

BELL STREET COLUMNS

NEWSLETTER FOR THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF BELL STREET CHAPEL



WORSHIP SERVICE SCHEDULE

SERVICES BEGIN AT 10 AM

TODDLER CARE AND SUNDAY SCHOOL AVAILABLE

4 | JULY

THOMAS JEFFERSON, THE FREEDOM TO GROW

Sally Gabb

An exploration of Thomas Jefferson, who, when he had a spare moment from music, rebellion, architecture, and invention, liked to garden.

11 | JULY

ENCIRCLING EARTH

Philip Smith and Karina Lutz

Today we will look at religious pilgrimages. According to Wikipedia, "In religion and spirituality, a pilgrimage is a long journey or search of great moral significance." Karina Lutz will share with us a dramatic presentation of an epic poem she wrote about pilgrimages.

18 | JULY

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

Greg Greco

Providence is a city (as are many of our cities) where many of its children deal with violence on a daily basis. Many of our children have lost a sense of hope and justice. As a community, we have a responsibility to these young people. We will not be able, as a community, to effectively keep our children safe unless we all decide that we will do our part, however small, in making this a safe, loving community. It will not be me who does this, or you. It will take a village.

25 | JULY

THEOLOGY OF AFTER SCHOOL

Daniel Lawlor

From pottery to football, there is something eternal in after school programs. Come and find out what!

FROM THE BOARD: S OUR BELOVED COMMUNITY

We are at a pivotal and important time here at Bell Street Chapel. During the next year, we will search for a settled minister, articulate our vision and mission for the church, make important steps toward full accessibility, advocate for social and economic justice, and deepen our connections to each other and the larger world.

Today, we live in a world of uncertainty and anxiety. The unemployment rate in Rhode Island hovers around 12 percent. We still do not know the extent of damage due to the Gulf oil spill. Our country continues to fight two wars, one of which, the war in Afghanistan, is now the longest war in United States history. We have a polarized electorate and punditry that is less interested in solutions and common goals than in our differences.

As Peter Bowden said at a service last year "The world needs us." It needs our love, our kindness, our generosity of spirit, our call to justice. The world needs us to tap into our reservoir of love and nurture ourselves, our community, and our world. We already do much; we send books to prisoners, feed our most vulnerable citizens, fight for equality, and beautify our neighborhood and our coast, but the world needs to know about us. It needs us to shout out who we are and what we do, as loudly as we can.

But who are we? Recently, our minister, José Ballester asked me that very question. Somewhat to my own surprise, I didn't have a ready answer. Several popped to mind. Perhaps we are the church of the open mind, the helping

CONT. ON PAGE 5

1 | AUGUST

THE BOOK OF JOB

Daniel Lawlor and Ray Perreault

The book of Job is a book and a play and meditation on the relation between suffering and faith. A reading of this book raises questions that we ask again and again in times of disaster and doubt.

8 | AUGUST

CELEBRATING CELEBRATIONS

Daniel Greco

Celebrations are an important part of our life. How can we make them spiritually meaningful?

15 | AUGUST

TIME, TRANSFORMATION AND MUSIC

Steve Kagan

As summer continues, we reflect on connections between the past and present with music!

22 | AUGUST

BELL STREET SINGS

Audrey Greene

Human voices joined in song, lift the spirit and bind the singers in moments of real transcendence. We will draw from many sources and inspirations to celebrate the power of music

29 | AUGUST

TRUTH

Ray Perreault and Noah Barreto

What is truth? Are there always two sides to every story, or is there a reality that is objective? We know the question of truth is important in science, but it is also important in religion. What tools do we have to determine what is true in religion?

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CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS

AMONG US

In this column we celebrate milestones and other life events, request healing thoughts for those in need, and remember departed loved ones. If you or anyone you know is in need of assistance or support, please notify the Membership and Caring Committee.

Loving thoughts go out to Arline Davis, as she mourns the loss of her beloved husband Joe, who passed away in May. Arline and Joe have been members since 2005, and were married for 38 years. Arline has moved to Tockwotton Home in Fox Point and no doubt would appreciate continued loving support from friends at Bell Street.

Good luck and wishes for a speedy recovery to Jim Gillis, who was unexpectedly hospitalized last month with a polyp in his bladder, and as of press time was still awaiting surgery. Jim is also expecting to have heart surgery sometime this summer. Please keep him in your thoughts. Thoughts of sympathy for Richard Corso and Don Laliberte, who recently lost both of their cats, Emily and Scarlett, both of whom were 17.

Love to Richard Muto, who's been dealing with health issues that have kept him from church most of the time.

On a happy note, Irina and her husband, Gregory, this spring became American citizens after 20 years of effort! Congratulations! Irina and Greg also celebrate their anniversary in July.

Happy birthday to the following Bell Streeters: José Ballester (July 9), Jennifer Shimkus (July 16), Wendy Schwartz (July 22), Cecily Goulis (Aug.8), Jasmine Appleberry (Aug. 10), Nicolas Friend (Aug 16), Don Laliberte (Aug. 22) and Noah Barreto (Aug. 28).

Happy anniversary to Irina Tchantcera and Greg Balagian (July 16), Bell Hall and Stacy Cristo (July 17), Tom and Betty Lamora (July 27), David Gleicher and Luz Brave-Gleicher (July 27), Chris Campanile and Peg Boyle (July 28), and Ellen and Stuart Smith (Aug. 18).

If you have any submissions for Among Us, please contact Ellen Smith at Ellen.smith2@gmail.com



ON THE ROAD TO PROVIDENCE: DETOUR

It is springtime. Across the land people are engaging in their accustomed rituals: vacations are being planned, organizations are preparing for their summer schedules and students are graduating from various schools. Over the years, I have attended many graduations; sometimes to deliver an invocation or prayer, sometimes to give an inspirational speech; sometimes to celebrate with a particular graduate with whom I share a familial connection. Mostly these occasions follow a predictable pattern and the various speeches are forgotten in a very short time.

Recently, I attended a graduation at a community college. A band played selections from various musicals, which sounded somewhat harsh with the large collection of brass instruments. After the procession and expected acknowledgments, the president of the college approached the podium. From the program I knew this individual was a Rhodes Scholar; had earned his doctorate in education from a prestigious Ivy League school and was in his sixth year as president of the community college. What was not in the program was how much he loved his students and how much he loved being the president of a community college.

Looking out at the gathered students, parents and guests the president gave the most memorable advice I had ever heard:

In the spring, smell the lilacs.

In the fall, carve a pumpkin.

At Thanksgiving, appreciate those around the table for they won't always be there.

Simple advice with deep wisdom. As the president concluded his speech, the students lined up and he called each one by name, 800 graduates ranging in age from 19 to 72. He told them that their stories gave all of us hope. He allowed each student the

time to enjoy their moment by waiting for each one to cross the stage, receive their diploma with congratulations, and then pause for their official photograph, before he called for the next student. For many of those graduates with their associate's degree, this would be the only time they would graduate from college. These were the students that most people would never expect to go to college, much less actually complete their courses and receive a degree. These were the ones who might not have been given much hope; and yet they had done the work and succeeded. I then understood why the president was so proud of them.

It is springtime. Across the land people are engaging in their accustomed rituals. Here at Bell Street Chapel the congregation is preparing for the summer schedule and the year that will bring many changes. Bell Street Chapel is embarking on a search for its next pastor. The year will be challenging. That which is familiar may change. Faces that are familiar may not return. But through it all there remains a deep strength the situation and the congregation is hopeful.

Remember the simple things and trust that it will all be well. Follow the good advice:

In the spring, smell the lilacs.

In the fall, carve a pumpkin.

At Thanksgiving, appreciate those around the table for they won't always be there.

~Rev. José Ballester

CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS

FERRY BEACH

Enjoy UU company on your vacation. Ferry Beach in Saco, Maine, is a great place for a weekend or longer vacation. It is a Unitarian Universalist Camp and Conference Center that has scheduled camps for all ages and also welcomes vacationers to stay a few days or more. You'll find a welcoming atmosphere with great food in the dining hall, great U.U. conversations on the porch and a great location right on the beach. www.ferrybeach.org Questions? Contact Kate Gillis at ksgillis@netzero.net.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The next issue of Bells Street Chapel Columns comes out in September, and the deadline is Aug. 15 at 8 p.m. Please submit your articles as a Word attachment – not in the body of the e-mail – to Meredyth Waterman at MeredythW@aol.com. Our newsletter is one of the most effective means of communicating with our members and friends, so don't miss out on this opportunity. And remember — it's not just for announcing events. If you have information like what your committee is working on, or other church-related information of interest that you'd like to share with the Bell Street community, please send it in.

~Meredyth Waterman

BOOKS THROUGH BARS

July and August's recipient of Share the Plate proceeds will be Providence Books Through Bars, whose library is housed in the Bell Street Chapel Parish House.

Although BTB is again out of postage money for our national outreach; the good news is that we have *finally* received permission to donate books to the ACI's Intake Service Center. A building that houses up to 1500 inmates, the ISC currently has no provisions for getting books to these men. Over the summer, we plan to place at least one bookcase with about 300 paperbacks in each, into the first eight "modules." The bookcases must be metal, not wood, and we may have a resource to secure these. As usual, thanks to the Big Gray Book Bin, the generosity of our congregation and many local libraries, we have plenty of books! We hope to start answering letters and mailing books again in September.

~Carol Wiseman

RHODE ISLAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Once again, Bell Street Chapel is proud to be a venue for the Rhode International Film Festival (RIIFF) Aug. 10 through 15. This year we will be hosting the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Sidebar Wednesday through Saturday nights. We will be screening a variety of GLBT-themed films, including shorts and features, comedies, dramas and documentaries. We are planning an opening reception on Wednesday evening. We are also organizing panel discussions to discuss issues raised in the films including marriage equality and transgender issues.

Additionally, on Saturday afternoon, we hope to screen documentaries focusing on other social justice issues. At press time, the screening schedule was still being developed. So mark your calendars for Wednesday August 11 through Saturday August 14, and check the Bell Street Web site or the RIIFF Web site (www.film-festival.org) for updates.

Of course, with all this activity we need volunteers to help with set up and clean up before and after the festival, and with box office and concessions sales during the screenings. Volunteers receive a free pass for all festival screenings at all venues. There will be a brief orientation for volunteers in mid-July. If you are able to help, please contact Don Laliberte by e-mail at dlaliberte@gmail.com.

Finally, we are looking for host families willing to host a visiting filmmaker for the week of the festival. Host families receive a pass that allows free admission to the opening night screenings and party at the Veterans Memorial Auditorium, access to all festival screenings, access to after hour filmmaker parties and other benefits. If you are interested in hosting a filmmaker, please contact Richard Corso via email at Richard-Corso@gmail.com or by phone at (401) 383-7470.

~Don Laliberte

CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS

SETTLED MINISTRY SEARCH

At the annual meeting on June 6, the congregation voted to resume the search for a settled minister. The goal will be to call a minister in the spring of 2011. The congregation elected a Search Committee, made up of Greg Greco, Don Laliberte, Wendy Schwartz, Carol Wiseman and Chad Welch.



The process of searching for a minister includes several phases. The process begins with a period of self-reflection, in which the congregation considers our values and what we need from a settled minister. This process will likely include small group discussions and a congregational survey. The results of this process will help the search committee develop an informational

packet that describes our church to potential ministers. Next, the Search

Committee interviews potential ministers and selects several pre-candidates. The Search Committee meets with these potential ministers and hears them preach at a neutral pulpit. Finally, the Search Committee recommends a candidate to the congregation and the congregation votes whether to call the candidate as a settled minister.

The Search Committee will begin our work over the summer. Although the interviewing and candidating processes need to be confidential, we will keep you informed about our work throughout the process. Watch for regular updates in future newsletters. In meantime, if you have any questions or thoughts to share, don't hesitate to speak with any one of us.

~The Search Committee

CONT. FROM PAGE 1

hand, and the loving heart. Perhaps our purpose is to spiritually nourish ourselves and heal the world. Perhaps it is something else. My guess is that each member would say something at least slightly different.

Our central goal as a spiritual community this year is to answer these questions: Who are we? What is our purpose? How can we best feed each other and nourish the world?

As we begin this new church year, let us reflect on these questions and on our journeys, both as a religious community, and as individuals. What brought us to this place? What keeps us here? How have we grown since we've come together? What is it we need to say to ourselves, to each other, and to the world?

We will have help to answer these questions. In his new role as interim minister, José Ballester will help us to honor and reclaim our past, to identify congregational strengths and weaknesses, and support us through our transition. He will lead us in a series of services and workshops to help us be ready for settled ministry. The mission and vision workgroup plans to complete mission and vision statements this fall, which will help give our community focus and direction.

As president, I am humbled, honored, excited and, frankly, a bit nervous to lead us during this very important time in our history. I'm grateful to draw on the experience and support of Meredyth Waterman, our past president, José Ballester, our interim minister, and Don Laliberte and Richard Corso, who have preceded me as president. I look forward this year to deepening our bonds, affirming our love, and changing the world.

*In faith and love,
Dan Greco,
President*

JULY | CALENDAR OF EVENTS

PH=PARISH HOUSE | S=SANTUARY | EH=EDDY HALL | MPL=MEET IN PARKING LOT | OS=OFFSITE | RE=RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ROOM

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				<p>1</p> <p>4 pm Big Train Farm (EH) 7 pm Outside group (PH)</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>8 am meditation (EH)</p>
<p>4</p> <p>9 am Choir (S) 9 am newsletter folding (EH) 10 am Service (S) 11 am coffee hour 11:30 Crossroads lunchmaking</p>	<p>5</p> <p>6 pm Empire Review (S)</p>	<p>6</p> <p>7 pm PEAC (EH) 6:30 pm Worship Committee (PH)</p>	<p>7</p> <p>6 pm Order of Service deadline</p>	<p>8</p> <p>4 pm Big Train Farm (EH) 7 pm Membership (PH)</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p> <p>8 am meditation (EH)</p>
<p>11</p> <p>9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am coffee hour 11:30 am cleaning blitz (EH)</p>	<p>12</p> <p>6 pm Empire Review (S) 6:30 pm Finance Committee (PH)</p>	<p>13</p> <p>6:45 pm Governing Board (PH) 7 pm PEAC (EH)</p>	<p>14</p> <p>6 pm Order of Service deadline</p>	<p>15</p> <p>4 pm Big Train Farm (EH)</p>	<p>16</p> <p>7 pm Drum Circle (EH)</p>	<p>17</p> <p>8 am meditation (EH)</p>
<p>18</p> <p>9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am coffee hour 11:30 Discussion Group (PH)</p>	<p>19</p> <p>6 pm Empire Review (S)</p>	<p>20</p> <p>7:15 pm House Committee (PH) 7 pm PEAC (EH)</p>	<p>21</p> <p>6 pm Order of Service deadline</p>	<p>22</p> <p>4 pm Big Train Farm (EH)</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>
<p>25</p> <p>9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am coffee hour (EH) 11:30 RE Committee (RE)</p>	<p>26</p> <p>6 pm Empire Review (S)</p>	<p>27</p> <p>6 pm Peace & Social Justice (PH) 7 pm PEAC (EH)</p>	<p>28</p> <p>6 pm Order of Service deadline 7 pm RIIFF Best of the Fest (EH)</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>Amoureux - Mazaris wedding (S)</p>



AUGUST | CALENDAR OF EVENTS

PH=PARISH HOUSE | S=SANTUARY | EH=EDDY HALL | MPL=MEET IN PARKING LOT | OS=OFFSITE | RE=RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ROOM

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1</p> <p>9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am coffee hour 11:30 Crossroads lunchmaking (EH)</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>6:30 pm Worship Committee (PH)</p>	<p>4</p> <p>6 pm Order of Service deadline</p>	<p>5</p> <p>4 pm Big Train Farm (EH) 7 pm Outside group (PH)</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p> <p>8 am meditation (EH)</p>
<p>8</p> <p>9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am coffee hour 11:30 cleaning blitz (EH)</p>	<p>9</p> <p>6 pm Empire Review (S) 6:30 pm Finance Committee (PH)</p>	<p>10</p> <p>6:45 pm Governing Board (PH) 7 pm PEAC (EH)</p>	<p>11</p> <p>RIIFF (EH) 6 pm Order of Service deadline</p>	<p>12</p> <p>RIIFF (EH) 4 pm Big Train Farm (EH) 7 pm Membership (PH)</p>	<p>13</p> <p>RIIFF (EH)</p>	<p>14</p> <p>RIIFF (EH) 8 am meditation (EH)</p>
<p>15</p> <p>9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am coffee hour 11:30 Discussion Group (PH) 8 pm newsletter deadline</p>	<p>16</p> <p>6 pm Empire Review (S)</p>	<p>17</p> <p>7:15 pm House Committee (PH) 7 pm PEAC (EH)</p>	<p>18</p> <p>6 pm Order of Service deadline</p>	<p>19</p> <p>4 pm Big Train Farm (EH)</p>	<p>20</p> <p>7 pm Drum Circle (EH)</p>	<p>21</p> <p>8 am meditation (EH)</p>
<p>22</p> <p>9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am coffee hour (EH)</p>	<p>23</p> <p>6 pm Empire Review (S)</p>	<p>24</p> <p>6 pm Peace & Social Justice (PH) 7 pm PEAC (EH)</p>	<p>25</p> <p>6 pm Order of Service deadline 7 pm RIIFF Best of the Fest (EH)</p>	<p>26</p> <p>4 pm Big Train Farm (EH)</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29</p> <p>9 am Choir (S) 9 am newsletter folding (EH) 10 am Service (S) 11 am coffee hour 11:30 RE Committee (RE)</p>	<p>30</p> <p>6 pm Empire Review (S)</p>	<p>31</p> <p>7 pm PEAC (EH)</p>				

MOVIE NIGHT TAKES AN INTERMISSION

In order to live out our commitment as a Unitarian Universalist Association Welcoming Congregation, Bell Street Chapel sponsors a monthly movie night, at which we view and discuss a film with GLBT or gender identity themes. Over the past few years we have seen countless artistically significant comedies, dramas, musicals and documentaries in this genre. We show the films on a large screen donated by the Rhode Island International Film Festival.

We will take a break for the summer and resume Movie Night on Sept. 17 at 6:30 p.m. Stay tuned!



The Religious Society of Bell Street Chapel

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**“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.”**

