

The Catalyst

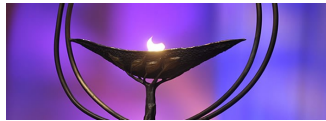
Channing Memorial Church Monthly Newsletter
March 2024

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

135 Pelham Street, Newport, Rhode Island



SUNDAY WORSHIP AT 10:00AM IN THE CHURCH SANCTUARY

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



Sunday, March 3

20 Questions (Sort of)

Rev. Bill Zelazny

We've not done an "ask the minister" service in a long time so this Sunday we will engage in our version of the 19th century game of 20 questions. Congregation members will be invited to ask Rev. Bill any questions they wish about Unitarian Universalism, religion, faith, facing life issues, etc. and he will endeavor to answer it.



Women's
Resource
Center

Sunday, March 10

Issues Facing Modern Women

Guest Presenter: Ms. Erica Baker

If you read women's history you will regularly see that they had to face many challenges from health issues to discrimination. Women in today's society may not have exactly the same trials, but women still face many challenges.

This Sunday Ms. Baker, the Newport Women's Resource Center clinical manager, will discuss issues modern women face. Other NWRC will be available for conversation during Fellowship time.



Food
Collection

The 2nd Sunday of the month is our nonperishable foods collection for local food banks. This month we are collecting foods high in protein (see "Think Protein" on page 2)

Sunday, March 17

Anne Hutchinson: The Woman who co-founded Rhode Island and told the Boston Puritans they were going to Hell

Presented by Tim Phelps

In 17th Century Boston, a woman dared to challenge the ruling theocracy by preaching first to women, then to an increasingly large mixed audience, that the Puritans were mistaken in their theology. Expelled from the colony in the midst of a snowstorm, she walked while 8 months pregnant to Providence and then by boat to Portsmouth, before being massacred by Native Americans she had tried to befriend.



Sunday, March 24

Facing the Dragon's Lair

Rev. Bill Zelazny

This Sunday in the Christian tradition, a week before Easter, is called Palm Sunday with the story that Jesus entered Jerusalem in celebration, though he supposedly knew very bad things were going to happen to him in a matter of days. This kind of situation is not confined to Jesus. Most of us have had to do something, even though we know there most likely was going to be great problems ahead – the "dragon's lair." Bill will talk about how we deal with facing the dragon's lair when that is our fate.



Sunday, March 31 Allowing Transformation Bill Zelazny

Author, Cynthia Ocelli has written: "For a seed to achieve its greatest expression, it must come completely undone. The shell cracks, its insides come out and everything changes. To someone who doesn't understand growth, it would look like complete destruction." On this Easter Sunday, Bill's sermon will look at how we must allow for transformation of all types in our lives if we are to live a full and complete life.



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.

Please do not park in the spaces along the fence that are marked for the B & B Inns down the street.

SUNDAY CHIMING

March 3: Linda Beall

March 10: Linda Beall

March 17: Jim Freess

March 24: Janna Pederson

March 31: Jim Freess

SUNDAY FELLOWSHIP



Coffee Fellowship

Fellowship is offered every Sunday morning after church. Many thanks to Coffee Fellowship Sam Jernigan for making delicious coffee every Sunday, which takes a lot of pressure off the Fellowship team! We invite you to bring snacks **and/or offer to man the kitchen**. There is a sign up sheet in the Parish Hall. **We ask for items that can be frozen and used when we are short of fresh snacks.**

USHERS NEEDED ON SUNDAYS

Are you a friendly person?

Do you like meeting people?

Try Ushering on Sunday morning(s)!



USHERS

Ushers are needed on Sunday mornings to help get the church ready for service, greet folks as they come in, collect and count the offering. It is a fun and easy job, and a great way to make new friends!

Contact Marian Royer if you would like to help out at membership@channingchurch.org



THINK PROTEIN!

During the month of March, the Margit Baum Fund Committee is donating nonperishable, high-protein food items to the Florence Gray Center food pantry. In hopes of expanding our outreach, the Committee asks that you **Think Protein** when you bring a food donation to Channing on the second Sunday of March! Items such as canned meat, canned beans, high-protein soups, and nut butters are greatly appreciated. Thank you for your generosity and support!



SHARE THE PLATE

The 4th Sunday of the month is "Share the Plate Sunday" when all cash and checks with a memo "Share the Plate" or "STP" collected during the offering are donated to a nonprofit organization chosen by the Social Action Team and approved by the Board of Trustees.



AQUIDNECK
COMMUNITY
TABLE

**March & April
donations will go to
Aquidneck
Community Table.**

Aquidneck Community Table works in many ways to build a vibrant food system on Aquidneck Island: distribution of fresh foods at our farmers markets, education in school and community gardens, programs that inspire young people to love nutritious foods.

NO PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE THIS MONTH. STAY TUNED FOR AN UPCOMING E-MAIL "STATE OF CHANNING CHURCH" ADDRESS

BLACK HISTORY AWARD WINNERS



Jelani Jackson was awarded the Dr. Marcus Wheatland award and scholarship at the 53rd annual Rev Robert L Williams National Black History Month Assembly. Jelani is a member of the National Honor Society, achieving a weighted GPA of 4.17 with courses in Honors, AP, and college classes. She received the Junior English Scholar Award in 2023 and has been a science fair finalist two years in a row. She is also Vice President of the Class of 2024 and a member of the Diversity Relevance Committee at the high school. Jackson was awarded the 2023 Civic Leadership Award from the Secretary of the State of Rhode Island. And she's on both the volleyball and softball teams. She plans to major in sports medicine in college.

The George T. Downing Award, which is given to a citizen in Newport who embodies the spirit of community involvement, humanity, and unity, was

presented to Charles Roberts. He is the founder and executive director of the Rhode Island Slave History Medallions project. Charles grew up in Newport and has been responsible for the city's New Year's Eve First Night celebrations in the past. He is a noted pastel artist and sculptor, having shown his artwork in numerous galleries in Rhode Island. Charles is married to Channing member Margaret Baker.

The moderator for the assembly was senior Devon-ta Campbell. Devon-ta has achieved a 3.64 GPA at Rogers. He is currently enrolled in Honors classes as well as AP Language and Composition and is currently dual enrolled in College Writing with the University of Rhode Island and AP Statistics. He was awarded the RHS Junior Scholar English award last year and has been in a residential carpentry program with the Newport Area Career and Technical Center for four years. His community leadership involves helping to design and build a playhouse for Rosemary's Wish List. He is a varsity member of the basketball team and is captain of the track and field team. He hopes to major in business in college.

Both Jackson and Campbell, pictured with Rev. Bill Zelazny, were presented with scholarships donated by Channing Memorial, Community Baptist, and St. John the Evangelist churches.

Once again, the assembly was held in the Rogers High School Cafeteria because the school is

under construction, and they no longer have an auditorium. The Culinary Arts department of Rogers served an excellent brunch in the Colonial Dining Room for awardees and adult attendees of the assembly.

Channing members of the steering committee are Rev Bill Zelazny, Judith Porter, and Sally Hanchett.

Photograph by Bill Peresta.

~Judith Porter



Church Office Hours:

**Monday, Tuesday,
Thursday & Friday
10:00am-9:00am-2:30pm**



Our Office Administrator, Michele, is attending a music, art, and wellness convention in the Poconos March 22-24. **The church office will be open Wednesday, March 20 and closed Friday, March 22 that week.** Please send announcements for the Weekly E-News in by Wednesday evening.



OFFICE EMAIL

When emailing Michele in the Church Office **please only use office@channingchurch.org for the email address.** The Gmail address is a back up and is not checked regularly. Please remove it from your contacts.

CAREGIVING UPDATE

As always, we look forward to the official return of spring later this month, and hope that the “unofficial” start won’t be significantly later than that!

Many thanks to Rachel Balaban and John Burnham for serving as Caregiving coordinators for February. As always, they did a great job keeping up with check-ins to Channing members and friends recovering from surgeries or illnesses or needing other support.

All seem to be doing well as of this time. Our best wishes go out to Ginny Spaulding, Nan Heroux, Abby Adams, Jo Freedman, Gayle Hanrahan, and Margaret Baker for continued healing. Hope you all are back to 100% very soon!

Please remember that the Channing Caregiving team is always available to offer support to anyone who is feeling isolated, coping with 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 **March coordinator is Tom Beall**. Tom is away **March 1-3, JoAnn Rosemont will cover those three days**. Please call Tom, or Caregiving co-leaders Sally Hanchett and JoAnn Rosemont, with any Caregiving news or needs.

~Linda Beall for Channing Caregiving



COMMUNITY MEAL

Channing Church is part of the network that provides a meal for needy people every day of the month. We serve from 20 to 30 people on the **third Monday of every month, at 5:00pm in the Parish Hall**. Joan Dermody continues to cook each month so we’re able to provide a nutritious homemade meal. We have a faithful group of volunteers but could always use a few more. **Contact Joy Benson to volunteer at communitymeal@channingchurch.org**

~Joy Benson,
Community Meal Manager



SHARING LOCKER

The Sharing locker collects toiletries and cleaning supplies that are distributed through local food pantries to those struggling to afford them. **In March we are getting ready for spring cleaning with cleaning supplies, toilet bowl cleaner, scouring powder etc.**



WELCOME NEW MEMBER:

PETER L. FREEMAN

Peter is an attorney practicing law in Massachusetts, specializing in affordable housing and land use law. He is heavily involved with non-profit organizations on Cape Cod and Martha’s Vineyard – he is currently Vice Chairman of Housing Assistance Corporation where he has been a member of the Board of Directors for many years. He is an Adjunct Professor of Law at Boston University School of Law where he has taught Historic Preservation Law and Affordable Housing and Community Development Law for many years.

Peter graduated Yale College in 1971 with a Bachelor of Arts degree and graduated Boston University School of Law with a Juris Doctor degree in 1975.

Peter is Jewish, and was raised in the very “reform” side of Judaism which emphasizes social justice and community service as much as a belief in God. He is a resident of Barnstable, Massachusetts and also spends much time in Newport. Peter has two grown daughters and one granddaughter.

Are you interested in becoming a member? Contact Membership Chair, Marian Royer, at membership@channingchurch.org or the church office (401-846-0643) to learn more!



ECO BITS & TIPS

A Warming World: What to Do

Over the last two Ecobits columns, I had hoped to broaden the discourse to include additional reasons why Central Americans seek a new life here in the US. It is a complicated situation. I admit to having skipped over one the most significant reasons why this situation has manifested itself: a lack of strong democratic institutions that minimize political corruption and antidemocratic trends including lawlessness related to armed gangs. But I am also reminded of to primary purpose of this column: focusing on environmental issues on local and broader levels.

Immigration within the US continues to be mainly driven by retirement decisions made by northeastern retirees moving to the Southwest (but not urban California) and coastal southeastern states but away from the immediate coast. How could this be one would ask? A recent UVM study confirms this and even went so far as to report the rate of these moves “as returning to pre-pandemic levels.” Wildfires are on the increase, severity of hurricanes and flooding events also increasing.

There is plenty of anecdotal and US Census Bureau data reporting people moving away from California, and its likely fire and drought future. People continue to move to Texas, Florida and the Carolinas even with their increasingly being in harm’s way. I guess winter warmth continues to be too great a draw. Areas of the US with fewer risks for climate related weather events are the Great Lakes, upper Midwest and the interior northeast.

But the US has the beginnings of both government and even private investments in building protections from climate risks. From simple urban tree planting initiatives to building code and planning changes up to and including buyouts of flooding prone properties. As we are starting to give in to the ocean’s advances. Wealthy communities such as Miami Beach are now elevating roads and other key infrastructure. New oceanfront houses on Cape Cod must be built on pilings and living space begins on the second floor. Storm damage has proven to be curtailed by encouraging reestablishment of green buffers including native mangrove trees (in the south) and eelgrass beds (northeast).

Substandard housing even in the US leaves it occupants highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. A National Resources Defense Council report from 2022 highlighted the need for protection from heat exposure, protection from chronic health conditions like asthma, and prevention from

displacement as being the primary benefits. Maintaining and improving the quality of public/ social housing. The Biden infrastructure bill did not address residential housing.

Less developed countries in Central America and around the globe are unable to fund these climate mitigation strategies. And with families in these regions fleeing for safety and economic stability, they look to enter our country through our southern border. An idea called Climate Reparations has taken hold over the last five years in Climate Justice circles. Stay tuned as I follow this potential remedy among many.

~By Craig Gaspard

ISRAEL GAZA WAR BRIEFING

**Sunday, March 17, 11:30am,
in the Parish Hall**



The Channing Social Action Committee is offering a briefing by Tom Beall on the Israel-Gaza war and its relationship to the international laws on armed conflict. The event will take place on Sunday, March 17, at 11:30 AM, in the Parish Hall. **A light lunch will be provided.**

Tom is a retired US Navy captain and a retired teacher of math and history. He has recently earned his PhD in International Relations from Salve Regina University. His dissertation is entitled, “From Troy to Kabul: Military Effectiveness, Moral Injury, and the Just War Tradition in Western History.”

Continued on next page

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Israel Gaza Presentation continued:

This event is being publicized only within the Channing community, although attendees are welcome to bring guests. We are aware that this is a highly emotional and polarizing subject, and attendees will be asked to keep in mind that we are all members of the Channing family, and we may express our feelings while remembering that all of us are deserving of respectful discourse.

~Beth Milham for SAT

TLC PRESENTS A COMMUNITY EVENT TO TACKLE HIV/AIDS STIGMA & SPREAD AWARENESS

Friday, March 1,
7:00pm, Sanctuary

A play reading and panel
discussion focused on AIDS/
HIV education.

For more info see the

[February Catalyst Newsletter](#)

\$10 suggested donation.

This event will be
livestreamed on the [Channing
Memorial Church Newport
RI You Tube Page](#) and
available for viewing
afterwards.



SPRING IS COMING!

Do you have a
framed picture or
mounted poster that
has a spring natural image, or a
Unitarian philosophical quote for
our Parish Hall space? **Please
contact Susan Kieronski at
TLC@channingchurch.org**

IT'S PROM TIME, YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!



Can we count on
your support for
this year's **Born
this Way Prom**,
scheduled for April
26th 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 church with
Born This Way Prom in the
memo to either Joy Benson
or Sally Hanchett.**

**Do you know anyone with a
truck or van who could
assist with delivery and
pickup of tables and chairs
from Channing to the
Florence Gray Center on
the day of prom? This would
be a great support.**



A number of
volunteer
positions are
available to
pick up food, assist with
loading and unloading,
monitoring exits, assisting
with check in etc. **You can
let Interweave know of your
availability and interest by
signing up when you sign up
with Joy and Sally to help
with food.**



OPEN-MIC MUSIC AT CHANNING'S COFFEEHOUSE

**Sat., March 9, 7:00pm, in
the Parish Hall**

Join us for our last open-mic
coffeehouse of 2024! You're
invited for a night of covers,
originals and singalongs with
Channing members and
friends. Coffee and tea are
served, and you're welcome to
bring a dessert to share or a
donation (\$5 or more suggested)
to support the church.

**Want to join the lineup?
Contact facilitator John
Burnham in advance!**

**Email: [coffeehouse@
channingchurch.org](mailto:coffeehouse@channingchurch.org)**

PFLAG SUPPORT MEETINGS

**The Second Monday of each
month in the
Parish Hall, 6:45-8:15pm**

**Contact Doreen LePage for
more info at
pflag@channingchurch.org**

**As always, discussion is
confidential.**

**There is no charge to
attend, resources are
available and refreshments
are served.**

*PFLAG is a national organization
that offers resources, education and
support to the LGBTQIA+
community in addition to their
family, friends, and allies.*