



The Channing Connection

CHANNING MEMORIAL CHURCH
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

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October 2023

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Dear Channing members and friends,

You may have caught on by now how much I cherish our interdependent web of life. What about this Principle calls to me? This is the web that ties us together with all that is, was, and ever will be, the web that binds us together eternally by stardust, that ripples outward goodness, love, and joy to all that is. This past week in Lectio Divina we discussed a poem entitled "Ancient Language" by Hannah Stephenson that shares this sentiment:

If you stand at the edge of the forest
and stare into it
every tree at the edge will blow a little extra
oxygen toward you
It has been proven
Leaves have admitted it
The pines I have known
have been especially candid
One said
that all breath in this world
is roped together
that breathing is
the most ancient language

We are held together by all that has ever breathed, entwined by all that has ever lived. Breathing is the most ancient language. While during the discussion I thought of eternity, in the days since I have reflected on our own beloved community – Channing Memorial Church. Together, let us breathe in, and let us breathe out.

We are interdependent in sacred ways simply by being a dedicated church community. Just as in the natural world, what affects one affects all. We are bound together – not only by stardust – but by love, commitment, compassion, and dedication. Breathing the same air – in, and out.

This connection seems increasingly relevant to me as we enter the beginning of a new church year. Just as surely as there will be love, companionship, and joy, there will be changes, disagreements and uncertainty. Let us enter our



**We are a Welcoming
Congregation**

Wayside Pulpit

The notion that science and spirituality are mutually exclusive does a disservice to both.

Carl Sagan

(Continued on page 2)

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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 November 2023 issue of *The Channing Connection* to newsshare@channingmc.org by **7:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 22, 2023.**

(Minister's Column - continued from page 1)

year in covenant, intentional in what ripples out among our web.

I share with you some values I hope we can all uphold, while together we share that common air, breathing in and breathing out. May we each bring our full selves to all that we do. May we offer one another compassion, sharing in kindness and letting judgment fall to the wayside. May we offer grace and forgiveness, for we will each make mistakes. May we listen to one another even when we disagree. May we release ourselves and one another from unattainable perfectionism and allow for messiness. May we engage with conflict with compassion, calm, and insight. May we love and care for one another, with all our hearts and souls.

Why do we agree to this covenant? Why do we maintain our place in this web? Together, we will laugh and cry, we will rejoice and mourn, as we journey through all of life's joys and detriments. Together, we will join as fellow travelers on our unique spiritual and theological journeys. We will grow in faith, in love, and in intellect. Sometimes we need help, and sometimes we can offer help, and church is the medium for both. We are a community of sacred reciprocity. Just like the trees, conversing in that ancient language. Held together in sacred ways, breathing in and breathing out.

With love,
Rev. Jane

Board Bits

The Board approved the Music Director Search Team's request for funds for a substitute musician to relieve Stephen occasionally while we continue searching for a replacement. Lynne Schaefer has stepped up to chair the RE Search Team. They will be meeting soon to coordinate next steps.

The Space Team presented their views on ways to continue working with Epiphany Lutheran. Action item: Kris and Dan plan to meet with Epiphany leaders to gauge their interest in continuing our partnership.

The Board discussed potential dates for a Board Retreat, to include LDNC and other interested members. The retreat will examine our governance structure and ways to keep our church functioning well.

President's Column

It's October, and things are in full swing here at Channing Memorial Church.

Reverend Jane returned from study/vacation leave in August and hit the ground running. Our ritual of Water Communion in September marked our coming together for a new church year. Committees and teams have been meeting, socializing has been happening, "Sundays After" and other group discussions and explorations have reconvened, and the board has a few meetings under its belt.

We're on the move!

As is true every year, the agendas for board meetings are full. Today, I'd like to highlight four of the many important items currently before the board. These items are of particular importance because work on them is unfolding now, they will be best served by robust congregational involvement, and they have a significant impact on church life now and into the future. Here's an update.

Epiphany Lutheran Church

Last April, we entered into a lease agreement with Epiphany Lutheran Church for a period of one year. Much has happened since then. I'm wondering, how is it going for you?

What has your experience at Epiphany been like this year? What has been going well for you? What are your areas of concern? How suitable a match is Epiphany for us?



These are some of the questions the board has been discussing, and I hope you've been thinking about them, as well. Our future at Epiphany is one of the most important questions our congregation will grapple with this year. The board aims to have this discernment process be inclusive, accessible, and transparent.

Thinking this through will be a participatory process involving information sharing, collaboration, deep listening, and reflection. The board's first step is to meet with leaders from Epiphany to gauge their interest in continuing our partnership and under what terms. Keep your eye out for notice of how this and other information will be shared.

Church Structure and Governance



Like churches worldwide, we have confronted many challenges over the past few years. The Covid-19 pandemic, as well as cultural shifts in church participation and function have impacted all aspects of church life, from how we worship to how we engage with the larger world. The world of church in general and our church in particular has changed.

It's time for us to take a fresh look at our structure and governance, as they make up the foundation of our spiritual home. A thoughtful examination of this foundation will help us better understand what is and isn't serving us well and help us better navigate the complexities of church life in a changing time. A strong and well-considered church

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structure and governance will help ensure our church's healthy functioning now and into the future.

With this in mind, the board is currently working with the staff of the Central East Region (CER) of the UUA to arrange a facilitated day-long retreat on church structure and governance involving members of the board, the Leadership Development and Nominating Committee (LDNC) and members who express interest in this issue. The retreat will explicitly focus on the needs of small congregations. If you are interested in participating in this retreat, please let a board member know.

Religious Education for Children and Youth



Our congregation has a strong history of supporting religious education for children and youth. My own entry into Channing was through my children, which is to say, through the RE program over 25 years ago. In recent years, however, we have struggled to bring our vision of a vibrant RE program to life.

In order to move forward with rebuilding an RE program, the board designated funding for a part-time RE professional in this year's budget. We are very fortunate that Lynne, Cathy, and Rosie have agreed to be part of a team that will coordinate this effort. I am incredibly grateful for their involvement, the perspective each of them brings to this work, and their commitment to our future.

When my husband and I walked through Channing's doors all those years ago, I was just happy to find an RE program with an open-minded and inclusive approach to spirituality. However, as my children grew and I watched them navigate the world, I began to deeply appreciate how the core values of Unitarian Universalism can provide a foundation for an engaged and fulfilling life.

Today's world can be a tough place to grow up in. Providing a safe, supportive space for young people to explore their beliefs and values, interact with diverse perspectives, learn to engage in the world, and have fun is more than a worthy endeavor. Let's make this happen!

Music Director Search Process

The search for our new music director began last June when the Music Director Search Team (MDST) was formed. The team, consisting of Pam, Jim V., Ken G., and Rev. Jane, is deeply engaged in finding someone well-suited to our congregation.



The board recognizes that music ministry plays a profound role in our church. Not only does music enhance our worship experience, it helps foster spiritual growth, and a sense of community. The board is very grateful for the knowledge, skill, and determination the MDST members bring to the charge and is committed to wholeheartedly supporting their work.

You can follow the progress of the MDST by reading their monthly updates in the Channing Connection. Several of these updates invite you to share your thoughts

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and feelings about aspects of the search. Please consider adding your voice to the conversation!

Thank you for your active involvement in church matters as we move forward this year. Your dedication to our church's mission and vision is greatly appreciated, and the board is grateful for your support as we continue the work of the church.

All my best,

Kris

Music Director Search Team -- Update



Last month we reported that things were in motion for The Music Director Search Team. Unfortunately, since then, things have slowed down considerably. Here's what's been happening:

- Our promising applicant withdrew from consideration after receiving a full-time job offer.
- Having not received any further applications, we expanded our advertising to other outlets, including some paid advertising.
- Still, we have not had further interest in the position.
- We did have one offer from someone to serve as an occasional musician.

Currently, we are exploring the occasional musician option as a way to give Stephen some scheduled Sundays off, as he graciously continues to serve during the search process. Once we get that in place, we will revisit our advertising strategies. If you have any ideas, please let us know! We will keep you posted with any significant progress.

The Music Director Search Team

Pam E.

Ken G.

Jim V.

(with Rev. Jane)



Volunteers Needed

Channing Memorial Church at Howard County Pride

What: Howard County Pride sponsored by PFLAG

When: Sunday, Oct. 15th 11am - 4pm

Where: At the Chrysalis at Symphony Woods, Columbia

Sign Up to volunteer: [HERE](#)

The Outreach Team at Channing is looking for volunteers to help staff the Channing table at this year's HoCo Pride event on Sunday, October 15th from 11am-4pm. This is a great opportunity for us to get out in the community and share our mission and vision with folks who may be looking for a church. By participating, we are also supporting the work of [PFLAG](#) whose mission is to "promote the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people as well as their families and friends."

We will have a table and a tent provided by the event sponsor. We will need to bring chairs. We need help with setup from 8-9:30 am and then for 2 hour shifts between 11am-4pm. Unfortunately, volunteers for the early part of the day will miss church and coffee hour. Rev. Jane has said that this will be an excused absence. □

Sign Up [HERE](#) to staff the table or help with setup or take down.

Rev. Jane will be participating in an interfaith service at 3pm at the event.

Please join us. Even if you are unable to volunteer, please plan to attend and show support for the gay, lesbian and transgender community of Howard County.

Thank You!

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. The next meeting will be on October 18. 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!

Save the date!



The **2023 Channing Memorial Church Auction Weekend Extravaganza** will take place on **November 10-12, 2023**.

Here are our well laid plans:

- **Friday, November 10th:** Online via Auctria: Silent auction and fixed price event signup open.
- **Saturday, November 11th:** At Epiphany Lutheran Church: Live auction will be an **in person dinner** (that's right, your eyes do not deceive you, an **in person dinner**) with some kind of entertainment.
- **Sunday, November 12th:** Silent auction ends.

What do we need from you?

Donations: We need donations for the silent and fixed price events and for the live auction. It's not a hard and fast rule, but silent auction items tend to be household goods, artwork, or food, while fixed price events and live auction items tend to be dinners, classes, etc.

Entertainers: While we do have a few people interested in participating as entertainers, we could certainly use a few more. Moreover, we do not have anyone in a leadership role, nor do we have any kind of concrete entertainment plan. If this sounds like your kind of thing, please let the Auction Planning Committee know ASAP.

Your Participation: Experts agree, your participation is **the key** to a successful auction, so mark your calendars, plan your donations, dust off your singing voice, and save your pennies for November 10-12!

With love,

The Auction Planning Committee channingauction@yahoo.com

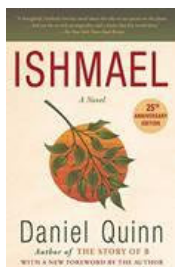
Cathy F., David F., Eric S.

Channing Book Club

Saturday, October 7 at 10:00 AM at Park Ave.

We usually meet on the second Saturday of the month 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.

The next discussion is about a book that is something interesting and a little bit different, suggested by Paula. It is:



Ishmael by Daniel Quinn: <https://tinyurl.com/yc4buvdx>

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

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.*

Men's Group

**Thursday October 5 at 10:00 a.m. on Zoom
and 10:00 am in person at the Bagel Bin on October 19**

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.

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

Wisdom Tales **Updated meeting time for October!**

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 on the **first Tuesday** of the month, **11am-12pm**, held on Zoom.

****Note - October's discussion has been rescheduled to Wednesday, October 4 from 11am-12pm****

Join the Zoom Meeting

Lectio Divina

We have returned to our normal schedule of the 2nd and 4th Tuesday evenings at 7 pm. Next Meeting is October 10, 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.

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.

Join the Zoom Meeting.

The New Jim Crow: A discussion with Rev. Jane

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.
Saturday, Nov. 11, 10 till noon at Park Avenue.

Stewardship update Year-to-date as of August 31, 2023

General Operating Fund

Total Operating Income	\$ 32,350
Total Operating Expense	<u>27,759</u>
Difference	\$ 4,591



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.

October 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Worship Service 11:00-12:00 am	2	3 Minister's Office Hours 1:00-4:00 pm	4 Wisdom Tales 11:00 am-12:00 pm Space Search Team Meeting 5:00-6:00 pm Young Adult Game Night 7:00-9:00 pm	5 Men's Group on Zoom 10:00 am-12:00 pm	6 Membership Team Meeting 2:00 pm Outreach Team Meeting 6:00-7:00 pm	7 Channing Book Club 10:00 am
8 Worship Service 11:00-12:00 am	9	10 Minister's Office Hours 1:00-4:00 pm LDNC Meeting 5:30-7:30 pm Lectio Divina 7:00-8:00 pm	11 Stewardship Meeting 7:00-8:00 pm	12	13 Worship Team Meeting 1:30-3:00 pm	14
15 Worship Service 11:00-12:00 am Channing Table at Howard County Pride in Columbia 11:00 am-4:00	16	17 Minister's Office Hours 1:00-4:00 pm Board Meeting 7:00-9:00 pm	18 Young Adult Small Group 7:00 - 9:00 pm	19 Men's Group 10:00 am-12:00 pm at Bagel Bin	20	21
22 Worship Service 11:00-12:00 am	23	24 Minister's Office Hours 1:00-4:00 pm Lectio Divina 7:00-8:00 pm	25	26	27	28
29 Worship Service 11:00-12:00 am	30	31 Minister's Office Hours 1:00-4:00 pm HALLOWEEN				

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.