

The Channing Connection

CHANNING MEMORIAL CHURCH UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

Volume 27, Issue 3 March 2020

March Minister's Column

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In	01	~		•
	27	ш	•	•
		_	\sim	•

March Sermons2	
Stewardship Update2	
President's Column3	
Young Adult Potluck4	
Chili Cookoff4	
Rev. Jane's Installation5	
Book Review by Bert6	
From Membership7	
Board Bits7	
Committee on Ministry7	
CMC Church Covenant8	
LH3 Activities9	
Potluck/Game Night9	
Webinar Pi Day10)
Webinar Pi Day10 Ignite Social Justice List10	
<u> </u>)
Ignite Social Justice List10)
Ignite Social Justice List10 Channing Book Club10) 1
Ignite Social Justice List10 Channing Book Club10 Rekindling the Flame11)

We are a Welcoming Congregation!



Wayside Pulpit

Each day comes bearing gifts. Until the ribbons.

— Ann Ruth Schnabaker

I've been spending a good amount of time in nature these days as the spring temperatures rise. It's been beautiful! Sunny skies, fluffy white clouds. And yet this morning as I was preparing to start my day, my mind traveled to a much chillier time: December. Specifically, the December holidays.

Every year I pause in the month of December to bake goodies for the holidays: almond crescent cookies, chocolate pepper cookies, and mint brownies, to list my favorites. So much goes into these cookies! I need to have funds to purchase the ingredients, the time to prep and bake, and some knowledge of baking. Treasure, time, and talent. That sounds familiar to our stewardship goals – necessary for cookies, and necessary for church community. And when I make these cookies, I inevitably plan on eating far too many. I also plan, however, to offer these gifts to those around me, placing cookies in tins and bags decorated with bows and ribbons and distributing them to those I love.

This month, as we explore the theme of wisdom, we also take time to reflect on stewardship and outreach at Channing Memorial Church. It is that time of year when we kick off our pledge drive, when we reflect on what Channing means to us and the future we envision. We reflect on our ability to give generously, to the extent that we can, to fulfill these goals. We each have ways to contribute to church, and just like when baking those cookies, each piece is crucial – a crucial combination of time, talent, and treasure.

And what about sharing these cookies with the world? We have been doing some exciting work at Channing around outreach. We have a new enthusiastic Outreach Team, and we are getting our name known in the surrounding area. Like I share my cookies, let's share Channing Memorial Church. Let us bring this beloved community out into the world so that others can share in all that feeds our souls!

Warmly, Rev. Jane

Minister

Reverend Jane Smith

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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 April issue of *The Channing Connection* to newsshare@channingmc.org by 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, March 22, 2020.

March Sermons

10 am at Linden Hall



Rekindling the Flame 3/1

As we begin Stewardship Month, we will hear all about what sparked the creation of Channing from those who created this congregation 27 years ago. What sparks each and every one of us about this place we call home, and how can we tend to this flame? We have the opportunity to care for and nurture what provides this life-sustaining warmth by contributing to this spiritual community.

Where Have I Not Yet Looked? 3/8

Today we explore the various and sometimes unexpected ways to seek wisdom. We may find wisdom in our mistakes, discomfort or disappointment. How can we remind ourselves to check these unexpected places?

The Sweet Spot 3/15

There is wisdom in discernment and intuition and in finding ways to communicate with that which lies within. Today we trust our intuition and hold space for uncertainty. In life, we need to discern our level of commitment to that which feeds our souls. How can we find our sweet spot?

Shining Our Light 3/22

Wisdom is a gift; wisdom connects us and gives us strength as a community. Let us explore these sometimes unexpected gifts. How can we share these gifts and this cherished wisdom with those we care about?

Come In, We're Open 3/29 with Pam El-Dinary, Worship Associate

Part of our mission is to "Invite seekers into spiritual community." What are some ways we make Channing Memorial Church open and inviting? How do we let seekers know that we're here, and we're open?

Stewardship Update

January Year to Date

Total Operating Income \$112,854 Total Operating Expenses \$96,801

Difference \$16,052



President's Column

March is an exciting month...

We'll be focusing on wisdom and stewardship. You'll hear stories from your fellow congregation members at church on Sunday as you prepare to make your annual pledge to support Channing.

March 14 is the Small Congregations gathering in Gettysburg. If you plan to attend, you need to register by March 1.

For me, there have been several key messages in the Small Congregations webinars:

- Small congregations have many strengths our limitations can be turned into advantages.
- Small congregations that try to be full-service churches risk volunteer burnout.
- The full-service church model may no longer be as relevant in the 21st century.
- It is difficult to sustain a full-service church model if you have fewer than 120 members.
- There are many small congregations in our association that are doing amazing things and having a great impact on their communities.
- Small congregations should focus on the one or two things that they do really well.
- If there is simply no energy or interest in a project that we think we "should" be doing, perhaps it is in fact not something that we "should do" it is okay to choose not to do some projects.
- People in today's world are hungry for the connections and community that small congregations offer.

The board and other teams/committees will be looking at the feedback that was gathered during the cottage conversations. Thank you to everyone who participated. The notes collected have been placed in one place on Google Drive. If your team or committee would like access, please email Julie F. for a link.

The board is also working on the bylaws review, required every two years, and will be preparing for the annual meeting in upcoming months.

The space search process is starting in a methodical way with initial information gathering. The comments that were made during cottage meetings will be considered as we set our requirements and budget. The board expects to appoint a space search committee in June.

Last Sunday of the month, plan to grab some chili after church at the Bridges to Housing Stability Chili cook-off. Vote for the best chili, which will be made by your favorite church!

Of course, don't forget to attend the installation service for Rev. Jane at First Unitarian in Baltimore on March 28.

—Julie

Young Adult Potluck on March 14

Are you looking to connect with other young adults (20s, 30s and 40s) and young families with similar interests and values? As Unitarian Universalists, we come together to share common values, not common beliefs. We live by our Seven Principles, including respect for the inherent worth and dignity of every person and respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are all a part.

On March 14 from 4:30-7:30pm, at our Park Ave location, join members and friends of Channing Memorial Church, Unitarian Universalist for a time of connection, conversation, and fun. We are excited to welcome both young adults and children! We will have childcare provided on site from 4:30-6pm.

This month we will have both vegan and meat enchiladas. A salad will also be provided. This event also falls on "Pi Day," so we encourage folks to bring pie! Please let us know if you have any other dietary restrictions. Attendees are welcome to bring a dish to share.

Adults are invited to participate in a potluck dinner and a time for board games. We will have kid friendly food available as well as activities for the children. We hope this will be a night of connection for all. This event is open to the public – folks are encouraged to share this event with anyone who may be interested in attending. (Note that this event is targeted to folks in their 20s, 30s, and 40s.) We hope to see you there!

-Rev. Jane and Patrick B.

Chili Cookoff Brings the Heat

Come support Channing in the Bridges "Hotter Than Thou" Chili Cookoff! We will be entering Steve and Joe's special vegan chili, winner of our auction chili cook-off in November!

Admission to the event is free, but bring cash to vote for the best chili (cough cough, ours). All proceeds benefit Bridges to Housing Stability. See flyer to the right for details.

— Colleen





Installation of Rev. Jane Smith

Saturday, March 28 at 2:00 p.m.

First Unitarian Church of Baltimore

10 W Franklin Street

Baltimore MD 21201

This very special ceremony will be held on Saturday March 28 at 2:00 p.m. at the First Unitarian Church of Baltimore

An installation is a special worship service held to formally celebrate the covenantal relationship between a minister and the congregation that has called the minister. On March 28, Rev. Jane and Channing Memorial Church will join together to celebrate the



promises made to one another through worship, song, and ritual. This event is a celebration of the joy of having found one another, and a ritual agreement to enter into a covenant of shared ministry.

Individual invitations were sent via email to members and friends in February. You should RSVP through the invitation you received.

There is a parking garage across the street from the church at 15 West Franklin Street. Cost \$5.00 - Pay before you return to your car!

Street parking is also available. Pay to Park is in effect on Saturdays.

Carpooling is encouraged!

A reception will follow the Installation ceremony. It will be held from 4:00-6:00 p.m. at Oliver's Carriage House, *5410 Leaf Treader Way, Columbia, MD 21044*.??



Book Review by Bert

Getting a grip on what Unitarian Universalism is all about can be a bit of a challenge to a newcomer. After I started participating in the community about a year ago, I turned to the local library to get a handle on the basics. There I found David E. Bumbaugh's excellent work, Unitarian Universalism: A Narrative History. (Note that the book is also available in our own collection at Park Avenue.)

Prior to reading, my knowledge of Unitarian Universalism was very limited. I had somehow absorbed the idea that it was more philosophical than mystical, and that it didn't require adherence to supernatural dogmas or myths like other religions. Online interactions with a UU member in blog comment threads suggested that UU was pretty liberal. I'd also picked up the tidbit that several early American presidents had been Unitarian.

David's book fleshed out the UU story for me. I've always loved history, so I immediately found it engaging. One of the first surprises to hit me was seeing Transylvania's prominent early role. A land known to most of the West as the home of the world's most famous vampire turns out to have been (along with Poland) the birthplace of one of the West's least supernatural religions.

It's an amusingly counterintuitive historical fact. David describes how the Slavic region's tenuous existence in the buffer zone between the Islamic and Christian worlds made it something of a safe haven for religious reformers and radicals during the tumultuous 16th century when proto-Unitarianism got its start. The largest and oldest Unitarian congregation in the world (the Unitarian Church of Transylvania) began during this time, according to Wikipedia. (A Unitarian even led an unsuccessful revolt in the province at the beginning of the 17th century.)

David describes how Unitarian ideas flowed along with commerce through the flourishing trade network of Holland into England. By the 19th century, Unitarian congregations were forming in the nascent United States.

One of the formative events in Unitarianism took place right here in Maryland when William Ellery Channing delivered "The Baltimore Sermon" in 1819. David characterized the hour and a half oration as "one of the most significant sermons ever preached in the United States." Eight editions of it were printed in four months.

David covers the separate trajectory of American Universalism, and the ultimate merger of that denomination with Unitarianism in 1961. He concludes with a description of Unitarian Universalism's ideological history through the end of the 20th century, with a particular emphasis on the vital role women have played in the community's thriving activism.

David's book is edifying and well-written, though it would have benefited from the inclusion of some visuals — along with a more orthodox chapter organization — to break up and illuminate the complex and sometimes-confusing historical narrative. But I wouldn't hesitate to recommend Unitarian Universalism: A Narrative History to anyone interested in learning more about the birth and development of our religion.

From Membership

Interested in Becoming a Member?



The Membership Committee encourages those considering membership to make an appointment to meet with Reverend Jane.

The Annual Congregational Meeting of Channing Memorial is Sunday, May 17, 2020. Anyone wishing to vote on issues before the congregation must be members for at least 30 days before that meeting. Please talk to Joe, Steve or Marian should you have any questions about membership.

Need a New Directory?

The Channing Directory is always being updated. If you would like an updated directory at any time, email membership@channingmc.org

Board Bits

The February 18 meeting started with a very strong Minister's report by Reverend Jane. Sunday service attendance has been up and small group ministries have also been well attended.

The cottage meeting notes are being collected and the Board will review them and pull out the common themes for later use. At the time of this writing, there are two cottage meetings remaining.

The Board approved adding a \$200 budget item for young adult programming.

Maureen and other space search folks are meeting with a commercial realtor at the end of February, as part of the Board's space search plan for the coming year.

The Board is reviewing the bylaws with help from Anne H. to see if there are any changes to propose to the congregation at the May annual meeting.

Dan V., Board Scribe

Committee on Ministry

Did you know that Channing Memorial Church has a Committee on Ministry? Responsibilities of the Committee on Ministry vary from congregation to congregation, and we are working with Rev. Jane to establish the responsibilities for our team. Types of responsibilities may include one or more of the following: Ministerial Advisement, Conflict Engagement, Ministerial Professional Development Support, and Congregational Assessment. This committee also serves as a space to discuss congregational feedback. We will keep you informed of the committee's charge as it is established. Currently, we have the happy task of helping Rev. Jane plan her Installation service on March 28.

Committee members are Rebecca B., Pam E., Ken K., Ken G. and Kris T.

Channing Memorial Church Covenant (Approved 5/21/2017)

Our covenant is a set of promises we make to one another to create a climate of brave space. It represents our understanding that we come together as a church to be part of something bigger than who we are by ourselves. In that spirit, we strive to promote the good of the whole community and the individual.

We promise to work together collaboratively with a commitment to justice, equity, and compassion. We:

- o Engage with respect and kindness.
- Encourage those who are quieter to "lean in" and those who are naturally outspoken to "lean out" for full engagement.
- o Seek to understand one another's perspectives, intentions and needs.
- Commit to having fun even as we engage in the serious work of church, using gentle humor to ease the way through challenges.

• We promise to invite and encourage each person to be open, honest and engaged. We:

- o Listen respectfully to one another and uphold the equality of voices and feelings.
- Honor confidentiality regarding sensitive matters. We also recognize that there may be times when an obligation to guard someone's safety may override the need for confidentiality.
- Value and encourage active participation of all and understand that each person's capacity to engage varies.
- o Encourage one another to stretch, take risks, and ask for help.
- o Take personal responsibility for our own boundaries and connection.
- Speak for ourselves when expressing our concerns. We don't expect anyone else to speak for us, nor will we speak on behalf of others who are able to speak for themselves.
- o Address those with whom we have a concern, directly and authentically.

We promise to bravely wrestle with challenging issues and discuss fairly, respectfully, and constructively the opinions of others. We:

- Acknowledge that different opinions and perspectives are part of the richness of our diversity. We are "like-hearted" people, not necessarily "like-minded." Even though we may disagree, we are still equal members of the community.
- o Strive to be clear and honest when we have an objection, and to get to the core of the problem quickly.
- Honor that Channing Memorial Church is a spiritual and religious place, remaining respectfully engaged regardless of political identity.
- Commit to keeping lines of communication open, particularly when polarization is a danger, and staying connected with each other, regardless of whether our perspective is shared by the whole.

Continued on page 6

Channing Covenant, continued from page 5

 Accept that living in beloved community is not always comfortable. We acknowledge that discomfort is sometimes essential to growth, and we commit to staying connected as best we can in order to work things out.

Upholding this covenant is the responsibility of everyone in the church community. This is a living document for us as committed and imperfect human beings: We make it. We live it. We break it. We recommit. As we live out this covenant, we look to our mission, our vision, and our UU principles to guide us and move us forward.

LH3 Youth Create Valentines for Charlestown Retirement Community

Our LH3 (Loving Hearts, Helping Hands) youth group created nearly 50 valentine cards and included individually wrapped chocolates. Maggie N. delivered the cards to Charlestown Retirement Village residents in independent living, assisted living and memory care. Maggie reports that the residents were thrilled and surprised to receive the cards and especially loved the chocolate. They send copious heartfelt thank yous to the youth of Channing Memorial Church.

LH3 Youth Need Donations for March

Our Loving Hearts, Helping Hands youth group will be creating birthday gift boxes and wrapping them for 8 - 10 year old foster children who are part of the "Building Families for Children" organization. This is the second year that the youth will create birthday boxes for children in the foster program. We plan to assemble 10 gift boxes, and donations of items for the boxes are needed! Please check your email for the signup genius to contribute, or go to https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0b44adaf2da31-lh3birthday.

All items should be brought to church on Sunday, March 8th. Many thanks for your participation and help in making a young child's day!

Thanks, Anne and Kathleen



Channing Potluck & Game Night-Please note change of date for March!



In March, you're invited to join us on the *third* Friday, March 20th, 6-9 pm, for food, friends and games at the Park Avenue house. Bring a game or two and a dish to share... or just bring yourself. And bring a friend! All are welcome.

Questions? Contact Ostara H.

Small Numbers, Infinite Possibilities Pi Day Gathering!



It's almost here! Fans of the Small Numbers, Infinite Possibilities webinar series will be gathering on **Saturday**, **March 14**, **2020** from 12—4:30 pm in Gettysburg for discussion, idea swapping and pie.

Each person attending MUST register. Link for registration information: https://www.uua.org/central-east/events/region/pi-day-small-congregation-gatherings

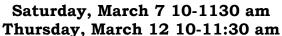
If you register for Pi Day in Gettysburg, please let Julie know by February 29 at 7 pm. She will send out a list so that people can coordinate carpools with each other. If you can't make the meeting in Gettysburg, there's also a virtual gathering- see above link for information.

CER offers this Resource Website for small congregations: https://www.uua.org/central-east/resources/topics/smallercongregations

Are you on Channing's Social Justice/Outreach **Sharing List?**

Sign up to be included on the email list ignite@channingmc.org by sending an email to webmaster@channingmc.org. Notices sent to ignite@channingmc.org will go to everyone who has signed up. Members and friends of Channing are involved in a variety of advocacy organizations and activities. Get on the list and get involved!

Channing Book Club Meetings for March



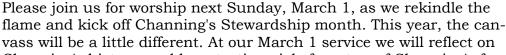
The January book club meetings were a great success! We had fifteen attendees between the two sessions. The book club will meet every other month.

Our book choice for March is The Art of Living: Peace and Freedom in the **Here and Now** by Thich Nhat Hanh.

Discussions will be at Park Avenue. Come at 10 am on either March 7 or March 12. No need to sign up in advance; we ask only that you read the book if you can, and come with a comment or question to help stimulate the discussion.

The book is available on Amazon, at local libraries and on websites selling used books. Hope to see you there!

Rekindling the Flame





Channing's history, and hear testimonials from two of Channing's founding members. The canvass packet will be emailed after the kickoff service and you will have two weeks to consider what Channing means to you. There will be additional testimonials on March 8 and March 15 and on March 15 you will have the opportunity to make a pledge of financial support to the mission and goals of Channing Memorial Church for the upcoming church year.

If you are new to Channing, or if you are a long time member who has questions about our canvass process, you may request a visit from a Board or Stewardship Committee member.

Based on the success of last year's matching pledge challenge, all pledge increases and new pledges will be matched up to \$7,600, thereby doubling the impact of your increase on our operating budget for the July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021 church year. See you Sunday.

Warmly,

The Stewardship Team

Evelyn G., Anne H., Ken H., Ostara H., Diana M., Lynne S., Dan V., Cathy F.



What are You Doing This Summer? Some UU-centered activities

General Assembly, aka GA, on June 24-28 in Providence, RI. See www.uua.org/ga for more information. Or ask Rev. Jane!

Central East Region Summer Institute (CERSI) on July 12-18 in California, PA. See www.cersiuu.org for more details.

Unirondack— a UU Camp and Conference Center in the Adirondacks has many programs and camps. See www.unirondack.org for more details.

Read a book on UU history or by a UU writer. If you like it, perhaps our book club can read it, too!

Save some water from a place meaningful to you. It doesn't have to be Paris, just a place that meant something to you this summer. We'll bring our water to church at Ingathering in September.

March 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
10 am Sunday Service at Linden Hall Spirit Play	2	3 1—4 pm Minister's Drop in Office	4 4—9 pm Private music lessons 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	5 10 am Men's Group at Bagel Bin 2:30—8 pm Private music	6	7 Channing Book Group 10 am 9 am—1pm Private music lessons
8 10 am Sunday Service at Linden Hall LH3 and KidZone Daylight Saving Time Begins at 2am- set your clocks ahead one hour	9	1—4 pm Minister's Drop in Office Hours	11 4—9 pm Private music lessons 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	Channing Book Group 10 am 2:30—8 pm Private music lessons	13	9 am—1pm Private music lessons UU Small Congregations Gathering 12 noon Young Adult Potluck 4:30 pm
15 10 am Sunday Service at Linden Hall	16	17 1—4 pm Minister's Drop in Office Hours 7 pm Board of Trustees meeting	18 4—9 pm Private music lessons 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	2:30—8 pm Private music lessons	20 Potluck and Game Night 69 pm	9 am—1pm Private music lessons 10 am Men's Group at Bagel Bin
22 10 am Sunday Service at Linden Hall KidZone	23	24 1—4 pm Minister's Drop in Office Hours	25 4—9 pm Private music lessons 7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	26 2:30—8 pm Private music lessons Groceries to Westside Shelter	27	28 9 am—1pm Private music lessons Rev. Jane's Installation 2 pm Reception 4:00 - 6:00 pm
29 10 am Sunday Service at Linden Hall 12:30 pm Chili Cookoff at Bridges	30	31 1—4 pm Minister's Drop in Office Hours				

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 Linden Hall: .From the South:

Drive north on Rt. 29 from south of Columbia.

Take Rt. 108 West.

Turn right onto Columbia Road.

Turn right at the first light on Old Annapolis Road.

You will be behind the Dorsey Search Village Center. Take the third entry road on the left (Old Route 108).

The parking lot is immediately on your right. Overflow spaces available at other locations in the Village Center.

From Baltimore:

Take 70W to Rt. 29 south.

Take Rt. 108 West.

Turn right onto Columbia Road.

Turn right at the first light on Old Annapolis Road.

You will be behind the Dorsey Search Village Center. Take the third entry road on the left (Old Route 108).

The parking lot is immediately on your right. Overflow spaces available at other locations in the Village Center.