

MMUUS letter

December 1, 2015 Vol. 78 No. 21

May Memorial
Unitarian Universalist Society

Sunday,
December 13



Music Sunday Service - 10:30 am



Tree Decorating in Foyer - 12:00 pm

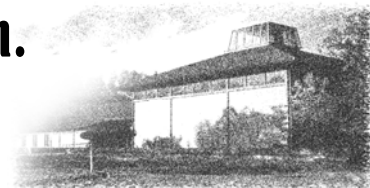


First Sunday Luncheon (hosted by the R.E. Committee) - 12:00 pm

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Worship Service, 10:30 a.m.



December 6

'Tis the Season to Be Connected

Rev. Kathy Tew Rickey

The winter holidays can be full of cheer yet over-consumption and other excesses of the season can be symptoms of spiritual disconnection. Thus it is important to stay connected to our values and connected with one another in this season of darkness. It sounds easy enough, but true connection between human beings requires being vulnerable with one another from time to time, which is not always a comfortable place to be.

December 13

Music Sunday: Anticipation

Glenn Kime and the MMUUS Choir

Our Winter Music Service takes as its inspiration the Christian season of Advent, as a time of waiting and expectation. The Choir will perform an Advent motet of Johannes Brahms, something impatient for the kids, and the spiritual "Ain'-a That Good News!"

*12:00 pm—First Sunday Luncheon in Social Hall/Tree Decorating in foyer

December 20

Winter Solstice

Rev. Susan Daiss

This Sunday, we welcome Rev. Susan Daiss to the pulpit, as we celebrate the arrival of the Winter Solstice one day early.

*11:30 am—Bake Sale to benefit Homeless & Hungry in Foyer/Social Hall

Thursday, December 24, at 6:00 pm

Christmas Eve Service

Stacy Sceiford and Friends

Join us in celebration and simple recreation of the Christmas story. We will have music and plenty of "joyful noise" and a closing circle of candlelight.

December 27

Begin Again!

Worship Committee

Everyone needs a new beginning—whether it be from a personal shortcoming, or a desire to pursue a dream! Let's bid farewell to regrets of the past year, and begin again, with the hope and promise of the new year ahead.



CareRing News & Notes

It was so good to see **Remo Bianco** back in church last Sunday! He is still rather weak, but convalescing smoothly. With little bits of independence (driving himself to the grocery store), and little bits of help (from his daughter early in the morning), he is managing very well. His doctors have OK'd plans for his usual ski trip to Banff in March. Send him some eCards!

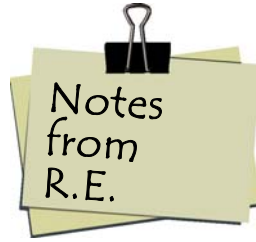
Randy Archambault fell at home and broke her hip on October 27th. She is recuperating from surgery at home after brief stays in Crouse Hospital and a rehab facility. Her women's group is helping her. She can manage most things aside from steps. We look forward to seeing Randy again! eCards for her are a good idea, too; they're fun!

Don Milmore also underwent hip replacement surgery recently. We will have more information on how Don is doing in the December 15th MMUUSletter.

Dorothy Riester celebrated her 99th birthday on November 29th, at a party held in her honor in the Cazenovia Public Library's Community Room.

Local photographer Andrea Kennedy created a video that pays tribute to Dorothy, which can be seen at <https://youtu.be/0k2OQIFcS2o>.

Little **Nick Favata** (son of **Kristina Starowitz and Joey Favata**) celebrated his first birthday at May Memorial on November 21st! It's hard to believe it's been a year already since that cutie-pie came into the world!



*Peace be with you. As-salamu alaykum.
Shalom aleichem.* In any language, I wish you peace.



This is a beautiful time of year. It is a time when, knowing that the nights grow longer, we focus on the love and light in our lives. When daylight shortens, it gives us the opportunity to appreciate the sun. If it was always warm and sunny, we wouldn't have the euphoric joy that comes on that first day of warm weather in the spring, the day when we all shed our winter jackets and revel in the warm breeze with the sun on our faces and delight in everyone else's joy as well. So this time of year, when it starts to get cold and dark and we begin to hunker down in our homes awaiting the long cold winter days ahead, is when we celebrate holidays of light.

This year in particular, I am in need of some light in my life. The world seems a very dark place right now, and I don't just mean the shortening daylight hours. Recent world news has been filled with the darkest parts of humanity, and sadly, the responses of some of those in leadership or seeking leadership in our country have left me feeling dejected. When I start to feel helpless in the face of so much suffering in the world, I try to pull myself back to my own sphere of influence. While it is understandable to empathize, it doesn't do anyone any good for me to be pulled into the abyss and see only darkness. But when I find myself asking "*What can I do in the face of so much fear and hardness?*", that's when I have to center myself in what I have to be grateful for and what I see that is good.

So how do I cope? I find refuge in my work. There is something very healing to the soul about holding the hand of a small child and helping them down the stairs on their way to chapel. This small act is something in my realm of influence, something I can do to make a human connection. I take time to try to find a place of peace within myself. I breathe deeply, meditate, and try to find stillness. I share peace with my family and those around me. Sharing a supportive word, a hug, even a smile can turn someone's day around. When I encounter fear and hateful words, I try to counter them with peace and compassion. I make every effort not to respond in an angry, hurtful way because I know that while that may assuage my need to let off steam, it will not change hearts or minds.

Even if there was no refugee crisis, even if the political climate was calm, we would still be experiencing the time of long dark hours. This time of year we all need an extra dose of kindness and now more than ever. I hope you will join me and shine a light in the darkness. We can each be a light, a message of truth, of compassion. I know it can feel overwhelming--there is so much darkness! But a single flame can illuminate a dark space, and if we all kindle our small flames we can spread the light far and wide.

In Peace,
~ Stacy Sceiford,
Director of Religious Education, MMUUS



(“President’s Letter” continued)

Capital Campaign” on your check, and send it, or bring it in! The entire Board of Trustees and everyone connected to the Capital Campaign, would be extremely grateful!

On a happier note, we have received over \$15,000 in recent pledges—moving our Operating Fund ever closer to reducing the \$22k deficit!

And finally, please be advised that pledge statements will be going out this week, and they will include any Capital Campaign Pledges for fiscal year 2014-15 and 2015-16.

Please honor your pledges, which keep our beloved community running!

See you on Sunday!

~ Mariah Ducey, President, MMUUS Board of Trustees

Listening as Spiritual Hospitality

“To listen is very hard, because it asks of us so much interior stability that we no longer need to prove ourselves by speeches, arguments, statements, or declarations. True listeners no longer have an inner need to make their presence known. They are free to receive, to welcome, to accept.”

Listening is much more than allowing another to talk while waiting for a chance to respond. Listening is paying full attention to others and welcoming them into our very beings. The beauty of listening is that, those who are listened to start feeling accepted, start taking their words more seriously and discovering their own true selves. Listening is a form of spiritual hospitality by which you invite strangers to become friends, to get to know their inner selves more fully, and even to dare to be silent with you.”

~ Henri Nouwen

Greeting and Salutations Beloved Community!

The recent Board Chat generated several excellent questions! Here are some answers:

Q. What is a Spiritual Enrichment Group?

A. Spiritual Enrichment Groups (SEGs) are May Memorial’s small group ministry, answering the need for continued person growth. Each meeting starts with a Chalice Lighting and Opening Words that reflect on the topic of the meeting. Topics can be widely diverse, from Acceptance and Forgiveness, to Letting Go! SEG’s do not tell people what to do or how to think, rather, topics serve as a springboard for personal sharing, spiritual reflection and discussion. A very important component of Spiritual Enrichment Groups is to fully listen to each speaker without judgement or advice (See Henri Nouwen’s meditation in the below right sidebar).

Q. Why can’t we put food in the food disposal?

A. Basically, the plumbing at May Memorial is too sensitive for a food disposal! The food particles gets stuck in our plumbing system, which causes the sewers to back-up. We have a service comes twice a year, at about \$200 a visit, to clean out all the stuck food, so that the pipes will run smoothly. A few weeks ago, (about a month before the clean-out service was due) the pipes backed up, and the downstairs was flooded with sewer water. That clean-up will cost us about \$1,500. At B&G’s recommendation, the Board has agreed to increase the clean-out service to three times a year. There is now a small container in the dishwashing room for food scrapings.

If you think that the increase in clean-out times might make it OK to put food down the disposal, please let me know—and I will make sure you are the one who gets called (e.g., at 9:40 pm on a Friday night when 150 people are in the Sanctuary listening to music and have been told they can’t use the bathrooms) to come over and deal with sewage flowing into the daycare rooms. ☺ **Please let everyone in your committees and small groups know about this, and help us make sure that no food gets into the disposal!**

Q. What’s the status of the Capital Campaign?

A. The Capital Campaign is still very active and we absolutely need your help! While we accomplished way more than we ever thought possible—a new roof, new furnaces, new windows, and a new kitchen—we have also had several people withdraw their Capital Campaign commitments, primarily due to moving from the area, job changes and other financial problems, contributing to a shortfall in Capital funds. We also borrowed money for the Capital Campaign, which we must now must pay back. If you would like to contribute **any amount** to the Capital Campaign, please write “MMUUS

(continued above right)



Homeless & Hungry News

The next *Homeless & Hungry* meal will be served **Sunday, December 27th, from 10:30 am—3:00 pm**, at the new Samaritan Center on State Street.

We are looking for about twenty volunteers to help out.

Contact **Julie Daniel** at 622-3423 or jdanielyoga@gmail.com to volunteer.

Also, the funds in our *Homeless & Hungry* account are running low. Please consider making a donation to this critically important service in our community.

Please make your checks out to "MMUUS" with "*Homeless & Hungry*" on the memo line. They may be dropped off at the office or mailed to Homeless & Hungry c/o MMUUS, 3800 East Genesee Street, Syracuse, NY 13214.

Bake Sale to help the Homeless & Hungry



During Coffee Hour on **Sunday,**

December 20th, May Memorial will host a bake sale, the proceeds of which will go to the *Homeless & Hungry* Program.

So be sure and grab a sweet or two to go with your coffee!

The "Giving Tree" returns!

Our annual "Giving Tree" returned to the foyer on November 29th, with gift tags suggesting donations for Dorothy Day House and the Christmas Bureau. **All donations should be returned to MMUUS no later than 12/13/15. It is requested that all donations be new and left unwrapped.** They greatly appreciate donated rolls of gift wrap.

Questions? Contact **Julie Daniel** at 622-3423 or jdanielyoga@gmail.com.



A Beautiful Gift from an Old Friend

Perhaps you have already noticed the large granite and serpentine statue that was placed in the foyer this week, between the nametags and the office door. This statue is a donation made by long-time member **Peter Black**, in a process that began seven months ago. The sculptor is Sylvester Mubayi, of Harare, Zimbabwe, and the title of the statue is "*Brother and Sister*".

Perhaps you too will view this statue as an expression of May Memorial's values.

Peter, thank you!





Rev. Robert E. Romig

Rev. Robert Eldon Romig was our sixth minister. He was born in Fort Scott, Kansas, in 1908. He went to the University of Denver and Meadville Theological School.

His first post was at the First Unitarian Church in Duluth, Minnesota, in 1936. He came to the pulpit at May Memorial in the summer of 1941.

Because of the wartime housing shortage, Bob and Ellen Romig could not find a suitable home, and the church bought a parsonage for them—a large colonial house on 913 Comstock Avenue, near the university. There the Romigs could entertain students interested in liberal religion and build up the campus organization that had been started by Rev. Argow. In 1943, Romig wrote to the AUA Department of Ministry to inform them that the church was in excellent shape, financially in the black for the first time in years. The 1943-1944 budget was oversubscribed, and average attendance that year was 121, up from 96 the year before. In 1944, Romig worked for the United War Fund, organizing five New York State counties to raise money for twenty-three war service agencies, including the USO, War Prisoners' Aid, Seamen's Service, and a number of foreign relief agencies. In 1945, he received a Certificate of Merit, awarded annually by Temple Adath Yeshurun for promoting interfaith goodwill. He resigned his ministry in the spring of 1946 stating that he wished to work for American acceptance of the United Nations and extension of that organization to a world government.

Later, he settled in Syracuse to help run a family business, the Davis Distributing Company. Romig was the first president of the United Nations Association of Syracuse when it started in the 1950s, enlisting the support of many business leaders for the association. Romig remained active at May Memorial until he died in the fall of 1986.

His sermon entitled [Can Modern Man Believe in Immortality?](#) gives us some insight into his preaching. He believed that immortality is the fundamental and basic reality of life, and that it is a thoroughly reasonable belief which is supported, not by mythology and theology, but by modern science. He cited that every living thing on the earth is radiant energy from the sun transformed in multiple and varied forms. He quoted that *"The good that men do lives after them."* He thought that the quality of life we seek, the virtues of goodness, brotherly love, righteousness, loyalty to principles, and the ethical life we cherish for ourselves and children—they alone make living worthwhile; this is the only life that is food for the soul.

It is clear that his thinking was affected by World War II when he cried,

(continued above right)



Rev. Robert E. Romig,
May Memorial's Parish Minister
(1941-1956)

("Room in 8" continued)

"Why should men be willing to give their lives in defense of country?"

He finished this memorable sermon with a quote from Walt Whitman, with which I will also conclude:

*Give me – give him or her I
love – this quenchless faith*

In They ensemble.

*Whatever else withheld, with-
hold not from us,*

*Belief in plan of Thee enclosed
in Time and Space;*

*Health, peace, salvation uni-
versal.*

Is it a dream?

*Nay, but the lack of it the
dream,*

*And, failing it, life's lore and
wealth a dream,*

And all the world a dream.

~ Jay Brenner,
Chair, History Committee



December FUUN Event: Holiday Cookie Baking

The next FUUN event will take place on **Friday, December 18th, beginning at 5:30 pm in the Social Hall.**

We will be baking holiday cookies to celebrate the season. **Be sure to bring the ingredients or dough for your favorite cookies.**

Our Gallery Artist for December: Ken Nichols

Beginning December 3rd, May Memorial is pleased to exhibit the work of local artist Ken Nichols.

Ken believes his artwork represents



"Through the Window"
by Ken Nichols

Universal Energy, which "is what you see if you go beyond electrons and quarks", he explains. He wants people to see paintings within paintings when looking at his work, and to experience positive energy as well. Ken describes his paintings as unplanned and that they "paint themselves" and that he merely "holds the brush".

To meet Ken in person, be sure to attend the *Meet the Artist* session on **Sunday, December 13th, in the Social Hall at 11:30 am**. In the meantime, you can visit his website at <http://www.kennicholsart.com>.

Art Gallery Committee Welcomes Two New Members

Cynthia Carter and Pam Steele have volunteered to join the Art Gallery Committee. Pam is a well-known and talented artist herself, and we have all enjoyed Cynthia's talent in decorating the front of the church. They will make a valuable addition, and we welcome them both to the committee. With Pam and Cynthia, we now have six members who are all creative themselves. Others are **Bob Burdick, Lisa Harter, Steve Reiter, John Seavers and Kristina Starowitz**.

~ Lynne Perry, Chair,
Art Gallery Committee



MUSIC AND THE ARTS

"MAY MEMORIAL
LOVES THE ARTS
MONTH"



Calling All Talent: Sign Up Now!

Before we know it, 2016 will be here. And that means February is coming soon. And that means *MMUUS Loves the Arts* is coming soon. So, it's not too early to sign up to:

- **Exhibit Your Artwork**—Do you paint, draw, take photos, write poetry? We need you to help transform our Social Hall into a colorful and creative exhibit.
- **Perform in the Talent Show!**—Do you sing, dance, play an instrument, recite poetry, tell jokes, perform magic tricks? We need you to make our 2016 May Cabaret a lively production and a rousing good time.

To take part in either (or both!), please contact **Lynne Perry** at clynneperry@gmail.com.

Last Folkus Concert of 2015



The following Folkus concert will take place at May Memorial this month:

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. Show begins at 8:00 pm.

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

To reserve tickets, or for details and info, please visit <http://www.folkus.org>.



Calendar (continued from page 8)

Tuesday, December 15th

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

Wednesday, December 16th

6:30 pm Men's Fellowship Potluck/Discussion Social Hall

Thursday, December 17th

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

Friday, December 18th

5:30 pm Cookie Making FUUN Event Social Hall

Saturday, December 19th

10:30 am Worship Committee Memorial Room

Sunday, December 20th

10:30 am Worship Service Memorial Room
10:30 am Teenz First UU
11:30 am Homeless & Hungry Benefit Bake Sale MMUUS

Monday, December 21st Winter Solstice (Beginning of Winter)

6:30 pm Spiritual Enrichment Group Memorial Room

Tuesday, December 22nd

3:00 pm T'ai Chi Chih Social Hall
5:30 pm Twisted Sisters Memorial Room

Thursday, December 24th Christmas Eve

6:00 pm Christmas Eve Service Sanctuary

Friday, December 25th Merry Christmas, To One And All!!

Sunday, December 27th

10:30 am Worship Service Memorial Room
10:30 am Teenz First UU
10:30 am—3:00 pm Homeless & Hungry Meal Samaritan Center
(see page 4 for details)
12:00 pm PR Committee Memorial Room
12:15 pm Spanophiles COA

Monday, December 28th

4:00 pm Spiritual Enrichment Group Memorial Room

Tuesday, December 29th *No T'ai Chi Chih

Thursday, December 31st New Year's Eve *No T'ai Chi Chih or Choir Rehearsal

Community News

Child Remembrance Service

The CNY Perinatal & Infant Bereavement Network invites you and your loved ones to the 16th Annual National Children's Memorial Day World Wide Candle Lighting Ceremony on **Sunday, December 13th, from 7:00 pm—8:00 pm in the Sanctuary.**

The ceremony will unite family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to remember children who have died at any age from any cause.

Families around the world will be participating in similar ceremonies at 7:00 pm, in every time zone.

Questions? Contact Helen O'Neill at 458-7975 or hmo520@verizon.net.

Black Lives Matter Book Club

The deaths of unarmed black Americans, such as Trayvon Martin and Eric Garner, shine a spotlight on the violence and discrimination that run through 21st-Century American society, which some pundits had so eagerly hailed as "post-racial." In this reading group, we will read books written in the shadow of these revelations, but also from the deeper shadows of pain, anger, and trauma of the unremarked, unreported losses, injuries, and injustices perpetrated against black Americans.

The first meeting will take place at **First UU on Monday, December 7th, from 7:00 pm—8:00 pm.**

Anyone interested in attending is asked to contact Claudia Klaver at ccklaver@gmail.com.

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

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NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS
Email:
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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

Tuesday, December 1st

3:00 pm T'ai Chi Chih Social Hall

Thursday, December 3rd

1:30 pm Bookenders Memorial Room
3:00 pm T'ai Chi Chih Social Hall
7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal Sanctuary

Saturday, December 5rd

10:30 am Environmental & Social Concerns Committee Memorial Room

Sunday, December 6th

10:30 am **Hanukkah Begins** (*Hanukkah Sameach!*)
Worship Service Memorial Room
10:30 am Teenz First UU
12:00 pm Music & Arts Committee Memorial Room

Monday, December 7th

Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day (74th Anniversary)
6:30 pm Spiritual Enrichment Group Memorial Room

Tuesday, December 8th

3:00 pm T'ai Chi Chih Social Hall

Thursday, December 10th

3:00 pm T'ai Chi Chih Social Hall
6:00 pm Spiritual Enrichment Group Memorial Room
7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal Sanctuary

Friday, December 11th

8:00 pm Folkus Concert: Sloan Wainwright MMUUS

Saturday, December 12th

9:00 am—12:00 pm Choir Rehearsal Sanctuary

Sunday, December 13th

10:30 am Worship Service Memorial Room
10:30 am Teenz First UU
11:30 am "Meet the Artist"—Ken Nichols Social Hall
12:00 pm First Sunday Luncheon Social Hall
12:15 pm Spanophiles COA
7:00 pm Child Remembrance Service Sanctuary
(see page 7 for details)

Monday, December 14th

4:00 pm Spiritual Enrichment Group Memorial Room
6:30 pm Building & Grounds Committee Memorial Room

(continued on page 7)