**IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN!**

From Channing's Stewardship Team

At the last Sunday service in February, Rev. Bill and the Stewardship Team kicked off our annual pledge drive with a discussion about the meaning of money, and the importance of money as a way to support those things in our lives that are important to us. Please be our guest at one of the House Parties to be held in March (see list below). Come spend time with old and new Channing friends, enjoy food and beverage, hear about the exciting things being planned for next year and beyond, and make a pledge to help all of us realize our goals for our Channing community. **Contact Julie Herrick to sign up for one of the House Party dates. Important note to parents:** Free child care will be provided at the party on Friday evening March 10th.

- Friday, March 10, 6 to 8pm, Lisa Colburn & Drew Carey’s *(child care provided)*
- Friday, March 17, 6 to 8pm, Marcia & Coles Mallory’s
- Sunday, March 26, 12 to 2pm, Eleanor & Gabe Doumato’s

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**March Worship Services**

**Sunday, March 5**

6 Remarkable Unitarian and Universalist Women and their Words

**Kathy Takata & Rev. William Zelazny**

This Sunday, in recognition of Women’s History Month, Bill and Kathy will present the biographies and writings of six Unitarian and Universalist women who made an undeniable impact on Unitarian universalism and society in general. With this sculpture it can be said there is definitely a there, there.

**Sunday, March 12**

Tragedy, Death, Pessimism, Despair, Miracle, Interconnection and Joy

**Rev. Steve Wilson**

Ever walked into a church service hurting, and found that the optimism that flowed from the choir and pulpit failed to soothe. If so, this is a service for you. Need a good cry? Come! Come assured that your sadness will not be lonely. Today we will be healed by a good honest cry and the peace and even laughter that “can” come from that journey.

Worship Services continued on page 2

Religious Education Classes are offered most Sundays, and children and youth are always welcome to attend our services! Childcare for children 4 and younger is offered in our Parish Hall. See the RE Page 4 for more info.
Sunday, March 19
Right Speech - A Practice
Rev. Kathleen A. Green

Within Buddhism, Right Speech is one of the Five Precepts for ethical conduct, as well as one of the components of the Noble Eightfold Path. Here the word “Right” is not a moral judgment to be contrasted with bad or wrong, but means “leading to happiness for oneself and others.” A practice for us all!

Rev. Kathleen A. Green is a Doctoral candidate at New York Theological Seminary in New York City. Her dissertation concerns collaboration between humanists and religious adherents in interfaith engagement. Currently, she serves as Chair of the Board of Directors for the Yale Humanist Community and is part of the teaching faculty at Claremont Lincoln University. She is the author of Goodness Gracious, a children’s book of humanist reflections, due out later this year.

Sunday, March 26
To Be On Fire for Justice
Rev. Bill Zelazny & Channing Youth

The sermon title is drawn from a quote by Cornel West, the prolific author and political activist. Bill thinks this statement is an appropriate call for our congregation. This Sunday, Bill, assisted by our children and youth, will spend some time reflecting on the issue of economic justice and the marginalized worker who functions in the “informal sector” of our economy.

FROM THE MINISTER

In Oakland, CA there is a sculpture titled “There.” It’s a tribute to Gertrude Stein and a reference to her remark “There is no there there.” (A statement of distress about the home of her birth having been torn down, not about the city of Oakland)

I think this idea of a “there” (a place) is important for us at Channing as we engage with each other this month in our stewardship campaign. I think it is important for us to think about our “there”, our church community.

Our “there” serves many purposes. It is a place to come for spiritual exploration and fulfillment through worship services and education classes. It is a place for children and youth to start their faith development journey in the company of other children and youth of the same faith tradition. It is a place where like-minded people can organize to work for justice. It is a place where people can engage one another in friendly and thought-provoking conversations in small discussion groups and social gatherings.

Our “there” has a number of important ministries and programs already, but there is more that we could do to better meet the spiritual, social, educational and social action desires of current and future members. We could enlarge our social action and community involvement activities; augment our adult spiritual development endeavors; help current and new families with additional support programs; increase ministerial availability.

Funds to support our “there” come from several sources, but pledges from members and friends by far are the largest single source. Significant new revenue from non-pledge sources is unlikely, so if we want to expand our ministries and programs we will need to rely on expanded pledge income.

Over the next few weeks our Stewardship Team will be asking all of us to make a financial support commitment for the 2017-2018 year. Please listen to what they have to say, ask questions, discuss Channing’s future and potential, then make a pledge at the level that is right to help our “there” grow its ministries and programs to be a strong and active congregation.

~Rev. Bill Zelazny

MARCH GREETERS
March 5: Cynthia Skelton
March 12: Marian Royer
March 19: Calvin Pierce
March 26: Susan Booth

MARCH CHIMERS
March 5: Christine Ariel
March 12: Linda Beall
March 19: Jim Freess
March 26: Janna Pederson
As always, we’ll keep a close eye on our budget, however, it’s important to remember that all of our activities and programs at Channing depend 100% on your financial support. Our annual fund drive, meaning, your pledges, support 100% of our ministry and programs. Throughout March we will be asking you to make a financial pledge. Please take a moment to reflect on what Channing brings to your life. Help us to keep the wonderful positive momentum we have at Channing going by pledging as generously as you can.

In friendship, Barb Nowicki, Co-president, Board of Trustees

CHANNING BOARD NEWS
Well, we’ve heard from you and we’ve acted accordingly! We received an overwhelmingly positive response to our “How are we doing?” request in the December Catalyst, and, through our Committee on Ministry Open Forum, we’ve heard that things are going more or less swimmingly at Channing. Folks are very pleased with our new minister, are feeling positive about the general atmosphere at church, and are enjoying the variety and breadth of worship services that can be provided when we invite outside speakers to our pulpit on a regular basis. Based on such positive feedback, the Channing Board of Trustees has decided to offer Reverend Zelazny a 3-year contract, and to increase his hours from half to 2/3rd’s time. We plan to continue our practice of inviting outside speakers for our worship services but will ask Reverend Bill to provide us with at least 2 services a month. We’re excited about the ideas Bill has for new programs and activities he’d like to initiate at Channing. Nothing is firmly settled at this time, but in the future we might experiment with a new Youth and Family Ministry, podcasts of our worship services for those who travel or are confined to home, extended outreach events in our community that might appeal to Gen-Xers and Millenials and an Eldercare Ministry. Our Growth Convocation in February generated loads of terrific ideas for programs and activities that might appeal to a wide range of ages and interests.

COMMUNICATIONS FACEBOOK AND WEBSITE UPDATES & POLICY
Those of you on Facebook will have noticed more activity on the Channing Facebook page recently and found events and information to share with friends. Our Office Administrator, Michele Dubuc, has added notice of events regularly, and some of our most popular have been those involving the larger community, especially Singing for Shelter, Green Drinks and the Women’s March. More recently, we have shared a series of stained glass images that have welcomed a large number of virtual visitors to Channing.

The Communications Team has been updating the church website progressively, including monthly info on upcoming services and a new Religious Education page. Our web statistics show that 5,600 of 8,000 visits to our site last year were by people who hadn’t been there before and the “Newcomers” page is a frequent destination. Needless to say, we’re focusing on this as we improve the site and plan to add more content that represents Unitarian Universalism, as well as the work of our Social Action, Interweave and Green Congregation groups.

The Team has also begun discussing other improvements ranging from improving the speed of the site to possibly giving it a new look. We’re also working on budgeting for the site in the next fiscal year. If the idea of websites, writing, photography, and/or marketing doesn’t scare you, we’d welcome adding team members to our effort.

Channing has a “Website, Social Media, and Communications Policy” approved by the Board of Trustees last Nov. 17. This policy provides guidance to the minister, staff, and volunteer communications folks such as webmaster, social media coordinators, committee chairs and their publicity reps. If this describes you—or you’re simply interested in reading it—email Michele for a copy or pick one up at the church office.

The policy had close to two years of Board, Program Council and our team’s input. No doubt, it can and will be refined over time (changes and additions may be made at any time by a Board vote). In the meantime, I’ll close with sincere thanks to all who contributed to it.

~John Burnham, Communications Team Leader
**Notice to all Parents:**
The Stewardship Team has invited you to attend a House Party to celebrate the kickoff of Channing’s annual stewardship drive. Although you may choose from 5 parties taking place, please note that the party on Friday, March 10th will include complimentary childcare on site. Please contact Julie Herrick for more information or to RSVP.

**Religious Education News**

Religious Education class, for students of all ages, is held in the Parish Hall on Sundays. We leave the Sanctuary just after the Message for All Ages.

Our Youth Group meets the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month. It is open to students grades 6 and up and provides socialization and friendship for Channing Youths, as well as service projects chosen by the Youth. Besides Laser Tag and Snow Tubing this month, the Youth group will be sponsoring a St. Patrick’s Theme Game Night and Potluck. This event, which is open to the whole Channing community, will take place on Saturday, March 18th in the Parish Hall.

We would like to thank Marilyn McDonald, friend of member Judy Byrnes, who very quickly made 3 beautiful stoles for our Coming of Age mentors. We appreciate her talent and efficiency. The Coming of Age participants will soon be choosing their service project. If you have ideas or needs for consideration, please speak to any of the COA facilitators (Barbara Coppola, Sally Hanchett, Russ Milham, Barbara Russell-Willet, or Kathy Takata).

Please consider attending our next RE Committee Meeting on Tuesday, March 14th at 7:00 PM at Channing House. You do not have to be a parent or grandparent to attend. All are welcome.

-Kathy Takata
Religious Education Committee

**March RE Calendar**

- Sunday, March 5: RE Class
- Youth Group will go Snow Tubing at Yawgoo Valley
- Sunday, March 12: RE Class
- Youth Group will play Laser Tag at Laser Gate
- Saturday, March 18, 5pm, St. Patrick’s Game Night Potluck in the Parish Hall
- Sunday, March 19: RE Class
- Sunday, March 26: Students participate in the Sunday Worship Service

Notice to all Parents:
The Stewardship Team has invited you to attend a House Party to celebrate the kickoff of Channing’s annual stewardship drive. Although you may choose from 5 parties taking place, please note that the party on Friday, March 10th will include complimentary childcare on site. Please contact Julie Herrick for more information or to RSVP.
CAREGIVING UPDATE

Thank you to our Caregiving coordinators Rachel Balaban, John Burnham, and Barbara Russell-Willett for keeping up with the news for the month of February!

Please keep Rev. Bill’s and his partner Patrick’s young nephew Keion in your thoughts and prayers as he progresses through his long recovery from a brain aneurysm. Keion is only 8 years old and faces a probable hospital stay of at least two months. At the time of this writing, he seems to have shown some improvement, and our good wishes go out to Rev. Bill and his whole family.

Best wishes for a speedy recovery also go out to Morty Glasser, who had recent surgery for a broken wrist.

Congratulations to Bob Janeisch and Sue Vanderhoof’s son David, who was honored during February as the URI Alumni of the Week!

Congratulations also to Shannen Thomas, who made the Dean’s List at Bristol Community College.

Charlie Beckers is still welcoming cards and visits. He and his wife Susan are searching for a suitable handicapped-accessible apartment, and in the meantime making some improvements to their current place to make daily activities easier for Charlie.

We were very pleased to hear from Dave Nava, a newer attendee of Channing, that his son, a Navy Seal, just returned safely from Afghanistan.

I was asked to wish a very Happy Birthday in February to Tom Willett, who celebrated a “milestone,” and to Sophie Burnham, who is on a roll getting settled in Los Angeles with a new screenwriter editing job, acting internship, apartment, and car!

Our Caregiving coordinators for March are Mary Benson and Betsy Dees. Please call either of these individuals with any caregiving needs within our congregation.

~Linda Beall

MARCH

SHARING THE PLATE

This month half of our cash offerings and checks with the memo “Share the Plate” will go to Syrian Refugee relief under the Rhode Island Council of Churches (RICC) newly launched Sanctuary Fund. The Council met in February with many coalition members, including several from Channing, to support Sanctuary Congregations in Rhode Island. One congregation is up and running and several more are in process of joining the program. These congregations of all faiths are offering shelter and coordinating services. Most congregations do not have facilities and funds to become sheltering Sanctuary Congregations. Our donations will be used to purchase supplies for food, bedding, hygiene, laundry, clothing, infant needs and other necessities used specifically at these sheltering Sanctuary Congregations.

~Joanne Armenia for CMC Social Action Committee socialaction@channingchurch.org

MARCH

COMMUNITY MEAL

Monday, March 20
3:30-6:15pm, Parish Hall

Thanks to everyone who helped at the February community meal. We really missed Joan Dermody and her culinary skills, but somehow managed to serve about 50 meals anyway. Our next Community Meal will be on Monday, March 20. If you have any questions or wish to help please contact Meal Manager, Joy Benson.
GREEN CORNER
Lots going on! Join in!

Your Green Congregation has been "quietly" busy, and we’ll soon be more visibly so.

In February, we sponsored two Newport presentations of "Learn the Facts" (about the proposed Burrillville power plant) by Paul Roselli, Burrillville Land Trust President. The second was attended by three Newport City Council members, important because we’re asking the Council pass a resolution supporting Burrillville’s opposition to the plant. 29 of RI’s 39 municipal councils have signed on, including all of Newport County except Newport. When it comes before the council, please come support it.

We also co-sponsored, with Emmanuel Church and TLC, a talk by David Stookey about his important book, *Climate-Proof Your Personal Finances*, at Emmanuel on February 15.

State level environmental legislation is of paramount importance, given the federal administration’s total antipathy to science and the environment. The most important bill in our General Assembly is EnergizeRI, the carbon fee and dividend bill. To learn more about it and other bills, see www.environmentcouncilri.org. And come to the RI UU Legislative Ministry Annual Meeting in March 19 to vote on this and other issues for UULMRI's 2017 agenda.

Nationally, 350.org is organizing the People’s Climate Mobilization on April 29 in Washington, DC. Let’s form a strong RI contingent! Get details at www.peoplesclimate.org.

Watch for information soon on a field trip to the Tomaquag Museum in Exeter, in March or April, following on Loren Spears’ wonderful Earth Day program of last year. Tours are tailored to the group’s wishes, with the cost varying from $10 to $25 per person.

For Earth Day Month, we’ll have a weekly mini-film festival. Titles and dates will be announced in the April Catalyst. And we’re planning yet another wonderful Earth Day service for April 23.

Share the plate for April will be honored by RI Interfaith Power and Light and the Island-based Greenlove Foundation. Our deep thanks to the Bandoni Family who, with the Foundation, recently donated a water bottle refilling station to the Norman Bird Sanctuary, in memory of their beloved son, Luc.

~Beth Milham, Chair, Green Cong. Committee

ECO-BITS & TIPS
Carbon Sequestration in the Garden

Let’s take a much needed break from politics this month! I wanted to tell you how I’m improving my yard’s soil fertility, increasing its water holding capacity, and binding up some carbon, by using charcoal from my fireplace and biochar fertilizer and, the largest contributor by far, by burying older, rotting unburned wood.

The first two are easy to understand, and some of you may already be using them. The charcoal and “Biochar,” a fertilizer created to add potassium, magnesium and other micronutrients, have a long history of benefit.

But burying wood, even if it is rotting, is something entirely different. Known in some circles as hugelkultur (pronounced hoo'-gle-cul-tur,) it was first popularized by permaculture activists who plant their trees on beds with a base of deciduous trees of varying sizes, allowed to break down undisturbed. In the past three years I’ve used an estimated ½ ton of wood this way in my garden, and I’ve witnessed benefits already, from higher yields to reduced need for watering in our now common drier summer months here in the Northeast. It even supports various soil fungi that research shows help with plant growth.

So think of using hugelkultur in your garden and yard if you have access to wood, even down to small pruned branches, as a powerful soil amendment. Plus, you can sequester carbon and slow down the rate of carbon dioxide increase in our atmosphere.

Feel free to chat with me at Fellowship should you have any questions.

~Craig Gaspard, for the Green Cong. Committee
**FILL THE FREEZER FOR FLORENCE**

The Margit Baum Fund Committee would like to invite Channing Memorial Church to participate with us in conducting a drive to collect protein (hamburger, chicken, hot dogs, etc.) that can be kept in the Florence Gray food pantry freezer to help provide food for the North end community.

While most people are aware of the food pantry at the Martin Luther King Center on Wheatland Boulevard, many are unaware of the food pantry that provides services to public housing in the area around Miantonomi Park. It has come to our attention that they are in need of help with improving their healthy meat offerings.

We will be conducting a public food (i.e. meat) drive on March 19th at Channing Church. The meat should be fresh, as it will be going into a freezer and they don’t want to deal with refreezing.

Please bring your contributions to Channing Church between 9:30 am and noon on Sunday March 19th. Together we will work together to fill the freezer at the Florence Gray Center.

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**UU LEGISLATIVE MINISTRY OF RHODE ISLAND**

Select the Issues R.I. UU’s will lobby for/against at the R.I. Statehouse this year.

The UU Legislative Ministry of R.I.’s annual meeting is set for Sunday, March 19th from 2 to 4 PM at the Westminster Church in East Greenwich. The UULMRI team will lobby for or against the three top issues selected at this meeting. So far the following issues are being considered (Got another? Give it to a SAC Committee member):

- Affordable Housing/Homelessness (for)
- Gun Violence (no guns in schools, 10 rounds per clip max., and no guns for domestic violators)^1
- Immigration Reform/Sanctuary Cities (for)^2
- Woman’s Reproductive Rights (for)^3
- Environmental/Climate Change issues (for)
- Mass Incarceration Reform (for)^4

A final list of 2017 issues will be set by March 5th. Two-page documents detailing issue background and justification will be available on the SAC table in the Parish Hall. If you plan to attend this annual meeting or need a ride on March 19th contact Al Benson.

**INTERWEAVE POTLUCK & PROGRAM**

**Sunday, March 19, 5:30pm, Parish Hall**

In our current political climate, activism is more important than ever. Join Interweave for a presentation by a former member of ACT UP and hear stories of the rallies, protest marches, collaboration, arrests, and shootings that took place surrounding the AIDS crisis. All are welcome, this is a free event. The discussion will begin at 7PM in the Parish Hall behind Channing Memorial Church. Join us at 5:30PM for a potluck dinner before the presentation.

This event is sponsored by Interweave, Channing’s group for LGBTQ people and allies. Contact Rex at: interweave@channingchurch.org for more information.

**Interested in Social Action?**

All are invited to join our Social Action Committee. We meet at 11:30am in the Channing House Library the second Sunday of the month, join us!
100 QUESTIONS ABOUT UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM
A Discussion for People New to Channing Church
Sunday, March 5, 11:30am, Ladies' Parlor in the Parish Hall

This is an informal introductory class designed for people new to Channing to get their questions answered about Unitarian Universalism and an orientation to Channing Church with members of Membership Committee and Rev. Bill. All questions are encouraged. This class will lay the groundwork for the new member class which will be held in spring. **Grab a cup of coffee and join the conversation in the Ladies' Parlor, (the room with the large wood table off the main Parish Hall room)**

IRISH MUSIC AT CHANNING’S COFFEE HOUSE
Saturday, March 11, 7:00pm in the Parish Hall
Join us for an evening of coffee, dessert, and music with an Irish flavor provided by Channing musicians and friends of Channing: 7-9:00pm, March 11, 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.

TLC FIELD TRIP TO THE MUSEUM OF RUSSIAN ICONS, CLINTON, MA
Saturday March 25, 8:30 AM – 5 PM (Meet at Channing)
We will leave Channing at 8:30 AM via carpool; arrive at the Museum around 10:30; and enjoy a group tour given by a member of the museum staff. We’ll lunch at a restaurant nearby, and then return to the Museum to spend individual time until 3 or so. We expect to be back on Aquidneck Island around 5 PM. Gas costs will be compensated to 4 people who are able to drive and offer rides to (hopefully 3) others.

**We’ll start to sign people up on March 5 after church. Registration is limited, so your $20 cash payment (includes transportation and group tour) will hold your place! Lunch costs are up to you.**

OPIOID ADDICTION IN OUR LOCAL COMMUNITIES – WHAT CAN WE DO?
Monday, March 27, 6:30 to 8:30pm, Newport Public Library Program Room
Led by Linda Hurley, President and CEO of CODAC
Free and open to the public; please encourage others to attend, Refreshments will be served

Channing’s SAC and TLC will co-sponsor a timely program dealing with the growing problem of substance use disorder, with particular attention to local issues and resources.

Several speakers will share information about their areas of experience and expertise: Linda Hurley will discuss the science and problem of opioid use, and modes and success rates of treatment of addiction. The family member of a young person who died from an overdose will talk about her personal loss and experiences. We will have speakers on the current demographics of the problem, from Newport Hospital and from the local prevention community. **We’ll also produce a resource list of both prevention programs and treatment options available locally.** There will be plenty of time for discussion and questions.

March Caregivers
Mary Benson and Betsy Dees
Please call with any caregiving needs within our congregation.