Sunday Worship Services
Sunday, December 2:
Rev. Ellen Quadgrass
Imperfectionism
We are surrounded by messages telling us what success looks like and how to achieve it - perfection is an ideal toward which we are to strive. Yet all of us are also imperfect, vulnerable, and human. How do we cultivate an appreciation for our unique and irreplaceable selves in this often unforgiving world?

Rev. Ellen Quadgrass is a minister, writer and musician who cares deeply about issues of social justice. A graduate of Andover Newton Theological School, she has served Westminster Unitarian Church since 2012 and is looking forward to connecting with all of you this Sunday.

Sunday, December 9:
Rev. William Zelazny
A UU Looks at Hanukkah
Depending on who you ask, Hanukkah is either not a significant festival or it is of major symbolic importance in the Jewish faith. This Sunday, Bill, who is not Jewish, will take a look at this festival from a UU perspective.

This Sunday we will also conduct a new member signing ceremony during the service (see Joining Channing Church article on page 8 )

Subscribe to the “Channing Memorial Church Newport RI” YouTube channel and view sermon videos!

Click Here

David Pedrick, Worship chair; David Cooper, Eleanor Doumato, Margaret Polski, Judie Porter, Janet Grant, and Rev. Bill Zelazny
Sunday, December 16:
Rev. William Zelazny
Incarnation is Real:
Seeing the Divine in All Things
“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The word became flesh, and dwelt among us,” (John, Ch 1) That is what incarnation means. According to Christian teaching the incarnation is the mystery of the nativity of Jesus and it was a one-time thing. But Unitarian Universalists have a different perspective. As UU minister Galen Guengerich says, “each of us are the face of God in this world, and God’s voice and hands.” In this, the first of two sermons reflecting on theological aspects of Christmas, Bill will explore the notion that mystery and wonder are incarnate in all, including each of us.

Sunday, December 23:
Rev. William Zelazny
The Mystical is the Core of Living
Mystical moments, although we cannot will them to happen, are available to us all. And it is through mystical moments that we glimpse the awe of creation. In this second of two sermons reflecting on theological aspects of Christmas, Bill will consider the intersection of mystery and wonder in our lives.

During the service we will conduct a Child Dedication ceremony. (see the article “Child Dedication Ceremony” on page 5)

Sunday, Dec. 30:
Andrea Greenwood
Turning Pages
Every year for Christmas, my husband and I give each other a new datebook. It is always a welcome – sometimes desperately so – gift, as all the appointments and events that are scribbled in margins or stuffed on scraps into the back of the book for the year just ending can be put in their proper places, and we can begin our march through the new year. I suppose we are showing our age, in our failure to use phones for this purpose, but I like turning the pages of an actual book. What are we leaving behind, and who are we becoming?

FROM THE MINISTER
Raindrops on roses,
And whiskers on kittens
Bright copper kettles and warm woolen mittens
Brown paper packages tied up with strings
These are a few of my favorite things

I must admit that whiskers on kittens and brown paper packages are not necessarily on my list of favorite things. But I do have a list. The drawing to a close of the year is a good time to reflect on favorite things that have happened in one's life, I think. A few of mine…
Channing Memorial Church with its committed members and friends, the beautiful building, and the fun and stimulating things that are happening here
The wonderful staff with whom I get to work

My partner of 10 years
My house, even with the seeming unending renovation work
My family and family-in-laws, regardless of their idiosyncratic behaviors
Very long-time friends
Playful dogs, and maybe even kitties,
Gardens and fields full of flowers
Sunsets and moonrises
Trees with bright colored leaves in autumn and quiet winter snowfalls

Couldn’t get the list to rhyme, but these are a few of my favorite things. What are yours?

And with pleasurable thoughts about things that have been part of my year, I turn to you and say “have a wonderful holiday season and a great new year.”

~Rev. Bill Zelazny

A Christmas Eve Celebration!
Monday, Dec. 24, 5:00pm
Rev. William Zelazny, the Channing Choir and Guests
A celebration of Christmas-time with music, choral anthems, carols and readings with the Channing Choir, guest musicians, members of Channing Church and Rev. Zelazny concluding with the lighting of candles and singing Silent Night in the darkened sanctuary. Come and bring family or friends for the traditional Christmas Eve service.
Ruminations on the Question, “Is Life Worth Living?”

The timing was out of the ordinary—late afternoon on a Saturday—yet the Parish Hall filled to capacity with nearly 40 people who came to hear a public lecture given by John Kaag, author of two award winning books that explore the ways philosophy can matter in our everyday lives.

The subject of Prof. Kaag’s presentation was the question, “Is Life Worth Living?” And his answer comes from philosopher William James, who in 1895 grappled with this question in the wake of a spate of suicides by students at Harvard where he was teaching.

James’ answer? “Maybe. It depends on the liver.”

Influenced by Emerson and fellow philosopher C. S. Peirce, James believed that human lives are not fixed, but teem with the ‘maybes’ that can make our lives worthwhile by giving us something to watch for and experience. For James, who suffered from depression, this “maybe,” this “chance,” was often enough to see him through when other measures failed him. “No fact in human nature is more characteristic,” he wrote, “than its willingness to live on a chance. The existence of chance makes the difference... between a life of which the keynote is resignation, and a life of which the keynote is hope.”

James asserts nevertheless that “It’s up to each of us to make of life what we will,” and my guess is he means that the constant presence of chance does not always translate into hope for everybody. And here I quote Prof. Kaag: “In an 1899 essay James reminds us that we don’t have a clue about how other people experience the meaning of their lives. Better to leave it at ‘maybe.'”

Why have I made a Learning Center event the centerpiece of the Presidents’ December message? Two reasons: I think awareness of the never-ending possibility of “chance” to brighten our prospects is empowering to us as individuals, and therefore worth reinforcing. Then there’s the event itself. Its success in attracting an enthusiastic audience on a Saturday afternoon speaks volumes about who we are as a community and, like other successful events, suggests ways we might want to think about our wants for the future.

A final note: if you’re impressed by my quotes from Prof. Kaag’s talk, don’t be. I found the text online.

~Happy Holidays to you all,
Eleanor Doumato,
Channing Co-President

Money Matters!

Welcome to Money Matters! The goal of this new column is to keep you informed about financial things at Channing that are of interest and importance to all of us. For those whose eyes glaze over when finances are mentioned, I promise not to get down into the weeds, but rather will share some of the highlights of the financial picture at our church.

We ended last year with an operating surplus of $21,000. In light of this, the Board authorized $2,600, plus the Learning Center donated $600, to establish an audio-visual system in the sanctuary that permits sermons to be recorded and uploaded to YouTube. This is also a nice feature to offer to couples looking for a wedding venue. John Burnham spearheaded the project and Russ Milham provided much assistance.

Other good news is that we recently received $22,500 from the estate of long-time member Loie Kessler related to her pledge for the restoration of the steeple and bells. This happened to arrive as we were piecing together funds to clean the steeple and hang the two bells donated by the Milhams several years ago. Soon we will be hearing those two bells that are no longer sitting in the back of the sanctuary. We only need three more bells to complete the set.

Thanks to the teamwork of Mary Alice Smith and Chris Laudan, we have received two grants to restore the Shaw stained glass window, the big one on the left near the front of the sanctuary. Prince Charitable Trusts gave us $30,000, and we were just awarded $50,000 from the Champlin Family Foundation. A year ago the same intrepid team...
FAMILY MINISTRY

NEWS

The Family Ministry Committee wishes you all moments of peace and true connection in community during this holiday season.

Channing Chalice
Children Class (CCCC)
Our second full month of CCCC has been fun, informative and creative! We have continued our creativity with making more chalices and baking and icing Turkey cakes and cupcakes for the November Community Meal (see pictures). A special thanks to Sara Walker-Tompson, Jon Heywood-Henry and Ellen Harcum for each taking a week to assist in the class.

Halloween Party
Update
A small group of us had a scary and tasty time at the Channing Church Haunted Happening! Rev. Bill came as the Phantom of the Opera or the Penguin or something like that... (The kids insisted he was the Penguin.) We acted out stories, listened to a creepy story, ate some yummy food and visited a haunted house! Too bad the rest of you missed it because it was the BEST PARTY EVER!!!

Calling All UU Youth
On November 17, I attended a conference entitled Healthy and Relevant Youth Ministry! So now I am ready for the Young Adults to join me. Rumor has it that preparing and running the Holiday Cookie Contest and then going out to buy the items for the teen goody bags is a very popular activity for all our young people! The contest will happen after the December 16th service, so I need help before the service when the cookies are dropped off (anytime after 8:30am) and for the actual contest. After the contest, we will have a quick lunch (pizza?) and then we will be then off to do the shopping. Please come and invite your friends. Contact me to let me know if you and your friends will be helping.

~JoAnne Ritchie,
Family Life Coordinator

FRIDAY FAMILY NIGHT

December 14, 5:30-7:00pm
In Channing House

The December Channing Church Family Ministry hosted Friday Family Night will be on December 14 from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. in Channing House. The evening is hosted by Sondra Gold and Rev. Zelazny. The event will begin with a simple dinner, provided by the Family Ministry Team, followed by a facilitated discussion with the adults on addressing natural selfishness and teaching generosity. The children will have a supervised child-appropriate, which for December will be the Polar Express. A free-will donation is requested to cover the cost of the food. Families planning to attend are asked to let the church office know (office@channingchurch.org/401-846-0643) by Wed., December 12.

FAMILY MINISTRY DECEMBER CALENDAR

December 2: Family Sunday. Children stay in the Sanctuary for the entire service.
December 9: A special Hanukah presentation by Irene Glasser after the Message for All Ages.
December 14, 5:30-7:00pm: Family Friday in Channing House
December 16: Baking for the Community Meal. Children go to the Parish Hall immediately upon arrival at 10:00am.
December 23: Child Dedication Ceremony during the service
December 24: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 5:00pm. Children participate in the service/childcare available
December 30: No Chalice Children Class

Child Care with Amy and Morgan is available on Sundays for children ages 5 and under until 11:30am in the Parish Hall.
CAREGIVING UPDATE
Thank you so much to our November caregiving coordinators, Betsy Leerssen and Betsy Dees, for keeping us updated throughout the month.
We were very glad to hear from Judie Porter that she has been recovering well after undergoing treatment for breast cancer. She has returned to serving as a worship assistant for Sunday services and her other usual activities.
Christine Ariel continues to recuperate from hip surgery a few months ago. At the time of this writing, she had been experiencing some setbacks, but we hope these will be short-lived. Supportive notes and calls are always welcome!
Please keep Donna O’Neill in your thoughts as she continues coping with advanced cancer. At this time, she is unable to be out and about and cannot receive many visitors, but messages of love and support are deeply appreciated by both Donna and Dan.

Please contact either of these individuals with any caregiving needs among our congregation members or friends. From all of us at Channing Caregiving, we wish you joyous holidays, peace, and good health as 2018 draws to a close.
~Linda Beall, for Channing Caregiving

DECEMBER SHARE THE PLATE
Your cash offerings and checks with the memo “Share the Plate” donated during our December Sunday services will provide a perfect gift to a young person in need.
Share the Plate is partnering with Foster Forward (FF), a Rhode Island nonprofit dedicated to supporting children, young adults, and families impacted by foster care. The December STP funds will be donated to the FF’s Youth Enrichment Fund, which provides grants of up to $300 per year to young people in foster care. The teens and young adults apply for grants and, in the past, have received money to pay for driver’s education classes, music-art-or-dance lessons, sports equipment, prom expenses, Kindles, school trips, or cameras, in other words money to pay for just-what-they-wanted-most. These grants provide funding for young persons to do what-they-want-to-do or to buy what-they-want-to-buy. The young people gain opportunities to get involved, to learn something new, and to build their self-confidence.
The knowledge that your STP donation to the Youth Enrichment Fund will provide a wonderful-sought-after-gift to a young person could be one of the best holiday gifts you receive this season.
Be generous as you always are.
Thank you and Happy Holidays from the Social Action Committee

CHILD DEDICATION CEREMONY
Sunday, December 23
During the worship service Unitarian Universalists do not have baptism to wash away Original Sin – we do not hold that there is an original sin. We do dedicate our children in a formal ritual at which the parents bring their child(ren) forward and present their child (ren) to the community and into the circle of Unitarian Universalism.
Channing Memorial Church will hold a Child Dedication Ceremony during the December 23 Sunday Service. During the ceremony the minister will bless the child and ask the parents to promise to raise their child(ren) as ethically-minded people and the congregation promises to support the parents in the raising of their child(ren).
The family may choose to include grandparents, aunts and uncles and/ or sponsors (god-parents) to recognize the special relationships between the child and other members of the family or circle of friends.
Contact the church office -- office@channingchurch.org – to let Rev. Zelazny know you would like your child(ren) included in this year’s ceremony.
By now we are well aware of the out of control wildfire season California is having now, and much of Central and Northern Europe has had for many months. In California, the wildfire season was created due to multiple human caused issues: building homes in fire prone areas; possible electric company right-of-ways being a fire source; and extended drought periods likely exaggerated by climate change. I would argue that wildfires and forest fires have always existed, but due to population and climate change, are becoming more common with possible catastrophic consequences.

While insufficient water is leading to crises here and around the globe, just as crucial is the timing of when the water is available: too much water falling at once, or outside of the season it is needed, leads to either flooding or wasteful runoff. And climate change can mean that instead of getting the water as snow, that is stored in the mountains until the Spring runoff, it is not stored because of insufficient capacity in the form of reservoirs. The latter issue is beginning to be a problem in the rice growing regions of Southern Asia, where the population needs every acre of food production capacity.

Climate change, in fact, is predicted to put more water into the global water cycle. This is due to heating of the oceans creating more water vapor. But it will also create more droughts, due to more intense heating over land masses along with intense rain events and flooding as we learned with the hurricanes and tropical storms that have hit the southern US recently.

Becoming more resilient of both drought and flooding presents local, state and federal governments with multiple challenges that need t be met. Population pressures to grow along the coasts and water bodies like rivers that are prone to flooding must be balances with not building on ever expanding flood plains and ever rising sea levels. This likely includes higher density development in safe areas. Homeowners can still use less water by in-home water conservation and having outside plantings that are native to the surroundings such as avoiding planting lawns in deserts.

Next month: More resilience is possible.

~Craig Gaspard, Green Congregation Committee
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Continued from page 3

Money Matters!

quietly put together a successful application to the van Beuren Charitable Foundation and secured a grant for $45,700. A professional engineering firm from Providence will soon complete the drawings, specifications and cost estimating to reconfigure and make sense out of all the utilities that serve our Channing site. We are extremely fortunate to have developed relationships with several foundations that have been very supportive over the years of Channing and our historic church.

Meanwhile, we are living on a very tight operating budget for the 2018/2019 year and are looking for creative ways to raise additional funds. Thanks go to Susan Kieronski and her team who worked hard to put on the Chautauqua series in July and August, raising $1,400 after expenses. Soon you will be hearing about other ideas to raise money for Channing in ways that will not be burdensome, either financially or otherwise, to those who are already working hard on behalf of our community. Stay tuned!!

Questions or comments on financial matters are always welcome, as are suggestions about what you might like to hear about in future articles. Email me at treasurer@channingchurch.org

Submitted by Julie Herrick, Treasurer, on behalf of all those who help steward Channing’s finances.

GRANTS UPDATE

Channing has much to be thankful for in the support we receive from major private foundations that give to improve the quality of life in Newport.

The Grants Team is pleased to announce Channing has received two grants towards the restoration of the Shaw window in the east transept.

The Champlin Foundation has notified us of a $50,000 grant, which we will receive in full in mid-December.

The Prince Charitable Trusts has also informed us of a $30,000 grant for the window restoration, the last of our major windows in urgent need of repair. The Prince award will be made in two installments, one in 2018 (already received), and another $15,000 in 2019.

The east transept window is buckling and in grave danger of shattering in high winds or hurricanes. Because of its eastern exposure, it is particularly vulnerable during Nor’easters.

Our sanctuary features late 19th century stained-glass masterpieces in all styles representative of the era from Gothic Revival to American Opalescent. Scholars and students often visit Channing to view its windows.

Given as a memorial to Ann Checkley Shaw and featuring the theme “Faith, Hope and Charity,” the Shaw window was fabricated by the Belcher Glass Company and represents more traditional English painted styles of stained glass. Its white glass and soft colors light up the sanctuary on sunny days.

Age, weather and moisture have taken their toll on the Shaw window over the last 138 years. The large size of the window (136 inches by 205 inches high) means heavy weight is borne by the leading compound that joins the glass pieces. Significant bowing has occurred due to the softness of the lead and the heaviness of the glass. Some of the glass is cracking. The window is in imminent danger of failing, which would mean extraordinary costs to recreate and restore, and a loss to the art treasures of Newport.

Now we have the funding to undertake its restoration and to continue to be good stewards of our sanctuary.

~Mary Alice Smith, Grants Team

SENIOR BROWN BAG LUNCH

Tuesday, December 11, 12:00pm in the Parish Hall

The Senior Brown Bag Lunch discussion program of the Channing Senior Adult Ministry (C-SAM) will be held on Tuesday, December 11 at 12:00 noon in the Parish Hall. Join with other members and friends of CMC for a congenial and stimulating lunch time conversation on a topic of interest to senior adults. Bring your lunch, coffee will be provided.
**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**DECEMBER CHIMERS**
Dec. 2: Cynthia Skelton
Dec. 9: Janna Pederson
Dec. 16: Cynthia Skelton
Dec. 23: Jim Freess
Dec. 30: Linda Beall

**JOINING CHANNING CHURCH**
Been coming to Channing Church for a while? Like Unitarian Universalism?
Why not now become a member of Channing Church?
Rev Bill and the Membership Committee will conduct a ceremony during the service on Sunday, December 9, 2018 for people to sign the membership book. If you are interested in becoming a member at this time, contact Rev. Bill through the church office (office@channingchurch.org) by Friday, December 7. If you are unable to come to the December 9 service another time can be arranged.

**GREAT GUYS GROUP BREAKFAST**
Saturday, December 15, 8:30am, Parish Hall
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. Things wrap up by 10:30.

**CIRCLE OF CONCERNS & JOYS**
Saturday, December 15, 9:00am, Library
“Circle of Concerns and Joys” is an opportunity to gather in a supportive setting to share joys and concerns, outside of the weekly service. Each session includes brief readings, sharing, shared silence, and candle-lighting, and lasts about an hour. All are welcome, we meet the third Saturday of each month. If possible, let Facilitator, Maryellen Doherty, know ahead of time if you’re planning to come or have any questions.

**HOLIDAY POINSETTIAS AVAILABLE**
The Beautiful Poinsettias will Grace the Sanctuary at our Annual Christmas Eve Service!
As December 24 approaches, Channing Caregiving has made arrangements for you to order colorful poinsettia plants. Order forms are in the December Catalyst and order of services, in the Parish Hall (on the piano), back of the church, and in the Church Office. Please fill out the form and give it to Nickie Kates who will facilitate your order. We encourage you to help make our Channing Eve service especially beautiful by purchasing a flowering plant. (Please remember when you order a plant, you are obliged to pick it up IMMEDIATELY after the Christmas Eve service.)

**MEETING TO INFORM AND DISCUSS FACILITY AND FINANCIAL TASK FORCE PROGRESS**
January 19, 2019 (snow date Jan. 26), 9:30am, Parish Hall
All members of Channing are invited to come and spend a couple of hours learning about the progress the Task Force has made on both future facility options and long term financial planning. At the Annual Meeting there will be a request for a membership vote on future plans so we are offering this initial opportunity to understand the issues in depth. You will be able to ask questions and discuss the ideas we present, and because your opinions are important to include in our deliberations we encourage everyone interested in the future of Channing to join us.

**USING THE ONLINE CALENDAR**
Have you noticed when using the church online calendar on the that the title of the event(s) is sometimes cut off or not shown? Well, if you use the mouse to hover over the event title the arrow will change to a hand (a.k.a select tool) at which point you can click the event to see more information. This also works when you see a “2 (or 3, or 4) more”, click that line and you will see the hidden event(s). If you have any questions just contact Michele in the church office (846-0643).
HOLIDAY EVENTS AT CHANNING

A Green Way to Shop: Frustrated with all the shopping for holiday gifts and concerned about the impact on the environment? Channing offers a green alternative for your holiday shopping! Our Re-Gifting sale in the Parish Hall will be open Sunday's after church in December. We ask parishioners to drop off donations of gifts that didn’t fit, that they changed their mind about, or that just missed the mark but might prove to be perfect for someone else. Donations can be dropped off in the Parish Hall on Saturday Dec 1st between 12-2pm, before church on Sunday, Dec. 2nd, or contact Sally Hanchett to make other arrangements. Help appreciated in set up, sales or tear down. Sponsored by Channing’s Green Congregation.

Fair Trade Shopping: During the holidays we expand our fair trade product sale. In addition to our usual coffee products, there will be other food and craft products available for sale Dec. 2, Dec. 9, and Dec. 16 during Fellowship. Food products are grown in an environmentally sound manner and food producers are paid a fair wage, often working in cooperatives. The craft products are created by artisans working to better the lives of their families, provide for the education of their children, improve their housing and use their income for self sufficiency. These products allow holiday shopping that makes a difference in the lives of others. Sponsored by Social Action Committee.

Giving Tree: Channing once again will be providing holiday support to local families and teens through our Giving Tree, set up in the Parish Hall with requested gift ideas for each family (though other surprises are also appreciated)! Select a tag, shop for the gift or pick up a gift card and drop back off under the tree Sunday Dec. 2, Dec. 9 or Dec. 16. We are providing gifts to three families as well as gifts for teens. See Sally Hanchett if you have any questions. Sponsored by Family Ministry.

The 18th 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. 7th at 6:00pm. If you wish to help, please bring gloves. ~Barbara

Holiday Cookie Contest Sunday, December 16 during Fellowship
Cookies can be brought to the Church Office on Friday, Dec. 14 between 9am-noon or to the Parish Hall or before church on Sunday, Dec. 16th. Plates of cookies will be sold after the contest and proceeds used to buy gifts for Children and Youth in the DCYF program.

Minister’s Holiday Open House Sunday, December 16, 3-6pm
Rev. Zelazny and Patrick Griswold welcome members and friends of Channing Memorial to a holiday open house on December 16, 2018 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: Every December we are pleased to provide a gift bag to everyone who attends our community meal. Collection boxes will be set up in the Parish Hall to accept your donations of things to put in these bags. Toiletries, warm socks, hats, gloves, holiday snacks, etc. are appreciated by our guests. Bags will be filled Dec 16 for distribution Dec. 17. Help filling the bags after church in the Ladies’ Parlor on Dec. 16th will be appreciated. Sponsored by SAC and Family Ministry.

Holiday Office Hours & January Catalyst Deadline The Church Office will be closed closed for the holidays December 24-Jan 1. Due to the holiday hours the January Catalyst Deadline is Friday, December 14. Many thanks for your early submissions!