

BELL STREET COLUMNS

NEWSLETTER FOR THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF BELL STREET CHAPEL



WORSHIP SERVICE SCHEDULE

SERVICES BEGIN AT 10 AM

TODDLER CARE AND SUNDAY SCHOOL AVAILABLE

4 | SEPTEMBER

LABOR DAY

Raymond Perreault

Labor is lauded for its success and attacked for its excesses. How can Unitarian principles guide us in our journey from an adversarial to a more cooperative model, one that recognizes the value of every person?

11 | SEPTEMBER

INTERGENERATIONAL WATER COMMUNION

Rev. CJ McGregor

For many UUs the official beginning of a church year is marked by a water communion. We ask that you bring water that has some meaning for you. The water collected is sanitized and used for special services throughout the year such as child dedications. We will also hear a homily of homecoming and will take a few moments of remembrance to honor the anniversary of Sept. 11, 2001.

18 | SEPTEMBER

SOL SISTRE

Rev. CJ McGregor

Sol Sistere is derived from the Latin sol (sun) and sistere (to stand still). On the autumnal equinox, many pagans celebrate Mabon, which marks the second harvest and the beginning of winter preparations. What can we learn from Mabon? How can respecting the dark and giving thanks to the light benefit our spiritual lives?

21 | SEPTEMBER — 7:30 P.M.

VESPERS

Rev. CJ McGregor

See description on Page 4.

25 | SEPTEMBER

I'M NOT A FEMINIST, BUT...

Audrey Greene

The feminist click and why women and men need to own and promote the feminist movement.

FROM THE MINISTER

As I write this column I am keenly aware of the photograph of the Reverend Anna Garlin Spencer over my right shoulder. I found this photo in the room just off the sanctuary buried with books and odds and ends. I reframed the photograph of Bell Street's first minister and hung it in my office in the Parish House. Let it be a reminder to me of her ministry, and the legacy of all the ministers who have served here, but most importantly of a beginning.

Not unlike Rev. Spencer, my ministry begins at Bell Street. My mind is racing with excitement and curiosity. My heart is filled with the feeling that I have arrived home. This feeling of being where I am supposed to be is overwhelming and calming at the same time. I haven't the words to explain how comfortable I am feeling at Bell Street. I'm sure there will be days that this feeling wanes because everything beautiful has a darker side. But for now I'm glad, content, and eager to be welcomed by our family.

With every beginning there is bound to be changes. When you change the players in a game the game changes. When you trade or recruit new team members the team changes. Each time there is a change there is a beginning. Many say change is scary. Change is inevitable and it is the way in which we deal and manage change that can be scary. My hope is that we listen to one another and consider how each change will get us closer to becoming the beloved community we long for.

One change that I think about often is the type of ministry you have called for. You now have a settled minister who will be working from the church and the Parish House. This is a whopping change. Many of the responsibilities that you all have carried so competently can be shared. My hope is that you will easily become accustomed to change and use your minister. I am here to support you and your families as well as our community. Whether it be in celebration or sorrow please understand you have a minister minutes away, available to stand with you, laugh with you, pray with you, cry with you, and, yes, challenge you. I emailed Kate Gillis about our upcoming retreat at Cedar Hill. I told her that I envision listening to all of your hopes and dreams for Bell Street and for your spiritual lives. I will then take this and lead you in the direction that will get you, us, closer to this vision. It is not my job to tell you what to do or what you want, but to guide you there.

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COMMUNITY MINISTER REV. MARY MARGARET EARL SAYS GOODBYE (PAGE 3)

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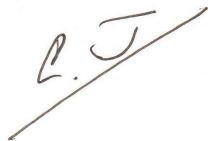
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CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS

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During my candidating interview at one point I told the Search Committee to listen carefully. I told them "I will disappoint you at one time or another. You will disappoint me." Our work together is not to avoid being human. It is to constantly work to be in right relationship so when the time comes that we miss our mark we will be able to forgive, learn from our mistakes, continue to care for one another, and keep moving forward. It is naïve of us to think that while maturing spiritually, deepening our relationships, and growing our community that we will not stumble. Catching one another is the meaningful and real work. That said I know we will be doing a heck of a lot more jumping up and down celebrating our successes. Let us bask in the glow of this beginning. Let us set our sights forward. Let us live, love, and laugh in community. Let us be together. Let us be.

Peace and Blessings,



MINISTER'S INSTALLATION OCT. 23

Bell Street Chapel is pleased to announce the installation of Rev. CJ McGregor as its minister Sunday, Oct. 23, at 3 p.m. in the sanctuary. After four years of transition, we are very excited to begin this exciting relationship with CJ. Please join in the celebration!

In advance of the installation, we will be spiffing up our church. Among the plans is a new coat of paint for Eddy Hall. If you are interested in participating in a painting day, please contact Ray Perreault at ceviz58@yahoo.com or (401) 575-0709. A date will be selected based on when the most people can help.

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Heidi Gilkenson, our office manager, works 8 a.m. to noon Monday through Friday. The office is open for parish business 9 a.m. to noon Monday through Friday. Please be mindful of this schedule if you need assistance from Heidi. She may be contacted at (401) 273-5678 or contact@bellstreetchapel.org

SUBMITTING ANNOUNCEMENTS

If you would like to have your announcement included in the weekly e-mailed schedule of events or printed in the order of service, the information must be sent to Heidi Gilkenson at contact@bellstreetchapel.org by Wednesday evening. Please note your announcement may be edited due to limited space.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for the next issue of *Bell Street Chapel Columns* is Sept. 11 at 8 p.m. Please submit your articles as a regular Word attachment (.doc, not .docx, please) to Meredyth Waterman at MeredythW@aol.com. Our newsletter is one of the most effective means of communicating with our members and friends, so don't miss out on this opportunity. And remember — it's not just for announcing events. If you have information like what your committee is working on, or other church-related information of interest that you'd like to share with the Bell Street community, please send it in.

~Meredyth Waterman

CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS



FAREWELL, REV. MARY MARGARET EARL

Last week, our beloved community minister Rev. Mary Margaret Earl informed the Governing Board that she would be leaving Bell Street's ministry and seeking other opportunities. She will be missed! Plans are in the works for a farewell and best wishes coffee hour in her honor. Below is Mary Margaret's letter to our congregation:

I remember blessing animals in the park next to Bell Street: the dogs on leashes and the cats in carriers and the photographs of beloved animals, too.

I remember coffee hour with pastries from Seven Stars Bakery and leftovers from some social event or another, and the loud ringing of the bell in the midst of it to announce a march or a protest or the signing of a petition.

I remember preaching on prisons at Bell Street, and on animal rights, and on those who are homeless. And I remember the extraordinary openness of all of you, listening. Weighing. Considering.

And so it has been with me, of late. Listening. Weighing. Considering.

For a time, now, I have wrestled with my next professional steps. After 7 years in Providence – my longest time anywhere since graduating high school - I wondered whether it was time to make some changes. I felt tugged to explore new opportunities that renewed my sense of call as a community minister.

My clarity came the day CJ McGregor was called as your new minister. Wonderful energy filled the Chapel and I could feel it. It filled me, too. This was a new beginning. He was called unanimously.

This was a new beginning.

I knew in that moment, this was the right time for beginnings, and for endings, too.

This was the time for me to say goodbye.

I was so happy Bell Street had a new settled minister to love it well.

And I have the difficult task of ending my time as your community minister, and seeking another congregational relationship that will support my work serving those in need.

Bell Street was the first congregation to formally embrace me after my ordination.

Bell Street welcomed me – my sermons, my commitment to animal rights, my commitment to those who are poor.

You were kind. You were tenacious. You were mature. You never once created any triangles with me and the parish minister – in itself quite extraordinary.

These are just some of the gifts you will bring in your work with CJ, in service of the world.

I will miss you. And I thank you for the Unitarian Universalist community you have provided me for 7 years.

I thank you.

I thank you.

And I wish you every blessing in your important work ahead.



*With love,
Mary Margaret*

CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS

VESPERS SERVICE



In addition to the worship services offered each Sunday by our Minister and the Worship Committee there will be a vespers service offered once per quarter. These services will be led by Rev. CJ and will take place in the sanctuary at 7:30 p.m. as announced in the newsletter. Vespers is traditionally a service of evening prayer. The word comes from the Latin *vesper*, meaning “evening.” Of course our Vespers will have a Unitarian Universalist twist. Our Vespers will honor our many ways of worship. Services may include spiritual practices such as chanting, poetry, singing, readings and meditation. These services allow all of us to go deeper spiritually. Our first vespers service is scheduled for Sept. 21 at 7:30 p.m. Attendees are asked to enter the sanctuary in silence. If you have questions please contact Rev. CJ at cjmcgregor@prodigy.net.

BEYOND BELL STREET

Each month I will submit a newsletter article giving you some information about my participation in community and denominational events. It's a chance for me to help you see how our ministry is reaching beyond the walls of Bell Street. By no means will it be a list of my every move and most certainly should not be considered an accounting of my time. It is simply information I think you'll be interested in and opportunities for you to become involved if you choose.

I've submitted my name to Marriage Equality Rhode Island (MERI) as an officiant willing to do civil unions. I plan to get more involved with MERI. I've also joined the Clergy for Marriage Equality Coalition.

I've reached out to the Islamic Center of Rhode Island. I am planning the worship service for 9/11 and although it will not be all about the 9/11 anniversary I would like someone from the Muslim community to worship with us and lead a prayer during the service to mark the anniversary.

I am officially a member of the West Broadway Neighborhood Association. I plan on attending meetings and getting more involved to encourage collaboration and who knows maybe we will gain a few members from the neighborhood. There is an event I am participating in and would love some company: Playground Design Day - the WBNA and the Providence Parks Department received a grant from KaBOOM and United Healthcare to rebuild the playground at Dexter Training Ground which is worn out and in need of repair. There was a design day for

children and adults in August with a Community Build on Tuesday, October 11. They need the participation of MANY neighbors to make this happen. Contact me if you are interested. Don't forget to wear your Bell Street T-shirt!

I've had a couple of discussions with Bill Zelazny our District Executive and have joined the Unitarian Universalist Minister's Association for our district.

I've become involved with the Rhode Island Council of Churches (thanks Kate) and will be attending an Interfaith Service at Manning Chapel at Brown University on Sept. 11. The service is at 4 p.m. and is focusing on remembrance and peacemaking. Please consider joining me.

I will travel to Boston and participate in the Ministerial Fellowship Committee interviews on Sept. 22 through 25. This is an excellent way to serve the Unitarian Universalist Association and participate in the credentialing of our future ministers. There are 40 candidates being interviewed.

I've reached out to the people who signed in for more information about Bell Street at Pride. Hopefully this will bring us new members.

May we continue to inspire one another to reach beyond ourselves.

CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS



FROM THE PRESIDENT

We have had a wonderful summer of services organized by the Worship Committee in Eddy Hall. I look forward to seeing everyone upstairs in the Sanctuary on Sept. 11. Please remember to bring some water to mingle in our Bell Street bowl to celebrate our church family.

Bell Street met a milestone this summer when our stair lift to the second floor was actually installed. We have had a vision of having our sanctuary accessible to more people for years now so it is very exciting to have that mission accomplished. Many thanks to all who have worked on this project, raised money and made donations over the years.

We welcomed Rev. CJ McGregor as our new called part-time minister on Aug. 1. He moved into an office in the Parish House that had had the wallpaper removed and been newly painted. Take a peek into our secretary Heidi's office and you will also see freshly painted walls. Thanks, House Committee and all your helpers.

I look forward to a rewarding year as your president.

*Blessings,
Kate Gillis*

OUR NEW STAIRLIFT

At last, it's here! Our new chairlift to the sanctuary was installed at the end of July! This is a great development for Bell Street Chapel, since it means many of the people who would like to attend services and events here can now join us. It also is a better way of living our values as a congregation that recognizes the dignity and importance of every individual.

Bell Street's stairs are now a matched set, since our stairlift to Eddy Hall was installed in December.

Although having a chairlift does not make our church fully accessible, since we don't have a fully accessible restroom and only those who can move into the chairlift can use it, it is a huge step toward being able to invite more people into the church to enjoy our unique community. A great many thanks go out to the many, many individuals who helped over the years to bring this into being, whether through donations, participation in or planning of fundraisers, or through the complicated process of navigating the design, approval and installation of the lift. Great job, Bell Streeters!



CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS

MARSH CLEANUP - SEPT. 17, 8 A.M.



Illustration by Sally Gabb.

Bell Streeters and anyone else interested in helping the earth are invited to take part in the fall cleanup at the salt marsh we've adopted on the Providence waterfront. This year's fall cleanup is scheduled Saturday, Sept. 17 at 8 a.m. Only if it rains very heavily will this event be rescheduled to Sept. 24, at 8 a.m..

We will meet directly at the marsh, which is located off Allens Avenue at the end of Oxford Street. Please contact Meredyth Waterman at MeredythW@aol.com or (401) 451-2322 to sign up. Please provide your name, phone number, e-mail address and T-shirt size. Since we do this event in conjunction with the International Coastal Cleanup, the Audubon Society is kind enough to provide T-shirts for all volunteers!

Thanks to Save the Bay, we have plenty of garbage bags and plastic gloves. However, we have only a few work gloves, rakes and shovels, so you are encouraged to bring your own if you want them (Gloves are very much encouraged). Please wear sturdy shoes or boots. Sunblock and hats are also advised.

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

This is a fun and satisfying way to make a difference in the world. It's often amazing what we find. And along that vein, our cleanup always features the popular Bell Street Biohazard Contest, which arguably makes otherwise unsavory discoveries a treat. Nonetheless, please do not bring pets or young children to this event due to the dangerous nature of the rocks and the items we find. Please join us and bring a friend or two for this fun morning of helping the earth.

~Meredyth Waterman

BOOK GROUP

The Death and Loss reading group is not going to change its name. We address those difficult subjects but our discussions are inspired by great books and our conversations are filled with interesting insights, laughter and compassion. We will be meeting Sept 15 at 6:30 p.m. in the Parish House. This month our book will be one of Philip Roth's later short novels. The library is happy to provide as many copies as we need. Please contact Audrey Greene, audreyjgreene@gmail.com for more information and for a copy of the book.



CONGREGATIONAL AFFAIRS



SEPTEMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

PH=PARISH HOUSE | S=SANTUARY | EH=EDDY HALL | MPL=MEET IN PARKING LOT | OS=OFFSITE | RE=RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ROOM

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|--|--|--|--|---|---|
| | | | | <p>1</p> <p>3 pm Big Train Farm pickup (EH)</p> <p>7 p.m. Outside Group (PH)</p> | <p>2</p> | <p>3</p> <p>8 am meditation (EH)</p> |
| <p>4</p> <p>9 am Choir (S)</p> <p>10 am Service (S)</p> <p>11 am Social hour (S)</p> <p>11:30 am Cross-roads</p> | <p>Labor Day</p> <p>5</p> <p>6 pm Empire Review (S)</p> <p>6:30 pm Finance Committee (PH)</p> | <p>6</p> <p>6:30 pm Worship (PH)</p> | <p>7</p> <p>6 pm Order of Service deadline</p> | <p>8</p> <p>3 pm Big Train Farm pickup (EH)</p> <p>7 pm Membership Committee (PH)</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)</p> <p>10 am Service (S)</p> <p>8pm newsletter deadline</p> | <p>12</p> <p>6 pm Empire Review (S)</p> <p>6:45 pm Governing Board (PH)</p> | <p>13</p> <p>6 pm Daydream Auditions (EH)</p> | <p>14</p> <p>6 pm Order of Service deadline</p> <p>6 pm Daydream Auditions (EH)</p> | <p>15</p> <p>3 pm Big Train Farm pickup (EH)</p> <p>6:30 p.m. Book Club (PH)</p> <p>7 pm Gay Bingo (OS)</p> | <p>16</p> <p>7 pm Drum Circle (EH)</p> | <p>17</p> <p>8 am Marsh Cleanup (OS)</p> <p>8 am meditation (EH)</p> |
| <p>18</p> <p>9 am Choir (S)</p> <p>10 am Service (S)</p> <p>11 am Social Hour</p> | <p>19</p> <p>6 pm Empire Review (S)</p> | <p>20</p> <p>7:15 pm House Committee (PH)</p> | <p>21</p> <p>6 pm Order of Service deadline</p> <p>7:30 pm Vespers service (S)</p> | <p>22</p> <p>3 pm Big Train Farm pickup (EH)</p> | <p>23</p> | <p>24</p> <p>8 am meditation (EH)</p> <p>10 am-5 pm Daydream sewing setup (EH)</p> |
| <p>25</p> <p>9 am choir</p> <p>9 am newsletter folding EH</p> <p>10 am Service (S)</p> <p>11:30 am RE Committee</p> <p>4 pm Daydream</p> | <p>26</p> <p>6 pm Empire Review (S)</p> <p>6 pm Daydream rehearsal (EH)</p> | <p>27</p> <p>6 pm Peace & Social Justice (PH)</p> <p>6 pm Daydream rehearsal (EH)</p> | <p>28</p> <p>6 pm Daydream rehearsal (EH)</p> | <p>29</p> <p>3 pm Big Train Farm pickup (EH)</p> | <p>30</p> | |

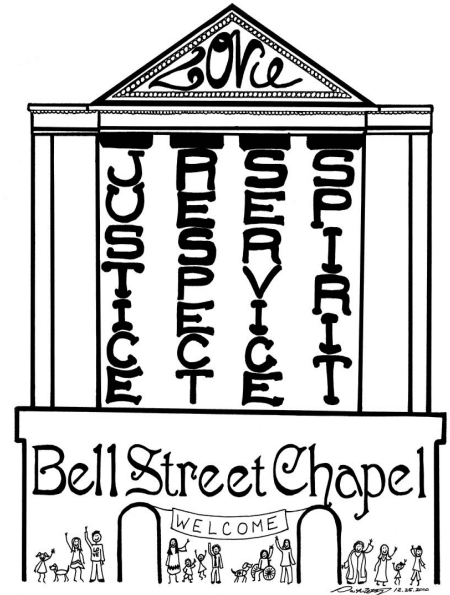
BELL STREET T-SHIRTS AND MORE

Visit www.cafepress.com/bellstreetchapel and get your own Bell Street Chapel T-shirts, sweat-shirts, canvas bags, mugs, bibs, doggy shirts and lots of other stuff!

David Whitty, fiancé of Board member and Membership Committee Co-chairperson Meredyth Waterman, created the original design at left, which is now available on all kinds of things through our Cafepress.com shop . (Look carefully at the people in the design. You may recognize some!)

And just to make a good thing even better, 10 percent of each sale comes back to Bell Street Chapel.

Wear your Bell Street pride and help spread the word about our great church community!



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.”**

