

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

5 | JULY

A QUESTION OF CHOICE

Worship Committee

Abortion, how do we talk about it?

12 | JULY

SUMMER POETRY

Worship Committee

Sitting in the cool of Eddy Hall, listening to the crisp and flowing, cool green words of great poets. What could be better?

19 | JULY

WHEN WE DISAGREE

Dan Greco

How can we, both as a congregation and as individuals, be strong advocates for our progressive religious values while upholding the worth and dignity of those who disagree with us?

26 | JULY

ETHICAL EATING

Ethical Eating Committee

What's better than talking about food? Pack a lunch and join us at Stu and Ellen Smith's farm after the service.

2 | AUGUST

STATUS QUO IS NOT AN OPTION

Rev. José Ballester

This year's Unitarian Universalist General Assembly should prove to be pivotal. Either we will chart a new direction for our movement or the delegates will hunt down the Trustees with torches and pitch forks. Rev. Ballester, our Consulting Minister and UUA Trustee, will reveal all the details. (Obviously if he's reporting it was not the latter.)

FROM THE GOVERNING BOARD — SUMMER AT BELL STREET

Like at many other UU churches, things slow down at Bell Street in the summertime. The Sunday services are more laid back and intimate. There are fewer tasks and events, and less busywork. Some committees take the summer off. Summer is an ideal time for rest and relaxation, to restore our energy and spiritual juices for the coming year. It is also an ideal time for us, both as a spiritual community and as individuals, to look inward at our spiritual paths. We may use this time to catch up on reading, to go outside and enjoy the healing nature of good weather and sunshine, or to learn a new hobby.

Summer can also be an ideal time to dig deeper spiritually, to go to a summer workshop or to develop a spiritual practice. The UUA provides many opportunities to dig deeper in the summer through workshops and trainings (<http://www.uua.org/events/>), including many offerings at nearby Ferry Beach in Saco, Maine.

Although the summer calendar at Bell Street will not be as full as usual, it will certainly not be empty. Bell Street is planning to offer 2 cookouts, the Bell Street annual cookout in June and an ethical eating cookout in July. Our Meditation group and our new drumming circle will march on as usual throughout the summer, and don't forget the Rhode Island International Film festival in August, when Bell Street Chapel will again be a featured venue.

Although it is easy for us to fill our calendars with social events, it's also important to use this break in the church year to take stock, to rest, and restore. We hope you join us at Bell Street this summer for our excellent lay services, our cookouts, and our spiritual and social justice opportunities.

~In faith,

Dan Greco, President Elect

23 | AUGUST

WHAT NOURISHES YOU?

Peace and Social Justice Committee

We will explore how people feed their souls in these times of economic despair.

30 | AUGUST

BELL STREET SINGS

Audrey Greene

Once more, the collected voices of Bell Street Chapel will rise and join in song. This is our annual a capella, all-singing, life-affirming celebration. Don't miss it!

9 | AUGUST

CELEBRATING THE LOVE OF MARRIAGE

Kathy Kushnir, Executive Director of Marriage Equality Rhode Island

For richer or poorer, in sickness and in health...Marriage Equality RI will host this service exploring the warmth, passion, respect and diversity of the partnership of marital love.

16 | AUGUST

BREAD AND ROSES

Rev. José Ballester

Many of our hymns have curious histories that belie their simple lyrics. Hymn #109 is based on a clarion call that is as powerful today as it was in its beginning. Learn its history and heed its call.

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joseballester@mac.com or (781) 264-3511*

REV. MARY MARGARET EARL
COMMUNITY MINISTER

REV. BEN HALL
COMMUNITY MINISTER

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

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NED FOSTER, SEXTON
IRENE ZABEK, CHILDCARE MANAGER

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ON THE ROAD TO PROVIDENCE

Russell was an amateur geologist, paleontologist and professional teacher. He took his young charges on an overnight field trip. Sitting around the campfire he brought out a bag and took out five rocks. Holding-up a round grapefruit sized rock. "This rock" he began explaining, "looks ordinary on the outside. But inside there is hidden beauty."

At that he opened the two halves of the rock to reveal all the purple crystals inside the geode. He then picked-up another rock of equal size and opened it to reveal a fossil. "This is the fossil of a Trilobite" Russell explained, "It was a sea creature that lived millions of years ago. All that remains is this impression of him. Minerals seeped into the mud that held his body and this is all that remains."

Next, he picked-up something that looked like a small wooden branch, "this branch is another fossil that looks like wood, but it really is a rock. And as we know wood burns, but not rocks." At that, Russell threw the rock that looked like a branch into the fire; it did nothing. Next he took out a flat, palm-sized rock and said, "Now watch closely." He threw the flat rock into the fire and it soon began burning. "That rock is called Oil Shale and has been used for fuel for hundreds of years."

He then began his lesson in earnest. "People can be as complex as these rocks. Too often all you see is a dull rough exterior but never suspect there is beauty inside as a crystal or a fossil. Sometimes they look like something else and behave in unexpected ways. And here is the true lesson from the rocks." At this he picked-up a round, black stone from a water filled container.

"I found this stone earlier today in the stream. As you can see the water has rounded the rock and the minerals have turned it black." He then hit the stone with a hammer and it broke in two. "As you can see the outside is still wet and the water has made it round and dark; but the inside is still dry and grey. A human heart, like a stone can be shaped by outside forces but its inside remains unchanged. Over time this stone will be further reduced, perhaps becoming a grain of sand that will find its way into an oyster and become a pearl. You never know what a human heart will become over time, so never lose hope in its potential."

~ Rev. José Ballester

ON THE ROAD TO WASHINGTON, DC

On October 10-11, 2009, people will gather in Washington DC from all across America to let our elected leaders know that now is the time for full equal rights for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people. We will gather. We will march. And we will leave energized and empowered to do the work that needs to be done in every community across the nation. My partner Don Laliberte and I have made the commitment to be there and we would like to invite anyone who is interested to join us. For more information, go to www.nationalequalitymarch.com.

Richard Corso

CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS



PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS

The name has changed, but the mission is the same. Our committee has changed it's name (which was approved of at the annual meeting) to better reflect what our committee work entails-working for peace and justice in our own community and within our larger community.

Nominations for Share the Plate are located in Eddy Hall. A nominated non-profit organization will be given a portion of our monthly offertory. Selected organizations are encouraged to provide a speaker or other information to the congregation during their designated month. Due to the smaller church attendance in the summer months of July and August, a single organization has been selected to get a portion of the offertory for those two months. The organization selected is "Trees 2020" a non-profit environmental project funded by the Helen Walker Raleigh Tree Care Trust Fund to increase the tree canopy in South Providence which will decrease summer temperatures, lower rates of childhood asthma, and increase bird habitat.

PROVISIONS UNITED'S CAR RAFFLE JULY 2009 — MPG - MEALS PER GALLON

Some VERY lucky and philanthropic person is going to drive away in a new 2010 Toyota Prius Hybrid car. Could this fortunate and car-ing person be you? ProVisions United, in association with Colonial Toyota & Amy's Apples will raffle off a Prius Hybrid (Go Green!) on July 24th, at the Colonial Toyota dealership located in Smithfield RI on Friday night (6-9 pm.). Only 500 tickets will be sold and everyone has a 1/500 chance to win. Tickets are priced at \$100 each. These are better odds than winning the national lottery! Monies raised will support ProVisions United, Cross Roads RI, Youth Pride International, McAuley House, and Manna Relief in support of local & global food and nutrition programs. For complete participating details and tickets explore www.ProVisionsUnited.Org or contact John Tarrats at # 401-965-9202.

EDDY HALL CHAIRLIFT, MORE TO COME

At its June meeting, the Governing Board voted to immediately contract the work to install the chairlift down to Eddy Hall. This is great news, particularly considering that we have now moved our services to Eddy Hall for the summer.

We are doing this with money that is already in our restricted account for handi-capped access. Last year we put that money into a CD, and that CD matures on July 11. We also voted at the June meeting to set up a separate money market account for restricted donations, primarily for the handicapped access project right now. A money market account, while not earning as much interest as a CD, will give us the flexibility to take out the money anytime, which is what we want because our goal is to install the other chairlift to the sanctuary this year as well.

Getting that chairlift sooner rather than later has a number of advantages: it can help members get to service this summer, and it can help all the people who use Eddy Hall, including other organizations, such as the Rhode Island International Film Festival, scheduled to use it in August. But it will also serve as a visible reminder that we are seriously working – and making real progress – toward completing the project and making our services accessible to more people.

That said, the Board also voted to accept restricted donations to be deposited into that money market account to install the other chairlift up to the sanctuary. Your donation of any size would be greatly appreciated! We will be looking to raise somewhere in the vicinity of about \$6,000 on top of money we already have and the money we expect to get from the Chalice Lighters grant we've been awarded by the Ballou Channing District. Chances are good we will need to run some fund raisers for this, so if you have any ideas and are willing to spearhead one, please contact me (MeredythW@aol.com or (401) 451-2322) or another Governing Board member.

~Meredyth Waterman
President

CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS

MOVIE NIGHT TAKES AN INTERMISSION

After another successful season of viewing and discussing films with gender identity themes, we will be taking a break for the summer. On September 18, we will resume our series with our annual showing of a cult classic. Our plan is to broaden the scope of Movie Night to include all films with gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender themes. If you would like to suggest a film for viewing and discussion, please let Carol Crowley or Brian Kovacs know. And stay tuned.

SHARE THE PLATE

Each month, Bell Street Chapel shares a portion of our offertory with a charitable organization in Rhode Island through our "Share the Plate" program. We donate half of the unallocated (non-pledge) donations received to an organization chosen by the Peace and Social Justice Committee. In May we were able to donate \$260.00 to Marriage Equality Rhode Island, an organization that advocates for equal marriage rights for same-sex couples in Rhode Island.

Thank you to everyone for your generosity, which allows us to share our gifts with the community



ETHICAL EATING: THE UUA STUDY/ACTION ISSUE (SAI) FOR 2008-2012

This summer marks the beginning of the second year of the UUA Study/Action Issue for 2008-2012, "Ethical Eating". Bell Street has been actively participating in this SAI.

We started off with the Ethical Eating Art Show – a beautiful, nonjudgmental, and fun way to call attention to the issue. We had some fascinating entries – ceramics, painting, sculpture, glass art, and even some living art in the form of composting worms at work in a glass container. Contributors ranged from professional artists to the children in our religious education program. All the art, be it beautiful, whimsical, or very serious, inspired thought and discussion about food and eating behavior.

The Ethical Eating Committee (Audrey Green, Carol Crowley, Rev. Mary Margaret Earl, and Carol Wiseman) offered a church service with reflections about food. We are planning another service for this summer.

Bell Street Chapel continues to serve fairly traded coffee at all social events. We make lunches for the homeless and hungry clients of Crossroads

once each month. And, as of June, Bell Street Chapel became a pick-up site for the neighborhood CSA (Community Supported Agriculture), Big Train Farm.

And each month we had a column about some aspect of Ethical Eating in the Bell Street Chapel newsletter. Food for thought (sorry about the food metaphors!) included articles on meatpacking plants, genetically modified foods, farms in Rhode Island, and the fish industry. We will continue these articles over the next few years with the hope that the information shared will stimulate thought, discussion, and decisions about what the term "ethical eating" means to each one of us. Some of us already eat a vegetarian or vegan diet; others eat locally produced fruits, vegetables, fish, shellfish, poultry, and livestock as much as possible. The important thing is not your own individual decision, but the thought and values behind that decision.

Plans for the future include the collection of recipes and the publication of a Bell Street Chapel Ethical Eating Cookbook, some adult education classes, and many more terrific meals.

ACTION: And speaking of wonderful meals, we hope you will join us at the BSC Ethical Eating Picnic at the home of Ellen and Stuart Smith after the Sunday service on July 26. Ellen and Stuart grow everything from asparagus to pumpkins in their large garden and raise chickens for eggs, both brown and green. In years past, when their four boys were living at home, they raised cows, goats, turkeys, and even a pig! Everyone is asked to bring a dish to share – something that illustrates what "ethical eating" means to you at this time. If you bring a homemade dish, please provide the recipe, which we will post on a bulletin board in Eddy Hall (and eventually include in the cookbook). A sign-up sheet will be in Eddy Hall starting in early July and we will provide directions to the Smith's farm.

We'd also love to hear from all you Bell Streeters with ideas for Year two of our UUA Study/Action issue, Ethical Eating.

Carol Crowley (ccrowley8@cox.net)

AFFAIRS



AMONG US

“To keep our faces toward change and behave like free spirits in the presence of fate is strength undefeatable..”

Helen Keller

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 Carol Crowley (ccrowley8@cox.net).

Welcome to the new members who joined our religious society on May 17. It is a pleasure to have Pamela Adams, Julie & Mykl Friend, Marvin Ronning, Elaine Stannard, Carlos Vega, and Chad Welch as part of the Bell Street community.

Congratulations to Elizabeth Ellison, the daughter of Jim Ellison, who graduated from Dartmouth College in May. Liz will go on to graduate school at Carnegie Mellon, where she will pursue an MFA. Liz is a gifted creative writer and aspires to write plays and screenplays for theatre and film.

Another talented Bell Streeter, our community minister Ben Hall, provided some details about his recently released CD. It contains eleven songs, all written, performed, and recorded by Ben himself. The songs reflect Ben's journey of self-discovery, including the experience of becoming a father for the first time in May, 2008. Congratulations, Ben!

Happy Birthday to the many Bell Streeters born during the summer months. They include our minister, Rev. Jose Ballester (7/9); Norma Nelson (7/13); Jennifer Shimkus (7/16); Wendy Schwartz (7/22); Jasmine Appleberry (8/10); and Don Laliberte (8/22). Very special birthday wishes to the children who celebrate summer birthdays – Cecily Goulis (8/8), Nicolas Friend (8/16), and Noah Barreto (8/28).

NEWSLETTER REMINDER

Please remember the deadline for the September newsletter is Sunday, August 16, at 8 p.m. Early submissions are encouraged and appreciated. Please do not wait until the last minute. Please e-mail your submissions as a Word attachment (in .doc format,) to Richard Corso at RichardCorso@gmail.com. Thanks!

*~Richard Corso
Columns Editor*

Happy Anniversary to Irina Tchantceva & Greg Balagian (7/16); Ben Hall & Stacy Christo (7/17); David Gleicher and Luz Bravo-Gleicher (7/27); Tom & Betty Lamora (7/27); Peg Boyle & Christopher Campanile (7/28); and Ellen & Stuart Smith (8/18).

Love and concern go to all our members who are enduring challenges and stresses during these difficult economic times. Love, too, to those dealing with health issues.

Thanks to Ellen Kellner, who hosted a memorable Memorial Day picnic at her lovely home in rural western Rhode Island. About twenty Bell Streeters, and four of our favorite dogs (Sage, Suzie, Oscar, and Annie!) enjoyed a delicious cook-out, a hike in the woods, and a sing-along (with three guitars and a banjo) on a spectacular sunny day. It was a little too cool for a swim in the pond, but Sage and Suzie went in. It was magical!

A generous member of the congregation has offered to provide rides to doctor appointments for anyone in need; if you would like to take advantage of this kind offer, contact Carol Crowley (ccrowley8@cox.net); she will pass on the information.

~From The Membership and Caring Committee

SUMMER READ-A-THON TO BENEFIT PROVIDENCE BOOKS THROUGH BARS

If you would like to read (at least) 10 books in 10 weeks to help us send books to prisoners (or would be willing to sponsor a reader at \$1.00 a book) please go to notaboutthebuildings.com or talk to Carol Wiseman. She can be reached at (401) 461-6903 or 3wisemans@gmail.com.

CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS

JULY | 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 6 pm Order of Service deadline	2	3	4 8am Meditation (EH)
5 9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am Coffee Hour (EH) 11:30 am Sandwiches (EH)	6 6 pm Empire Review rehearsal (S)	7 6:30 pm Worship Committee (PH)	8 6 pm Order of Service deadline	9 7 pm Membership Committee (PH)	10	11 8 am Meditation (EH) 10:30 am RISE tutoring (EH)
12 9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am Coffee Hour (EH) 11:30 Cleaning	13 6 pm Empire Review rehearsal (S) 6:30 pm Finance Committee (PH)	14	15 6 pm Order of Service deadline	16	17 7 pm Drum Circle	18 8 am Meditation (EH)
19 9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am Coffee Hour (EH)	20 6 pm Empire Review rehearsal (S)	21 6:45 pm Governing Board (PH) 7:15 pm House Committee (PH)	22 6 pm Order of Service deadline	23	24	25 10:30 am RISE tutoring (EH)
26 9 am Newsletter Folding (EH) 9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am coffee hour (EH) 11:30 am Religious Ed. comm. (RE) 12 pm Picnic (OS)	27 6 pm Empire Review rehearsal (S)	28 6:30 Peace and Social Justice Committee (PH)	29 6 pm Order of Service deadline	30	31	

CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS



AUGUST | CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						<p>1 8am Meditation (EH)</p>
<p>2 9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am Coffee Hour (EH) 11:30 am Cross-roads (EH)</p>	<p>3 6 pm Empire Review rehearsal (S)</p>	<p>4 6:30 pm Worship Committee (PH)</p>	<p>5 6 pm Order of Service deadline Rhode Island International Film Festival (EH)</p>	<p>6 Rhode Island International Film Festival (EH)</p>	<p>7 Rhode Island International Film Festival (EH)</p>	<p>8 8 am Meditation (EH) Rhode Island International Film Festival (EH)</p>
<p>9 9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am coffee hour (EH) 11:30 cleaning</p>	<p>10 6 pm Empire Review rehearsal (S) 6:30 pm Finance Committee (PH)</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12 6 pm Order of Service deadline</p>	<p>13 7 pm Membership and Caring Committee (PH)</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15 8 am Meditation (EH)</p>
<p>16 9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am coffee hour (EH) 8 pm newsletter deadline</p>	<p>17 6 pm Empire Review rehearsal (S)</p>	<p>18 6:45 pm Governing Board (PH) 7:15 pm House Committee (PH)</p>	<p>19 6 pm Order of Service deadline</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21 7 pm Drum Circle (EH)</p>	<p>22</p>
<p>23/30 9 am newsletter fold (8/30) (EH) 9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am coffee hour (EH) 11:30 am Religious Ed. comm. (8/23) (RE)</p>	<p>24/31 6 pm Empire Review rehearsal (S)</p>	<p>25 6:30 pm Peace and Social Justice Committee (PH)</p>	<p>26 6 pm Order of Service deadline</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>

BELL STREET CHAPEL AND THE RHODE ISLAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Once again, Bell Street Chapel will be a venue for the Rhode International Film Festival (RIIFF) August 4 - 9. This year we will be hosting the GLBT Sidebar Wednesday through Saturday nights. We will also be hosting several panel discussions about the issues of coming out and marriage equality. We hope to have several filmmakers with us for these discussions. Finally, on Friday night we will be hosting a drag show featuring Carmella Cann, direct from New York City.

Of course, with all this activity we are in need of volunteers to help. We are also seeking host families willing to host a visiting filmmaker for the week of

the festival. Volunteers receive a free pass for all festival screenings. Host families receive a pass that allows discounted entry to the opening night screenings and party at the Providence Performing Arts Center, access to all festival screenings, access to after hour filmmaker parties and other benefits. If you are interested in volunteering or hosting, please contact me via email at RichardCorso@gmail.com or phone (401) 383-7470.

Richard Corso



The Religious Society of Bell Street Chapel

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

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

