HOLIDAY EVENTS AT CHANNING!!

The 12th Annual “Singing for Shelter”
Acoustic Christmas Concert
For the benefit of Lucy’s Hearth and the McKinney Shelter
Thursday, December 5, 7:00pm, Sanctuary
Tickets are $25/BUY IN ADVANCE! THIS EVENT WILL SELL OUT! For tickets visit Lucy’s Hearth, 19 Valley Road in Middletown or contact Mark Gorman (Email: mgorman20@cox.net / Phone: (401) 835-7209

Minister’s Holiday Open House
Sunday, December 8, 3-6pm
Rev. Zelazny and Patrick Griswold welcome members and friends of Channing Memorial to their annual holiday open house at their home, 1474 Ten Rod Road (Route 201) North Kingstown.
Directions from Newport: Route 138 over the bridges to Route 1 north to Route 4 north to Exit 3A (Route 2/102) At bottom of exit ramp turn left onto 2/102 (toward Exeter). Go under Route 4 bridge to the 1st traffic light. Turn Left onto Autumn Dr, then immediately right onto “old” Ten Rod Road. White house with stockade fence and very large Norwegian pine tree on the corner of Ten Rod Rd and Autumn Dr.

Winter Concert
Wednesday, Dec.11, 5:30pm, Sanctuary
Featuring Newport String Project Students

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service!
Tuesday, December 24,
5:00pm in the Sanctuary
Ushers are needed!
Please contact Joy Benson

Worship Services
Sunday, December 1:
Rev. Bill Zelazny
Beauty’s Deeper Connection
Beauty is not decorative. It touches us deeply. It has the power to dissolve our conscious control, and connect us to levels of our being well beyond our day-to-day concerns. Humans need beauty to live as much as we need food to live. As we begin this season of beauty – snow on tree branches, the Messiah, lights decorating houses and trees, family and friends talking and laughing, festive meals, people helping those with less – Bill will explore the concept of beauty.

Sunday, December 8
Professor Robert M. Thorson
Humanism Runs Amok
Humanism, with its nearly exclusive focus on human needs and critical thinking is an important element in UU spirituality. This species-specific perspective has been largely responsible for a planetary transformation so complete that a new geological epoch is required -- the Anthropocene. In his talk, professor Thorson will explore the philosophical and spiritual implications of having our own epoch. On balance, the prospect looks good.

Robert M. Thorson, a long-time member of Channing Memorial Church and former board member, has spoken to the congregation about earthly matters twice a year for the last 13 years. Away from Channing, he’s a professor, writer, journalist, speaker, and consultant.
Sunday, December 15: Rev. Bill Zelazny
On Awe
“He... who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead.” Words of one of the ultimate logical thinkers, the theoretical physicist, Albert Einstein. On this Sunday in the middle of the Holiday season, Bill will ask us to pause in wonder, to contemplate the mystery of conscious life, to reflect upon the marvelous structure of the universe, to try to comprehend the intelligence manifested in nature, to deeply observe life. In other words, to think about living in awe.

During the service we will welcome everyone who wishes to officially join Channing Memorial Church in a new member signing ceremony.

Sunday, December 22
Filling in the Manger
Rev. John H. Nichols
The Christmas story we hold dear in our thoughts and memories is what we want and need it to be. Technically it has two authors -- Matthew and Luke -- but many of us have crafted the story to be the news we most need to hear. “Be not afraid!” This sermon is part of my recently published book, which will be on sale for $19.99 which can be purchased at the coffee hour.

Known as an inspiring preacher, Dr. John Hay Nichols is now Minister Emeritus of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts, where he served as senior minister for twenty-three years. He also served as interim minister for ten other congregations (including Channing) in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New York.

Tuesday, Dec. 24, 5:00pm
Christmas Eve
A Moment of Magic
Rev. William Zelazny, the Channing Choir and Guests
The sanctuary is decorated, the candles are lit. Come to a Christmas Eve Celebration for adults and children with the Channing Choir, guest musicians, members of Channing Church and Rev. Zelazny with carol singing, choral anthems, instrumental music, and scripture and secular readings, concluding with the traditional lighting of candles and singing Silent Night in the darkened sanctuary. Come, bring family and friends for the our very special Christmas Eve service.

Ushers are Needed! Please Contact Joy Benson.

Sunday, December 29:
Service under construction – the Worship Committee is putting together a “Moth”- like (think NPR’s Moth Radio Hour) Sunday’s service. Like the Moth Radio Hour, this will be a theme-based service. The theme, in recognition of the new year starting in a few days, is Renewal.

The Worship Committee is looking for several people who wish to tell a story – personal or published -- or do a reading of a poem or essay -- personally composed or from a published source - that illustrates renewal. Want to be part of it? Contact Rev. Bill (401-846-0643 or minister@channingchurch.org) by December 18 to discuss your idea. Let your creative or theatrical self shine out!

FAMILY MINISTRY NEWS
We are still looking for a new chairperson for the Family Ministry Program. Sally Hanchett, Barbara Russell-Willett and I are trying our best, but we all wear other hats and cannot take this on. For anybody interested please talk to me about it!!!!

Even though we did not have the Fall Frolic or a Halloween Party, we DO want to have the Holiday Cookie Contest and Sale with the proceeds going towards gifts for youth in need. The contest and sale will take place December 22 after the service. You may drop off your cookies before the service that day, but it would be better if you can drop them off at Channing House either Friday morning or the Parish Hall Saturday afternoon. From 12:00-2:00pm Prizes will be awarded!!!! Call me if you have any questions.
JoAnne Ritchie at (401) 855-8765.

CHANNING CHALICE CHILDREN
We are back in our space in the Parish House. It beautiful and super clean!! The children, Mr. Tom and I will work together in reorganizing and redecorating the room.. The Child Care room has been relocated to the room opposite our classroom. Ms Amy and Ms Morgan have done a great job redecorating the newly renovated room. If you haven’t already been by, take a look!!

Last month we learned about the Diwali light ceremony, Veterans Day, and participated in the Bread Ceremony.

Continued on page 3
Family Ministry Continued

COMING IN DECEMBER:

Dec. 1: Family Service, the Chalice Children will stay in sanctuary with their parents. Children 5 and under ONLY are welcome to visit Ms Amy and Ms Morgan in Channing House for Child Care.

Dec. 8: The Chalice Children leave with Ms JoAnne and Mr. Tom after the Message for All Ages.

Dec. 15: The Chalice Children will leave with Ms JoAnne and Mr. Tom after the Message for All Ages. We will help Ms. Sally fill the toiletry gift bags for our Community Meal guests.

Dec. 22: The Chalice Children will leave with Ms JoAnne and Mr. Tom after the Message for All Ages. The theme of the lesson will be about the Second Principle: BE KIND IN ALL YOU DO.

Dec. 24: All children at the 5:00pm Christmas Eve service are welcome to participate in the procession into the sanctuary. We will meet inside the front doors.

Dec. 29: No Chalice Children Class, but Child Care is available for children 5 YEARS OLD AND UNDER ONLY in the Child Care Room with Ms Amy and Ms Morgan.

~JoAnne Ritchie, Family Life Coordinator
Phone: 401-855-8765
FamilyMinistry@channingchurch.org

CAREGIVING UPDATE

Happy Holidays wishes to everyone in our Channing Church community!

Thank you so much to Betsy Leerssen, Rachel Balaban, and John Burnham for giving of their time as Caregiving coordinators in November. Not all Caregiving news shows up in the Catalyst by any means – many people wish to keep their matters private. Much is done by the coordinators just working quietly, offering a note or phone call to let people know that support is available if needed. Those efforts are deeply appreciated.

There are many things to celebrate this month, including some milestone anniversaries! Happiest congratulations to Coles and Marcia Mallory, who marked their 60th wedding anniversary on Nov. 28 with a family celebration in Boston. Our much-missed friends Jake and Anna Smith, now living in Virginia, also will celebrate their 60th anniversary this month.

Sherrill Warch lit a candle at the Sunday service a couple of weeks ago and mentioned the great news that her grandson Adam just turned 18 and is graduating from high school. Many of us remember Adam from the time he was a toddler, and the sad accident that almost took his life – what a wonderful thing to know he is doing so well! Adam also recently won a silver cup and several ribbons at a horse-riding competition in Missouri.

Congratulations to Rex LeBeau, whose beautiful charcoal work “Shadow” appears in the current issue of UUWorld. If you have not seen it yet, take a look – and you can see more of their art at: www.reximusmaximus.com

Caregiving keeps in touch with Charlie and Susan Beckers, and we hear that Charlie still enjoys getting cards and seeing visitors. If you’d like to write him a note, his address is St. Elizabeth Home, Room 214, One St. Elizabeth Way, East Greenwich, RI 02818.

Our condolences go out to former Channing member Deb Wyman, now living in Maine, whose mother recently passed away after some years of poor health.

Nickie Kates and Barbara Russell-Willett will retire from leading Channing Caregiving at the end of this month. Nickie of course was the driving force behind developing the Caregiving program decades ago, and both she and Barbara have devoted so many years to providing support to our congregation! We can never thank them both enough for all that they have done to help keep us all connected in the spirit of compassion and caring. Sally Hanchett and JoAnn Rosemont will take over the leadership reins as the new year begins, and they will undoubtedly do a fantastic job.

Our Caregiving coordinators for December are Betty Maloof from Dec. 1-15, and Tom Beall from Dec. 16-31. Please contact them with any caregiving needs within our congregation.

~Linda Beall, for Channing Caregiving
DECEMBER CHIMERS
Dec. 1: Cynthia Skelton
Dec. 8: TBD
Dec. 15: Janna Pederson
Dec. 22: Jim Freess
Tues., Dec. 24: TBD
Dec. 29: Christine Ariel

BROWN BAG LUNCH
Tuesday, December 10, noon, in the Parish Hall
More to the Senior Ministry Brown Bag Lunch Program in 2020!
Starting in January, the Senior Adult Brown Bag lunch will incorporate a spirituality and life issues seminar. Each session, lead by Rev. Bill, will be held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month and will include readings, exercises and discussions. The goal of this seminar is to help people think about their aging and the spiritual implications of their senior aged life. The class should be thought of as “spiritual” not religious. Topics will cover looking at one’s life path, a person’s spiritual perspectives in the past and currently, eldering/mentoring in senior years, and other topics. The Brown Bag lunch is open to senior adults in the greater Newport community, so Channing members are invited to bring friends and neighbors. As always, coffee, tea, water will be provided, with each individual bringing their own brown bag lunch.

GREAT GUYS GROUP (GGG)
Saturday, December 21, 8:30-10am, Parish Hall
The Channing GGG holds its monthly breakfast gathering the third Saturday of the month in the Parish Hall. GGG is an informal church association for men. It is open to men of all ages, both Channing members/friends as well as men from the larger community. Its purpose is to provide camaraderie, conversation, learning, spiritual exploration. Group participant take turns making or bringing breakfast. Coffee/tea is provided.

JOIN CHANNING CHURCH!
Been coming to Channing Church for a while? Like Unitarian Universalism? Why not now become a member of Channing Church by signing the church membership book? Rev Bill and the Membership Committee will conduct a ceremony during the service on Sunday, December 15, 2019, 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 13. If you are unable to come to the December 15 service another time can be arranged.

COMMUNITY MEAL
Monday, December 16, 3:30-6:15pm, Parish Hall
The Channing Memorial Church Community Meal is the third Monday of every month in the Parish Hall. To see when volunteers are needed contact Joy Benson at communitymeal@channingchurch.org
Thank you to all who helped at the November Community Meal! Joan Dermody cooked up a wonderful holiday meal with all of the fixings. Thanks to the Friday night AA group who donated most of the meal. They were extremely generous!

THANK YOU!
Have you noticed that it's a little warmer in the Ladies' Parlor? You might have seen JoAnn Rosemont working hard in there, with advisement from Russ Milham and the help of Bob Kieronski and Cal Pierce. JoAnn selected dark blue insulated drapes, to harmonize with the stained glass panel over the mantel, and worked with the crew on taping insulating plastic on the windows. It's great to see our Parish Hall becoming more functional and attractive!

ROUND ROBIN DINNERS
Save the Dates!
Channing will be sponsoring 3 rounds of potluck dinners in people's homes. We hope you will join in. Sondra Gold will begin sign-ups in January during fellowship. Potluck dinners will take place in people's homes at 6:00 pm on 3 Saturdays: February 1 and 29, and April 4.
Politics and the Environment: Post-Nixon

My last Ecobits article focused on the infancy and the early development of the environmental movement in the US and how Rachel Carson, through her writings and books, focused the American imagination on the environment. Others, like John Muir, certainly preceded Carson. What became more influential now, besides the commercial popularity of her writings, was that government reacted to pressure from its citizens to respond to an increasing number of highly publicized environmental catastrophes: DDT poisoning, on a large scale, of predatory bird populations, due in large part to Carson’s book Silent Spring, rivers catching on fire in industrial settings, and then more local issues down to roadside litter and landfills running out of space.

Nixon seized on these shifting political winds and the need for government to take a more proactive approach to pollution. He established the Environmental Protection Agency, enacted the Endangered Species Act, and the Clean Air and Water Acts. While Nixon was a shrewd politician first, he also was continuing a long tradition of Republican-led, yes led, conservation issues, that first focused on land conservation and protection, such as creating and setting aside National Parks and National Forest lands, both for broad public enjoyment, but also for sustainable and multiple economic uses: maintaining a supply of wood products from logging, increasing recreational uses on public lands and so forth. Transitioning to Presidents Carter and Reagan, the environmental movement was paused, in large part, due to the “gas crisis” and a rapid increase in gasoline prices that even resulted in short term shortages. People of a certain age remember cars in long lines waiting to fill up, alternating days for filling one’s tank and on and on. While Global Warming first gained traction in the public discourse at this time, the immediate government response was to increase our ever increasing search capability to find more oil, something our western civilization had become clearly dependent on for economic growth. And with that, a relaxation in the emphasis on environmental protection activities, except for Reagan’s support for the Montreal Protocol to eliminate threats to and restoring the Ozone level of the earth’s atmosphere.

While Presidents throughout this period continued to set aside public lands for protection, and moderate success were implemented, including federal mileage standards for cars, and increasing these standards modestly, the most significant policies may have been the ones we did Not implement. I am talking here about those focused on reducing and reversing the effects of human-caused Global Warming, not called Climate Change.

Our next installment will focus on the late 20th Century up to the President Trump era.

~Craig Gaspard, (again, solely responsible for the content of this article), for the Green Congregation Committee

INTERWEAVE POTLUCK
Sunday, December 15, 5:30pm, Parish Hall

Christmas can be a challenging time for anyone, and it can be particularly tough for LGBTQ+ people. Come celebrate in a safe and welcoming environment at our potluck dinner and Yankee swap in the Parish Hall. All are welcome. Bring a dish to share and a wrapped, inexpensive gift. No worries if you can’t bring anything; just come. For those of you thinking about coming out over the holidays or wondering what it takes to weather the storm of family when you’re queer, check out this article recommended by PFLAG facilitator Doreen LePage here: PFLAG

*For more information about Interweave, contact Rex LeBeau at interweave@channingchurch.org

MONTHLY PFLAG MEETINGS
Monday, December 9, 6:45pm, Parish Hall

PFLAG holds monthly support meetings the second Monday of every month. For more information contact Doreen LePage at led1pflagnewport@gmail.com
In Rhode Island, that changed in 1977 with the founding of the Newport County Women’s Resource Center and a handful of committed women staffing phones in a small office in Newport. Within a few years, it became clear that domestic violence was a key issue that needed to be addressed and that domestic violence victims required specialized help. The WRC decided this would be its main focus.

Until the late 20th century, there were few laws pertaining to the protection of domestic violence victims and punishment of perpetrators. The WRC joined with the Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence whose focus was to work with local and state police and the court system to help protect victims and seek punishment and rehabilitation for perpetrators.

Today, the WRC provides assistance for victims by helping to obtain temporary restraining orders against perpetrators, explaining their rights, accompanying them to court, helping them find shelter for themselves and their children, helping children who witness abuse with counseling, training police to deal with the problem, counseling for adults, and supports clients with DHS services through the Family Violence Advocacy Program.

One of the biggest changes in the last few decades is that the WRC provides emergency shelter and temporary housing to domestic violence victims. Finding shelter for victims is an especially important role. While it is best for victims to escape their abusers, it is also the most dangerous point in the relationship. Abusers often go to extremes to prevent victims from leaving and try to track them down after they do leave, sometimes harming them, or even killing them.

In September of 2019, advocates at the Women’s Resource Center provided 541 services to 146 clients. These services included: 182 counseling sessions, 101 services through the Court Advocacy and Crisis Advocacy Programs, 119 services through the Law Enforcement Advocacy Program, 108 services through the Family Violence Options Advocacy Program, 48 services through the Residential Options Program, and 14 Peer Support Group sessions. WRC advocates also responded to 90 hotline calls and made 163 referrals.

Jessica Walsh of the Women’s Resource Center will be at Fellowship on December 8 to briefly speak about the WRC and its programs.

Help WRC Support Families this Holiday Season! The Center is still in need of gift-givers for their holiday giving program! The holidays can be a challenging time for clients, both emotionally and financially. The Adopt-a-Family program helps clients provide their children with a special holiday in the midst of a very trying time. If you would like to learn more about providing gifts for a family in need, please reach out to Therese Duquette at (401)236-8365 or email WRC at AdoptaFamily@wrcnbc.org.

~Nan Heroux, Chair
Social Action Committee
**Fresh Water from Old Wells**

Guest Speaker, Rev. John Nichols, will have copies of his most recent book available for purchase during fellowship on Dec. 22.

From the back cover: “With masterful storytelling and lighthearted humor, Unitarian Universalist minister Rev. John Nichols presents familiar Bible stories in a new, unexpected light. From Adam and Eve to Jesus’ final days, each reinterpreted story creates thought-provoking insights, opens a world of questions, and even suggests some answers. Entertaining as well as intriguing, the stories are written to be enjoyed without the seriousness of being preached at that has driven many away from church. Each chapter is one of Rev. Nichols’ most requested, popular sermons over his decades-long career in ministry. Fresh Water from Old Wells delivers a refreshing angle of vision to those old, familiar stories from the Jewish and Christian scriptures. Rev. Nichols’ fresh approach to familiar stories puts some serious questions and ideas forward, helping us to connect with the deepest sources of our spiritual lives.”

Rev. Nichols holds a Doctor of Ministry degree from Meadville Theological School in Chicago and has taught at Andover Newton Theological School and New York Theological Seminary. He is also the author of *A Wind Swept Over the Waters*, *A Biblical Humanist Companion*, *Liberal Religion’s Response to Loss*, and *Lives that Speak and Deeds that Beckon*.

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**FROM THE LEARNING CENTER AT CHANNING CHURCH**

**Understanding Medicare for All and Alternative Proposals**

*Co-Sponsored by TLC & the Social Action Committee*

*With Physicians J. Mark Ryan, MD, and James A. Cowan, MD*

**Wed. Dec. 4; 7:00 PM, Channing Church Parish Hall**

Dessert and decaf will be served. $5 suggested donation will help to cover costs – thanks!

In light of the ever-growing problems with our current healthcare system, and of the heightened interest generated by recent presidential candidate debates, this subject is of interest and concern to many. Drs. Ryan and Cowan are active with the RI Chapter of Physicians for a National Health Program, and are offering this program as an educational public service. A slide show and talk will be followed by an opportunity for Q&A.

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**TLC Tech Update**

The Epson digital projector that TLC purchased and installed is now available for use by other committees! We have written up some step-by-step instructions, which will be laminated and placed in the wall file. Our Blu-ray player and projector remote are stored in a secured location at Channing. With a little notice, TLC folks will be glad to work with your committee representative to make instructions and equipment available. Please contact Bob or Susan Kieronski, for TLC. 871-4471 (Bob) or 662-2906 (Susan)

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**LOOKING FORWARD:** Interweave and TLC are working on a joint program for January: a panel discussion, “Queer History of RI”. Doreen LePage is in touch with several possible outside speakers. Keep an eye on the Channing email for updates!
**HOLIDAY EVENTS AT CHANNING!**

**Giving Tree**
The annual holiday giving tree will be set up after the Thanksgiving Meal this Sunday! Please select a tag/tags starting after the Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner. We identify families and teens in care that need our support. You can shop for the items you select or provide a gift card(s). Please put your tag on the item and drop off in the Parish Hall on Sunday(s) Dec 1st, Dec 8th or Dec 15th.

**Gift Bags for Community Meal Guests**
Look for the boxes in Parish Hall & Sanctuary for the annual collection of toiletries and warm clothing items for our Community Meal guests. We especially need men’s items, like shampoo deodorant, warm socks, gloves etc. Items can be dropped off up until Sunday, Dec 15th when the children will be making up the gift bags for the Community Meal on Dec. 16th.

**Holiday Re~Gifting & Fair Trade Sale**
Channing’s Re-Gifting sale will be held in the Parish Hall Dec 8, 15, and 22 during Fellowship. We ask people to look around their homes and bring in any new (or lightly used) items they may not be able to use, but would make a nice gift for someone else. This green way to shop saves shoppers money and recycles unwanted items, like that purple spotted necktie aunt Tillie bought you last year!

**Fair Trade Sale:** Every Sunday we sell Fair Trade coffee during Fellowship. This organic product is produced by farmers using sustainable farming methods and working in co-ops that ensure they are paid a fair wage for their product. During the holidays we offer additional fair trade items for sale including other food products, green products and craft items. Families in other parts of the world are able to support their family and send their children to school through the earnings from the sale of these products. We hope you will consider doing your holiday shopping with us.

**Barbara Richter’s 19th 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. 6th at 6:00pm. If you wish to help, please bring gloves. ~Barbara**

**Stop & Shop Gift Cards for the Holidays!**
*Earn money for Channing while you buy your groceries!* The holidays are big grocery shopping times for many of you. Please think about doing your shopping at Stop and Shop, and planning ahead to use Stop and Shop gift cards. **Julie will be putting in an order for more cards for Christmas grocery shopping!** Please put in your reservations so she can order enough to meet everyone’s needs. It takes up to 10 days to get the cards after she puts in the order, so please get your email request to her at treasurer@channingchurch.org, preferably by Dec. 5th. Please order your cards by email so Julie will have it in writing. Plan to provide payment when you pick up the cards. We routinely order $50 and $100 cards, but they also are available in $25 and some larger denominations. **Remember.....Stop & Shop gives us $5 for every $100 you spend. Since starting the program a year ago, we have earned over $700 for Channing. If together we spend $5,000 over the holidays, that’s another $250 for Channing.**

**Holiday Office Hours & January Catalyst Deadline**
The Church Office will be closed closed for the holidays December 24-Jan 1. The January Catalyst Deadline is Monday, December 16th. Many thanks for your early submissions!

**I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day!!**
If you are out and about on Christmas morning, you’re invited to stop by Touro Park and listen to the beautiful Channing bells! Linda Beall and Christine Ariel will be playing seasonal music starting at 11:00a.m. and continuing until approximately 11:45.