, trying times for many of us. I know many combinations of burnout, exhaustion, anxiety, fear, and fatigue are commonplace throughout our society. What can we do when the world feels overbearing and oppressive? It is in times like this when we must take a thorough inventory of all

that lies within and to do what we need to keep ourselves safe and healthy. I want each of you to know that you are seen, and that you are loved.

How can we be kind to ourselves? How can we help ourselves heal? When immersed in hardships, we are never our best selves. This calls for a focus on self-forgiveness and an opportunity to apologize. Let us be gentle with ourselves and all of our imperfections. I invite you to contemplate what you need. Do you need to pull back? Do you need to find a new, fulfilling commitment?

In our practice of healing, let us say "no." We can say no to those things that chip away at our inner being. Saying no is ok and saying no is healthy. Saying no creates boundaries and keeps each of us from fatigue, anxiety or burnout.

In our commitment to good health, let us say "yes." We can say yes to that which feeds our souls, that which brings us peace and joy and contentment. This may be found in church work, or in a hobby, or in acts of service. Let us say yes to that which helps another, using our gifts to heal. Those of us with excess means can say yes to using our excess wealth to ease the hardship of those who do not have enough. Both yes and no offer kindness. Both yes and no help us heal.

In these trying times, may we always remember to hold tightly to hope. Hope keeps us going against all odds. Hope gives us strength and allows us to smile. It is held deep within us and ultimately never leaves – it simply gets

*(continued on p. 2)*

**Minister:**

Rev. Jane Smith

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**President:**

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Kris Tyssowski ('23)

**Newsletter Editors:**

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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](mailto:newsshare@channingmc.org)*

Send submittals for the March issue of *The Channing Connection* to [newsshare@channingmc.org](mailto:newsshare@channingmc.org) by **7:00 p.m. on Sunday, February 20.**

*Minister's Column - continued from p. 1)*

covered up. It is at its sweetest when everything is hard and seems bleak. Let us each center in hope, in healing, and in love.

Warmly,  
*Rev. Jane*

## **Courageous Conversations: Standing Together As Allies**

From the Courageous Conversations web site:

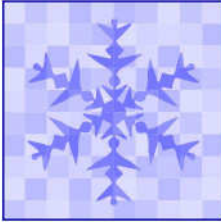
As we engage in Courageous Conversations, we learn from one another through listening to each other's perspectives about how we are living together through our experiences of race and religious bias. The purpose of these conversations is not to persuade, debate, or convince one another of our positions, but to make space for each of us to be heard and to learn about one another, including areas in which we might disagree or hold different views.

Through these Conversation Circles, we explore how each of us can contribute towards creating a connected community of different people rather than a community that lets different people in.... Courageous Conversations are intended to lead to courageous connections and courageous actions.

The small discussion circles will include members of over 50 faith communities and other interested community members. These discussions will be held virtually.

The virtual meetings will be held every Tuesday in February (February 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>.) Registration is open. Visit [www.hococourageousconversations.com](http://www.hococourageousconversations.com) to register.

## President's Column



As I write this on a bitterly cold January day after announcing that February in-person worship services have been canceled, I must express my disappointment. In December things were looking up for a bit, and I had a lovely time with many of you at the Christmas Eve outdoor gathering at Park Avenue, chatting, milling about, and eating more cookies than I should have. But now I am reduced yet again to wondering when we will meet in person. Omicron has definitely been a setback. In spite of this, my general demeanor remains “chipper” (I suppose this is a gift), and I am thankful for all that Life has given me.

By the time you read this there is a good chance that the Council of Committees has met to discuss how they will implement the various facets of the Strategic Plan for the Church. That's all well and good for those of us on the various teams and committees of the Church, but you may be wondering how the Strategic Plan applies to us as members of the Congregation. On February 20th after services we will be holding a congregational meeting to discuss just this. There will also be a brief budget review and time for general communication with the Board. I hope you will be able to attend.

Work on the 8th principle continues. We have had many discussions and educational sessions, and the time for the vote is coming. The vote will take place on March 20th after the service. The Board and the 8th principle team are working on the details of the vote, and more information should be forthcoming as the date approaches.

The Space Team has taken a break from the search for office space due to the pandemic, so there is not much to report this month. As I mentioned last month, it has been frustratingly difficult to find office space, and there is a real possibility that we may be extending our lease at Park Avenue beyond April.

Finally, I'm looking forward to bumping virtual elbows with our Beloved Community in the upcoming auction and also to doing some filming for a stewardship skit with the incomparable Daniel V.

Care,

*David*

### **Congregational Meeting to Discuss the Strategic Plan**

#### **February 20th**

On February 20th after services there will be a congregational meeting to discuss the Strategic Plan as it applies to members of the Congregation. There will also be a brief budget review and time for general communication with the Board. The Board hopes you will be able to attend.

## Stewardship Update

**Fiscal year 2021/22 as of December 31, 2021**

|                         |               |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| Total Operating Income  | \$112,725     |
| Total Operating Expense | <u>65,517</u> |
| Difference              | \$ 47,208     |

Mid-way through Channing Memorial Church's 2021/22 fiscal year, our financial position is looking better than normal. There are two reasons for this. Many of you have completed payment of your Operating Fund pledges ahead of schedule, which is really great. Thank you! Sadly, part of our good financial fortune is because the Covid variant has prevented us from resuming in-person Sunday services when we had planned; therefore, we have only paid for Sunday worship space on one Sunday during the first half of the year. During the second half of the church year, our income and expenses will likely normalize and we should end the year with something close to a balanced budget—or a little better.

-- Evelyn

## Young Adults Game Night and Virtual Potluck



The **Young Adults Game Night and virtual potluck** meets every first Wednesday of the month **from 7:00 to 9:00 pm**. We'll have games and conversation. Anyone in their 20's, 30's and 40's are welcome.

This event is open to the public and folks are encouraged to share this event with anyone who may be interested. Contact Patrick B. for information.

## Men's Group

**Thursday, February 3 & Saturday, February 19**

**10:00 am - 12:00 pm**

Join us for informal conversation and fellowship. Bring a topic to discuss, or just bring yourself. All are welcome. The meetings are by Zoom until further notice. Hopefully, pandemic permitting, we can resume meeting in person at the Bagel Bin sometime in the relatively near future.



Please see Channing News emails for further information and the Zoom link.

## Soul Matters Small Groups **\*\*New format!!\*\***

Our theme for this month is “Widening the Circle.” It can be easy to be insular, spending our time with those we feel most comfortable with. This month, we challenge that idea, and work to invite all of those within the interdependent web of existence into our midst. We work to love those we disagree with, even if love simply means wishing goodwill to them. We widen the circle through our service and justice work, creating a beloved community where everyone’s worth is realized.



Often, widening the circle begins from within. If you like, feel free to try some loving kindness meditation. I have provided a link for a spoken guided practice, and another with written guidance.

Access a video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UIW0VHupTFI>

Or a written text:

<https://www.contemplativemind.org/practices/tree/lovingkindness>

**I invite you to come to this group with nothing but curiosity and an open mind! There will be no prep work and no need to reflect on a packet. Together, we will reflect on wise words of others and grapple with some self-reflective questions. Please sign up using the link below.**

All Ages:

February 18, 10:30am-12pm

February 23, 7-8:30pm

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0D4AACAF2AA1FC1-soul16>

**\*\*Our Young Adult Group will continue to follow our traditional format. If you are joining our Young Adult Group (20s, 30s, 40s), I will send you a packet to review before the Small Group. I am available for any questions\*\***

Young Adults (20s, 30s, 40s):

February 19, 7:30-9:00pm

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0D4AACAF2AA1FC1-young21>

I hope you will join me!

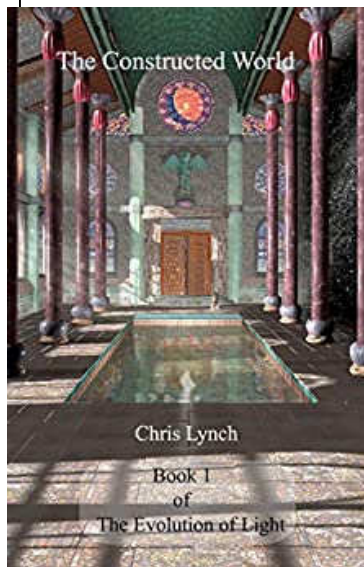
Warmly,  
*Rev. Jane*

### Lectio Divina

**Every second and fourth Tuesday of the month from 7-8pm we join together for a practice of Lectio Divina.** This ancient practice allows us the opportunity to delve deep into a chosen text. Each gathering we will focus on one poem. We will read through the selected text several times, with a different focus on every read-through. We will then pause for several minutes of silent reflection, which will be followed by each person sharing their unique reflection. **I look forward to this sacred time of meditation and reflection!**

-- *Rev. Jane*

## Channing Book Club



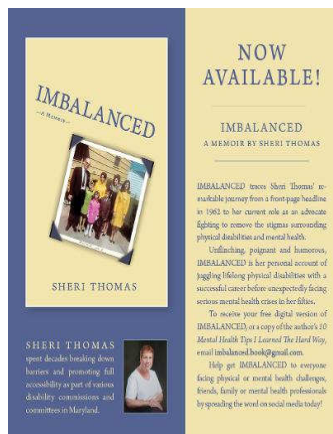
**For February 12 at 10 a.m.,** *The Constructed World*, by Channing Member Chris L.: [Amazon.com: The Constructed World \(The Evolution of Light Book 1\) eBook : Lynch, Chris: Kindle Store](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B000APR004)

**March:** *Imbalanced*; a memoir by member Sheri T. (see below)

**April:** *Unthinkable: Trauma, Truth, and the Trials of American Democracy* by Jaime Raskin

Do you have a poem or an essay you'd like to talk about in the future? Would you like to make it a selection for the book club so you can have good conversation about it? Let Ken H. know what you are thinking about, and contact Ken with any questions.

### ***Imbalanced: A Memoir by Church Member Sheri T.***



A new book, *IMBALANCED: A Memoir*, a poignant, sometimes humorous look at physical disability, serious mental health issues and about how Unitarian Universalism led the author to her current role as a disability advocate, is now available for FREE from member Sheri T.

Email her at [imbalanced.book@gmail.com](mailto:imbalanced.book@gmail.com) to request a free digital copy that can be read on your phone, tablet, computer, etc. Paperback copies are also available at the Howard County Library.

Quote from a reader: "Thank you for sharing it with me. It is wonderful to know a neighbor who has overcome so much in life and is the author of a truly emotional and informative book."

## Channing Care Team

The Care Team is a group of Channing volunteers who respond when a member of the Channing community is in need. They visit, send flowers, cards, meals and provide other caring gestures when needed. You may contact the Care Team at [careteam@channingmc.org](mailto:careteam@channingmc.org).

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## Social Justice Advocacy

The Maryland General Assembly is now in session and will consider several bills that reflect our UU values regarding immigrants' rights, climate change, criminal justice reform and medical aid in dying. You are encouraged, during the session, to advocate for these bills. Watch for email messages that will ask you to contact your legislators. For information about the bills visit [www.uulmmd.org](http://www.uulmmd.org). For information about Channing social justice advocacy, visit our Channing Justice website - <https://jimcal87.wixsite.com/channingjustice> or contact Jim C.

### Afghan Refugee Support

Many agencies and faith groups are working to assist the thousands of Afghan refugees that are expected to be moving to the United States in the coming months. A small group of Channing folks is joining in the effort. Be on the lookout for future announcements about how you can help. Our first event will be an informational session during an After Service Sunday Zoom meeting likely in February. We look forward to discussing ways that you can help us in this important work.

While you are waiting, consider making a purchase to support Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) Northern Virginia's Amazon wishlist:

<https://lirs.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1ba26e3c84448d9ea4814c790&id=b4104d8013&e=2920a7b08e>

Thank you!

-- Angela L., Toni R., Kris T., Nancy H., and Jim C.

### Adopt a Drain Volunteers Sought



Channing Memorial Church has adopted two drains on Court Place (near the church office and the upper parking lot) through the Howard EcoWorks Adopt a Drain Program. When heavy rain threatens the area, EcoWorks will send volunteers a request to clean their adopted drains of debris to help prevent flooding in Old Ellicott City. The

cleaning materials have been provided to us and will be stored in the Church office. This is expected to be a low-commitment effort, while expanding our church's impact on our community.

Anyone who is interested in helping can contact Julie F. and a mutually agreeable time will be set to meet for a brief orientation. We can rotate months, or simply have people serve as a backup to Julie when she is out of town, depending on volunteer interest.

The Board also plans to sponsor those two drains financially. Information on a future Sunday plate collection to sponsor the drains will be forthcoming.

-- Julie F.

## SoulCollage®-Inspired Poetry

The SoulCollage® group would like to share with you some of the fruits of our spiritual pursuits. Each month, we spend an afternoon letting our intuition guide us to select images from magazines, creating collage cards with those images, then reflecting on what spiritual lessons our created cards have to give us. Kris T., our trained SoulCollage® facilitator, generously guides us with a new theme each month. For the new year, Kris invited us to select several of the cards that we've created over the past several months, using them to write a poem based on a model that she shared with the group. Below are three of our poems.

If you're curious to try out SoulCollage®, contact Kris T. We would love to have you join us!

-- Pam E.

### I Am Here to ...

I am here to be mystified and feel small inside the wonder  
to stand solidly in who I am  
to surrender to a higher calling

I am here to experience all emotion  
to live through loss and loneliness  
to look fear straight in the face

I am here to recognize destruction  
to see terror with clear eyes  
to strip away what no longer serves

I am here to protect what matters  
to tend the flame of hope  
to embrace the ones I love

I am here to radiate my inner power  
to seek clarity and vision  
to touch souls with compassion

I am here to delight in new discoveries  
to stretch into transformation  
to embrace the light

*By Pam E., 1/8/2022*

*(continued on p. 9)*



*(SoulCollage - continued from p. 8)*

**I Am Here To**

I am here to love; my family, my friends, all the people around me.  
I am here to explode with color, shapes, and possibilities. To color brightly.  
I am here to tell a story, in all its complexities and with all its twists and turns.  
I am here to experience nature in all its manifestations.  
I am here to serve.  
I am here to heal; myself and whoever else I can.  
I am here to shine brightly.  
I am here to teach and lead.  
I am here to explore.  
I am here to grow.  
I am here to rejoice.  
I am here to follow; paths, people, ideas.  
I am here to get dirty.  
I am here to appreciate beauty.  
I am here to care for all creatures.

*By Colleen R., January 08, 2022*

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**In My New Year**

I am here to welcome in, to let go, and to witness the unfolding.  
I am here to walk in fields of sunflowers with the eyes and heart and spirit of a child.  
I am here to give sweet and blessed nectar to the hummingbirds.  
I am here to celebrate the wisdom found in whimsy  
to dance with earnest and fanciful steps  
to honor the sacred with my laughter.  
I am here to be reminded of the joy and goodness found in the fluttering, flowering  
heart.  
I am here to open portals to realms of grace and grandeur.  
I am here to burst forth with newness, embracing all that is holy, all that is astonish-  
ing, all that is divine.  
I am here.

*By Kris T., 01-08-2022*



# February 2022



| Sun                                                                                            | Mon                                                                                                                         | Tue                                                                                                        | Wed                                                                                         | Thu                                                 | Fri                                                                             | Sat                                                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                |                                                                                                                             | <p><i>1</i><br/>Rev. Jane's Office Hours 1:00-4:00 pm<br/>Committee on Ministry 6:30-8:30 pm</p>           | <p><i>2</i><br/>Space Team Meeting 5:00-6:00 pm<br/>Young Adult Game Night 7:00-9:00 pm</p> | <p><i>3</i><br/>Men's Group 10:00 am - 12:00 pm</p> | <p><i>4</i><br/>Membership Team 2:00 pm<br/>Outreach Committee 6:00-7:00 pm</p> | <i>5</i>                                                                                       |
| <p><i>6</i><br/>Worship Service 10:00-11:00 am</p>                                             | <i>7</i>                                                                                                                    | <p><i>8</i> Rev. Jane's Office Hours 1:00-4:00 pm<br/>LDNC 5:30-7:30 pm<br/>Lectio Divina 7:00-8:00 pm</p> | <p><i>9</i><br/>Stewardship Committee 7:00-8:00 pm</p>                                      | <i>10</i>                                           | <p><i>11</i><br/>Worship Team 1:30-3:00 pm</p>                                  | <p><i>12</i><br/>Channing Book Club 10:00 am</p>                                               |
| <p><i>13</i><br/>Worship Service 10:00 - 11:00 am</p>                                          | <p><i>14</i><br/><br/>Valentines Day</p> | <p><i>15</i><br/>Rev. Jane's Office Hours 1:00-4:00 pm<br/>Board Meeting 7:00-9:00 pm</p>                  | <i>16</i>                                                                                   | <i>17</i>                                           | <p><i>18</i><br/>Soul Matters 10:30 am - 12:00 pm</p>                           | <p><i>19</i><br/>Men's Group 10:00 am - 12:00 pm<br/>Young Adult Soul Matters 7:30-9:00 pm</p> |
| <p><i>20</i><br/>Worship Service 10:00 - 11:00 am<br/>Congregational Meeting after service</p> | <p><i>21</i><br/><br/>Presidents Day</p> | <p><i>22</i><br/>Rev. Jane's Office Hours 1:00-4:00 pm<br/>Lectio Divina 7:00-8:00 pm</p>                  | <p><i>23</i><br/>Soul Matters 7:00-8:30 pm</p>                                              | <i>24</i>                                           | <i>25</i>                                                                       | <i>26</i>                                                                                      |
| <p><i>27</i><br/>Worship Service 10:00 - 11:00 am</p>                                          | <i>28</i>                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                            |                                                                                             |                                                     |                                                                                 |                                                                                                |

Channing Memorial Church  
Unitarian Universalist  
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On the web:  
[www.ChanningMC.org](http://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.

**NURTURE Your Spirit.**  
**Help HEAL The World.**



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