



# The Channing Connection

CHANNING MEMORIAL CHURCH  
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

Volume 30, Issue 3

March 2023

## Minister's Column

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**We are a Welcoming  
Congregation**



### Wayside Pulpit

Forgiveness is the final form of love.

*Reinhold Niebuhr*



Dear Channing members and friends,

We have spent this past month reflecting together upon the theme of "love." This spiritual grounding is key to the month ahead. As I sit in front of my window, reflecting on love, anticipating the mockingbirds and blue jays of spring, I contemplate the words of the Persian poet Hafiz,

We have not come into this exquisite world  
To hold ourselves hostage from love.  
Run my dear,  
From anything  
That may not strengthen  
Your precious, budding wings.

What strengthens your budding wings? The grounding of our faith community is love. As we reflected on during our 30th anniversary celebration, Channing was founded as a church that values spiritual growth and religious exploration as manifested through Unitarian Universalism. What is the strongest element of our Unitarian Universalist faith? Love. I observe this love and desire for spiritual sustenance and growth in so many of my interactions with you. I witness this in the genuine care you offer one another, the questions you pose in small group discussions, your reflections after worship services, and your prayers, insights, musings and calls to heal an aching world. This is what strengthens your precious, budding wings. This month we are reminded of all we must do to keep this love alive and flourishing - to keep our wings strong. During this Stewardship month, we are each called to offer our treasure, as generously as we are able. Any organization needs substantial funding in order to thrive, and our beloved church is no exception. Every worship service, every small group, every justice initiative, every space we occupy - this takes substantial funding. This money comes from no other source than our generous donors - each and every one of you. So, what helps you to thrive and to find meaning and purpose? What calls you to love? I invite you to contemplate this as you reflect on how generous you are able to be.

*(continued on page 2)*

*Minister's Column - continued from page 1)*

**Minister**

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**President:**

Kris Tyssowski ('24)

**Vice President:** Open ('24)

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**Newsletter Editors:**

Ken Grim  
Chris Lynch

*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 April 2023 issue of *The Channing Connection* to [newsshare@channingmc.org](mailto:newsshare@channingmc.org) by **7:00 p.m. on Sunday, March 26, 2023.**

Love is at the center of our faith. Our denomination is currently undergoing a substantial change - revising our bylaws through Article II. This includes a change in our Principles and Purposes. The new bylaws state, "Love is the power that holds us together and is at the center of our shared values. We are accountable to one another for doing the work of living our shared values through the spiritual discipline of Love." Instead of highlighting the Seven Principles, the suggestion is to adopt phrasing of shared values: Interdependence, Equity, Transformation, Pluralism, Generosity, and Justice - all stemming from Love, the core. This is a new way to articulate and highlight those things that strengthen our precious, budding wings. And, this is a work in progress. There will be changes and revisions throughout the next two years, before finally coming to a vote at the 2024 General Assembly. This is a big change, and I invite you all to be a part of it. Please join Angela and me in a church-wide discussion on March 4.

Love is our core. We feel and know this in our own faith community, and we observe this in our denomination as a whole. So, this month, take time to contemplate how much treasure you can give to our small corner of the Unitarian Universalist world, and join in the conversation about the future direction of our faith. Strengthen your precious, budding wings! Remember, always, that you are each held in love by your faith, by each other, and by your minister.

With love,  
*Rev. Jane*

**"Tuesdays After"**

Tuesday evening from 5:30-6:30pm I will offer a "Tuesdays After" session on Zoom. After everyone has had a chance to view the worship service either on YouTube or in person, we can join together to discuss any thoughts or emotions the service may have elicited.

Join this session through the following link:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/93121174683?pwd=QXBsRk1YUF11UWdwQmZKVmNOUHNEUT09>

Meeting ID: 931 2117 4683

Passcode: 012795

I hope you will join me!

Warmly,  
*Rev. Jane*

**Congregational Meeting  
March 2 at 7:00 pm**

There will be a congregational meeting on Thursday, March 2 at 7:00 pm over Zoom where you can ask questions and give feedback about renting space at Epiphany Lutheran Church. The link is below.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/96039657914?pwd=dGs4MzMyWkp5K01hZlBWTE1lWG01Zz09>

Meeting ID: 960 3965 7914

Passcode: 691687

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,96039657914#,,, \*691687# US (Washington DC)

+13092053325,,96039657914#,,, \*691687# US

Dial by your location

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC) Meeting ID: 960 3965 7914

Passcode: 691687

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/aepIpy2bBx>

**President's Column**

Dear Members and Friends,

Read any good bylaws lately? Probably not. They're not exactly the kind of thing people like to curl up with on a rainy Saturday afternoon while drinking a hot cup of tea. But just because we're not excited about reading our bylaws doesn't mean they're not good or important. As the organizational document for our church, our bylaws tell the world who we are and guide us in all aspects of governance. They enable us to bring our mission and vision to life in a structured and legal way.

Like all Unitarian Universalist churches, our identity and the way we function are influenced by two sets of bylaws: our church bylaws and those of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). The UUA's purpose, to advance UU values in the world by supporting congregations, is set forth in Article II of its bylaws. Article II also includes the Principles and Sources, and statements of inclusion and freedom of belief. Article II expresses the essence of Unitarian Universalism.

Solid foundational bylaws are essential to any healthy organization, but they are not meant to be static. Organizations change over time, and the times we live in change, too. Periodically reviewing and amending an organization's bylaws is necessary. It helps keep the organization focused on its purpose and allows it to remain relevant in a changing world. It is no surprise that the UUA bylaws mandate that Article II be reviewed at least every 15 years.

The most recent review of Article II formally began in the fall of 2020 when the General Assembly (GA) of the UUA called on the UUA Board of Trustees to appoint a task group to "propose any revisions that will enable our UUA, our member congregations, and our covenanted communities to be a relevant and powerful force for spiritual and moral growth, healing and justice...." As a result of this charge, the Article II Study Commission was established. The Commission completed its study and submitted a report with recommended revisions to the UUA Board of Trustees this past January.

*(Continued on page 4)*

*(President's Column - continued from page 3)*

The Article II Study Commission's recommendations contain significant changes to Article II. This document is a must-read for anyone whose spiritual search is connected to Unitarian Universalism. It is a well-written, comprehensive report. It contains information about the recent history of revisions to Article II, the perspective on why additional revisions may be necessary, the entire charge to the Commission, Article II in its present form, and the proposed recommendations, among other things.

The study does a good job of communicating the Commission's thinking and the process of discernment they went through. In my effort to understand the recommended changes, their history, and their future implications, I found many other resources online to consult, in addition to the study itself. I also found it helpful to place the current Article II side-by-side with the proposed changes and compare them as I reflected on the essence of Unitarian Universalism as I understand it. One church website (ccuu.org) reported "The commission asked us to read [the report three times] first with our hearts, then again with our curious and connecting brains, and only at the third read begin to think about possible critiques."

This study is a draft proposal. The next steps in the process of reviewing and possibly amending Article II are:

- June 2023 General Assembly – mini assemblies held to propose amendments in advance of GA 2023 and then a first vote will be done. If a majority approves, then 1 year of study time by congregations happens with no changes in language.
- June 2024 final vote is held. There has to be 2/3 approval by GA delegates to pass.

Our denomination must remain focused on its purpose and relevant in a changing world. I hope you will learn about and reflect on the pros and cons of the proposed changes to Article II. As stewards of the denomination, our voices are important.

We will have an opportunity to discuss these proposed changes as a church community on Saturday, March 4 at 1:00 P.M. on Zoom.

Below are links to the study and some additional UUA resources I found helpful.

All my best,  
*Kris*

Article II Study Report

<https://www.uua.org/files/2023-02/article-II-study-report-2021-23.pdf>

YouTube link to Article II Study Commission's presentation to the UUA Board, January 20, 2023.

<https://youtu.be/zPQmvlMBUOg>

Press release of from UUA President Susan Frederick-Gray: New Proposal for UU Principles and Purpose

<https://www.uua.org/pressroom/press-releases/why-change-principles>

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*(continued on page 10)*

**Pledge Campaign Kickoff  
March 5, 2023**

**“30 Years of Pearls Along The Path”**

I am very happy with the path our congregation is on. Having just participated in three worship services in a row, in-person, all at the same location, it just feels good. If this is what a return to normalcy feels like, then I like this new normal.



We do have a lot of exciting goals and decisions in front of us. 2023 is shaping up to be a pivotal year for Channing. On **March 5th** we will kick off our pledge drive to fund our church from July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024. Please join me in raising some energy around this important campaign!

**PEARL SUNDAY**

On **Sunday March 19**, we will observe **Pearl Sunday**. During the service, you will have the opportunity to make a pledge of financial support to the mission and goals of Channing Memorial Church. If possible, wear real or fake pearls to help us commemorate our 30th anniversary.

If you are new to Channing, one of our members will be in touch with you to hear from you and to answer your questions about the Church. If you are a long time member or friend who has questions, contact a Board or Stewardship Team member and we will be happy to meet with you. If you need some time to think about it, please come to the service on March 19 anyway and join in the anniversary celebration!

Sincerely,  
Dan V., Stewardship Chair

**Stewardship update  
Year-to-date as of January, 2023**

**General Operating Fund**

Total Operating Income	\$ 146,908
Total Operating Expense	<u>-94,705</u>
Difference	<u>52,203</u>



## Board Bits



The Space Team and the Board discussed some of the preliminary results of the *Renting Space at Epiphany Lutheran Church* survey. As of the Board meeting date, 24 people had responded. So far, most of the responses have been positive. The congregation will have an opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions about the space on Thursday, March 2nd at 7:00 pm.

The Board met with parents of young children to discuss the future of religious education at Channing. We look forward to providing religious education for all ages.

The Board discussed the delivery of online and/or hybrid services for those who are unable to attend in person. The goal is to come up with a feasible, affordable process for doing so. This will be decided in the near future.

March will be the launch of this year's Canvass and March 19th is the date the congregation will submit their pledges.

### Article II Discussion

Dear Channing members and friends,

We are in the midst of an important milestone in our faith. Our denomination is currently revising our Principles and Purposes via the rewording of Article II. Instead of articulating the Seven Principles, this new wording highlights the values of our faith and how we covenant to be in the world. These values are summed up in six key words: Interdependence, Equity, Transformation, Pluralism, Generosity, and Justice. Each of these values stem from the core of our faith: Love. This below link is to the Article II Study Report, and offers extensive information about Article II. I strongly recommend reading the Report in its entirety.

The proposed wording of Article II is not yet in its final state and will face revisions before ultimately being voted on at General Assembly 2024.

Article II Study Report: <https://www.uua.org/files/2023-02/article-ii-study-report-2021-23.pdf>

I encourage you to join Angela and me in conversation Saturday, March 4 from 1-2pm on Zoom to discuss these changes and any thoughts or questions they might elicit.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/93419996639?pwd=bFBobWRaOWhUc2MxK2pid21wWFVjZz09>

Meeting ID: 934 1999 6639

Passcode: 012421

Warmly,  
*Rev. Jane*

## “Five Wishes”

Dear Channing members and friends,

Death is the most intimate of life experiences - an unknowable mystery we will each face. In researching death as an undergraduate, I learned that one of the most important things in dying a “good death” is personal autonomy. How do I want to live my remaining months, weeks, and days? Together, in a small group, we will explore the detailed advance directive “Five Wishes,” a detailed legal document that allows one to reflect upon and answer the following questions:

Who should make my healthcare decisions when I cannot?  
What kind of medical treatment do I want?  
How comfortable do I want to be?  
How do I want people to treat me?  
What do I want my loved ones to know?

In reflecting on these questions, we contemplate our own deaths in an intimate way, taking control of our final time in this realm and allowing others, including family members, healthcare workers, and faith leaders to know how we would like to die. Engaging with this document ensures that our transition is as purposeful and meaningful as possible. Together, in a small group, we will reflect on these questions and discuss next steps for those who would like to pursue this option.

We will meet Saturday, March 18 from 1-2pm. Please RSVP to let me know if you would prefer to meet in person or at Park Ave.

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. After each read through, will pause for several minutes of silent reflection, which will be followed by each person sharing their unique reflection.

## **An adult RE/spiritual practice offering: (The *All New*) Clearing Circle**

Participants from Channing's Clearing Circle (originally the "Clearing as a Spiritual Practice" group) have decided to continue, and renew, this work. Having worked through two of Stephanie Bennett Vogt's books, we'll be journeying, together, through another one of her books, beginning on, or around, March 23rd. Anyone interested is welcome to join us! (No prior experience with Stephanie Bennett Vogt's work is required.)

On this journey, we'll explore "space clearing" from the inside out with the help of Stephanie Bennett Vogt's book, *A Year to Clear: A Daily Guide to Creating Spaciousness in Your Home and Heart*, which is divided into 365 days of bite-sized reading and practice.

- **What's this all about?** Stephanie Bennett Vogt writes, in the introduction to *A Year to Clear*, "The way I work to restore balance in people's homes and lives is a bit like acupuncture— the ancient Chinese practice of inserting tiny needles into the energy centers of the physical body to release stuckness and improve the flow of chi.... What I 'insert' to bring about lasting change is pure compassionate awareness." Elaborating on this "compassionate awareness," she adds, "Feeling and witnessing a task or a stressful situation in the present moment does a magical thing: It releases stuck energy, quiets the mind, helps us detach more easily, and creates openings that weren't there before." (To summarize, *Stephanie Bennett Vogt's approach strongly emphasizes the inner dimension of clearing.*)
- **What will I need to do?** Participants will work through one small bit of reading and practice per day on our own, and we'll meet together via Zoom once every two weeks to share about our experience. Practice will include reading, reflection, journaling, and occasional gentle practical work.
- **What materials are required?** Participants will need access to a copy of *A Year to Clear*. The book is available from various sources, including [Amazon](#), in paperback and on Kindle. (If you'd like to participate, but are short on funds at this time, please contact Rev. Jane.)
- **When will the group meet?** The group plans to meet every two weeks throughout the year. Our first Zoom session is tentatively scheduled for 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 23rd. If you'd like to participate, but this time doesn't work well for you, please let us know. **The timing of sessions is not set in stone, and is contingent on participants' schedules.**
- **I'm interested! What should I do before the first session?** First, let Pam E. know you'd like to join our circle--and whether the proposed time works for you. (Pam will be our Zoom host for the sessions.) Then, please read the introduction, and do the reading and the "Explore" practices for the first two weeks before the first session.

*(continued on page 9)*



(Clearing Circle - continued from page 8)

- **Who can I contact with a question?** Feel free to contact any of the following participants in the last “Clearing” round with any questions you may have:

Pam E.

Ostara H.

Diana M.

Maureen H.

### What Adult or Religious Education Topics Interest You?

Offering Adult Religious Education is one of my favorite things to do! I want to make sure each class and discussion is meaningful and of interest to members of our church community. I wonder, what would you like to learn more about? What would you like to discuss in a small group setting? I encourage each of you to take some time to reflect upon this. Please send me a note at [minister@channingmc.org](mailto:minister@channingmc.org). I look forward to what the future holds!

*Rev. Jane*

### Channing Book Club

We meet on the second Saturday of the month. The next discussion will be on March 11.

#### Nonfiction for March:

The topics in this book are ones the men’s group has touched on in discussion more than once. Perhaps more of that group will participate in this read. Only 100 well-written pages!

**The Authority of the Court and the Peril of Politics** by Stephen Breyer

<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/the-authority-of-the-court-and-the-peril-of-politics-stephen-breyer/1139271552?ean=9780674269361>



#### Fiction for April:

**Amy and Isabelle** by well known and respected American novelist Elizabeth Strout.

[Amy and Isabelle — Elizabeth Strout](#)

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*(Channing Book Club - continued from page 9)*

What's on your book list? Or a poem or essay? 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.

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*(President's Column - continued from page 4)*

What Brings Us Together: Love as a Common Theological Core

<https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/article-ii-study-commission/blog/love-common-theological-core>

About Article II: The Principles and Purposes of the UUA

<https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/article-ii-study-commission/about-article-2>

### **Young Adult Small Group**

Each month, our Channing Young Adult group meets to share insights, stories, reflections, and questions. Our conversations are based upon the same monthly themes as our worship services, ranging 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.

### **Young Adults Game Night**

The Young Adults 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 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, March 2 at 10 a.m.**

Everyone is welcome to join the men on the first Thursday of the month. We are on Zoom at this time. All are welcome. Email *Ken H.* for any additional information.

# March 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<p><i>1</i> Space Search Team 5:00-6:00 pm</p> <p>Young Adult Game Night 7:00-9:00 pm</p>	<p><i>2</i> Men's Group 10:00 am - 12:00 pm</p> <p>Congregational Meeting on Zoom 7:00 pm</p>	<p><i>3</i> Membership Team 2:00 pm</p> <p>Outreach Committee 6:00-7:00 pm</p>	<i>4</i>
<p><i>5</i> Worship Service 11:00 am-12:00 pm</p>	<i>6</i>	<p><i>7</i> Minister's Office Hours 1:00-4:00pm</p> <p>"Tuesdays After" 5:30-6:30 pm</p>	<p><i>8</i> Stewardship Committee Meeting 7:00-8:00 pm</p> <p>International Women's Day</p>	<i>9</i>	<p><i>10</i> Worship Team Mtg. 1:30-3:00 pm</p>	<p><i>11</i> Channing Book Club 10:00 am - 12:00 pm</p>
<p><i>12</i> Zoom Worship Service 10:30 am - 11:30 pm</p> <p>Daylight Saving Time Begins</p>	<i>13</i>	<p><i>14</i> Minister's Office Hours 1:00-4:00 pm</p> <p>LDNC Mtg 5:30-7:30 pm</p> <p>Lectio Divina 7:00 - 8:00 pm</p>	<i>15</i>	<i>16</i>	<p><i>17</i> St. Patrick's Day</p> 	<i>18</i>
<p><i>19</i> Worship Service 11:00 am-12:00 pm</p>	<p><i>20</i> First Day of Spring</p> 	<p><i>21</i> Minister's Office Hours 1:00-4:00 pm</p> <p>Board Meeting 7:00-9:00 pm</p>	<p><i>22</i> Ramadan Begins</p>	<i>23</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>25</i>
<p><i>26</i> Worship Service 11:00 am-12:00 pm</p> <p>Newsletter Deadline 7:00 pm</p>	<i>27</i>	<p><i>28</i> Minister's Office Hours 1:00-4:00 pm</p> <p>Lectio Divina 7:00 - 8:00</p>	<i>29</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>31</i>	

Channing Memorial Church  
Unitarian Universalist  
3677 Park Avenue  
Ellicott City, MD 21043



**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.