

MMUUS letter

November 15, 2015 Vol. 78 No. 20

May Memorial
Unitarian Universalist Society



"For it is only in company that eating is done justice; food must be divided and distributed if it is to be well received."

~ Walter Benjamin

In the spirit of the aforementioned quote, May Memorial will host two delicious feasts this month! All are welcome!

The first is the *Harvest Potluck Dinner*, which will begin at **6:30 pm on Saturday, November 21st**.

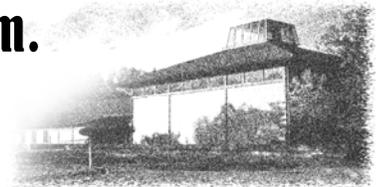
The second is *May Memorial's Annual Potluck Thanksgiving Dinner*, which kicks off at **3:30 pm on Thanksgiving Day with wine and appetizers. Dinner will be served at 4:00 pm.**

Turn to page 2 for more details on these two uber-yummy feasts!

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Sunday Worship, 10:30 a.m.



November 15

This I Believe

Judy Antoine

Come and hear some of your fellow congregants Lia Parks, Rob Neimeier, and Jonathan Needleman, as they share their insights about the values that have shaped their daily actions. Each will read their short essay on "This I Believe".

November 22

The Kirk's Alarm

Rev. Dr. Stan Sears

From Rev. Dr. Sears: *"I enjoy prowling through library stacks, looking at books. One night, in my seminary library, I encountered a book on Scottish Unitarianism. In it was a chapter on 'Robert Burns and the Ayrshire Heretics'. I soon learned that religion was a major theme in Burns' poetry. As a bagpiper, this was wonderful news. This morning, I invite the children to join me in the foyer. I will then pipe them around the church to open our service. The story for all ages will be a lesson in how a bagpipe works."*

November 29

Joe Heath, Esq.

The third service in our "Change the World" Speaker Series honors Chief Oren Lyons, Faithkeeper, Turtle Clan, Onondaga Council of the Haudenosaunee.

At the millennial summit of world religious and spiritual leaders, the internationally-renowned Chief Lyons said, *"I bring you greetings from the indigenous peoples of the world. We are the keepers of traditions, ceremonies, history, and future of our nations. We are the ones who escaped your proselytizing. We are the ones who survived with the wisdom of the Wise Ones. Chief Lyons' clan is the Turtle, the symbol of the Americas, and which is said to carry the world on its back. The creation story says that the turtle carries Sky Woman, the Iroquois Mother Goddess."*



CareRing News & Notes

Longtime May Memorial member, **George Millman**, died at the age of 96 on October 15th. Mr. Millman was among the members living at The Nottingham to whom Jean Wahlstrom ministered. He leaves a son, Richard, who lives in Rhode Island, and two grandsons. Mr. Millman's wife, Lillian, died in 2009. Her ashes are interred in our Memorial Garden. Richard plans a similar commitment service for his father in the spring.

Dr. Victor Burdick, MD, brother of longtime May Memorial member **Bob Burdick**, passed away on November 7th, at the Berkshire Medical Center in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. Dr. Burdick was 88.

Let us keep Bob and family in our thoughts and prayers during this sad time.

On Saturday, November 7th, former May Memorial member **Verah Johnson's** cremains were placed in the Memorial Garden by family members, including Verah's son, Peter.

Handicapped Parking Spots

Please be mindful of the marked handicapped parking spots in front of May Memorial, and leave them for those proper parking permits.



Harvest Dinner



To welcome our newcomers, and welcome back old friends, all are invited to a potluck harvest dinner at May Memorial on **Saturday, November 21st, beginning at 6:30 pm.**

Please bring a dish to share and, by all means, bring friends! Kids are welcome, too!

So please help spread the word, and join us for a wonderful evening of delicious food and drink! Cheers!



Don't feel like cooking an entire dinner on Thanksgiving? Feeling a bit lonely this time of year? Or would you just like to have a great dinner with company to match? Then, by all means, plan on attending May Memorial's Potluck Thanksgiving Dinner!

Bring a dish to pass and **join us at 3:30 pm on Thanksgiving Day for appetizers and wine. Dinner begins at 4:00 pm.**

The sign-up sheet is on an easel in May Memorial's foyer. If you're planning on attending, please sign-up and write down what dish you plan on bringing.



Worship
Chair's Letter

Greeting and Salutations Beloved Community!

I attended a meeting recently where the following question came up: **“What do you (Unitarian Universalists) want out of a Worship Service?”**

There were the usual opposing responses:

“I want them to be more spiritual.” and “I think they should be less spiritual.”

Which warms my heart as a UU, but it gets me no closer to uncovering the soul of UU Worship!

(I believe spirituality can refer to any kind of meaningful activity - so I am definitely on the side of more spirituality in our worship services.)

Essentially, I believe we worship (celebrate life!) to bring meaning to our lives. But worship doesn't serve a single purpose, we gather for many reasons and needs. A worship service should serve the whole—the common good—and offer a shared emotional experience celebrating our interconnectedness.

As UUs, we understand our experience of God, (higher power, quantum mechanics, the Force...) as an experience of belonging—not just to a family, or community, but to everything: all that is present in our lives and our world. We believe in the importance of a religious community to validate our experience. We depend on the confirmation of our peers, providing a critical platform and a network of mutual support to give our lives meaning. Certainly the meaning of life varies with everyone, and changes over time, perhaps focusing less on our relationship to God, and more on our relationships with individuals, as well as our community.

Every religious tradition has a defining narrative of faith. Jews emphasize obedience to the commandments, Christians emphasize love of God, and Muslims emphasize submission to the will of Allah. For UUs, our defining narrative could be gratitude, which emphasizes all we have been given and all we owe in return. Our gratitude shows up in how we respond upon recognizing that we are made up of our relationships to everyone and everything. From the moon bringing tides, to the air we breathe, and to the institutions of civilizations that make our lives livable, we depend completely on the people and things around us. We may be inclined to think that we're self-made and self-reliant, but we're not. In worship, we are reminded of that dependence we have on each other—indeed we celebrate it! See you on Sunday!

~ Mariah Ducey,
Chair, Worship Committee

Our Care Baskets



We are grateful for our many blessings. Let us remember as we celebrate our bounty that many in our community go without enough to eat and basic personal care necessities. Our donations can help offset these challenges for others. Let us be ever generous in our sharing and giving.

Did you know?

One common myth regarding homeless people is that they have been living in the streets forever. The truth is that a large percentage of homeless people are without a roof only temporarily. Forty percent will actually find a home again in six months or less. Another common myth is that homeless people are dangerous, while in fact statistics show that most are victims of crime rather than perpetrators.

~ Julie Daniel

A Note from Joan Loveridge- Sanbonmatsu

The following submission is from May Memorial member

Joan Loveridge-Sanbonmatsu, regarding her sister's memorial service at MMUUS on October 25th:



"I was so moved to see the support you all extended to us and our family at the memorial service for my sister on October 25, 2015, at May Memorial.

We have so many to thank, and would like to extend a special thanks to our guest minister, Rev. Kelly Spahr; Nancy Pease, for the inspired music; Harsey Leonard, for sound and microphone assistance; Brian Betz, for the beautiful order of service program; Alexa Carter, Peggy Ryfun, and all who helped with the reception; Mary Burdick, for the exquisite flowers; Jamie Sanbonmatsu, Celeste Browne, the Eves Women's Group, and Sera Browne, who helped with the photos; Judy Antoine, Vicky Schipper, Barbara Weingart, Donna Rohde, Maggie Rivera, Karissa Sanbonmatsu, Akira Loveridge-Sanbonmatsu, and Rosemary Adams,

I am blessed.

~ Joan Loveridge-Sanbonmatsu



MUSIC AND THE ARTS

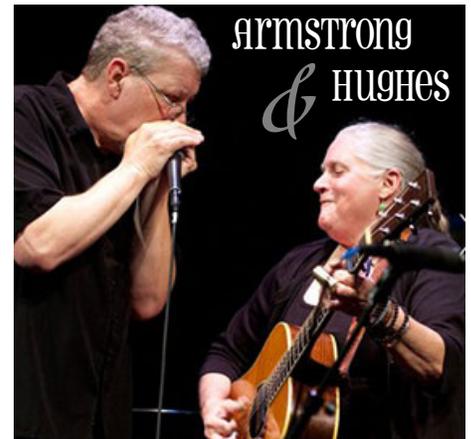
Upcoming Folkus Concerts



The following Folkus concerts will take place at May Memorial in November and December:

November 20th - Ann Armstrong & Steve Hughes

Armstrong's powerful vocals accompanied by her stellar guitar work, including a shredding slide guitar, and Hughes' masterful harmonica and flute provide a spicy picadillo. Armstrong is right up there with the great musical exports of Texas! She plays guitar sometimes sweetly, sometimes prickly as an Ocotillo cactus, sings like a steam-powered nightingale and writes songs from a depth of experience. Her constant companion and musical partner Steve Hughes spices up the proceedings with fine harmonica and flute work.



Tickets are \$15 (Folkus Member Price: \$12)

December 11th - Sloan Wainwright Band - Make merry this holiday with one of folk music's most passionate singers, as Sloan Wainwright brings her festive seasonal show to Syracuse. The evening will be a jubilant, uplifting celebration of the season and the upcoming new year. There will be laughs and good spirits, reflections and inspirations, all held together by Wainwright's distinctive music style and rich contralto.

Tickets are \$20 (Folkus Member Price: \$17)

All shows start at 8:00 pm.

To reserve tickets, or more information, please visit <http://www.folkus.org>.





What's the "Stink!" About?

While many of us were on hand to view the important "A Sea Change" film recently, another important film in the Syracuse Film Festival was overlooked. I went to see "Stink!" at Le Moyne College on the following Sunday afternoon. This movie was about what actually surrounds us everyday—smelly stuff in a vast number of products that is only labeled "fragrance", because the companies get away with not disclosing all the specific ingredients because it is their proprietary secret formula (*much like Halliburton manages to avoid disclosure of all the ingredients in their hydrofracking toxic soup*). These likely carcinogens surround us in detergents, lotions, carpeting, perfumes, scented candles, antiperspirants, furniture, drapes, nice-smelling baby products, and almost everything that has a fragrance. Some things are still scented with real and organic odors, but it is much cheaper to use artificial lemon, lime and lilac (*and huge numbers of other chemically-reproduced fragrances*) that imitate the real thing. These threats are very difficult to avoid because they are so ubiquitous. Yet the situation has become a global health threat. And it is insidious because we often aren't aware of when we are being exposed. These chemicals are causing birth defects, learning disabilities, autism, cancer, infertility, diabetes, etc. The aforementioned health issues begin when these toxins change the chemical signals in our cells, which causes disruption in our genes. It is not even necessary that a child be directly exposed to these usually nice-smelling concoctions because they enter the mother's bloodstream *in utero* and through nursing. This happens because EDCs (*Endocrine Disruption Chemicals*) mimic hormones by binding to the same sites and cells as normal ones. *We are being genetically modified.* Haven't you been wondering why we have so many more people than in the past suffering from allergies and asthma and multiple forms of ADHD?

Jon Whelan, the widower who co-wrote and starred in this documentary with his two young daughters (*with film clips and photos of his wife who died of breast cancer because of unknown causes*), decided to get to the bottom of the "stink" that enveloped his daughters on Christmas morning when they opened their packages of new pajamas. The flame-retardant caused them to reek. Whelan called the manufacturer repeatedly but received no answers. They were not under any legal obligation to reveal their formulas (*most of us believe that the FDA or SOME agency of our government deals with making sure things sold on our shelves are safe. IT DOES NOT! The chemical industry hides the information from the public and federal agencies*). Eagerly determined to get an answer, Jon sent the pajamas to a lab for analysis, and anxiously awaited the results. The news he received was not good.

Thalides in pajamas are especially disruptive to young girls. Flame-retardants are carcinogens, which change our DNA. Yet we are producing seven million tons of flame retardants a year. And here's the kicker—it was the tobacco industry that pushed flame-retardant products on us, because there were too

(continued on page 7)



Coat Drive Underway for the Center for New Americans

The Environmental & Social Concerns Committee is sponsoring a Coat Drive for the



Center for New Americans in Syracuse. This Center is part of the Interfaith Works Agency, of which May Memorial is a Faith Partner.

There is a collection box in May Memorial's foyer, where donated items may be left. Clean, new or gently used coats for all ages & genders, as well as gloves, scarfs, hats, boots are welcomed.

Many of these families come from equatorial climates and have no winter wear. Please help us "Affirm with Dignity" for these families who are in need.



ST. LAWRENCE DISTRICT NEWS

Preparation Meeting for Regionalization

The St. Lawrence District (SLD) Board invites you to hear about their regionalization plans. The SLD Board and regional staff are facilitating meetings in their congregational clusters to both update everyone on the regionalization process of and to gather feedback and input. This is to prepare all congregations, and their delegates, for the vote to dissolve the district in favor of our region, the Central East Region, at the upcoming District Assembly next spring.

The Central Cluster meeting of the SLD will take place on **Sunday, November 15th, from 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm, in May Memorial's Sanctuary.**

For additional information, contact the SLD President, Jeff Donahue, at Jeffrey.b.donahue@gmail.com.



Looking back on Unirondack Weekend, September 2015

We had beautiful weather for a good share of the weekend in which about fifty MMUUS and First UU members were able to enjoy Unirondack, the UU camp and conference center in the western Adirondacks which we have reserved for a mid-September weekend for at least seven years. It has become a wonderful tradition of community-building for the Syracuse congregations. This year, we had a smaller crowd, and it was an interesting constellation of UU folks. There was a 70+ year age span in the participants, three sets of twins under 7 years of age (*2 sets were identical*) and fewer teens than we have had in the past. The meals were delicious! We had lots of participation in the set-up, creating and clean-up of the fine food. People hiked and had a special adventure at Indian Falls (*ask about it!*). Others boated, played games, created art, performed theater, and just had a great time. Saturday evening in the lodge (with the fire roaring and the outside rain battering the windows), we had an amusing evening of improvisation, with the masterful guidance of Jesse Hamlin-Navias (one of the Teenz). Friday night, **Brian Leonard** led a dance party for the youth in the Steven's Performance Pavilion, down by the lake. It seems since many people took a leadership role, we all had great fun! It was greatly appreciated and helped make it a community weekend. Come join us next September 2016! The dates will **probably** be September 16-18, 2016 (**not confirmed yet**).

~ Stephanie Cross,
MMUUS Unirondack Coordinator

“GoingGreen” *(continued from page 5)*

many house fires being caused by cigarette accidents! Over 80,000 chemicals are legal to use. Chemical industries were self-regulated until the 1960s until Rachel Carson alerted us to not trust the “*Better living through chemistry*” mantra that TV commercials and the New York World's Fair were heralding. It was President Nixon who established the EPA (*Environmental Protection Agency*). Presidents Ford instituted the Substance Control Act in order to insure chemicals were controlled before being released to the public. But these agencies soon found they were limited in their ability to do their job. They lacked authority to regulate chemicals because of the secrecy loophole that allows companies to label only that “Fragrances” have been added. We used to be the best at regulating but now have fallen far behind. Witness toxic FEMA trailers that were made in China. We are now the dumping ground for products that the rest of the world won't use. Canada has a R.E.A.C.H. program that tests products for toxins before distributing them. Most European and other industrialized nations market systems use the precautionary principle. Even many developing nations do. Mubarek in Egypt adopted it. “*Made in the U.S.A.*” should now be considered a warning label. Our marketing system has conspired to ignore the health impact of plastic additives in consumer products as well so that we can do “*business as usual*”. Fracking fluid and fragrance products use many of the same lethal ingredients!

Here the “*rule*” is “*innocent until proof that you are guilty*”, where body bags are our “*proof*”. We have to prove it, not industry. So several states have taken upon themselves to pass laws. Proposition 65 prohibits businesses from not disclosing chemicals. There is a movement to “*get tough on toxins*” by requiring a warning before exposure (*they aren't requiring banning the product, just proposing information labeling*). Trade associations represent corporations that fight to keep carcinogens in their products. The American Chemical Council spends hundreds of millions of dollars in lobbying money. Politicians on both sides of the aisle become behold to Monsanto, Dupont, Nestle, etc. The president of Monsanto got a bonus of \$142,000 to his \$1.3 million salary, presumably because he is effective in deflecting legislation that would rein in potentially harmful products. The lobbyists write the rules.

What increases profitability is the bottom line. There is a bill to prohibit the personal care industry of products that are banned in other countries. The European Union bans over 1200 products. Or they change the formula until it is safe. Degree antiperspirant has a different brand name in Europe, as well as a different formula. But Congressman Leonard Lance from New Jersey has championed the chemical industry and has authored a bill that prohibits states from regulation because of liability claims. He doesn't want to pay for harm done. This is why we were told that lead, asbestos and tobacco were safe. They also use the “*job creation*” argument.

This 91-minute documentary, made in the U.S.A. with co-writer and editor Bryan Gunnar Cole, will be shown at the United Nations Association Film Festival and Human Rights Film Festival in Barcelona, Spain. Gunnar has recently moved to the Syracuse area and joined the LeMoyne College faculty.

~ Susan Savion
Environmental & Social Justice Concerns Committee



Disaster Preparedness Training with the Red Cross

The American Red Cross of Central New York will present a program dealing with disaster preparedness on **Saturday, November 14th, beginning at 10:30 am, in May Memorial's Sanctuary.**

This program, titled “*Citizens' Preparedness Corps Training*”, will instruct participants on how to prepare for natural, manmade and technological disasters. Red Cross staff will be on hand to provide information about the many volunteer opportunities available, such as disaster preparedness, response to disaster, service to the Armed Forces, education, health and safety training, international humanitarian services, blood services, and fundraising.

Those attending will learn the answers to questions such as:

- *How long will it take for emergency services to reach you and your family in a disaster?*
- *How many days might your family have to rely on yourselves?*
- *How much water should you have on hand?*
- *What supplies should you have?*

The presentation will include a question and answer period and is expected to last 1 ½ to 2 hours. It is sponsored by May Memorial's Environmental & Social Concerns Committee.

~ Lynne Perry, Co-Chair,
Environmental & Social Concerns
Committee

May Memorial is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association and the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee.

Glenn Kime
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC
Phone ♦ 315.729.3734

Stacy Sceiford
DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
Email: dre@mmuus.org

Mariah Ducey
SOCIETY PRESIDENT
Email: president@mmuus.org

Brian R. Betz
OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR
Phone ♦ 315.446.8920
Email: office@mmuus.org
Fax ♦ 315.446.4605
Office Hours: 9-5 Monday–Friday

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS
Email:
newsletter@mmuus.org

MMUUSletter is a publication of events and information at May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society. To be included on our mailing list, please contact our office at 315.446.8920 or office@maymemorial.com.

The deadline for the first of the month newsletters is the 15th of the preceding month. The deadline for mid-month newsletters is the 5th of the month. Articles received after the deadline will be included in the next newsletter. To submit an article, please email it to newsletter@mmuus.org.

May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society
3800 East Genesee Street
Syracuse, NY 13214

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TIME VALUE

Calendar

Sunday, November 15th

10:30 am	Worship Service	Sanctuary
10:30 am	Teenz	First UU

Monday, November 16th

6:30 pm	Spiritual Enrichment Group	Memorial Room
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Tuesday, November 17th

No Fitness Business Classes Tonight

3:00 pm	T'ai Chi Chih	Social Hall
7:00 pm	Board of Trustees Meeting	Memorial Room

Wednesday, November 18th

No Fitness Business Classes Tonight

6:30 pm	Men's Fellowship Potluck/Discussion	Social Hall
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Thursday, November 19th

3:00 pm	T'ai Chi Chih	Social Hall
5:30 pm	FitnessBusiness: Zumba Class	Social Hall
7:00 pm	Choir Rehearsal	Sanctuary

Friday, November 20th

8:00 pm	Folkus Concert: Armstrong & Hughes	MMUUS
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Saturday, November 21st

10:30 am	Worship Committee	Memorial Room
8:30 am—10:30 am	FitnessBusiness: Cardio/Strength Class	Social Hall
6:30 pm	Harvest Dinner	Social Hall

Sunday, November 22nd

10:30 am	Worship Service	Sanctuary
10:30 am	Teenz	First UU
12:15 pm	Spanophiles	COA

Monday, November 23rd

6:30 pm	Spiritual Enrichment Group	Memorial Room
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Tuesday, November 24th

3:00 pm	T'ai Chi Chih	Social Hall
5:30 pm	Fitness Business: Nia Class	Social Hall
5:30 pm	Twisted Sisters (<i>Women's Group</i>)	Memorial Room

Wednesday, November 25th

5:30 pm	FitnessBusiness: Yoga Class	Social Hall
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Thursday, November 26th

Happy Thanksgiving!

Friday, November 27th

Office Closed

Sunday, November 22nd

10:30 am	Worship Service	Sanctuary
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