



The Channing Connection

CHANNING MEMORIAL CHURCH
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

Volume 31, Issue 4

April 2024

Inside:

Committee Council Meeting	2
President's Column ...	3
Music Director Search Team Update	4
2nd Sunday Collection	4
Trusting Change	5
Lectio Divina	6
Wisdom Tales	6
Church Role Signup ...	6
Board Bits	7
Channing Book Club ..	7
UUtheVote	8
Stewardship Update ...	8
Introducing Ourselves	9
Spread the Word	9
Men's Group	10
Young Adult Game Night	10
Young Adult Small Group	10
New Office	11
April Calendar	12



**We are a Welcoming
Congregation**

Wayside Pulpit

May your life preach more loudly than your lips.

—William Ellery Channing

Minister's Musings



Dear Channing Members and Friends,

I am blessed to have a window at my home office which overlooks our backyard, full of gardens, grass, and the occasional critter. I observe trees, bushes, and flowers when in season. The garden is always enriched by colors of brown and green or by flower petals mimicking a sunset. To me, the beauty is always amplified with the changing of the seasons. What will fall to the wayside, and what will emerge in its place? Right now, I see the brown death of winter beginning to transition to new life as budding green foliage becomes more abundant. In reflecting upon these changing seasons, I thought, this morning, of liminal space. We spoke about liminal space during a recent worship service. Liminal space is that time between two marked endpoints to pause, reflect, grow, and change. It is a space between where you have been and where you are going. In nature, I think of the pause between the death of fall and the birth of spring - the pause of winter. I think, too, of the liminal space of our church community. I think of the marked transition we have navigated between uncertainty and stability.

Where were we last fall? We had a worship space, but no long-term lease. We had a church office, but had been in search of a new, more suitable space to inhabit. In short, we were uncertain, unstable, and in that transient mindset we have known for so long. We had no true, permanent space. We entered our own liminal time just as winter settled in, asking, what would happen next? Where would we reside? For how long? During this in-between time of winter, we had groups working in the background to negotiate, search, and plan. Now, as I watch the green emerge from brown outside my window, I watch our church transform from uncertainty to stability.

We have tangible gifts - budding flowers! - as we blossom and bloom this spring. We have a pending five-year lease with Epiphany Lutheran Church, and a three-year lease at an office space at Courthouse Square. We will save a substantial amount of money in office space rental costs. What a wel-

(Continued on page 2)

Minister

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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

Please send submittals for the May 2024 issue of *The Channing Connection* to newsshare@channingmc.org by **7:00 p.m. on Sunday, April 21, 2024.**

(Minister's Column - continued from page 1)

come stability! We were searching, and now we have a home. We were uncertain, and now we are reaching stability. Imperfect, yes. But we are dedicated to making the space into what we need. What intangible gifts are blooming this spring? Emotions of safety, stability, and homecoming, perhaps. Peace of mind, reassurance, calm, and security. Let us also highlight the love you share with one another. Has that grown in this liminality, as we lean on one another for stability, rather than a building? Has our commitment to this beloved church grown, celebrating all that strengthens and sustains us no matter where we are geographically?

What else have we gained during this time of pause, reflection, and change? We have had an influx of visitors as we transitioned into a more permanent worship space. We have seen a growth in volunteering - we now have eight volunteers dedicated to worship each week - that is remarkable! We are blooming indeed! What we have cultivated this winter is only beginning to sprout. Think of all we can focus on now which was difficult to commit to during our time of transience: Growth, community presence, implementing our Strategic Plan, reflecting on who we are as a faith community. We have so much to look forward to as we grow and flourish this spring. So may we delight in what has bloomed. May we pause in relief. May we celebrate all that is to come. And may we do this, together, as Channing Memorial Church.

With love,
Rev. Jane



President's Column

Dear Members and Friends,



As I write this, I'm filled with gratitude and anticipation. By the time you read these words, our congregation will have taken the next steps on an exciting new chapter of church life: relocating to our new office space at the Courthouse Square Office Complex in Ellicott City and securing a five-year lease with Epiphany Lutheran Church (ELC). This change in locations is more than just a physical transition. It signifies growth and progress for our congregation, demonstrating our commitment to manifesting our shared mission and vision.

One particular aspect of this transition that fills me with optimism and satisfaction is the progress we are making toward having an accessible bathroom at ELC. Work on determining the feasibility of this initiative has been ongoing since our relationship with ELC began a year ago, and your overwhelming desire for accessibility, as expressed in January's congregational survey, played a significant role in our decision-making process. Now, we've initiated the preliminary steps to turn our shared vision into reality. This Restroom Renovation Project is a priority for the Board, and we're excited to move it forward. We will be hosting a "Sundays After" information-sharing meeting in the near future to update you on the progress of the project.

The Board extends its heartfelt gratitude to Maureen for her exceptional leadership, dedication, and meticulous planning throughout our transition from Park Avenue to our new office and church location. Maureen's unwavering commitment and skillful coordination guided us through every step of the process with care and grace. We also extend our sincere thanks to the volunteers who generously lent their time and support to assist Maureen in accomplishing the multitude of tasks involved in this transition. These efforts are a testament to our church's resilience, adaptability, and belief in the power of volunteerism.

This year's stewardship theme reminds us that we invite seekers into spiritual community, connect souls in mystery and wonder, and ignite compassion into action by building our nest. As our Canvass Packet says, "Together, with our combined strength, courage, and love, we can do just about anything."

While our transition to Epiphany Lutheran Church and Courthouse Square marks the start of a new chapter, it's not merely about settling in. It's about continuous nurturing and care for our community. As always, each decision we make and action we take supports our goal of building a vibrant spiritual home where everyone is embraced and empowered to grow. In this way, Epiphany Lutheran Church and Courthouse Square become places where we can spread our wings and flourish. Together, let us continue to nurture and strengthen our congregation, ensuring that our nest remains a place where love, hope, and fellowship thrive.

With warmest regards,

Kris

Music Director Search Team -- Update

Things are starting to happen in the search for a music director:

- Anne Hart joined the search team. Welcome, Anne!
- We recommended increasing the salary range and changing to a 12-month position. The board approved!
- We began re-advertising in several of our previous outlets.
- We followed up on some personal contacts.
- We just received an application! It was through one of the personal contacts.

We will keep you posted with any significant progress, which we hope will be soon. As always, your ideas are most welcome!

The Music Director Search Team:

- Pam El-Dinary*
- Ken Grim*
- Anne Hart*
- Jim Vincent*

2nd Sunday Collection for Beans and Bags for Bridges

On Sunday, April 14th, we will have a special collection to support a fundraising event for Bridges to Housing Stability. Bridges to Housing Stability is a non-profit organization serving Howard County. Their mission is to “provide a path to self-sufficiency to prevent and end homelessness through affordable housing solutions and advocacy in Howard County, Maryland.” Bridges not only provides crisis intervention, they also seek to offer stability in housing through permanent housing locator services, partnering with landlords to encourage them to provide affordable housing options and advocacy for affordable housing for low-income households and the elimination of homelessness in all communities.

The Beans and Bags for Bridges event will be held on Sunday, May 5th from 12:30-3pm at Centennial Park Pavilion H. The event will feature delicious chili from Absolutely Perfect Catering, live music, a silent auction, and a (friendly) cornhole tournament. In addition to giving generously, I hope that some of us will plan to attend the event to support their much needed work and to connect with other like-minded folks in the community.

The Outreach Team at Channing sees this as not only an opportunity to support a worthy cause, but also an opportunity to gain Channing some visibility. Our donation will support the work of Bridges and also get Channing a mention in the event program and on other event promotional materials.

Also - any cornhole players out there??- the cornhole tournament entry fee is \$50.00 for a team of two. Kathleen Razmus is looking for a teammate!

Trusting Change

Trusting Change Session Three: **Navigating the Unknown**

Trusting Change Session Four: **Imagining a Way Forward**

Dear Channing Members and Friends,

I want to go on a journey with you. Together, we can explore the challenges and gifts of undergoing and embracing change. Change is inherent in each life in myriad forms, from the trivial to the monumental. Together, through a series of discussions, we will explore such topics as grief, letting go, navigating the unknown, and imagining a way forward. **You are free attend only those sessions which are of particular interest to you.**

We will be guided in our work by Unitarian Universalist minister Rev. Karen Hering's book *Trusting Change: Finding Our Way Through Personal and Global Transformation*. In beautiful prose, the book offers reflections, spiritual practices, and inspiration for connecting to change and one's own inner wisdom. Please have a copy of the book for our class.

If you would like to take part in any of the sessions, I request you read the Introduction and reflect upon the first section entitled "Beginning Here." You are welcome to attend any of the sessions that speak to your heart.

If you need assistance purchasing a book, do not hesitate to reach out. ***If you are going to attend either gathering, please email me by March 30th.***

Our first session will be held on **April 6th from 1pm-3pm **On Zoom****. Together we will reflect on navigating the unknown. Please read the section entitled "Navigating the Unknown" before attending.

Our second session will be held on **April 20th from 1pm-3pm **On Zoom****. Together we will reflect on imagining a way forward. Please read the section entitled "Imagining a Way" before attending.

I hope you will join me!

Warmly,
Rev. Jane



William Ellery Channing

Lectio Divina

Our normal schedule is the 2nd and 4th Tuesday evenings at 7 pm. The next Meeting is on **April 9**. On zoom; Rev. Jane will send out the link and the poem, the link is also immediately below. Please let her know if you would like to be added to the list.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/93324550758?pwd=VFVLZkdES2lodTnhK1pWZ1pZb114UT09>

Meeting ID: 933 2455 0758

Passcode: 250704

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

Wisdom Tales

Many faith traditions and cultures throughout millennia have shared wisdom, knowledge, and insights through fictional tales and parables. Each month, we'll explore a different story, allowing these ancient narratives to spark conversation and reflection. Join Rev. Jane to engage with these ancient tales.

Our standing meeting is the first Tuesday of the month, 11am-12pm, held on Zoom.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://zoom.us/j/94007522019?pwd=MEhIT1IKbDRIUWViT-m9WeTFDTERrdz09>

Meeting ID: 940 0752 2019

Passcode: 665527

Sunday Church Roles Signup Open through May!



It's the moment you've been waiting for: I've opened the signup for Sunday morning roles for the next three months. There's something for everyone, so please [use this link](#) to give us a hand with everything that makes the weekly worship service run.

Our dedicated prez Kris highlighted the important job of closing the building on Sunday morning. We cannot meet at Epiphany without a volunteer to close the building. There are easy-to-follow instructions and, although you'll leave church a little later than usual, it'll be with the satisfaction of providing a vital service. *Can you sign up to do just one Sunday closing the building in the next three months?* See the link above.

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

-- Cathy Fu

Board Bits



March 26th was scheduled for the move-in date to the new office. Many thanks to those who have helped make this possible, including Maureen and the Space Team! The kitchenette has been installed in the new office. The Board discussed the logistics of moving stuff from the old office space and of creating a task force to work on building an accessible bathroom.

Negotiations with Epiphany for a 5-year lease have begun.

The Board discussed ways to improve communication with the congregation such as having quarterly listening sessions.

The Council on Committees will be held virtually on April 2nd from 6:30 to 8:30 pm.

The annual Congregational Meeting will be on Sunday, May 19th.

Channing Book Club

We usually meet on the second Saturday of the month. See below. **We now meet at Channing's new office at 3525 Ellicott Mills Drive, Suite A, Ellicott City at 10 a.m.**

Please let Ken Hart know at least three days in advance, or more, if you would like to participate by Zoom session.



For April 13: "David Brooks on Staying Humane in Inhumane Times"

The ancient wisdom of Athens and Jerusalem can help us survive these cruel and challenging times.

NYTimes <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/11/23/opinion/brutalizing-humanity-modernity.html?showTranscript=1> If you do not have access to a NYT article, let Ken know and he will send you a copy.

For May – The Boys in the Boat by Daniel Brown

What's on your book list? Would you like to make it a selection for the book club so you can have good conversation about it? Let Ken Hart know what you are thinking about, and contact Ken with any questions.

UUtheVote

The UUtheVote 2024 campaign is getting underway. Intersecting with several Unitarian Universalist Association programs such as Side With Love and the UU Service Committee's Love Resists, UUtheVote seeks to mobilize UUs, voters and local communities to understand the threats to our democracy, to engage with state action networks (like UULMMD) and collectively win on ballot measures that promote and affirm our UU values.

UUtheVote encourages congregations to become "Good Trouble" Congregations, honoring the late Congressman John Lewis who said, "Never, ever be afraid to make some noise and get in good trouble, necessary trouble."

To become a Good Trouble Congregation, Channing must meet these goals:

Meet four total (at least two of each) to accomplish Good Trouble (GT) Congregation:

Organizing (meet at least two of six):

- Turn out 5 percent of members at a partner public action / witness
- Turn out 10 percent of members at UUTV political education event
- GT team table or canvasses at three (or more) public events
- At least 2 congregants are line warmers, poll workers, non-partisan poll observers, Election Defenders
- Reach 20 percent volunteer engagement in GT programming
- Act as Ballot Initiative Petition Hub or other ballot-related site

Voter Contact (meet at least two of five):

- Average 20 postcards or letters per member
- Average 200 text messages per member
- Average 20 calls per member
- Average 20 doorknocks per member
- Average 10 ballot petition signatures per member

Are you prepared to become a Good Trouble Congregation? Want to help? Contact Jim Caldiero, jimcal87@gmail.com

Stewardship update Year-to-date as of February, 2024

General Operating Fund

Total Operating Income	\$140,741
Total Operating Expense	- 122,739
Difference	<u>\$ 18,002</u>



Introducing Ourselves to Our Neighbors



We wish to make ourselves known to residents of the neighborhood around our church meeting place. *Bernie Nebel* has prepared flyers with essential information. Now is the time for volunteers, preferably male-female pairs, to visit homes (only 6-7 homes after church), and deliver a personal invitation, (with or without an “elevator talk”).

If you are willing to or interested in participating in this service please see Bernie after our service, or call him at 410-314-9024. He will provide further information, fliers, and assignments to particular homes. This is an effort that will be ongoing for the spring months.

Help Spread the Word About Channing

We all know how wonderful Channing Memorial Church is, with our dynamic minister, spiritual and inspiring worship services, the many spiritual exploration programs and classes, our expanding social justice work, and the warm, friendly and supportive members and friends of this congregation, Channing is a special and unique place. If you would like the world to know more about Channing and what we offer, below is an easy way to help spread the word. There are several websites that encourage people to leave comments or reviews specifically about Channing Memorial Church:

- Our own **Channing Facebook page** (<https://www.facebook.com/ChanningMemorialChurch/>) allows comments and likes. We can definitely use more.
- **Channing’s Google page** appears when you google “Channing Memorial Church, Unitarian Universalist.” It permits reviews. Unfortunately, most of the Channing written reviews are several years old. Let’s update them.
- **Yelp** is a business-oriented site that includes basic information about businesses, but also includes churches. It encourages reviews. So far, there is only one review for Channing. The Channing site can be reached by googling Channing Memorial Church, Unitarian Universalist and searching through the listings, or by searching <https://www.yelp.com/channing-memorial-church-unitarian-universalistellicott-city>

Outreach Team (Marian Vessels, Kathleen Razmus, Evelyn Grim, Ken Grim)

Men's Group

**Thursday, April 4 (10 am - 12 pm) on Zoom
and In-person April 18 (10 - 11:30 am)**



Everyone is welcome to join the men at either or both of these events. For the zoom meeting on **April 4**, a link will be sent out via the distribution list for the group. If you are not on that list and are interested, check with Ken Hart via email.

The **April 18** gathering will be at **Roggenart** on Rt. 40 east of Bethany Lane, at 10:00 am. **Please email Ken Hart if you intend to attend.** We need enough responses to make this happen.

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 con-

versation. 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 Beben* for information.

Young Adult 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. Young Adults include anyone in their 20s, 30s or 40s. It is always a good time, and we would love for you to join us!



Where is Our New Office???

The church office has moved from Park Avenue to its new location at:

3525 Ellicott Mills Drive, Suite A, Ellicott City, in the Courthouse Square Office Complex

This location is just outside old Ellicott City, not far from our current Park Avenue office location. Directions on Google Maps from Epiphany Lutheran to the new church office: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/bv9mju4ATX9nkdp98> Driving time is approximately ten minutes.

To find the new office, go to the above street address (this is just about at the junction of Courthouse Drive and Ellicott Mills Drive in Ellicott City. Click [office](#) to see a map.). Enter the property via the driveway, drive through the parking lot along the buildings and turn right after the last building and park there. Look for 3525 on the corner of the building, and take the sidewalk along the lower side of the building until you see Suite A.



Sign at Entrance to Courthouse Square Complex



Door to Channing's New Office



William Ellery Channing Finds a New Home

April 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<i>1</i> April Fools Day	<i>2</i> Wisdom Tales 11 am - 12 pm Minister's Office Hours 1:00 -4:00 pm Council of Committees Mtg 6:30-8:30 pm on Zoom	<i>3</i> Young Adult Game Night 7:00 - 9:00 pm	<i>4</i> Men's Group 10:00 am - 12:00 pm on Zoom	<i>5</i> Membership Team 2:00 pm Outreach Team 6:30-7:30 pm	<i>6</i> Trusting Change Session Two 1:00 - 3:00 pm on Zoom
<i>7</i> Worship Service 11:00 am - 12:00 pm	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i> Minister's Office Hours 1:00 - 4:00 pm LDNC meeting 5:30 - 7:30 pm Lectio Divina 7:00 - 8:00 pm on Zoom	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>12</i> Worship Team 1:30 - 3:00 pm	<i>13</i> Channing Book Club 10:00 am - 12:00 pm SoulCollage Workshop at ELC 1:30-4:30 pm
<i>14</i> Worship Service 11:00 am - 12:00 pm (Special Collection for Beans & Bags for Bridges)	<i>15</i>	<i>16</i> Minister's Office Hours 1:00 -4:00 pm Board Meeting 7:00 - 9:00 pm	<i>17</i> Stewardship Group Mtg. 6:30 pm on Zoom Young Adult Small Group 7:00 - 9:00 pm	<i>18</i> Men's Group 10:00 - 11:30 am at Roggenart	<i>19</i>	<i>20</i> Trusting Change Session Three 1:00-3:00 pm on Zoom
<i>21</i> Worship Service 11:00 am - 12:00 pm Newsletter Deadline 7:00 pm	<i>22</i> Passover Begins	<i>23</i> Minister's Office Hours 1:00 -4 :00 pm Lectio Divina 7:00 - 8:00 pm on Zoom	<i>24</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>28</i> Worship Service 11:00 am - 12:00 pm	<i>29</i>	<i>30</i> Minister's Office Hours 1:00 -4:00 pm Last Day of Passover				

**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.