December Worship Services

Sunday, December 3:
Rev. Bill Zelazny
The Joy and Challenge of a Family
Families are where we connect ourselves in relationships to past, current, and future generations. Our families are where we experience our biggest triumphs and our deepest vulnerabilities. This Sunday Bill will look at the psychological and spiritual aspects of families.

We will also acknowledge several individuals who have decided to become official members of Channing Memorial at Membership Signing Ceremony.

Sunday, December 10:
Rev. Bill Zelazny
What’s in it for Us in Gift Giving?
It’s that time of the year when people’s attention is focused on the holiday ritual of gift-giving. Shoppers are scurrying about looking for the right gift for the special people in their lives. Advertisers have been busy creating a culture of giving, preparing for finding that right gift,” building expectation of what it will mean when a person receives a gift. But the act of gift-giving can offer the giver benefits too. Bill will explore the benefits of gift giving to both receiver and giver.

This is our Family Sunday. Families are invited to have their children stay for the whole service. Rev. Bill will present the Message for All Ages.
Childcare is available for the youngest children in the Parish Hall and a quiet crafts table in the sanctuary for children who may become a bit fussy at having to sit in the pews.

After the service Channing members and friends will have an opportunity to write letters for the Amnesty International’s 2017 “Write for Rights” campaign in recognition of Human Rights Day. See “Write for Rights” article on page 7.

Sunday, December 17: Jessica Thomas & Rev. Bill Zelazny

The Longest Night of the Year

Solstice has long been a time of both foreboding and hope as the longest night gives way to the sun. Come help us welcome the sun back as we take a moment to acknowledge the joy that we have and make plans for a bright future.

Sunday, December 24: No Morning Service!

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service: A Celebration with Words and Music

4:45 Carol Singing
5:00 Worship Service

The Channing Choir, Rev. Bill Zelazny and members of the congregation will offer a service for all ages and all religious backgrounds of secular and sacred reading, carols and anthems. The service will conclude with the traditional singing of Silent Night in a candle lit sanctuary. There will be open carol singing starting at 4:45.

Sunday, Dec. 31: TBA

FROM THE MINISTER

Auld lang syne, 2017. It was a good year for Channing Memorial Church. Take a look back with me. This year we... reignited the sense of community and fun.
...conducted a successful stewardship campaign, raising more money for the church programs and operations than we have in several years.
...launched a Family Ministry program.
...started a men’s group and added a Women of Wit and Wisdom group, which expanded our small group offerings.
...launched a new website that is attractive and informative, which we know is being used by people searching for a church.
...expanded our web-based outreach to the larger community with regular Facebook postings, which is showing results in attracting visitors.
...held a summit to explore ideas for church growth, which will be worked on in 2018.
...continued our support for LGBT people with our Transgender Day of Remembrance, Born this Way Prom and participating in the RI Pride Festival and Parade.

...engaged in several social action events and projects that continued our tradition of giving care, compassion and support to people in need and working for justice.
...welcomed several new and returning members.

I can hardly wait to see what new and exciting activities and programs we will have in 2018. Thank you, everyone for the time, treasure and talent you gave to Channing, but most of all, for your spirit that has made this a dynamic, fun, wonderful congregation.

May your holidays be filled with happiness and meaning, may any voids from absent family and friends be filled with good memories, and may 2018 be a prosperous and fulfilling year in all the ways you wish.

~Rev. Bill Zelazny

MANY THANKS TO OUR USHERS & GREETERS!!

Sunday, Dec. 3
Greeter: Susan VanDerhoof, Ushers: Jo Freedman and Judy Byrnes

Sunday, Dec. 10
Greeter: Cynthia Skelton Ushers: Barbara Coppola and Fatima Devine

Sunday, Dec. 17
Greeter: Ruth Jernigan Ushers: Barbara Coppola and Marian Royer

Sunday, Dec. 24
Greeters: Marian Royer and Judy Byrnes
Make your Legacy Meaningful through your Will & Estate Plan

With Attorney Holly Janney
Wednesday, Dec. 6, 6:30 PM, in the Parish Hall

We all have a lot of stuff, valuable and otherwise, gathered over our busy lives. What will happen to it when we're gone? How can we best use our assets (houses, stocks & bonds, IRA's) to benefit the ones we love and the organizations and causes we care about? Is a trust advisable?

It's estimated that some 70% of Americans die without a will. Prince did. So did Michael Jackson, Picasso, and Abraham Lincoln. That means the courts will decide what happens to their assets. Most UU's are pragmatic enough to have plans, but are they up-to-date? Do they accomplish what we want?

Come learn some of the ins and outs of effective estate planning with Jamestown Attorney Holly Janney.

Open to the Public, Q & A will follow; refreshments will be served.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Join Us for a Religious Education (RE) Summit!
Sunday, January 28, 11:30am in the Parish Hall

I like to imagine a world in which all children are raised with UU values. Just imagine if all kids were immersed from earliest childhood in our UU principles of kindness, acceptance, and respect for others and our environment. Peace could eliminate violence, acceptance could “trump” intolerance, and ending hunger, homelessness, and environmental destruction could become true priorities. Certainly “being our best selves” is always a work in progress, but just imagine how different the world would be if our UU principles were more universally followed. One of our central missions at Channing is to instill UU values in our children and to guide them through their own unique spiritual journey. We are committed to religious education for our youth, but despite Herculean efforts by our RE team over the past few years, we find that our RE program is struggling to meet our needs. The difficulties we face are common to many UU congregations these days. Simply put, we’re attempting to offer a religious education program designed for families in the 1950’s to families living in the 2020’s. Many of us older folks at Channing remember fondly a traditional RE program that

But much has changed for families in recent years, and the old RE classroom model no longer serves today’s families well. We’re committed to providing strong opportunities for spiritual growth and faith formation for all our Channing members across all ages. The big question is how best to do that. What does RE for children and families look like today, and when and how does it happen? We’re already experimenting with some new ideas for youth and family ministry this fall. Re-envisioning and re-vamping our RE program is going to take a little effort and a lot of creative thinking. Regardless of whether you have children currently in our program, we need your help. Please join us for an RE Summit in late January where we will explore numerous options for religious education at Channing and work together to craft a program that really works!

~In Friendship, Barbara Nowicki, Channing President

Interested in hearing about WhaleCoast Alaska?

Russ and Beth Milham and Maryellen Doherty took part in the WhaleCoast Alaska tours last summer, and look forward to sharing their experiences with those interested in a superb Alaskan tour experience that supports the four UU congregations in the state. The Milhams will reminisce about the All-Alaska tour, and Maryellen will contribute her thoughts in writing about the National Parks tour. The tours, each limited to forty participants, begin booking in December, and fill up quickly. They’re very popular, but few Rhode Islanders have taken part. Learn about them first-hand on Sunday, December 3, at 11:30, in the Parish Hall.
The Religious Education Committee wishes you all moments of peace and true connection in community during this holiday season.

Get Involved!!

- Stop by the Parish Hall for Cocoa, Cookies, and Crafts with Reverend Bill on Saturday, December 9, between 1-3pm. This event is to welcome locals and visitors to our church home. Volunteers are needed, contact Rev. Bill if you would like to help!

- Enter the Annual Channing Holiday Cookie Contest on Sun. December 17! Bake 1 or 2 (or more!) batches of cookies and deliver them to the Parish Hall on Saturday, December 16th between 9-11 am (or early Sunday, December 17th). The cookie sale helps fund the Channing Annual Shopping Trip for Youth in Need.

- Participate in the PJ drive by donating pajamas for infants-4th graders...look for donation boxes in the Parish Hall.

- Or Come to the Holiday Movie and PJ drive sponsored by the Youth Group and Interweave on Sunday, December 17 at 5:00. Potluck and cocoa bar in the Parish Hall prior to the movie.

- Check out the Giving Tree in the Parish Hall & purchase a gift for someone in need.

- Sing carols at the Community Meal on Monday, December 18., at 5:00pm in the Parish Hall.

Don't Miss It!
Family Fun Day - “Christmas at the Castle”
Join us at noon on December 3 for a tour of Smith’s Castle in North Kingstown with live music from an earlier era, mulled cider, and baked goods. Stop by Wickford’s Festival of Lights on the way home for hayrides with Santa and shopping.

Spiritual Parenting
Sunday, December 17, 11:30am-1:00pm, in the Ladies' Parlor. Childcare is provided. All are invited.

Youth Group for 6th-12th graders meets the 1st and 3rd Sundays.

The RE committee and our newly trained facilitators, Rex Lebeau and Kathy Takata, are excited to be offering 4-6 Grade Our Whole Lives Program after the first of the year. Our Whole Lives is a comprehensive sexual education program developed and promoted by the United Church of Christ and the Unitarian Universalist Association. Written by professional sexuality educators, the programs provide accurate information for parents, teachers and pastors to use with children and young people to help them learn about sexuality in the affirming and supportive setting of our churches. OWL facilitators, Rex Lebeau and Kathy Takata are happy to share information about this valuable program. If you are interested in having your child participate in this program please contact Jessica Thomas as soon as you can.

~Kathy Takata, Chair, RE Committee

DECEMBER RE CALENDAR


- 12pm: "Christmas at the Castle" at Smith’s Castle.

- 6:00 Youth Group shopping for teens in need

Sun., Dec 10, 10am: Family Service with Reverend Bill

Sun., Dec 17, 10am: Baking for the Community Meal, Creating Toiletry bags for those in need + Holiday Cookie Contest

- 11:30-1:00 Spiritual Parenting

- 5:30 -8:00 Youth Group/ Interweave Movie & PJ drive

Mon. Dec 18, 5:00pm: Caroling at the Community Meal in the Parish Hall

Sun., Dec. 24, 5:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
CAREGIVING UPDATE

Best wishes to all for a peaceful and joyous holiday season with your loved ones!

Thank you to all who spoke, sang, and helped in other ways with the beautiful Caregiving Sunday service on Nov. 12, and to the congregation members who generously supported our program through the special collection.

Our thoughts have been with Betsy Leerssen and her family this past month after Neil passed away on Nov. 5. Neil had been on hospice care for a brief time, and was blessed with the presence of his family at the time of his death. His memorial service was held at Channing on Nov. 12. Betsy has expressed her deep appreciation for all who assisted with the reception after the service and have provided support at this sad time.

We also have been thinking of the Gaspards as they grieve the recent loss of Craig’s father. In addition, sadly, Catie suffered the theft of her backpack at college, which contained a laptop computer and other valuables. Her application materials for a year of architectural study abroad were part of what was lost. We have heard that Catie has been able to replace some of the lost items, and has revised her plans for study abroad. She will apply for programs in India and New York City, to take place a semester later than planned. We wish her well! If you would like to drop Catie a note of support, you can write to her at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Voorhies 003 E Complex, 1999 Burdett Ave., Troy, NY 12180.

We are sorry to hear that former Channing member Heather Bartee’s beloved grandfather also died recently, on Oct. 11. If you’d like to write to Heather, her address is 210 Lanfare Place, Security, CO 80911.

On a happier note, congratulations to Bill and Bett Marshall, who recently celebrated their 50th anniversary!

The Pederson family, especially daughter Emily, has had much to celebrate this past month. Emily married Emmanuel (Emma) Guillen-Lozano on Nov. 7 at Judson Memorial Church in Manhattan. Judson Memorial has been in the forefront of the Sanctuary movement – an apt place for their wedding, given their work as activists. Their address is 273 Buffalo Ave., Apt. 2L, Brooklyn, NY 11213. Also, congratulations to Emily for winning the Grand Prize at the March on Washington/Civil Rights Film Festival for her documentary, “They Took Them Alive”! More information on the film can be found on the website of the production company, Field of Vision.

Please keep Barb Baum in your thoughts as she continues the chemotherapy treatments that she started in early October. These will finish in January, and preliminary results of scans have been positive for her. Though she is not able to be out and about much at present, her husband Jerry says she is doing well. I’m sure messages of support would be appreciated.

I was asked by Nickie Kates to pass along the following: With the support of our congregants, the decision has been made by the co-chairs of Channing Caregiving that Caregiving is no longer able to provide support and food for any events at the Elks Club or any other off-campus event. Cleaning the space and tables and organizing and providing refreshments for an outside event is a labor-intensive project that is now a bit beyond the capabilities of Caregiving to undertake. Caregiving welcomes all events held within the Parish Hall and/or Sanctuary and will continue to assist with these as needed.

Announcements have been made in the Sunday orders of service and weekly e-mails, but we wanted to put in another reminder about Christmas flowers! Caregiving will once again coordinate the purchase and placement of flowering plants in the sanctuary prior to the Christmas Eve service. If you’d like to order a flowering plant in honor or in memory of someone, there is a firm deadline of noon on Dec. 11. Fill out the form that you can find in your order of service and give it (along with $11 payment) to Nickie Kates, or e-mail the information to her.

Thank you so much to Susan Kieronski and Betsy Dees for their devoted efforts as November Caregiving coordinators! For any Caregiving concerns among our Channing members and friends during December, please contact either Mary Benson or Fatima Devine from Dec. 1-15, or Joy Benson from Dec. 16-31.

~Linda Beall, for Channing Caregiving
SOCIAL ACTION

GREEN CORNER
A message from Susan Adie
We recently heard from our dear friend, Susan Adie, co-organizer of Step It Up in 2007, charter member of Green Congregation, and creator of our now ten-year-old Eco Bits and Tips Column. For many years, Susan has worked as an environmental educator on cruises, mostly to the Antarctic, Arctic and Greenland. She’s currently part of a coalition fighting the scourge of plastic in our oceans. She writes:

"... we are trying to work with UNEP (UN Environmental Program) via #CleanSeas - through our Arctic organization, Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators (AECO.no). We work on a project now called Clean Up Svalbard, through the Svalbard government (a Norwegian archipelago in the Arctic Sea) and together with others in the industry, we pick up tons of plastic garbage on beaches in the Arctic every season. We do not have a garbage problem in Antarctica YET so that is a blessing. But I am working with our company to start plastic pickup updates on each of our worldwide departures."

We've invited Susan to give a presentation about the work her groups are doing early next year. Watch this column for more information in the near future.

~Beth Milham, Chair, Green Cong. Committee

ECO-BITS & TIPS
Green holiday redux
It’s a busy time of year, and this year seems busier than ever. So we’re dipping into our treasure trove of past EcoBits columns for some time-tested holiday advice for avoiding contributing to the never-ending waste stream.

Some tips we’ve evolved over the years:
- Email holiday greetings and newsletters, when possible.
- Make donations to the giftees’ favorite organizations, in lieu of unneeded gifts.
- Give useful gifts, like reasonably healthy consumables, rather than trinkets that cause clutter, or evoke guilt from discarding or re-gifting.
- Make gifts.
- Support Channing’s holiday regifting and fair trade sale, or buy from local independent merchants and from charitable organizations' stores or shopping sites.
- Enconce your offerings in colorful recycled paper, like the newspaper comic sections, or your treasured gift bag collection. Or wrap them in colorful dish or hand towels, or bag them in reusable shopping bags.
- Decorate with LED lights.
- If you have space, buy a living tree and replant it.
- Reuse your cut tree as a critter shelter, or mulch or compost it. If your town collects trees, put it out for pickup, then pick up some of the resulting mulch next spring.

And of course, at holiday time, we like to mind our manners by writing thank you notes. Here’s a timely one for Clean Ocean Access: thank you for leading the charge to reduce the burden of live-forever plastic shopping bags on our fellow creatures in the oceans, and encouraging our two islands to move to more responsible choices. Newport and Middletown have already enacted the ban, and Jamestown will do so next Earth Day. Residents of Portsmouth, please keep encouraging your town council to join this important movement.

~Beth Milham, Guest Columnist

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!
Turning Around Ministries (TAM) will be serving breakfast from 7:30-8:30 AM at the Community Baptist Church Annex, 50 Marcus Wheatland Blvd., Newport, on Tues. Dec. 26, Weds. Dec. 27, Thurs. Dec. 28, Fri. Dec. 29 and Mon. Jan. 1st. Want to help serve? Please call Catherine in the TAM office (846-8264) to let her know which date(s) you would like to help. Thanks!

We asked Jennifer Barrera, director of Lucy’s Hearth, how one might be useful in some way at the shelter on Valley Rd. in Middletown. One specific need is for a few volunteers ready to be called in to be with children in the playroom, while their mothers are taking various classes at Lucy’s, and when a family first arrives. One could also arrange to come on a weekly basis. Orientation for volunteers is held the third Thursday of every month at 10:30 AM. Background checks are required. Call program director Tara at 847-2021 for an on-line application or you can find printed copies on the SAC table in the Parish Hall.
SHARE THE PLATE
It is December and you are probably wondering how you can surprise a young person in need with a perfect holiday gift – just the gift that young person is hoping for.

Good News: Share the Plate is partnering with Foster Forward to do just that!!

Foster Forward is a Rhode Island nonprofit dedicated to supporting children, young adults, and families impacted by foster care. One of its programs provides Teen Grants of up to $300 to young people who are in DCYF care. These grants provide funding for young persons to do what-they-want-to-do or to buy what-they-want-to-buy. The teens and young adults apply for the grants and, in the past, have received money to pay for driver’s education classes, music-art-and-dance lessons, sports equipment, school-and-club activities, prom expenses, Kindles, books, school trips, gym memberships, cameras, or just-what-they-want most.

Your cash offerings and checks with the memo “Share the Plate” donated during our December Sunday services will provide the perfect gift to a young person who will really appreciate it.

Happy Holidays! and please be generous, like you always are.

Respectfully submitted,
Sheila McEntee

WRITE FOR RIGHTS EVENT
Sunday, December 10
11:30am in the Parish Hall Ladies’ Parlor

Human Rights Day is observed every year on 10 December – the day the United Nations General Assembly adopted, in 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Declaration sets out universal values for all peoples and all nations. The 2017 campaign revolves around the theme of rights and freedoms — freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear — which underpin the International Bill of Human Rights.

Every December, Amnesty International, in conjunction with Human Rights Day, asks people across the globe will write letters in support for those whose basic human rights are being attacked. Each year they select 10 focus people or groups for the letter writing campaign.

This year, Rev. Bill is organizing a letter writing event on December 10 in the Parish Hall, Ladies’ Parlor, after the service. Paper, envelopes, descriptions of the 10 targeted individuals/groups and sample notes will be available. Channing members and friends are invited to take a few moments to write one or more short letters. The church office will mail them.

GGG (GREAT GUYS GROUP) TO MEET AGAIN
Saturday, December 16,
8:30am, Parish Hall

In November, eight men met in the Parish Hall for the initial gathering of the GGG. The group had a free flowing conversation over breakfast and decided to meet again. The next gathering will be December 16.

All men, members and friends of Channing Memorial, of all ages, are invited to participate. The Group meets at 8:30 in the Parish Hall on the third Saturday of the month to make breakfast and discuss topics of interest to men. The December topic will be “Father, how they affected and influenced our lives.” Things wrap up by 10:30. Please drop Rev. Bill a short email – minister@channingchurch.org – by Friday morning, December 15 if you are planning to attend.

DECEMBER CHIMERS
Dec. 3: Christine Ariel and Cynthia Skelton
Dec. 10: Janna Pederson
Dec. 17: Jim Freess
Dec. 24: Jim Freess

Monday, December 25
The 7th annual "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day" chime concert will be offered by Linda Beall and Chris Ariel from 11am to 12pm on Christmas Day. Come to the Park and honk or clap if you like the chiming.

Dec. 31: Linda Beall
Cocoa, Cookies, and Crafts Sat., Dec. 9, 1-3pm, Parish Hall
Channing Memorial will be holding a community outreach event -- Cocoa, Cookies and Crafts -- on December 9, from 1:00 to 3:00 in the Parish Hall. We are giving out cocoa and cookies and will have a crafts table for children to make some simple, yet fun, ornaments for their tree or to give as a gift. This event will be an opportunity for the community to meet our church. If members of Channing have friends or neighbors that they think may like coming here this could be a good event to which to bring them and their children. We will also have the re-gifting and Fair Trade coffee “stores” open.

A Green Way to Shop: Check your closets, clean off those shelves. It’s time for the December re-gifting sale. Please bring in those lovely gifts that Aunt Tilley gave you that just weren’t your style.

Donations can be dropped off in the Parish Hall on Saturday December 2, from 1-3pm, or before church on Sunday, Dec. 3. The sale will run Sunday’s during Fellowship, Dec. 3, 10, and 17, as well as during the Cocoa and Craft event.

Fair Trade Shopping: There will also be a collection of fair trade crafts and food items available for sale. Coffee grown in cooperatives that use sustainable farming methods and pay a fair wage, craft products that support women and families working to feed and educate their children, chocolate produced ethically, as well as olive oil from Palestine will be available. Shop til you drop

Giving Tree: Each year at Channing we identify a few families who need our support. Suggested gift items are posted on tags on the Giving Tree in the Parish Hall. We also provide gifts for teens in care. Select a tag, purchase your item(s) and bring the gift back to the Parish Hall and place under the tree with tag on the outside. As always, thank you for your generous support. Questions? Contact Sally Hanchett (849-9023)

The 17th Annual Wreath Sale to Benefit Non-Profits: Barbara Richter will have a self-serve display of handmade wreaths at 138 Old Beach Rd near corner with Eustis Ave. (only 6 blocks away). So many non-profits need your support! Self-service anytime, just leave your check payable to the organization of your choice.

Holiday Sanctuary decorating will be done Friday Dec. 8th at 6:00pm. If you wish to help, please bring gloves. ~Barbara

Holiday Cookie Contest Sunday, December 17 during Fellowship. Cookies can be brought to the Parish Hall Saturday, Dec. 16, between 9-11am, or before church on Dec. 17th

Youth Group & Interweave PJ Drive & Holiday Movie: Sunday, December 17, 5pm
Come to the Holiday Movie and PJ drive sponsored by the Youth Group and Interweave! Potluck and cocoa bar in the Parish Hall prior to the movie.

Minister’s Holiday Open House Sunday, December 17, 3-6pm
Rev. Zelazny and Patrick Griswold welcome members and friends of Channing Memorial to a holiday open house on December 17, 2017 from 3:00 to 6:00pm at their home, 1474 Ten Rod Road (Route 102), North Kingstown.

Directions from Newport: Route 138 over the bridges to Route 1 north to Route 4 north to Exit 5 (Route 2/102). At bottom of exit ramp turn left onto 2/102 (toward Exeter). Go under the Route 4 bridge and travel to the 1st traffic light. Turn left onto Autumn Dr, then immediately right onto “old” Ten Rod Road. White house with very large pine tree on the corner of Ten Rod Rd and Autumn Dr.

Community Meal Gift Collection and Holiday Caroling: Guests at the December Community Meal will each be given a holiday gift bag on Monday the 18th. The children in RE will be assembling the bags on Sunday the 17th and helpers would be appreciated. Boxes are available in Parish Hall to accept your donations of toiletries, warm socks and hats or other products (primarily for men). All are invited sing Holiday Carols at the Community Meal in the Parish Hall on Monday, December 18, at 5:00pm

Holiday Office Hours & January Catalyst Deadline The Church Office will be closed closed for the holidays December 25-Jan 1. Due to the holiday hours the January Catalyst Deadline is Friday, December 15. Many thanks for your early submissions!