

# The Catalyst

Channing Memorial Church Monthly Newsletter  
April 2023

Channing Memorial Church

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135 Pelham Street, Newport, Rhode Island



## TWO AFTER CHURCH PROGRAMS FROM THE LEARNING CENTER!



### ESTATE PLANNING FOR ALL SEASONS

with *Melissa L. Green Esq. of  
Sayer Regan and Thayer LLP*

**Sunday, April 16, 11:30 AM, In the Parish Hall**

**A light lunch will be served**

**Come and bring your adult children!**

Melissa Green's practice is centered on probate, trust and estate administration for different stages of her clients' lives. In the estate planning area of her practice, she works with families after some of the most joyous events of their lives - marriage, the birth or adoption of children, the purchase of a new home, retirement - with the goal in mind to help the clients protect the assets they have worked hard for, and the family they love.

Naturally, much of her practice centers around estate planning, to ensure that clients' wishes are carried out. She assist in the area of estate administration as well; of working with family members of the recently deceased; and in navigating the complexities of the sale of real estate from an estate.

Even if you already have an estate plan set up, there is always something to learn - come and bring your questions!

**Melissa is a graduate of Roger Williams University School of Law, Bristol, Rhode Island, having earned a J.D. cum laude in 2010.**



### WHAT IS A "VILLAGE"?

#### HOW CAN IT IMPACT A COMMUNITY?

With *Caroline Gangji, Executive Director of  
the Village Common of RI*

**Sunday, April 30, 11:30 AM, In the Parish Hall. A light lunch will be served**

The Village Movement started over 20 years ago in Beacon Hill, MA, and provides communities with creative solutions that will enable elders to continue to live as independently as possible in their own homes. There are now over 300 villages across the US, with four currently functioning in other cities and towns in RI.

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

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

**Sunday, April 2**

**So, What Does Passover**

**Have to Do With It?**

**Guest Speaker: Peter Freeman**

It is that time of year again when thoughts turn to Spring and all its rituals. In true Universalist tradition, the Channing community has long recognized and reflected upon the relevance of Passover and Easter to our spiritual practice. This year, Passover precedes Easter. On Sunday morning, friend of Channing, Peter Freeman and Worship Associate Margaret Polski will reflect on the parallels between Passover and Unitarian Universalist principles. **The incomparable Newport String Project will provide music for the service starting at 9:45am.**

*Peter Freeman is an attorney practicing land use law in Massachusetts. He is a Jewish person who grew up in Newton on the very "reform" side of the religion, a Yale alumnus and deeply devoted to the Red Sox, Patriots, Bruins, and Celtics. He is inclined to fall asleep in Temple but always stays awake at Channing services.*



**Irene Glasser  
and Rev. Bill  
will lead us in a  
Seder potluck**

**at 5:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall. To reserve a seat and select a dish to bring, please sign up with Irene on Sundays or email: [seder@channingchurch.org](mailto:seder@channingchurch.org)**

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**Sunday, April 9**  
**Something Happened.....**  
**Thoughts about the Easter**  
**Event**

**Rev. Bill Zelazny**

The facts are lost to time, but something happened in Jerusalem two days after an itinerant Jewish prophet was executed by crucifixion. Was a man actually raised from the dead? Were people having post-death visions of a person as sometimes happens when a loved one dies or did Jesus really appear to people? It is all a made-up fable to give credence to a new religious movement? This Sunday let's think about Easter, the resurrection and the fact that something happened.

*The 2nd Sunday of the month is our nonperishable foods collection for local food banks.*

**Sunday, April 16**  
**Religious Diversity**

**Rev. Bill Zelazny**

 Religious pluralism is an attitude or policy regarding the diversity of religious belief systems co-existing in society. While this idea may seem normal for Unitarian Universalist, it is not in much of the world and faith communities. This Sunday, Bill will discuss the idea of religious diversity and functioning in a pluralistic world.

**Sunday, April 23**  
**Protecting our Earth**

**Guest Speaker: Alex Chuman**



Celebrate our Earth, and learn how you're helping to protect it at our annual Earth Day service, April 23. Alex Chuman, Conservation Director for Aquidneck Land Trust (ALT), will be our speaker, **His topic will be "Watershed Conservation on Aquidneck Island: How Land Protection and Good Stewardship Can Improve our Island Waters."** This will also be Share the Plate Sunday, and ALT is our recipient for March and April. Your generosity will help guard your water supply!

**Sunday, April 30**  
**Finding Meaning in**  
**Everyday**

**Rev. Bill Zelazny**



Searching for meaning is a primary motivation for each of us.

Feeling that our life has meaning is fundamental to the experience of being human. Philosophers, psychologists, and psychiatrists argued that meaning in life is a rare, profound experience, attainable through an active search, deep self-reflection, or some other arduous way of creating meaning in a seemingly meaningless world. But does it really require all of that? Bill will explore the notion of creating meaning in our everyday life this Sunday by just living life.



**SUNDAY CHIMING**

**April 2:** TBD

**April 9:** Janna Pederson

**April 16:** Christine Ariel

**April 23:** Linda Beall

**April 30:** Jim Freess

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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.



**2023-24**  
**STEWARDSHIP**  
**PLEDGE DRIVE**

The 2023/24 Pledge Drive has begun and will end on April 30, 2023. Stewardship information and pledge forms have been emailed to Members & Friends. If you have any questions or did not receive the email, please contact the church office or you may send an email to: [stewardship@channingchurch.org](mailto:stewardship@channingchurch.org)

# BOARD OF TRUSTEES

## TLC CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1:

Caroline will explain the village model, share the history of the village movement in Rhode Island, and describe the steps to start a village. There will be plenty of time for Q&A. Visit our website: [www.villagecommonri.org](http://www.villagecommonri.org) if you're interested in learning more before the program.

Caroline joined The Village Common of RI in 2021. Prior to this, she served as the Acting Executive Director at Age-Friendly RI, where she worked on issues important to Rhode Islanders as we age, including transportation, housing, food & nutrition, social isolation, civic engagement, supports to remain at home, healthcare, and outdoor spaces. Caroline has a Master of Science in Healthcare Administration, an MBA, and a Bachelor of Science in Physical Therapy.

**A \$5 suggested donation to TLC at our programs, to help defray costs, will be appreciated!**



## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Greetings all. This is the beginning of true Spring. Our little early Spring flowers are giving you as much pleasure as they have given me with hope for continued color of changing spring flowers, budding trees, and mild weather as we move toward summer sun and more outdoors activities.

It continues to be a busy time for us at Channing with much change coming our way. We will be wrapping up our Congregational forums, our pledge drive, establishing our budget for next year, rounding out our new slate of Church officers and preparing for our annual meeting in May. As I have been intimately engaged in these activities for years now, I wanted to share a recent book find that has helped me to think more closely about what it means to be an “alive” human being and practicing Unitarian Universalist. This book was shared with me by a military friend, which made me feel quite happy, as he is exploring a different way of looking at his life and the world. The title of this book is *Inner Engineering: A Yogi's Guide to Joy* by Jaggi Vasudev-Sadhguru. From the moment I began listening, I was enthralled by this man's wisdom, humor, experience, and clarity. This book seems not about any political stand and provides insights into definitions and dimensions of words like love, responsibility, and freedom. I also believe that his insights are incredibly applicable to what it means to **be** a practicing Unitarian Universalist. As the UUA has recently gone through a revision process of Article 2, the foundations of our beliefs, purpose and covenant, Jaggi's definitions help clarify how we might be as humans in life as we examine our responsibilities with freedom from limiting judgements and boundary issues that keep us feeling separate and guarded.

I want to share his thoughts about two of the most important, and I believe applicable, ideas as we determine and renew our UU covenant, the seven principles and the new Article 2 wording. These things will be heard and voted on this June at the UUA GA. Please let me know if you wish to go and to be a voting delegate. It will be held in person in Pittsburgh and virtually as well. I will briefly focus this month on the meaning of responsibility and next month on the meaning of love as presented by this Yogi. I was pleasantly surprised that responsibility and action were presented as two separate concepts. He said we can always be responsible, but we may not always be able to take direct action. He defined responsibility as being response able. It involves being open to response and is only limited by our ability to be free of negative judgements about self and others and by creating artificial boundaries which keep us in the illusion that we are separate. When I think of our Church and our current UU Principles, like the interconnected web of life and support of freedom and dignity of all creatures this practice of developing personal response ableness surely seems like a supportive path. For more in-depth understanding of how this way of looking at things might work for you, I encourage picking up this insightful book and once again, thank you for your kind indulgence in my musings!

As always, may you be happy, healthy, safe, and live with as much ease as is possible!

~Ginny



## CAREGIVING UPDATE

It has been a very busy month for Caregiving, with many hospitalizations and illnesses within our Channing family. Grateful thanks go to March coordinators Sally Hanchett and Betsy Dees, who kept track of all the needs and news.

Anna Smith was recently hospitalized for gall bladder surgery, but by the time you read this, she will have been home for a week or so. Nickie Kates had surgery during March and will probably be recuperating for the next 2-3 months. Sheryl Warch also was hospitalized for respiratory issues and is now home. We wish all of you continued comfort and healing.

Best wishes for improvement go out to Nan Heroux, who has been dealing with knee pain and staying at the Grand Islander for rehab.

We are sorry to learn that what Barbara Richter thought was a sprained ankle turned out to be a fracture! We wish her a rapid recovery.

Last month we mentioned Sarah Roche, the daughter of Elizabeth and Harry Spring, who is being treated for brain cancer. The Springs have requested that positive and healing energy be sent out to Sarah at 8 a.m. daily, so please keep her in your thoughts.

On a happier note, JoAnn Rosemont's condition has steadily improved over the last few weeks after her recent hospitalizations, and she has been able to return to Sunday services. She is very thankful for all the support she has received during this time of illness.

A belated happy 80<sup>th</sup> birthday to Nancy Caswell! She celebrated her birthday with a Zoom party.

Many in our congregation were greatly saddened to learn of the death of former Channing member, the Rev. Lee Whitaker, who passed away unexpectedly on March 4 at St. Luke's Hospital in New Bedford. Lee was very proud of having become an ordained UU minister some years ago, graduating from the Starr King School for the Ministry in Oakland, CA. He remained there for a few years, but returned to Newport at the beginning of the pandemic and then moved to Fairhaven, MA several months ago. Prior to his time in CA, Lee was the first president of the Interweave group. Under his leadership, the first "Born This Way" prom was held, an event that has become a cherished annual event in our area. Lee is survived by his beloved cat, Zoey, and we're happy that a new home has been found for her.

Sue Beckers would like to invite all Channing friends to attend a Celebration of Life for Charlie Beckers on Saturday, April 15 at 11:00 in the church sanctuary. A reception will follow immediately afterwards at the Elks Lodge.

Also, Fatima Devine would like to invite everyone to a memorial

service for George Devine on Saturday, April 29 at 11:00 in the church sanctuary.



Please remember that the Channing Caregiving team is always available to offer support to anyone who is feeling isolated, coping with an illness, or just 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 April coordinators are Beth Jepson and Marian Royer.** 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



## COMMUNITY MEAL

**The Third Monday of the Month, 5:00pm, Parish Hall**

The Channing Community Meal is served from 5:00-5:45pm in the Parish Hall. Joan Dermody provides a delicious hot dinner with all the fixings for our guests. **Contact Meal Manager, Joy Benson, at [communitymeal@channingchurch.org](mailto:communitymeal@channingchurch.org) with any questions or if you would like to help out.**



## ECO BITS & TIPS

### *The Vernal Equinox, Conventional Agriculture, and It's Contribution to Climate Change*

The 20<sup>th</sup> of March was the Spring Equinox. When the darkness and chill of winter starts its transition to Spring and the accompanying burst of lush green growth, and pollen ☺, manifests. I love Spring, but not because I hate winter. Living in the northern US, I have come to treasure our change in seasons. But it sure seems we skipped over most of winter. Gardeners, here comes our season(s)!

In the last column, I discussed how our mixed capitalist system uses huge subsidies to support the fossil fuel industry. Our federal and/or state government prioritizes these climate wrecking businesses with every kind of tax write-off. China, the US and Russia each provide over half a TRILLION dollars or more in subsidies YEARLY. This data is straight from the Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) an influential bipartisan think tank and available free on-line. And while alternative energy subsidies have grown substantially since the Carter years, they are no match for oil and coal subsidies. One could argue that this “helps” moderate and low-income families to affordably heat their

homes, electrify and keep fuel costs lower than they would be. Is this wise policy? Free public transit and home insulation is a better idea here.

This year, the US Department of Agriculture's Farm Bill come up for a five-year budget. This year will be a watershed year. I say that because of the influence the bill has in the agricultural, forestry and natural resource realms and for the rapidly increasing need to actually deal with Climate Change and it's human caused effects. From carbon sequestration, preservation of forests and protecting them from fires and insect pests, and, changing farm tillage practices to protect our topsoil, the importance of this year's Farm Bill cannot be underestimated.

Support for Regenerative Farming practices and small to mid-scale farm practices and research, and disincentivizing large scale animal feedlots and overuse of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides are sure to become flashpoints during the budgeting and mark-up process. What is different this year is we have a Democratic Senate and President, with a Republican House and it's narrow five seat majority. For those who want a concise, informative documentary to watch, please consider Netflix's 2020 produced “Kiss the Soil”, masterfully narrated by Woody Harrelson. (Terry and I viewed this last weekend to our delight!)

And finally, your last chance to support our 2023 Green Fondo Climate Ride and our three

riders on team “The Islanders”: Catherine, Terry and Craig Gaspard. We are getting very close to our goal. As an added incentive, **EACH ADDITIONAL PLEDGE IS MATCHED DOLLAR FOR DOLLAR, DOUBLING YOUR PLEDGE** thanks to a foundation aligned with Climate Ride. Any pledge is MUCH appreciated!! We will be in church over the next few weeks carry pledge sheets for those not wanting to use their on-line pledge system. Going past our goal would be GREAT!

~Craig Gaspard, for SAC

## SPRING RECYCLING DAY



Newport will hold its Spring Recycling Day on **Saturday, April 22, the**

**54th anniversary of Earth Day, 8 AM to 12 noon, at Easton's Beach.** This event is

for Newport residents only and is the only major recycling day for this year. Accepted items include electronics waste (some with a co-pay,) rigid plastics, scrap metals, cooking oil, sensitive document shredding, clothing and textiles, cardboard and bulky items (limited number per household.)

Items that **will not be accepted** include hazardous waste, Styrofoam, mattresses and plastic bags.

**For more details, go to [www.cityofnewport.com/en-us/living-in-newport/trash-recycling](http://www.cityofnewport.com/en-us/living-in-newport/trash-recycling).**

# SOCIAL ACTION



## SOCIAL ACTION TEAM

### Green Congregation and Share the Plate update

April is Earth Day month, and this year, Channing will honor the day at our April 23 service. Alex Chuman, Conservation Director for Aquidneck Land Trust (ALT), will tell us how this organization guards our water supply through stewardship and protection of important properties from development. **ALT**



**is also the beneficiary of our March and April Share the Plate donations, and the Earth Day service is on Share the Plate Sunday.** So our gifts will help protect our drinking water!

Also, that afternoon, from 1:30 to 2:30, Alex will be our guide on a walking tour of Oakland Forest & Meadow in Portsmouth (see map above), one of ALT's drinking supply watershed properties. Oakland Farm, on East Main Road, is special to us at Channing, since it was owned by sisters Sarah Gibbs and Channing's wife, Ruth Gibbs Channing. It was also Channing's beloved summer retreat. The 1/2 mile

walk is likely to be muddy, so boots are recommended.

An update on last year's Earth Day Share the Plate project: To recap, our donations funded installation and replacement filters for water bottle refilling stations at the new Save the Bay Aquarium at the former Newport Gateway Center, and at the Martin Luther King Community Center. The stations were provided through grants from the Greenlove Foundation. Both sites are under major reconstruction, so the time was ideal to install new plumbing. Both places are expected to reopen in the fall.

~Beth Milham, for SAT and Green Congregation



## APRIL SHARING LOCKER

Since April brings us April showers we would especially appreciate **donations of shampoo, conditioner and body wash this month.** All donations of toiletries and cleaning also accepted to be provided through the MLK pantry to those in our community needing our support. Place in collection bucket in parish hall or the back of the sanctuary.

Bring your ideas and energy to our next **Social Action team meeting Sunday April 9th** after church in the Channing House Library.



## IT'S PROM TIME!

**Can we count on your support for this year's Born this Way prom, scheduled for April 21st at 6:00 PM?** We want to help the kids have a great time by supplying wonderful food for the event. Food donations of finger foods and desserts can be dropped to the event, which will be held at the Florence Gray Center gym, however cash donations are especially helpful so we can purchase a nice selection of prepared foods. **Sign up to bring food during coffee hour or drop a check made out to Channing Memorial Church MEMO "Born This Way Prom" to either Joy Benson or Sally Hanchett.**

## PROTEIN DRIVE UPDATE

**Thank you from the Margit Baum Fund Committee!**



Thanks to the generosity of the Channing community, **156 pounds of high protein foods** were donated to Conexion Latina in Newport. The donations were gratefully received and we thank you for making this possible!