Thinking about (and doing something) to help Channing grow

[We have changed the date to February 18 so that people going to
the Women’s March in Washington DC will be able to attend the
Convocation]

Have ideas about how Channing Memorial Church can
grow its membership? What to help Channing grow in the
next several years? Then come on Saturday, February 18,
2017 (NEW DATE) from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 noon, to the
Channing Growth Convocation, being hosted by Rev. Bill
Zelazny

The day will start with coffee and breakfast snacks in the Parish
Hall at 9:00. At 9:30 we will move to the Sanctuary for an
opening presentation about the ins and outs of church growth.
Then we will break into small discussion groups to have idea-
generating conversations about specific growth and outreach
initiatives. Perhaps we want to think about and develop new
approaches for family ministry, or ways we can reach out to Gen-
Xers and Millennial or the members of the military stationed at
Newport, or how we can effectively partner with other
Newport organizations, or start a campus ministry, or any other
growth ideas that participants want to discuss together.

Remember to save the date—February 18, 9:00 a.m. to
12:30 p.m. to think about growing Channing Memorial
Church!
What has happened? What is going to happen next? Did the elections make you happy or cause you anguish? Just 54 years ago, Dr. King spoke of a dream where we as a nation would move toward a more just and united people. Today feels like 1963. What can each of us do? Is the dream really dead?

Rodney Davis was born and raised in Newport, RI. In the early 1990s Rodney was disfellowshipped from the ministry at the Newport Congregation of Jehovah’s Witnesses and left “the island” to begin a new chapter in his life. He has served as vice president and president of the RI Alliance for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights and served 20+ years as co-chair and then president of Rhode Island Pride. He has been an active supporter of AIDS Quilt Rhode Island, AIDS Care Ocean State, Marriage Equality RI, PFLAG, SAGE, The Imperial Court of RI and A Common Bond. Rodney works as a communication director for Big Picture Learning, the organization which created the Met School and 200 similar schools based on that design nationally and around the world. He lives in Western Coventry with his partner of nearly 20 years, Brian Mills.

Rev. Bill has known and worked with Rodney for 15 years and is pleased he will be our guest presenter. Rodney is a keen observer of cultural trends and developments in ethnic and Black communities in Rhode Island and the nation.
Where do we make room for individual opinions? What policy or criteria can guide these decisions? And how do we balance our work on issues that require energy and action with our sometimes overwhelming desire to find peace, respite and politics-free spiritual healing in our worship together? We have important decisions to make this year. I am confident that, working together, we are ready for the challenge. Our board meetings are open to all and you can reach us at board@channingchurch.org. I ask that you join me in working collaboratively, carefully listening to each other, respecting one another’s different viewpoints, and striving together to find common ground and consensus within our special church community. I feel especially blessed to be starting the year again surrounded by enduring Channing friendships. I wish all of you peace in the coming year.

~Barbara Nowicki,
Co-president, Board of Trustees

Rev Bill was complimented for his participation in church committees including worship, membership, stewardship and religious education. He has enthusiasm and lots of creative ideas. He is an organization builder.

Many felt that Rev Bill is approachable and a good listener and willing to go the extra mile. “He has come into a difficult situation and has handled it well.” Many feel that the congregation is doing better because of this.

There was a range of opinions regarding the approach to sermons. While some people felt that Rev Bill’s sermons speak to them, others felt they were the weakest area of his ministry and need improvement. It was mentioned that Rev Bill was given priorities when he was hired, including growth, healing, joy, and community, and his sermons reflect these issues.

All in all, there is healthy enthusiasm about church now, and it was expressed that we all need to reach out to others to attend our church and see what’s happening.

We would love to hear from others. If you would like to respond about how we’re doing, please contact any member of the Committee on Ministry in person, by phone, or by email at committeeonministry@channingchurch.org. Members are: Barbara Coppola, David Pedrick, Susan VanDerhoof, Judith Porter, Sam Jernigan and Sondra Gold.

~Judie Porter,
Committee on Ministry
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

Sunday Religious Education classes in PreK to 12th grade are learning about the 7 UU principles using stories, arts, and activities in our "one room schoolhouse" multi-age classroom. RE classes meet in the Parish Hall, behind the church just after the Message for All Ages. Children and youth in RE also participate monthly in baking for the community meal held at Channing. Perhaps you saw some of our children and youth participating in Reverend Bill's service on Light and Hope in mid December.

To enroll your child in RE classes, please complete a registration form, which can be found on the RE table in the Parish Hall or see Jessica Thomas or any member of the RE committee before the Sunday service begins. We are in need of assistants for our Sunday morning classes. You can sign up for as many or few as you like, tailored to your own schedule. Please see the sign up sheet on the RE table in the Parish Hall or contact Jessica Thomas or any member of the RE Committee.

Our dynamic Youth Group continues to meet the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month. Recently, our Youth Group raised money with the sale of cookies from the Cookie Competition. Thank you to all who baked and donated cookies. Congratulations to First Place Winner, Shannen Thomas, Second Place Winner - Youth Group, and Third Place Winner - Sally Hanchett. In addition to raising money, the Youth Group also used their money to buy $300.00 worth of holiday gifts for community teens in need and donated $50 worth of toiletries to Channing's sharing locker. Youth Group is open to students grades 6 and up. It provides socialization and friendship for Channing Youths, as well service projects chosen by the Youth.

The Coming of Age (COA) program for students in 8th-12th grade is up and running. Mentors will be chosen this month and will begin getting to know the Youth and their quest.

Be on the Lookout for these Special Events in January:
In conjunction with The Learning Center (TLC), a game night or possibly another round of our popular COSMOS viewing and potluck.

MYSTERY FRIENDS begins Sunday, January 29th

Make a difference in the lives of children and Youth at Channing Church. Attend our next RE Committee Meeting on Tuesday, January 10th at 7:00 PM at Channing House to find out how.

January RE Calendar:
Sunday, Jan. 1: NO RE - Happy New Year
Sunday, Jan. 8: RE Class and Youth Group (6:00-8:00 PM)
Sunday, Jan. 15: RE Class bakes for the Community Meal
Sunday, Jan. 22: RE Class and Youth Group (6-8PM)
Sunday, Jan. 29: RE Class, Mystery Friends begins

-Kathy Takata
Religious Education Committee
CAREGIVING UPDATE
All of us involved with Channing Caregiving wish you a very happy new year and the best in 2017! Thank you so much to Ruth Jernigan and Jim Freess, who served as Caregiving coordinators for the month of December, always such a busy time for many of us.

We are grateful for the help of many of you this month. The love and support extended to Sherrill Warch and her family after the death of her grandson Alex was heartwarming, and those who brought food and helped set up the reception after Alex’s memorial service are especially appreciated. Special thanks to Interweave and Sherrill’s WWW group. Nickie Kates asked me to thank all of the men who have responded to the Caregiving program’s request for more male coordinators and volunteers. We appreciate everyone who participates in our covenant to extend simple kindnesses to our church community.

And, this first year of Caregiving coordinating the Christmas plants and flowers for our Christmas Eve service turned out very well! The poinsettias were lovely, and those who are homebound who received a flowering plant were most appreciative. Thank you all for helping our new system work so beautifully, including our office administrator Michele Dubuc for putting together the list of plant donors and their remembrances for the Christmas Eve order of service!

Our thoughts go out to the Armenia family this month. Mike and Joanne’s daughter Tracy has recently been diagnosed with early stage cancer.

Two of our former snowbirds, Dick and Marylou Baker, recently sold their place in Arizona and will now be living here on the island full time. Arizona’s loss is Channing’s gain!

Congratulations to new grandma Barbara Coppola on the birth of her granddaughter. Barbara has been down to the Washington, D.C. area to visit the new baby and family.

Our Caregiving coordinators for January are Chris Laudon from Jan. 1-15, and Marcia Mallory and Barbara Richter from Jan. 16-31. Please call them with any caregiving needs within our congregation.

~Linda Beall, for Channing Caregiving

Please... BEFORE YOU LEAVE CLEAN UP
Please remember to wipe down the counters when using the kitchen in the Parish Hall, many thanks!

JANUARY
SHARE THE PLATE
This month half of our cash offerings and checks with the memo “Share the Plate” will be donated to the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC). The UUSC advances human rights through grassroots collaboration. In more than a dozen countries throughout the world, UUSC fosters social justice and works toward a world free from oppression. UUSC’s innovative approaches and measurable impact — in promoting economic justice, bolstering environmental justice, and protecting rights at risk — are grounded in the belief that all people have inherent power, dignity, and rights.

COMMUNITY MEAL
Monday, January 16, 3:30-6:15pm, in the Parish Hall
Thank you to everyone who participated in the December Community Meal either by helping, bringing desserts, providing gifts, or caroling. We provided over 50 meals and gave out 40 gift bags. The Carolers were lively and much appreciated. They added greatly to the Christmas atmosphere.

The Channing Memorial Church Community Meal is the third Monday of every month in the Parish Hall. To see when volunteers are needed contact Joy Benson at communitymeal@channingchurch.org
SOCIAL ACTION

GREEN CORNER

The bad dream gets worse

Wish this were an upbeat column about a new year of environmental progress, or at least hopes to combat the dive into the swamp, but I got nothin'. Every hen house has its proposed slobbering fox!

Exxon Mobil’s Tillerson for Secretary of State? We’re trying to prosecute this company for its well-funded 40 year disinformation campaign about global warming, in spite of proof that their own scientists warned them of the problem. At least, right now, he seems to favor a carbon tax bill.

Pruitt for EPA? He’s been suing the agency for years to eliminate regulation on clean air, clean water, mercury, asbestos -- you name it! He opposes it!

Perry for Energy? That was one of three departments he vowed to eliminate if he was elected president -- the one whose name he couldn’t even remember!

Zinke for Interior? He wants to open federal land to more oil and gas exploration. (Have you seen the proposals for development near the Grand Canyon, everything from uranium mining to shopping malls.)


One nominee’s view on climate change is unknown (Goldman Sachs’ Mnuchin,) and one, possibly positive (deVos.) The rest are on record as not believing in it, or have taken action against efforts for remedies. Many have direct ties to fossil fuel industries and their allies. That includes posts not directly related to it, but could influence relevant policy. (Source: The Guardian, 12/15/16)

Arrrgh!

~Beth Milham, Chair, Green Cong. Committee

ECO-BITS & TIPS

2017 and Beyond

Where does humanity stand in response to human-caused climate change? At a crossroads to be sure. President-elect Trump hopes to appoint Federal Department heads to Energy, Interior, EPA and Even Secretary of State with an extreme, anti-science philosophical worldview: that climate change is either not happening, that humans make an infinitesimal contribution to it, or that climate changes all the time, so we should all just get used to it.

I think it’s natural to question what individuals can and should do in this climate (pun intended). My answer is, as much as you can, as often as you can: energy efficiency, local and home produced food, carbon offsets for long distance air travel, purchasing medium- (e.g. clothing)and long-term use (e.g. automobiles) products and maintaining and caring for them, to make them last five to 10 years or even longer. In this most political of seasons, is there are stronger statement to be made than how we live and conduct our lives? I think not.

Next month, back to the topic of carbon.

~Craig Gaspard, for the Green Cong. Committee

INTERWEAVE

MOVIE & POTLUCK NIGHT

Sunday, January 15, 5:30pm, Parish Hall

Need a winter warmer? Join Interweave and The Learning Center (TLC) for a lively joint potluck dinner followed by the movie Better Than Chocolate (Rated R, 101min). The movie is a happy romantic comedy about two young lesbians who fall in love. Chaos ensues when one of their mothers decides to move in with them.

Bring a dish to share and join us for this relaxing evening. For more information, contact Rex LeBeau or Susan Kieronski.
Save the Dates for
ROUND ROBIN DINNERS = FOOD, FUN AND FRIENDSHIP
This winter Channing will be sponsoring 3 rounds of potluck dinners in people’s homes. We hope you will join in. Here is how it works:

Sign up! Hopefully you can be part of all 3 dinners, but even if you can only do one, please sign up. We want to get to know you.

Potluck dinners will take place in people’s homes at 6:00 pm on 3 Saturdays: February 4th, March 4th and April 15th.

Please consider hosting a dinner. The host does not cook. Instead the host provides the setting, the set up, and beverages. The host determines the number of guests that can fit comfortably at their dinner

Each guest will be assigned each month to a host and to a part of the dinner. If you sign up as a single – 1 dish. If you sign up as a couple – 2 dishes. Or, for non-cooks, you can bring bread, a bakery dessert or help with beverages.

Multiple dinners will be going on at the same time in different homes each month. The following month everything will be changed up: new host, new dinner partners, new dishes.

By the end of the series of dinners you will have gotten to share with many old and many new friends.

Let us know if you need a ride, can host, or if you have any food requests (such as vegan, vegetarian, food allergies, etc.).

Sign up in the Parish Hall on Sundays beginning in January, or contact Sondra Gold. Hope to dine with you!

OPEN FORUM UPDATE
Results of the Committee on Ministry (COM) Open Forum, held Sunday, December 11, showed the approximately 15 people in attendance were ‘very happy’ with the direction Channing is moving and the way it is being done.

The COM will support the Board on January 7, 2017 in its discussion and review of Rev. Bill’s work at Channing this past Fall and on Rev. Bill’s assessment of our progress as a congregation. The COM and the Board, with the help of Chris Ariel, began training this month on how to hold difficult conversations. We hope to bring this learning to the congregation as well.

If you would like to contact the COM you can talk to any member of the committee, Barbara Coppola, Judie Porter, Sam Jernigan, Susan VanDerhoof, Sondra Gold or David Pedrick. You can also reach the committee by emailing us at committeeonministry@channingchurch.org.

~Barbara Coppola, Chair, COM

2017 CHANNING COFFEEHOUSE SERIES BEGINS SATURDAY, JANUARY 14TH!!
Join us for coffee, dessert, and a relaxed evening of music by Channing musicians and friends of Channing: 7-9:30pm, Jan. 14, Parish Hall. Suggested donation $5 to support the church. Musicians: Format is open mic, 2 songs per act (bring 3 just in case). Please contact coffeehouse@channingchurch.org in advance. Future Coffeehouse dates are Feb. 18 & March 11.

“BOUNCY SEAT” NEEDED BY CHANNING CHILDCARE
Do you have a bouncy seat that you no longer need? Channing Childcare would greatly appreciate one (or two!) if there are any out there just waiting for a little one to "bounce" in it. Please contact Barbara Russell Willett or Marilyn Murphy (childcare@channingchurch.org) or just bring it in and leave it in the childcare room in the Parish Hall.

DON’T TRASH THAT PERFECTLY GOOD CHRISTMAS TREE!
Thinking about upgrading your Christmas Tree? If your old one is in good condition, please consider donating it to Channing to use in our Sanctuary holiday decorating for the coming years. Please contact Michele in the Church Office (401-846-0643 or office@channingchurch.org) if you have one to donate.
Women’s March on Washington, Rhode Island Chapter:

WHO WE ARE

Organized by women and those who support the power of women’s voices and leadership, The RI Chapter of the Women’s March on Washington is a fully inclusive, NON-VIOLENT movement, calling on all defenders of human rights to join us for the first step towards unifying our communities. The Women’s March on Washington is a national movement to unify and empower everyone who stands for human rights, civil liberties, and social justice for all.

Do you want to learn how to march peacefully, without violence? Women’s March on Washington, RI Chapter is sponsoring training sessions for volunteers and those attending the March on Washington, or the Providence Rally on January 21, 2017. Training is provided at no cost to attendees by The Institute for the Study and Practice of Nonviolence. The facilitator/speaker for the training is Rev. Raymond B. Malm. He will focus on nonviolent interaction in the context of peaceful protest marches, and include ways to respond when confronted by agitators, counter-protestors, or other challenging situations that could arise during the course of a peaceful action.

The training session will take place at Channing Memorial Church on Wednesday, January 11, from 6:00-8:00pm, in the Sanctuary.

To sign up for the ISPN free session please go to: http://www.riwomensmarch.com/get-involved.html and select *Newport, RI, please select one training session *Newport, RI - Channing Memorial Church, 135 Pelham St. WEDNESDAY JANUARY 11, 2017 6:00 - 8:00PM
A TOUR OF THE MYSTERIOUS OLD STONE TOWER
AND VISIT TO THE MUSEUM

LED BY CHANNING’S OWN TEDX SPEAKER, JIM EGAN

Sunday, Jan. 8; we will meet at the Tower in Touro Park at 11:30 AM.
Your $5 suggested donation to TLC will be passed along
to help support the work of the Museum.

Tour and Museum visit will last 1 ½ hours. Limited to 15 people - you must preregister! See us at the TLC Table at Fellowship.

Jim Egan’s fascination with the 28-foot-tall stone-and-mortar tower that stands in Touro Park started 30 years ago. Since then, he has written twenty books on the subject, and in 2010 he opened up the Newport Tower Museum to explain his findings. First, Jim will point out fifteen little-known architectural features of the tower. Then we’ll walk across Mill Street to the museum, where Jim will explain why he believes the tower was built in the year 1583 by the Elizabethans as a church and a horologium, a building that keeps track of time.

A FUN FILM AND POTLUCK EVENING FROM INTERWEAVE AND TLC

see “Interweave” write-up on the Social Action page 7 for more details.
Sunday, January 15, 5:30 PM, Channing Parish Hall
“Better Than Chocolate”, Rated R, 101min.
No fee, but please bring a dish to share.

An additional program from Clean Ocean Access is in the works – also, a much anticipated next Intergenerational “Cosmos” program – sponsored by RE and TLC – will be coming up in February! Please keep an eye on your Channing weekly email, and Sunday bulletin.