

# The Catalyst

Channing Memorial Church Monthly Newsletter  
January 2023

## MUSIC AND POETRY OPEN-MIC AT CHANNING COFFEEHOUSE

Saturday, January 14, 7:00pm, Parish Hall



**Join us for our first open-mic coffeehouse in a few years!** We're going to go mainly acoustic and invite you to bring a song to play, sing along, or share a poem. Coffee and tea are served, and you're also invited to bring a dessert to share or a donation (\$5 or more suggested) to support the church.

**Questions? Contact the facilitator, John Burnham, at [coffeehouse@channingchurch.org](mailto:coffeehouse@channingchurch.org).**



Photo Credit, Bill Peresta

## SINGING FOR SHELTER RAISES \$10,300!

On December 8th the Fifteenth Annual "Singing for Shelter" Benefit Concert was held here at Channing Church. Each year this wonderful event raises

more and more money for Lucy's Hearth and the McKinney Shelter. A few words from the event organizer, Mark Gorman:

*I want to thank you all so much for all you did to make Singing For Shelter such a success this year. The attendance was excellent and the musicians sounded so wonderful. Special thanks to Ed McGuirl, Rick Jones and Tom Perrotti for stepping up and making everything run so smoothly! And we exceeded our goal of \$10,000 and presented the shelters with \$10,300 right after Christmas. !!!*

*Merry Christmas and happy holidays!!*

### Channing Memorial Church

A Welcoming Congregation, welcoming & affirming all people  
A Green Congregation, committed to protecting the environment

Phone: 401-846-0643/ Email: [office@channingchurch.org](mailto:office@channingchurch.org)

135 Pelham Street, Newport, Rhode Island

## SUNDAY WORSHIP AT 10:00AM IN THE SANCTUARY

Services are live streamed on the [CHANNING YOU TUBE CHANNEL](#) and available for viewing afterwards.

Sunday, January 1



### Brunch and a Few New Year Thoughts

This Sunday we will celebrate the start of a New Year with a Channing Church New Year's bunch at 10:00 in the Parish Hall. Bring some food (do you have a New Year's specialty?) to share. After we eat Rev. Bill will lead us in reflecting on a new year. We will also play a Resolution Game – come up with a resolution you think some world leader might make (serious, not so serious, outrageous)

Sunday, January 8



### Music, Music, Music!

**Cory Pesaturo**

Guest  
presenter, Cory

Pesaturo, is revolutionizing the accordion and accordion performance. He holds world championships on acoustic, digital and jazz accordion. In 2017 he became a Guinness world record holder when he played a 32 hour and 14-minute accordion concert. Cory is a graduate of the New England Conservatory of music in Boston – one of only two accordion graduates. This service will be a fun and inspiring way to start your new year! An amazing musician and speaker, you'll want to see him play and hear his talk.

**Music starts at 9:30am.**

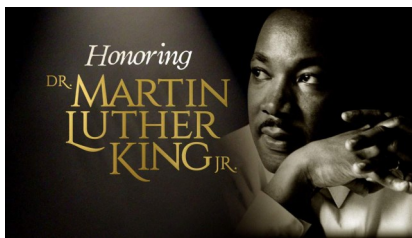
# MINISTRY TOGETHER

## Sunday, January 15 Power, the Three-Part Brain and Personal Agency Jeannette Bessinger



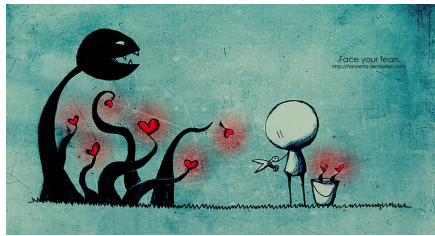
In my last year of theological study in social change at Starr King School for the Ministry (a UU seminary),

my concepts about personal power have transformed. In this service we'll explore models of power based on elemental archetypes we can actually draw on when we need to show up strong in challenging situations. And we'll look at some ways we might work with the hardwired functions of our three-part brains to disengage the governors that can disempower us from the inside.



## Sunday, January 22 Sixty Years After M. L. King Rev. Bill Zelazny

Sixty years after Dr Martin Luther King campaigned for racial equality some things have changed, and some things are pretty much the same. This country continues to struggle with race, but in ways different from what Dr. King was battling. As our annual tribute to Dr King Rev. Bill will look at the race issues facing us in the 2020s.



## Sunday, January 29 Facing Fears Rev. Bill Zelazny

Our fears serve a great purpose. They can prepare us to face a threat as adrenaline rushes through our body, so we can physically respond with speed and strength. But sometimes our fears are concerns made up by anxious minds.

UU Navy Chaplain notes that often religious paths can help us cope when we are afraid. Some can give us inner fortitude to charge ahead and some help us cope by cultivating the inner life so our the spirit is strengthened to face anything that happens in the material world. Rev. Bill will help us look at how to face our various fears.

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## ELKS' PARKING FOR SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP



Channing Members may park in the Elks' parking lot from **9:00am-12:00pm on Sunday mornings** while attending Sunday Services. **Please place the bright orange parking permit on your dashboard where it is clearly visible.** Permits are located on the table to the right as you enter the church.



## SUNDAY CHIMING

- Jan 1: Linda Beall
- Jan 8: Janna Pederson
- Jan. 15: Linda Beall
- Jan. 22: Jim Freess
- Jan. 29: Jim Freess



**Church Office Hours:  
Tuesday, Thursday &  
Friday 10:00am-3:30pm**



## THANK YOU

Thank you to all who supported our holiday giving programs. We provided gifts to two families with working moms, to some students at Rogers High School thru a teacher organizing holiday gifts for these older kids, to our community meal guests and to McKinney Shelter residents. Your help is so appreciated by our recipients.

~Sally Hanchett for SAC



## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Greetings once again! It's a new calendar year and as usual a time to reflect on where we have been and where we are headed. As with all tasks of this sort, examining where we are is also a key practice. For me personally, I have entered into a new and more complete understanding of chronic pain and its impact on the mind, body, and emotions and the importance of spiritual practices to help navigate these deep, dark and disabling waters. Whatever is key in our lives that make us smile and feel very much alive and connected with others, has again proven to be key in turning the negative impact of pain into a more manageable and life affirming practice. Whatever makes us laugh, smile, dance, move, sing, and connect to one another is so important for health and healing. I have come to truly understand that without our connections and caring community pain is just pain, sadness, and despair. It is within community that we can leave our individual experiences and join with and share in the healing that connection with the experiences of others brings.

In this new year, as we take the time to examine what makes us feel connected to each other and supportive of each other, we will inevitably discover our reasons for being. We will be gathering in community this winter and spring to discuss and examine what we feel and believe about our Church and congregation in order to come to some conclusions about our future direction as a beloved community. During these past years of COVID, we have experienced the devastating effects of isolation and distance from some of our most joyful practices which we must now begin to reintegrate. We must examine what to keep of the old and what to incorporate of the new in order that we might thrive and grow. We must connect more to the larger community and show greater concern for the needs of others than for our own. Our pains, as my pain, though real and devastating enough, must not be seen as something to be rid of but as something that connects us with the pains of all peoples and sentient beings. There is much to know and to do to help, and in the doing of what we can, we will BE better, BE more connected, and grow. I have faith that this is how that all works!!!

Once again, I share the words of the loving kindness meditation: May you be happy, may you be healthy, may you be safe, may you live with as much ease as is possible. Happy New Year!

~Ginny

## MARGIT BAUM FUND COMMITTEE

Members of the Margit Baum Fund Committee continue to meet monthly and decide on donations that give assistance, care and relief of poor and needy persons who reside in the city of Newport.

Recently funded projects include:

The purchase of additional underwear for folks attending Channing's Community Meal and expansion of this project to include plain white tee shirts and socks. These items were added thanks to suggestions from those attending the meal and were gratefully received by our guests!

A donation of socks and gloves to the Seaman's Church Institute and distributed at their Thanksgiving meal.

A donation of Stop and Shop and Walmart gift cards to Conexio Latina. The gift cards will be distributed to their adult clients.

\$1000 to Baby Steps. This money will be used to purchase bilingual board books and art supplies, and to finance a field trip for families who attend Baby Steps parent education sessions.

\$500 to the Newport Housing Hotline to provide emergency temporary housing over the holidays.

A stipend of up to \$300 to provide on-site haircuts for residents of the McKinney Shelter.

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# SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY

## Margit Baum Fund Continued:

Funds to supplement Channing's Christmas giving tree and purchase toiletries to be distributed at the December Community Meal.

The purchase of 60 pairs of socks for Jean's Closet at Rogers High School.

Suggestions for potential projects are always welcome and can be sent to the committee through the church office!

~Lissa Fernandez for the Margit Baum Fund Committee

## CAREGIVING UPDATE



We hope your holiday season was full of the people and moments that are most meaningful to each of you and wish you all a happy and healthy new year in 2023! Many thanks to Margaret Baker and Tom Beall, who served as Caregiving coordinators during a busy December.

We were saddened to hear of the death of long-time Channing member Charlie Beckers, who passed away on Dec. 1 at age 79. He had been living in nursing facilities for several years, most recently Village House in Newport. We send our deepest sympathies to Charlie's wife Susan and his son and daughter-in-law.

We also are thinking of Fatima and the rest of the family of George Devine, who died on

Nov. 23. He had been in hospice care after suffering with Alzheimer's Disease for many years.

Tom Pederson was hospitalized briefly after a heart attack early in December, and happily is home now recovering after having stents inserted.

Morty and Irene Glasser have unfortunately experienced a difficult last half of December. Morty had just been discharged home after a hospitalization and subsequent physical therapy; shortly afterward, Irene fell and was hospitalized with a broken hip. Thank you to all the volunteers who have been providing meals and check-ins over the past couple of weeks!

Please remember that the Channing Caregiving team is always available to offer support to anyone who is feeling isolated or needs a bit of cheer. If you know of anyone who could use a friendly phone call, a meal offering, a ride to an appointment, or some other assistance, we welcome hearing from you.

**The January coordinators are Joy Benson and Mary Benson.**

Please contact either of these individuals, or Caregiving co-leaders Sally Hanchett and JoAnn Rosemont, with any Caregiving news or needs this month.

~Linda Beall,  
for Channing Caregiving



## THE SHARING LOCKER



The Sharing Locker continues to collect toiletries and cleaning supplies that are distributed through the MLK center to those who are unable to access these items with food stamps. All items accepted, however our January special request is for laundry soap. Let's start the New Year fresh and clean. **Items can be dropped in the box in parish hall or with food collection the second Sunday.**

## SHARE THE PLATE



Traditionally each January our congregation gives to the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC). This helps the UUSC to carry out their current projects in the world, done in coop with local groups in each location. Here at Channing we will have an opportunity to learn more specifically about these projects. Keep posted!

## MCKINNEY SHELTER BREAKFASTS



We need help with the breakfast in buying food, cooking at home, and/ or delivering to McKinney on the last Saturday of each month. Can you help in some way? It could be only for certain months. **Please contact Betsy Dees or Sally Hanchett.** Whatever you can do is significant. Let us know. Thanks

## SOCIAL ACTION UPDATES

**Want to have some fun and help solve the world's problems at the same time?**

Channing's Social Action Team (SAT), made up of a core of 5 (give or take) amazing members who are passionate about making a difference in our communities, could use your help! Right now, we are all women, but we are urging some of you menfolk to get involved too!

Who says solving the world's problems can't involve having a good time as well? With this in mind, we plan our monthly meetings to include visits to some of Aquidneck Island's most interesting locations! As an example, the last two meetings were held at sites where we could have a meal! Didn't someone say, "feed them and they will come!"...a little poetic license there!

In November, we met in the Colonial Dinning Room at the Newport Area Career and Technical School for lunch after our meeting in their spacious facility. We got a delicious meal prepared and served by well trained students and learned more about the programs they offer.

In December our meeting place was CRU Cafe at One Casino Terrace. If you haven't been there yet, you are in for a treat! After our meeting/meal, we headed on over to the Newport Art Museum to experience the Current exhibit,

"Social Fabric: Textiles and Contemporary Issues". This exhibit was meant for the SAT... right up our alley! A prominent feature was a room with many of the AIDS Quilt panels, most of which are in memory of people from Rhode Island. It runs through June 11, 2023 and it's not to be missed!

This month's meeting is scheduled for Friday the 13th of January....details to follow once we locate an appropriately spooky destination! Are you afraid of Friday the 13th? Then that means you suffer from Paraskevidekatriaphobia. Say it with us: para-skev-EE-dek-a-tri-a - p h o - b i a . Definition: a persistent, irrational fear of Friday the 13th - I'd advise you not to miss this meeting or you might have bad luck all day! Bwa-ha-ha!

Of course, eating and visiting isn't the only thing we do! Our meetings are packed with planning and executing action in support of worthy causes! If you have a favorite issue on your plate, come to our next meeting and bring your appetite for action!

Share the Plate (STP) for the month of January will be collected for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC.org) and will include boxes for Guest at Your Table collections.

February STP will be designated to support the good works of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA.org), for their

disaster relief fund. Collections for STP are held every fourth Sunday at our service, but don't forget that you can easily donate online on Channing's website: [www.channingchurch.org](http://www.channingchurch.org).

In February we also plan to organize a Fika event with a smorgasbord of tasty sweet treats.

~Nan Heroux, for SAC

## SAC SURVEY

### **Our Social Action Team**

### **Survey '22-23 results are in!**

...and a huge thank you to the 43 of you who responded, 17 on paper in September and 26 online by November 30.

### **Here's what we learned:**

In almost a tie, the top two concerns were the environment/climate change and affordable housing. Not far behind was gun violence. Fourth was women's rights, followed by income inequality, then racial justice. About half of the respondents preferred to hear about issues on a monthly basis, while a quarter wanted weekly updates. Almost equal numbers chose either the *Catalyst* or the *Weekly E-News* as their preferred information sources.

Five people expressed interest in joining the Social Action Team! We've added them to our email contact list.

Our survey was derived from one conducted online by the UU Congregation of South County, and we thank them for giving us permission to use it and guiding us in putting it online. Continued on next page

Our sincere gratitude, also, to John Burnham, who handled all design and technical issues for the online version. Great job, John! You made it easy for all of us.

These results will be a great help in planning the SAT's outreach to like-minded groups in our community and in selecting beneficiaries for Share the Plate donations. The RI UU Legislative Ministry is already incorporating our results and those from South County in planning our legislative Zoom gatherings and our General Assembly priorities.

We'll hold the drawing for the Equal Exchange coffee basket during Fellowship later this month. Watch the Weekly E-News for the date. ***If you took the survey and haven't given us your name yet, you still have time. Just email your name to Beth at [sacbeth@channingchurch.org](mailto:sacbeth@channingchurch.org)***

## ECO BITS & TIPS

### A New Year: Staying up with Change



By the time you read this column, we'll have entered a new year. With a new year comes hope, promise and the possibility of change for the better. Anyone who reads this column and gets something from reading it (hopefully) may be looking for ideas on how to contribute to a better world, both as an individual, and as a part of a group effort.

Here are some ideas for anyone, but especially, for

Channing Church members:

**Visit the back left** corner our Parish House, along the same wall as the two bathrooms; there, you will find multiple resources including books, pamphlets, bumper stickers on everything from LGBTQ+ advocacy to environmental issues such as "Seafood Watch" fish consumption recommendations and collections for toiletries for soup kitchen and homeless people.

**Avoid plastic whenever possible**, because there are few to no options to recycle it. If you must, buy water in cardboard containers, filter your drinking water, buy permanent water bottles to refill and patronize businesses like The Refill (in Newport) or Green Grocer (on East Main in Portsmouth) where everything from bulk cleaning products to dry food products and shampoo bars are available;

**Consider line drying your clothes.** We have used what is now called a one-pole Umbrella clothesline dryer for over 10 years. These are now available from most hardware stores, With a concrete block and some cement, all could be had not for less than a hundred dollars; Useful even in the winter on sunny, low humidity and above freezing days. We save an estimated \$1.00 in electricity costs for a medium sized dryer load. Plus, your clothes last much longer, and, smell better without the need for a fabric fragrance;

Follow Channing efforts on the church website [www.channingchurch.org](http://www.channingchurch.org) under What We Do and Social Action

where Share the Plate, Sharing Locker and support for Fair Trade Coffee and similar products are discussed and made available;

**For more global efforts**, please visit the Unitarian Universalist Association website [www.uua.org](http://www.uua.org) and then go to Justice and Inclusion page.

Just a couple more items. COPS 15, different from COP 27, is focusing on Biodiversity of the planet and the importance of ecosystem preservation. This United Nations effort, entering year 15, just ended their meeting in Montreal, Canada with the result of 190 countries signing on to the agreement known as the Kunming-Montreal Framework.

With a goal of setting aside 30% of a country's landmass and 30 % of the ocean, and aid coming from developed countries to developing ones of \$30 billion by 2030, individual countries can scale up efforts to preserve animal and plant species as well as ecosystems. These efforts will reduce the threats of extinction.

Why is this important? Because the best way to prevent extinctions, aside from directly protecting animals from poaching pressure and the like, is to preserve large preserves like National Parks, that also benefit many other less threatened species like bats, birds and insects, so necessary for pest control and pollination services and the like.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

~Craig Gaspard, for SAC