

Sunday Offerings for February and March

This year we have been sharing our Sunday offering with a local service agency. We donate 50% of the cash received (bills and coins only; not the checks) to an organization chosen by the Social Justice poll last spring.

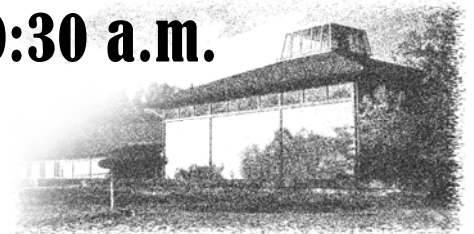
Through February, half of our cash offerings will go to Syracuse's **Vera House**, whose mission is to support those affected by domestic and sexual violence. See verahouse.org.

In March, we will be sharing the offering with **Planned Parenthood of Central and Western New York**, which operates an oft-picketed Health Center here in Syracuse. Planned Parenthood of Central and Western New York "provides high quality, nonjudgmental reproductive health care; promotes responsible and healthy sexuality; advocates for access to comprehensive health care; and supports those affected by sexual violence."

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Sunday Worship, 10:30 a.m. and Religious Education



February 15

The Fire of Commitment

Rev. Jean L. Wahlstrom

What fires you up? What sparks your imagination? What enflames your passion? What eternal flame sustains you? What embers warm your soul?

February 22

Reverence

Alice Chico

Noted psychoanalyst and author D. Stephenson Bond wrote the following about **reverence**: "The soul suffers when we lack reverence. We live in an age that understands respect—respect earned through achievement, power, or actions. We live in an age that understands rights, obligations, and sets of commitments. But we have difficulty experiencing reverence because it comes from a deeper place. Reverence requires an experience of 'otherness,' the 'thou-ness' of that other who crosses our path."

Please join the Worship Committee member Alice Chico this Sunday for a special service about reverence and how we show respect for that which we hold dear.

March 1

Rev. Jean L. Wahlstrom

* 12:00 pm—First Sunday Luncheon in the Social Hall



CareRing News & Notes

On November 14th, **Don MacKay** became a first-time grandfather. Grandson Moustafa Marcus Diallo was born to Catherine MacKay and Mouctar Diallo in Pretoria, South Africa. Catherine will soon return to her job interviewing asylum-seekers for the UN High Commission on Refugees. Moustafa's maternal grandparents are delighted by periodic visits via Skype.

Seen on TV and in the newspaper: **Kasia Kirnie** and **Peri Cannavo** who participated in the Post-Standard/WCNY spelling bee on Saturday, February 7th. Kasia, a 5th grader, represented J-D Middle School; her last word was *populace*. Peri, a seventh grader who represented Manlius Pebble Hill School, faltered on the word *hafiz*. [Huh?] Kasia is the daughter of **Karin Kirnie** and Peri is the daughter of **Peter Cannavo** and **Helen Jacoby**. Congratulations to both girls for spelling their way into the competition!

* * * * *

*We want to include your news in this column. Although news of illness and bereavement will always be covered (if we know about it and you consent,) GOOD NEWS is especially welcome to balance it. Please let a member of the CareRing (**Peggy Ryfun, Carol Bickart, or Remo Bianco**) know of your joys as well as your sorrows. We can be reached at carering@mmuus.org.*

50th Anniversary

Fifty Years Strong! “Kick-Off Cook-Off!” Stewardship Event

Our 2015-16 Stewardship Campaign—Fifty Years Strong!—launches on March 15th, with a special stewardship service and a chili and cookie cook-off competition, the *Kick Off-Cook Off*, in the Social Hall afterwards. **Alexa Carter** and **Jane Fagerland**, stewardship co-chairs, have lined up some of May Memorial’s best cooks to participate. But don’t despair—there is plenty of room for more entries in the vegetarian and meat categories, and unlimited space in the cookie competition! Contact **Alexa Carter** at alexacarteralexa@iCloud.com or **Jane Fagerland** at Jane_F@sbcglobal.net if you’d like to participate. Additional announcements and details about the *Kick-Off Cook-Off* will be coming soon.



Look for your 2015-2016 Stewardship materials to arrive in your mailbox around the first week in March. They will include a stamped addressed envelope to make it easy for you to respond with your pledge of support to May Memorial. *Fifty Years Strong!*



~ Alexa Carter and Jane Fagerland,
Co-Chairs, 2015-16 Stewardship Campaign

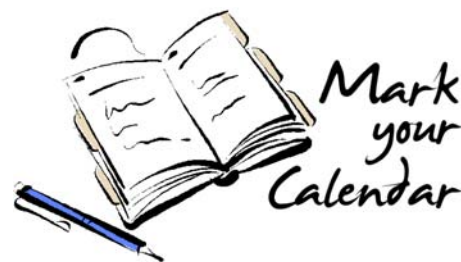


(“President’s Letter” continued)

Topic II

Soon you will become very aware that we have begun the annual Stewardship Campaign to secure pledges from members and friends for the church fiscal year which begins July 1, 2015. This year’s canvass co-chairs are **Jane Fagerland** and **Alexa Carter**. If they ask for your help in conducting the campaign, please join their team. The Koch brothers and Warren Buffet and Bill Gates don’t live around here, and are not pledging MMUUS members so it is up to all of us to do the lifting.

~ Peter Colman, President,
MMUUS Board of Trustees



Get a Move On!

May Memorial proudly presents a Sunday Serenade featuring “Then and Now” on **Sunday, March 22nd, at 12:15 pm in the Social Hall.** “Then and Now” is a trio made up of MMUUS member **Anne Shelly** and friends, Pat Rector and Carol Murphy. They will sing popular dance tunes from the Charleston era up thru the Disco era. Everyone will be invited to dance along and enjoy or simply relax, listen, watch, and enjoy. **Please mark March 22nd on your calendars and plan to join the fun!** This event is sponsored by the Music and Arts Committee.

News from your Board of Trustees

Topic I

Thanks to all of you who responded to the Board’s survey, to help it with the required minister performance review. We had 166 signed responses, an outstanding participation level. **Richard Coombs** won the drawing for a \$166 Wegmans gift card.

We hope that the process of taking the survey freshened your thinking about the many different dimensions of the job of minister and the impossibility of any one person doing well with every listed job element. It is helpful for Rev. Jean and the Board to know which ministerial functions are most important to you.

It was also helpful to learn what you see as Rev. Jean’s strengths and weaknesses. One person responded that Rev. Jean is “*the gold standard for UU ministers*”. Others thought she should leave tomorrow. We also received many specific and detailed comments.

We asked you about prior ministers, what they did well and what they did poorly. The responses were interesting. For example some replied that minister “XYZ” was really great at something, while others would say that the same minister was really terrible at the same thing.

In that vein, it is therefore not surprising that we received responses that Reverend Jean’s sermons are great and also that they are poor. We also have responses that since her return from sabbatical, she seems rejuvenated and that her sermons have reflected this.

The purpose of a performance review is to help the subject of the review to improve his/her performance. It is essentially a way to have a conversation.

In this case the Board expects that Rev. Jean will be tightening up her sermon content and delivery. She is taking cues from the indications of topics which people want. Among these are tie-ins to the “*seven principles*”. It is also obvious that Rev. Jean, well-liked by some she knows best, needs to work harder at strengthening her connections with the congregation and the community.

A detailed report is being mailed separately to the congregation. The Board is holding a meeting on **Sunday, February 22nd, at 12:15 pm in the Sanctuary**, to answer any questions which remain, but please read the report carefully first. We are working to arrange childcare.

(continued above right)



Homeless & Hungry Meal— March 14

May Memorial will be preparing a meal for the Homeless & Hungry at the Samaritan Center in Syracuse on **Saturday, March 14th**. If you are interested in volunteering your time, please contact **Julie Daniel** at jdanielyoga@gmail.com or call (315) 622-3423. If you are unable to come and serve, please consider making a financial contribution to this important work in our community. You can write a check to MMUUS and put "Homeless and Hungry" on the memo line



Social & Environmental Concerns

"Grounded"—A Play about Weaponized Drones to be performed at MMUUS

May Memorial will host "Grounded", a powerful one-woman play about a fighter pilot who becomes pregnant and is re-assigned to operate remote-controlled drone strikes, **in the Sanctuary at 7:00 pm, on Monday, March 9th**.

The subject of drones, the timing of the performance and the fact that it is being enacted here in Syracuse are all highly significant.

Weaponized Reaper drones have been flown from Hancock Field Air National Guard Base by the 174th Attack Wing since 2010, and have been deployed over Afghanistan. Recurring non-violent, anti-drone protests during these years have resulted in more than 150 arrests and in multiple incarcerations. Protestors have been arrested invoking international law while expressing their First Amendment rights to petition the government.

The trial of protestors accused of trespassing, disorderly conduct and obstruction of government administration is scheduled to begin March 10 – the day after the performance of "Grounded"—in DeWitt Town Court. The accused are from New York City, New Jersey and Maryland. Three are with Veterans for Peace and one is a member of the Granny Peace Brigade.

"Grounded" will be performed here by Katelyn Burrello: a senior at Russell Sage College. Leigh Steinbeck, a teaching artist at the school is director. The play was written by George Brant, author of several other thought-provoking productions. This one is gaining national attention, and will be performed this Spring by Oscar winner Ann Hathaway at the Public Theater in New York City.

Our own **Dick Weiskopf** has demonstrated in many of the weekly protests at Hancock. He compellingly states that, *"I do not want these attacks done in my name. The President has the authority to target and kill anyone our intelligence agencies say is a terrorist or is fighting with terrorists. If we participate in these killings and extrajudicial executions, without bringing charges, we become no better than the terrorists. There are inevitably mistakes and numbers of innocent civilians killed. These remote killings are against international law. We are lucky we are still able to make peaceful demonstrations and protests in this country. I hope that continues ..."*

The performance is sponsored by the Syracuse Peace Council Committee to Ground the Drones and End the Wars, and is co-sponsored by Upstate Drone Action and May Memorial's Social & Environmental Concerns (Green Sanctuary) Committee.

There is no charge to attend the play, but a donation will be requested.

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

Several members of our congregation who were present for the January 25th Spiritual Practice service have expressed an interest in spending more time with the poem shared by Emanuel Carter on that day. Emanuel has consented to have it published here. Enjoy!

("The Collecting of Rhythms..." continued)

The Collecting of Rhythms as a Spiritual Practice

Being daily attuned to the rhythms around me is to acknowledge the privilege of sharing existence with all that there is: about discerning the shapes and the patterns, the colors and the sounds, the speeds and trajectories, the arrivals and departures of the multiple elements in the matrices of our lives—the birthing of stars, bright solar storms, the wobbling of the planets, the sequencing of the seasons, the changing lengths of our days, the structure and nuance of nature and community, the delicate fabrics of body, mind and spirit!

Being daily attuned to the rhythms around me is to acknowledge the beauty of visual perception, to be able to discern both sunlight and shade, clouds and blue sky, green leaves of summer, the kaleidoscope of fall, the skeletal sculpture of long white winters, the green fuzz of spring and all the living creatures that burrow and fly, walk and swim, stalk and attack, procreate and die and are the beautiful, intelligent, kinetic context of our lives!

Being attuned to the rhythms around me is to acknowledge the beauty of our ability to hear – to hear the bells or the carillons of the nearby cathedral, the call of the muezzin from the nearby mosque, the hourly chimes at the ancient city hall, the changing of shifts at Bethlehem Steel, the low moan and wail of the CSX freight in the hour past midnight. It is the collegiate sprinter doing the open 440 at one full breath for every eight steps then every six steps after 300 yards, I'm ahead of the pack and I KNOW I'm alive! It is the powerful syn-copation of human footsteps in airport terminals, the staccato of high heels, the clunk of hiking boots, the authoritative step of English leather brogues, the swaggering trash talk of the basketball team, heads impossibly high over colorful sneakers, the whispered intensity of young boys on leave from the 82nd Airborne!

Being daily attuned to the rhythms around me is to acknowledge the joy of engagement—to look in the eyes of a newborn child, see the intimate, intelligent infinite potential of the beginning of life and the unspoken prayer that this one will make better all that (s)he touches—to stand in the sleet at East Side Soccer, count to ten every time they ignore parental questions, be more moved than intended at graduations and weddings, promotions and reunions, always looking for the next set of eyes, so deeply brown or blue, so hazel or green that even focused by an infant grandchild, I KNOW I've been SEEN!

Our lives are full of trumpets, guitars and pianos that tell us where to shop, what to think, where to live! There is the perpetual opera of colleagues and bosses, neighbors and pundits, experts, and frauds in soprano and alto, tenor, and bass backed by an orchestra of organized religion, politics, and commerce, ceremony, and ritual, process and procedure but what keeps my spirit

on edge is the internal drum that picks up the pulse of the supernova burst, the Chicago blues the New Orleans shuffle, climbing jetliners, car horns and busses, the samba, bolero, calypso and waltz and lays down a cadence for daily engagement with the ever-evolving, always surprising polyrhythmic matrix of everyday life! Somewhere inside me there is a full trap set with high hats and ride cymbals, there are djembes and congas, timbales and tambourines, castanets and bongos linked to the pulsing, vibrating universe we share. Their sonic potentials are real and imagined, played by my hands on table tops or knees, on the kitchen sink edge, or the shower stall wall, on the car steering wheel or on drums of my own and the rhythms are driving and raucous, sometimes distracting, disconcerting or out of control but they uplift and sustain, make all things beautiful, and give power and substance to gentle interactions and to just aspirations!

~ Emanuel Carter
(January, 2015)

(continued above right)

Our Care Baskets

Are you curious about where the items in our

Care Baskets go when they leave MMUUS? I was and here is the scoop:



Vicky Schipper generally delivers the items (may get help from some church members occasionally). **Food** collected goes to the Inter-Religious Food Council which distributes food to local pantries free of charge. **Personal hygiene items** go to Plymouth Church where they have a food pantry on Thursday mornings. These items augment the food they give. At Plymouth clients are told they can take two or three personal hygiene items depending on how much they have available. At the Inter-religious Food Council a worker distributes the food as pantries call with a specific need.

Personal hygiene items that are in high demand: deodorant, lotion, shampoo, toothpaste, tooth brushes, and soap (Be sure your donations are new and have not be opened!).

Thanks so much to all who donate to these important services in our community. Be sure to add items to your weekly grocery list, and keep them in your car so you don't forget them on Sunday morning!

~ Julie Daniel



“Thank you!” from InterFaith Works of Central New York

We recently received the letter below from the CEO of InterFaith Works of Central New York, Beth A. Broadway, in which she thanks the congregation of May Memorial for their donation:

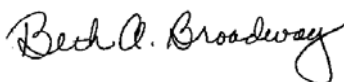
Dear Friends:

On behalf of InterFaith Works of Central New York, thank you for your generous contribution of \$200.00 in support of the Building Bridges annual appeal.

Your gift helps us to carry out our mission of affirming the dignity of each person and every faith community. InterFaith Works strives to create relationships and understanding through education, service and dialogue, and each of our programs -the Ahmad & Elizabeth El-Hindi Center for Dialogue, Center for New Americans, Senior Services and Spiritual Care-will benefit in some way from your generosity.

Your kindness is met with much gratitude from InterFaith Works and the thousands of people we serve.

Best wishes,



*Beth A. Broadway
President/CEO*

Creating a more welcoming May Memorial

Our Board and standing committees are exploring ideas for making MMUUS a more intentionally warm and welcoming faith community. At the Board's mid-year Goals Retreat on January 31, we reviewed, among many other items, our progress on improving outreach to new visitors. Here are a couple of ideas which came out of that discussion:

Advice for Engaging Young Adult Visitors

This piece, entitled "Coffee Hour Caution!", comes courtesy of the UUA.

X - Avoid saying: **"How old are you?"** *Why:* Is age so important? There's no good answer. Avoid this one altogether.

✓ - Say instead: **"What did you think of the service today?"**

X - Avoid saying: **"Are you new here?"** *Why:* A young adult may have been attending for years, you just haven't met them. This implies you think they don't belong in the church.

✓ - Say instead: **"I don't think we've met, my name is..."**

X - Avoid saying: **"When are you planning to have kids?"** *Why:* Having or not having kids is a private matter and not one people may want to discuss. This implies you only value young adults for their future children, not as a peer adult, here and now.

✓ - Say instead: **"What brought you here today?"**

X - Avoid saying: **"What do you do?"** or **"What year are you in school?"** *Why:* For those who are unemployed or underemployed, work is a tricky question; assuming someone is a student implies you think they are of a certain age or life stage. Give them the chance to talk about whatever is meaningful, which might not be school or a job.

✓ - Say instead: **"So tell me about yourself..."**

X - Avoid saying: **"We need more young people!"** *Why:* Like everyone else, young adults want to be seen for who they are, not as a token for their age.

✓ - Say instead: **"Great to meet you!"**

(continued above right)

("Creating a more welcoming..." continued)

X - Avoid saying: **"Have you met our other young adult?"** *Why:* Young adults enjoy friends of all ages. Welcome them into faith and fellowship.

✓ - Say instead: **"Can I introduce you to my friend?"**

Help in Noticing Visitors and Newcomers

The Board has purchased new **yellow mugs** for visitors' use at coffee hour. Please keep an eye out for people with one of these mugs (or wearing a yellow Visitor name tag). Take a few minutes to introduce yourself and get to know them. It's surprising how easy it is to extend yourself when you realize how important your own role is.

Thank you all!

~ Rev. Jean

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

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NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS
Email ♦ newsletter@mmuus.org

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

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.

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TIME VALUE

Calendar

Sunday, February 15th

9:40 am	Individual Spiritual Practice	Creekside
10:30 am	Worship Service	Sanctuary
10:30 am	Teenz	Teen Room
12:15 pm	Spanophiles	COA

Monday, February 16th

2:00 pm	Presidents' Day *Office Closed* CareRing Meeting	Memorial Room
6:30 pm	Spiritual Enrichment Group	Memorial Room

Tuesday, February 17th

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

Wednesday, February 18th

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

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

Friday, February 20th

8:00 pm	Folkus Concert: The Kennedys	MMUUS
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Sunday, February 22nd

9:40 am	Individual Spiritual Practice	Creekside
10:30 am	Worship Service	Sanctuary
10:30 am	Teenz	Teen Room

Monday, February 23rd

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

3:00 pm	T'ai Chi Chih	Social Hall
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Thursday, February 25th

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