

# May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society



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

February 2019 Volume 82

## May Memorial is Going Places!



Reverend Jo with UUA President Rev. Susan Frederick Grey

As with many religious organizations it is generally 20% of the members doing 80% of the work of the church. This has been true for May Memorial in the past few years and even at the start of this fiscal year back when I joined you in August. But on January 13<sup>th</sup> you all showed me a new way of doing church!!

On January 13<sup>th</sup>, we had a Rainbow Connection Festival sponsored by the Program Council and planned by Diane Chappell-Daily and Gabrielle Storey. And friends, it was PHENOMENAL!!! Each of the committees present decorated tables and had snacks, it was really festive!! But more importantly we got over 30 volunteers to sign up for helping with the work of the church!!

Many folks signed on to join committees, an even larger number signed up to help with tasks and care of the congregation! And a good deal of folks signed up to do social justice!!

Friends, this congregation is on FIRE!

I heard from the ministerial start up we had a few months ago that what this congregation really wants is social justice, community building, and growth. I can tell you that we are well on our way to all three of these things. When you move forward to say "Yes" you are sending a message to me and the leadership of the church that there are folks that are in the game with us. And you are sending a message to the rest of the Society that you are committed to making MMUUS a thriving spirit in the community of Syracuse. I am so delighted that you have chosen to come on this journey of life and ministry with me. Together we will make May Memorial a beacon of justice, equity, and compassion in our community

HUGE thank you to the committees to really stepping up to make this event a success, and an even bigger thank you for those who signed on to help make our congregation an even better place! If you were not there, don't worry! You can still sign up! please contact Teri in the office if you are interested in signing on to help make MMUUS thrive!

~ Rev. Jo



2019/2020  
 May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society  
 Stewardship Campaign

## Our Future Has Begun



May Memorial's annual Stewardship Campaign will run from March 3 through March 31. This Campaign is important for many reasons: It ensures that MMUUS will continue to thrive as we strive towards our mission of making the world a better place. It allows us to provide competitive compensation to our wonderful staff. It ensures that National Grid bills are paid, the grass is cut, and the snow is cleared. It enables us to provide an excellent Religious Education program for our children and youth. It is a way for all of us to show the Fire of Commitment for our Principles and our community.

This year's campaign is based on the hymn, Fire of Commitment, which inspired our congregation's president, Jane Fagerland's November newsletter column, quoting "when we live with deep assurance of the flame that burns within, then our promise finds fulfillment and our future can begin." Here are some of the ways we are ready for our future to begin.

A new minister who has inspired us to engage in social justice activities and newer members who have stepped up to take on leadership positions

Teen Group youth involved in a host of community actions

A clean building that is being cared for by both staff and a committed Buildings and Grounds Committee

Our namesake, Sam May, inducted into the Abolitionist Hall of Fame, upon the application of some of our congregation's members

At Start Up meetings this fall, a whole host of ways that our future can begin were discussed, many already taking shape including more Well-spring Groups, monthly vigils in front of the church, and young adult groups

One way you can ensure that May Memorial's Future can begin is to pledge as generously as you

can. Pledge forms will be available before, during, and after the March 3 Worship Service and will be collected during the service. After the service, a Canvass Kick Off Cook Off will be in the social hall. Pledge forms not picked up on March 3 will be mailed. Please return pledge forms no later than March 31 to help our Board efficiently plan next year's Budget.

The Finance Committee has set the goal at \$265,000, which will allow us to pay our minister and staff fairly per UUA guidelines, and will allow us to pay our "Fair Share" to the UUA, who has provided support in our years of recent transition.

Once again, an anonymous donor has generously donated \$20,000 in matching funds. All new pledges or pledge increases of \$250 to \$500 will be matched dollar for dollar until the \$20,000 fund is depleted. Please consider increasing or beginning your pledge to maximize the match criteria!

We encourage you to demonstrate the Fire of Commitment as you make your pledge, and we look forward to beginning a new future with you at May Memorial.

### The Stewardship Team

Rob Neimeier, Mardie Ninno, Annegret Schubert, Reverend Jo Von Rue and Jane Fagerland



<http://peacepeg.tripod.com/>



## Greetings from Your President!

I found the Start-Up Workshop for Jo’s ministry unexpectedly inspiring. I say “unexpectedly” because I looked at it as a responsibility to fulfill, but was blown away by the large attendance, and the energy and commitment of enthusiastic participants. Evin Carville-Ziemer gave us exactly what our unique church with its unique history needed at this unique moment.

We were asked to sort ourselves into groups based upon how long we’d been members. We then told our stories - “Before Stories” of what we had picked up about times past at MMUUS, and “Now Stories” reflecting first-hand experiences. Common themes arose: nostalgia for fun-filled, all-church activities that created community spirit; also, a desire to regain our reputation as a social justice leader. Later, we reshuffled into three new groups: Keepers of the Traditions, Keepers of the Rules, and Tellers of the Truth. These groups exposed the underpinnings of our congregation. What traditions do we revere? What unwritten rules do we follow? And what are the unspoken truths that “everyone” somehow knows?

One message in particular spoke to me. Early in the workshop, Evin stated that churches have two distinct ministries – the *congregation* has its ministry, and *Rev. Jo* has her personal ministry. Sunshine tried to get this across during the interim, by strongly pushing back on expectations like increased financial well-being or expanded membership as responsibilities of a new minister. We’ve been blessed – and perhaps cursed – by our past charismatic leaders. In the workshop, Tellers of the Truth reflected a past “truth” this way: “This congregation puts a lot of emphasis on the minister; it’s **all** up to the minister to lead us someplace.” But the REAL truth is that a congregation’s ministry must be distinct from the minister’s. We must walk in the same direction, with the same goals; but we, as members of MMUUS, are responsible for creating **our** ministry, what we want our church to be. A few months after the Start-Up, the Rainbow Connection committee fair demonstrated that we believe our gifts will be appreciated when offered. The joyful noise in the Social Hall that day was accompanied by new commitments to our congregation’s ministry. EVERY committee gained new volunteers. This is the way we build our ministry. It’s happening. We’re on our way!

Jane Fagerland, President  
Board of Trustees

### Getting in touch with...

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



## Notes from the Admin Office:

- **Calendar Items:**

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.

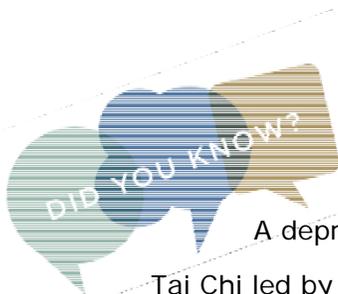
- **Newsletter:**

**Deadline for March newsletter is: February 20** by noon.

Any submissions received late will be omitted from the newsletter and added to next month where appropriate. Please keep word count to 250-300 to allow room for everyone to have a voice in the newsletter

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

- Our snow removal 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.

# From JRev

I need female identified people for a special secret musical surprise during worship on March 31st. Every age and ability is encouraged, no singing talent required!!

## **I want to make this big!**

There will be a few rehearsals scheduled.

Please contact Reverend Jo if you are interested!!

## **Do you want to be a part of worship in a bigger way?**

JRev and the Worship Associates team are looking for a few more good souls to join our team. Your responsibilities would be to attend annual WA training, at least quarterly meetings, have a 2 year commitment, help to find speakers for the Sunday's when Jo is out of the pulpit, serve as a Worship Associate during worship several times throughout your 2 year commitment, help Jo find worship related readings and other materials, and of course, present your own worship service, at least one each year you serve as a Worship Associate. There are only a few spots available, and if you would like to apply to be a part of this team, please contact Jo [ministerjrev@gmail.com](mailto:ministerjrev@gmail.com) or by calling the office for a WA application.



## **Social Justice Tuesday! Join us February 5 at noon!**

Join Rev. Jo on the front lawn/roadside of the church on the **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!

### **UU101 Class!**

Are you new to Unitarian Universalism or interested in learning more about our faith? Join us for a UU101 Class! We will learn about the history of our U and U faiths, and how we came to be who we are today! Please sign up on the bulletin board outside of JRev's office. There will be two options for class: Tuesday February 26th at 2pm, and Tuesday February 26th at 6pm. The class will run about 90 minutes.

### **Are You Interested in Becoming a Member?**

Have you been attending May Memorial for long enough that it feels like home to you? Are you ready to jump into membership, giving of your time, your talent, and your treasure?

If you are interested in becoming an official member of May Memorial please contact Reverend Jo at [ministerjrev@gmail.com](mailto:ministerjrev@gmail.com) or call her in the office. There is also a sign up sheet posted on the bulletin board outside of her office so she can call you if that's what you would prefer!



## History Corner

### Greetings from the MMUUS History Committee!

Thank you to everyone who stopped by the history table at the rainbow connection event on Jan. 13! Some of you enjoyed looking at the photo album of the gray stone church on James Street that was our home before the congregation moved to East Genesee Street. One responsibility of the history committee is to protect and preserve such treasures, part of the church archives in room 8.

Between 2006 and 2016, more than 40 long-time members of May Memorial were interviewed and digitally recorded for our Oral History Project. This project will be starting up again soon. If you're interested in hearing about the lives and experiences of other members and friends, please let us know. This is a fun way to get involved and to learn more about our religious community!

Summaries of oral history interviews were included in newsletter columns in 2016-2017, but we would like to include actual audio segments of interviews on the May Memorial website. That requires some expertise

in digital audio editing. If you or someone you know might be able to help with this project, please email us.

If you missed the NAHOF symposium on Oct. 20 and would like to watch Rog. Hiemstra's excellent presentation highlighting the many accomplishments supporting Rev. Sam May's induction, there's now a DVD that can be borrowed from the church office.

After the service on February 17, we'll be in the social hall displaying miscellaneous history-related items that are now in storage above the coat room. Before we dispose of any of the stored items, we hope to obtain more information about them and find out if any are of special interest to members of the congregation. Please stop by to take a look!

Mary Louise Edwards

MMUUS History Committee

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

All are welcome!



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>
Feb 3	Outside the Box	Rev. Libby Moore and Worship Associate Eliza Bailey
Feb 10	Trust is Earned When Actions Meet Words	Rev. Jo VonRue and Worship Associate Cat Rippentrop
Feb 17	Fake News	Rev. Jo VonRue and Worship Associate Bess Kamerance
Feb 24	The Arts as A Spiritual Practice	Worship Associate Amanda Winkler and Worship Associate Cat Rippentrop



## Green and Social Justice Committees



### Living a Sustainable Life- by the Green and Social Justice Committee

The long term survival of our planet and all the living things upon it depends on me and you; are we and our descendants going to live Sustainable Lives or not? If not, we will use up all of our precious natural resources and burn off all of the buried hydrocarbons--coal, oil and gas that took millions of years to accumulate-- thereby raising CO2 levels so high as to create environmental conditions of global warming intolerable for human or animal existence. In other words, we will create an exhausted, super-hot planet with intolerably extreme weather; extinction for all of us, including the birds and bunnies!

We tend to think of our planet as this huge vast thing with inexhaustible resources. Nothing could be further from the truth. The earth has a surface area of 197 million square miles, only 29% of which is land. You and I are one of 7.7 billion people who occupy that land. So our individual piece of the surface of the planet is an area 844 feet square; but the land area of which --at 29 %-- is an area only 455 feet square

(or 4 3/4 acre). That's the distance from May Memorial's front entrance to the end of the parking lot squared.

But maybe close to half of that 4+ acres is desert, polar areas, marshes or steep hills or shared common service areas (roads, offices, stores etc). So maybe we each have only a little more than (2+) two useable acres (290 ft square) to sustain you and all your descendants for all your fuel, materials, food, fresh water, clothing etc. And you need to dispose of any of your own waste sustainably on your two+ acres.

Wow, now sustainability is getting up close and personal. Start thinking about that and send us your comments. We will continue this discussion about Living a Sustainable Life on your 2+ acres in future Going Green articles. dca

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.



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](mailto: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

FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION  
2019 GREAT DECISIONS GROUP FORMING AT MAY MEMORIAL

It is time to plan for our non-partisan May Memorial 2019 Great Decisions group. Our first meeting will be February 3. Now is the time to order your Briefing Book by going online to [fpa.org](http://fpa.org), and selecting the tab "bookstore". The books now cost \$32 plus shipping and sales tax. Don't wait to order or you will need to pay for expedited shipping. To order by mail, write Foreign Policy Association, 470 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10016. Books are currently being shipped.

As always, the topics are more complicated and much more interesting than the topic titles may suggest. There is much we don't ever learn from our usual news media. As citizens of the world, we need to know both what and why, all over the world. Last year's topics were extremely important for understanding 2018 world events and evaluating our regular news sources and our government. Here are the eight 2019 topics and our discussion schedule.

Feb. 3,	Refugees and Global Migration
Feb. 17	The Middle East: Regional Disorder
March 3	Nuclear negotiations: Back to the Future?
March 17	The Rise of Populism in Europe
March 31	Decoding U.S.-China Trade
April 14	Cyber Conflicts and Geopolitics.
April 28	The US and Mexico: Partnership Tested
May 12	State of the State Department and Diplomacy

This year's meetings are scheduled for every other Sunday from 7 to 9PM. Note that this is different than the first and third or second and fourth Sundays. We can avoid meeting on Easter Sunday and Memorial Day weekend with the schedule of meeting dates set out here above. The May 12 meeting falls on Mother's Day and if the group wishes, we can move that one up or back a week.

Newcomers, non-members, and teens are all very welcome. You really do need to buy a Briefing Book from the Foreign Policy Association but there is no charge for participating in our group. You can also order by writing to Foreign Policy Association, or by calling 800 477-5836. The [fpa.org](http://fpa.org) website will provide optional additional resources about each topic so your book stays up to date. Often these are links to very thoughtful magazine articles.

Just get the Briefing Book, read the first topic and show up at 7PM meeting. Most of our meetings will be in the Memorial Room.

Questions? Want to see a Briefing Book? Contact: Peter Colman, 315 345-7111 for voice or texts, not voicemail; or reach him at [sailfast@windstream.net](mailto:sailfast@windstream.net).

### **Spiritual Enrichment Group Forming**

May Memorial currently has two active Spiritual Enrichment Groups that meet in the evening. Their times and locations are listed in the newsletter each month. There has been some interest expressed in forming a Spiritual Enrichment Group that would meet during the daytime hours. If you would like to learn more about what is involved with a group or would like to be part of a daytime group, please contact Alexa Carter at [alexacarteralexa@icloud.com](mailto:alexacarteralexa@icloud.com)



## February

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!

<b>DATE</b>	<b>EVENT</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
Feb 1	FOLKUS	7:30 pm	Sanctuary
Feb 2	Green and Social Justice Meeting	9:00 am	Memorial Room
	Wellspring	12:30 pm	Memorial Room
	Great Decisions	7:00 pm	Memorial Room
Feb 4	Spiritual Enrichment Group	6:30 pm	Memorial Room
Feb 5	Writers Group	10:30 am	Teenz
	Social Justice Vigil	12:00 noon	Font Lawn
	Grounded Kids Yoga	5:00 pm	Sanctuary
Feb 9	Choir Practice	9:00 am	Sanctuary
	Teeny Yogini	9:30 am	Social Hall
Feb 10	PR Committee Meeting	9:00 am	Memorial Room
	Congregational Review Circle	12:00 pm	Sanctuary
	Program Council Meeting	12:00 pm	Memorial Room
	Spanofiles	12:15 pm	Coming of Age Room
Feb 12	Writers Group	11:30 am	Teenz
	Grounded Kids Yoga	3:0 pm	Sanctuary
	Twisted Sisters	6:30 pm	Memorial Room
Feb 14	Spiritual Enrichment Group	6:00 pm	Memorial Room
Feb 15	FOLKUS	7:30 pm	Sanctuary
Feb 17	Green and Social Justice Meeting	9:00 am	Memorial Room
	Great Decisions	7:00 pm	Memorial Room
Feb 18	Spiritual Enrichment Group	6:30 pm	Memorial Room
Feb 19	Writers Group	11:30 am	Teenz Room
	Grounded Kids Yoga	5:00 pm	Sanctuary
	Board Meeting	6:00 pm	Memorial Room
Feb 20	Men's Fellowship Potluck	6:30 pm	Social Hall
Feb 24	Spanofiles	12:15 pm	Coming of Age Room
Feb 28	MMUUS Book Club	1:30 pm	Memorial Room
	Spiritual Enrichment Group	6:00 pm	Memorial Room

**Choir Rehearsal will be every Thursday at 7:30 pm unless otherwise noted.**



"...one of Central New York's  
hidden treasures"  
—Chris Baker, nytimes.com

**The Folkus**  
Project of Central New York

Feb 1: Kieran Kane & Rayna Gellert  
Feb 15: Mike Powell

Tickets and information available at:  
[folkus.org](http://folkus.org)

### 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 18 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.

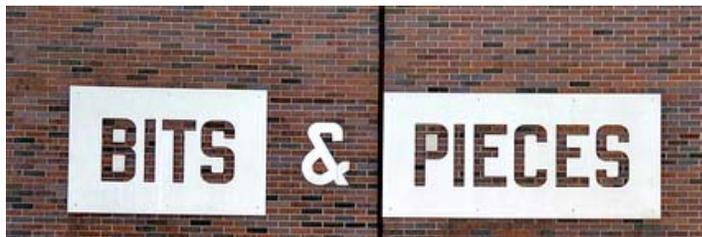
It's important to us to give our performers a great experience playing with us, and to have our audiences feel a part of a greater community of folks who enjoy listening to live music out with others. For us, it's about the music as well as the experience that live music creates.



## Art Gallery

February is May Loves the Arts month

Be sure to stop by the Social Hall as we present works from members  
and friends of May Memorial



**Copies of The Green Boat: Reviving Ourselves in Our Capsized Culture** by author **Mary Pipher** were purchased by the Green Sanctuary Committee a few years ago. They were circulated throughout our congregation and many people have read this inspiring book. Several copies of the book have not been returned. Please check under your bed or on your bookshelves to see if you have one of the missing copies. If so, please return it to the Green Sanctuary/Social Justice Committee mailbox in the office so that others may have their turn at reading the book.



**First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse, 109 Waring Road**, is once again hosting a Building Beloved Community Beyond the Binary conference on February 9, 2019. Registration starts at 8:30. The day begins at 9:00 am with our keynote and will be over at 4:30 pm. This conference is focussed on transgender and non-binary identity issues and concerns. As a congregation it is our hope that this one-day conference will be both a place where trans and gender non-conforming folk can gather, connect and learn and where cisgender folk can learn about being better allies.

We are so excited to have **J Mase III** as our keynote speaker. **J Mase III** is a Black/trans/queer poet & educator based in Seattle by way of Philly. As an educator, Mase has worked with community members in the US, UK, and Canada on LGBTQIA+ rights and racial justice in spaces such as K-12 schools, universities, and faith communities. He is founder of awQward, the first trans and queer people of color talent agency.

His work has been featured on MSNBC, Essence Live, Everyday Feminism, Black Girl Dangerous, the New York Times, BuzzFeed, the Root, theGrio, Teen Vogue and more.

His current projects include being the head writer of the theatrical production, Black Bois and being co-editor of the #BlackTransPrayerBook.

We will also be offering the following workshops:

- I'm new to all this - Trans/Nonbinary/Gender Non-Conforming 101
- Being a Trans Ally
- Medical Interventions for TG/GNC people
- On Faith and the Criminalization of the Black Trans Body,
- De-escalation,
- Preemptive Radical Hospitality
- Creating a Welcoming Environment for Trans and Gender Non-Conforming Children
- Transgender Law & Policy
- Micro-agressions
- From there to here.. stories from parents of Trans Youth on their journey supporting their child's transition
- Writing Where it Hurts

**Please register (sliding scale) <https://firstuusyr.breezechms.com/form/d69f1133>**

**"The Board of Trustees has approved the following Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy and accompanying Complaint Form. This is in response to a law recently enacted by the State of New York that requires all employers to have a policy in place. It is NOT in response to anything that has happened in our church!"**

**Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy  
for May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society**

**Introduction**

May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society (MMUUS) is committed to maintaining a workplace free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a form of workplace discrimination. All employees are required to work in a manner that prevents sexual harassment in the workplace. This Policy is one component of MMUUS's commitment to a discrimination-free work environment. Sexual harassment is against the law, and all employees have a legal right to a workplace free from sexual harassment and employees are urged to report sexual harassment by filing a complaint internally with MMUUS. Employees can also file a complaint with a government agency or in court under federal, state, or local antidiscrimination laws.

**Policy:**

MMUUS's policy applies to all employees, applicants for employment, interns, whether paid or unpaid, contractors, and persons conducting business, regardless of immigration status, with MMUUS. In the remainder of this document, the term "employees" refers to this collective group.

Sexual harassment will not be tolerated. Any employee or individual covered by this policy who engages in sexual harassment or retaliation will be subject to remedial and/or disciplinary action (e.g., counseling, suspension, termination).

**Retaliation Prohibition:** No person covered by this Policy shall be subject to adverse action because the employee reports an incident of sexual harassment, provides information, or otherwise assists in any investigation of a sexual harassment complaint. MMUUS will not tolerate such retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, reports or provides information about suspected sexual harassment. Any employee of MMUUS who retaliates against anyone involved in a sexual harassment investigation will be subjected to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. All employees, paid or unpaid interns, or non-employees working in the workplace who believe they have been subject to such retaliation should inform a supervisor, manager, the Minister, or the Chair of the Safe Congregations Team. All employees, paid or unpaid interns or non-employees who believe they have been a target of such retaliation may also seek relief in other available forums, as explained below in the section on Legal Protections.

Sexual harassment is offensive, is a violation of our policies, is unlawful, and may subject MMUUS to liability for harm to targets of sexual harassment. Harassers may also be individually subject to liability. Employees of every level who engage in sexual harassment, including managers and supervisors who engage in sexual harassment or who allow such behavior to continue, will be penalized for such misconduct.

MMUUS will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation that ensures due process for all parties, whenever the Minister or the Chair of the Safe Congregations Team receives a complaint about sexual harassment, or otherwise knows of possible sexual harassment occurring. MMUUS will keep the investigation confidential to the extent possible. Effective corrective action will be taken whenever sexual harassment is found to have occurred. All employees, including managers and supervisors, are required to cooperate with any internal investigation of sexual harassment.

All employees are encouraged to report any harassment or behaviors that violate this policy. MMUUS will provide all employees a complaint form for employees to report harassment and file complaints.

Managers and supervisors are **required** to report any complaint that they receive, or any harassment that they observe or become aware of, to the Minister or the Chair of the Safe Congregations Team.

This policy applies to all employees, paid or unpaid interns, and non-employees and all must follow and uphold this policy. This policy must be provided to all employees and should be posted prominently in all work locations to the extent practicable (for example, in a main office, not an offsite work location) and be provided to employees upon hiring.

**What Is "Sexual Harassment"?**

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is unlawful under federal, state, and (where applicable) local law. Sexual harassment includes harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, self-identified or perceived sex, gender expression, gender identity, and the status of being transgender.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome conduct which is either of a sexual nature, or which is directed at an individual because of that individual's sex when:

Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment, even if the reporting individual is not the intended target of the sexual harassment;

Such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment; or

Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting an individual's employment.

A sexually harassing hostile work environment includes, but is not limited to, words, signs, jokes, pranks, intimidation or physical violence which are of a sexual nature, or which are directed at an individual because of that individual's sex. Sexual harassment also consists of any unwanted verbal or physical advances, sexually explicit derogatory statements or sexually discriminatory

remarks made by someone which are offensive or objectionable to the recipient, which cause the recipient discomfort or humiliation, which interfere with the recipient's job performance.

Sexual harassment also occurs when a person in authority tries to trade job benefits for sexual favors. This can include hiring, promotion, continued employment or any other terms, conditions or privileges of employment. This is also called "quid pro quo" harassment.

Any employee who feels harassed should report so that any violation of this policy can be corrected promptly. Any harassing conduct, even a single incident, can be addressed under this policy.

### **Examples of sexual harassment**

The following describes some of the types of acts that may be unlawful sexual harassment and that are strictly prohibited:

Physical acts of a sexual nature, such as:

Touching, pinching, patting, kissing, hugging, grabbing, brushing against another employee's body or poking another employee's body;  
Rape, sexual battery, molestation or attempts to commit these assaults.

Unwanted sexual advances or propositions, such as:

Requests for sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning the target's job performance evaluation, a promotion or other job benefits or detriments;  
Subtle or obvious pressure for unwelcome sexual activities.

Sexually oriented gestures, noises, remarks or jokes, or comments about a person's sexuality or sexual experience, which create a hostile work environment.

Sex stereotyping occurs when conduct or personality traits are considered inappropriate simply because they may not conform to other people's ideas or perceptions about how individuals of a particular sex should act or look.

Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications anywhere in the workplace, such as:

Displaying pictures, posters, calendars, graffiti, objects, promotional material, reading materials or other materials that are sexually demeaning or pornographic. This includes such sexual displays on workplace computers or cell phones and sharing such displays while in the workplace.

Hostile actions taken against an individual because of that individual's sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and the status of being transgender, such as:

Interfering with, destroying or damaging a person's workstation, tools or equipment, or otherwise interfering with the individual's ability to perform the job;  
Sabotaging an individual's work;  
Bullying, yelling, name-calling.

### **Who can be a target of sexual harassment?**

Sexual harassment can occur between any individuals, regardless of their sex or gender. New York Law protects employees, paid or unpaid interns, and non-employees, including independent contractors, and those employed by companies contracting to provide services in the workplace. Harassers can be a superior, a [subordinate](#), a coworker or anyone in the workplace including an independent contractor, contract worker, vendor, client, customer or visitor.

### **Where can sexual harassment occur?**

Unlawful sexual harassment is not limited to the physical workplace itself. It can occur while employees are traveling for business or at employer sponsored events or parties. Calls, texts, emails, and social media usage by employees can constitute unlawful workplace harassment, even if they occur away from the workplace premises, on personal devices or during non-work hours.

### **Retaliation**

Unlawful retaliation can be any action that could discourage a worker from coming forward to make or support a sexual harassment claim. Adverse action need not be job-related or occur in the workplace to constitute unlawful retaliation (e.g., threats of physical violence outside of work hours).

Such retaliation is unlawful under federal, state, and (where applicable) local law. The New York State Human Rights Law protects any individual who has engaged in "protected activity." Protected activity occurs when a person has:

made a complaint of sexual harassment, either internally or with any anti-discrimination agency;

testified or assisted in a proceeding involving sexual harassment under the Human Rights Law or other anti-discrimination law;

opposed sexual harassment by making a verbal or informal complaint to management, or by simply informing a supervisor or manager of harassment;

reported that another employee has been sexually harassed; or

encouraged a fellow employee to report harassment.

Even if the alleged harassment does not turn out to rise to the level of a violation of law, the individual is protected from retaliation if the person had a good faith belief that the practices were unlawful. However, the retaliation provision is not intended to protect persons making intentionally false charges of harassment.

### **Reporting Sexual Harassment**

**Preventing sexual harassment is everyone's responsibility.** MMUUS cannot prevent or remedy sexual harassment unless it knows about it. Any employee, paid or unpaid intern, or non-employee who has been subjected to behavior that may constitute sexual harassment is encouraged to report such behavior to a supervisor, manager, the Minister, or the Chair of the Safe Congregations Team. Anyone who witnesses or becomes aware of potential instances of sexual harassment should report such behavior to a supervisor, manager, the Minister, or the Chair of the Safe Congregations Team.

Reports of sexual harassment may be made verbally or in writing. A form for submission of a written complaint is attached to this Policy, and all employees are encouraged to use this complaint form. Employees who are reporting sexual harassment on behalf of other employees should use the complaint form and note that it is on another employee's behalf.

Employees, paid or unpaid interns or non-employees who believe they have been a target of sexual harassment may also seek assistance in other available forums, as explained below in the section on Legal Protections.

### **Supervisory Responsibilities**

All supervisors and managers who receive a complaint or information about suspected sexual harassment, observe what may be sexually harassing behavior or for any reason suspect that sexual harassment is occurring, **are required** to report such suspected sexual harassment to the Minister or the Chair of the Safe Congregations Team.

In addition to being subject to discipline if they engaged in sexually harassing conduct themselves, supervisors and managers will be subject to discipline for failing to report suspected sexual harassment or otherwise knowingly allowing sexual harassment to continue.

Supervisors and managers will also be subject to discipline for engaging in any retaliation.

### **Complaint and Investigation of Sexual Harassment**

**All** complaints or information about sexual harassment will be investigated, whether that information was reported in verbal or written form. Investigations will be conducted in a timely manner, and will be confidential to the extent possible.

An investigation of any complaint, information or knowledge of suspected sexual harassment will be prompt and thorough, commenced immediately, and completed as soon as possible. The investigation will be kept confidential to the extent possible. All persons involved, including complainants, witnesses, and alleged harassers will be accorded due process, as outlined below, to protect their rights to a fair and impartial investigation.

Any employee may be required to cooperate as needed in an investigation of suspected sexual harassment. MMUUS will not tolerate retaliation against employees who file complaints, support another's complaint or participate in an investigation regarding a violation of this policy.

While the process may vary from case to case, investigations should be done in accordance with the following steps:

Upon receipt of complaint, the Minister or the Chair of the Safe Congregations Team will conduct an immediate review of the allegations, and take any interim actions (e.g., instructing the respondent to refrain from communications with the complainant), as appropriate. The Minister or the Chair of the Safe Congregations Team will notify the Committee on Ministry about the complaint and its review. If complaint is verbal, encourage the individual to complete the "Complaint Form" in writing. If he or she refuses, prepare a Complaint Form based on the verbal reporting.

If documents, emails or phone records are relevant to the investigation, take steps to obtain and preserve them.

Request and review all relevant documents, including all electronic communications.

Interview all parties involved, including any relevant witnesses;

Create a written documentation of the investigation (such as a letter, memo or email), which contains the following:

- A list of all documents reviewed, along with a detailed summary of relevant documents;
- A list of names of those interviewed, along with a detailed summary of their statements;
- A timeline of events;
- A summary of prior relevant incidents, reported or unreported; and
- The basis for the decision and final resolution of the complaint, together with any corrective action(s).

Keep the written documentation and associated documents in a secure and confidential location.

Promptly notify the individual who reported and the individual(s) about whom the complaint was made of the final determination and implement any corrective actions identified in the written document.

Inform the individual who reported of the right to file a complaint or charge externally as outlined in the next section.

### **Legal Protections And External Remedies**

Sexual harassment is not only prohibited by MMUUS, but is also prohibited by state, federal, and, where applicable, local law.

Aside from the internal process at MMUUS, employees may also choose to pursue legal remedies with the following governmental entities. While a private attorney is not required to file a complaint with a governmental agency, you may seek the legal advice of an attorney.

In addition to those outlined below, employees in certain industries may have additional legal protections.

#### **State Human Rights Law (HRL)**

The Human Rights Law (HRL), codified as N.Y. Executive Law, art. 15, § 290 et seq., applies to all employers in New York State with regard to sexual harassment, and protects employees, paid or unpaid interns and non-employees, regardless of immigration status. A complaint alleging violation of the Human Rights Law may be filed either with the Division of Human Rights (DHR) or in New York State Supreme Court.

Complaints with DHR may be filed any time **within one year** of the harassment. If an individual did not file at DHR, they can sue directly in state court under the HRL, **within three years** of the alleged sexual harassment. An individual may not file with DHR if they have already filed a HRL complaint in state court.

Complaining internally to MMUUS does not extend your time to file with DHR or in court. The one year or three years is counted from date of the most recent incident of harassment.

You do not need an attorney to file a complaint with DHR, and there is no cost to file with DHR.

DHR will investigate your complaint and determine whether there is probable cause to believe that sexual harassment has occurred. Probable cause cases are forwarded to a public hearing before an administrative law judge. If sexual harassment is found after a hearing, DHR has the power to award relief, which varies but may include requiring your employer to take action to stop the harassment, or redress the damage caused, including paying of monetary damages, attorney's fees and civil fines.

DHR's main office contact information is: NYS Division of Human Rights, One Fordham Plaza, Fourth Floor, Bronx, New York 10458. You may call (718) 741-8400 or visit: [www.dhr.ny.gov](http://www.dhr.ny.gov).

Contact DHR at (888) 392-3644 or visit [dhr.ny.gov/complaint](http://dhr.ny.gov/complaint) for more information about filing a complaint. The website has a complaint form that can be downloaded, filled out, notarized and mailed to DHR. The website also contains contact information for DHR's regional offices across New York State.

#### **Civil Rights Act of 1964**

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) enforces federal anti-discrimination laws, including Title VII of the 1964 federal Civil Rights Act (codified as 42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq.). An individual can file a complaint with the EEOC anytime within 300 days from the harassment. There is no cost to file a complaint with the EEOC. The EEOC will investigate the complaint, and determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe that discrimination has occurred, at which point the EEOC will issue a Right to Sue letter permitting the individual to file a complaint in federal court.

The EEOC does not hold hearings or award relief, but may take other action including pursuing cases in federal court on behalf of complaining parties. Federal courts may award remedies if discrimination is found to have occurred. In general, private employers must have at least 15 employees to come within the jurisdiction of the EEOC.

An employee alleging discrimination at work can file a "Charge of Discrimination." The EEOC has district, area, and field offices where complaints can be filed. Contact the EEOC by calling 1-800-669-4000 (TTY: 1-800-669-6820), visiting their website at [www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov) or via email at [info@eeoc.gov](mailto:info@eeoc.gov).

If an individual filed an administrative complaint with DHR, DHR will file the complaint with the EEOC to preserve the right to proceed in federal court.

#### **Local Protections**

Many localities enforce laws protecting individuals from sexual harassment and discrimination. An individual should contact the county, city or town in which they live to find out if such a law exists. For example, employees who work in New York City may file complaints of sexual harassment with the New York City Commission on Human Rights. Contact their main office at Law Enforcement Bureau of the NYC Commission on Human Rights, 40 Rector Street, 10th Floor, New York, New York; call 311 or (212) 306-7450; or visit [www.nyc.gov/html/cchr/html/home/home.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/cchr/html/home/home.shtml).

#### **Contact the Local Police Department**

If the harassment involves unwanted physical touching, coerced physical confinement or coerced sex acts, the conduct may constitute a crime. Contact the local police department.

***Approved by the MMUUS Board of Trustees, December 18, 2018***

May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society

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Syracuse, NY 13214  
315.446.8920  
office@mmuus.org  
Office hours: Sun -Thurs 9am-2pm

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**February 2019  
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.

February 5

John Hottenstein

Assistant Chaplain, Upstate

Bill Billingham, Musician

February 19

Rev. Jo Von Rue

May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society

Nancy Pease, musician

February 12

Rev. BJ Norrix, Pastor

Erwin First United Methodist Church, Syracuse

Rev. Karen Bellimer, Musician

February 26

Rev. Jennifer Hamlin-Navias will lead this celebratory event commemorating five years of interdenominational services here at

The Nottingham

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

