



The Channing Connection

CHANNING MEMORIAL CHURCH
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

Volume 27, Issue 4

April 2020

April Minister's Column



Inside:

Get Ready to Zoom.....	2
President's Column	3
Board Bits.....	3
Pandemic Players.....	3
Tips and Info for Pledgers.	4
Annual Campaign Update.	5
Stewardship Update.....	5
Covid-19 Haiku Challenge.....	5
Podcast Roundup by Bert.....	6
Channing Joins Immigration Coalition.....	7
Channingites Go "Wild" ...	7
April Calendar.....	8

Last week my husband Eric and I were able to do one of our favorite things – we went on a hike. It was finally warm enough that we did not need sweaters, and the bushes and trees surrounding us were beginning to bud as the earth slowly shifts from brown to green. And in that space, we were able to marvel in the beauty that was all around us, find release, and laugh.

We are in unprecedented times. All around us, there is news of isolation, of overwhelmed hospitals, and of unnerving predictions. And yet, Wendell Berry writes,

*When despair for the world grows inside me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.*

We are a Welcoming Congregation!



Wayside Pulpit

I'm not afraid of storms,
for I'm learning how to
sail my ship.

Louisa May Alcott

We all need those moments to be free. To Wendell Berry, it is still water. To me, it is the budding leaves.

To you, perhaps it is the serenity that may be found in alchemy of baking cookies, or stir frying that perfect mix of vegetables. The release that comes when creating artwork, or the serenity of constructing a work of fiction. Whatever it is, I ask you to embrace this activity.

There is a lot of uncertainty in the world. What I am certain of is that we will continue to be this sacred community, we will continue to connect and support each other, and we will continue to thrive. Our web strengthens; we are not alone.

“For a time I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.”

Warmly, *Rev. Jane*

Minister

Reverend Jane Smith

410-203-0474 (office)
minister@channingmc.org

President:

Julie Fitzer ('20)

Vice President: Maureen Hayes ('20)

Treasurer: Evelyn Grim ('21)

Secretary: Kathleen Razmus ('21)

Trustees:

Ken Hart ('20)
Colleen Rathbun ('21)

Newsletter Editors:

Cathy Fu
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 May issue of *The Channing Connection* to newsshare@channingmc.org by **7:00 p.m. on Sunday, April 26, 2020.**

**Announcement from Your Board,
aka Get Ready to**



Given the current guidance from public health officials, the board has decided that we will hold worship and meetings online until April 19, 2020. This decision will be re-evaluated at the April 21 board meeting.

All teams and groups are encouraged to continue meeting with each other. Please consider moving your regular meetings online. We need to maintain our connections with one another.

The board has set up a paid Zoom account to be shared for all meetings held other than worship or minister-led meetings. This account can be used for board meetings, covenant circle, men's group, book club, youth, etc.

In order to hold a group meeting on Zoom for longer than 40 minutes, you have to have a paid account. This account allows us to host meetings for up to 100 people.

If you want to use this Zoom account to host a meeting, please email Julie with the date and time of your meeting. She will set it up on the calendar for you and send you the sign-in information. She will also provide you with the log-in and password of this host account so that you can log in and start your meeting.

Please be careful **not** to save this password and login to your personal computer. Remember to sign out of the account when you are finished with your meeting, and please don't change any subscription settings.

Julie will put together a basic instruction sheet on how to run the meeting if you are a host.

—Julie and Ken H.

President's Column



Challenging times like these are when we most need community. We will need to find creative ways to stay connected to each other.

Zoom is one way. The board has established an account that may be shared among Channing teams and groups. Reach out to me for the log in information and to schedule a meeting.

Please call, email, or text people who you know may need extra support. Let Rev. Jane and the Care Team know of any situations that may need pastoral support.

There are teams keeping an eye on who we see in worship, and who we do not see, so that we can reach out to anyone who may be having problems connecting via Zoom. You can call into Zoom using your telephone if you do not have a computer.

I am grateful for everyone who has been willing to try new things in the past few weeks.

In early April I will be reaching out to teams and committees for items for the annual report. This annual report goes out to the congregation in advance of the May 17 Annual Meeting. Please get things back to me when you can so that I can start to compile the report.

—Julie



Board Bits

The board met via Zoom.

The following items were accomplished:

- Approved recommendation from social justice team that we join the Howard County Coalition for Immigrant Justice.
- Discussed meeting online until April 19; Board has set up a Zoom account to be shared.
- Discussed status of space search and appointing a realtor as our representative.

—Julie



Pandemic Players Pleases Peaked Public

Stephen, our music director, founded Pandemic Players, a completely quarantined online theater company seeking to provide online productions of classic plays and possibly future originals every Saturday at 7:00 pm. They will produce shows in an effort to raise money to keep local theaters and arts groups open, and will do so until the need for social distancing has passed.

For more information, including how to tune in, you can follow Pandemic Players on Facebook. Also, look for Pandemic Players of Baltimore on YouTube, where you'll find a live broadcast every Saturday night as well as archived shows.

TIPS & INFO for New (and Other!) Pledgers



Greetings from your Finance Team! Here are some tips and tidbits to take the “mystery and wonder” out of giving to the church.

Fiscal year: Channing MC's financial year runs from July 1st to June 30th. Pledges people make in the spring apply to that period of time.

Where to give/send your contributions: Pledge donations and other contributions may be placed in the offering plate on Sundays. If mailing your contribution, please send it to:
Channing Memorial Church, 3677 Park Avenue, Ellicott City, MD 21043

How to give

Checks: If you're giving by check, please use the memo line to indicate what the check is for (e.g., “2020-21 pledge,” or “annual pledge,” etc.).

Cash: If you're giving toward your pledge by cash, please put the cash in an envelope, write your name and the date on the front, and drop it in the offering plate. Cash placed anonymously in the collection plate is simply recorded as “plate cash”, not as money given toward pledges.

PayPal: Use your credit card or PayPal account to donate to Channing! Go to channingmc.org and select *Community*, then *Donations to Channing*. Follow the directions on the screen to complete the process.

Stock: Stock donations are a great way to give to the church. See Evelyn G. for more information.

Pledge donations vs. other donations

Donations to church funds other than the general operating fund, such as the Minister's Discretionary Fund or the Westside Shelter food fund, are accounted for separately from your pledge donations. When giving to a special collection for one of these other funds or causes, it's helpful to have a note in the memo line of the check stating the donation's purpose.

Annual and quarterly donation statements

In January, everyone who has given to the church in the past year-- regardless of whether they've pledged-- receives a statement that shows their giving from January 1st through December 31st. This is a *calendar year statement* with no reference to the July-June fiscal year

People who have made donation pledges to the church also receive *quarterly statements* three additional times each year. These are given out sometime after September 30th, March 31st, and June 30th. These quarterly statements update pledged givers on how much they've given toward their pledges thus far, while also serving as a check on what the Treasurer has in the system. If you see something you believe is an error, please let the Treasurer know.

The timing of your contributions toward your pledge, throughout the fiscal year, is up to you; so, the reports put out in October and April are not to be construed as an indication of whether or not you are “behind” in pledge giving.

Thank you for supporting the mission of Channing Memorial Church!

—Ostara H.



Update on the Annual Campaign!

As of March 25, we have received 25 pledges totaling 106,042, which is 78.5% of our goal of \$135,000. Of this amount, \$10,162 represents new pledges or pledge increases, which means we have met our match challenge of \$9,400. Hooray! If you have not returned your pledge form, a member of the Stewardship Team will contact you soon.

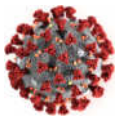
— Evelyn G.

Stewardship Update



February Year to Date

Total Operating Income	\$122,611
Total Operating Expenses	\$108,523
Difference	\$14,088



Covid-19 Haiku Challenge

Pandemic got you down? We have the “cure”— our Covid-19 Haiku Challenge! Below are several works of art by fellow Channingites. Vote for your favorite by emailing newsshare@channingmc.org with “Haiku” in the subject line and the number of your favorite poem in the body of the email. You’ll get cookies and the poets will get some, too!

Votes must be emailed by April 15, 2020. Void in AK and HI. Cookies will be distributed when it’s safe to do so.

1 Covid shopping trip
Columbia Costco craze
No Lysol wipes left

4 Asked to stay home now
Opportunities abound
Just want to do naught

2 Grammy on lockdown
Daughter, granddaughter grateful
Visit just in time

5 Go out to the store
Come home, now want alcohol
Hand sanitizer

3 Yikes, itch on forehead.
Don’t touch your face! Don’t do it.
Coronavirus.



Podcasts Offer Erudite Entertainment In Closed-Down World

If current events have you squirreled away at home, looking for something to do, you may find it an auspicious time to check out some more spiritually-oriented podcasts.

Spirited Discussions

Robert Wright's Meaning of Life (MOL) podcast website (<https://meaningoflife.tv/>) offers a rich lode of intellectual discussion of cultural and spiritual issues. MOL is something of a spin-off from Bloggingheads (<https://bloggingheads.tv/>), which the former Atlantic editor co-founded with Mickey Kaus back in 2005 while podcasting was still in its infancy. It was one of the early adopters of the long-form format interviews/discussions (45 minute plus) that was subsequently embraced by enormously popular podcasts like the Joe Rogan Experience.

Though there's some overlap between the two sites, Bloggingheads focuses more on politics, while MOL is centered more on philosophical and spiritual matters. You can watch both MOL and Bloggingheads discussions online or download audio-only versions for more listening flexibility.

Robert Wright is not the only interviewer on MOL. There are a half dozen 'channels' on MOL featuring different interviewers and formats (though not all are still active). But I like Robert's droll interview style, which manages to be both sharp and gentle at the same time. He's not afraid to challenge his guests, but discussions rarely get heated, and he always maintains a good rapport with his subjects. He's also one of the few non-religious intellectual pundits who understands the importance of the issue of 'consciousness'/subjective experience/'the mind body problem,' a fundamental mystery which science has yet to make a dent in.

I thought one archived MOL discussion from 2015 was particularly intriguing since many of the issues discussed seemed similar to those facing UU congregations. Robert interviews Judith Shulevitz (<https://meaningoflife.tv/videos/31713>) on her views of God and religion. Coming as she does from a liberal Jewish perspective, her observations on the challenges facing religions which are based more on action than belief, and which lacked the anchor of belief on which to ground the creation of community, resonated with some of the struggles I see taking place at Channing.

An In-Depth Import

Another podcast worth looking into is Ideas from the CBC (<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/ideas>). I've only listened to a few of its shows so far, but host Nahlah Ayed has impressed me with her deep approach to her topics, which cover the full gamut of social and cultural subjects. Some recent shows focused on Darwin's legacy, evangelism's impact on America, the fight for democracy, and psychology's current uncertainty about mental illness.

One recent episode I particularly enjoyed was from March 16: "The Saxophone and the Spirit: The Sax's Forgotten Spiritual Roots" (<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/ideas/the-saxophone-and-the-spirit-the-sax-s-forgotten-spiritual-roots-1.5483769>). I learned a lot about the history of the sax, as well being exposed to some intriguing musicians I'd never heard of. When I saw the title, I immediately thought of one of my favorite musicians, the Scandinavian Jan Garbarek, and I was amused to find he makes a brief appearance in the podcast.

— Bert



Channing Joins Immigration Coalition

Channing Memorial Church has joined the Howard County Coalition for Immigrant Justice. The Coalition, a group of immigrants, individuals and concerned organizations ranging from the ACLU, Council of American Islamic Relations, Friends of Latin America as well as faith communities including the Columbia Jewish Congregation, Patapsco Friends Meeting House and the UU Congregation of Columbia, seeks to build a respectful, just and safe community where all our foreign-born friends and neighbors may thrive and prosper.

Specifically, the Coalition seeks to end the Intergovernmental Service Agreement between Howard County and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement to house immigrant detainees in the Jessup facility and to enact laws to protect immigrants from discrimination.

Sadly, the MD General Assembly adjourned its 2020 session prematurely because of the COVID-19 pandemic and none of the immigrants' rights bills advocated by the statewide UU Legislative Ministry of Maryland were passed, although HB 403 which dealt with prohibiting immigration enforcement in schools, hospitals and courthouses did pass the House of Delegates overwhelmingly, 93-45. We'll begin again next January to advocate for these bills.

If you are interested in participating in advancing human rights worldwide and particularly immigrants' rights in Maryland and Howard County, please contact Jim C.

Channingites Go "Wild"

Nine Channingites ventured to Dayspring Retreat Center in Germantown, MD to attend the monthly Church of the Wild service. It was a spiritual service starting with a drum circle and including meditation, singing and contemplative wandering in nature. The hymn at the end of the service was our familiar UU hymn "When I Breathe In".



The next service will be April 5th from 3:00—4:30 pm. Location to be determined (probably along the banks of the Potomac). For more info: <https://www.centerforspiritualityinnature.org/church-of-the-wild>

— Joe C.

April 2020



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<i>1</i>	<i>2</i> Men's Group TBD	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i> Channing Book Group 10 am
<i>5</i> 10 am Sunday Service Online	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i> 1—4 pm Minister's Drop in Office Hours Online	<i>8</i> Passover Be- gins	<i>9</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>12</i> 10 am Sunday Service Online Easter	<i>13</i>	<i>14</i> 1—4 pm Minister's Drop in Office Hours Online	<i>15</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>17</i> Potluck and Game Night 6--9 pm	<i>18</i> Men's Group TBD
<i>19</i> 10 am Sunday Service Online	<i>20</i>	<i>21</i> 1—4 pm Minister's Drop in Office Hours Online 7 pm Board of Trustees meet- ing	<i>22</i> Choir Re- hearsal? TBA	<i>23</i>	<i>24</i> Final Friday Potluck?	<i>25</i>
<i>26</i> 10 am Sunday Service, location TBA	<i>27</i>	<i>28</i> 1—4 pm Minister's Drop in Office Hours , loca- tion TBA	<i>29</i> Choir Re- hearsal,? TBA	<i>30</i> Groceries to Westside Shelter		

Channing Memorial Church
Unitarian Universalist
3677 Park Avenue
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.

Directions to Linden Hall: From the South:

Drive north on Rt. 29 from south of Columbia.
Take Rt. 108 West.
Turn right onto Columbia Road.
Turn right at the first light on Old Annapolis Road.
You will be behind the Dorsey Search Village Center. Take the third entry road on the left (Old Route 108).
The parking lot is immediately on your right. Overflow spaces available at other locations in the Village Center.

From Baltimore:

Take 70W to Rt. 29 south.
Take Rt. 108 West.
Turn right onto Columbia Road.
Turn right at the first light on Old Annapolis Road.
You will be behind the Dorsey Search Village Center. Take the third entry road on the left (Old Route 108).
The parking lot is immediately on your right. Overflow spaces available at other locations in the Village Center.