

May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society



We embrace all spiritual journeys and encourage service as we build a more loving and just world

December 2018 Volume 81



JRev serving as the Marshall with her homemade sceptor at Rev. Lane Campbell's Installation at First Universalist of Rochester



Beloveds, I want to know all that is going on in your hearts, I want you to call on me when I can support you, I want you to never ever hesitate to talk to me or ask if we can have a meeting.

Along those same lines, I have heard that the gate on my office door has worried some folks, and has possibly been a bit of a deterrent. I want you to know that I am going to remove the gate as it stands, and replace it with one that simply sits on the floor in my office, and can simply be folded together to remove completely in 2 seconds. And, when you have concerns about this type of thing, I want to know, please tell me when you have concerns, because that is the only way we can work them out, if we are both in it together!

My beloveds, I hope in the upcoming months and years, you will come to know that I am truly here to build a relationship with each of you as individuals and with all of you as MMUUS. Please call or email any time to set up an appointment with me.

Love,
JRev

"I Know You're a Busy Person..."

"I know how busy you are" "I know you're a busy person" "I know you must be busy"... I hear these phrases nearly every time someone asks to speak to me or to set up a meeting. So, I want to take the time here to say FRIENDS! I am here to be busy with YOU!! My ministry is one of love, inclusion, and acceptance. I want to spend time with you! I want you to drop by to say hello when you come into the church building, if I am with someone else I will let you know, I want you to invite me to important occasions, I want you to make appointments with me, I want you to unburden your sorrows with me, and share your joys.

The bottom line is that my ministry would be worthless if it weren't for all of you. YOU are the reason I accepted this job, the love I felt in Candidating week, and precandidating, the joy I feel during worship... that feeling I get when I am driving away from a church event and I am just so excited to get back to church to see you again...

Getting in touch with Rev Jo

Rev. Jo can be reached at ministerjrev@gmail.com or by scheduling an appointment through www.calendly.com/jrev.



DECEMBER



Join us on Sunday December 9 after Sunday services for a delicious lunch hosted by the RE Team!





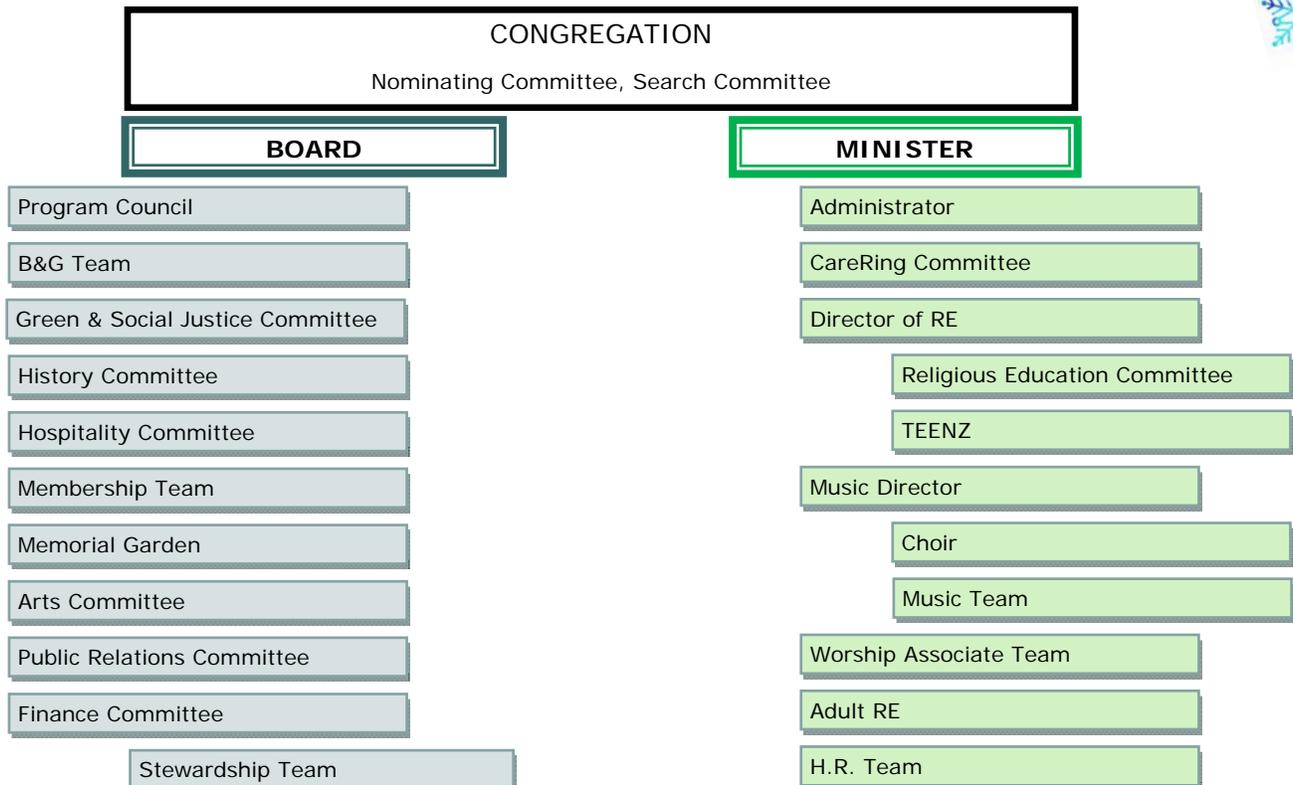
Greetings from Your President!

Happy Gratitude Season! What are you grateful for? More importantly, WHOM have you thanked? The Board recently treated the Search Committee to dinner, in thanks for personal sacrifices made in the quest to find us the right minister. It was fun listening to stories of their adventures during the cloaked-in-secrecy selection process. Hearing them describe the small, but telling, gestures signaling that Jo was right for us made me appreciate their work all the more.

In service of our Mission, the Board is implementing a governance model that changes the way members can bring concerns to us. From *Governance and Ministry*, a book Sunshine introduced to us, we learned that for a church to succeed in its Mission, bureaucracy must be reduced to give the Board time and mental space to develop a Vision for the future. This requires clear roles and boundaries between the congregation, minister, staff, and committees/teams. In our pre-interim years, roles drifted and boundaries became fuzzy. In tribute to member commitment, folks stepped up and kept MMUUS functioning well during these years. In truth, though, it was tough to make progress toward a larger Mission – the one we

identified together as “building a more loving and just world.” It’s that old “draining the swamp while you’re up to your you-know-what in alligators” phenomenon. The chart below is your guide to who is responsible for what and where the buck stops. If you have a concern for the Board to consider, we ask that you take it first to the responsible committee, who can help you formalize it into a proposal for the Board. If you have a concern about anything falling under the Minister’s side of the chart, take that first to Rev. Jo. However, notice that the Congregation sits atop the chart, over both the Board and the Minister, a nod to our UU principle of congregational polity. The chart is a tool to create efficiency, a work-progress. We welcome your ideas about it!

See you in church!
Jane Fagerland, President
Board of Trustees





There are a few moments that I look forward to each year, moments when I experience a feeling of awe and connection to spirit. The first is the moment at the end of pumpkin carving when everyone has brought their jack o'lanterns forward and we turn off the lights to admire them. There is always an audible gasp, and oohs and aahs from those in attendance, it feels magical and though it only lasts a moment, it feeds my spirit. The Christmas Eve service offers up two such moments for me. The first comes when all of the players have assembled on the chancel and they hold (relatively) still in the final tableau of the nativity scene. It's when the congregation goes quiet and time seems to pause, just for a moment. Though I no longer have the same spiritual connection to the story of Jesus' birth as I did growing up in the United Methodist church, I still feel a spiritual connection to all my fellow UUs and Christian siblings who are looking upon a similar scene and experiencing the reverence that it engenders.

But, I'm also going to let you in on a little secret...every year I have a flash of panic when I am convinced that there is going to be some sort of pandemonium on the chancel. That stretch between "Angels We have Heard on High" and when the wise men show up feels especially drawn out. The more children who have joined the tableau and the longer they are standing there before the big finish, the more I prepare for some level of anarchy from the barnyard animals or the angels. But that never happens. And the few instances of mild rebellion (perhaps a cow who decides they want to hold baby

Jesus) or slightly dangerous curiosity (tinsel halos wandering a bit too close to the chalice), have always been met with gentle redirection and the scene remains tentatively peaceful. It's something about that resolution of nervous energy where there is a pause of calm that speaks to me in that moment. And soon our gaggle of costumed kiddos are posing picture perfect then scampering off back to their families for candlelight singing.

And that brings me to the second moment from the Christmas Eve service that I look forward to every year, singing "Silent Night" by candlelight. I love how full the church is each December 24th, I love passing the light from candle to candle, I love how quiet and reverent everyone is. Despite our different theologies and different faiths, in that one moment we are all connected by tradition and singing and community. And I would encourage you to pay attention to those moments in your own life when you feel a connection of spirit, when you are open to awe and mystery. I hope that I will see many of you there for our Christmas Eve celebration and I look forward to sharing a moment of awe with you all.

In Peace,

Stacy Sceiford, Director of Religious Education



December is Religious Education's month to host First Sunday Lunch!

This year we will be moving to second Sunday, December 9th, so that folks can attend Plowshares. But, we still need MANY more volunteers to help set up, serve, and tear down, as well as bring soups, casseroles, or other goodies in order for our luncheon to be successful. Please follow this link to a signup to see where you can help. Traditionally RE's Sunday has been the most profitable of the lunches during the year--let's do our part and make this one amazing! Thanks. <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0d4da5ad2fa3fe3-2018>





History Corner

Rev. S. J. May's Legacy of Social Action: Women's Rights

Last month we talked about taking inspiration from Reverend Samuel Joseph May's tireless work to abolish slavery and to promote racial equality and integration. As with racial equality, Rev. May was far ahead of his time in supporting equal rights for women, including the right to vote. While some abolitionists considered "the woman question" to be a distraction, Rev. May believed in equal rights for everyone and therefore embraced both issues.

In one of his first Syracuse sermons, Rev. May advocated for the full participation of women in public affairs. Published as Women's Rights Tract #1, it became a key document in the fight for women's rights. Biographer Yacovone (1991) calls Sam May "one of the country's first feminists." He invited women to speak from his pulpit, advocated for including women as delegates to the national Unitarian conference, and helped organize the Onondaga County Suffrage Association.

Rev. May would be shocked to find that nearly 150 years after his death, women still aren't equally represented in government, aren't paid as much as men, and don't have equal rights under the law. However, he would be pleased that a record number of women have recently been elected to Congress, and he would probably join with them in working for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment, standing up for victims of sexual assault, and defending a woman's right to control her body. Let us carry on Rev. May's legacy by continuing to work for equal rights for women.

Mary Louise Edwards

MMUUS History Committee

The History Committee Meets the
3rd Wednesday of the month in
Room 8.

All are welcome!



Social Justice Tuesday! Join us December 4 at noon!

Join Rev. Jo on the front lawn/roadside of the church on the **first Tuesday of each month from noon to 1:30pm** (or however long you have time). We have pre-printed signs! Just bring yourselves and dress for the weather. We are going to start becoming known again in this community and this is an easy way for us to be visible. If you would like to come but have trouble standing for long periods of time we will get a chair for you. This is a multigenerational event and kids are especially welcome as we teach them how to love out loud.

Hope to see you there!



Green and Social Justice Committees



GOING GREEN

by Bess Kamerance

We are lucky to live in a state and a region of that state which evidences environmental consciousness in many ways. Here are three local agencies which reflect that consciousness and provide a variety of opportunities for us at May Memorial to put our 7th UU Principle into action; "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which are a part."

The Onondaga Lake Conservation Corps is made up of area volunteers as well as members of the Audubon Society and the ESF School at Syracuse University. Their mission is to restore the area around Onondaga Lake, both its flora and fauna. All of their activities and projects are family-friendly. Several members of May Memorial have participated in planting native trees, shrubbery, and plants on the shores of the lake. Other recent projects included surveying bird species and building blue bird houses. Workshops and seminars are also conducted. The website is: <http://audubon.org/OLCC>

The mission of the Onondaga Earth Corps is to "empower youth to be active participants in creating positive change for their communities and the environment." This organization has had recent projects that include tree planting in public parks in Syracuse, Manlius, and Liverpool. The Corps also has focused on urban gardening projects throughout the city. The group has also developed urban forestry plans and provides arborist assistance for residential tree plant-

ing. The website is: www.onondagaearthcorps.org

Habitat Gardening of CNY states that their mission is to "promote environmentally sound landscaping practices to preserve biodiversity through the preservation, restoration and establishment of native plant communities." Their activities include monthly projects, native plant sales, annual field trips, and access to arborists and landscape specialists. The website is: www.hgcny.org

All three of these organizations are in need of volunteers for their projects. Most of their activities take place on weekends and are intergenerational; they offer fun, learning, and community camaraderie with the goal of improving our environment. These organizations provide a framework for team formation with their many projects. Let's form some May Memorial teams this coming year and reflect our 7th principle!

The Green and Social Justice Committee meets on the third Sunday of each month. All are welcome to join or to help us with our action plans.



Thank you for your patience! The bulletin boards are ready for repopulation! HUGE thanks to Julie Daniel for dressing our bulletin boards up with fabric, they look so much nicer now! We have moved some things around, so please use the board that has been designated for your group. The following groups have requested space The Writing Group, Membership, History, Board of Trustees, Social Action, please let us know if would like bulletin board space but do not see your name on this list. Please be careful about what you post, and make a goal of checking your board once monthly to take old things down and add new things!





About Folkus

Great live music. Friendly people. All volunteer run.

Quite simply, the Folkus Project is all about bringing great, live acoustic music to Central New York. We've been doing that for over 17 years, and cultivating a community of acoustic music fans in the process.

Folkus is a not-for-profit organization, run entirely by volunteers committed to bringing a wide variety of live music to our area. This includes old favorites, up and coming artists, and seasoned performers new to our area – all high quality, and all at affordable prices. We present shows twice a month on Friday nights, from September to May.

It's important to us to give our performers a great experience playing with us, and to have our audiences feel a part of a greater community of folks who enjoy listening to live music out with others. For us, it's about the music as well as the experience that live music creates.



Friday December 7, 2018 8pm
Karen Savoca & Pete Heitzman

November 2018 Services at The Nottingham

The following weekly services will be held at *The Nottingham* in September. Join us on Tuesdays at 1:30 pm in the Meeting Room at *The Nottingham* (1301 Nottingham Road, Jamesville, NY 13078).

All are welcome.

DECEMBER 4

Rev. Jo Von Rue
May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society
Fred Fiske, musician

DECEMBER 11

Rev. BJ Norrix, Pastor
Erwin First United Methodist Church, Syracuse
Rev. Karen Bellimer, Musician

DECEMBER 18

Rev. Jennifer Hamlin-Navias
First Unitarian Universalist Society, Syracuse
Sara-Jo Brandt-Doelle, Musician

DECEMBER 25

MERRY CHRISTMAS

These services are sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Society, and all leaders and musicians are volunteers

Notes from the Admin Office:

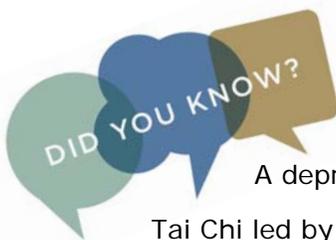


- **Just a reminder:**
All meetings and events must be scheduled through the Office Administrator.
- **Deadlines to remember:**
Any submissions to the **E-Blast and Order of Service** need to be to me by *midnight on Wednesday*.
- **Newsletter:**
Deadline for January newsletter is: December 23 by noon.
Any submissions received late will be omitted from the newsletter and added to next month where appropriate

Looking for Office Hours? Events happening in our church? Closures or special notices? Check out the bulletin board located to the right of the Admin Office door for answers to those questions and more!

As we enter the season of uncertain weather conditions please note:

- Our lawn care service will only show up on days when the accumulated snow reaches 2 inches.
- I have placed at every entrance a bright orange bucket with ice melt. If you encounter a slick spot please address it immediately then alert the admin office.
- Any closings will be announced on Facebook, by e-blast, and be included in the alerts on local news media as provided to the Admin Office (315-446-8920 or office@mmuus.org). Rev. Jo is the final word on whether Sunday Services are cancelled.



May Memorial offers many groups and classes tuned in to mind, body and spirit

A depression support group meets every Thursday at 4:30pm in the Teenz Room

Tai Chi led by Ann Pia is held in the Social Hall every Tuesday and Thursday starting at 3pm

Spiritual Enrichment groups are held at various dates and times through out the month, check the calendar for details.





Join us on Sunday morning at 10:30am
for worship service.
Stay for coffee hour right after service in
the Social Hall.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Sermon Title</u>	<u>Speakers</u>	<u>Intergen?</u>
Dec. 2	The Warmth of Hanukkah	Rev. Jo VonRue	No
Dec. 9	Waiting for Hope	Rev. Douglas Taylor and Worship Associate Amanda Winkler	No
Dec. 16	Music Sunday	Music Director Glenn Kime and Rev. Jo VonRue	No
Dec. 23	A Winter Solstice Rite	Rev. Jo VonRue	Yes
Dec. 30		Worship Associates Cat Rippentrop and Bess Kamerance	No (there will not be childcare available)

A few congregants have been asking about the absence of blurbs for upcoming Sunday Services. If you have questions about that, please speak directly with me, Rev Jo. I will say that my philosophy of the way we do "Church" (or Society if you prefer to call it that) is that we are a group of people that come together on Sundays to be lifted up spiritually, and no one person can do that alone, it is our collective job. Coming to "Church" on Sunday morning should never be about the sermon alone, or even the minister. Rather, it is about people showing up to support the members of their community. We are here for one another, we need one another, and it is my hope that this community will choose to show up for each other on Sunday's and not just for the sermon but for the care, support, and encouragement we get from one another when we create sacred community together.

Christmas Eve Service December 24th:

6pm service: Join us for a nativity tableau! This is an intergen service.

8pm service: This service is more quiet and contemplative, there will not be childcare available but children are always welcome in the sanctuary



Are you interested in volunteering as a valet for our Christmas Eve services this year? We have a number of people who need handicap parking, and not enough spaces to go around, especially if the weather is icy. We are hoping to provide free valet parking to people who request assistance. Please let Larissa Brenner know if you are interested in serving as a Volunteer Valet by calling 315-692-4097 or by emailing larissa_brenner@yahoo.com.

Also, please let Larissa know if you plan to attend the 6:00 pm service or the 8:00 pm service.

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

Goods and Services Auction a Success



The MMUUS community came together on November 17, 2018 for an evening of food, fellowship and great bargains. Our joint effort netted \$4,667 which will be added to the budget to help with all the many expenses associated with keeping our beloved community financially solvent.

It was an all congregation effort with 123 goods and services auctioned, a social hall full of shoppers, volunteers for everything including advertising, poster and bid sheet preparation, set up, transporting, baking and food preparation, bar tending, serving, money collection, take down and dish washing.

A special shout out to Fred Fiske for engaging us in song as we awaited our totals. Kudos to Adele Toney for a couple of exceedingly generous bids. Gabrielle and Brian Story provided the entire inventory for the Tiny Treasures table. Teri Coon graciously produced countless forms, signs and documents for the event.

The talented trio of Jennifer Newman, Cynthia Carter and Alexa Carter pulled the entire event together in record time. Many thanks, ladies.

When we pull together, the MMUUS community can accomplish great things. Be on the lookout for information about our next fundraiser and be sure to get involved in the fun.



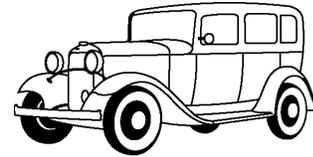
Please join us at Plowshares Craftsair and Peace Festival on December 1-2, 2018 at Nottingham High School (3100 E. Genesee St., Syracuse -map). Central New York's premier multicultural Craftsair, Plowshares celebrates a world where people enjoy their work and have control over it. With 130 area craftspeople and community groups, it is a marketplace of ideas and beautifully diverse, hand made items.

More than a Craftsair, it is a peace festival, with music, food and a spirit of fellowship, creating a weekend of grassroots commerce and community. It's a wonderful opportunity to connect at year's end with old and new friends and share in the life of a village marketplace that has no corporate headquarters.

For more information, contact Carol 315.472.5478, carol@peacecouncil.net



Our Perilous Parking Lot: The Landscape Architect's Role



The City of Syracuse requires that improvements to any lot result in LESS water runoff. A landscape architect (LA) has the professional training and skills to make this happen by constructing a detailed engineering/hydrology plan to meet the City's stringent requirements. This Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan will also have features consistent with our U/U principles by incorporating green infrastructure and environmentally sensitive design. These will offset the negative effects of paving, which is a necessity for safety's sake.

The LA will prepare detailed construction plans, help our Board identify quality contractors and oversee the actual construction. The first phase of construction will get started on the parking lot drainage problems (see last month's article).

To manage this big job, the Board selected Terry Horst, RLA, from a field of four landscape architects. Her expertise is already well known at May Memorial because she designed the area in front of our church. Her other designs include the NY Spine & Wellness Center in Camillus, features of several Syracuse parks, and the new Brooklyn Pickle in Clay (spring, 2019). You'll be impressed with her credentials on her website: MaxianHorst.com

She will create detailed drawings (site plans) of alternative ways the improvements could look. The congregation will have ample time to consider her options and make the final selection. That's the fun part! Stay Tuned.



The weather has turned snowy and cold! When the weather changes, there are several people in the congregation who do not attend services if driving conditions are snowy or icy. Please contact Teri (office@mmuus.org) if you would be willing to drive another person (or a couple of people) to May Memorial for Sunday services in bad weather. We are looking to create a "car buddy" system and pair up people who live relatively near to each other. Your "car buddy" may turn into a new friend, as well!

Getting in touch with...

Rev. Jo VonRue	Minister	ministerjrev@gmail.com www.calendly.com/jrev
Stacy Sceiford	Director of Religious Education	dre@mmuus.org
Glenn Kime	Director of Music	Phone w 315.729.3734
Leslie Dendy	Bookkeeper	ldendy@mmuus.org
Jane Fagerland	Society President	president@mmuus.org
Kevin King	Vice President	vp@mmuus.org

Giving Tree

Our **Giving Tree** will be up in the foyer this Sunday (November 25th) with tags for donations for various organizations in the community. Please plan to take a tag (or a few) and return your donations by Sunday, December 9th. Gifts should be new and left unwrapped. If you have questions please contact Julie Daniel: jdanielyoga@gmail.com or phone: 315-622-3423.

Recipients of our donations:

- Dorothy Day House (emergency shelter for women)
- McKinnley Brighton School
- The Workers' Center of CNY
- RISE (Refugee Immigrant Self Empowerment)



Let's remember to continue making food and personal care donations to our baskets in the foyer. Many of us have been away this summer... but sadly poverty never gets a vacation. Try to make it a regular habit to pick up items at the grocery store or drug store and bring something to church each Sunday. Here are a few suggestions: peanut butter, tuna, canned fruit, canned vegetables, soup, pasta, quick to fix macaroni packages, cereal, feminine hygiene products, shampoo, lotions, deodorant, shaving cream, razors, toothpaste, toothbrushes. Thanks so much for your continued support of our helping agencies in the community. Questions? contact Julie Daniel: jdanielyoga@gmail.com or call: 315-622-3423

****When donating items to the Personal Care basket in our foyer, make sure all items are NEW and UNOPENED**



Music Notes



Choir practice is held on Thursday evenings at 7:30pm in the Sanctuary unless otherwise noted.





December

Just a snapshot of your month ahead.
Please refer to the weekly calendar of events listed on the bulletin board located to the right of the Admin Office and throughout this newsletter for special events of interest!

DATE	EVENT	TIME	LOCATION
Dec. 3	Spiritual Enrichment Group	6:30pm	Memorial Room
Dec. 4	Writers Group	10:30am	Teenz
Dec. 4	Social Justice Vigil	Noon	Front of church
Dec. 6	MMUUS Book Club	1:30pm	Memorial Room
Dec. 9	PR Committee Meeting	9:00am	Memorial Room
Dec. 9	Spanofiles	12:25pm	Coming of Age Room
Dec. 9	First Sunday Lunch	12:00pm	Social Hall
Dec. 9	World Wide Candle Service	5:30pm	Sanctuary
Dec. 13	Spiritual Enrichment Group	6:00pm	Memorial Room
Dec. 16	Green and Social Justice	9:00am	Memorial Room
Dec. 17	Spiritual Enrichment Group	6:30pm	Memorial Room
Dec. 18	Writers Group	11:30am	Teenz
Dec. 19	Men's Fellowship Potluck	6:30pm	Social Hall
Dec. 19	History Committee	8:00pm	Room 8
Dec. 20	Twisted Sisters	6:00pm	Memorial Room
Dec. 23	Spanofiles	12:25pm	Coming of Age Room
Dec. 24	Christmas Eve Service	6:00pm	Sanctuary
Dec. 24	Christmas Eve Service	8:00pm	Sanctuary
Dec. 27	Spiritual Enrichment Group	6:00pm	Memorial Room

