



The Channing Connection

CHANNING MEMORIAL CHURCH
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

Volume 29, Issue 1

January 2022

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Minister's Column



Dear Channing members and friends,

During any snowstorm that lasted from evening throughout the night, my sister and I would watch the clock with great anticipation. When midnight hit, we jumped out of our seats, rushed out the door, and saw – often before anyone else in the neighborhood – a sheet of untouched snow. It was magical!

Nothing but a smooth, white blanket covering the ground. We walked around, creating the very first footprints, packing the very first snowballs.

Reflecting on these memories reminds me of a Mary Oliver poem and her own experience with the untouched and the beauty that arises with it in her poem, "Passing by the Unworked Field."

Queen Anne's lace
is hardly
prized but
all the same it isn't
idle look
how it
stands straight on its
thin stems how it
scrubs its white faces
with the
rags of the sun how it
makes all the
loveliness it can.

That Queen Anne's lace – a weed, not prized as a daffodil or a crocus, yet filling that untouched space with beauty, its humble attributes making all the loveliness it can. Now, in these cold, dark, January days, we are not offered that unexpected beauty of a flower, but we are surrounded by the winter's own, unique magic. The cold, chilly untouched pieces of this winter canvas. While we hunker down to stay warm, let us take note of our foggy breath in the untouched air, the coziness within our jackets as we take the first step from the warmth of our homes into the frosty chill of the winter.



**We are a Welcoming
Congregation!**

Wayside Pulpit

When there is no vision,
the people perish.

--Proverbs 29:18

(continued on p. 2)

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Rev. Jane Smith

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David Fu ('22)

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Ken Grim
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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 February issue of *The Channing Connection* to newsshare@channingmc.org by **7:00 p.m. on Sunday, January 23.**

(Minister's Column - continued from p. 1)

January itself can be a month untouched – the very beginning of a fresh, new year. Often, we take this time to set intentions or resolutions. We enter the new year as a blank canvas, placing our very own first footprints in that metaphorical layer of snow, or examining that unworked field looking for unexpected beauty. Intentions allow us to face that blank canvas and create beauty. What we create is brought to life as we take that time to reflect on all that we have experienced this past year. What can we place on that blank canvas to give our lives more meaning, more peace, more purpose, more beauty?

As we face this blank canvas ahead of us, this untouched snow in a midwinter night, may we hold in our hearts faith, justice, kindness, and love.

Warmly,
Rev. Jane

Board Bits



The Board met on December 21st. Issues addressed were:

Adopt-a-Drain

Julie F. requested that the Board consider adopting a drain through the Howard Eco Works organization. The Board agreed to have Channing sponsor 2 drains, near the Park Ave. office, and to put out a request for volunteers to work with Julie on this activity.

Meeting in Person

After much discussion, the Board decided to cancel in-person worship through the end of January due to the sharp rise in Covid infections in the area.

The Board agreed to hire Stuart D. as a contracted technical assistant for hybrid worship services when they resume, hopefully in February.

The Board agreed to the request from Rev. Jane and the Worship Team to change the start of worship at the Robinson Nature Center to 10:30am AND to rent for an extra hour each Sunday to allow for more time for the technical set up. Channing will rent from 8-12 each Sunday we have worship at the Robinson Center.

(continued on p. 3)

(Board Bits - continued from p. 2)

Space Team Report

The Space Team continues to search for suitable space. They reported on a space they found on Grace Drive and one on Corporate Court. The Board decided not to pursue the space on Grace Drive due to the distance from Baltimore County and its lack of storage space. The Corporate Court Space was ruled out due to its aesthetics.

Strategic Plan

The Board will share the Strategic Plan with the congregation, and then Kathleen Razmus will convene a meeting of the council of committees to discuss the plan.

-- Kathleen Razmus, Secretary

President's Column

As I write this on this sunny, cold day right between Yule and Christmas, the radio is playing Schubert's jaunty 9th symphony, and in spite of the pandemic and everything else that is not yet right in this crazy world, I find myself feeling an inextinguishable hope and a joyous anticipation.

On December 12 we had our first in-person worship service since "the before times", and while there were numerous technical difficulties, I was so glad to see it happen. On the other hand, I am saddened to be cancelling our January in-person services. Nothing would please me more than to learn in the near future that this decision was overly cautious—even flat out wrong, but given the current infection rate and overall number of new cases, even amongst the vaccinated, I also have no problem standing by our Board's decision. And, to take a page out of *The Fiddler on the Roof* character Tevye's book, on the *other* hand, I still hold hope for February, though I'm not so naive as to think I know the ways of this beast of a virus.

Next, I'd like to remind you that we have a team who worked hard this summer and fall to create a strategic plan for the Church (Thank you Patrick B., Pam E., Angela L.). While its release has been "real soon now" for some time, I'm pleased to announce that it will indeed be promulgated via email at the end of the 2021 calendar year. The first chance to digest it in a group setting will be at a subsequent Council of Committees meeting.



The members of our Space Team continue to "stomp the bushes"; their latest efforts have been focused on obtaining accessible and usable office space in a reasonable location. Unfortunately, all I have to report at this time is that we've had some near misses. The search is difficult for a number of reasons, including, but not limited to our budget, our physical space needs, and an unfortunate reluctance of Howard County landlords to rent to churches. Please thank a Space Team member the next time you see one (Maureen H., Dan V., Deanna G.).

May we all stay healthy in body and spirit this holiday season. May we remember hope. May we remember joy.

Care,
David

FROZEN, THE AUCTION - THIS MONTH!!

It's a new month, a new year, and a new Auction! Whoo hoo! Our Annual Auction will take place on the evening of Saturday, January 29, with some on-line bidding starting on Friday, January 28. Here is a timeline of all the activities:



Monday, January 3, 2022 - order Frozen Pizza from Joe Corbi's - www.joecorbi.com; for assistance, contact Colleen at channingauction@yahoo.com

Sunday, January 9, 2022 - you will receive your DRAFT Auction Catalog for review

Sunday, January 16, 2022 - 11:30 a.m. - practice live bidding on Zoom (link to be provided); comments on DRAFT Auction Catalog due to channingauction@yahoo.com

Sunday, January 23, 2022 - 11:30 a.m. - practice live bidding on Zoom (link to be provided); FINAL Auction Catalog will be published

Friday, January 28, 2022

4:00 and 6:00 p.m. - pick up Joe Corbi's order from church office - IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE OR DELIVERY TO YOUR HOUSE, CONTACT COLLEEN AT channingauction@yahoo.com

6:00 p.m. - Silent Auction Bidding Opens on Auctria:
<https://event.auctria.com/296888b1-d720-4445-bed3-70d9dbd43217/>

Saturday, January 29, 2022

1:00 p.m. - Fixed Price Sign-ups Open on Sign-Up Genius - link will be provided at that time

4:30 p.m. - Sign on to Zoom for Live Auction and Awesome Entertainment (link to be provided)

Sunday, January 30, 2022, 6:00 p.m. - Silent Auction Bidding Ends on Auctria

Channing Connection News

Due to her new full-time work and consequent time constraints, *Cathy F.* has stepped down as co-editor of *The Channing Connection* effective with this issue. I want to personally thank Cathy for her hard work and creativity in heading this communication effort over the past several years. She has been great to work with.

Chris Lynch has graciously consented to become co-editor of the newsletter, also effective with this issue. As a published author, he has well-established editing skills. Welcome aboard Chris!

-- *Ken Grim*, co-editor

Soul Matters Small Group January: Living with Intention



January is a time where folks often pause and set intentions for the year ahead. What have we learned this past year that we want to carry with us into our future? How can we navigate what we want to spend our time doing? Should we reconsider our priorities? We can set intentions by settling into our “heart spaces” and listening to that small yet strong call within us, urging us to be in alignment with our true selves. Lao Tzu wrote, “At the center of your being, you have the answer; you know who you are, and you know what you want.” This month, we explore how we can alter aspects of our lives to live in full alignment with our true selves.

“Living with Intention” is our worship theme for January, 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.

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

Wednesday, January 19 7-8:30pm (held on Zoom)

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0D4AACAF2AA1FC1-young20>

All Ages:

Friday, January 21 2-3:30pm

Wednesday, January 26 7-8:30pm (held on Zoom)

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0D4AACAF2AA1FC1-soul15>

I hope you will join me!

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

Afghan Refugee Support

Many agencies and faith groups are working to provide assistance to the thousands of Afghan refugees that are expected to be moving to the United States in the coming months. A small group of Channing folks is joining in the effort. Be on the lookout for future announcements about how you can help. Our first event will be an informational session during an After Service Sunday Zoom meeting. We look forward to discussing ways that you can help us in this important work.

Thank you!

-- Angela L., Toni R., Kris T., Nancy H., and Jim C.

Channing Care Team

The Care Team is a group of Channing volunteers who respond when a member of the Channing community is in need. They visit, send flowers, cards, meals and provide other caring gestures when needed. You may contact the Care Team at careteam@channingmc.org.

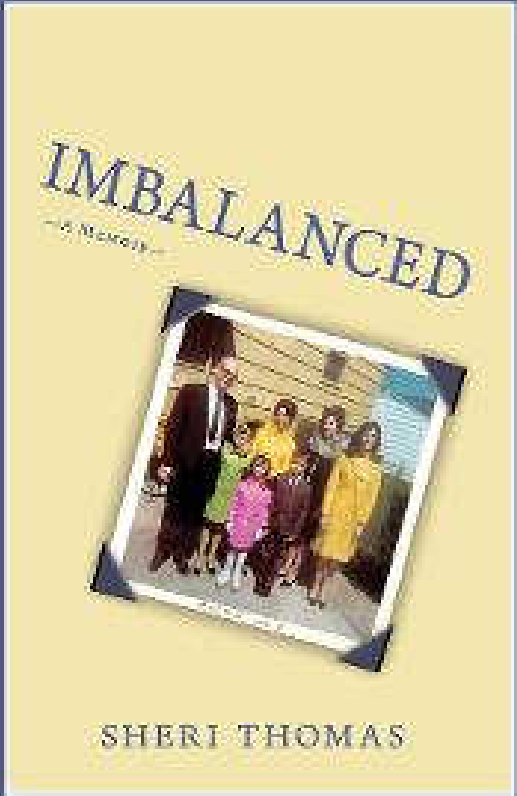
Stewardship Update

November 2021 to Date

Total Operating Income	\$93,062
Total Operating Expenses	<u>55,775</u>
Difference	\$37,287

A New Disability Memoir Now Available for Free From Channing Member Sheri T.


A new book, *IMBALANCED: A Memoir*, a poignant, sometimes humorous look at physical disability, serious mental health issues and about how Unitarian Universalism led the author to her current role as a disability advocate, is now available for FREE from member Sheri T. Email her at imbalanced.book@gmail.com to request a free digital copy that can be read on your phone, tablet, computer, etc. Paperback copies are also available at the Howard County Library. See book details below.



IMBALANCED
A MEMOIR

SHERI THOMAS

SHERI THOMAS spent decades breaking down barriers and promoting full accessibility as part of various disability commissions and committees in Maryland.



NOW AVAILABLE!

IMBALANCED
A MEMOIR BY SHERI THOMAS

IMBALANCED traces Sheri Thomas' remarkable journey from a front-page headline in 1962 to her current role as an advocate fighting to remove the stigmas surrounding physical disabilities and mental health.

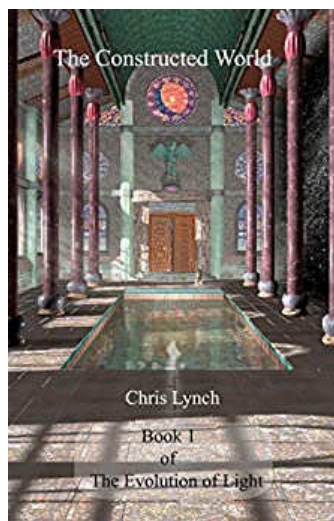
Unflinching, poignant and humorous, *IMBALANCED* is her personal account of juggling lifelong physical disabilities with a successful career before unexpectedly facing serious mental health crises in her fifties.

To receive your free digital version of *IMBALANCED*, or a copy of the author's 10 *Mental Health Tips I Learned The Hard Way*, email imbalanced.book@gmail.com.

Help get *IMBALANCED* to everyone facing physical or mental health challenges, friends, family or mental health professionals by spreading the word on social media today!

Channing Book Club

January 8 at 10 a.m.



The book **The Connected World**, by Channing Member Chris L.: [Amazon.com: The Constructed World \(The Evolution of Light Book 1\) eBook : Lynch, Chris: Kindle Store](#) will be discussed on January 8.

Do you have a poem or an essay you'd like to talk about in February? 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 Hart know what you are thinking about, and contact Ken with any questions.

Young Adults 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 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.

Buy Gift Cards Through Channing Memorial Church

Support Channing Memorial Church while doing your weekly grocery shopping! Grocery cards are available for Giant, Safeway and Weis.

Contact *Maureen H.* to make a purchase. A percentage of each gift card that you purchase through Channing goes to help support the church.

Men's Group

Thursday, January 6 and Saturday, January 15

10:00 am - 12:00 pm



Join us for informal conversation and fellowship. Bring a topic to discuss, or just bring yourself. All are welcome. The meetings are by Zoom until further notice. Please see the Channing News emails for further information and the Zoom link.

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.

We are excited to welcome you into the Team!

—Rev. Jane and the Worship Associates

Social Justice Advocacy

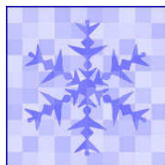
After the MD General Assembly's successful override of Governor Hogan's vetoes in December 2021 of the Dignity Not Detention bill and the Driver Privacy bill, both of which are now law, the legislators are busy pre-filing bills. There will be two immigrants' rights bills that the [UU Legislative Ministry of MD](#) will be supporting in the upcoming session: Universal Representation and Health Care Expansion for Immigrant Families.

Universal Representation, which was previously introduced in the 2021 session has been pre-filed. It is [HB0114](#) / [SB0129](#). The bills will be considered in the House Judiciary and Senate Judicial Proceedings Committees.

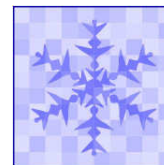
Health Care Expansion for Immigrant Families will be filed during the regular session.

For more information, see [Immigration | ChanningJustice \(wixsite.com\)](#)

Or, contact *Jim C.*



January 2022



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						<i>1</i> New Years Day
<i>2</i> Worship Service 10:00-11:00 am	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i> Young Adult Game Night 7:00-9:00 pm	<i>6</i> Men's Group 10:00 am - 1200 pm	<i>7</i> Outreach Committee Meeting 6:30 pm	<i>8</i> Channing Book Club 10:00 am
<i>9</i> Worship Service 10:00 - 11:00 am	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i> Lectio Divina 7:00-8:00 pm	<i>12</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>15</i> Men's Group 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
<i>16</i> Worship Service 10:00 - 11:00 am	<i>17</i> Martin Luther King Day	<i>18</i> Board Meeting 7:00 - 9:00 pm	<i>19</i> Young Adult Soul Matters 7:00-8:30 pm	<i>20</i>	<i>21</i> Soul Matters (all ages) 2:00-3:30 pm	<i>22</i>
<i>23</i> Worship Service 10:00 - 11:00 am Newsletter Deadline 7:00 pm	<i>24</i>	<i>25</i> Lectio Divina 7:00-8:00 pm	<i>26</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>29</i> Channing Auction 
<i>30</i> Worship Service 10:00 - 11:00 am						

Channing Memorial Church
Unitarian Universalist
3220 Corporate Ct.
Suite C
Ellicott City, MD 21042

On the web:
www.ChanningMC.org

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 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.

NURTURE Your Spirit.
Help HEAL The World.



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