

ANNOUNCEMENTS DURING SERVICE

The announcements at the beginning of service have been getting rather lengthy lately, and as a result the Governing Board and Worship Committee wish to remind everyone that the congregation has a written policy limiting spoken announcements at the beginning of service to "late-breaking news" items that come to light after the order of service deadline. Members and friends are asked to please make every effort to submit your announcements to Office Manager Heidi Gilkenson in time for inclusion in the order of service. The deadline is each Wednesday at 6 p.m., and announcements should be e-mailed to Heidi at contact@bellstreetchapel.org.

Announcements during coffee hour should also be limited to items that are either Bell Street-related or about events or news that is consistent with Bell Street's principles.

Please do not be offended if you are asked to hold off on making a spoken announcement. We are going to make a real effort to keep spoken announcements at a minimum to maintain a spirit of reflection and meditation during our Sunday services.

A NOTE FROM THE COFFEE CREW

In an effort to reduce the number of disposable cups used during coffee hour we would like to encourage all members and friends to bring your own mug to church. Hooks are being installed in the kitchen so that you may wash and store your mug at Bell Street Chapel each week.

~Peg Boyle



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."**

MOVIE NIGHT: INTERMISSION

Bell Street Chapel's Movie Night series concluded its 2007-2008 season in May with the award-winning 2003 Thai film, "Beautiful Boxer." Movie Night 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 present films with GLBT themes. For the past two years, we have been concentrating on films that examine gender identity issues.

We will take an intermission for the summer and then resume this successful series in September with a real blockbuster! Watch for announcements.

■ JUNE
■ 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

1 | JUNE

A CALL TO SERVICE: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL JUSTICE AND SPIRITUALITY

The Parish and Social Concerns Committee

Can social justice work enhance a person's spirituality? Come and let's find out together.

8 | JUNE

FLOWER COMMUNION

Rev. Bill Robinson

Everybody has one but some of us seem to deal better with them than do others of us. Rev. Robinson will talk about mothers during this annual service.

15 | JUNE

FATHER'S DAY

Philip Smith

Come to the service on Father's Day, where we will celebrate and remember fathers in poetry, prose and song.

22 | JUNE

SUPPORTING OUR SOLDIERS

Ray Perreault

Can we support the troops and at the same time resist the war?

As the war grinds on, this question grows in importance.

29 | JUNE

TBA

The Governing Board



CONSULTING MINISTRY

At the Annual Meeting on May 18, the congregation made a decision to change the direction in our search for a settled minister. With the announcement by Rev. Bill Robinson that he would not be returning for a second year as interim minister, the congregation examined its goals and readiness to call a settled minister. Rather than hire another interim minister and continue the search process, the congregation voted to hire a part-time consulting minister for a period of up to three years. A consulting minister is hired to coach the board and congregation on fulfilling specific, stated objectives. In our case, the primary goal will be to help the congregation to grow so that we can support a full-time settled minister.

Like an interim minister, a consulting minister will work with the board and congregation on trust-building, leadership, growth and other issues. However, unlike interim ministry, consulting ministry is not time-limited. This flexibility will give Bell Street Chapel time to develop and implement an intentional plan for growth. The consulting minister will help the congregation to get to know itself and its needs and will challenge us to consider new ways of thinking and acting.

As a next step in this process, the Governing Board will complete the online application for a consulting minister. Our District Executive, Rev. Bill Zelazny and the Unitarian Universalist Association Transitions Director Rev. John Weston will discuss the congregation's needs and recommend candidates. The Governing Board will appoint a task force made up of Board members and a member of the Search Committee to interview and hire a consulting minister.

Because we will no longer be in search, the work of our current Search Committee will end shortly

after the consulting minister is hired. The Search Committee has worked hard over the past year and has gathered much useful information about our congregation and our needs. The committee will share this information with the consulting minister to inform his or her work with us. On behalf of the congregation, I would like to thank the Search Committee members for their time, hard work, professionalism and sensitivity to the needs of the chapel and its members.

With this decision, the congregation has begun to write the next chapter in its history. The Governing Board will, of course, keep you updated as this process continues.

In faith,

Don Laliberte, President

ELECTIONS

At the Annual Meeting on May 18, the congregation elected the following individuals to serve on the Governing Board or as chairs of the Chapel's committees:

- Don Laliberte, *President (until 5/09)*
- Meredyth Waterman, *President Elect (until 5/09)*
- Carol Crowley, *Secretary (until 5/10)*
- Jen Shimkus, *Board Member at Large (until 5/09)*
- Tina Holden Shea, *Board Member at Large (until 5/10)*
- Dan Greco, *Board Member at Large (until 5/10)*
- Ellen Kellner, *Events Committee Chair (until 5/10)*
- Phil Smith, *Finance Committee Chair (until 5/10)*
- Frank Faltus, *House Committee Chair (until 5/09)*

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

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 noon
Tuesday and Thursday – by appointment only

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

GOVERNING BOARD

DON LALIBERTE, PRESIDENT
MEREDYTH WATERMAN, PRESIDENT-ELECT
CAROL CROWLEY, SECRETARY
DAN GRECO, AT-LARGE
TINA HOLDEN SHEA, AT-LARGE
JENNIFER SHIMKUS, AT-LARGE

STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS

EVENTS, ELLEN KELLNER
FINANCE, PHILIP SMITH
HOUSE, FRANK FALTUS
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT, PEG BOYLE
MEMBERSHIP/CARING, RICHARD CORSO
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, KATE GILLIS
PARISH AND SOCIAL CONCERNS, CLARA HARDY
WORSHIP, AUDREY GREENE

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

MEREDYTH WATERMAN, EDITOR
ORIGINAL DESIGN BY TERRY BARBOUNIS

CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS

IN THE INTERIM

Leaving

By now just about everybody at Bell Street has received my letter announcing my departure on July 31. This was a very difficult decision for me because I have really gotten to know and like all of you at Bell Street. And no, I don't think you're all that quirky as some of you accuse the rest of you of being.

The fact that I was finding it difficult to leave means for an interim minister that it is already time to leave, maybe even a little too late. This role of an interim minister is a little quirky all by itself. Interims contract with a church to provide ministerial services for one year and possibly two. At the end of two years the interim leaves and is usually replaced by the incoming settled minister. The interim minister in his or her contract agrees not to be a candidate for the position that the church has open.

If a church's Search Committee is unable for one reason or another to find a candidate in two years, it will continue "searching" for a third year but the interim will not continue. Again, the interim is contractually available for only two years. A third year of search will require a new interim. This may sound a bit convoluted, but it works. Every year through this process 40 or 50 ministers find new churches in which they can hang their hats (actually the official term would be "in which they are settled.") A two-year search had already been announced for Bell Street, so my options would be to stay for year No. 2 and request a new interim for No. 3 or to leave now and request a new interim for years No. 2 and No. 3. The second option would allow the new interim to view the process for the next two years, which would be the most active years and would afford the new interim with a more complete perspective.

Into this quandary was introduced a new alternative, that of a contract minister. A contract minister is just what it sounds like: a minister who contracts with the church to provide very specific ministerial assistance, usually in growing the congregation. Discussions have been held between the Ballou Channing District (BCD) office and the Bell Street leadership. Personally I think this offers an effective solution. One reason is that contract ministers do not have a cap on the number of years they can remain at the church. Also a contract minister can be "called" by the church at which they are serving and that happens once in a while.

What's next? Really only time will tell. The BCD will supply some potential names and Bell Street will go through an interview process. With luck you may have a contract minister here in a couple of months. Life at Bell Street should continue to be a series of interesting and exciting encounters. I don't know about you but in my few remaining months, I am looking forward to them.

~Rev. Bill

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The next issue of *Bell Street Columns* will be a combined July/August edition. If you are planning events or news later in the summer, please bear in mind that the deadline for that edition will be June 22 at 8 p.m. Please limit each submission to 500 words, and e-mail them as an attachment to Meredyth Waterman at MeredythW@aol.com.

The Governing Board would really like to see more than just events in the newsletter, so if you have an idea that you would like to share, some general thoughts from your committee, or anything else that has to do with Bell Street Chapel and is of interest to our members and friends, please contact me to discuss including it. Thanks!

~Meredyth Waterman

R.I. INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Bell Street Chapel is happy to announce that we are a venue for this year's Rhode Island International Film Festival (RIIFF). RIIFF has secured its place in the global community as the portal for the best in international independent cinema, earning the respect of domestic and foreign filmmakers, film goers and trend watchers. The festival brings together world-class celebrities, award-winning filmmakers, new talent and audience members. RIIFF is a qualifier for the Short Film Academy Awards and ranked as one of the top 12 festivals in the United States.

The festival runs Monday, Aug. 4 through Sunday, Aug. 10. Each morning, Bell Street Chapel will host the festival's KidsEye International Festival. Since it began ten years ago, this popular festival-within-a-festival has celebrated young video makers by showcasing their projects. Those attending KidsEye will see a diverse collection of youth-produced media. Bell Street will also screen films made by, for and about the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) community in the evenings, on dates to be announced.

Finally, in conjunction with RIIFF and Rhode Island Pride, on Friday night, June 13, Bell Street will hold a screening of GLBT films as part of the month long Pride celebration.

In order to make these events a success we need volunteers to help with publicity, setup, concessions and other tasks. If you can help please contact Richard Corso at (401) 383-7470 or via e-mail at RichardCorso@gmail.com.

Richard is also coordinating hospitality for the festival and is looking for people willing to host visiting filmmakers during the festival in August. All you need to provide is a place to sleep, filmmakers are responsible for their own transportation and meals. Hosts receive a pass to all festival screenings. If you are interested and would like more information please contact Richard.

PARISH & SOCIAL CONCERNS

Have you ever wondered what the Parish and Social Concerns Committee does? Here is a brief description of our committee and it's work: The Parish and Social Concerns Committee of Bell Street Chapel creates opportunities for members and friends of the congregation to live our Unitarian Universalist principles through **Social Service** and **Social Justice** activities.

Social Service activities involve supporting and giving assistance to members and to others who seek and need our help. Examples include making lunches for Crossroads-R.I. and the marsh clean-up for Save the Bay.

Social Justice activities involve changing systems and policies that perpetuate needs in our community, nation and world. Through our social service work we start asking questions like "Why are we still fighting in Iraq?" or "Why is housing so unaffordable in our area?" We then work to change these conditions through advocacy, direct action and political involvement. Examples include our participation in Rhode Island UUs for Social Justice, Fair Trade Coffee, the Welcoming Congregation and the Peace Movement. If you are interested in joining this important committee to help build energy to support and be an activist to important causes, please feel free to contact the chair of the P&SC Committee, Clara Hardy at clarapvd@gmail.com or (401)231-9226.

Pride Festival- June 21, 2008

Join Bell Streeters at the Pride Festival where we will be managing a booth to provide information about Bell Street. Later in the evening, we will once again be marching in the parade. We will need volunteers to help at the booth, a sign-up sheet will be located in Eddy Hall.

Marsh Clean-up

The twice-annual marsh cleanup will be held Saturday June 7. Bell Street will be cleaning our adopted marsh located on Oxford Street (off Allens Avenue on the Providence waterfront.) Due to the incoming tide, we will have to do it early in the morning, so we'll meet in the Bell Street Chapel parking lot at 8 a.m. and carpool to the site. (If you know where the marsh is and would prefer to go straight there, plan to arrive around 8:15 a.m..)

Sneakers or work boots are recommended, and you are encouraged to bring work gloves, rakes and shovels. Due to the nature of this work, this is not a good event for young children. Please contact Meredyth Waterman at MeredythW@aol.com or (401) 451-2322 to sign up.

~Clara Hardy

ELECTIONS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

- Richard Corso, *Membership and Caring Committee Chair (until 5/10)*
- Clara Hardy, *Parish & Social Concerns Committee Chair (until 5/09)*
- Kate Gillis, *Religious Education Committee Chair (until 5/09)*
- Audrey Greene, *Worship Committee Chair (until 5/10)*
- Peg Boyle, *Leadership Development Committee (until 5/09)*
- David Gleicher, *Leadership Development Committee (until 5/10)*
- Open, *Leadership Development Committee (until 5/11)*

The congregation also endorsed the appointment of Jim Gillis as Treasurer by the Governing Board.

Thanks to all of the members for your willingness to serve Bell Street Chapel.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Don't be too timid and squeamish about your actions. All life is an experiment.

~Ralph Waldo Emerson

This month marks the annual rotation of membership in Bell Street Chapel committees. This means much change for the Finance Committee. Thank you to John Simmonds for his clear and thoughtful leadership of the Finance Committee over the last two years, and to Jen Shimkus for her great dedication and continuity in the role of treasurer. Joe Chaves and Lyn Stein were invaluable in their positions on the committee.

Welcome to new committee member Greg Greco and incoming Treasurer Jim Gillis. As a result of these changes, we are looking for a few good members. A Finance Committee member needs to have an interest in church affairs, a willingness to pitch in, but not an MBA. Please see Phil Smith to learn more about this exciting opportunity.

This month's finance table shows that we are still running just in the positive side of income versus expenses.

	July - April Actual	July - April Budget	Variance	Annual Budget
Income				
Pledges	\$40,790	\$45,833	(\$5,044)	\$55,000
Sunday Collections	\$11,166	\$6,227	\$4,940	\$7,472
Interests and Investments	\$40,749	\$39,979	\$770	\$47,975
Rentals	\$6,000	\$11,250	(\$5,250)	\$13,500
Events & Fundraising	4,641	\$5,208	(\$567)	\$6,250
Other Income	\$3,432	\$0	\$3,432	\$0
Total Income	\$106,778	\$108,498	(\$1,719)	\$130,197
Expenses				
Salary & Benefits	\$63,396	\$64,128	(\$732)	\$76,954
Administrative Expenses	\$18,865	\$16,578	\$2,287	\$19,893
Buildings & Grounds	\$15,507	\$15,833	(\$327)	\$19,000
Denominational Affairs	\$500	\$2,458	(\$1,958)	\$2,950
Other Expenses	\$4,035	\$9,500	(\$5,466)	\$11,400
Total Expenses	\$102,302	\$108,498	(\$6,195)	\$130,197
Net Income Gain/(Loss)	\$4,476	\$0	\$4,476	\$0

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 for the current fiscal year which ends June 30, 2008.

~The Finance Committee:
(Philip Smith, Greg Greco)

CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS



AMONG US

"The beauty of the world has two edges, one of laughter, one of anguish, cutting the heart asunder."

~Virginia Woolf

In this column we celebrate milestones and other life events, request healing thoughts for those in need, and remember departed loved ones. If you have information you would like to share in this column, or if you know of anyone in need of assistance, please contact Carol Crowley.

We have quite a few Bell Streeters celebrating special events in the beautiful month of June.

- Happy Birthday wishes go out to Sophie Schwartz Barreto (8 years old!), along with a hearty WELCOME BACK!! to the whole Schwartz Barreto family.
- Happy birthday, too, to Owen Goulis, who will be all of 3 years old on June 1 (how can he be 3 already?!) And birthday wishes go to Lily Campanile-Boyle, who also merits congratulations for getting her driver's license recently – a big event for the whole Campanile-Boyle family, for sure.
- Our favorite twins, Dan and Greg Greco, also celebrate their birthdays in June.
- Bryn Clayton and Frank Whitsitt-Lynch celebrate birthdays in June and we wish them the best.
- Community minister Ben Hall will probably be celebrating his birthday at the end of June this year changing diapers, as he and his wife, Stacy, expect a baby imminently.
- And anniversary wishes go out to Robb and Connie Kok. We all miss you, Robb and Connie, and hope to see you at Bell Street again soon.
- Our thoughts are always with Ellen Smith and Carl Freese, who are dealing with health issues, and to Neva Hantover and Bev Hart, who have not been able to get to church recently. We miss you.
- And, finally, our best wishes go to our interim minister for the past year, Rev. Bill Robinson, who will be leaving us this summer and assuming the full-time interim position at the UU church in Canton, Mass. We appreciate all the thoughtful help you have provided to us during the past year and wish you the good luck in your new ministry.

Enjoy the lovely spring weather and the beautiful flowers, Bell Streeters!!

~ The Membership and Caring Committee

BOARD BITS

From the May Governing Board meeting:

- The Board accepted Rev. Bill Robinson's notice that he would be leaving at the end of his contract year to accept a full-time position as interim minister in the Canton, Mass., church. The Board is very grateful to Rev. Bill for his dedication and work this year, and for serving as a great resource at a time of transition for the congregation.
- In connection with Rev. Bill's departure, the Board discussed with members of the Search Committee the possibility of exploring consulting ministry as opposed to simply hiring another interim minister and continuing along the same path.
- The board welcomed the addition of three new members, Dr. Robert J. DiDomenico, Deverly Feedee and Shannon Gemma.
- The Board discussed the rental of Eddy Hall to the Rhode Island International Film Festival in August for a week of children's films. The church will receive half the gate from those movies, as well as all of the proceeds from any concessions sold. The festival will also use Eddy Hall for a night of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender themed films during the first week of August, and on June 13 for Pride Flicks.
- Outgoing Treasurer Jennifer Shimkus reported a final canvass total of \$46,582. The Board planned to have a separate meeting to discuss changes for next year's canvass.
- At the request of the Worship Committee, the Board discussed the fact that announcements at the beginning of service have gotten length. The Board chose to reaffirm the existing written policy on announcements which asks that people make an effort to submit them to the office for inclusion in the order of service, and limit spoken announcements to those of a late-breaking nature. Announcements during coffee hour should be limited to chapel-sponsored events and news and other events that are consistent with Bell Street's principles.
- Pending an interview with Don Laliberte and Rev. Bill, the board agreed to accept a person who has expressed an interest in completing 150 community-service hours at Bell Street Chapel. The person, who would be serving the hours for a non-violent offense, would work under Heidi Gilkenson's supervision and only when Heidi is present.

~ Meredith Waterman
Governing Board Secretary

MINISTERIAL SEARCH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Social justice is a key value in this congregation, as well as a key facet of Unitarian Universalism. It can manifest in various forms, beyond obvious associations, like protests. These include bringing in experience in this area; supporting congregants' actions, interacting with other churches, networking, providing adult education programs, and exploring social justice through a spiritual lens in worship services. Which of these might be most important to you?

There were many views regarding the significance of sermons, as well as style and content. Congregants clearly desire meaningful sermons that provoke thought throughout the week. Some felt sermon quality less important than other ministerial skills, while many others noted that sermons were the biggest factor in bringing them into the church, and could be for newcomers.

Respondents clearly identified growth as a goal. But different perspectives emerged on what facilitates this, from very specific ideas, to ministerial qualities that can draw in congregants and keep them engaged. How have ministers had a role in your coming to, and staying at, Bell Street Chapel?

Different thoughts arose as to administration, including the question of a minister supervising staff, or some other structural changes, as well as the balance, in a minister, between organizational skills and respect for church structures already functioning well, including committees.

All these issues are intrinsically related; certain areas may even surprise us as vehicles for growth, satisfaction and spiritual exploration. Finding a useful blend can help us to build upon clear strengths identified in our first survey. In this time of transition, we can work together with a sense of abundance in the midst of limited resources and with a sense of excitement as we set priorities.

This has been a tremendously fulfilling and enlightening process. We are grateful for your support and for the opportunity to get to know our congregation better. In doing so, we have witnessed a community rich in energy, identity, ideas and resilience.

~Jasmine Appleberry

UU CAMP

Enjoy a summer vacation with other Unitarian Universalists. There are a number of UU Camps for children and/or adults across the United States. Here in New England, there is Ferry Beach in Saco, Maine, Star Island off the coast of Portsmouth, N.H., and Rowe Camp in western Massachusetts. In nearby New York there is Unirondack Camp. All the email addresses are available at www.cu2c2.org.

~Kate Gillis

THE KNIT PROJECT

Tuesday nights, Knitting group to make knit scarves, hats, gloves, mittens, socks for the needy. Knitting lessons available for those who don't knit but would like to participate. Men and women welcome. Questions, call Richard Muto at (401) 944-4809.



CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS



JUNE | 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 9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am coffee hour 11:30 am sandwiches (EH) 11:30 am Discussion Group (PH)	2 5 pm Groundwork Voc. Class (EH) 6 pm Empire Review rehearsal (EH)	3 5 pm Groundwork Voc. Class (EH) 6:30 pm Worship Committee (PH) 7 pm knitting group (PH upstairs)	4 5 pm Groundwork Voc. Class (EH) 6 pm Order of Service deadline	5 5 pm Groundwork Voc. Class (EH)	6	7 8 am Sitting meditation (EH) 8 am Marsh cleanup (MPL)
8 9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11:30 p.m. Cleaning Blitz (S)	9 5 pm Groundwork Voc. Class (EH) 6 pm Empire Review rehearsal (EH) 6:30 pm Finance Committee (PH)	10 5 pm Groundwork Voc. Class (EH) 7 pm knitting group (PH upstairs) 7:30 pm Governing Board (PH)	11 5 pm Groundwork Voc. Class (EH) 6 pm Order of Service deadline	12 5 pm Groundwork Voc. Class (EH) 7 pm Membership Committee (PH)	13 7 pm Rhode Island Film Festival GLBT film (EH)	14 8 am Sitting meditation (EH) 10 am Council of Chairs (EH)
15 9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11:30 am Discussion Group (PH)	16 5 pm Groundwork Voc. Class (EH) 6 pm Empire Review rehearsal (EH)	17 5 pm Groundwork Voc. Class (EH) 7 pm knitting group (PH upstairs) 7:15 pm House Committee (PH)	18 5 pm Groundwork Voc. Class (EH) 6 pm Order of Service deadline	19 5 pm Groundwork Voc. Class (EH)	20 5 pm Groundwork Voc. Class (EH)	21 RI Pride Fest
22 9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 8 pm newsletter deadline	23 6 pm Empire Review rehearsal (EH)	24 6 pm Parish & Social Concerns (EH) 7 pm knitting group (PH upstairs)	25 6 pm Order of Service deadline	26	27 2 pm Chamber Music Camp (S)	28
29 9 am newsletter fold (EH) 9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am coffee hour	30 6 pm Empire Review rehearsal (EH)					

MINISTERIAL SEARCH REPORT AND REFLECTION

With plans for a consultative minister, the Ministerial Search Committee will be disbanding.

We thank everyone for your helpful and thoughtful participation. We are extending some thoughts regarding recent information gathered for your reflection. Our findings will also be shared with the consultative minister.

Five areas have come across as key issues. How these will blend and translate into action will be important questions, affecting which skill strengths and priorities a minister might have, as well as congregational goals. These five areas include pastoral care, social justice, sermons, growth and administration.

When most people think of pastoral care, they have traditional associations: hospital visits, weddings, funerals, baptisms, etc. But the term is truly broader. Some in cottage meetings felt "pastoral care" less significant, until examples were given; responses often changed. For instance, did it influence at all your decision to come here that a minister met with you? Did it influence, in any way, your decision to stay, that a minister was available for one-on-one meetings to discuss issues in your personal and spiritual life? Has a minister ever been helpful in discussing misunderstandings between members, or issues of safety? If not, do you think such a presence, in times of life changes, might be valuable? The answers vary for each person; in cottage meetings, the answers were often affirmative. Pastoral care is often invisible to the congregation, due to necessary confidentiality. Congregants' mutual support, as well as the Membership and Caring Committee, can provide key interventions. Yet pastoral care requires neutrality, and is a safe place for private issues. It can help with member satisfaction, retention and recruitment.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

FROM THE BOARD

With the official end of this year's Board term on May 18, we'd like to use our newsletter spot to summarize the Governing Board's activities for the year.

- **New Faces:** The Governing Board began the year by welcoming Interim Minister Bill Robinson and new Office Manager Heidi Gilkenson. It has been a pleasure to work with both Rev. Bill and Heidi.
- **Communications** has been a key initiative this year. A monthly update (like this one!) on Board activities was included in each issue of Columns. In addition, the Governing Board worked closely with the incredibly talented Terry Barbounis to design a new Web site that provides up-to-date information about the church and activities. Check it out at www.bellstreetchapel.org!
- **Conflict Transformation:** President Don Laliberte, Vice President Carol Crowley and Rev. Bill Robinson co-facilitated a conflict transformation workshop that was attended by nearly 20 Bell Streeters. The next workshop, slated for the fall, will focus on developing a shared vision statement.
- **Films:** BSC will partner with the Rhode Island International Film Festival, first on June 13 by hosting Pride Flicks. In August, Bell Street will host a week of children's films and one night of the LGBT programming. These events will also serve as fund-raisers for Bell Street as we will receive 50 percent of ticket sale revenue and any proceeds from concessions.
- **Fiscal Management:** Bell Street Chapel remains current on all bills, despite losing significant anticipated revenue (\$6,000) from parking lot rental.
- **Committees:** All committee chairs were invited to at least one Governing Board meeting this year to discuss their committee's activities, strengths and challenges. The Governing Board also received regular updates from the Search Committee on its activities.

Thank you to departing members Greg Greco and Ellen Kellner for their energy and enthusiasm over the past 12 months. Your contributions have been greatly appreciated. The Finance and Membership committees and Events committee (respectively) are lucky to have you joining their ranks!

This month, the Governing Board welcomes new members Jim Gillis (Treasurer), Dan Greco (Member at Large) and Tina Holden Shea (Member at Large).

Finally, we'd like to remind all BSC members and friends that Governing Board meetings are open to all. We meet the second Tuesday of each month in the Parish House at 7:30 p.m. and welcome guests. Please join us for a meeting (or two, or three).

In Peace,
The Governing Board

MEMBERSHIP AND CARING COMMITTEE

DEVELOPING A PLAN FOR GROWTH

As we talked about at the annual meeting, the Membership and Caring Committee is working on a plan for growth. At our last meeting we spent some time brainstorming ideas. Some of the ideas we came up with were:

- Advertising in local publications including, The Providence Journal, Options, and the Federal Hill Gazette.
- Outreach to local college campuses including providing pamphlets to chaplaincy offices.
- Reactivating our membership in the West Broadway Neighborhood Association.
- Advertising our events and activities, both spiritual and social justice, through the use of press releases.
- Developing an informational insert for inclusion in programs held by outside groups in Eddy Hall.
- Reorganizing the use of space in the foyer and Eddy Hall to highlight who we are, what we do, and how to become involved.

We have appointed a subcommittee of Richard Corso, Jen Shimkus and Peg Boyle to prioritize tasks and develop a formal plan for growth. Your input is welcomed. If you have other ideas I would encourage you to attend the next Membership and Caring Committee meeting on Thursday, June 12, at 7 p.m. If you cannot attend the meeting, please feel free to speak to one of us or e-mail me at Richard-Corso@gmail.com.

Once we develop the plan we will present it to the congregation. At that point we will need the help of the entire congregation to implement it. You will be hearing more about this in the coming months.

~Richard Corso