

The Catalyst

Channing Memorial Church Monthly Newsletter
May 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

Notice to Members of Channing Memorial Church

The 2024 Annual Meeting will be held

Wednesday, May 22, 2024, 7:00pm in the Parish Hall

The meeting will begin with a Dessert Potluck at 6:30pm

Potluck begins at 6:30pm,

Annual Meeting begins promptly at 7:00pm

AGENDA

- Welcome & call to order, verify quorum
- Approval of minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting
 - Wheel of Life
 - Vision 2025 Update
- Reports from Minister, Officers & Committee Chairs
- Presentation & approval of the FY 2024-2025 budget
 - Election of Officers & Members of the Board of Trustees and Committee Chairs & Committee Members
 - Recognitions & Appreciation
 - Presentation of the Unsung UU Award

Items to be Voted on:

- Approval of the FY 2024-2025 budget
- Election of Officers & Members of the Board of Trustees and Committee Chairs & Committee Members

The Annual Report will be sent to the congregation by email on Tuesday, May 21.

Printed copies of the Annual Meeting Report will be available at the Annual Meeting

Committee Chairs are reminded to submit (via email) their Annual Report to the church office by

EMAIL to: office@channingchurch.org by

Monday, May 6th at the latest!

**SUNDAY WORSHIP
AT 10:00AM IN THE
CHURCH SANCTUARY**

Most services are livestreamed on the [CHANNING YOU TUBE CHANNEL](#) and available afterwards.

Sunday, May 5

Live into a New Way of Thinking

Rev. Bill Zelazny, Ginny Spaulding, and Tim Phelps

All people and organizations are constantly going through change. Sometimes they are small adjustments and sometimes major transitions. Channing Church will be going into a time of change in the next year. Bill thinks this quote from Father Richard Rohr, the founder of the Center for Action and Contemplation -- "We don't think ourselves into new ways of living. We live ourselves into new ways of thinking." -- is perhaps a good perspective for grounding us during this important time in our history. Bill, Congregation President, Ginny Spaulding and Board member, Tim Phelps, will talk about the upcoming changes and the process we will go through living into this change.

Sunday, May 12

Mothering Principles for Everyone to Live

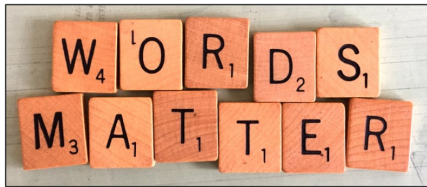
Rev. Bill Zelazny



A man who has not raised children looks at Mother's Day and sees there are many principles of mothering that can apply to everyone's life. On this Mother's Day Bill will explore these universal "mothering" principles. →

Sunday, May 12 we will have guest musician and harpsichordist, Sebastian Bottone.

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



Sunday, May 19
Words Matter: Watch Your Mouth

Rev. Dianne Daniels

When I initially entertained the concept of becoming a minister, I knew that my own use of words would be important - it could mean the difference between a person finding a soothing balm for their spirit, being “called out” on a challenging subject, or turning away from a spiritual walk that could help to free them from their pain and suffering.

Words do indeed Matter - to a person’s self-esteem and self-confidence, to a person’s livelihood, to the status of an important relationship. Whether they are words we say to ourselves (often the toughest) or words we say to others (often “throwaway words” hurt others the most), Words Matter.

Rev. Daniels has found refuge and inspiration in Unitarian Universalism for more than 20 years and is a 2022 graduate of Starr King School for the Ministry. Rev. Daniels provides guest preaching services to UU churches in the region.

Sunday, May 26
Finding Zen
Presented by Jeff Thomas

Zen is simply everyday life lived with awareness. It is a practical and spiritual method of living that can bring simplicity, balance of nature, and clarity into our daily lives. This Sunday, Jeff will share what he has learned about Zen philosophy & practices. Additionally, Jeff will talk about how Zen can provide guidance in working through strong emotions, such as fear or anger, to reach a sense of tranquility. Several years ago, Jeff Thomas became a member of Channing Memorial Church. He was attracted to the principles of Unitarian Universalism and the compassionate and caring spirit that the U.U. community fosters. While at Channing, Jeff has given a guest video presentation on “Cosmic Spirituality” and a slide show on the climate crisis. He graduated from Southern New Hampshire University with a bachelor’s degree in communications and moderates an internet-based talk show where panelists engage in thoughtful discussion on a variety of topics.

PARKING FOR SUNDAY 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

May 5: Janna Pederson

May 12: Linda Beall

May 19: Jim Freess

May 26: Linda Beall



SHARING 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.



Newport Pride is our beneficiary for Share the Plate in May and June.

It’s the non-profit younger sibling of NewportOUT and now hosts the Newport Pride festival and other events each June, as well as events throughout the year. It also operates a community center on Spring Street, open Thursdays and Fridays. From the website: (www.newportprideri.org.) Its purpose is “to advocate for equality and more inclusive policies, safe and welcoming spaces, provide resources and education to expand community understanding, support diverse LGBTQ+ identities and history, and produce events for people to connect, learn, and celebrate.” (NewportPrideri.org)



PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Greetings all,

And I thought Christmas season was the busiest of all!! Well Spring has certainly proven me wrong!! It is so lovely and refreshing to see more sun and tons of lovely spring life creations all around. From earlier sunrises to the even earlier chirping birds, to the many, many colorful flowers, to the fresh green leaf buds beginning to clothe the many heavenly stretched tree branches, we can finally feel the aliveness all around and within (sneezes not withstanding!!). Spring is a truly “getting ready” time of year. It seems too that our Church community has become more enlivened with revitalizing older connections even as we share our wonderful community with new connections. Growth is happening all around, and it feels hopeful and just great!

By the time you read this message we will have wrapped up our annual pledge drive, hosted our annual Born This Way Prom, finished our ever so wonderful round robin dinners, and either completed many projects or are preparing new endeavors for the end of this 2023-24 Church year. There have been some excellent, thought provoking and heartwarming or heart wrenching programs this Spring, calling us to mind that we are not only part of, but fed by the ever present

interconnected “web of life” that include all things. I remember the guessing game my family used to play where the first question was “is it animal, vegetable, or mineral.” I think our most recent programming has shown that within each category is common ancestry and chemistry ... nothing is separate!!

Our challenges in the coming year may just well have to do with really taking that in and moving forward some important agendas that may be beyond the usual scope of our “human” agendas. We will be called upon to be most thoughtful about where we really stand in relation to this planet earth and everything we share. Though few in our congregation, our messages might best serve the future, through our teaching our children, not just “Unitarian” children but all children. What might we do with the wisdom we have through our many years of learning? Can we let ourselves think about what we are doing and what messages that sends about what we value? Can we examine how we might move forward more mindfully and openly to live our principles more fully? These are the questions ...

May we be well, happy, peaceful, and live with as much ease as is possible for us.

Happy May!
Ginny



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY JUNE 20-23

***Come to our General Assembly
from your Own Home!***

General Assembly is the annual gathering of Unitarian Universalists for Association business, education, worship, and fellowship. This year it will be held entirely on-line, which provides an opportunity for people to attend without the cost of travel and hotel.

GA is set for June 20-23 with opportunities to attend lectures, workshops (some pre-recorded for on-demand viewing before and for a short time after GA), worship services, affinity groups (Cohorts) and special events.

**Registration, open to
everyone, is \$315 until May
15 and \$400 after**

Registration off-sets the technology and other event expenses.

Channing Church has 3 delegate positions. Delegates can vote on business matters, including this year on the proposed new Article II. The CMC Board selects the delegates. Talk with Board President, Ginny Spauling if you are interested in being considered for a delegate position.

**Go to <https://www.uua.org/ga>
for more information and
registration, and see an
overview of the schedule is at
[https://www.uua.org/ga/
program/schedule](https://www.uua.org/ga/program/schedule).**

CAREGIVING UPDATE



Hope you are all well as we look forward to warm summer weather coming soon! Many thanks to Tom Beall, who served as Caregiving coordinator during April.

We extend deepest condolences to JoAnn Rosemont and her family upon the death of her daughter, Kathleen Denaro, on March 24th. Kathleen had been ill for a long time and JoAnn had traveled back and forth to Washington on many occasions to care for her.

Sincere sympathies also go out to Pat and Piper Padillia and the rest of their family upon the death of Pat's sister Allie on April 12.

On the good news front, Bob Kieronski is at home recovering after a recent stay at RI Hospital. Tom Howard came down with COVID during April but is doing much better at the time of this writing.

Susan Beckers spoke with me in church recently and wanted to say how much the Caregiving contacts meant to Charlie in his last months. To all of you who visited or sent cards of support to Charlie, please know how much your efforts were appreciated!

This is a reminder to anyone who would like to attend the memorial service for former Channing member Don Mallinson that it will be held Saturday, May 4 at 1 p.m. at the UU Fellowship of Falmouth, 840 Sandwich Road in East Falmouth, MA.

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**



May coordinators are Judie Porter and Barbara Russell-Willett. Please call either of them, or Caregiving co-leaders Sally Hanchett and JoAnn Rosemont, with any Caregiving news or needs.

~Linda Beall for Channing Caregiving



CHANNING YARD SALE Saturday, June 8, 8:00am– 1:00pm

The Margit Baum Fund Committee is seeking **items of good quality** for a yard sale to benefit Channing Church.

Drop items off in the Parish Hall on

- Saturday, May 25, from 12:00 – 4:00pm
- Friday, June 7, from 12:00 – 4:00pm

Attend the Yard Sale

- Saturday, June 8, from 8:00 – 1:00
- Sunday, June 9, from 9:00 – 12:00 (All items remaining on Sunday will be sold for half price!)

Important Yard Sale Guidelines

Only donate clean items that are in good, saleable shape! No outdated electronics, such as old, heavy televisions, can be accepted. If large items such as furniture are donated and do not sell, you will be expected to reclaim and pick up your item/s after the sale.

Thank you for supporting the Channing Yard Sale!

AQUIDNECK ISLAND VILLAGE

We're expanding to Portsmouth and changing our name to Aquidneck Island Village.

A public meeting about creating a village for Newport, Middletown and Portsmouth seniors is being held on **Wednesday, May 22, 2024 from 3:00 – 4:30 pm at the Portsmouth Free Public Library.** Light refreshments will be served.

Villages help older adults stay active, connected, and independent in their own homes and communities as they age through networks of trusted volunteers. The concept is neighbors helping neighbors in a formal, sustainable organization. Older adults can get help when they need it and also stay social, preventing the negative effects of isolation.

A local 15-member Steering Committee is working with The Village Common of RI to form a village for older adults in Newport, Middletown and Portsmouth. On May 22, there

Continued on next page

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Aquidneck Island Villages continued

will be an opportunity to learn how an Aquidneck Island Village will support older adults and how you can become involved.

Formerly known as the Greater Newport Village, the group has decided to expand its geographic coverage to include Portsmouth and to change its name from the Greater Newport Village to the Aquidneck Island Village.

The Aquidneck Island Village is now seeking members and volunteers who will fill a variety of roles, including driving to appointments, shopping, providing tech support, minor home repairs and serving on committees.

For more information, check the website www.villagecommonri.org or contact Mary Alice Smith .

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO PLEDGE!



Our 2024/25 Pledge drive ended on April 30, but it is never too late to make a pledge. Contact

Michele in the church office by phone (401-846-0643) or email (office@channingchurch.org) and let her know how much you would like to pledge for the upcoming church year which starts on July 1, 2024.

VISION 2025

It is also never too late to contribute to Phase 2 of the Vision 2025 Capital Campaign to move the electric underground, upgrade the sewer lines, and improve the landscaping between the buildings. If you would like to change your Vision 2025 pledge or make a one time contribution, please contact Michele in the church office.



IS RELIGIOUS EDUCATION WORKING?

An evening on Zoom of questions, conversations, and wonderings about UU faith formation in 2024 and beyond, presented by the UUA

A traditional one-size-fits-most Sunday School program was the primary method of religious education in the mid-to-late 20th century. And we have known for years that model was working less and less effectively for our families. The covid pandemic really accelerated the decline in the Sunday School model that is heavily dependent on large numbers of volunteers and regular attendance on Sunday mornings.

Join your New England Region staff and members of other UU congregations from across New England to share thoughts about these questions and more on **Thursday, May 9th from 6:30 to 9:30pm ET.**

Register at:
<https://www.uua.org/new-england/events/region/beyond-sunday-school-online>

The registration deadline for the May 09th online conversation is Wednesday, May 08th.

Congregational leaders of all kinds are invited!



From The Learning Center SCENIC WONDERS OF THE GREAT AMERICAN WEST

A Photographic Journey with Bill and Nancy Peresta

Last September, the Perestas spent 10 days enjoying the scenic wonders of the Great American West during a guided Grand Circle Tour of 7 National Parks, 3 State Parks, and 3 Tribal Sites, accompanied by 4 other couples and their tour guide/driver. **On May 26, at 11:30 in the Parish Hall, Bill will present a slide show of photos** taken on their 2,000 mile exploration of some of the most visually stunning geography and geology of the region, along with a narrative of their adventure. You may be familiar with Bill's photographic work – this promises to be an extraordinary event.

A light lunch will be served. Hope you will plan to join us!



ECO BITS & TIPS

Income and Social Justice

My last column focused on the vastly different consumption patterns and contributions to global warming between the “haves” and the “have nots.” My family and I are firmly in the “haves” camp where on demand automobile travel, not to mention air travel to California, Europe and around the globe, happens frequently. Vacations to exotic places for many members of Channing are a yearly occurrence. I love to travel as most of us do. Can there be other considerations?

Can you imagine if the other 85-90% of the world’s eight (plus) billion inhabitants lived like Americans and Europeans? Demand for conventional fuels like gasoline and oil, raw materials like wood and carbon intensive cement and steel are already bringing the earth’s ecosystems to the brink of collapse. And now the electric vehicle and heat pump revolution, with its demand for rare earth minerals for car batteries and photovoltaic panels has just begun in earnest.

The two most deadly outcomes for the poorest of earth’s inhabitants are either too much water (or not enough water) and extended heat waves. Flooding is often associated with creeks and rivers that overflow their banks damaging nearby buildings. Low lying districts in the US were often the last to be

built on for a reason: the least desirable development alternatives, often going to low-income and mainly minority housing. Think New Orleans, oceanside suburbs of Houston and Virginia’s Tidewater region over the last 20 years when hurricanes, slow moving fronts or king tide events strike regularly.

The localized flooding is increasing in both frequency and scale as province and country-wide flooding events in the developing world can directly be tied to symptoms of a human warmed planet. Widespread flooding in Pakistan in 2022 submerged about one-third of the country’s entire land mass for months (and earning a Wikipedia posting). As we speak, significant flooding causing hundreds of deaths and billions in damages is happening in Guangdong Province in southeastern China: and this is spreading further to encompass Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Closer to home, I mention that the Central American drought that is continuing now, and very likely contributing in a major way to our immigration crisis at the southern border. Many families that live rurally from southern Mexico through Central America down to the small farming regions of South America are subsistence farmers with little access to capital. They are very dependent on surface water and not groundwater from drilled wells and therefore highly vulnerable to medium and long-term droughts for feeding themselves and selling their excess for profit.

The United States will not be immune to extended heat waves in a warming world. First Street Foundation estimates that while today, 46% of the population will experience at least three consecutive days of 100-degree heat in an average year, this will increase thirty-three percent to 63% in a 30 year timespan. In fact some part of the country, predominantly in the southern US: Texas and Florida will see a doubling or more of the number of days with 100 degree heat and dangerous high heat index (high heat and humidity level) days. Many low-income elderly cannot afford the high cost of air conditioning, and they along with low-income families will need to utilize Cooling Centers, of which there will be too few of, and rarely do they have back-up power generation.

Next edition, I hope to look at some solutions outside of actually fulfilling our Net Zero pledges by 2035 or so. Until then...

~By Craig Gaspard

SHARING LOCKER

Celebrating mothers in May



In honor of Mothers’ Day, we invite everyone to donate mom-pampering and childcare items to the Sharing Locker. Examples include diapers (for babies) and toiletries for little ones and their moms. (The Sharing Locker donates products that can’t be purchased on the SNAP program--formerly “food stamps”) to our local food banks.

HOT TOPICS

**Continuing the Dialog:
The Israel-Gaza War**

**Sunday, May 19, 11:30am in
the Parish Hall**

Tom Beall is returning on May 19 to follow up on his informative discussion of International Law and the Israel-Gaza War. That event was well received but needed more time for everyone to feel heard. So, we're reviving the Hot Topics format that first Tom brought to us during the Iraq War. We'll gather in the Parish Hall for a light lunch, then begin our discussion at 11:30 AM. Some resource articles will be available online and in the parish hall in advance. As before, we ask everyone to bear in mind that we're all Channing family, and we want to remain friends after the discussion, by nurturing mutual respect for one another.

**CHANNING GOTV
TEAM KEEPS UP
THE PACE!**

Our 23-member postcard and letter-writing team continues to encourage voters across the country to vote in November, and encourage their family members to vote, too. We're in our fourth and fifth phases, with writers averaging 25+ notes for each phase. So far, we've written to voters in Georgia, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Arizona. We'll keep at it until election day! **Care to join us? Contact Beth at sacbeth@channingchurch.org**. All supplies are provided, and each piece requires minimal writing.

LOOKING BACK



Oakland Forest

It took a year, but we finally took our tour of the Channing/Gibbs family's treasured Oakland Forest in Portsmouth on April 13. After a soggy spring, it was a soggy walk, but we "booted" up and much enjoyed the walk led by Alex Chuman of Aquidneck Land Trust.

Legislative Forum

Seven Channing members attended this excellent briefing on General Assembly bills addressing the UU Legislative Ministry's four areas of concern: gun safety, economic justice, climate action and democratic process. We heard from and dialogued with Attorney General Peter Neronha and several progressive legislators and journalists at Westminster UU Church on April 7. If you're interested in learning more about ways to help, contact Beth at sacbeth@channingchurch.org.



**Caring for our
Land/Our Earth**

Drawing on the wisdom of our First Nations contemporaries and of Aquidneck Community Table (ACT,) we learned about protecting our land through regenerative farming practices and localized consumer habits during Earth Day month. Several of us watched *Food, Inc 2*, at the Jane Pickens Theater on March 31. The film exposed the ways industrial farming degrades the land and the environment, then at our Earth Day service, we learned from ACT board member Cris Offenbergh what that group and its partners are doing to preserve the land and make healthy food available to all. After the service, we shared a "locally grown" brunch and watched the film, *Common Ground*, demonstrating regenerative farming methods that restore the land and even stabilize the climate. Two big things we can do are to shop locally and to scale down regenerative methods to our own gardens and yards.

 **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,

May 2024 Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm-PH	2	3	4
5 Sunday Worship 10 am-Sanctuary	6 <i>Last Day for Committee Chairs to Submit Annual Reports !</i>	7	8 Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm-PH	9	10	11
12 Sunday Worship 10 am-Sanctuary Monthly Nonperishable Food Collection	13 PFLAG Meeting 6:45pm-PH Finance Comm. 7pm-Zoom	14	15 Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm-PH	16 Board of Trustees 7pm-Zoom	17	18 Circle of Concerns & Joys 9am-Zoom
19 Sunday Worship 10 am-Sanctuary <i>Hot Topics 11:30am-PH</i> Interweave Potluck 5:30pm-PH	20 Catalyst Deadline Community Meal 5:00pm	21 Worship Comm. 5:30pm~Zoom	22 Office open today: 2:00-6:30pm Channing Annual Meeting 6:30pm in the Parish Hall	23 Office Hours: 10am-1pm	24 Office Closed Today	25 Yard Sale Drop Off 12-4pm in the Parish Hall
26 Sunday Worship 10 am-Sanctuary <i>Share the Plate Sunday</i> TLC: Scenic Wonders of the Great American West, 11:30am-PH	27 Memorial Day Office Closed	28 Office Closed Today	29 Office Open Today 9am-2:30pm Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm-PH	30	31	

Abbreviations: Sanctuary-S, Parish Hall-PH, Channing House-CH

**Please contact the Church Office to schedule all activities & events—
846-0643 or e-mail us at office@channingchurch.org.**

Church Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 9:00am-2:30pm

***Special Hours May 22-29! Our Office Administrator, Michele, is going to
Greenfield, Massachusetts on Memorial Day Weekend.***