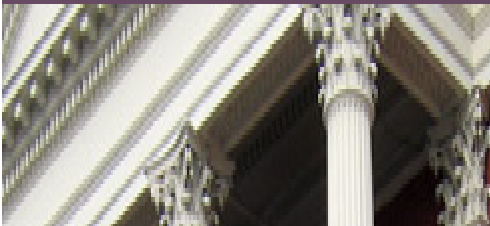


BELL STREET COLUMNS



NEWSLETTER FOR THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF BELL STREET CHAPEL

WORSHIP SERVICE SCHEDULE

SERVICES BEGIN AT 10 A.M.

TODDLER CARE AND SUNDAY SCHOOL AVAILABLE

4 | OCTOBER

TRAGEDIES AND MIRACLES: LESSONS LEARNED IN THE TRENCHES

Rev. Mary Margaret Earl

Rev. Mary Margaret and other Bell Street Chapel members reflect on what they have learned in their work facing poverty, mental illness, addictions and injustice.

11 | OCTOBER

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

Rev. José Ballester

This is Association Sunday. There are thousands of Unitarian Universalists in our congregations and thousands more that have not yet discovered that they are Unitarian Universalist. Our Association is working to help grow our faith by deepening the faith of our current members and awakening the faith of those who should be our members.

18 | OCTOBER

EQUALITY

Audrey Greene

A celebration of the struggle for gay rights in words and song.

25 | OCTOBER

QUESTIONS

Rev. José Ballester

In a recent article it was postulated that our faith can be understood through three questions. We will explore and expand those questions.

ON THE ROAD TO PROVIDENCE: RENEWAL

On September 13 the choir sang hymn #279 *By The Waters of Babylon*, during the Ingathering/Water Ceremony worship service. This hymn has been a favorite of mine for years and undergirded much of my justice work.

Curiously, I had never heard the hymn in my former church nor had my Roman Catholic faith embraced Psalm 137. My first encounter with the hymn was on when I had purchased the Don McLean album *American Pie*. One of the songs was entitled *Babylon*, which was McLean singing the hymn. I was enthralled by the mournful song and soon began singing it to myself. However the album did not have the words and I was not aware that the words were from the Psalm, so I sang the wrong words. Instead of "...we sat down and wept, and wept for thee, Zion. We remember...thee Zion" I thought it said "...we sat down and wept and wept for these our young. Please remember...these our young."

Perhaps it was my misinterpretation of the song/hymn that held such power for me. Over the years I had seen what injustice, poverty and violence had done to the young. Hunger, civil rights violations and the war in South East Asia had all contributed to inflict suffering and death upon the young and innocent. Even as the psalmist lamented the loss of Zion, I lamented the loss of the young. *Babylon* became my clarion call and remembering the suffering of others resulted in my zeal for peace and justice.

Remembering the suffering of others, especially the young, shaped my faith and forged the statement I use to describe Unitarian Universalism: *My faith does not tell me that my sisters and brothers are suffering, hungry and afraid it asks me "Why have you let your sisters and brothers suffer, go hungry and be fearful? And what are you going to do about it?"* I sang my misquoted song as I watched volunteers rebuild firebombed African American churches, as they assisted the victims of disasters, assisted migrant workers who were being exploited, and inner-city youth who had been trapped by the lure of gang life. I sang my misquoted song while marching for immigrants' rights, testifying for marriage equality and demonstrating for reproductive choice.

I have spent most of my ministry responding to that call and helping others to hear that same call. Faith becomes faith when we act upon that faith turning it into action. Without acting upon faith all we say and sing are mere words. So I will continue to sing my misquoted song not for the beauty of the words or for the harmonious melody but for the gripping images it invokes. I invite you to join me in remembering these young and working to change the world.

Rev. José Ballester

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

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COMMUNITY MINISTER

REV. BEN HALL

COMMUNITY MINISTER

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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

MEREDYTH WATERMAN, PRESIDENT

DAN GRECO, PRESIDENT-ELECT

JIM GILLIS, TREASURER

CAROL CROWLEY, SECRETARY

RAY PERREAULT, AT-LARGE

DON LALIBERTE, PAST PRESIDENT

STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS

EVENTS, ELLEN KELLNER

FINANCE, GREG GRECO

HOUSE, OPEN

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT,

JASMINE APPLEBERRY

MEMBERSHIP/CARING, RICHARD CORSO

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, KATE GILLIS

PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE, OPEN

WORSHIP, AUDREY GREENE

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

EDITOR, RICHARD CORSO &

DON LALIBERTE

COPY EDITOR, ELLEN SMITH

ORIGINAL DESIGN BY TERRY BARBOUNIS

FROM THE BOARD: RENEWAL

Bell Street Chapel has always been the Little Church That Could: a small group with big goals and ideas. And for probably as long as we've been around, that's meant that being a leader here can be a demanding job spread among too few people. It's easy for folks in leadership to lose touch with the rewards of being a leader in such a worthwhile group when we're flooded with a near-constant stream questions, problems and tasks, and never seem to have enough help to do the work.

As summer came to a close this year, many church leaders were feeling burnt out and worried about the future of our congregation. For that reason the Governing Board planned our annual leadership retreat with a focus on renewing ourselves, our leadership and our commitment to our beloved church community. The goal was to remind ourselves why we choose to be leaders of this church.

What we found was that we all became leaders because we believe in our liberal faith, we want to nurture it in ourselves and in others, and we want to work together on common goals to make the world a better place. When we feel burnt out, it's usually because the mundane details of everyday church life overwhelm us and we lose sight of the spiritual aspect of our work.

What we all need to remember is that we are not just an organization that does good things, like a fraternal club or a scout troop. We are a church, and we are all here because we need spiritual nourishment. We have to remember that we serve because we are called to do so by our religious faith.

What we as leaders needed to remind ourselves was that there is holiness in all work that we do to support Bell Street Chapel, we just need to take the time to find it and appreciate it. There is something spiritually fulfilling in coming together, whether for church services, committee meetings, a social thing like Movie Night or a service event like last month's marsh cleanup, because we all believe that we must work together to heal our world. We need to make sure we don't lose sight of that spiritual connection that we all share, even as we are all on our own unique spiritual journeys.

If I do say so, the result was the most renewing leadership conference I've ever attended. The small group of leaders who participated in the 24-hour event all said that it was just what they needed to renew our energy and drive to help lead our church toward strength, activism and spiritual growth over the coming year. This is a message that has value to everyone in our church, not just committee chairs and board members. Remember that even in the little things you do to support greater goals, there is holiness. Find it, savor it and be nourished from it.

In Faith,
Meredyth Waterman
President

A F F A I R S

FOLK COFFEE HOUSE WITH THE MOORE BROTHERS

On Thursday, October 15, at 7:00p.m., Bell Street is fortunate to be hosting The Moore Brothers, two folk singers from San Francisco who will be stopping in Providence on their first tour up the east coast. This is also a benefit concert for the Bell Street disability access fund. The Moore Brothers' sounds are reminiscent of the Beatles, Neil Young, the Grateful Dead and the Everly Brothers and have been well reviewed and received on the west coast. Come out and show them some east coast/Bell Street hospitality as they make their debut east coast tour, enjoy these two talented musicians, and help the disability access fund at the same time. Check out their music and videos on their websites at www.themoorebros.com or myspace.com/themoorebros. Tickets are \$10.

TRANSITIONS

Bell Street Chapel would like to thank Frank Faltus and Clara Hardy, both of whom recently stepped down from their roles as chairpersons of the House and Peace and Social Justice Committees, respectively. Both Clara and Frank had led their committees for several years, and both felt that they needed a break from leadership while other commitments made demands on their lives. On behalf of the Governing Board and our congregation, I'd like to give some hearty and well-deserved thanks to Clara and Frank. Our Leadership Development Committee will work hard to help new leaders to step into their leadership posts, and I'm sure the House and Peace and Social Justice Committees appreciate their years of work and dedication.

~Meredyth Waterman
President

BOARD BITS

In this monthly column, we summarize the recent activities and decisions of the Governing Board of Bell Street Chapel. It is our goal to keep you as informed as possible about what we do at our meetings, as we represent and are answerable to you, the congregation. Also, we remind you that all our meetings are open. We would be happy if members of the congregation attended. If you would like to make suggestions for the agenda, and speak to the president, Meredyth Waterman.

At our meeting on September 8, we finalized arrangements for the Leadership Retreat and made plans for a Congregational meeting after the 9/20 service on Behavioral Covenants. We also scheduled a "Conversations with the Board" session for October 21 (Wednesday) at 7 PM in the Parish House; all Bell Streeters are invited to ask questions, make suggestions, etc.

We voted to purchase a new sound system for which the Trustees will provide the funds. We recognize that a good, well-functioning sound system is absolutely essential.

We recently received word that Bell Street Chapel has received a Chalice Lighters Grant from the Ballou-Channing District in the amount of \$2845.00 for the purpose of improving accessibility. We have been making good progress with plans to install a chair lift to provide handicapped access to Eddy Hall. A city engineer has approved the plans and an application for a permit from the city has been submitted. We are exploring the options for accessibility to the Sanctuary.

The Board also reviewed, discussed, and voted to approve the newly revised Policies & Procedures Manual. Thanks to our president, Meredyth Waterman, and her committee (Jen Shimkus and Jim Gillis) for a very long and difficult job well done! We will soon move on to a review of the by-laws.

Clara Hardy and Frank Faltus have resigned from their positions as chairs of the P&SJ and the House Committee respectively. The Board expressed gratitude for their service as chairs for the last several years. Both will continue as members of their committees. The Leadership Development Committee will seek to fill the vacant chairs.

That is a summary of the important work of your Board in September.

~Carol Crowley, Secretary



CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS

NEWSLETTER REMINDER

Please remember the deadline for the November newsletter is Sunday, October 11, 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 RichardCorsoatgmail.com. Thanks!

~Richard Corso, Columns Editor



CONVERSATION WITH THE GOVERNING BOARD

Got an idea for Bell Street Chapel? Got questions or comments about where we're going as a church? Just want some face time with your friendly neighborhood church leaders? Then come to the Conversation with the Board, Wednesday, Oct. 21, at 7 p.m. in the Parish House. The Governing Board is making an effort to schedule a few of these opportunities throughout the year to give Bell Streeters a chance to chat about whatever is on their minds. There's no agenda, and you are welcome to come for the whole thing (we'll probably be there until about 8:15 p.m. or 8:30 p.m.) or just long enough to chat about whatever you'd like. Coffee and pastries will be available. We held the first such conversation in the spring, and enjoyed a lively conversation with a number of folks from our church community who care about what we're doing and where we're going together. Please come and take advantage of this opportunity to talk with us about whatever is on your mind.

Meredyth Waterman, President

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

	Actual 7/1-9/2	Budgeted 7/1-9/2	+/-
Total Income	21,530.36	21,892.38	-362.02
Total expenses	24,315.05	21,893.80	-2421.25
Total +/-			-2783.27
Pledge Income	10,101.00	6688.90	+3,212.10



So far, the financial outlook of the church has been good. This month's numbers show us in the black because they include an additional month of payments to our staff, given that the report was given out after the end of the month. We are ahead of schedule with pledges and received over \$800 from RIFF and \$400 from the concert series! We are also doing well with rental income for Eddy Hall. We still have a healthy amount in our checking account. We are behind however, in unrestricted donations (our cash collection). Giving cash is a chance to not only help Bell Street Chapel, but other institutions we care about through our share the plate program. As we head into winter, and gas prices climb, it is critical that we maintain consistency with our pledges and continue to come up with creative and fun fundraising activities. Please come see the Finance Committee, Greg Greco, Phil Smith, and Jim Gillis, with any questions.

-In Peace, Love and Justice
Gregory Greco, Finance Committee Chair

MARCH FOR MARRIAGE EQUALITY—SATURDAY OCTOBER 17

Come out and MARCH to the State House for Marriage Equality on October 17th. Every town in Rhode Island will be represented. March with your neighbors, or local organization. Our New England sister states will all join us in our call to action. The time is NOW to send a clear message to our state legislators that MARRIAGE EQUALITY must be the law in Rhode Island. Don't miss this great day of solidarity and action....and fun. We will gather at Burnside Park (opposite Kennedy Plaza) at 10:00 AM. The march to the State House will begin at 11:00 AM, followed by Rally for Marriage Equality on the south steps of the RI State House at 1:00 PM.

After the rally, at 4:00 PM, there will be a Marriage Equality Reception at Downcity Diner, 50 Weybosset Street, followed by other fun events. For more information, visit: www.MarriageEqualityRI.org.

CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS

Among Us

“For here we are not afraid to follow the truth wherever it may lead.”

Thomas Jefferson

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 (ccrowley@atcox.net).

Pamela Adams was selected for an Outward Bound expedition in northern Canada in mid-September. She will be canoeing and rock-climbing and camping. It sounds like an exciting trip and we look forward to hearing about it. She should be back by the time this newsletter is published.

Several Bell Streeters have suffered recent losses. Our sympathy goes to Tom Mack, who lost his brother, and to Peg Boyle and Richard Muto, who lost their fathers.

It has been over a year now since Carl Freese received his heart transplant; he is doing extremely well. We hope for the day when his immune system will be strong enough to allow him to come to Sunday services.

Bell Streeters celebrating birthdays in October include Arline Davis and Steve Kagan. And we should also wish a happy birthday to one of our favorite pets, Sage Faltus, who will be five (human) years on October 13 (how many dog years is that?). Anniversary wishes to Wendy Schwartz and Steve Barreto and to Kathy Lannigan and Cindy Palmieri.

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 (ccrowley@atcox.net); she will pass on the information.

~From The Membership and Caring Committee

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The moment you've all been waiting for is here: The new Bell Street Chapel Policies and Procedures Manual is finally complete! OK, I'll stop fooling myself; chances are that many of you have never been aware that we have a policy manual, much less that some good folks from the Governing Board (myself, former Board member Jennifer Shimkus and Treasurer Jim Gillis) have been slaving away for more than a year to update and revamp it so it reflects what we should be doing now. But although it may seem like boring, dry work, the result is something that is not half bad. In fact, at its debut for church leaders at September's leadership conference, it was downright warmly received, because it spells out just how to do stuff that has often mystified members of our community. It should also make the jobs of church leaders easier, because it answers many oft-asked questions about how we're supposed to do things here at Bell Street.

What's new? First and foremost, we have a new section on how to propose and run an event at Bell Street. There's also a new event proposal form designed to help someone who wants to propose one to cover all their bases. The Events Committee will soon have a packet of info available with that form to guide anyone proposing an event, whether it's a one-time showing of a movie or a new event that will be held regularly. Unbelievably, we've never had a formal procedure for how to plan an official Bell Street event, and result is that sometimes things get planned willy-nilly or without the knowledge of church leaders. This new, uncomplicated policy should help those involved do the necessary work, and improve communication within our church about events. Watch for that packet to show up soon, and use it for all events, even if you've planned them before.

We also broke some new ground in our communications policies, with new policies on use of our church e-mail lists (the ones used to send you this newsletter and the weekly announcements) and our Facebook page. (Are you aware that we're on Facebook? Search "Bell Street Chapel" and become a fan.) Our goals are to optimize communication with church members and the larger community, without flooding people to the point where they consider our messages spam.

There are lots of other changes, and if you are a leader here or would like to be involved as one, I recommend you take a look at the fruits of our labor. (It may look imposing, but most policies are a single page and you can take in what you need in less than an hour.) The book has been distributed to committee chairpersons and other leaders, and will soon be available as a .pdf document on our website. Copies will also be left for reference in Eddy Hall and the Parish House.

*~Meredyth Waterman
President*



CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

We have an enthusiastic group of children and teachers to start off the church year. We will have a variety of programming during the year with something offered almost every Sunday. At this time child care is offered for the youngest children, some Sundays have inter-generational services and most other Sundays there is a single class for elementary age children. There are always two adults in the class so if there is a wide age range present, we will have two activities in the same room with one adult for each activity. Here is the schedule for October and November:

- October 4 – *Our Faith Home* with Jose Ballester and Dan Greco
- October 11 – *Story for all Ages Discussion*
- October 18 – *We Believe Curriculum – Session 1 – First Principle*
- October 25 – *Story for All Ages Discussion*
- November 1 – *All Soul's Day Intergenerational Service* – children remain in church or go to child care
- November 8 – *Story for All Ages Discussion*
- November 15 – *Faith in Action – Unitarian Universalist Service Committee curriculum*
- November 22 – *Thanksgiving Intergenerational Service* - children remain in church or go to child care
- November 29 – Religious Education Break – children remain in church or go to child care

For more information contact Kate Gillis, Religious Education Chair at ksgillis@netzero.net.

NEW UU CLASSES SCHEDULED

We are thrilled to see so many new faces – individuals, couples, and families – on Sunday mornings. Many of you have expressed an interest in learning more about Bell Street Chapel and Unitarian Universalism in general, and about the process of becoming members of Bell Street Chapel. In order to answer your questions, the Membership and Caring Committee has scheduled New U.U. classes for Sunday, October 18 and Sunday, October 25.

Previously, this program has been offered as a series of four classes, but we have condensed it into two to make it easier for those interested. New U.U. classes are designed for people who are new to Bell Street Chapel and are considering becoming members. These classes help us get to know each other by exploring our individual spiritual journeys. We will also discuss the history of Unitarian Universalism and Bell Street Chapel and explore what it means to be a member of Bell Street. Classes begin at 11:30 a.m. and run for approximately 90 minutes. Child care will be available.

A sign-up sheet will be available in Eddy Hall. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Richard Corso by e-mail at richardcorsoatgmail.com.

BALLOU CHANNING DISTRICT FALL CONFERENCE

The Ballou Channing District Fall Conference will be held at First Parish Church, Brewster on Saturday October 2 from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. This year's theme is "Effective Congregations." The Keynote Speaker will be Rev. Dr. Tracey Robinson Harris. Dr. -Harris has been a parish minister, consultant, Deputy Director for Congregational, District and Extension Services, and from 2002 - 2009 the Director of Congregational Services at the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). As Director, she provided growth and organizational development advice to hundreds of congregations, organized the UUA's small, mid-size and large church conferences, oversaw the Association's congregational growth services and stewardship offices, served on the UUA's Growth Team and launched the anti-racism/anti-oppression JUUST Consultancy program. Her work experience has provided her with a broad view of congregation life and leadership. She is currently serving as a UUA consultant for the Office of Ethics in Congregational Life and for the JUUST Change Consultancy (an anti racism, anti oppression, multiculturalism resource). Drawing on her extensive congregational experience, with guidance from congregational best practices and her experience as a dancer, Tracey will guide us in an exploration of congregational leadership fit for times that are calling on us to be connected to our larger communities and to navigate change.

The Conference will also include a variety of workshops, including: "Eat, Drink, Be Merry - But Do it Ethically," facilitated by Rev. Robert Murphy; "Leading vs. Managing: The role of a Congregation Leader", facilitated Rev. William Zelazny; "Effective and Fulfilled volunteers: it's Not Magic, it's ministry," facilitated by Deborah Levering; and "New Ideas for Congregation Life - An Idea Swap." facilitated by BCD Board Members.

The cost is only \$15. You can register online at www.bcdoua.org.

7 CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS



OCTOBER | 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
				<p>1</p> <p>3pm Big Train Farm (EH) 7 pm Outside Group (PH) 7 pm Membership and Caring Committee (PH)</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>8am Meditation (EH)</p>
<p>4</p> <p>9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am Coffee Hour (EH) 11:30 am Sandwiches (EH) 4 pm Books Through Bars (PH)</p>	<p>5</p> <p>6 pm Empire Review rehearsal (S)</p>	<p>6</p> <p>6:30 pm Worship Committee (PH) 7 pm PEAC (EH)</p>	<p>7</p> <p>6 pm Order of Service deadline</p>	<p>8</p> <p>3pm Big Train Farm (EH)</p>	<p>9</p> <p>6:30 pm Movie Night (EH)</p>	<p>10</p> <p>8 am Meditation (EH)</p>
<p>11</p> <p>9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am Coffee Hour (EH) 11:30 Cleaning</p>	<p>12</p> <p>6 pm Empire Review rehearsal (S) 6:30 pm Finance Committee (PH)</p>	<p>13</p> <p>6:45 pm Governing Board (PH) 7 pm PEAC (EH)</p>	<p>14</p> <p>6 pm Order of Service deadline</p>	<p>15</p> <p>3pm Big Train Farm (Parking Lot) 7 pm Moore Brothers Coffee House</p>	<p>16</p> <p>7 pm Drumming Circle (EH)</p>	<p>17</p> <p>8 am Meditation (EH)</p>
<p>18</p> <p>9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am Coffee Hour (EH) 11:30 am New UU Class (PH) 11:30 am Discussion Group (EH) 4 pm Books Through Bars (PH)</p>	<p>19</p> <p>6 pm Empire Review rehearsal (S)</p>	<p>20</p> <p>7:15 pm House Committee (PH)</p>	<p>21</p> <p>6 pm Order of Service deadline 7 pm Conversation with the Governing Board (PH)</p>	<p>22</p> <p>3pm Big Train Farm (Parking Lot) 7 pm Rhode Island International Film Festival Horror Festival (EH)</p>	<p>23</p> <p>7 pm Rhode Island International Film Festival Horror Festival (EH)</p>	<p>24</p> <p>10:30 am RISE tutoring (EH) 12 pm Ballou Channing District Fall Conference (OS) 2 pm Rhode Island International Film Festival Horror Festival (EH)</p>
<p>25</p> <p>9 am Newsletter Folding (EH) 9 am Choir (S) 10 am Service (S) 11 am Coffee Hour (EH) 11:30 am Religious Ed. comm. (L) 11:30 pm New UU Class (PH) 4 pm Books Through Bars (PH)</p>	<p>26</p> <p>6 pm Empire Review rehearsal (S)</p>	<p>27</p> <p>6:30 pm Peace and Social Justice Committee (PH)</p>	<p>28</p> <p>6 pm Order of Service deadline</p>	<p>29</p> <p>3pm Big Train Farm (EH)</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>8 am Ballou Channing District Congregational Stewardship Workshop (EH) 2 pm Outside Eddy Hall Rental (EH)</p>

MOVIE NIGHT—FRIDAY OCTOBER 9

It is hard to believe that a movie with a gender identity theme was a huge mainstream box office success in the USA in the 1950's, but our October movie was exactly that. It is considered by the American Film Institute as the greatest American comedy film ever produced. Our licensing agreement does not permit us to name the film; if you would like more details, email Carol Crowley at ccrowley8atcox.net.

Join us on October 9 at 6:30 in Eddy Hall. Bring some food or nonalcoholic beverage to share. Our plan is to broaden the scope of Movie Night this season to include all films with GLBTQ themes. If you would like to suggest a film for viewing and discussion, please let Carol Crowley or Brian Kovacs know.

~Carol Crowley and Brian Kovacs



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.”**

