

# May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society Newsletter



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

March 2024



Beloveds,



I hope that this letter finds you well, warm, and taking some time to rest during this winter season. I am writing to give you details about my upcoming ministry sabbatical

so that we can put your mind and heart at ease in my absence. I will be away from you and from the church beginning February 26th. On August 19th I will move into study leave as I prepare for the new church year; at that time I will be available for emergencies until my return to the pulpit on September 8th.

Sabbatical is a time for my professional and personal rest and renewal, a part of that means being completely away from my work. Therefore, during this time, I will be completely out of communication with all members of the congregation. In my absence, our Board of Trustees, in conversation with Stacy, Glenn, and Teri, will lead this society with joy and love. If something should arise in my absence that they need help with, they will seek help from our UUA Central East Region Primary contact person, Alia Shinbrough. If you have a pastoral emergency, you should contact the church office and Teri will direct you to one of three Ministers who will be on call for pastoral emergencies. These ministers are Rev. Jennifer Hamlin-Navias (retired from FUUS, our former MRE), Rev Douglas Taylor (Minister in Binghamton, son of Rev. Liz Strong), and Rev. Karen Brammer (UU Utica).

The board of trustees have been informed as to what circumstances would warrant their contacting me while away. While I may be informed of certain things, I may or may not respond to any of them, trusting in the leadership of this congregation. This congregation has come such a long way since we have been in partnership together, and I have every confidence that you can all handle what comes your way in my absence.

Sabbatical is a wonderful opportunity for you to experience many other ministers and worship perspectives while I am gone! While I am away, you will continue to see Glenn and Stacy on Sunday mornings supporting our Worship Associates, guest preachers and artists lead wonderful and engaging worship services. My final Sunday with you will be February 25th and my first Sunday back will be September 8th. This will also be our Water Communion homecoming service and I hope to see many of you at both of those services.

My loves, you may not fully understand how much I love you. I am going to miss you all very much while I am away. I am so excited to return rested and renewed so that together we can rise up and grow into the next best version of ourselves so that we might spread the incredible message of Unitarian Universalism.

I love you, and there is nothing you can do about it.

*Rev. Jo VonRue*





### Larry Hoyt

Paintings, Drawings and Photographs by local artist and musician Larry Hoyt will be on display in our Social Hall during the month of March. The exhibit is a mix of Larry's work - old and new. Some go back about 45-years. The work includes everything from portraits to abstracts.

#### Larry's artist statement -

I've been interested in the visual arts since childhood. I remember my mother taking me to art museums in New York City, and some of those early images and impressions still inspire me. I've shot photos since my teens, and started painting and drawing (and sculpture) in college. I've never settled on just one style of painting - I feel like I am always experimenting, learning as I go through trial and error. As with Life - it's a mixed bag.

Don't miss this exhibition of Larry Hoyt's extensive artistic work.

**Gallery Hours:**  
 Sunday: 8am-2pm  
 Monday: 8am—2pm  
 Thursday: 8am—2pm



**The Folkus**  
Project of Central New York



**THE FOLKUS PROJECT** presents BRUCE MOLSKY & TONY TRISCHKA on Friday, March 1 @ 8pm. Two legends of the folk/roots world join forces for an evening of old time string band wizardry. Syracuse native Tony Trischka is considered to be the consummate banjo artist and perhaps the most influential banjo player in the roots music world, helping to usher bluegrass out of the dusty past and into a progressive future, while honoring the old time traditions. Grammy-nominated and described as “an absolute master,” Bruce Molsky transports audiences to another time and place, with his authentic and personal interpretations of rarities from the Southern Appalachian songbook and other musical traditions from around the globe. The two will trade songs from their prolific and beloved catalogs, as well as the deep well of American traditional folk tunes, both well-known and recently unearthed. For tickets and more information go to [folkus.org](http://folkus.org).



**THE FOLKUS PROJECT** presents LOUISE MOSRIE COOMBE on Friday, March 15 @ 8pm. Louise Mosrie Coombe grew up riding horses and writing poetry on a cattle farm in Tennessee. She began writing songs after college, while working in TV/radio in Knoxville. Her strong expressive voice has been described as "like listening to Patty Griffin and Susan Tedeschi at the same time." She weaves together narratives between songs with humorous personal stories and historical anecdotes, drawing on sensual imagery of the deep South. "Louise Mosrie Coombe's voice is a gift from the gods, and how she uses it is a gift to us." --Christine Lavin. "Louise Mosrie may well be the brightest young folk-oriented artist to emerge from Nashville in many a year." --Rich Warren, WFMT, Chicago. For tickets and more information go to [folkus.org](http://folkus.org).





**We have a great lineup of guest Ministers and speakers for March!**

3/3	Wouldn't You Rather be Found with the Lost than Lost with the Found?	Rev. Jennifer Hamlin Navias/ Worship Associate Sandy Greenberg
3/10	Pay Attention and Be Transformed	Poet Carol Mikoda/ Worship Associate Eliza Bailey
3/17	A Pattern Like Truth	Rev. Douglas Taylor/ Worship Associate Ruth Yanai
3/24	Original Grace	Worship Associate David Mendelsohn/ Worship Associate Sgarlata
3/31	Easter	Director of Religious Education Stacy Sceiford/ Worship Associate Kent Lindstrom

<https://zoom.us/j/91720743841?pwd=ZFdlbVNsYW1za3RWN29SVldUMDV5Zz09>

Meeting ID: 917 2074 3841

Passcode: 801542

One tap mobile

+19292056099,,91720743841# US (New York)

+16469313860,,91720743841# US

Dial by your location

- +1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

- +1 646 931 3860 US

Meeting ID: 917 2074 3841



**Vespers**

During Rev. Jo's Sabbatical Vespers will be led by LeeAnn McKinney. These will be a once-a-month check-in. Please watch our social media, website and eblasts for details.

<https://zoom.us/j/96509877539?pwd=ZmZPQllaTlhkSFNETW5yQmszMXdYZz09>

Meeting ID: 965 0987 7539

Passcode: 513494

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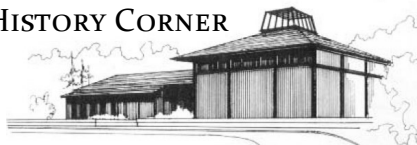
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## HISTORY CORNER



### Sam May Sunday



As announced in recent eblasts, April 14, 2024, has been designated as Sam May Sunday. This special Sunday celebrates the legacy of our second minister, Reverend Samuel Joseph May (1845-1868) and honors a present-day activist whose outstanding work in the Syracuse community echoes that of Rev. May.

Rev. Samuel Joseph May was best known for his work to abolish slavery, but he was also involved in every major reform movement of the mid-19th century and was an important figure in the early history of Syracuse. He arrived from New England in 1845 to serve as the second minister of the Unitarian Congregational Society (later May Memorial). He immediately got involved in the community and remained active in Syracuse until his death in 1871. As we think about possible honorees for Sam May Sunday, we want to remind readers of some of Rev. May's important social justice causes, with just a few examples of each.

#### Racial equality and integration

- Invited a growing black family in his first church to move from the back pew to a larger one in the front, vowing to publicly chastise a resistant parishioner if he insulted the family.
- Raised money to educate formerly enslaved people in the South.

#### Equal rights for women

- Advocated for the full participation of women in public affairs.
- Invited women to speak from his pulpit and encouraged other ministers to do the same.
- His 1845 sermon, published as Women's Rights Tract #1, became a key document in the struggle for women's rights.

#### Educational reform

- In 1848, drafted the resolution establishing the school system for the newly incorporated city of Syracuse.
- Elected to the Syracuse Board of Education in 1865; president from 1866-1869.
- Advocated for public education and for integration of the schools.

#### Peace and nonviolence

- Considered war to be "the greatest of all human crimes."
- Openly opposed the Mexican American War, causing him to be criticized in a local paper.
- Played an active role in ending corporal punishment in the Syracuse City Schools.

#### Poverty

- Shortly after arriving in Syracuse, helped open a county home for orphaned children.
- Worked for state legislation to house and educate the homeless canal boys

Continued from page 4

**Interfaith work**

- Worked closely with members of the Temple Society of Concord.
- Collaborated with Rev. Jermain Loguen of the AME Zion Church to assist enslaved people who had escaped.
- Supported Father O’Hara, founder of St. Joseph’s Hospital and openly objected to the prejudice shown toward the nuns who staffed the hospital.
- Held community discussions at City Hall that were open to all faiths.

If you know of a community activist whose work is consistent with the values of Rev. May, please send us that information soon ([history@mmuus.org](mailto:history@mmuus.org)) or talk to us on Sunday.

The person who is selected will receive an award and will be invited to speak in the April 14 service and to meet with us in the social hall afterwards. Thank you for your help!

Mary Louise Edwards & Kent H. Lindstrom

[history@mmuus.org](mailto:history@mmuus.org)



Sponsored by  
 First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse  
United with Love and Joy, Open to All  
 the **Q** center  
for Health

# Building Beloved Community Beyond the Binary

Saturday, April 27th, 2024

9:00am-5:00pm

First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse

109 Waring Road, Syracuse, NY

*And virtually!*

*A place to find community with transgender, nonbinary folx and our allies*

*A conference for us to gather, learn and grow.*



Registration for the Building Beloved Community Beyond the Binary conference on April 27th is LIVE!

<https://firstuusyrc.my.canva.site/bcbb>

# UPCOMING Events



<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
Friday	1st	FOLKUS	8pm	Sanctuary
Sunday	3rd	First Sunday Lunch	11:45am	Social Hall
Tuesday	5th	Tai Chi	3pm	Social Hall
Thursday	7th	Tai Chi	3pm	Social Hall
		Depression Support Group	4:30pm	Memorial Room
		Choir Rehearsal	7:30pm	Sanctuary
Monday	11th	Twisted Sisters	7pm	Teenz
Tuesday	12th	Writers Group	10am	Teenz
		Tai Chi	3pm	Social Hall
Thursday	14th	Tai Chi	3pm	Social Hall
		Depression Support Group	4:30pm	Memorial Room
Sunday	17th	Soul Matters	12:15pm	Teenz
		Choir Rehearsal	7:30pm	Sanctuary
Tuesday	19th	Tai Chi	3pm	Social Hall
Thursday	21st	Tai Chi	3pm	Social Hall
		Depression Support Group	4:30pm	Memorial Room
		Choir Rehearsal	7:30pm	Sanctuary
Tuesday	26th	Tai Chi	3pm	Social Hall
Thursday	28th	Bookenders	1:30pm	Memorial Room
		Tai Chi	3pm	Social Hall
		Depression Support Group	4:30pm	Memorial Room
		Choir Rehearsal	7:30pm	Sanctuary

### Diversity Action Team

As you may have noted, the 8th Principle Team has changed their name to the Diversity Action Team (DAT). Our main focus will transition toward 'action' as the 8th principle and our own name suggests. During the remaining worship services we will continue to highlight important persons in history and our community. We will also be highlighting organizations and people who are focused on supporting marginalized people in some way. We are hoping this information will be useful in assisting MM members and friends to become aware of these opportunities as well as to become actively engaged. If you are a member of such a group or you are participating in an activity you would like to share, please contact Mardie Ninno ([mpninno@gmail.com](mailto:mpninno@gmail.com)) or LeeAnn McKinney ([lamckinney425@gmail.com](mailto:lamckinney425@gmail.com)).

## Kickoff of our 2024-2025 Stewardship Campaign: February 11 - March 7

### ***Rise Up!***



Sunday, February 11, we kickoff our annual stewardship campaign. To *Rise Up!* our welcoming religious community, we will need increased financial support from members to catch up with inflation and poise us for a drive for increased membership when Reverend Jo returns in September 2024 from her well-deserved sabbatical leave.

- During the campaign, we will hear testimonials that reflect individual members' thoughts on our community and its future.
- During the campaign, we ask that you carefully consider your pledge with generosity to support our mission. ***"We embrace all spiritual journeys and encourage service as we build a more loving and just world."***
- **Thank You All! Together, we can make a more loving and just world.**

#### 4 ways to return your pledge – choose whichever is easiest for you.

**Please return your pledge before March 7, 2024.**

- Return the signed pledge form to the Pledge Box in the office.
- Send the paper form by US mail to Jane Fagerland, 2852 Citation Drive, Fabius NY 13063.
- Scan or take a picture of the form and email it to Jane at [jane\\_f@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jane_f@sbcglobal.net)
- Send an email specifying the pledge amount to Jane at [jane\\_f@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jane_f@sbcglobal.net)



Minister	Rev. Jo VonRue	<a href="mailto:ministerjrev@gmail.com">ministerjrev@gmail.com</a>
Director of Religious Education	Stacy Sceiford	<a href="mailto:stacymaydre@gmail.com">stacymaydre@gmail.com</a>
Director of Music	Glenn Kime	<a href="mailto:gkimeorganist@gmail.com">gkimeorganist@gmail.com</a>
Board President	Peter McClure	<a href="mailto:peterrogermccclure@gmail.com">peterrogermccclure@gmail.com</a>
Book Keeper	Leslie Dendy	<a href="mailto:lesliedendy@yahoo.com">lesliedendy@yahoo.com</a>
Finance	Jane Fagerland	<a href="mailto:jane_f@sbcglobal.net">jane_f@sbcglobal.net</a>
Church Office	Teri Coon	<a href="mailto:office@mmuus.org">office@mmuus.org</a>



### Unirondack weekend Sept 20-22, 2024

This year's May Memorial UU and UU congregation in Kingston, Ontario, Canada Unirondack weekend will be from Friday, Sept 20, 4 pm through Sunday Sept 22, 2 pm. Other congregations from Central New York are invited to participate as well.

Unirondack is a UU Camp and Conference Center, about a 2.5 hour drive from Syracuse in the western Adirondacks, near Lowville, NY. To see the Unirondack facilities/environment, the website is: [www.unirondack.org](http://www.unirondack.org)

Since 2008, this intergenerational Unirondack weekend has been a source of early fall community building for our UU congregations. This weekend is often an introduction to the camp for youth and families who later go on to be campers and staff at the weeklong youth or family camps. Usually, we have room for guests of MM folks, so check in if you want to ask a friend to accompany you to the weekend.

There are cabins and heated sleeping spaces with indoor bathroom facilities. People need to bring their own bedding, towels, and pillows as well as their personal items. People hike, bike, read, play games, go boating, swim, talk, nap, arts, crafts, sport games or just sit by the lake soaking in the beauty. Group activities are encouraged and are led by the weekend participants. Please leave your pets and electronic games at home.

The 2024 cost is expected to be: \$110/PP for those over 12 years old; Children 4-12 years \$100; Children 3 and under are free. Some financial assistance is available to help pay the costs for MM families.

This cost is inclusive of 2 nights (F, S) lodging and use of the Unirondack facilities, Friday night welcome light meal, 3 meals Saturday and Sunday breakfast & lunch. Meals are prepared/cleaned-up by participants and are shared in a dining hall. Special dietary needs are carefully managed in food planning and prep; refrigeration is available for individual needs. Snacks and transportation are not included in this rate. Carpooling has been arranged by individuals in the past.

A 50% deposit is required to hold your space; the balance needs to be paid 2 weeks in advance of the weekend (Sept 6) Full initial payment is totally appreciated! If you need to cancel, usually you will receive a full refund. Reservations can be made by sending your names/ ages of children to Stephanie Cross at [msscoss1234@gmail.com](mailto:msscoss1234@gmail.com). Deposit checks should be made to "Stephanie Cross", given to her at MMUUS or mailed to 3844 Pompey Center Road, Manlius, NY 13104. Venmo payments can be sent to: Stephanie-Cross-75

Please include your contact information, names of people attending and ages of the children attending with your payment.

This is a great weekend - we hope you will join us!

Stephanie Cross, Coordinator, May Memorial UU Society, Syracuse

More Unirondack news on page 9





**Goods and Services Auction on May 18 at 5:30 pm!**



As we have done in the past two years, we will be releasing an online catalog the Monday prior -- May 13 -- so even if you can't get to the event, you can support this fundraiser and reap the benefits of dozens of "Buy it Now" treasures -- Good Eats, Experiences and Adventures, Enlightenment, Creative Expressions, and Serendipitous Treasures!

This is not only a major fundraiser for May Memorial, but, it is also a fun event, and the organizers are working on making it an even more family friendly event than ever! If you have ideas on how to accomplish this, let Jennifer Newman at [mamaslash@twcny.rr.com](mailto:mamaslash@twcny.rr.com), Cynthia Carter at [ccarringtoncarter@verizon.net](mailto:ccarringtoncarter@verizon.net) or Dawn Mendelsohn at [dpmendels@gmail.com](mailto:dpmendels@gmail.com) know.

Check out the weekly eblasts for timely details on how to participate, get in touch with any of us for details, and, if you're ready to send a description and/or photo of a donation, along with the details about estimated value and minimum bid amount, please send to Teri at [office@mmuus.org](mailto:office@mmuus.org) AND Cynthia at [ccarringtoncarter@verizon.net](mailto:ccarringtoncarter@verizon.net). And let any of the organizers know if you want to help out with any facet of this event!



**Unirondack is filling up!**

If you're looking for a place for the values we talk about each week to come to life in a real-life community that is centered around a youth experience, check out Camp Unirondack!

Unirondack is a radically-inclusive, UU-founded summer camp located in the beautiful lake-filled Adirondacks on the ancestral lands of the Haudenosaunee. We're currently enrolling for spring and summer programs, and spots are filling up!

At Unirondack we provide a space that holds progressive values, but focuses on providing a space for campers to play, scream, shout, be themselves, and learn about others. Our values create norms, but it's our campers and staff arriving with a focus on creating community who provide an environment of learning and exploration that makes Unirondack special. Whether it's a camper's first time in the outdoors, diving into the fantasy world of a DnD campaign, playing music in front of an audience, or showing off their art, we aim to help youth discover new passions and parts of themselves to love.

**Camp Unirondack is hiring!**

Are you interested in working at a youth-centered space, surrounded by peers who share a passion for intentional community engagement and social justice work? Have you ever considered working at a summer camp? You should check out Unirondack! Unirondack is a radically-inclusive, UU-founded summer camp located in the beautiful lake-filled Adirondacks on the ancestral lands of the Haudenosaunee. We have been helping create smiles and chaotic fun for decades since 1951!

This summer we are looking for prep cooks, maintenance staff, counselors, and several leadership positions. If interested, check out [www.unirondack.org](http://www.unirondack.org) or email [Director@unirondack.org](mailto:Director@unirondack.org) for more info.

**Unirondack Camperships available!**

Parents of May Memorial youth who are attending Unirondack 2024 summer camp can apply for a Campership (scholarship) to help pay the tuition for the week.

In addition, Camperships from the camp itself are available through the Unirondack website.

Did you know? If your employer has a FSA (Flexible Spending Account) for childcare, you can often use that money for summer camp tuition!

Interested in applying? Send an email to Stephanie Cross [msscoss1234@gmail.com](mailto:msscoss1234@gmail.com) and

Stacy Sceiford [stacymaydre@gmail.com](mailto:stacymaydre@gmail.com) to request the assistance.

(Unirondack is also a women and trans-led summer camp that leads the summer camp world in gender-inclusivity for youth.)

Lauren Hunt, Executive Director  
[Lauren.Hunt@unirondack.org](mailto:Lauren.Hunt@unirondack.org)

May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society

3800 East Genesee Street  
Syracuse, NY 13214  
315.446.8920  
office@mmuus.org



**New Office Hours:**

Sunday: 8am-1pm

Mon - Thurs: 8am-2pm (other times by appointment only)

Days off are Friday and Saturday

- **Calendar Items:**

All zoom meetings must be scheduled through the Office Administrator.

- **Deadlines to remember:**

**E-Blast and Order of Service** need to be to me by 5pm on Wednesday.

- **Newsletter:**

**Deadline 20th of preceding month, please adhere to this deadline to allow for the newsletter to be sent out in a timely fashion.**

Please keep word count to 300-400 to allow room for everyone to have a voice in the newsletter