Worship Services

Sunday, April 7
The Ultimate April Fool’s Joke: Life Will Mess Up Perfection
Rev. William Zelazny
Many people describe themselves as perfectionists. But life’s joke on all of us is that perfection in all things is not possible. Trying to live into perfectionism can doom us to unhappiness. Perhaps a more reasonable view of life may be what we can call “The way of wabi sabi.” Come to the service where Bill will explore this philosophy.

Sunday, April 14
The Power of Celebrating Everything
Rev. William Zelazny
We regularly celebrate big success - the new job, the new house, the new baby. But it is equally, maybe even more important to celebrate little successes. That kind of celebration make us pause and be mindful and that boosts our well-being. Bill will help us reflect on the emotional and spiritual value of celebrating everything. We will lots of music provided by members of the Geezers, the group of musicians that gathers in our Parish Hall Tuesday evenings, and we will celebrate our 2019 canvass drawing to a close with an after-service reception.

Food for the Prom: Once again we are asking Channing folks for donations of snacks and desserts. Anything is fine, store bought or homemade, it’s all good! We only ask that it be finger foods, since we don’t supply utensils. Signups will be during Fellowship in April, or you can contact Mary Benson or Joy Benson.
Sunday, April 21
Rev. William Zelazny
Where the Passover and Easter Stories Point Us
This year the movement of the moon and the earth have determined that Passover and Easter overlap. Though each event is a central element of their respective religious traditions Bill thinks it is important that we not get lost in concern about the literalness of their story. Rather we should look the similar message that comes from the stories.

Our traditional children’s Easter egg hunt will follow the service.

Sunday, April 28
Rev. Lee Whitaker
Sowing Seeds of Welcome
This Sunday Lee is inviting us to look into how a healthy welcome can transform all who enter our church.

Rev. Lee Whittaker is a former member of Channing Memorial Church. He earned his Masters of Divinity from Starr King School for the Ministry and is an ordained minister with the Progressive Christian Alliance. While at Starr King he served on the Admissions and Scholarship Committee. Lee served on the Leadership Council for the Progressive Christian Alliance for two years. Presently he is the co-founder of Revolution Ministries which has the mission of creating alternative worship experiences. He lives in Oakland, CA with his partner, Janelle, and two dogs, two cats, and two and sings with the Oakland Interfaith Community Choir. Lee is one of the original organizers of CMC’s Interweave and a founder of the Born This Way Prom.

FROM THE MINISTER
Recently I came across an article posted a minister Facebook group to which I belong with the provocative title Your Church Does Not Need Volunteers. What? Of course we do. There are dozens of things that need to be done and no paid staff to do them.

But as I read through the article I came to realize the author was asking us to think of our work at our church in a different light. What the author was talking about is that the term volunteer denotes an individual who is not part of an organization who comes in occasionally to help an organization, but the organization is not at a place that they own. The person comes in and then leaves. We volunteer at the library, animal rescue center, red cross office.

We do a disservice to our faith, and ultimately to ourselves, when we view doing work at our church as something we mark on a time card.

We cannot volunteer to walk our own dog, shovel snow off our sidewalk, or babysit our own child. We cannot volunteer to take care of something that is ours. We just do it.

We take care of it because it’s our own place, our own dog, our own child – it belongs to us. The same is true with our church. It’s our place our people and our responsibility. We help take care of it – do yard work, make coffee, usher, teach the kids, sing in the choir, and whatever else needs to be done because it is our home, we own it and we need to make it function.

We are stuck with the term volunteer. It rolls off our tongue when we ask people to assist, which we do a lot. But, though we may use that term, it is not really the right expression for a church setting. Perhaps we should consider our work as doing our part of keeping our religious home functioning as we do our part of keep our residential home functioning. What we are doing is joining with all the other people who come to Channing Memorial as their religious home to make shared ministry happen.

In my sermon on March 17, (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pyxM60CJRfo&t=545s) I said that Channing Memorial Church is here to support each person’s religious and spiritual journey, and I hope each member and friend will feel called to return the favor with their gift of treasure, time and talent.

~Rev. William Zelazny

CHANNING CHURCH’S YOUTUBE CHANNEL
If you are unable to attend Channing Church on a Sunday, you can still see the sermon. Channing Church now has a YouTube Channel where most of our sermons are posted within a day after they are delivered in the sanctuary. Click Here:
CO-PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE
A lesson from Christchurch: What’s a UU to do?

The shooting of worshippers in a Christchurch, New Zealand mosque in March deserves our condemnation, and the world’s. At least 50 people lost their lives in the attack, carried out by a white supremacist who issued a manifesto expressing praise for Norwegian immigrant-hater and mass-murderer Anders Breivik and Radovan Karadžić, convicted for his role in the genocide of Bosnian Muslims. The perpetrator in Christchurch videoed his assault, documenting that the first person killed was a man who greeted him at the door of the mosque with the words, “Hello brother.”

Of course there are those who will respond with a shrug of the shoulders. Do we not reap what we sow? In 2016 an Afghan-American homophobic domestic abuser called 911 and claimed affiliation with ISIS before shooting 49 people to death at a gay night club in Orlando; a Muslim-American and his Pakistani wife sprayed a gathering of office workers in San Bernadino with bullets; 12 people at a satirical magazine in Paris were murdered by men who pledged allegiance to the caliph of the Islamic State; in lower Manhattan, an Uzbek national shouting “Allahu akbar” drove onto a bike path killing eight pedestrians. In the name of Islam, Americans and Europeans have been marched out ceremoniously on camera to be beheaded by ISIS thugs, while Muslims from all over Europe rushed to join them.

As UUs, what should our response be? Silence, or sympathy? Our faith calls us to affirm the worth and dignity of every human life, and to search for truth. So should we not try to understand the whys of human hatred? To my way of thinking, when we look at Islam as both victim and perpetrator of violence, the first step in understanding the whys is knowing that there is as much diversity in what it means to be Muslim as there is in what it means to be Christian, that ISIS and bin Laden no more speak for Islam than the Imperial Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan or John Hagee speak for Christianity.

Yet putting people who are “other than us” into categories of sameness and fostering hatred against them is spreading in our world today, and gaining respectability. One piece of evidence is the back-handed approval given in 2017 to white supremacists shouting racial, ethnic and misogynistic epithets in Charlottesville Virginia, where one young woman was killed. And hatred is an equal-opportunity motivator. In October, 2018, 11 people were shot dead in a Pittsburgh synagogue by a man who told police that Jews were committing genocide against his people and he wanted all Jews to die. In June 2015 a young white man was welcomed into the fellowship of a black church in Charleston, South Carolina just before shooting 9 people dead.

And we know that anyone, any of us, could be the object of someone else’s hatred just for beliefs we are perceived to hold, or the color of our skin, our sex or sexual orientation, even for our politics. We should not imagine that as UUs we are so small, so under-the-radar that we are immune from hatred’s new respectability and its toxic effects. In July 2008 a man who professed his hatred of Democrats, liberals, African-Americans and homosexuals, walked into the UU church in Knoxville, Tennessee and started shooting. A fan of talk-radio, he later claimed he targeted the church because of its liberal teachings and his belief that all liberals should be killed because they were ruining the country.

The Christchurch killings should serve as a reminder that we as UUs must condemn any sort of violence against innocent individuals, especially when motivated by hatred, not only because that’s the right thing to do, but because hatred is contagious. The most pernicious impact of these repeat killings is that we lose interest, become immune to their horror, and settle into a grudging acknowledgement that this is the way we must live from now on.

The effect of these killings motivated by hate is already about to impact our church. A committee, encouraged by our insurance carrier, is working on “safe congregation” protocols, exploring, in conjunction with the Newport Police Department, what we as a congregation can do to minimize the number of deaths should an active shooter situation arise. And we’re not alone. Other churches, like schools, are having to prepare for the possibility of hate-based violence, however remote. All the more reason we must not become inured to the daily dose of hate flowing from religious extremists, white-nationalist fanatics, racial purists, and especially, from Washington.

~Eleanor Doumato
The Channing Chalice Children

The children, Ellen and I have been continuing on our 7 Principles journey. In March we talked about the freedom to learn together to search for what is true. We realized that what is true is not always easy to figure out, but we can figure some things out with the help of others.

We also had fun being engineers for the Stewardship Train!!! ALL ABOARD THE “M” TRAIN!!!

Ellen Harcum, the Chalice Children and I will continue our Intro to the 7 Principles journey this month.

On March 8, Aquinnah and I attended one evening of a Youth Con at Westminster Unitarian Church in East Greenwich. We both made many new friends, and we are hoping to join the next Con with some other of our Youth.

Protein Drive Sunday

On Protein Food Drive Sunday, we learned about the importance of Protein and what foods have protein.

And last, but not least, we learned that people of all sizes, ages, shapes, colors, beliefs, appearance, etc. have a say and should be heard and listened to, and what they have to say should be respected.

~JoAnne Ritchie
Family Life Coordinator

The Channing Chalice Children

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We also had fun being engineers for the Stewardship Train!!! ALL ABOARD THE “M” TRAIN!!!
**CAREGIVING UPDATE**

Thank you to some new volunteers who have stepped up in recent weeks to take some slots as monthly Caregiving coordinators! I believe the only schedule holes that need to be filled at this point are in the second half of July and for part of August. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Nickie Kates or Barbara Russell-Willet – we are grateful for your support!

Our deepest condolences go out to Dan, Eric, and Rachel O’Neill as they grieve the loss of Donna, who succumbed to cancer on March 8. Donna was a long-time member of our congregation, a talented artist, musician, gardener, and cook, and devoted wife and mom who was loved and will be missed by so many. Her memorial service was held here at Channing on March 24.

Our thoughts are also with Marilyn and Jack Murphy, who lost a brother-in-law, Arthur “Chip” Chaplin in February. Chip had been married to Marilyn’s late sister Dolly.

Betsy Leerssen recently traveled to Australia and New Zealand – sounds like a wonderful adventure!

Thank you so much to our March Caregiving coordinators, Barbara Richter and Marcia Mallory, who both give of their time each year to help support the Channing congregation in this way. The coordinators for April are Margaret Baker from April 1-15 and Tom Beall from April 16-30. Please contact either of these individuals with any caregiving needs among our congregation members or friends.

~Linda Beall, for Channing Caregiving

**SHARE THE PLATE**

Channing will share donations made during April’s Sunday services with the Exploration Center and Aquarium at First Beach, a project of Save the Bay.

The STP monies will be donated to the remarkably effective, champion of Narragansett Bay, the Save the Bay organization. Channing’s donation will be used for the specific purpose of supporting educational programs for school children of Aquidneck Island. The Exploration Center houses more than 40 species of animals from the Bay. Students utilize touch tanks and other exhibits to interact with skates, dogfish sharks, urchins, crabs, seahorses, turtles and more. The center creates scavenger hunts, engages students in stories, and uses crafts and science experiments to introduce students to new and unexpected things about Narragansett Bay. When all else fails, there is an ocean and a sandy beach right outside to explore and greet.

And remember: SAC welcomes and encourages your suggestions for STP recipient organizations. If you would like to champion a STP recipient, please give your suggestion to Nan Heroux or Sheila McEntee, the committee’s co-chairs, or plan to attend the next SAC meeting on Sunday, April 7 at 11:30 in the library of Channing House when future recipients will be chosen.

~Respectfully submitted, Sheila McEntee, for the Social Action Committee

**PASSOVER SEDER**

**Sunday, April 14, 5:00pm, in the Parish Hall**

Celebrating Passover together as a Channing Community Event is a fun way to understand the traditions and beliefs, along with the music and delicious food of Jewish people. Children are most welcomed and encouraged to attend, and we hope you will invite friends and family!! Sign up in the Parish Hall on Sundays during Fellowship or contact Joy Benson.

**COMMUNITY MEAL**

**Monday, April 15, in the Parish Hall**

Channing serves a Community Meal for those less fortunate the third Monday of the month. Many thanks to Joan Dermody for making delicious Chicken Pot Pies last month! If you would like to help please call Joy Benson at communitymeal@channingchurch.org
**SOCIAL ACTION**

**ECO-BITS & TIPS**

*Living Sustainably in an Overly Commercial World*

Most every day we are presented with purchasing decisions, from food to clothing, cosmetics to durable items like electronics and automobiles. With choices come decisions based on any number of factors: lowest cost; locally produced; organically grown; made in the USA. This list goes on much longer depending on your priorities. Most UU’s look to social responsibility, as in who is producing what, and, how something is produced. If something is ecologically produced is it from recycled sources. And, overall energy usage including Energy Star rated appliances and mileage efficiency in an ICE, standard hybrid, chargeable battery hybrid or an electric only car.

Cost is an obvious factor, but hidden in the “cheap” costs are often externalized costs borne by us all. An example is plastic, ubiquitous in our environment, as people discard plastic single-use water bottles or plastic bags when blow out of the rear of a truck. The good news here is that cities and towns around Rhode Island are banning these bags. But consciously buying products either less frequently, using reusable cloth shopping bags, purchasing products in larger plastic or even glass containers that produce less waste should all be considerations. Better yet, using water filters that cut down on the use of purchasing water or using frozen juice that can be reconstituted from filtered tap water are worth considering too. And now with the loss of markets like China for recycling plastics and metal, using any single use containers should really be stopped, if the option is something that easy, but will require us to behave differently.

Any church member by now has noticed the food products that Sally Hanchett is making available to congregants for purchase. From granola produced by RI Training School youth or sustainably produced or organic coffee, these products support organizations (and thus the participating members) with a message that we support this work because it can sustain people attempting to change their life, or an agricultural model that can have a lower environmental “footprint.”

Local production of everything from art (like jewelry) to veggies and fruit supports everything from local vendors to open space, keeping money in our local economy and reducing costs on our communities, from infrastructure costs to pollution. Living on an island, I believe, encourages us to look even more to ways to both protect our environment and support those who make this their home. Just remember that Little Rhody produces its own dairy products, harvested fish and shellfish and as we speak, maple syrup. Let’s all think a little more before we purchase.

~Craig Gaspard, Green Congregation Committee

**GREEN CORNER**

Just a thought as we move into spring and will be opening up our homes, hopefully to fresh air. I was thinking about the pollutants that might be residing in our homes. So I picked one-- “Volatile Organic Compounds” (VOCs). They are found in methanol, flammable gas used in pesticides, the “new” smell of clothing, cars, furniture, stains, finishes, paints, etc. Look for products with low VOCs or finishes made from renewable oils and paints with low VOCs. Note: some paints sold in quarts or smaller may have very high VOCs and you may not want to use them inside your home. Be aware of this if you note irritation of eyes, nose and/or throat, and get to a ventilated space.

Event: Sunday, April 7th from 2 to 4 PM, the UU Legislative Ministry of RI annual meeting will take place at Westminster UU Church. We will be selecting areas to focus on in the coming year and the environment can be ONE if there is enough interest???

~Russ Milham, Green Congregation Committee
SOCIAL ACTION & ANNOUNCEMENTS

A Beautiful Day
Granola Question

Are you interested in regular church deliveries of the delicious, fresh, healthful granola produced by Beautiful Day Granola (BDG), a non-profit company of Providence, whose mission is to assist refugees transitioning to new lives in this country?

Maybe you have had a chance to sample the granola during a recent Fellowship or maybe you heard BCG’s staff person Rebecca Garland talk about the world’s refugee crisis, the difficulties experienced by displaced persons, and how Beautiful Day works to assist refugees.

Now maybe you are wondering how you can buy BDG’s granola and its health bars on a regular, easy basis.

Here is a possibility: The Social Action Committee is considering delivering Beautiful Day Granola to Channing on a regular basis. The product would be ordered and delivered to the church for pick-up. Members of SAC would like to hear from people who are interested in regular deliveries of granola or health bars to gage the interest in this effort.

Just contact Sally Hanchett or Sheila McEntee, if you would be interested in participating. If there is a sufficient response, SAC will create a system to deliver the product.

You can get more information about BDG at its website, https://www.beautifuldayri.org.

~Sheila McEntee, for the Social Action Committee

HOT TOPIC DISCUSSION
Sunday, April 28. 11:30am,
Ladies’ Parlor

Have you read the article in the UU World After L, G, and B? It’s a great example of how much harm ignorance can cause. The UU trans community is maaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaad. The article revealed some terrible mistakes on the part of the author and editor. UUs have a long way to go before being truly transgender and nonbinary competent. The mistakes are well outlined in this response from CB Beal Centering the Marginalized: symphony and triptych and from the editor From the editor: Our story hurt people All are worth a read. Let’s think about how we as Channing members and friends can address such ignorance and harm, and not perpetuate it further.

Read the articles let’s gather after church in the Ladies Parlor for a Hot Topic discussion of the article, the responses, and trans cultural competency/humility in our church. All welcome. For more info, contact Rex LeBeau by email at: interweave@channingchurch.org

UULMRI ANNUAL MEETING
The UU Legislative Ministry of R.I.’s (UULMRI) Annual Meeting is set for Sunday, April 7th from 2-4 PM at the Westminster Church in East Greenwich. The UULMRI team will lobby for or against bills relating to the top issues selected at this meeting. Two-page issue description documents are available on the SAC table in the PH, and sign up sheets for all the issues will be available at the annual meeting. If you plan to attend this annual meeting or need a ride contact Al Benson.

WOMENSHERE SPRING MEETING
Accessing Your Inner Wisdom Saturday, April 27, Westminster UU, E. Greenwich,
Searching for answers? Oracles are all around you! Discover what they are and how to read them. The 2019 Womensphere Spring workshop explores the fascinating art of divination. Cost: $27, including lunch. Enjoy a day with inspiring women in a beautiful setting! For details and the registration form, email: BCDWomensphere@gmail.com.

Womensphere is a collective of individual UU women passionate about exploring our spirituality, meeting other open-hearted people, and serving humanity and the planet.
**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**NEW UU CLASS**
Tuesday, April 2, 6:30pm, Channing House Library
Considering joining Channing Church? Set on your calendar, **Tuesday, April 2, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.** to come to the New UU Class hosted by the Membership Committee with Rev. Zelazny. This class is designed to welcome and orient newcomers into Channing Memorial Church and Unitarian Universalism. We will cover UU roots, philosophy and religious practices, church polity, governance and financial support as well as have time for participants to get acquainted with each other. **RSVP the Church Office: 846-0643 or office@channingchurch.org**

**APRIL CHIMERS**
April 7: Cynthia Skelton
April 14: Janna Pederson
April 21: Linda Beall
April 28: Jim Freess

**Ballou Channing District (BCD) Annual Meeting**
Saturday, May 4, 2019
First Parish UU, 1508 Washington St., Canton, MA
The BCD annual meeting will be held at the Hilton in Woburn, MA, at 3:45 PM, as part of the New England Region Assembly. If you plan to attend please register online at: [https://marylulove.typeform.com/to/QRf9qN](https://marylulove.typeform.com/to/QRf9qN)

**Channing Memorial Church**
Annual Congregational Meeting
Wednesday, May 22, 6:00pm,
In the Parish Hall
**Our Annual Congregational Meeting is also a Dessert Potluck, so bring something delicious to share!**

**From the Learning Center at Channing Church**
Presenting a unique perspective for Earth Day Month:

**LINCOLN AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**
A Talk by James Tackach, PhD
Wednesday, April 17, 6:30 PM, Parish Hall
**Refreshments will be served, $10 suggested donation**

James Tackach will give a talk on his newly-released book, a groundbreaking environmental biography of Abraham Lincoln. In the book, Jim maps Lincoln’s lifelong relationship with the natural world, from his birth and boyhood on Midwestern farms through his political career and presidency, dealing with the effects of the Industrial Revolution and the Civil War. Professor Tackach paints Lincoln’s personal and professional life against the backdrop of nineteenth-century American environmental history, issues, and writers, providing insights into contemporary environmental issues.

**James Tackach** is a professor of English at Roger Williams University and the president of the Lincoln Group of Boston. He is the author of *Lincoln’s Moral Vision: The Second Inaugural Address* and numerous articles on Abraham Lincoln.