



# The Channing Connection

CHANNING MEMORIAL CHURCH  
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

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September 2023

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Dear Channing members and friends,



What a delight it is to be back! My time away was rejuvenating, and it was filled with insights, wisdom, and new knowledge as I engaged with a hefty stack of books. I chose to engage with material which would enhance my own growth and spiritual formation. I did this in the hope of deepening your faith as well. I further studied my passion - theology. I also read about world religions including Buddhism, a faith that can teach us about karma, impermanence, and suffering. I further engaged with texts about justice, -isms, and the history of this country that can guide us in our commitment to heal an aching world.

And yet my time was not only spent on intellect but also in caring for my soul. I engaged with practices that help cultivate wisdom, peace, love, and contentment. These blessings are available to each and every one of us. I meditated on my breath, practiced prayer, and cherished intentional time spent in nature. Breathing, prayer, and gratitude. My body is calm, my heart is healed, and my soul is full. This is attainable by each sacred being in our Beloved Community - what practices feed your heart and soul? In our capitalist, consumer culture we may feel our time is better spent working and buying and doing, doing, doing - How could our days change if we paused, just for a moment, in stillness? Inner peace grows in importance as constant productivity falls to the wayside. The heart is just as important as the intellect. So may we breathe. May we connect with the sacred. May we center in gratitude.

Throughout the summer, I found that study, meditation, and prayer connected me ever further to love, to our Unitarian Universalist faith, and to our church. Through our faith centered in love, we covenant towards the inclusion of each of our beloveds. Not just of the temporarily able-bodied, but towards anyone who enters our sacred space. During coffee hour, we have created a separate space where those who are hard of hearing can meet, and it has been a blessing. I want, however, to offer an invitation and a reminder - everyone is



**We are a Welcoming  
Congregation**

## Wayside Pulpit

*What is the use of a house if you haven't got a tolerable planet to put it on?*

*Henry David Thoreau*

*Continued on page 2*

**Minister**

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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 October 2023 issue of *The Channing Connection* to [newsshare@channingmc.org](mailto:newsshare@channingmc.org) by **7:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 24, 2023.**

*Minister's Column - continued from page 1*

welcome there! Let this space not divide us but offer an accessible way for us all to engage with one another.

Love fosters inclusivity. We have a new worship space that is in so many ways a blessing. And yet it comes with its shortfalls, including the lack of ADA accessible bathrooms. This is an issue we will have to grapple with as a church. Can we live our values if not everyone can use the bathroom? I pose this question to each of you and encourage you to reflect. What actions come next? Know that this issue is not going unattended.

My final reflection on love and inclusivity is related to children's Religious Education. We pride ourselves as a congregation who used to have more children than adults. While we may not return to that ideal, we have young ones and parents among us eager for spiritual growth and knowledge of the world's faith traditions. Children are not the future of our faith, they are our faith. Acceptance, love, and justice are values to be instilled in the youngest among us. Together, we can create programming to feed the hearts, minds, bodies and souls of the most tender and eager in our midst. We can love and include these young ones in all that we do. I encourage you to be a part of this movement.

As we enter this new church year, may you know that you are loved, you are good, and you are whole.

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. **I look forward to this sacred time of meditation and reflection!**

## September 3rd - Channing Memorial Church Picnic at Piney Run Park in Sykesville, MD

We have rented **Pavilion #5** at Piney Run Park. We'll share a potluck lunch, lawn games, board games, and conversation. **Please note that there will be no Channing worship service at Epiphany Lutheran Church that day.**

**Cost:** There is a per-vehicle cost to enter the park. If the driver of the vehicle is 62 years old or older, admission is free. For drivers younger than 62, the fee per vehicle for non-Carroll County residents is \$12; for Carroll County residents, \$6.

**Accessibility:** The pavilion, parking, and restrooms are fully accessible.

**Time:** Ostara will arrive by 10:30 a.m. to set up tablecloths, etc., for the picnic, and will stay until at least 2:00 p.m. The pavilion is rented for the day (7:00 a.m. until sunset), so feel free to come as early as you'd like and stay as long as you'd like.

**Food:** Bring a dish to share for a potluck lunch. (Emphasis on the "luck" here-- There is no food sign-up.) Please also bring any serving utensils needed for your dish. Some beverages will be provided, but you may want to bring a water bottle. Ostara will bring paper plates and utensils. but you're welcome to bring your own reusable plates and utensils to take home and wash.



**Activities:** Ostara and Dan will bring a couple of yard games and a couple of board games. You're welcome to bring any games or activities you'd like to share.



The Piney Run Nature Center (relatively near the pavilion) is open from 2:00 to 5:00, and is free with admission to the park. Other activities available at the park include hiking trails and boat rentals. See [the website for the park](#) for boat rental fees and other information about park activities opportunities.

**Location and directions:** The address for the park is 30 Martz Road Sykesville, Maryland 21784. Here is a [link for directions](#) from various directions.

We hope you'll be able to join us on September 3rd!

## President's Column

Alright already! I admit it. I have commitment issues.

Not with my husband and marriage. I have commitment issues with volunteer work. All kinds of volunteer work. I have to confess that I've almost never wholeheartedly volunteered to do anything. Not when I agreed to be a Girl Scout leader, a band mom, a mentor teacher, a program leader, a committee chair, an RE teacher, a hauler of furniture, driver of people, cleaner of places, etc. Heck, I've even been reluctant to volunteer for things I initiated and knew I would lead! (Think Middle School Game Day.) Why? That's something I've been thinking about lately.

There's a kind of a pattern in the reasons for my hesitation that some of you might relate to. The reason that most often tripped me up was that at every turn, I already had a busy, full life. I didn't know where I would find the time to take on an additional commitment, especially if it was a big one. I didn't want the extra work.

Then, there was the anxiety that accompanied requests to take on something I knew little about. In those situations, I worried that the learning curve would be too steep, that the potential for mistakes was too great (and they'd be very public!), and that my lack of skills and experience would make me a weak link on a team. Even when my skills and experience were a good match with a volunteer request, apprehension entered the picture as I was uncertain what awaited me on the other side of "yes."

And, sometimes, I was just not interested in doing what was asked of me.

While I didn't always agree to help, I did say "yes" a lot of the time, accepting the risks of discomfort, frustration, and vulnerability. Unlike my reasons for saying no, which were many, there was usually one main reason behind me saying yes—I cared deeply about the group, organization, or people asking for my help, and I wanted to have a part in creating and maintaining the culture and relationships I valued.

Was it difficult to balance the competing needs and inconveniences ushered in by saying yes? Absolutely. Did I ever do something purely out of a sense of obligation? Of course, I did. Did I ever fail and disappoint myself and others? Well, yes. Do I have any regrets about my volunteer history? Some. But most often, the other side of yes felt really good. I got to know new people as well as deepen existing relationships. I stretched myself beyond my comfort zone and grew. I found aspects to enjoy in just about all of my jobs—sometimes in unexpected places. And I found satisfaction in expressing my values in concrete ways that benefited the organizations I cared about.

I imagine you know where this is going. We, Channing Memorial Church, are a small, volunteer-led, spiritual community. We have something unique and beautiful happening here, and we hope not only to sustain it, but also to develop it. We are a hard-working group of people. One of the challenges faced by hard-working groups of people with high aspirations is having enough community involvement to do the necessary work in ways that don't push anyone to the point of overload. This is a challenge faced by many churches and one we face, as well. What can we do about it? Well, one

*(Continued on page 5)*

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

thing we can do is face it.

With this in mind, on Sunday, September 10, I invite you to keep an eye out for a "Help Needed" jobs board. This board, physically present at Epiphany and virtually in the Zoom room, will contain notices of tasks requiring volunteers. All kinds of jobs will be posted, including those with short-term and long-term commitments. There may be one-time events where people can pitch in or tasks that will take a few hours once a month to accomplish. Both remote and in-person opportunities will be included. Anyone can post a request; each notice will contain contact information for learning more. We will add to and take away postings as our volunteer needs fluctuate. Having a central place listing up-to-date volunteer openings will allow each of us to keep a finger on the pulse of our community and see where we can best direct our energy.

I hope the Help Needed jobs board will add flexibility and creativity to our recruiting efforts. People ready to change their volunteer commitments can easily make their desire known using the jobs board. People connected to the church virtually or by covenantal groups rather than by attending in-person services will be able to see ways they can assist without having to be physically present on Sundays. Thanks to Zoom and other technologies, organizing, monitoring, and supervising no longer require in-person attendance. Maybe reluctant volunteers can find ways to buddy up with others to get a job done. Much of what we need will be visible right before us—a gentle call to action.

If you, like me, have commitment issues, I hope the Help Needed jobs board is a bridge from reluctance to risk-taking for you. It is no small thing for a person to step to the other side of yes. It is also no small thing for a community when people take this step. The more people willing to commit to volunteering, in small and large ways, the more collective energy we will have to put toward making an impact in the world.

All my best,

*Kris*

## Board Bits



The Board approved the end-of-year financial reports and agreed to move an approximate \$11,000 surplus from the previous fiscal year to the Reserve Fund.

Rev. Jane returned and gave a report on her time at General Assembly, the books she has read over the summer, and the two studies she will be leading in the Fall: *On Repentance and Repair: Making Amends in an Unapologetic World* and *The New Jim Crow*.

The Board approved removing the requirement for masking while singing with the contingency that Howard County COVID levels remain low. The Music Director Search Team continues its search for a new music director. The Board discussed strategy for discussing future plans with Epiphany. Stay tuned for coming updates!

## Water Communion



As we make our way through summer, I invite us to be intentional about noticing those places that feed our spirits. Perhaps this is a special destination we travel to, a gathering with those we love, or a walk to center in nature. **I invite each of you to collect water from one of these places.** When we join together on **Sunday, September 10 for our annual Water Communion service**, we have a special opportunity to celebrate this water and the story it holds. We will bless the water and join in a ritual to share this water with that from years past,

combining this year's joys with the joys of dedicated members and friends that came before us. I look forward to celebrating this beloved tradition!

## Join the Quieter Space at Coffee Hour!

As a faith centered in love, justice, and radical welcome, we hold in our core the sacred need for inclusivity of all of those in our interdependent web. This summer, we created a quieter space in the downstairs hall allowing for an area for those who are hard of hearing. It has been a blessing! We welcome to this new space all of those who need less noise to engage in conversation. We also want, however, to offer an invitation and a reminder - everyone is welcome there! We can all say hi to and engage with those who need less noise. Let this space not divide us but offer an accessible way for us to engage with one another. We have another way to help many of those among us - to spread out in the fellowship hall. We have an abundance of space, let's use it! I am continually grateful for all of you as we continue to find ways to offer love, acceptance and welcome to everyone who enters our sacred space.

Warmly,  
*Rev. Jane*

## Young Adult Small Group

Each month, our Channing Young Adult group meets to share insights, stories, reflections, and questions. 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!

**Wisdom Tales \*\*Updated meeting time for September! \*\***

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

**\*\*Note - September's discussion has been rescheduled to Wednesday, September 6 from 11am-12pm\*\***

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/94007522019?pwd=MEhIT1IKbDRIUWViTm9WeTFDTERrdz09>

Meeting ID: 940 0752 2019

Passcode: 665527

I hope you will join me!

Warmly,  
Rev. Jane

**UUA Common Read: *On Repentance and Repair***

Each year, the UUA offers a Common Read for Unitarian Universalists across the nation to engage with. This year, our Common Read is *On Repentance and Repair: Making Amends in an Unapologetic World* by Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg.

**Join Rev. Jane in a series of three workshops based on this year's Common**

**Read.** Together, we will deepen our own understanding of “repentance, atonement, forgiveness, and repair from harm - from personal transgressions to our culture’s most painful and unresolved issues.” Topics span from systemic racism to the sexual abuse highlighted in the #MeToo movement to Native American land rights. Written for “anyone who has been hurt or who is struggling to take responsibility for their mistakes,” this book will guide us towards making a difference in our own lives and in the lives of those of whom we have caused harm.

Our discussions will be based on a series of three workshops. First, we will navigate interpersonal relationships. Second, we will focus on communal spaces, such as our church. Lastly, we will engage with our wider communities. I am eager for discussion, and I hope you are as well!

If you are interested in joining this series of workshops, **please let Rev. Jane know by September 5.** We will then coordinate a schedule and a meeting space.

I hope you will join me!

Warmly,  
Rev. Jane

### Music Director Search Team -- Update

Things are in motion for The Music Director Search Team! Since last month, we have accomplished the following:



- Conducted an exit interview with Stephen and revised the job description, audition/interview script and Mission/Vision of Music Program based on Stephen’s input.
- Began advertising the position in several outlets.
- Had our first applicant!
- Created a script for contacting references.
- Started coordinating a schedule for auditions/interviews.

Soon, we hope to be reviewing resumes, contacting references, and scheduling interviews as additional candidates apply. Stay tuned for more updates.

The Music Director Search Team

*Pam E.  
Ken G.  
Jim V.  
(with Rev. Jane)*

### Stewardship update Year-to-date as of July 31, 2023

#### General Operating Fund

Total Operating Income	\$ 18,796
Total Operating Expense	<u>-12,415</u>
Difference	<u>\$ 6,381</u>

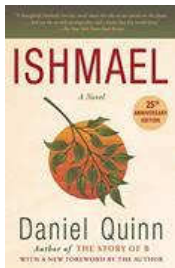


## Channing Book Club

**We 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.

Looking forward, let's read something interesting and a little bit different suggested by Paula. It is:

***Ishmael*** by Daniel Quinn: [https://www.amazon.com/Ishmael-Novel-Book-1-ebook/dp/B000SEFH6A/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=2K8OVYL8YTJAV&keywords=ishmael+daniel+quinn&qid=1688992775&srefix=ish%2Caps%2C82&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Ishmael-Novel-Book-1-ebook/dp/B000SEFH6A/ref=sr_1_1?crid=2K8OVYL8YTJAV&keywords=ishmael+daniel+quinn&qid=1688992775&srefix=ish%2Caps%2C82&sr=8-1)



You will find it readily available on used sites (Amazon, Thriftbooks, Alibris, abebooks, etc., and it may be at some libraries.

We will schedule this on **Saturday October 7**

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.

## Volunteers Needed for Channing Services



Channing needs volunteers for a number of jobs at church! To signup, go to <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f084fa4ad2ba46-sunday1#/> with access code: cmc

We are working to fill roles such as greeter, usher, snacks, zoom support, coffee, cleaning, and others. What can you do? More help is needed. Please volunteer to make the inperson and online services work each week.

Any questions, contact *Cathy F.*

## 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 is welcome. This event is open to the public and folks are encouraged to share this event with anyone who may be interested. Contact *Patrick B.* for information.

## Men's Group

**Thursday September 7 at 10:00 a.m. on Zoom  
and 10:00 am in person at the Bagel Bin on September 21**




Everyone is welcome to 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.



Stephanie's auction item "Brunch Brunch" held in June. She's some cook and hostess!! (Thanks to Nancy H. for the photo)

*Cathy F.*



***The New Jim Crow: A discussion with Rev. Jane***  
**Saturday, November 11, 10:00 am till Noon**

Join Rev. Jane for a discussion of Michelle Alexander's book *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. Today's justice system keeps Black lives at the bottom of society, continuing and maintaining a caste system in America. While we no longer live alongside slavery or in the Jim Crow era of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Michelle Alexander reflects, "We have not ended racial caste in America; we have merely redesigned it." To elaborate, "By targeting Black men through the War on Drugs and decimating communities of color, the US criminal justice system functions as a contemporary system of racial control - relegating millions to a permanent second-class status - even as it formally adheres to the principle of colorblindness." I look forward to this opportunity for reflection, discussion, education and growth.

# September 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					<i>1</i> Membership Team 2:00 pm Outreach Team Meeting 6:00 - 7:00 pm	<i>2</i>
<i>3</i> Picnic at Piney Run Park in Sykesville - No service at Epiphany today	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i> Minister's Office Hours 1:00-4:00 pm	<i>6</i> Wisdom Tales 11:00 am-12:00 pm Young Adult Game Night 7:00-9:00 pm	<i>7</i> Men's Group on Zoom 10:00 am-12:00 pm	<i>8</i> Worship Team Meeting 1:30 - 3:00 pm	<i>9</i>
<i>10</i> Worship Service 11:00 am - Water Communion	<i>11</i>	<i>12</i> Minister's Office Hours 1:00-4:00 pm LDNC Meeting 5:30-7:30 pm Lectio Divina 7:00-8:00 pm	<i>13</i> Stewardship Meeting 7:00-8:00 pm	<i>14</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>17</i> Worship Service 11:00 am	<i>18</i>	<i>19</i> Minister's Office Hours 1:00-4:00 pm Board Meeting 7:00 - 9:00 pm	<i>20</i> Young Adult Small Group 7:00-9:00 pm	<i>21</i> Men's Group at Bagel Bin 10:00 am - 12:00 pm	<i>22</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>24</i> Worship Service 11:00 am	<i>25</i>	<i>26</i> Minister's Office Hours 1:00-4:00 pm Lectio Divina 7:00-8:00 pm	<i>27</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>30</i>

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**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.

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

**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.