

MOVIE NIGHT IS BACK !

The Rocky Horror Picture Show!!!!
Friday, Sept. 14, 6:30 p.m. in Eddy Hall

Intermission is over and Bell Street Chapel will start the new Movie Night season with a BANG on Friday, Sept. 14, at 6:30 p.m. We will show *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, the 1975 musical comedy that has become a cult classic. It stars Tim Curry, Susan Sarandon and Barry Bostwick. We chose this film not only because it is relevant to our theme of movies that examine gender identity issues, but also because we suspect that Dr. Frank-N-Furter, the "Sweet Transvestite from Transsexual, Transylvania" just might be a UU! There are many UUs in Transylvania, you know (no joke).

Last season we enjoyed excellent, acclaimed films that had gender identity themes. They ranged from heartbreaking to hysterically funny; most of them, like life, evoked a combination of emotions. Our conversations afterward, discussing characters as diverse as Lucien in "Ma Vie En Rose," Hedwig in "Hedwig and the Angry Inch," Roy in "Normal," and Kitten in "Breakfast on Pluto," were enlightening and uplifting.

This season we plan to show "To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar" on October 12; "Soldier's Girl" in November; and "Home for the Holidays" in December. Attendees will help us decide what movies to schedule in 2008, but the whole season promises to be as good as the last.

Thanks to Genevieve Peri, our talented audiovisual technician, we will watch these films on a large screen with excellent acoustics, while sharing a pot-luck dinner.

So bring some food to share and your water pistol (no rice please) and join us on Friday, Sept. 14, at 6:30 p.m. in Eddy Hall. And bring your friends. The more the merrier.



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"**



■ SEPTEMBER

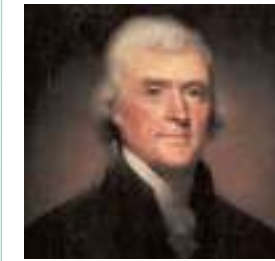
■ 2007

BELL STREET COLUMNS

NEWSLETTER FOR THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF BELL STREET CHAPEL



ASSOCIATION SUNDAY | OCTOBER 21



Thomas Jefferson once wrote to a friend that he believed every American would eventually be a Unitarian. Our experience over

the intervening years has proven that his prediction is far from the mark. True, the 19th century turned out to be a high point in both the Unitarian and Universalist movements but during the 20th and so far in the 21st we struggled to hold our own. As a movement we have much to do. According to statistics provided by the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), two-thirds of our congregations have fewer than 150 members. Less than 5 percent have over 550 members, and only 5 congregations out of 1,042 can count their membership in four figures. We are about the same number of members now as we were at

the time of merger in 1961. We are a movement of small congregations, and as such we have a lot of work to do. In 1946, architect and Unitarian Frank Lloyd Wright wrote "The Unitarian Church, . . . always a leader in the ethical thought of humanity . . . must resolve to lead, or we will all be led to destruction."

On Oct. 21 we will join with thousands of other UUs across the nation in celebrating our shared commitment on Association Sunday. We will join with hundreds of congregations in taking a special collection dedicated to funding outreach efforts to increase our numbers.

More information will be forthcoming about this effort. In the meantime you are being asked to consider a significant contribution to help support this effort. Our spirit, influence, and values are needed to help heal our wounded world.

At the same time it is also important to be aware of the differences between the activities of a settled minister versus those of an interim minister.

What you can expect to happen during the coming year, or two, will be the focus of this service.

**30 | SEPTEMBER
TBD**

Lay-led Service

SERMON COLLECTION

A bound collection of Rev. Steve Landale's sermons has been donated to Bell Street Chapel by Kelly LoGiudice. The 20 favorite sermons from 2001 to 2007 include topics as varied as the two pillars of UU, marriage equality and even themes and lessons from the Lord of the Rings. If you are interested in reading this collection, please sign it out from the parish house. Kelly hopes that this book adds to the documented history of Bell Street.

BELL STREET CHAPEL

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MINISTERS

REV. WILLARD ROBINSON, *INTERIM PARISH MINISTER*
 REV. MARY MARGARET EARL, *COMMUNITY MINISTER*
 REV. BEN HALL, *COMMUNITY MINISTER*

CHURCH STAFF

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

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 CAROL CROWLEY, *VICE PRESIDENT*
 JENNIFER SHIMKUS, *TREASURER*
 MEREDYTH WATERMAN, *SECRETARY*
 TARA ANDERSON, *AT-LARGE*
 GREG GRECO, *AT-LARGE*
 ELLEN KELLNER, *AT-LARGE*

STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

MEREDYTH WATERMAN, *EDITOR*
 TERRY BARBOUNIS, *LAYOUT/DESIGN*

CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS



BITS FROM THE BOARD

Here are the highlights from business taken up by the Governing Board in July and August. If you have any comments or would like more information about anything the Board is doing, please ask a Board member.

- We signed a contract with our new Interim Minister, the Rev. Bill Robinson, who began his duties Aug. 1, and has been hard at work getting to know our church and its members and friends.

- We hired Heidi Gilkenson as our new office manager effective Aug. 7, and she too, dove into her work.

- We backed the Parish and Social Concern Committee's petition to get the Unitarian Universalist Association to stop investing with Fidelity, which invests in companies that are helping to fund the genocide in Sudan. (None of the UUA's funds are directly invested in those companies, but the petition is part of an effort to get Fidelity to stop investing any of the money it manages in those companies.)

- The members of the board signed a covenant to work in the interest of our chapel, to practice right relations, to actively participate in board activities, to be accountable and to remember that our church work is a sacred activity.

- We've documented the responsibilities of board members and church staff.

- We decided to invite each committee to one of our meetings through the year as a means of facilitating communication

- We discussed the upcoming leadership retreat on Sept. 7 and 8. We discussed the status of our effort to hire a cleaning contractor.

~ Meredyth Waterman,
 Secretary

SEPTEMBER | 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 8am sitting Meditation (S)
2 9am Choir (S) 10am Service (S) 11am coffee hour (EH) 11:30am sandwiches (EH)	3 Labor Day	4 6:30pm Worship Committee (PH)	5 6pm order of service Deadline	6	7 6pm Leadership retreat begins	8 8am sitting Meditation (S) Leadership retreat ends
9 9am Choir (S) 10am Service (S) 11am coffee hour (EH)	10 7pm Finance Committee (PH)	11 7:30pm Governing Board (PH)	12 6pm order of service Deadline	13 7pm Bible Study (PH)	14 6:30pm Movie Night	15 8am Walking mediation (S) 3pm Marsh Cleanup (MPL)
16 9am Choir (S) 10am Service (S) 11am coffee hour (EH) 4pm Marsh rain date (MPL)	17	18 7:15pm House (PH)	19 6pm order of service Deadline	20	21	22
23 9am Choir (S) 10am Service (S) 11am coffee hour (EH) 8pm Newsletter deadline	24	25 6pm Parish & Social Concerns (EH) 7pm Membership (PH)	26 6pm order of service Deadline 6:30pm Leadership Development (PH)	27	28	29
30 9am newsletter fold (EH) 9am Choir (S) 10am Service (S) 11am coffee hour (EH)						

FINANCE COMMITTEE OUR FINANCIAL HEALTH

The Finance Committee would like to welcome you to the new fiscal year. The end-of-year figures from the last fiscal year are shown below. We came out ahead last year for a number of reasons. Budget cuts were made, the office manager's hours were cut, the cleaning company contract was stopped, the sparkle project was introduced, and our office manager moved on to another job. In addition to lowered expenses, we had increased money from the trustees and non-pledged Sunday collections were higher than expected and made up for other income that fell short of our budget. With your help and patience, we have made it through another year and things are looking upward.

During the current fiscal year, all committee budgets were increased. This was due to our going to a part-time minister. In an effort to manage our expenses better, we ask that all committee members make requests through their committee chairs before making expenditures. Committee chairs will be receiving monthly reports and thus can monitor committee expenses and ensure that they are within their budget. We also ask everyone to please turn in reimbursement forms no later than 30 days after the expense has incurred.

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

~ The Finance Committee

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

	JULY-JUNE ACTUAL	JULY-JUNE BUDGET	VARIANCE	ANNUAL BUDGET
INCOME				
- PLEDGES	\$54,048.00	\$56,257.00	(\$2,209.00)	\$56,257.00
- SUNDAY COLLECTIONS	\$25,784.00	\$7,600.00	\$18,184.00	\$7,600.00
- INTERESTS AND INVESTMENTS	\$37,565.00	\$40,980.00	(\$3,415.00)	\$40,980.00
- RENTALS	\$10,800.00	\$13,567.00	(\$4,000.00)	\$14,800.00
- EVENTS AND FUNDRAISING	\$4,646.00	\$6,417.00	(\$1,339.00)	\$7,000.00
- OTHER INCOME	\$7,820.00	\$12,051.00	(\$5,326.00)	\$13,146.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$141,677.00	\$139,783.00	\$1,894.00	\$139,783.00
EXPENSES				
- SALARY AND BENEFITS	\$96,595.00	\$96,718.00	(\$8,915.00)	\$105,511.00
- ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES	\$17,830.00	\$13,146.00	\$3,489.00	\$14,341.00
- BUILDING AND GROUNDS	\$11,297.00	\$11,848.00	(\$1,628.00)	\$12,925.00
- DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS	\$0.00	\$275.00	(\$300.00)	\$300.00
- OTHER EXPENSES	\$11,548.00	\$6,147.00	\$4,842.00	\$6,706.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$137,270.00	\$139,783.00	(\$2,513.00)	\$139,783.00
NET INCOME GAIN/LOSS	\$4,407.00	\$0.00	\$4,407.00	\$0.00

CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS

CHAPEL CLEANING

When we approved our budget for this fiscal year at the annual meeting in May, many of us were relieved that we would be able to include \$4,000 for cleaning services. However, what that meant wasn't exactly clear at the time.

As things stand right now, we have not contracted with a new cleaning service yet. We still have some unpaid debt to the cleaner we had the year before last that will have to be paid out that funding before we can contract with a new service. It may be a few months before we are in a position to sign a new cleaning contract. We have just begun to explore the options that are available from local cleaners.

The long and short of it is, we are still responsible for cleaning the chapel and the parish house ourselves. Our Sparkle Project has now been going on for over a year, and some participation has dropped off. As reigning Cleaning Czarina, I'm looking for your help. Please help keep our chapel clean by picking up after yourself after coffee hour, especially if you are responsible for coffee hour during a particular week, and after meetings. Please take your trash out to the Dumpster after meetings, too.

And if you're willing to take vacuum in hand for Bell Street Chapel, by all means please do. Nobody's going to feel hurt that you helped out with his or her cleaning job, so if you notice something that needs doing, feel free. We keep cleaning supplies in the sexton's closet, which is in the second vestibule off the lobby of the chapel (the one with the second set of front doors that we usually don't use). And if you'd like to take over a regular task for a few months, please see me. Also, if you're one of the kind folks who has volunteered for a regular task and you're no longer doing it or would like to stop, please let me know. There's no shame in it – we said these

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

FROM THE BOARD

It's sometimes said that many people are "foul-weather" UUs, because attendance at our services is usually significantly lower in the summertime – so low that some congregations don't meet at all or meet less frequently during these months. We're a group that appreciates what the earth gives us, and the great opportunities for travel and leisure in the summer are certainly among its greatest gifts.

And while it's true that our summer services this year have been relaxed events held in Eddy Hall, this summer has actually been a very busy time in our chapel. As we welcome our members and friends back this fall, we have a number of exciting changes to announce.

As you probably know by now, we have a new interim minister, the Rev. Willard (Bill) Robinson, who began his ministry with us Aug. 1. He's been quick to learn the ropes (as well as an impressive number of members' names) at Bell Street, and has already shown us that he'll be a great resource in helping our church understand itself and determine its direction as we move forward in calling a new settled minister in the next year or two.

Also, at long last, we have hired a new office manager, Heidi Gilkenson. She started working Aug. 7, and has also been enthusiastic and quick to catch on. After several months of being without an office manager, it will greatly help the daily operations of our church to have someone in the office, answering the phone, handling issues and generally making things run smoothly.

At its August meeting, the members of the new governing board signed a covenant that says we promise to do our best to work in the interest of our chapel, to practice right relations, to actively participate in board activities,

to be accountable and to remember that our best to work in the interest of our chapel, to practice right relations, to actively participate in board activities, to be accountable and to remember that our church work is a sacred activity. We feel that since Unitarian Universalism is a covenantal faith, it is important that we all make these specific promises as we head into our terms of serving Bell Street Chapel. We will reread the covenant at our meetings as the year moves along to remind ourselves of these promises.

Even though summer may seem like a sleepy time in many UU churches, here at Bell Street it was pretty eventful. The changes here at Bell Street are very positive and encouraging ones that will help us continue to grow as an organization and as a resource that helps encourage our members and friends along their own spiritual paths. We look forward to an active and exciting year at Bell Street Chapel.

In service and friendship,
~ *Meredyth Waterman*
Secretary

were all temporary jobs, and I truly appreciate all the work you've done over the past year.

I will likely organize a single "spring-cleaning" type event sometime this fall (quite possibly Sept. 2 – listen up for an announcement on Sunday) to just take care of some of the things that don't get done as often. I'll let you know more as that develops, and I hope you'll consider helping out.

We hope to hire a cleaning service at some point in the coming months, so we're just asking everyone to help out for a few more months, and I'm really only concerned about keeping the most visible, important areas of the chapel clean. It's more important that our guests see a clean sanctuary carpet than that the cobwebs be cleared out of the secret stairway behind Eddy Hall. (If this article makes you go looking for that stairway, though, please feel free to clear out the cobwebs while you're there if you feel moved.)

Thanks very much to everyone who's helped with the Sparkle Project so far, and I'm grateful to everyone for helping keep our chapel clean during the next few months. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at MeredythW@aol.com or (401) 451-2322.

Yours in the battle against the dust bunnies,
Meredyth Waterman





MARSH CLEANUP

It may seem like just yesterday that we visited our adopted marsh on the Providence waterfront, but it's already time for us to do our fall cleanup.

Our second one is timed to coincide with the International Coastal Cleanup (although Save the Bay will actually be observing that holiday a week earlier.) We'll meet at 3 p.m. (the time of low tide that day) at the Bell Street Chapel parking lot and drive over to our marsh, which is on Oxford Street. We usually clean for a little more than an hour, depending on the heat and our energy.

This time, in connection with the global effort going on that day, Save the Bay has asked us to record the trash that we find using a special checklist. This means we'll have to work in pairs and the effort might be a little slower than it was during our June cleanup. So the more people who show up, the better!

Save the Bay, as always, has provided us with bags and plastic gloves, but you are strongly advised to bring your own work gloves, and to wear sturdy sneakers or boots. We come across a lot of broken glass and the occasional other sharp object, so this activity is not really good for the kids. And on a related note, this event will feature the second twice-annual Bell Street Marsh Cleanup Bio-hazard contest. Can you unseat reigning champion Tom Mack?

Our cleanup in June was very encouraging because the site was actually not that messy when we started. It'll be interesting to see if it's still looking good when we get there this time. It's possible that the police are patrolling the area more often, or perhaps some of the folks who have dumped trash there in the past have noticed that somebody is taking care of it and have felt moved to put their trash someplace more appropriate. At any rate, it's satisfying to see that things are looking up at our

little marsh, and to help it look even better. Please join us and do a little bit to help our planet.

~ *Meredyth Waterman*

CLARIFYING OUR ROLES IN A TIME OF TRANSITION

In the past several months, a number of people at Bell Street have asked us questions regarding our roles as Community Ministers.

With Steve Landale's departure and the congregation's decision to explore part-time ministry, some parishioners have wondered whether we might play a larger role at Bell Street. Others have simply wondered again exactly what our role as Community Ministers is – what it means for us and what it means for Bell Street Chapel.

Regarding the latter – our roles in general – Don Laliberte, our President, has suggested that the two Community Ministers strategize with the Board during the coming months to find ways that we can educate and communicate with the congregation to clarify and deepen our roles and relationships in the Bell Street Community. Both of us look forward to this process.

Regarding our roles during Bell Street's interim period, we have discerned that they will not change substantially from our roles previously. Bell Street Chapel is in a period of self-exploration and self-discovery right now. One important aspect of this is that we as a congregation are exploring what kind of professional ministry we will have. Our Interim Minister, the Rev. Bill Robinson, will serve half-time. This will be a big change from the full-time ministry of Steve Landale. For one thing, it will create more Sundays on which worship will not be led by the Parish Minister (Bill).

While it might seem tempting to ask the Community Ministers to help to "fill in the gaps" left by our new half-time parish ministry, we believe it wise not to do so for two reasons.

First, if one of the goals of the Bell Street community is to discern what kind of ministry it wants and can afford, then it will be valuable for the community to experience realistically what half-time professional ministry feels like. Having the Community Ministers filling in gaps would only skew the picture of how well such a ministry serves the community – i.e., whether it is a good fit, or not. The second reason is that both of us serve (still) in ministry positions outside the congregation that are full-time or more. While being a part of a congregation is vital for our religious and ministerial lives, the time and energy we have to contribute in ministerial terms is limited, simply to preserve our sanity and respect our personal boundaries. What this means in practical terms is that we will continue to attend worship when possible, and continue to contribute to the parish community in various ways, including leading worship 1-2 times each per year and providing backup pastoral care.

We each feel grateful to be part of the Bell Street community – honored to participate in parish life and to experience, with you, this time of transition. Our hopes and prayers are with the congregation as we journey through this part of Bell Street's history.

We look forward, too, to working with the board in the ongoing process of explaining and exploring how we – Community Ministers and congregation – can relate to each other in ever more mutually nourishing ways.

In Faith,
~ *Rev. Ben Hall and
Rev. Mary Margaret Earl*

IN THE INTERIM...

Greetings:

I am the Reverend Bill Robinson, your Interim Minister, and I am taking this opportunity to introduce myself. I have already met many of you during committee meetings, Sunday services, and working around the Parish House. Everyone has been enthusiastic, friendly, and very supportive. I feel truly welcomed to your community and look forward to meeting all of you.

For the past two years I have been Interim Minister at the First Universalist Society in Salem, Mass. In June that congregation jubilantly called a new settled minister. Bell Street and First Universalist are both urban congregations, are comparable in size, and have similar concerns.

My wife, Gretchen, and I live in Attleboro. She is the part-time minister at Channing U. U. Church in Rockland, Massachusetts. She is also the Spiritual Coordinator for the Hospice Program of the Community Visiting Nurses Association in the greater Attleboro area.

We have one son, a daughter-in-law and two delightful grandchildren, ages 5 and 6 1/2. Recently they all relocated to North Carolina to take advantage of job opportunities.

Pieces by me in future church newsletters will often contain information pertaining to the interim process. Having a firm understanding of this process is vital because calling a minister is the most important activity that you and other church members will do over the coming year or two.

At the Sunday service on September 23rd I will speak in some detail about the role of an Interim Minister and about the interim year, so I hesitate to go over that information now. However, I will venture to say that an Interim's primary tasks are twofold.

First, to structure a breathing space between prior and succeeding ministers; and second, to facilitate a process that will help you prepare for your next settled minister.

During the coming year we will look at the "story" of the church from the perspective of its ministries, something that clergy and congregants do jointly. You will be invited to share your accounts about what you enjoyed and didn't, and about what worked well for you and didn't. We'll look at where the congregation is now, where you have been in the past, and where you hope to be in the future. For those who are relatively new, workshops will provide you with insights into your congregation. For those who have been around for a while I invite you to attend to help everyone deepen their understanding of Bell Street Chapel as a vital living system.

I will be holding office hours and invite you to call me for an appointment. Initially, they will be on Tuesday afternoons 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. and Thursday evenings 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., but other days and times are definitely available. If you prefer to just stop by, I'll be happy to meet with you providing the time is open. If you would like a home visit, please call me at the church or send an email to RevBillRobinson@BellStreetChapel.org.

I am glad to be with you and eagerly look forward to the upcoming church year. Together we will make this year productive and enjoyable.

~ *Rev. Bill*

UU RETREAT FOR WOMEN

"Conscious Choices for Sustaining a Livable Planet" is the theme for the Womensphere retreat to be held for all women in the Ballou Channing District Saturday, Sept. 29, through Sunday, Sept. 30, at Senexet House in Woodstock, Conn., about 40 miles west of Providence. Registration begins at 9 a.m., followed by a reflective presentation by Chris Loughlin on the issues facing us as we meet the challenge of living in harmony with our planet. The weekend will include socializing, relaxing or walking the lovely lakeside grounds. The cost of \$107 includes four meals (request vegetarian on the registration form if desired) and overnight accommodations in dorm-style rooms with shared bathrooms. Scholarships are available.

Come and join the UU women of southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island and give yourself a weekend treat. Look for fliers in the chapel, or contact Bell Street's own Kate Gillis, ksgillis@netzero.net or (401) 823-7929.

Womensphere is an organization of the Ballou Channing District that provides programming for all women in the district.

LEADERSHIP

LEADERSHIP RETREAT CEDAR HILL SEPT. 7-8, 2007

The annual leadership retreat will be held at the beautiful Cedar Hill Retreat Center in Duxbury, Mass., from Friday, Sept. 7 (arrive any time after 3 p.m.) until the afternoon of Saturday, Sept. 8. 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.

All members of the Governing Board, Ministerial Search Committee, Committee on Ministry, and Nominating Committee, as well as the chairs of the standing committees are invited and encouraged to participate. The theme for the workshops will be "Getting to Know Ourselves as Individuals and as a Congregation." We will also be able to get acquainted with our new interim minister, Rev. Bill Robinson, as well as to form closer friendships among ourselves.

The good news is that the cost of the weekend retreat will be \$30, considerably less than previous years. The bad news is that 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. Consider preparing our meals a bonding experience. It will be fun, honest!!

So make sure this event is on your calendars. Details and directions will follow soon.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for submission of articles for the October edition of *Bell Street Columns* is Sunday, Sept. 23 at 8 p.m. **This deadline is firm.** Please attach a copy of your article in Word format via e-mail addressed to Meredyth Waterman at MeredythW@aol.com.

what you want and get in by the deadline. Help us get the most for our 41-cent stamps and contribute toward packing our newsletter with everything that inquiring minds want to know about Bell Street.

Please consider writing something for the newsletter whenever you or your committee have news to report, an event coming up, or a message you would like to share with the members and friends of Bell Street. It doesn't have to be long, flow like poetry or even adhere to the basic rules of grammar. It just has to say

VOLUNTEERISM TIPS FROM KELLY LOGIUDICE

Ask them. So many people say they want to help but no one ever called them or asked them. A personal contact makes all the difference.

Small bits. Break down big volunteer jobs into small parts so that people more readily feel they can fit them into their schedule. People are more likely to commit to a one-time volunteer bit rather than an ongoing every week commitment.

Make it fun and part of a spiritual practice. Volunteering doesn't have to be all work and no play. Always find a way to enjoy the time together volunteering either with some kind of spiritual reading, some humor and laughter or be creative and find other ways to incorporate fun and connection.

Document. Take photos and display them at Bell Street to show how much fun the event was so next time others will want to join in. This adds to our rich history at Bell Street. Leaders, make sure you write down what worked and what didn't work to pass it on to the next leaders.



YOUR SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

The members of the Worship Committee are Annette Briand, Tom Briand, Renae Chaves, Kate Gillis, Audrey Greene, Brian Kovacs, Betty Lamora, Ray Perreault, and Linda Skibski. We have great meetings! We discuss the large and small issues of worship, such as innocence, atheism, and whether there are enough candles or we should order more.



Of course, our priority is making sure that worship is a nurturing, supporting, and uplifting experience for everyone involved. We

coordinate services with our interim minister, Reverend Bill Robinson. We stay aware of important religious and spiritual occasions, such as Los Dios de las Muertes, Christmas, and Water Communion Sunday. We are also alert to current world events and our community's response. We try to make sure that services reflect our congregation's diverse religious and political make-up. We try to gauge Bell Street Chapel's emotional temperature as the year progresses so that our services reflect and respect the congregation.

When a lay-leader (technically a non-minister) steps up to lead a service, we are delighted! We try to make service-leading a comfortable and rewarding experience, helping with everything from submitting your service blurb to the newsletter editor, through how to use the microphone and light the chalice candle, to locking up the church after coffee hour. We are there for you!

Did I mention that we are delighted when people volunteer to lead a service? Especially through the next two years when we will be responsible for even more services as our half-time minister will be in the pulpit two Sundays a month. So, think about leading a service! Just because we make it look elegant and seamless and moving and professional, doesn't mean you can't do it too. We would especially ask the standing committees to offer to lead at least one service in the coming year so that the rest of us can see what you're all about and appreciate your contributions to Bell Street. Leading a service does not necessarily mean that you have to write a 10-minute address and then deliver it in ringing tones. You can ask for volunteers to find readings on your topic, or to give their own reflections. It's great when services reflect our diverse life experiences through the many voices at Bell Street Chapel.

We will be offering a worship-leading workshop this fall. Please consider attending if you can, and we will unmask and demystify the magic of leading worship.

And we love to have feedback on any of our services! Don't hesitate to come up to any of us at coffee hour or drop us an email.

The Worship Committee is dedicated to the art and science of creating consistently great worship experiences throughout the year.

-Audrey Greene

CONVENTION ON UNIVERSALIST SPIRITUALITY

"Universalist Spirituality" will be the theme of the New. Massachusetts Universalist Convention's Annual Conference on Saturday, Sept. 29, at All Souls UU Church, 196 Elm St., Braintree, Mass. (Despite its name, the convention serves UUs throughout all of New England.) Worship (*The Gift of Forgiveness*) will be led by the Rev. Olav Nieuwejaar. The keynote address (*Universalist Spirituality*) will be by the Rev. Richard Trudeau. The day's program will also include a presentation by the Rev. Edmund Robinson (*Universalism: Means of Salvation or the Coming World Religion?*), a panel of old-time Universalists reflecting on how Universalism as they remember it differs from today's UUism, a presentation about the Universalist Heritage Center in Winchester, NH, and a sing-along of Chris Raible's parodies of UU hymns. The day will run from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and will include a continental breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. Registration fliers will be sent to all UU churches in New England. For full information, please visit www.nmuc.org and click on "Annual Meeting."

