

TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALLGAME

MOVIE NIGHT

On Sunday, March 30, I will be leading a worship service about the spirituality of baseball. It has been suggested to me that we follow this service with a softball game and cookout (hot dogs, popcorn and peanuts!) in the park across the street from the chapel. However, planning a service and an event afterward leaves me feeling somewhat overwhelmed. My hope is to find a person or two (or three, or four) who are willing to help coordinate the softball game and cookout. If you are interested, please email me at richard-corso@gmail.com or see me after service on Sundays.

~ Richard Corso

Friday, March 14, 6:30 p.m. in Eddy Hall

Bell Street Chapel's Movie Night series continues on March 14 at 6:30 p.m. in Eddy Hall. This series is part of our effort to live out the values that we espoused when we became a Unitarian Universalist Welcoming Congregation several years ago. Accordingly, we have been proud to sponsor a series of movie nights presenting films with GLBT themes. For the past year, we have been concentrating on films that examine gender identity issues. We continue this series on the second Friday of each month.

So far we have enjoyed films, both dramatic and documentary, that ranged from heartbreaking to hysterically funny; most of them, like life, evoked a combination of emotions. Our conversations afterward have been enlightening and uplifting. Fortunately, there seems to be no end to the artistically significant, award-winning movies examining the issues facing transgender individuals and those who love them. Suggestions from the participants are always welcome.

Thanks to our talented audiovisual technician, these films are shown on a large screen with excellent acoustics. We share a potluck meal during the show and have our discussion over dessert. We invite you to join us. Bring food or non-alcoholic beverages to share – and bring your friends to Bell Street Chapel's Movie Night!

For a list of films to be shown and for any other information contact Bell Street Chapel at (401) 273-5678 or by e-mail at contact@bellstreetchapel.org or speak to Carol Crowley.



The Religious Society of Bell Street Chapel

5 Bell Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02909
Phone (401) 273-5678 | contact@bellstreetchapel.org

**“Love is the spirit of our church
and service is its law**

**This is our great covenant:
To dwell together in peace,
To seek the truth in love,
And to help one another.”**



■ MARCH
■ 2008

BELL STREET COLUMNS

NEWSLETTER FOR THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF BELL STREET CHAPEL

WORSHIP SERVICE SCHEDULE

SERVICES BEGIN AT 10 A.M.

TODDLER CARE AND SUNDAY SCHOOL AVAILABLE

2 | MARCH

KEEPING YOU POSTED: UPDATE FROM THE SEARCH COMMITTEE

Members of the Search Committee

One role of the Settled Minister Search Committee is to gather information and create a portrait of our community to present to ministerial candidates. This service will explore what we have learned so far.

9 | MARCH

TRANSCENDENTALISM: OUR RELIGIOUS AND PHILOSOPHICAL LEGACY

Rev. Bill Robinson

16 | MARCH

VERNAL EQUINOX

Kate Gillis and Renae Chaves

23 | MARCH

EASTER SERVICE

Rev. Bill Robinson

30 | MARCH

THE SPIRITUALITY OF BASEBALL

Richard Corso

Baseball, spiritual? Many would scoff at this notion. During this service we will explore the spiritual side of baseball, and most especially the Red Sox and Fenway Park, the sense of community shared by those who enjoy baseball and the reasons that baseball really is a spiritual practice.

IN THE INTERIM: OPTIMISM UNFETTERED

As the weather gets warmer and the days become just a little bit longer with every rotation of the globe, I feel my attitude about everything in life, including life itself, taking a major turn toward a very optimistic bent. Spring is coming and the knowledge of that always contributes to my psychological well-being.

One boost in optimism has been the number of visitors joining us in the chapel for worship during the last several Sundays. If you, dear reader, are one of those visitors I hope you felt comfortable and realize that the welcome mat is out for your return. It is nice to meet new folks and to talk about our mutual enthusiasm for Bell Street Chapel. A few people asked about the process for joining. It is simplicity itself: talk with me or someone from the Membership Committee and attend a workshop called the “New U.U.” We also have brief information sessions after the worship service on the first Sunday of each month. This does not replace the “New U.U.,” which is intended to answer your more in-depth questions.

I have been asked by a few people about the minister's office hours. Working part-time, I am unable to squeeze any more into my weekly schedule, so I have chosen not to schedule office hours. However, and this is the important part, not scheduling open office hours does not mean that I am not available to meet with you. If you want to meet, please call me or send an e-mail to schedule a mutually convenient time.

Annual canvass season is just about upon us and I am very optimistic about that, despite knowing that the chairperson of the Canvass Committee has yet to be recruited. Canvass problems will eventually work themselves out but most likely the canvass itself may have some difficulties attaining the level of pledge

commitments that a dedicated canvass chair could identify. There really is nothing quite like a good canvass chairperson to keep things moving in the right direction and to optimize the “ask”. Running an effective canvass really is an art.

To start the campaign, a few members will be asked to share in a church service their reasons for joining Bell Street, for continuing to maintain their membership and for contributing. Stories of personal commitment are often very moving. They offer an opportunity for not only the presenter to share her or his story, but for everyone to reflect on their own reasons for the depth of their commitment.

Despite all that is going on now, I am reserving my most optimistic feelings for this same time next year. At that time you may be in the final stages of the minister search process; you may even be interviewing a minister candidate. This future event not only increases member optimism but adds a tremendous excitement to your day-to-day life here at Bell Street.

~ Rev. Bill

The Passover Seder Returns to Bell Street Chapel

Please join us on the second night of Passover, Sunday, April 20, at 6 p.m. in Eddy Hall.

A moving service will be followed by a wonderful meal.

~ Peg Boyle, Carol Crowley and
David Gleicher

BELL STREET CHAPEL
5 BELL STREET
PROVIDENCE, RI 02909
CONTACT@BELLSTREETCHAPEL.ORG
WWW.BELLSTREETCHAPEL.ORG
(401) 273-5678

MINISTERS

REV. WILLARD ROBINSON
INTERIM PARISH MINISTER

Rev. Robinson's office hours are by appointment.
To schedule an appointment contact him at
revbillrobinson@msn.com or at (508) 226-2910.

REV. MARY MARGARET EARL
COMMUNITY MINISTER

REV. BEN HALL
COMMUNITY MINISTER

CHURCH STAFF

HEIDI GILKENSON, OFFICE MANAGER
Office Hours:

Monday, Wednesday, Friday – 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Tuesday and Thursday – by appointment only

IRINA TCHANTCEVA, MUSIC DIRECTOR
NED FOSTER, SEXTON
IRENE ZABEK, CHILDCARE MANAGER

GOVERNING BOARD

DON LALIBERTE, PRESIDENT
CAROL CROWLEY, VICE PRESIDENT
JENNIFER SHIMKUS, TREASURER
MEREDYTH WATERMAN, SECRETARY
GREG GRECO, AT-LARGE
ELLEN KELLNER, AT-LARGE

STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS EVENTS, OPEN

FINANCE, JOHN SIMMONDS
HOUSE, FRANK FALTUS
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT, PEG BOYLE
MEMBERSHIP/CARING, STEVE KAGAN
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, KATE GILLIS
PARISH/SOCIAL CONCERNS, CLARA HARDY
WORSHIP, AUDREY GREENE

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

MEREDYTH WATERMAN, EDITOR
TERRY BARBOUNIS, LAYOUT/DESIGN

CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS

FROM THE BOARD

I am writing this reflection as I enter my fourth year on the Governing Board (I can hardly believe this myself). Over these past three years, I have seen a lot. I have spent countless hours reviewing budgets and bylaws. I have been to three leadership retreats and seven congregational meetings. I have been to 36 Governing Board meetings. I have seen one minister leave, the hiring of a new minister, and I have worked with three board presidents and vice presidents. I have seen this church at its strongest and this church when it has struggled. I never thought when I came to visit more than 6 ½ years ago that this church would mean so much to me, but somehow, magically, it has.

Last Monday, I was driving home from work, when all of a sudden, I decided, almost in spite myself, that I would not go home but to Bell Street Chapel to participate in Mary Margaret Earl's spiritual practice group. I had planned to sign up but didn't. I then planned to talk to Mary Margaret on Sunday but didn't. So I just decided to show up and asked if there was room. I am usually not so brazen but I was hungry. I was hungry for spiritual nourishment beyond three-hour board meetings and bylaws discussions. I apparently wasn't the only one. Of the five people who participated in the group, three were on the Governing Board. It was good to connect on a different level with my fellow board members and church members, and it was good to be fed in a different way. I was so glad that I decided to drive to church instead of home, and I am really looking forward to our other meetings.

Over these past three years, I have seen Bell Street have many ups and downs. I have seen many people I care about come and go, and I have written board reflections naming Bell Street's struggles and difficulties. This time, I want to name something else. For what seems like the first time in a while, Bell Street's energy is on an upswing. There are

new faces coming to church consistently. There is an increase in attendance. There are teenagers who, despite not really having a religious education program, are refusing to let go of this community. We have a thriving search committee and an interim minister who has generated interest and energy in our congregation.

We have an opportunity to capitalize on this new energy. As Peter Bowden said last Sunday, the world needs us. We have so much love, passion, compassion, energy, intelligence, humor and joy to share with the world. This congregation and the world is in an exciting time. We have a chance to reinvent, reclaim and re-energize our church, our community and our country. I am glad that I have this community to share this excitement, and I look forward to being with all of you in this exciting journey.

*Love, peace and justice,
Greg Greco*

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Sometimes I'll mention the topic of one of our upcoming services at Bell Street to a new friend or co-worker. They'll invariably look a little nonplussed and say, "Wow, what kind of church do you go to? I wish my church had services like that!"

In the coming weeks and months at Bell Street, we'll be celebrating baseball, the vernal equinox, Buddhism, Roger Williams, etc. Aren't you glad this is the kind of church we go to? And don't get me started about summer services, where there's a pretty good chance we'll be talking about everything from canning preserves to superheroes.

Remember the Worship Committee is always open to topic suggestions and help with services. We are Betty Lamora, Renae Chaves, Annette Briand, Tom Briand, Ray Perreault, Brian Kovacs, Linda Skibski, Kate Gillis and Audrey Greene.

~ Audrey Greene

RIUUSJ

A Rhode Island policy/budget crisis : What can we do?

We can meet on Sunday, March 2, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the First Unitarian Church on Benefit Street to define this year's legislative action program of Rhode Island Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice.

Recently Bell Street's Governing Board voted to accept RIUUSJ as Bell Street's "Legislative Ministry for Social Justice." This is our opportunity to help define objectives for this year, joining the other UU churches of Rhode Island with the goal of mobilizing 1,000 U.U. members and friends to "walk our talk."

From the Providence Journal
An editorial:

"...the governor's spokesman, Jeff Neal, noted that Rhode Island is facing the worst budget problem since the credit union crisis of the early 1990s. The current year's budget deficit exceeds \$150 million and is projected at between \$384 million and \$450 million."

A comment from Sen. Harold Metts:
"The governor's hard choices may force many from our community back into economic slavery. We have no intention of going back to the plantation...."

The governor's response:
Carcieri has said that he will not roll back a series of tax breaks adopted in 2006 to benefit the wealthy and warns the state is teetering on the financial brink but promises no tax hike.

So, once again we experience the repeated failure of our tax system to provide the government with the money needed to do its job and continuing increases in poverty not only among the unemployed and working poor but also among many in middle-income households, who have to make trade-offs each month among the basics of food, clothing,

On Sunday, March 2 at 2 p.m., Rhode Island Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice will hold a meeting at First Unitarian Church on Benefit Street. U.U.s from all over the state will come together to discuss the issues that the state legislature will be voting on in the coming months. Our governing board has endorsed the legislative ministry of RIUUSJ, and encourages members to be prepared to contact their senators and representatives and urge them to cast a vote that is consistent with our seven U.U. principles. Please plan to attend that meeting to learn about the issues and to help decide which ones have the highest priority.

shelter, utilities, health care, education and child care.

Based on our religious values and principles, what have we to say about this increasing divide of political and economic power between the very rich and the rest of us? How do we – not only those who experience these awful trade-offs but also those who don't – feel about these trends? Must we, should we, will we take any action? Can we be effective, and how so?

These are the questions that we – members and active friends from six Rhode Island U.U. churches – shall raise, discuss and resolve at our meeting on March 2 at First Unitarian in Providence. Few people can control governmental policies and budgets – it takes many people to change them. And each of us can do much with only one hour a month of our time, not a great investment to make a real difference, and there are 1,000 U.U.s in this state. If we cannot raise such a commitment from ourselves, how can we expect to get it from the larger community?

Bring yourselves and your friends. We do have the power to effect change. That is the priceless benefit of our constitutional democracy, and the core belief of our U.U. heritage of action linked to our spiritual values and principles.

~ David Gleicher

PARISH & SOCIAL CONCERNS

Crossroads has requested donations of warm socks, gloves and hats for its clients, as most of them spend long hours out in the cold. A box has been set up in Eddy Hall (near the Parish and Social Concerns table) to collect these needed items to help keep the homeless warm during these cold winter months.

A sign-up sheet has been developed to assist in making sure we have needed supplies for our monthly lunch-making efforts for Crossroads. Please see Clara Hardy if you would like to donate any supplies.

The peace-making book discussion group will be continuing on a monthly basis. We read "Speak Peace in a World of Conflict: What You Say Next Will Change Your World" by Marshall B. Rosenberg in February. Please contact Clara Hardy at (401) 231-9226 or clarapvd@gmail.com for more information.

~ Clara Hardy

CONCERT MARCH 8

Come join us for an afternoon of great classical music on Saturday, March 8 at 1:30 p.m. Jesse Holstein – violinist from The Providence String Quartet – will perform with Marina Galt-syan on piano at Bell Street. The program will consist of Bach's Sonata in A-major; Chopin's Ballade #1 in G-minor; Bach's Partita in E major and Brahms A-major Sonata.

The musicians will be asking for a donation for the performance. All of the funds from this performance will go to the Fred Kelley Memorial Scholarship Fund, to send Community MusicWorks students to music camp in the summer. Fred was a longtime resident of Providence and a big supporter of Community MusicWorks who passed away in July.

The Providence String Quartet and its members help to fund Community MusicWorks, a nonprofit organization that provides free after-school programming to youth in the West End and South Side neighborhoods of Providence in musical instruction and access to instruments.

Please show your support for such a great cause and listen to some great music!

FINANCE COMMITTEE OUR FINANCIAL HEALTH

We are doing well financially. All of our bills are current and our income is keeping pace with our expenses.

Letters have been sent with an accurate accounting of your 2007 donations, signed by the treasurer. If you have any questions about your letter, please contact Heidi, our office manager.

With tax time upon us, you may have questions about what is or is not tax deductible. Your 2007 pledge donation shown in your letter is tax deductible. Purchases from the goods and services auction are not deductible. Your donation of goods to the auction could be tax deductible much like a donation to the Salvation Army would be.

Finally, we would like to thank you for your continued support. Please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Finance Committee should you have any questions, concerns or need detailed financial information and thank you for making and honoring your pledge commitment.

~ The Finance Committee

(Joe Chaves, Jen Shimkus, John Simmonds, Phil Smith, Lyn Stein)

	JUL-JAN ACTUAL	JUL-JAN BUDGET	VARIANCE	ANNUAL BUDGET
INCOME				
- PLEDGES	\$27,981.00	\$32,083.00	(\$4,103.00)	\$55,000.00
- SUNDAY COLLECTIONS	\$7,627.00	\$4,359.00	\$3,269.00	\$7,472.00
- INTERESTS AND INVESTMENTS	\$27,320.00	\$27,985.00	(\$665.00)	\$47,975.00
- RENTALS	\$5,800.00	\$7,875.00	(\$2,075.00)	\$13,500.00
- EVENTS AND FUNDRAISING	\$4,176.00	\$3,646.00	\$530.00	\$6,250.00
- OTHER INCOME	\$3,142.00	\$0.00	\$3,142.00	\$0.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$76,046.00	\$75,948.00	\$98.00	\$130,197.00
EXPENSES				
- SALARY AND BENEFITS	\$39,007.00	\$44,890.00	(\$5,883.00)	\$76,954.00
- ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES	\$12,127.00	\$11,604.00	\$523.00	\$19,893.00
- BUILDING AND GROUNDS	\$9,561.00	\$11,083.00	(\$1,522.00)	\$19,000.00
- DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS	\$0.00	\$1,721.00	(\$1,721.00)	\$2,950.00
- OTHER EXPENSES	\$950.00	\$6,650.00	(\$5,700.00)	\$11,400.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$61,645.00	\$75,948.00	(\$14,303.00)	\$130,197.00
NET INCOME GAIN/LOSS	\$14,401.00	\$0.00	\$14,401.00	\$0.00

CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS



HEIDI'S PRIORITIES

Heidi Gilkenson has been our office manager for six months now. I would like to take a minute to thank her for her hard work. She jumped right into the work, and has been friendly and helpful.

In recent weeks, several people have asked about a protocol for getting Heidi's assistance with various tasks. While we would like to be able to ask Heidi to provide administrative support to every committee that needs it, she only works 20 hours per week. Therefore, it is necessary to prioritize tasks. In addition to greeting office visitors and answering the phone, Heidi's priorities include the following: the weekly Order of Service, generating the monthly newsletter, and maintaining the Chapel's membership database and financial records. Requests for assistance with other tasks should be sent to me to review with Heidi. Please send these request to me via e-mail at Dlaliberte@gmail.com as far in advance as possible. If Heidi's other responsibilities prevent her from taking on the task, I will let you know.

~ Don Laliberte
President

NEW UU CLASSES SET

The new Unitarian Universalist classes are set to begin again for those wishing to join Bell Street Chapel, those considering joining Bell Street Chapel, and those members who would like to explore these topics again.

The schedule for new classes is:
 Sunday, March 23- Sharing Spiritual Journeys
 Sunday, March 30- Bell Street History
 Sunday, April 13- Unitarian Universalist History
 Sunday, April 20- Principles and Values
 Thursday, May 1- Potluck Dinner
 Sunday, May 4- Membership Sunday
 Each class will commence in the Parish House approximately fifteen minutes after the conclusion of service and child care will be provided. The potluck dinner on Thursday, May 1 will be arranged at the Sunday, April 20 class.

~ Gregory Greco

DAY OF MINDFULNESS

The Bell Street Sangha, in conjunction with a Sangha from Barrington, is organizing a one-day meditation retreat to be held at Bell Street Chapel on March 1 from 9:15 a.m. to 5 p.m. It will be led by Joanne Friday, an ordained Dharma teacher in the Tiep Hien Order of Thich Nhat Hanh, a Vietnamese Zen Master, who has been her teacher for 16 years. The focus for the day will be "Dancing on the Head of a Pin: Engaged Buddhist Practices for Maintaining our Joy and Balance in Difficult Times." Meditation instruction will be provided.

We are living in a time when it is very easy to get pulled off center and into places of fear, frustration, anxiety and aversion. This drains our energy and colors our perceptions. During this Day of Mindfulness we will be using practices that will help us to develop our concentration, become more aware of and transform our unskillful habits of mind and expand our capacity for love and compassion for ourselves and everyone else. These practices help us to hold everything with more equanimity and fearlessness. When we can choose where to place our minds, we have more clarity and more energy to take wise action. We can then experience more joy and freedom in every present moment.

Our lives have become increasingly busy and complicated. We are doing one thing and thinking about several other things at the same time. The present moment is all we have and we are not available to live it fully. A Day of Mindfulness is a gift we can give ourselves. It is a time when we come together to support each other in being mindful, experiencing peace, and enjoying every moment. We learn ways to practice, so we can bring that same peace, solidity, and clarity to the rest of our lives. No previous meditation experience is necessary. We hope that you will be able to join us.

The cost is \$20 per person (or whatever you can afford) plus dana (donation for the teacher). Part of the proceeds will be going to Bell Street Chapel.

Tea, juice, fruit and cookies will be provided. You will need to bring a bag lunch.

Dress warmly or in layers, and you may want to consider bringing some blankets. If you are a floor-sitter, you will also need to provide your own meditation mat and cushion.

The retreat is open to all. For information and to register, please contact Leslie at lmacdonald9@cox.net. You may also contact Robert Rosa for additional information at rjrosa7@verizon.net.

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

First, an update on my health: After several years of struggling with chronic bouts of fatigue and exhaustion that have kept me from work and from family and social engagements, often for days at a time, and after attempting a few different treatment modalities, I seem to be turning an important and long-awaited corner, thanks to a naturopathic treatment regimen. Though it hasn't been a quick fix (11 weeks so far, and some days I still can only rest), I have hope that deep changes are beginning to take root in me.

Second, an update on my family: Some of you know that Stacy and I are expecting a baby in late May! We are thrilled, terrified, grateful, and many other things. (You can see why rebuilding my energy is so timely!) I look forward to meeting our new child, and, in time, to introducing her/him (we don't know) to Bell Street.

Third, my ministry at the Eleanor Slater Hospital continues, with some news. Since my decision last May to leave the supervisory track in

Clinical Pastoral Education, I have found a very welcome relief from what was a very chaotic life. Though supervising chaplain-interns in groups and individually was a challenge and a gift, letting go of that responsibility has freed me to engage more fully in patient care and management of my department (Pastoral Care), including better unit coverage and the introduction of some new groups that allow me to share the experience and skill I developed in my years of supervision. That's exciting, and is a workable fit for the moment.

At Bell Street, I continue to facilitate the "Confronting the Bible, Confronting Our Faiths" group – which, by the way, anyone is welcome to attend, once or more times, any third Thursday of the month from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the Parish House. In Bell Street's larger life, I am impressed by the hearty and earnest dedication to re-examine ourselves as a community in order to chart a future that both fits who we are and is oriented toward who we would like to become. One thing I've learned in my work with groups is that in every system (and a church is a system), the strongest forces are those that seek to hold the system exactly where it is. Other forces that seek to bring change face an uphill battle. Change is scary; it threatens the existence of what is. But stagnation can be deadly. May we at Bell Street continue bravely to honor both our tradition and our aspirations. May we, as Don Laliberte so poignantly said at our mid-year meeting, dare to grieve the losses of our recent years and so free ourselves to blaze into a future that meets our highest spiritual aspirations, together.

~ Rev. Ben Hall
Community Minister

CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS



MARCH | CALENDAR OF EVENTS

PH=PARISH HOUSE | S=SANTUARY | EH=EDDY HALL | MPL=MEET IN PARKING LOT | MO=MINISTER'S OFFICE | OS=OFFSITE | L=LIBRARY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Day of Mindfulness 9:15 am to 5 pm (EH)
2 9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am Coffee Hour 11:30 am sandwiches (EH) 2 pm RIUUSJ meeting	3 6 pm Daydream rehearsal (EH)	4 6 pm Daydream rehearsal (EH) 6:30 pm Worship Committee (PH)	5 6 pm Order of Service deadline 6 pm Daydream rehearsal (EH)	6 6 pm Daydream rehearsal (EH)	7	8 8 am Sitting Meditation (EH) 1:30 pm Community Music Works concert (S)
9 9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am Coffee Hour (EH) 11:30 Cleaning Blitz	10 6 pm Daydream rehearsal (EH) 7 pm Finance Committee (PH)	11 6 pm Daydream rehearsal (EH) 7:30 pm Governing Board (PH)	12 6 pm Order of Service deadline 6 pm Daydream rehearsal (EH)	13 6 pm Daydream rehearsal (EH)	14 6:30 pm Movie Night (EH)	15
16 9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am Coffee Hour (EH) 11:30 am discussion group	17 6 pm Daydream rehearsal (EH)	18 6 pm Daydream rehearsal (EH) 7:15 pm House Committee (PH)	19 6 pm Order of Service deadline 6 pm Daydream rehearsal (EH)	20 6 pm Daydream rehearsal (EH) 7 pm Bible Study (PH)	21	22
23/30 Easter (3/23) 9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am coffee hour 8 pm newsletter deadline (3/23)	24/31 6 pm Daydream rehearsal (EH)	25 6 pm Parish & Social Concerns (EH) 6 pm Daydream rehearsal (EH) 7 pm Membership (PH)	26 6 pm Order of Service deadline 6 pm Daydream rehearsal (EH) 6:30 pm Leadership Development (PH)	27 6 pm Daydream rehearsal (EH)	28	29

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Bell Street Chapel has been blessed this year by the many members and friends who have supported our us with their leadership. The Leadership Development Committee (LDC) has been inspired by the joy and competence by which our Governing Board, committee chairs and Ministerial Search Committee have fulfilled their covenant to our community. Our many thanks go out to you for your sacrifice of time and energy in service to our church.

As the LDC prepares to put together the slate of leaders for the upcoming year, we are struck by the challenges our congregation is facing. As we enter the active phase for the search for a full-time settled minister, it is critically important that we have a Governing Board and committees that are fully supported and effective. To that end, the LDC will be asking many of you to commit to a leadership position. Many of you have been asked before in the past, and many of you will be asked again this year. If you have said no in the past, we would like you to reconsider. We realize everyone has busy lives, but this is such a critical year for Bell Street, we need your support even more!

Also, during the last several congregational meeting there appears to have been consensus that among our priorities was the need to increase our membership. We all seem to agree that BSC has an important message of hope and healing to spread to others, however, our Membership Committee has largely functioned with only two people for this entire year. Our immense gratitude goes out to Steve Kagan, the chair of that committee, and to Clara Hardy, its only other member. It's clear that they cannot do the important work of this committee alone. Here's how you can help:

- Sign up to be a greeter for one Sunday each month.
- Help with the New U.U. classes
- Join the committee!

This year we need all hands on deck. The Leadership Development Committee asks you to please reflect on what our congregation has meant in your life and if you can possibly make more time for a leadership position.

~ Peg Boyle
Leadership Development Committee

MINISTERIAL SEARCH

The Ministerial Search Committee is pleased in several ways with the opportunity to report the results of our preliminary survey. A broad range of respondents, including members and constituents responded to the survey. A total of 39 surveys was received, with roughly equal numbers of men and women, from all age groups, and representing a wide variety of backgrounds, beliefs, and length of attendance.

More than this, the respondents identified a wide array of assets that they unmistakably perceive in Bell Street Chapel. We all recognize this as a time of transition, growth, questioning, and seeking, not without conflict and difficulty. But what was most clearly reported in these surveys was the solid foundation we possess on which to build our future, even as we face uncertainties. The committee takes seriously any concerns and questions noted. We are also inspired and happy to report just how much positive energy and widely recognized gifts our chapel community brings to respondents' lives, with both abstract and concrete elements noted.

In terms of what respondents like about Bell Street Chapel, the most frequent response was: "the people." Respondents spoke often of a sense of community, which is mutually energizing, inspiring, supporting, and accepting, as well as unpretentious, loving, diverse, and "funky." Many respondents mentioned the strong value of social justice. Many enjoy the building. Our church is described to others as open and affirming.

On Sunday morning, a large number of re-

in, the various rituals and service elements. Music, including the choir, is clearly cherished. Relationships, community and coffee hour are key components to many. Sermons and reflections are noted several times. A number of respondents appreciate the strong sense of spirituality present in services; several enjoy learning new ideas as well. Respondents carry with them through the week many individual elements of Sunday services, as well as a general sense of connectedness.

Respondents enjoy a wide range of activities here, especially social activities and committee work. Many noted positive changes in themselves since coming to Bell Street Chapel, most frequently: greater calm and peace; more confidence; and overall personal growth.

Respondents noted their hopes for Bell Street Chapel, especially: more members, more small gatherings, more families and more of certain types of sermons.

A number of words and ideas came across clearly: Bell Street Chapel as a unique, eclectic, authentic, intimate, vibrant, caring, and thought-provoking experience, where individual spiritual journeys are both encouraged and safely expressed. While respondents indicated awareness of the choices and challenges before us, they overwhelmingly communicated a love for, and commitment to, the distinctive strengths of Bell Street Chapel.

There is far more to be heard from everyone, and we look forward to that. There will be "cottage meetings," or small groups, held this spring, in which ideas can be shared in person with us. There will also be another survey. As always, we are also all available one-on-one.

The Ministerial Search Committee thanks you for your time, your thoughtful reflections, and your ongoing contributions.

~ Jasmine Appleberry