

# 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

### 5 | SEPTEMBER

*Sally Gabb*

We create the past and worry about the future. It's time that we focused on the present. We need to learn to be here now.

### 12 | SEPTEMBER

#### WATER COMMUNION — HELLO AGAIN AND GOODBYE STILL

*Rev. José Ballester*

Our annual "in-gathering" service with waters and stories from our summer activities will have particular significance as Bell Street embarks once more in settling a new senior minister.

### 19 | SEPTEMBER

#### GHOSTS OF BELL STREET

*Rev. José Ballester*

Every minister who has served the Religious Society of Bell Street Chapel has left behind some part of themselves that has contributed to the formation of the current community. For good or ill, these changes must be understood in order to determine if they are transient or permanent.

### 26 | SEPTEMBER

#### NEW BEGINNINGS

*Ministerial Search Committee*

As the congregation begins the search for a settled minister, we have a unique opportunity for spiritual growth. The search committee will share our experiences and hopes for this important journey

## FROM THE BOARD: HOMECOMING

It's been said that Unitarian Universalists are "foul-weather" churchgoers; when summer comes, many of us make good use of the warm weather and travel or do other things that keep us from church on Sundays. Some U.U. churches don't even hold services in the summer for that reason.

Here at Bell Street, where we hold smaller, more casual, lay-led services in Eddy Hall during the summer, September means a return to our lovely sanctuary and the return of many members and friends who've been away. We welcome everyone back to church each year with our traditional Water Communion service, scheduled this year on Sept. 12. At that time, each one of us is invited to bring a small bottle of water from a special place, whether it's a vacation spot, a beloved family member's home, the ocean or a pond or our own kitchen sink.

The water is mixed together and becomes our version of holy water for the year, symbolizing our shared contribution to and ownership of our congregation.

Water Communion traditionally signifies the start of the church year as well. And this year is going to be a busy one at Bell Street as we embark on a search for a settled minister while simultaneously developing vision and mission statements for our congregation.

Hang on tight, because it's going to move quickly.

On the same day as Water Communion, the Vision and Mission workgroup will hold an open workshop after coffee hour to whittle down the first draft of a mission statement for the church. The process will be similar to the one we used last year to develop our Congregational Commitment to Right Relations. Please participate because these statements will define our congregation.

Earlier that weekend is our annual leadership retreat at Cedar Hill in Duxbury, Mass. This is a fun, enriching and community-building event (and a sleepover at a lovely and historic waterfront property) and it is open to all church members and friends who would like to participate. (More on this later in the newsletter)

On the 26th, the Search Committee, which been working very hard over the summer, will lead Sunday service, after which it will distribute a survey and hold the first of two cottage meetings that will be used to gather information for the lengthy packet describing our congregation to potential ministerial candidates, which the committee must complete by Oct. 31. The other cottage meeting will be the following Sunday, Oct. 3.

While the Search Committee is working diligently this fall to meet that and other deadlines, we have other church events scheduled: Our fall marsh cleanup (Sept. 18); the annual service auction (Nov 21), the coat drive for Buy-Nothing Day (day after Thanksgiving). After we celebrate the holidays, our mid-year meeting is usually around the last week of January. By that time, we will likely have had several meetings to develop our vision and mission statements, and may be ready to vote on their adoption. And our Search Committee will be working diligently to interview candidates and – if all goes well – by later in the spring will recommend a candidate to the congregation to become our first settled minister in four years.

Obviously, this means a lot of activity and a good deal of change here at Bell Street Chapel. It's a year of much work, but also of much hope and promise. Enjoy the ride, and please be a driver.

~Meredyth Waterman  
Past President

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

#### MINISTERS

**REV. JOSÉ BALLESTER**  
 INTERIM MINISTER

*Rev. Ballester's office hours are by appointment.  
 To schedule an appointment contact him at  
 joseballester@mac.com or (781) 264-3511*

**REV. MARY MARGARET EARL**  
 COMMUNITY MINISTER

**REV. BEN HALL**  
 COMMUNITY MINISTER

#### CHURCH STAFF

**HEIDI GILKENSON, OFFICE MANAGER**  
*Office Hours:  
 Monday, Friday – 7 a.m. to 11  
 Tuesday and Thursday – by appointment only*

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

#### GOVERNING BOARD

**DAN GRECO, PRESIDENT**  
**KATE GILLIS, PRESIDENT-ELECT**  
**JIM GILLIS, TREASURER**  
**RAY PERREAULT, AT-LARGE**  
**PEG BOYLE, AT-LARGE**  
**MEREDYTH WATERMAN, PAST PRESIDENT**

#### STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS

**EVENTS, ELLEN KELLNER**  
**FINANCE, GREG GRECO**  
**HOUSE, STEVE BARRETO**  
**LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT,  
 JASMINE APPLEBERRY**  
**MEMBERSHIP/CARING, CHAD WELCH,  
 MEREDYTH WATERMAN**  
**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, KATE GILLIS**  
**PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE, CAROL CROWLEY**  
**WORSHIP, RAY PERREAULT**

#### NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

**EDITOR, MEREDYTH WATERMAN**  
**COPY EDITOR, ELLEN SMITH**  
 ORIGINAL DESIGN BY TERRY BARBOUNIS

# CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS

## ON THE ROAD TO PROVIDENCE: FORGIVENESS

This past year has been one wherein I have made admissions that I had previously denied or ignored. Perhaps the hardest has been to admit that my accident in 2006 has left me permanently disabled. That admission freed me to apply for and receive an HP placard for my car, since I did find it challenging to carry items long distances to my parked vehicle. Furthermore, at this year's General Assembly, I rented a motorized scooter since previous General Assemblies had left me exhausted by the third day due to the harried schedule and the often long distances between venues. But perhaps the most significant change was that I joined the group of Unitarian Universalists that are concerned with accessibility issues. Suddenly, I found myself immersed in a new community gathered around certain mutual concerns.

All of this came to a critical point at this year's General Assembly. Unitarian Universalist Association President Rev. Peter Morales was giving his annual report and was stating that the UUA staff had endured many challenges due to many factors. Rev. Morales said to the assembly, "So I want to take a moment to thank and let us all thank the members of the UUA staff who have really done extraordinary work, and those of you who still can, please stand for appreciation." This was followed by the unscripted comment, "They are your staff, they are very dedicated, and I'm glad to see they're mostly still ambulatory."

Even before my new awareness of accessibility and disability issues, I knew that what Rev. Morales had said it would be hurtful to individuals with mobility problems. Instinctively, I knew that there would be complaints and that Rev. Morales would have to, in the very least, apologize for his remarks. Were his words hurtful; yes. Did people complain to him and his staff about the remarks; yes. Did Rev. Morales apologize for the remarks; yes. His apology included the following: "I had no intention of disparaging people with disabilities. You mentioned board member José Ballester on a scooter. José is an old friend of mine ... I would never knowingly make a comment that ridiculed him or his need for mobility assistance. My comment was intended to be a lighthearted way of acknowledging the hard work of UUA staff."

Despite the apology, some individuals are not satisfied. It seems that they wanted Rev. Morales to apologize during the remaining time of General Assembly or they complain that his apology was not sincere enough. At the center of much of the controversy are the following words included with Peter's apology: "While I should not have made my remark, I would also note that we all need to be aware of intent. A comment made with the intent to hurt is very different from a comment that inadvertently makes a poor choice of words. We need to be sensitive. We also need to cut each other a little slack."

While I will not defend Rev. Morales' words – they were wrong, ill thought and hurtful – I do believe that he is sincere in his apology. And other than using a time machine to either warn Peter about his impending remarks or insisting that he immediately apologize, I do not know of any other means of rectifying the situation. Perhaps the continued complaints are cathartic and will serve to assuage some feelings; however I sometimes believe we carry our hurts and complaints far too long. There are two essential elements when a wrong has been done and we wish to make amends. First, one person has to acknowledge they have done something wrong, and then they apologize to whomever they have hurt with the resolve to try not to repeat the wrong. The crucial element is that the person wronged needs to forgive the other person. We all need to be mindful of the healing power of forgiveness for all concerned and practice this whenever we can.

~Rev. José Ballester

# CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS



## BOARD BITS

During the months of July and August, the Bell Street Chapel Governing Board continued to be hard at work. Some of the highlights of the last two months of activity include:

Generating income for the church by negotiating a rental agreement for six parking slots in our lot at \$50 per slot per month.

Amending our policies to allow alcohol to be served in Eddy Hall on a case-by-case basis.

The Governing Board agreed to accept a one-year contract for interim ministry between the congregation and the Rev. José Ballester, our former consulting minister.

Meeting with Search Committee leadership to review their plans for the upcoming extremely busy fall months.

*~Peg Boyle, at large member*

## NAME TAGS

Do you have a name tag at Bell Street Chapel? Do you wear it at service? Do you know why you should?

We at Bell Street (and at most Unitarian Universalist churches) wear name tags because it helps put people – especially people who are new to our community – at ease. It can be difficult for many people to remember names, especially when they are new to the church and are meeting a lot of people at once. Wearing your name tag helps others learn your name and helps people avoid the embarrassment of forgetting names. It also helps people put a face to a name they hear or read in announcements as a contact for an event or activity.

Please remember to wear your name tag at service to help us be as welcoming as possible. Don't have a name tag or lost yours? Sign up for a new one on the sign-up sheet next to the name tags in the church foyer. In the meantime, temporary stick-on tags are always available from the greeters who meet you when you come in. Please take one!

*~Meredyth Waterman  
Membership Committee Co-chairperson*

## 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 Ellen Smith at [ellen.smith2@gmail.com](mailto:ellen.smith2@gmail.com).

Loving thoughts go out to Peg Boyle and her family, who recently marked the first anniversary of the death of her beloved father.

Best of luck to longtime member Richard Corso, who made the brave decision to run for State Senate in District 1 and has been working hard on his campaign this summer. We are proud of you, Richard!

Congratulations to Jack Amoureux and Angela Mazaris, who were married in a beautiful ceremony in our sanctuary July 31. We thank them for inviting all of Bell Street to the wedding, and wish them and their young daughter, Ocean, a lifetime of happiness. This summer they also moved from Providence to Washington, D.C. We miss them, but hope they are enjoying their new home.

And speaking of Bell Streeters who've relocated to D.C., warm thoughts go out to Heron Greenesmith, daughter of Audrey Greene and Phil Smith, who graduated law school this year and is in Washington and is search of a place to begin a fulfilling career. Congrats, Heron! We're proud of you and we know you'll do well.

Happy birthday wishes go out to the following Bell Streeters in the month of September: Liz Marsis (Sept. 10), Mary Margaret Earl (Sept. 24), Betty Lamora (Sept. 25) and Luz Bravo-Gleicher (Sept. 26). Mary Margaret also celebrates five years of work at McAuley House this month on Sept. 12.

## MEDITATION GROUP

Radiant Bell Sangha continues to meet on the first, second and third Saturday of every month, from 8 a.m. to 9:30/10:00 a.m. at Eddy Hall.

We practice in the tradition of the Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh. Our dharma teacher, Chan Lac Thi (Joanne Friday) received authority to teach from Thich Nhat Hanh, and usually gives talks and instruction on the first Saturday of every month. The basic format we follow incorporates two 20 minute sessions of meditation, with one 15 minute session of walking meditation in between. We begin each meeting with a reading from one of Thich Nhat Hanh's books and conclude with a discussion about the reading or issues relating to our meditation practice.

We are an open, diverse, and very supportive community of meditation practitioners. All are welcome. If you would like more information about Radiant Bell Sangha, feel free to contact Robert Rosa at [rjrosa7@verizon.net](mailto:rjrosa7@verizon.net). Meditation instruction is available upon request. Additional information can be obtained from our website: <http://sites.google.com/site/radiantbellsangha/home>.

*~Robert Rosa*

# CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS

## LEADERSHIP RETREAT AT CEDAR HILL SEPT. 10–11

The annual leadership retreat will be held at the Cedar Hill Retreat Center in Duxbury, Mass., from Friday, Sept. 10 (arrive anytime after 3 p.m.), until the afternoon of Saturday, Sept. 11. We hope that this opportunity to be together in such a lovely place will be spiritually uplifting and will reconfirm our commitment to serve Bell Street Chapel. As usual, we also expect to have a great deal of fun together!

This year, Bell Street Chapel is opening its leadership retreat to all members, ministers, and community ministers who wish to attend.

The cost of the weekend will be \$35 per person (checks payable to Bell Street Chapel and given or sent to Dan Greco). We will also be asking for donations of food for the meals, as the staff of the retreat center is no longer able to cook for us. Please let Daniel Greco know by e-mail ([dgreco2760@yahoo.com](mailto:dgreco2760@yahoo.com)) whether or not you are able to attend. Details about what to bring, rules of the retreat center and directions will follow soon.

~Dan Greco  
President

## VISION AND MISSION WORKSHOP

Last spring we made great progress at our retreat with Peter Bowden generating vision and mission ideas to help guide us and strengthen our sense of purpose as a church. Please join the Vision and Mission Committee after church on Sept. 12, at 11:30 a.m. and help us turn our ideas into inspiring statements.

~Kate Gillis  
Chairperson

## MEMORIAL

A memorial will be held Sunday, Sept. 12, at 2 p.m. at First Unitarian Church, 1 Benevolent St., Providence, for David St. Germain, a familiar face among social justice and anti-poverty advocates



in Providence and one of our neighbors at First Unitarian. David died July 23, an apparent victim of suicide. Donations in his name may be made to the David St. Germain Social Justice Fund, First Unitarian Church, 1 Benevolent St., Providence, RI 02906.

## A SHOWER FOR KATHY AND CINDY

As many Bell Streeters may be aware, two of our members, Kathy Lannigan and Cindy Palmieri, were among the hardest-hit victims of this spring's floods along the Pawtuxet River. Their home was flooded from their basement to the first floor, and Kathy and Cindy were forced to move in with relatives in Narragansett for about five months while their home was restored.

Restoration is almost complete on their home and Kathy and Cindy expect to move in sometime this month, but they lost a great many of their belongings in the flood. For that reason, the Membership and Caring Committee is planning a shower for them on Saturday, Sept. 25, at 5 p.m. in Eddy Hall. This shower will be a lot nicer for Cindy and Kathy than the showers in March that caused this problem for them!

All are welcome (this is a "Jack and Jill" type shower), and there will be fun and surprises. The event will be potluck, so please bring a dish to share.

Cindy and Kathy will be registering at Target for some of the items they will need as they put their lives back together from what has been a very trying experience for them.

Please RSVP to this event by contacting Meredyth Waterman at [MeredythW@aol.com](mailto:MeredythW@aol.com) or (401) 451-2322. If you have any questions or would like to help out in organizing this event, please also contact her.

We hope that the Bell Street Community will come together to support Kathy and Cindy — longtime members who were married at Bell Street six years ago — and welcome them back to their home while having a good time together!

~Meredyth Waterman  
Membership and Caring Committee Co-Chairperson

# PEACE & SOCIAL JUSTICE

## PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE NEWS

At our retreat in June, to which members of the congregation were invited, the Peace and Social Justice Committee set its agenda for the church year. We decided to focus our attention on three areas of social justice work, namely gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender queer (GLBTQ) rights; poverty and homelessness; and prisoner advocacy.

Brian Kovacs, Don Laliberte, and Richard Corso will organize and promote our activities in the area of GLBTQ rights. They will include, but not necessarily be limited to:

Movie Night at BSC – GLBTQ or gender-identity themed films  
Partnership with Rhode Island International Film Festival (RIIFF)  
R.I. Pride Festival (June 2011)

Trans Day of Remembrance in November 2010

Gay Bingo (Third Thursday of each month) - Although we lack the funds for a full sponsorship of Gay Bingo, we would like to try to sponsor one or two months a year and get a large BSC presence there for those months.

Partnership with Marriage Equality RI (MERI) - Richard is on the board of MERI and will serve as our liaison to them. He will keep the entire congregation informed about MERI events and activities.

Clara Hardy, Jim McCartin, and Evan Wilson will lead us in activities that concern poverty and homelessness. We agreed that we would like to find ways to help effect policy and systems changes, as well as to provide direct service to the poor and homeless. Our activities would include, but not be limited to, the following:

Crossroads Lunch-making (First Sunday of each month)

Collection Drives - We will organize quarterly drives for needed items for the homeless – coats, scarves, hats and gloves (for our participation in Buy-Nothing Day in November); underwear; Mothers Day baskets for the women of McAuley Village.

Needs-assessment for our neighborhood – Evan will figure out what we can do to help alleviate poverty and homelessness in our West Broadway neighborhood.

Carol Crowley will narrow the scope of our Ethical Eating (UJA Study/Action Issue for 2008-2011) activities to those that relate to poverty and homelessness, e.g. promoting good nutrition in the poor.

Carol Wiseman will continue to lead us in the area of Prisoner Advocacy, primarily through Books Through Bars, an independent nonprofit prison literacy program based at Bell Street Chapel. We need to come up with some creative ways to raise money for this project; the postage costs are significant and are the limiting factor for the work of the organization.

The PSJ Committee welcomes the input and involvement of the entire Bell Street Chapel congregation. We have always been leaders in social justice in our community and hopefully we will be even more effective during the 2010-2011 church year. We look forward to working with you!

~Carol Crowley

*Peace and Social Justice Committee Chairperson*

## CROSSROADS

On the first Sunday of every month, members of Bell Street Chapel make bag lunches for the clients of Crossroads Rhode Island, a shelter for our homeless and needy fellow citizens. We gather in Eddy Hall immediately after the service and share fellowship and fun while we make 100 bag lunches, which a member of the Peace and Social Justice Committee delivers. We have been doing this for over a decade. We hear from the staff at Crossroads that our reliability and the quality of the lunches we provide are very much appreciated by the clients. We try to make the lunches as nutritious as possible within our budget.

Crossroads Rhode Island is the largest provider of services to the homeless in the state. It depends on volunteers to provide lunches on weekends. Anyone who delivers the lunches cannot fail to be saddened by the large number of souls who gather at the facility for lunch. It reminds us to work not only for the immediate needs of the homeless, but also for their long-term needs, which can only be met by policy and legislative changes. Many hardworking and responsible individuals and families become homeless because of the acute shortage of affordable housing in RI. Other homeless individuals are mentally ill or addicted and have not been able to get the help they need.

This is a safe way for children to work for social justice. If at least eight volunteers participate, we are finished within an hour or so. If you are unable to join us in making lunches, you can participate by bringing juice boxes, cookies, or large cans of solid white tuna to church each Sunday. We also need lunch bags, baggies, napkins, and mayonnaise.

Let's let our homeless and hungry fellow citizens know that we at Bell Street Chapel do care about them. Clara Hardy heads up this project, which is sponsored by the Peace and Social Justice Committee.

# WORSHIP

## FROM THE MINISTER

Welcome back to the new church year at Bell Street. There have been a number of changes that will make this an exciting and pivotal year. First, in conjunction with the Search Committee, Worship Committee and the Governing Board, my worship services and related work will revolve around set themes every month. At least one worship service will be specifically on that month's topic. The topics for the year are:

September: *New Beginnings & Ministerial and Congregational History* — The emphasis will be to acknowledge that the current ministry is temporary and that the congregation is in search. The last worship service is a look at the past and provides an opening for celebration and grief work.

September 12 – Water Communion – *Hello Again and Good Bye Still*

September 19 – *The Ghosts of Bell Street*

September 26 – Search Committee Service

October: *Diversity* — The emphasis will raise-up the question of diversity in the ministry, congregation and the larger community. The sermon *Soul Work* will highlight the work of the UUA to foster racial, cultural and ethnic diversity and offer suggestions on how the congregation can increase its diversity.

November: *Congregational Dynamics and Authority* — This month will be focused on covenanted community, congregational authority, power dynamics and forgiveness. Sermon will be *Who's in Charge?*

December: *Theological Diversity* — As the month plunges into the holiday season it would be an ideal time to explore the history and current status of our faith's theological diversity. Sermon will be *A House With Many Rooms*.

January: *Conflict and Conflict Resolution* — In the stress of the post holiday time it is ideal to examine conflict and ways to resolve conflict. All communities have conflict; it is how we resolve that conflict determines if the organization is healthy. Sermon: *Agree to Disagree: Can Our Church Be Saved?*

February: *Emerging Faith* — We will be exploring the new dimensions of faith. In addition to wide distribution of material from the UUA, there might be a pulpit exchange with a minister that is practicing an Emerging Faith. Sermon: *Religious or Spiritual: Where is Our Holy Church*

March: *Community and Justice* — Given developments in the community around justice issues the congregation explores its commitment to social action and community involvement. Sermon *What Would Jesus Do Today?*

April & May: *Preparing For The Call* — Sermons *A New Hope & The Sun Will Come Up Tomorrow*

June: *Endings and Beginnings* — I will begin the process of leaving and preparing the congregation for the new pastorate. Sermon *It's Been Fun*.

Second the Search Committee for the new Senior Minister has been meeting and will be engaging the congregation in the process. The first step will be a worship service on September 19, with cottage meetings scheduled for after the service that Sunday and the Sunday after that. Sometime in the fall the Search Committee will be scheduling a *Beyond Categorical Thinking* workshop. This workshop assists congregations in determining whom they will call as their minister.

The third change is that after serving Bell Street as your Consulting Minister for two years; I will begin my third year as an Interim Minister. The main difference is that rather than assisting the Governing Board and various Committees by providing advice; an Interim or Transitional Minister my focus will be to prepare the congregation for calling and settling the new minister. In order to accomplish this I will be presenting certain themes throughout the year in worship services, workshops and after service "talkbacks."

This will be an exciting year as the Religious Society of Bell Street Chapel charts its future.

~Rev. José Ballester

# CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS

## MINISTERIAL SEARCH

Your ministerial search committee is off and running! We began to meet in June and have had a few meetings and a retreat since then to gear ourselves up for what will undoubtedly be a busy fall, winter, and spring. We are excited about our mission and also about how well we seem to work together as a group thus far.

We have developed a budget which the Governing Board reviewing in preparation for submission to the Trustees to cover our expenses. We are also working on a Congregational-wide survey about the ministerial search to hand out to members after a service that we as a committee are leading on Sept. 26. If you cannot make this service, there will be an opportunity to fill out the survey the following week.

In addition to the survey, we have scheduled cottage meetings after the services on Sept. 26 and Oct 3. These meetings will give members and friends an opportunity to share your opinions about Bell Street and what we should look for in a settled minister. Please sign up for one of the meetings on the sheets in Eddy Hall.

We cannot stress enough how much we need and value your input! You have invested us with the responsibility of this search, but ultimately, this is a search for *your* minister and each and every member of this congregation not only deserves, but needs, to be heard!

This is an exciting time in the history of Bell Street. It will be wonderful to have a settled minister for the first time in four years, but a lot of thought will be necessary between now and next summer. As the search committee members, we have volunteered to do the leg-work, but this is truly a Bell Street Chapel community-wide effort. Please fill out the survey, and voice your concerns and desires on the survey and to us throughout the year so that we may best serve the membership of this vibrant and warm community which is so important to us. Again, the committee members are Greg Greco, Don Laliberte, Wendy Schwartz, Chad Welch and Carol Wiseman.

There are some specific questions and issues that we ask that you consider as we launch into the search process:

1. A part-time minister cannot be expected to perform all the tasks of a full-time minister--an obvious statement, but one which may be more difficult to deal with as time goes on once the minister is settled. Please take some time to think about on what aspects of the ministry you think a part-time minister should focus and on what aspects the lay ministry might be best at serving.

2. When can we expect to have a full-time minister at Bell Street again and how would we go about making this feasible once more?

These are big questions to which we will return repeatedly throughout the year in this column. Please take some time to consider them--as well as what you envision as most important in a settled minister for Bell Street. And remember: please try to make it to the service on Sept. 26 and fill out a survey!

~Wendy Schwartz, Search Committee member

## WORSHIP

As a church with a part-time minister, the Religious Society of Bell Street Chapel has a shared pulpit and a shared ministry. This allows us to gain from the spiritual and life experiences of a diverse group of people. It is one of our great strengths as a community. As chairperson of the Worship Committee, I can say that I believe that the depth of writing and speaking talent here is astounding, probably without equal.

This year, as we search for a settled minister, it might be good to look at the role that Sunday services have in that search. There has been a discussion about having an arc of services that help us explore our history, values and relationships as a community. The Rev. José Ballester will be exploring our past relationships with ministers and helping us have the discussions that are critical for us at this time. The Worship Committee will be asking those who speak if they feel that their reflection or sermon has something that can be a part of this overarching church conversation. They don't have to, but each of the many voices here can bring the wisdom of unique experiences and perspectives to this search. In times of transition these qualities can illuminate the path and create a sharper, more detailed picture of the way ahead.

There is a wisdom in crowds that doesn't reside in any one person or place. I think it emerges the way a harmony is revealed by the many voices contained within the single sound.

~Ray Perreault  
Worship Committee Chairperson

## COLUMNS DEADLINE

The deadline for the October issue of Bell Street Columns is Sept. 12 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](mailto: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.

# CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS

## MARSH CLEANUP - SEPT. 18, 8 A.M.

Bell Streeters and anyone else interested in helping the earth are invited to take part in the fall cleanup at the salt marsh we've adopted on the Providence waterfront. This year's fall cleanup is scheduled Saturday, Sept. 18. As usual, we will affiliate our fall event with the International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) coordinated in Rhode Island by the Audubon Society of Rhode Island and internationally by the Ocean Conservancy. However, ours will be held a week earlier than the international event, because local tides will make our beach inaccessible that morning. Nonetheless, since our cleanup will be open to the public and publicized, we are likely to be joined by a number of guests.

We will meet directly at the marsh, which is located off Allens Avenue at the end of Oxford Street. Please contact Meredyth Waterman at [MeredythW@aol.com](mailto:MeredythW@aol.com) or (401) 451-2322 to sign up. Please provide your name, phone number, e-mail address and T-shirt size, since Audubon usually provides volunteers with T-shirts during the fall cleanup.

Thanks to Save the Bay, we have plenty of garbage bags and plastic gloves. We also have some work gloves and a few rakes and shovels,

but you are encouraged to bring your own if you want them. Please wear sturdy shoes or boots. Sunblock and hats are also advised. Only if it rains very heavily will this event be rescheduled to Oct. 2, at 8 a.m..

We usually wander across the street after our cleanup for a satisfying breakfast at the Seaplane Diner, so bring a few dollars if you are interested.

Unlike our spring cleanup, at our fall cleanup we document every piece of litter we find as part of a worldwide effort to monitor pollution of our shores and whether it's improving. It's often amazing what we find. And along that vein, our cleanup always features the popular Bell Street Bio-hazard Contest, which arguably makes otherwise unsavory discoveries a treat. Nonetheless, please do not bring young children or pets to this event due to the dangerous nature of the rocks and the items we find.

Please join us for this fun morning of helping the earth.

~Meredyth Waterman

## DRUM CIRCLE

We meet the third Friday of each month. We start at 7 p.m. and stay until it is decided by the group that we've had enough. If possible, a \$5 donation for church costs is appreciated.

All ages and types of people are welcome at this highly energetic and community-promoted, family-oriented live musical gathering. All forms and types of musical instrumentation are welcome i.e. drums, didgeridoos, sound bowls, shakers, strikers, stringed instruments, accordions, whistles, flutes, and on and on. Costumes face paints, masks, funny hats, dancing feet, poetry, story telling, singing, chanting, theatrics, and a childlike state of having fun are also encouraged. Nothing is out of the realm of possibility when it comes to artistic self-expression.

The more tools there are at the disposal of the group the more involving the experience. There is shared leadership along with the opportunity for all to have a voice in the moment along with others in the group. It's the energy, spirit and spontaneity of the moment that leads the group during this experience. Food and snack to be shared for potluck are also encouraged by all who would like to contribute. Community growth and self awareness are provided through music.

For more information please contact: Joshua Fonseca at [jfonseca1980@yahoo.com](mailto:jfonseca1980@yahoo.com) or (401)225-9082; or Pamela Adams at [lastpiece17@gmail.com](mailto:lastpiece17@gmail.com) or (401) 688-1050.



# CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS



## SEPTEMBER 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
			1	2 4 pm Big Train Farm (EH) 7 pm Outside group (PH)	3	4 8 am meditation (EH)
5 9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am coffee hour 11:30 Crossroads lunchmaking 1 pm Books Through Bars	6 6 pm Empire Review (S)	7 7 pm PEAC (EH) 6:30 pm Worship Committee (PH)	8 6 pm Order of Service deadline	9 4 pm Big Train Farm (EH) 7 pm Membership (PH)	10 3 p.m. Leadership retreat (OS)	11 8 am meditation (EH) Leadership retreat (OS)
12 9 am Choir (S) 10 am Water Communion (S) 11:30 am Vision and Mission workshop (EH) 1 pm Books t. Bars	13 6 pm Empire Review (S) 6:30 pm Finance Committee (PH)	14 6 pm Daydream auditions (EH) 6:45 pm Governing Board (PH) 7 pm PEAC (S)	15 6 pm Order of Service deadline 6 pm Daydream auditions (EH)	16 4 pm Big Train Farm (EH) 7 pm Gay Bingo (OS)	17 6:30 Movie Night (EH)	18 8 am Marsh Cleanup (OS) 8 am meditation (EH)
19 9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am coffee hour 11:30 Discussion Group (PH) 1 pm chapel rental 1 pm Books	20 6 pm Empire Review (S)	21 7:15 pm House Committee (PH) 7 pm PEAC (EH)	22 6 pm Order of Service deadline	23 4 pm Big Train Farm (EH)	24 7 pm Drumming Circle (EH)	25 5 pm Kathy Lannigan and Cindy Palmeiri's shower (EH)
26 9 am newsletter folding (EH) 9 am choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11:30 Search cottage mtg (EH) 1 pm Books t. Bars	27 6 pm Empire Review (S)	28 6 pm Peace & Social Justice (PH) 7 pm PEAC (EH)	29 6 pm Order of Service deadline	30 4 pm Big Train Farm (EH)		

# MOVIE NIGHT - FRIDAY, SEPT. 17

## 6:30 P.M. EDDY HALL

For the past several years, Bell Street Chapel has sponsored a monthly movie night, at which we view and discuss films with GLBT or gender identity themes. In this way, we live out our commitment as a UUA Welcoming Congregation; we also have a good time together and share a delicious potluck dinner. Over the past few years, we have seen some spectacular films – dramas, comedies, musicals, and documentaries – all mainstream films, many of which have won awards. We show these films on a large screen donated by the Rhode Island International Film Festival, for which Bell Street Chapel is a venue.

The movie for this month, which our licensing agreement prohibits our citing by title, is a 2003 musical about a New York performing arts camp for talented teenagers. We will be joined by members of Youth Pride Rhode Island.

So bring some food or nonalcoholic beverage to share and join us at Movie Night!



### **The Religious Society of Bell Street Chapel**

5 Bell Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02909  
Phone (401) 273-5678 | [contact@bellstreetchapel.org](mailto: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.”**

