



The Channing Connection

CHANNING MEMORIAL CHURCH
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

Volume 30, Issue 6

June 2023

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Minister's Column



Dear Channing members and friends,

Reading novels is one of my favorite pastimes. I love traversing through prose the tumultuous journeys of endearing protagonists. Recently, I've been able to read both *Go Tell it on the Mountain* and *Giovanni's Room*, so when I came across this quote from James Baldwin, I stopped and took note: "The world is before you, and you need not take it, or leave it, as it was when

you came in." The words reminded me of my own theology and my greatest intention as a person of faith: I am called to leave the world just a bit more beautiful than it was when I entered it. Not only is this my personal endeavor, but the journey and mission of our church. We are called to join souls in mystery and wonder, to *invite, connect, and ignite*, making the world and all of its inhabitants a little bit more beautiful.

This past week, I've been preparing for our annual meeting. I have thus spent much time reflecting on our church community and the happenings of this past year. I feel we achieved that humble and mighty goal - this past year we have made our world just a bit better. We are living our mission and doing so in a unique and special way because of who we are at our core - an intimate community focused on spiritual growth. Channing Memorial Church is a true gem. We engage in deep conversation that can only occur in communities with great trust - small communities like ours. This past year our spirits grew through a wide array of discussions, traversing together threads of death, theology, and language. We have worshiped together and sung together, journeying as a sacred collective through our worship labyrinth, traversing themes of Belonging, Courage, Vulnerability and Creativity. We laughed and cried together, both sorrowful and joyous, held, always, in the sacred embrace of our spiritual community. Our souls are forever wiser, our hearts forever more compassionate. We have so much to offer. Let us celebrate this! Let us bring this to the world!



**We are a Welcoming
Congregation**

Wayside Pulpit

True religion is the life we lead, not the creed we profess.

—Louis Nizer

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Minister

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Kris Tyssowski ('24)

Vice President: Open
(‘24)

Treasurer:

Evelyn Grim ('23)

Secretary:

Angela Lesperance ('23)

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Mel Currie ('23)
Sheri Thomas ('24)
Open ('24)

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

Send submittals for the July 2023 issue of *The Channing Connection* to newsshare@channingmc.org by **7:00 p.m. on Sunday, June 25, 2023.**

Now that we are settled into a worship home, let us get creative in welcoming new beloveds into our midst. Throughout the summer, as we enjoy all the season has to offer us - an abundance of flowers, a warm breeze, and fantastic thunderstorms - let us consider, how can we bring all these gifts to those unknown spiritual seekers in our community? Outreach is not the work of one committee or group of individuals, but of each and every one of us. I know it may sound awkward - but we can share with those close to us what brings us meaning and invite them to church! We can scout out our own communities and discover if there is any way for us to make our presence known. At what celebrations can we set up a booth? Where can we post our name and make our presence known? What protest can we join, what panel can we participate on? What can you post on social media? Where can you represent us, and where can you bring us to be represented?

You are each a treasure, and together we make a beautiful, sacred collective. Let us not be shy in bringing all our unique gifts to those around us! Let us spread our name and in doing so leave this world a little bit more beautiful than it was when we entered it.

With love,
Rev. Jane

Flower Communion June 4



Spring is my favorite season. Throughout the warming months, I watch as the crusty, brown earth returns to life. The flowers are blooming in abundance - pinks, blues, and purples peppered across the landscape. It's time for us to celebrate!

On Sunday, June 4 we will join together for our annual Flower Communion service. Whether joining us virtually or in person, **I invite you to bring with you a flower.** Perhaps tulips remind you of your youth or the scent of lavender brings a smile to your face. We will join together for reflection, celebration, and a blessing.

Warmly,
Rev. Jane

President's Column



Dear Members and Friends,

It's May—the end of our church year and time for the annual meeting.

Let's all exhale.

It feels like we've been going nonstop for a long time, which is no surprise because we've covered so much ground this year. Last July, we were worshiping together exclusively in online Zoom rooms. By September, we alternated between in-person worship services at Robinson Nature Center and online services. Today we have a new home at Epiphany Lutheran Church, where our services are live-streamed, allowing all members and friends to worship together regardless of where they are seated.

Getting where we are today has taken much time, effort, and creativity. Yet, through all the twists and turns and ups and downs in the work of individuals, teams, and committees, one thing has undergirded everything we have done: the belief that keeping our beloved community connected is at the heart and soul of this church.

There was much to figure out and much work to be done.

We saw our determined and dedicated Worship team facing new challenges every Sunday to create an environment conducive to transformational worship for everyone, whether you entered through a front door or a waiting room.

When it became clear that our services at Robinson Nature Center would have to be recorded and broadcast after the service on YouTube, Rev. Jane offered a virtual community (Tuesdays After) so everyone, whether they watched the recording or were in attendance, could more deeply connect with the worship themes together. We could not simultaneously share the Candles of Joys and Concerns ritual in the sanctuary and online, so Rev. Jane offered it on Saturday nights when everyone could gather on Zoom.

The work of all the iterations of our Space Team bore fruit this year when we signed a one-year lease with Epiphany Lutheran Church. Members of this team could have understandably stepped back and rested. But there was a need to manage the transition to our new space and they were right there for us.

A newly formed tech team took on our goal of finding a workable, affordable process to deliver high-quality multi-platform services from Epiphany. In what felt like the blink of an eye, we were together in one "room" because they puzzled out the difficult task of live streaming, allowing us to be spiritually linked.

Greeters, ushers, and hosts appeared at the "doors" of our worship spaces, connecting us with their welcoming spirit, whether our services were at Robinson Nature Center, online, or at Epiphany.

Even as we began to come together in person, our Zoom rooms remained full of meaningful ways to stay connected and have deep relationships. The number of offerings was remarkable! Our Young Adult group met monthly for Soul Matters discussions and Game Nights.

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There were various Adult Religious Education classes, including Lectio Divina, Death Café, Building Your Own Theology, and Wisdom Tales. Our ministry groups like Covenant Circle and Clearing Circle, Men's Group, Soul Collage, and Book Group came together regularly.

Our Park Avenue space continued to be put to good use as individuals and groups, seeing our need for time together, offered outside events such as book discussions, dessert gatherings, cookie exchanges, Strawberry Socials, time around a campfire, and "just because" get-togethers.

The connected efforts of many teams enhanced our ability to join with the larger community. Our Outreach and Growth Committee worked to increase our visibility. Our Membership Committee contacted inquiring people and supported new members and friends. Our Social Justice Advocacy, Social Responsibility, and Afghan Resettlement teams guided us to ways of influencing the world outside our walls. Rev. Jane's participation in interfaith and denominational activities brought us into wider spiritual circles.

Our Leadership, Development, and Nominating committee connected us in gratitude as they reminded us that many hands do our community's work.

We were unified in celebrating our past and future at the celebration of our 30th Anniversary and Rev. Jane's installation and Full Fellowship.

We came together when we answered the call of our Stewardship Team.

We met in safe, clean, well-maintained spaces at Park Avenue and Epiphany because of the efforts of our Facilities Team and the lovely individuals who have been cleaning our new space during our transition.

Our Committee on Ministry supported Rev. Jane in her desire to deeply connect with us as individuals as well as to all aspects of our church community.

We came together across generations thanks to our Auction Team. And we continue to come together throughout the year thanks to many social events that were auctioned off.

Feelings of belonging deepened with every act of support and concern expressed by our Care Team.

We were aligned with our denomination as the 8th Principle Team guided us through studying essential considerations in expressing our UU values.

Our bonds strengthened over coffee and snacks, thanks to our Hospitality Team.

Our Finance Team's wise stewardship of our combined financial resources made it possible for us to do so many things and to do them so well.

And where would we be without our Communication Team? There's no coming together if we don't know where to go.

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So, what is the state of our congregation? I'd say pretty awesome!

I see and feel the interconnected web in our church community and I see and feel the strength in how we nurture the heart and soul of who we are.

So, I invite you to exhale. Let's quiet our minds for a moment and relax. Let's open ourselves to feelings of pleasure as we turn our awareness to what we've accomplished this year. Let's take a moment to honor the holiness of our connections and to appreciate the beauty of our beloved community.

All my best,
Kris

Board Bits



The Council on Committees met on Saturday, April 29th. Kris reached out to each committee leader for reports which were included in the Annual Meeting Report. The Board spent much of the time at the May Board meeting planning for the Congregational Meeting. Accomplishments from the previous year and plans for next year were also discussed.

Kris and Maureen are the liaisons between Channing and Epiphany. Epiphany is very cooperative with our needs such as storing video equipment and worship team boxes. They are interested in a Cleaning Party where people from both congregations will participate in deep cleaning of the church. We will also be planning other co-congregation events.

We continue to have need for more volunteers, particularly for building tasks and for hiring committees. We will be hiring an RE person, a bookkeeper, and a Musical Director.

Angela will be virtually attending UUA General Assembly in June.

Board of Trustees and LDNC Elections

At the Annual Meeting on May 21, 2023, the congregation elected the following members to the Channing Board of Trustees for terms beginning July 1, 2023 and ending June 30, 2025: **Maureen Hayes**, Treasurer; **Angela Lesperance**, Secretary; and **Chris Lynch**, Trustee-at-Large. **Mel Currie** was elected to a 3-year term on the Leadership Development and Nominating Committee (LDNC).

The following people have completed their terms and will leave the Board effective July 1, 2023: **Evelyn Grim**, Treasurer and **Mel Currie**, Trustee-at-Large. We thank them for their hard work and accomplishments over the past 2-4 years.

Adult Religious Education at Channing

Lectio Divina



Every second and fourth Tuesday of the month from 7-8pm we join together for a practice of Lectio Divina.

Join Channing members and meet others from the Charlestown retirement community 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, we will pause for several minutes of silent reflection, which will be followed by each person sharing their unique reflection.

Wisdom Tales

First Tuesday of the month, 11am-12pm, held on Zoom

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 Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/94007522019?pwd=MEhIT11KbDRIUWViTm9WeTFDTERrdz09>

Meeting ID: 940 0752 2019

Passcode: 665527

I hope you will join me!

Warmly,
Rev. Jane

Language Series Part Three: Gender and Sexuality

Join Rev. Jane to explore language and culture as it relates to gender and sexuality. We'll address such questions as: What is the difference between sex and gender? What does it mean to be gender non-binary, or on the LGBTQIA+ spectrum? What are they/them pronouns, and how do I use them? Why do we use pronouns to introduce ourselves in worship? What is gendered language, and how do we avoid it? I invite you to bring your own questions with you! Together we will create a safe space for conversation.

This discussion will be on **Saturday, June 3 at 1pm on Zoom.**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/99309314654?pwd=UkF4cnJyMUxUbUR2OENKMnVzaFZrQT09>

Meeting ID: 993 0931 4654

Passcode: 238545

Warmly,
Rev. Jane

Stewardship Corner

As we approach the end of the Channing Memorial Church, Unitarian Universalist church year, here is some information regarding stewardship that you might find useful, especially if you are new to CMC.

- **Fiscal year:** CMC's fiscal year extends from July 1 through June 30. This corresponds to the fiscal year of the Unitarian Universalist Association/Central Eastern Region.
- **Pledge campaign** (also called the annual canvass): The annual canvass which we conducted in March and April covers the upcoming fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023. We received \$152,270 in pledges, which fell short of our goal of \$165,000. Our "official" canvass drive is over, but you may make a new pledge or amend your pledge any time during the year.

How to contribute to Channing Memorial Church:

- **By check:** be sure to indicate in the memo line what the payment is for—pledge payment with the church year designated or other donation. This is especially helpful when we are transitioning from the current church year to a new church year.
- **Cash:** loose cash placed in the offering on Sunday is gratefully accepted as a plate donation, but there is no way of knowing who made the donation. If you would like your cash donation to be recorded or applied to your pledge, please place it in an envelope with your name on it indicating whether it is a pledge payment for the current church year or other donation.

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- **Paypal:** see the Channing Memorial Church web page for directions on how to donate (there is another Channing Memorial Church in Rhode Island. Be sure you are in the correct web page).
- **Qualified charitable distribution:** If you are age 72 or older, you may direct your required minimum distribution to CMC. Check with your financial advisor and let the Channing treasurer know if you need specific wording on your donation statement.
- **Stock donations:** Stock donations are gratefully accepted. Let the treasurer know if you plan to make a stock donation. This requires some coordination between your stock broker and our investment administrator.
- **Planned giving:** Think about including Channing Memorial Church, Unitarian Universalist in your will. You will hear more about this in the coming year.

For your information, Evelyn Grim will complete her term and Maureen Hayes will begin her term as treasurer effective July 1.

Thank you for your continuing support for the programs and ministries of Channing Memorial Church.

Evelyn Grim

Stewardship Update
Year-to-date as of April 30, 2023

General Operating Fund

Total Operating Income	\$ 169,287
Total Operating Expense	<u>-133,405</u>
Difference	<u>\$ 35,882</u>



All Soles for All Souls



Join us as all soles, for all souls, this summer as we walk around Lake Kitt, a flat 1.4 mile paved loop (weather permitting, no rain) at a comfortable easy pace. Nature will provide us with inspiration with a question or quote of the day. Discuss this, bring forth a question bubbling in your own soul, or simply enjoy the walk.

Meet next to Whole Foods at the Bailey Park sign at the Lakefront in Columbia. If you're running late, just catch up to us. We'll do the loop clockwise.

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All Soles for All Souls - continued from page 8)

Getting deep? Grab a drink or a bite at Whole Foods at the end of the loop and keep it going on the outdoor tables for as long as you like.

All Soles for All Souls: **Saturday, June 10, at 9:30 am**

Rain plan (text or call 901-216-5995 with questions): Stay tuned to Channing email blasts for Zoom link.

Inspiration for June: Poems by Mary Oliver. Is a walk best enjoyed alone or with someone else? What are the limits of individual meandering in nature?

Participants with disabilities: Contact *Julie F.* to discuss. Paper copies of readings and questions will be available. The path is ADA accessible, and Julie will work with mobility needs as much as possible. Content can also be provided by email for review in your own time and place.

Channing Book Club



We meet on the second Saturday of the month, normally. See below.

Next Meeting will be Saturday July 8.

The reading will be **Siddhartha**, by Herman Hesse. Thanks to Chris for the suggestion. Copies are widely available for a reasonable price used as well as electronically on Libby and at the Baltimore and Howard County Libraries.

We will meet outside at Park Avenue at 10 a.m. weather permitting. We'll fall back to zoom **if** the weather is not friendly or perhaps meet inside. Notice will be sent out if we make this change.

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 H.* know what you are thinking about, and contact Ken with any questions.

The book club focuses on fiction and non fiction and attempts to offer a variety of interesting, thoughtful reads nominated by members of the club itself. We meet for up to two hours on the second Saturday of the month.

Young Adult Programs

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.

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!

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 June 1 at 10 a.m. on Zoom and the Bagel Bin in person on June 22!



Join the men at either or both of these events. For the zoom meeting, 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 H.* via email.

New: Meet at the Bagel Bin in the Enchanted Forest Shopping Center on the **third Thursday, June 22, at 10 a.m.**

All are welcome to these events. Email Ken H. if any questions.

Snack Squadders

Snack Squadders Needed!



We're back in person and need to be **fed and coffeed**. Can you join us and be a Squadder? Sign up below to bring 2-3 plates of food (low-effort is fine) for our after-service coffee hour. OR, sign up to make coffee. OR both!

[Here's the link:](#)

SNACKS

Use access code: Eat.



Any questions, contact *Cathy Fu*.

Thank you!

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, like us, 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 reviews are 4-8 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 for our Yelp page.

Outreach Team (Evelyn G., Ken G., Ken K.)

June 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				<i>1</i> Men's Group on Zoom	<i>2</i> Membership Team 2:00 pm Outreach Comm. Mtg. 6:00-7:00 pm	<i>3</i> Language Series Part 3 1:00 pm on Zoom
<i>4</i> Worship Service with Flower Communion 11:00 am - 12:00 pm	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i> Minister's Office Hours 1:00 -4:00 pm Wisdom Tales 11:00 am - 12:00 pm	<i>7</i> Young Adult Game Night 7:00 - 9:00 pm	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i> Worship Team Mtg. 1:30-3:00 pm	<i>10</i> All Soles for All Souls at Lake Kittamaqundi 9:30 am
<i>11</i> Worship Service 11:00 am - 12:00 pm	<i>12</i>	<i>13</i> Minister's Of- fice Hours 1:00- 4:00 pm LDNC Mtg. 5:30-7:30 pm Lectio Divina 7:00-8:00 pm	<i>14</i> Stewardship Committee Meeting 7:00- 8:00 pm	<i>15</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>17</i> The Language We Use - Part 2 - "Ableism" 1:00 - 2:00 pm
<i>18</i> Worship Service 11:00 am - 12:00 pm Father's Day	<i>19</i> Juneteenth	<i>20</i> Minister's Office Hours 1:00 -4:00 pm Board Meeting 7:00 - 9:00 pm	<i>21</i> Young Adult Small Group 7:00-9:00 pm	<i>22</i> Men's Group 10:00 am -12:00 pm at Bagel Bin	<i>23</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>25</i> Worship Service 11:00 am - 12:00 pm Newsletter Dead- line 7:00 pm	<i>26</i>	<i>27</i> Minister's Office Hours 1:00 -4:00 pm Lectio Divina 7:00-8:00 pm	<i>28</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>30</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.

Directions to Epiphany 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; Epiphany will be on your right.

Directions to Epiphany 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. Epiphany will be on your right.