



# The Channing Connection

CHANNING MEMORIAL CHURCH  
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

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December 2021

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## Minister's Column



Dear Channing members and friends,

Daylight too quickly turns to night as our trees turn from shades of green to brown and slowly become barren. We are in the heart of fall and all the beauty and eternal wisdom it offers. In the season of gratitude, I am thankful for you! I am thankful for your smiles as you share with me your joys. I am thankful for your vulnerable tears and the trust you have placed in me. I am grateful for each heartfelt question posed and each prayer we share. I hold deep gratitude in my heart for the love and support you offered me when my stepfather died; I appreciate you.

I appreciate the heart and soul of this church. In our over two years together, I see a profound love that, like our interdependent web, holds everyone together and keeps us connected to one another in sacred ways. I see a dedication to the church and this community that is hard to match. I see, at your core, a deep thirst for faith and spirituality. And, finally, I see a group of profoundly resilient people! There is so much you have persevered through. You are a gem of a church.

I am grateful to be your minister, and I hope that you are proud of yourselves! At this stage in the pandemic, we have accomplished two things that are currently rare in Unitarian Universalist churches: we have maintained our membership, and we have a very large percentage of members and friends regularly attending worship. This is wonderful! Last year, we had a very successful pledge drive, and we are gearing up for another one. Together, we are bravely wrestling with the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle, as we maintain our relationships and connection throughout a global pandemic. I invite each of you to reflect, what in this community are you grateful for? What are you proud of?

And yet, as the air cools and jackets become a necessity, we enter a season that may be hard for some folks. The holidays may be a time of great joy, and the holidays may be a time of sadness and hardship. Know that whatever you may be feeling is just right. You are good, you are whole, and you  
*Continued on next page*

## We are a Welcoming Congregation!



### Wayside Pulpit

They come to church to  
share God, not find God.

—Alice Walker

**Minister**

Reverend Jane Smith

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**President:**

David Fu ('22)

**Vice President:** Vacant

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Kris Tyssowski ('23)

**Newsletter Editors:**

Cathy Fu

Ken Grim

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 January 2022 issue of *The Channing Connection* to [newsshare@channingmc.org](mailto:newsshare@channingmc.org) by **7:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 26, 2021.**

*Minister's Column, continued from page 1*

are loved. I invite you, if you are joyous, to invite some others into your midst. If you are struggling, know that your community is here to help, as am I. Please don't hesitate to reach out for any needs.

In this season, I invite you into a time of rest and rejuvenation. May we take time to pause and breathe in that chilly air. May we slow down and give a beloved an unexpected hug. May we rejoice in the simple things. May we know we are held in love, this day, and every day.

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. We will then 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!** There is no prep work for these gatherings.

—*Rev. Jane*

**Stewardship Update**



**November 2021 Year to Date**

Total Operating Income	\$ 85,919
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 42,707
Difference	\$ 43,212

## President's Column



As I write this on this lovely pre-Thanksgiving Sunday, I see that the leaves are all but gone from the sugar maple tree that towers over our front yard. We enjoyed the last of their brilliant colors and sweet scents as we raked and bagged most of them last weekend, and now Winter looms near. Today was “bread service” in Church, and while I couldn’t take in the smells and tastes of this lovely tradition, I still enjoyed the sights and the stories, which added to the anticipation of celebrating my own family’s Thanksgiving gathering and traditions. May you and yours have a good one.

We have had a handful of outdoor gatherings and one worship service at Park Avenue. They were reasonably attended, and I count them as successes. For Christmas Eve there are plans for another outdoor gathering at Park Avenue in the afternoon and a virtual Christmas Eve service in the evening. If you have a look at the Board Bits this month you’ll see that a fire pit has been purchased to help us stay warmer at these gatherings as we head into the next season.

Last month I mentioned that the highest priority of the Board was to secure Sunday morning worship space ASAP. While it’s a bit early for me to write anything definitive at this time, wheels are definitely turning, and I hope, (fingers crossed again), that by the time I write my January column that we will have had a chance to worship in person. Hybrid (combined online and in-person) worship is a new thing for us, and there will almost certainly be some bumps and obstacles, so I ask you all for patience as we, (especially the Worship and Music teams), work out the details.

We will get there.

Care,  
*David*

## Blue Holidays

**Wednesday, December 15 7-8pm via Zoom**



It can be helpful to have a space to process the difficult moments of the holiday season. Some folks have lost a loved one. Some come from difficult family situations. Some are in recovery from alcohol or battle depression. For a multitude of reasons, many people struggle during this holiday season. If this season is difficult for you, you are invited to this special program with Rev. Jane. We’ll take time for prayer, meditation, ritual, and reflection. I ask you to reflect on two questions before our time together:

What’s weighing on your soul this holiday season?  
How do you plan to take care of yourself and your soul this holiday season?

I look forward to this time of connection.

Warmly,  
*Rev. Jane*



## New and Exciting Role: Worship Assistant!

Interested in worship arts, but wary of the commitment of Worship Associate? Worship is at the core of our church. Right now, our Worship Team needs help to continue to offer the same quality of worship we are accustomed to. Together, we put together a new role - Worship Assistant! This exciting role allows you to engage with our sacred act of worship in a simple yet meaningful way. How much do you want to engage? That's up to you and your spirit!

Our first option is to simply be another voice in the service. When Rev. Jane is in charge of worship, you can read aloud various liturgical elements during service.

Want a little more engagement? You are more than welcome at our monthly meetings! In addition, you can meet with Rev. Jane the week of the service and provide some input to the content. She always appreciates another viewpoint!

There is no expectation that the Assistant will provide entire worship services on Rev. Jane's Sundays out of the pulpit.

This is not necessarily a long-term commitment, and our hope is to rotate through volunteers quarterly. Engaging in worship provides a special way to engage with what we hold sacred. We hope this work will feed your soul, as it does ours! If you are interested, please reach out to Rev. Jane at [minister@channingmc.org](mailto:minister@channingmc.org) by December 5.

We are excited to welcome you into the Team!

—Rev. Jane and the Worship Associates

### Our Developing Relationship with UMBC



Please add to your calendar and plan to attend the next OCA Mocha Monday. "Navigating Polarizing Conversations" on **Monday Dec. 13, 6:00 pm** at OCA Mocha, 5410 East Drive, Arbutus, MD 21227.

OCA Mocha\* is a coffee shop in Arbutus. ("OCA" stands for UMBC's Office of Community Affairs; the "Mocha" part is a private business person.) OCA Mocha was established and operates to provide a meeting place for making connections and promoting interactions between UMBC and the surrounding community. So, in addition to the usefulness of the information, take this meeting to be a stepping stone in commencing those interactions.

Come early and enjoy a sandwich. Questions, contact Bernie N..

—Bernie N.

## 2nd Annual Channing Cookie Swap!



The elves are back in town! It's almost time for our 2nd Annual Cookie Swap. This fun activity allows you to sample cookies from some of the best bakers in the UUniverse. And we're adding an in-person component this year. Ready to bake and swap? Here's what to do:

- Sign up and let us know what you'll be baking. The deadline to sign up is **Saturday, December 4.**
- Bake three dozen of your holiday cookies (homemade only, please) and put them in small plastic bags (details to follow).
- Come to Park Avenue on **Saturday, December 11 at 2 pm** to swap your cookies for other cookies! Weather permitting, we'll have the fire pit and hot cider for those who want to hang out for awhile. Or just swap and run.

Interested? Here's the link. <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f084fa4ad2ba46-channing1>  
Access code: baker

(Fine print: If you can't come to the swap at Park Avenue or have any other concerns, please contact one of the elves for assistance. Because of the nature of the cookie swap, we cannot cater to special diets or allergies. Thank you.)

The Cookie Elves: *Cathy F.*, head elf and *Nancy H. and Kris T.*, minion elves



### Reminder— Your Auction Donations—LET THEM GO!!

Just a reminder to keep those donations coming for our annual Auction on **Saturday, January 29, 2022**. Please send your donations to [channingauction@yahoo.com](mailto:channingauction@yahoo.com) by December 19, 2021.

We plan to tell the story of Frozen during the auction. In addition to telling the story through performing arts, we would love to see if anyone has ideas on presenting some aspects of the story through other art forms, such as drawing or painting. We will have an entertainment Zoomstorming session on Saturday, December 4 at 2:00 p.m. All are welcome to join and contribute ideas. If you have any questions, please e-mail [channingauction@yahoo.com](mailto:channingauction@yahoo.com).

#### **Frozen Auction Entertainment Zoomstorm: Saturday, December 2 at 2:00 p.m.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81947624857?pwd=TxkRMllxRVFreWpMcnra05iWG1rUT09>

Meeting ID: 819 4762 4857

Passcode: 284852

Note: New email address for auction communications: [channingauction@yahoo.com](mailto:channingauction@yahoo.com)

—Colleen R.



## Soul Matters Small Group December: Opening to Joy

As we close the door on November and enter those cold December days, we are offered the opportunity to reflect on joy and all that it offers. Perhaps joy in the fresh morning snow, or hot cocoa on a chilly night, or a chance to celebrate love in groups of families or friends. What in December stands out to you, and how does it open you to joy?

This intention of opening to joy remains with us no matter what season we are in. Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh reflects, “Sometimes your joy is the source of your smile, but sometimes your smile can be the source of your joy.” What does this mean to you? How can we be the instruments of our own joy? This month we are invited to plant literal “pennies of joy” throughout the towns or parks around us, to engage in an act of “joyspotting,” to get in touch with a joy that may simultaneously be heavy, and to examine the joy in resistance.

“Opening to Joy” is our worship theme for December, and the theme for our small groups. These small groups are special because they allow each member to deeply engage with the topic in multiple ways. In preparation for each month’s Small Group, I will send each group member a packet. You are invited to select from this packet one spiritual exercise and one question to reflect on before our meeting together. **While reviewing the packet ahead of time is a great way to prepare for group, please do not let a busy schedule deter you from participating.** Whatever amount of time you are able to dedicate to preparation is just the right amount of time!

I ask that you sign up ahead of time. Please use the link below. Please provide me your email address so that I can send you the packet for you to review. For the virtual offering, I will provide all attendees a Zoom link the day of the Small Group. If the slot that you can attend is full, just let me know. We have opened our small groups to the public to share our gifts with the community. Feel free to invite friends. I am excited to explore the topic of Opening to Joy with you!

Young Adult Soul Matters (20s, 30s, 40s):

Friday, December 10 6-7:30pm \*held at Park Avenue, please bring a mask\*

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0D4AACAF2AA1FC1-young19>

All Ages:

Friday, December 17 6:30-8pmpm \*held on Zoom\*

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0D4AACAF2AA1FC1-soul14>

I hope you will join me!

Warmly,  
*Rev. Jane*





## Immigrants' Rights Bills in Upcoming Legislative Session

We will ask you, if you are inclined, to encourage your state senator and state delegate to support two bills that will be introduced in the upcoming 2022 MD General Assembly. The bills are:

- Universal Representation that will mandate legal representation during immigration proceedings for any detained Maryland immigrant. Studies show that a detained immigrant without an attorney will succeed in proceedings only 3% of the time, while if represented by a lawyer, will succeed in being released from detention on bond or permanently released 41% of the time. Detention is harmful, separating families and in many cases removing the only source of a family's income.
- Health Care Expansion for Immigrant Families will take advantage of waiver provisions in the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) and Medicaid that allow a state to change the eligibility criteria, in this case to allow undocumented immigrants to have access to health care. Individuals and families, particularly with young children, are not only in danger of becoming ill, but also of endangering others in the community.
- Both of these bills are consonant with our UU values of respecting the inherent worth and dignity of every person and promoting and affirming justice, equity and compassion in human relations.

The UU Legislative Ministry of Maryland (UULM-MD) will also be asking for your support on Climate Change and Criminal Justice Reform bills when introduced.

Watch for the email action alerts after the bills are introduced and assigned to committees. UULM-MD will make it easy for you to advocate. If you've got a mouse button, you're an advocate.

For more information about immigration rights or the UU Legislative Ministry of MD, please contact Jim C.

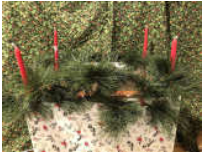
### SoulCollage® Returns!

Save the date! The next SoulCollage® Workshop is scheduled for Saturday, December 18th at 1:30 pm. Details to follow.

—Kris T.



## People, Look East: Love, the Guest is on the Way



Join us this Advent season for a new giving opportunity that you can do right in the comfort of your own home. On Sunday, November 28, we will light the first candle of Advent as part of our Gratitude Gathering during our regular worship service.

You are invited to place one non-perishable food item into your box that day, and every day thereafter during Advent.



The photo to the left has suggestions for each day of your box Advent calendar. (If it's hard to see, don't worry— there will be an email about this opportunity.) Note - you are not required to use any wrapping paper, hot glue, candles, strapping tape, or faux garland for your box. Normal people will most likely just use a plain, cardboard box.

Consider saying the following as you place your item in the box each day:

“Spirit of love and life, be our guest. Let these gifts, in this box, be blessed. Bless all children of the world. May no one go hungry or unloved. Amen.”

You can deliver your box to a thankful family yourself, or you can contact Colleen R., who will arrange to deliver your box to the Happy Helpers for the Homeless in Halethorpe, MD.

—Colleen R.

### December Throwback Photos



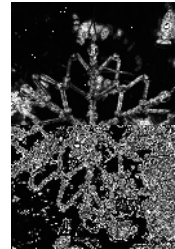
Channing choir, Christmas 2000



Kids with weird guy, 2006



Christmas treats and ornament (Deanna G.)



Lynne S. and adorables



Heirloom elf ornament from Kathleen R.'s tree



Skaters at Wrigley Field, 2019



Rockefeller Center tree the day Eric S. proposed to Rev. Jane!



## Board Bits



At their November meeting, the Board of Channing Memorial Church:

- Was visited by a special guest, music director Stephen Deininger, who shared that the last syllable of his surname is properly pronounced with a hard “g” sound. In the ensuing discussion, the Board heard about plans for implementing multiplatform (a.k.a. “hybrid”) worship, for which funds have already been approved. We also decided to allow the choir to resume in whatever way feels safe at this time. This could include bringing people a few at a time to make recordings.
- Approved indoor gatherings of small groups (with the number dictated by the size of the meeting space) of vaccinated, mask-wearing folks.
- Approved funds from the Vision and Growth fund to be used for the purchase of a fire pit and related supplies for outdoor gatherings. (The worship team have obtained the necessary permissions from Ellicott City, Howard County, etc., in order to use it outside our Park Avenue office.)
- Approved the use of unspent funds from the strategic planning budget to engage consultant Liz Coit in the creation of a Financial Sustainability Plan.
- Discussed and prioritized “board-assigned” items from the Strategic Plan Action Table for the coming year.

—David Fu

## Channing Book Club



Upcoming: For January, **The Connected World**, by Channing Member Chris Lynch: [Amazon.com: The Constructed World \(The Evolution of Light Book 1\)](#)  
[eBook : Lynch, Chris: Kindle Store](#)

Do you have a poem or an essay you’d like to talk about in December? Let us know.

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.

## Young Adult Game Night and Virtual Potluck

The **Young Adult Game Night and virtual potluck** meets every **first Wednesday of the month from 7 to 9 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 more information.



## Are You a CER Chalice Lighter?

The CER (Central East Region) Chalice Lighter Program makes grants to UU congregations and groups of congregations, enabling them to fan the flame of our UU faith. Helping neighboring congregations to realize their dreams is a splendid way to cooperatively grow the faith. Several Channing members and friends are already Chalice Lighters and our church has received Chalice Lighters grants in the past.

Chalice Lighters fund grants that help make these dreams a reality:

- Congregations with outstanding programs and outreach get the help they need to stretch and make their dreams into program realities.
- New congregations are supported in their fledgling stages so they can thrive, grow and serve those around them.
- Congregations that need a new home or need to expand or repair a familiar home are able to meet the needs of their members and future members.
- New or expanded staff positions help congregations realize their mission, increase their reach, and serve new ministries and members in new ways.

A Chalice Lighter Call letter or email notifies Chalice Lighters of the results of a grant-giving session of the CER Chalice Lighters Program Committee and states that it is time to send in their pledged amount to support the grants. There are currently three of these grant-giving sessions a year, giving approximately two grants of \$20,000 at each session.

Many Chalice Lighters pay for a year at a time to simplify record keeping. The current suggested pledge is 20 dollars per person per call, or 60 dollars per year for an individual and 120 dollars per year for a couple. Pledges of any amount are welcome.

If you wish to give for the entire year, just multiply your pledge amount by three. **Full details on how to donate online or via check are on the CER Chalice Lighters [website](#).** The mailing address for check donations, made payable to *UUA-CER*, is: CER Chalice Lighters, 100 W. 10th Street, Suite 1008, Wilmington, DE 19801.

It's an exciting program that has been a huge help to Channing over the years! Let's keep it going. Talk to me for more information.

—*Evelyn Grim*

# December 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><i>All events *online* unless otherwise noted</i></p>			<p><i>1</i> Space Search Meeting</p> <p>Young Adult Game Night 7-9 pm</p>	<p><i>2</i> Men's Group 10 am</p>	<p><i>3</i> Covenant Circle</p> <p>Membership Committee</p>	<p><i>4</i></p>
<p><i>5</i> 10 am Sunday Service</p>	<p><i>6</i></p>	<p><i>7</i> 1-4 pm Rev. Jane's Office Hours LDNC 7 pm Lectio Divina</p>	<p><i>8</i> Stewardship Meeting</p>	<p><i>9</i></p>	<p><i>10</i> Worship Team</p>	<p><i>11</i></p>
<p><i>12</i> 10 am Sunday Service</p>	<p><i>13</i></p>	<p><i>14</i> 1-4 pm Rev. Jane's Office Hours</p>	<p><i>15</i></p>	<p><i>16</i></p>	<p><i>17</i> Covenant Circle</p>	<p><i>18</i> Men's Group 10 am Soul Collage 1:30 pm</p>
<p><i>19</i> 10 am Sunday Service</p>	<p><i>20</i></p>	<p><i>21</i> 1-4 pm Rev. Jane's Office Hours 7 pm Lectio Divina 7 pm Board of Trustees First Day of Winter</p>	<p><i>22</i></p>	<p><i>23</i></p>	<p><i>24</i> Christmas Eve</p>	<p><i>25</i> Christmas Day</p> 
<p><i>26</i> 10 am Sunday Service</p> 	<p><i>27</i></p>	<p><i>28</i> 1-4 pm Rev. Jane's Office Hours</p>	<p><i>29</i></p>	<p><i>30</i></p>	<p><i>31</i></p> 	

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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.