



The Channing Connection

CHANNING MEMORIAL CHURCH
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

Volume 33, Issue 2

February 2026

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We are a Welcoming
Congregation

Wayside Pulpit

And the outside world simply goes on and on and on because it is a juggernaut that simply crushes you if you let it, but when you see it coming like a steam roller, sometimes you can get out of the way, sometimes you can even strengthen yourself so that not even the weight of a steam roller will break your bones.

- Willem Nyland

Minister's Musings

Dear Channing Members and Friends,



Since I've last written to you, the country has erupted. We faced the murder of Renee Good by ICE agents. We have seen detrimental abuse of power by politicians and law enforcement alike. We have seen violence, injury, and death. It is truly difficult to watch or read the news, bearing witness to the state of our country and our world.

Over the past several weeks, I've heard repeated laments for the generations yet to come. We act now to protect our children, and our children's children. That they may know a just and equitable world. I've heard, from you and my own family and friends, fear for our vulnerable neighbors, friends, spouses, co-workers, acquaintances. It is this fear and the anger that accompanies it which fuels our justice work and makes us agents of change.

Many of us are asking ourselves, "What can I do at such a poignant moment in our country's history?" First, we mourn. For a mother and her children. For all of those immigrants living each day in detrimental fear. Spirit of life, may these people know peace. I saw your tender tears in the vigil I hosted, and I hold that in love. Our Unitarian Universalist faith of love, justice, and equity calls us into action.

Each of us can act. We can call our politicians and vocalize our corners. We can be one more body at a rally or a protest - joining our voices in resistance. We can take out our phones and videotape an interaction with ICE. We can support advocacy organizations. Share reliable news. Help others learn their rights. We can make sure that when the time arises, we vote. We can simply be good citizens and support our scared and sacred neighbors by doing their errands for them. Protest. Act. Resist.

Continued on page 2

Minister

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Kathleen Razmus ('26)

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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

Please send submittals for the March 2026 issue of *The Channing Connection* to newsshare@channingmc.org by **7:00 p.m. on Sunday, February 22, 2025.**

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So, go forth in this broken and beautiful world. Each day, we can cultivate more goodness and justice in this finite realm. Do the next best thing, over and over again. Do not lose sight of love in the face of evil; do not lose sight of hope in the face of fear. Together, we can create lasting change. There have been movements before. Do not sit idly by during a revolution. Join me in shouting, "This is what democracy looks like!"

*With love,
Rev. Jane*

President's Column

I have always enjoyed February because both of my parents were born in this month, it has Valentine's Day, and because it is Black History Month. Every February, I reflect on the life of Martin Luther King Jr. and the hope he brought to our country; hope in a more ideal America than exists today. When I feel down, I think of the words from his "I Have a Dream" speech from the March on Washington in 1963:

"Let us not wallow in the valley of despair, I say to you today, my friends. I say to you today, my friends, though, even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up, live out the true meaning of its creed: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.'"

I am particularly focused on the first sentence lately. I have been wallowing even though I know it's not helpful. If I read further, I can be bolstered by the perseverance of MLK's dream. On my best days, I choose to do that and move forward with positive actions. On my worst days, I just want to stay home and curl up under a warm blanket in my safe home. May we all find inspiration in the days and months of this year to come out of the valley and into the light.

Blessings and Love,
Angela

Soul Matters Chalice Circles

Dear Channing Members and Friends,

Chalice Circles are a beautiful way to achieve greater spiritual depth. It is a time to gather with a small group of sojourners to contemplate insightful themes. Every time I participate in one of these discussions, I come away feeling nourished and fulfilled.

I invite you to a Soul Matters Chalice Circle!

Each month, we will meet as a small group for discussion. Our reflections will be guided by a monthly packet. Each packet will focus on a different theme, spanning from compassion to hope to resistance. We will work with packets because they provide an array of activities and a list of questions to draw from. I invite you to choose one activity and one question to reflect upon. After engaging in personal contemplation, we will each bring our insights back to the group to share.

I will hold these gatherings on either the 3rd or 4th Saturday of the month from 10-11:30 am. I will post each month's schedule in the weekly email. I encourage you to reach out to me by the first Friday of the month so I can send you the packet and give you ample time to prepare. These will be drop-in sessions; there is no commitment to attend each discussion. We will welcome different people into our midst each month.

Our February discussion will be held Saturday, February 14 from 10-11:30am at the church office. February's theme is "Embodying Resilience". Let's delve deep and explore the role of resilience in each of our lives.

I hope you will join me! Every discussion I have participated in has been a true blessing. I look forward to sharing this with our beloved faith community!

*Warmly,
Rev. Jane*



Sunday Church Roles Signup Open through February!

Please [use this link](#) to give us a hand with everything that makes the weekly worship service run.

If you have any questions or need help signing up, please email *Cathy F.* Thank you!

Congregational Mid-Year Finance and Stewardship Review Sunday, February 8 after the Worship Service

The Stewardship Committee is holding its annual mid-year review meeting on February 8 after the service. The agenda of the meeting is to:

- Discuss the Channing mid-year financial review, and
- Discuss Canvassing 101 in preparation for the annual March Canvass.

Channing Phishing Update

All,

Just reminding you to be attentive and very careful with requests for information about Channing, especially our directory. A couple more false incomings have been received in the last two days. Please remember to let Rev Jane and me know if you receive questionable requests.

Read such emails very carefully, and if you have any reason at all to doubt their veracity, either ignore them or make a direct contact, one on one, with the person who is supposed to have been the source of the email. Do not reply to the request in any way unless and until you KNOW it is a valid request.

We apologize for continuing this thread about these bad actors, but our own awareness is the best way to keep them from impacting us.

Thanks for your help with this, as always.

Ken H (for the Board and Rev. Jane)

Game Night!

Enjoy games, food and friends on Friday, Feb. 20, 6-9 PM at the fellowship hall at Epiphany Lutheran Church. Bring your favorite games and your friends regardless of whether they have ever been to Channing before. All are welcome. No RSVP required, just drop in and stay for as long or little as you want. Pizza, salad and beverages will be provided.

Meditation Series with Rev. Jane



Meditation is a practice embraced by the world's religions. It is a blessed opportunity to calm the mind, settle the spirit, and cultivate a sense of mindfulness. This spiritual practice emanates beyond those ten, twenty, or thirty minutes of silent focus on the breath. It alters daily living, leading to a life of peace, intention, calm, and mindful presence. **On the first Tuesday evening of every month, I will offer a guided meditation practice from 7-7:30 pm at the church office.** Please **RSVP by Tuesday morning** so I know who to expect. I

look forward to sharing this sacred time with you.

Warmly,
Rev. Jane

Board Bits...



Rev. Jane and Ostara gave a report to the Board on Channing's recent participation in the Maryland Just Power Alliance's Listening Session Campaign. Channing is participating through PATH (People Acting Together in Howard), which is part of the MJPA consortium, along with Action in Montgomery (AIM) and Anne Arundel Connecting Together (ACT). The Board also discussed the possibility of working further with, and formally joining, PATH. Board members raised questions around expectations for working with PATH, and these questions are being brought to our PATH liaison.

Kathleen brought a report to the Board about the Justice in Action Circle's explorations around setting up a Little Free Pantry, possibly near the church office. We hope to have more details

Stewardship update Year-to-date as of November 30, 2025

General Operating Fund

Total Operating Income	\$ 135,788
Total Operating Expense	<u>-96,452</u>
Difference	\$ 39,336



Calling all Channingites!

This February, we welcome a special guest visitor, traveling to us from Chicago, Illinois! **Elias Ortega, president of Meadville Lombard Theological School, will join us for a weekend of discussion, inspiration, and spiritual growth.** He will host a workshop on Saturday and a worship service on Sunday, followed by a special Sundays After. I'm very excited for this truly unique opportunity. I hope you can join me and other local clergy as we learn and grow together.

The Saturday workshop is designed for our church leaders. If you are on the Board, chair a committee, or are simply deeply dedicated to our church community, I invite you to join us! I further encourage each of you to join us for a transformative worship service.

Read more below!

Saturday, February 21: [time TBD]

Forming Our Faith, Shaping a People, and Sustaining Our Mission: A Workshop

Spiritual growth is both an individual and communal journey, enriching our self-understanding while equipping us to engage compassionately with others. In this workshop, we will explore how our personal spiritual practices connect with membership engagement, stewardship, and community outreach.

Through interactive discussions and practical exercises, we will investigate how spiritual growth intersects with our congregational mission and fosters community involvement. We will also examine the importance of volunteer work and financial contributions in creating a culture of philanthropy that sustains our mission and welcomes new members.

Participants will gain insights into the personal and communal aspects of spiritual growth, leaving with practical tools for nurturing their spiritual journeys, embracing stewardship, and building meaningful relationships within our community. Join us for this transformative experience of self-discovery and community engagement.

Sunday, February 22:

"We Are Each Other's Magnitude and Bond," with Elias Ortega

This sermon draws inspiration from Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Gwendolyn Brooks to invite us into a deeper sense of belonging and stronger ties of responsibility for one another as we face the days ahead with courage.

The service will be followed with a special Sundays After.

I hope to see you there!

Warmly,
Rev. Jane

Channing Book Club

We meet on weekdays as scheduled in advance. **We use restaurants or coffee shops as meeting locations at the time announced for each session.**

Please let Ken H. know if you plan to attend at least three days in advance so I have time to firm up dates/times/locations with those who intend to attend.



Next on February 19 —*Still Life at 80* by Abigail Thomas (238 pages)

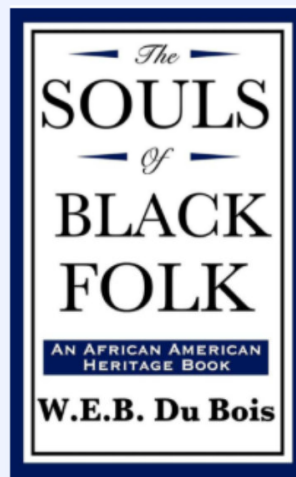
Board Meeting Invite

Hey folks, have you ever wondered what a Channing board meeting is like? Have you ever wanted a ring side seat to the exciting discussions that go on?

Anyone who is interested in getting a taste of what Channing board meetings are like can contact Angela Lesperance, our president *in* order to get a zoom link that will allow them to sit in as an observer. Meetings are on the third Tuesday of each month from 7:00 to 9:00 pm.

CHANNING MEMORIAL CHURCH'S JUSTICE IN ACTION CIRCLE

Join our conversation
Saturday February 28 1:00-3:00
HCPLS Central Branch CEN Studio

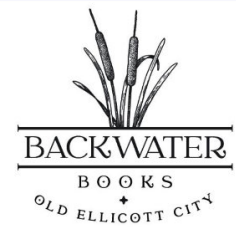


The Souls of Black Folk is a searing, lyrical exploration of what it means to live with “double consciousness” in a nation that promises freedom while denying humanity—and it dares readers to confront how that contradiction still shapes America today.

In connection with the
First Unitarian
Universalist Principle:
the inherent worth and
dignity of every person.

This is not an official
HCPLS event

Grab your copy at
Backwater Books
8156 Main Street
Ellicott City, MD 21043-4619



Men's Group

Friday In-person February 20 (10 - 11:30 am)



The February 20 gathering will be at **Bagel Bin** off Rt. 40 west of Bethany Lane, at 10:00 am. **Please email Ken H. if you intend to attend.** We need enough responses to make this happen.

Xennials, 20/40s Game Night



The Xernnials, 20/40s Game Night 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 is 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.

Xennials, 20/40s Small Group

Each month, our conversations range from imagination to courage to vulnerability. Before each gathering, we engage in individual reflection guided by a monthly Soul Matters packet. Delving deep into our reflections each month leads to meaningful conversation, and the prep work offers thoughts to reflect on between our gatherings.

We gather the **third Wednesday of every month from 7-9pm** for dinner and conversation. Anyone in their 20s, 30s or 40s is welcome. It is always a good time, and we would love for you to join us!



February 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1 Worship Service 11:00 am - 12:00 pm</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3 Minister's Office Hours 1:00 - 4:00 pm LDNC Meeting 5:30-7:30 pm Choir Practice 3:00-4:00 pm Meditation w/ Rev. Jane 7:00- 7:30 pm</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6 Membership Team 2:00 pm</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8 Worship Service 11:00 am - 12:00 pm Mid-Year Re- view after the service</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10 Minister's Office Hours 1:00 - 4:00 pm Choir Practice 3:00-4:00 pm</p>	<p>11 Xennials, 20/40s Game Night 7:00-9:00 pm</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13 Covenant Circle 9:30 am Worship Team 1:30-3:00 pm Outreach Team</p>	<p>14 Soul Matters Chalice Circle 10:00-11:30 am Valentine's Day </p>
<p>15 Worship Service 11:00 am - 12:00 pm</p>	<p>16 Presidents' Day </p>	<p>17 Minister's Office Hours 1:00 - 4:00 pm Choir Practice 3:00-4:00 pm Board Meeting 7:00-9:00 pm</p>	<p>18 Stewardship Committee Meeting 6:30 pm on Zoom</p>	<p>19 Channing Book Club</p>	<p>20 Men's Group 10:00 - 11:30 am at Bagel Bin Channing Game Night 6:00-9:00 pm</p>	<p>21 Forming Our Faith Work- shop Time: TBD</p>
<p>22 Worship Service 11:00 am - 12:00 pm with Elias Ortega Sundays After 11:15 am</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24 Minister's Office Hours 1:00 - 4:00 pm Choir Practice 3:00-4:00 pm</p>	<p>25 Xennials, 20/40s Group 7:00-9:00 pm</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>

**Channing Memorial Church
Unitarian Universalist
3525 Ellicott Mills Dr.
Suite A
Ellicott City, MD 21043**

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 a common spiritual center from Jewish and Christian roots while drawing 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.

We meet at 9122 Sybert Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043. Our Sunday worship service begins at 11:00 am.

Directions from the North on Route 29: Take Route 29 to Route 100 East, take first Exit Long Gate Parkway to stop sign (keep left at split). When traffic is clear, go straight across to Meadowbrook Lane, past the Park and Ride to the stop sign, turn right onto Sybert Drive. The church will be on your right.

Directions from the South on Route 29: Take Route 29 to Route 108, head East on Route 108 to first traffic light (Bendix Road), turn left onto Edgar Road; at stop sign turn right, then in two blocks turn left onto Parkvale Road. Continue to stop sign, then turn left onto Sybert Drive. The church will be on your right.