

Getting Involved at May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society

Many Different Beliefs, One Loving Community

Making Connections

Whatever your age or stage, here at May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society, you can meet new people, engage with fun groups and programs and volunteer in ways that contribute to the community and make life better for others. In addition to Sunday services and religious education programs, we have many ways to get connected, make new friends, and expand your mind!

All Are Welcome! We look forward to getting to know you.

Volunteer

One of the best ways to get to know people and feel a part of our community is to volunteer for one of the many tasks that keep MMUUS humming. Except for a few paid positions, our church is run by volunteers. By volunteering, you become part of our efforts to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community, which is how we care for one another and support the broader community.

Think about your skills and talents, and what you love doing most – chances are, there is an opportunity to do more of what you love and find meaning here at May Memorial.

We encourage you to consider any of these roles. There are one-time or **short-term** activities as well as more involved committees and groups, from bringing refreshments to giving a sermon. We will make sure you have help from someone who knows the ropes so you don't have to worry about getting it right.

If you would like an electronic version of this handout with active hyperlinks, contact Teri -office@mmuus.org

Here are some ways to help:

Adult Religious Exploration: Participate in a group that is currently meeting or organize a new workshop or discussion group for adult spiritual enrichment and personal growth

Audio/Visual: Learn to operate our equipment during worship services and other events

Building and Grounds: Keep our physical space in good repair with routine maintenance and upkeep or keep our space beautiful by working with our plants and gardens

Fundraising: Help with our *Goods and Services Auction* or plan new events to encourage giving

Gallery Exhibits: Work with our Arts Committee to find local artists to show their work at May Memorial

Hospitality: Be a greeter, share one of your favorite recipes during a potluck or during coffee hour, or share a note or visit a member recovering from illness

Music and Choir: sing or play during services and at events

Religious Education for children and youth: Guide and nurture our young people in spiritual growth and exploration

Social and Climate Justice: Support efforts to live sustainably and to create a more loving and just community; assist in our work to dismantle racism and other oppressions as we build our Beloved Community

Getting Involved at May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society

Many Different Beliefs, One Loving Community

Groups at May Memorial

Bookenders

This is a May Memorial book club that meets from September through May on the fourth Thursday of the month, from 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. Both fiction and nonfiction books are chosen at the beginning of the church year. Members share leadership of the book discussions. When the size of the group permits, Bookenders is open to new members.

Contacts: Janet Hiemstra janethiemstra@gmail.com Vicky Skipper schipper44@gmail.com

Diversity Action Team

The Diversity Action Team was created to shepherd a series of discussions, worship series and learning opportunities about the UUA's proposed 8th Principle, a call for "actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions." These activities led to a congregational vote on Sunday, October 29, 2023, at which May Memorial overwhelmingly supported the adoption of the 8th Principle. By doing so, we, the members of May Memorial, will begin a new journey to define what actions and accountability will mean for us. The Diversity Action Team will lead these efforts. Contact: Dawn Mendelsohn dat@mmuus.org

Kitchen Congregation

The informal gathering of the "Kitchen Congregation" usually occurs every Sunday morning during the church year. Folks sit together in the social hall to share conversation and fellowship. This is an alternative to attending the formal church service. Contact: Bruce MacBeth oldhouseelectric@gmail.com

Music and Choir

Music is an important part of worship and celebration in our congregation. We are blessed to have a number of talented musicians in our congregation who contribute instrumental and vocal performances, as well as original compositions.

Our Choir is made up of members and friends of our congregation who sing during the Sunday services from September to June as well as on a few special occasions. Some music-reading skills are helpful but not required. Please contact Glenn and he will help you determine your best fit for our program. Music varies and includes classical, traditional and popular. Our Society has an excellent grand piano and historic organ. The Choir practices on Thursday evenings at 7:30 in our sanctuary and is led by our longtime *Music Director*, Glenn Kime gakimeorganist@gmail.com

Our building is also home to **FOLKUS**. Although not an official part of our congregation, FOLKUS utilizes our sanctuary to bring live acoustic music to Central New York. FOLKUS is a not-for-profit organization, run entirely by volunteers committed to bringing a wide variety of live music to our area. Shows at May Memorial are generally run once or twice a month on Friday evenings from September through May.

Sister Circle

This is a group of women that meets weekly during the church year for personal growth and fellowship. Programs are planned by members and include rituals, celebrations, meditation, personal exploration, stewardship, arts, music, and movement. When the size of the group permits, Sister Circle opens to new members who are able to make a weekly commitment. Contact: Janet Hiemstra janethiemstra@gmail.com

Getting Involved at May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society

Many Different Beliefs, One Loving Community

Soul Matters Sharing Circle

Based on UUA-sponsored monthly topics used in our worship themes, participants gather after worship on the second Sunday of each month at 12:15 p.m. (after coffee hour) to go deeper into our monthly themes to explore how these themes may work in our lives when we invite them in. These classes are offered in person at May Memorial. This is an awesome way to dive deeper into our monthly themes, especially this year, as we are making a denominational move towards updating our existing Principles and Purpose. *Contacts: Rev Jo ministerjrev@gmail.com for questions; Teri Coon office@mmuus.org to sign up*

Soul Spring

Soul Spring is a ten-month spiritual deepening course for Unitarian Universalists using the UU Soul Matters curriculum. It is a program that explores how the foundations of our faith support us throughout our life. It offers an opportunity to connect deeply to your UU values and suggests techniques to ground your actions in spiritual practice. It provides a group of supportive seekers to share in your journey. The group rotates locations at people's houses, meeting once a month to share dinner and discussion. The group is closed until the new season, which organizes in late summer. *Contact: Stephanie Cross mscopy1234@gmail.com*

Thursday Spiritual Enrichment Group

The group contemplates and discusses the challenges of living a hopeful and fulfilling life during difficult times. Subject matter is generated from within the group and facilitator duties are shared. The group generally meets twice a month. *Contact: Alexa Carter alexacarteralexa@icloud.com*

Twisted Sisters

Twisted Sisters is a social group open to adult women. No commitment is required. Meetings will be held on the 2nd Monday of each month from 7 to 9 p.m. for the foreseeable future, so mark your calendars. Join us for conversation, camaraderie and support as we navigate this life together. *Contacts: Amanda Perrine amandaeperrine@gmail.com, Andrea Wandersee andreawandersee@gmail.com*

Writers' Group

The MMUUS Writers' group is a once-a-month (Tuesday, 10-12 p.m.) gathering in person. We seek to provide an encouraging place for writers of all stages of development, and focusing on a variety writing formats, to sharpen and broaden their writing skills. We follow a semi-structured, shared-leadership format. New members are welcome.

Contacts: Ann Pearson awpearson1@yahoo.com, Dick Pearson repearso@syr.edu

Events held periodically throughout the year and are generally a one-time commitment

February Potluck and Bingo Party

Chase those winter blues away as you join us for our annual gathering. Great fun for all ages ... and EVERYONE is a winner! What to bring: a dish to pass (beverages provided), your own place settings (this is a green event!) a prize from each person playing ... to be donated to the prize table. *Contact Julie Daniel jdanielyoga@gmail.com call/text: 315-729-8179*

Memorial Service Receptions

When a Memorial Service is held at May Memorial, these people help coordinate refreshments. More help is always needed. *Contact: Janet Hiemstra janethiemstra@gmail.com*

Getting Involved at May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society

Many Different Beliefs, One Loving Community

Goods and Services Auction (generally in May)

The annual service auction is our top fundraiser. Members and friends donate goods and services, which are bid on through an on-line auction software program and during an in-person social gathering. This is a family fun event. The event is about raising money, but also enhancing community friendships and relationships. Donating goods or services is a creative way for you to help your beloved community. Many auction items create opportunities to meet new friends and get to know old friends even better.

Contact: Jennifer Newman goodservices@mmuus.org

Monthly Sunday Lunches

Monthly Sunday Lunches are an opportunity for folks to sit and chat over a meal served after one Sunday service each month during the church year. The lunch is planned as a fundraiser and fun community-building event. Different groups at May Memorial generally sponsor the lunch, however, more hands are always needed to set up, cook, serve, wash dishes and cleanup afterwards. Contact: Eliza Bailey elizalafayette@gmail.com

Men's Monthly Lunch

This informal men's group exists to allow men at May Memorial to share a meal and get to know each other. They gather for lunch at a Syracuse restaurant once a month. Men who are new to May Memorial are especially welcome. Conversation ranges from family affairs and household tips to local news and world events. Contact: Anton Ninno antonninno@yahoo.com

RE Family Activities

This group of May Memorial families, who have children in the RE program, periodically plan activities for the children and families of MMUUS. If you want to join in or have an idea for an activity, let us know. Contact: Molly Letsch mletsch@gmail.com

Thanksgiving Dinner at May Memorial

Join with folks from May Memorial to share this festive meal as a single or a family. All are welcome. Bring your favorite dish to share. Look for more information in future eblasts and Facebook in the fall.

Contact: Kyle and Elena Brown ernwinn88@gmail.com

Unirondack Fall Family Weekend

Unirondack is a UU Camp and Conference Center, 2 - 2.5 hour drive from Syracuse in the western Adirondacks, near Lowville, NY. Since 2008, this intergenerational Unirondack weekend, generally in September, has been a source of early fall community building for May Memorial. This weekend is often an introduction to the camp for youth and families who later go on to be campers and staff at the week-long youth or family camps. There are cabins and heated sleeping spaces with indoor bathroom facilities. 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. Weekend participants work in teams to prepare and serve meals (the food is purchased ahead of time by the weekend coordinator). Group activities are encouraged and are led by the weekend participants. Contact: Stephanie Cross mscross1234@gmail.com
(Note: the camp hosts youth, family, and adult camps and retreats <https://www.unirondack.org/>)

Coffee Hour Host

Hospitality is an important part of the church experience. We need your help to be able to offer coffee, tea and snacks each week after the service. Any supplies you purchase will be reimbursed. You can sign up with Teri in the office office@mmuus.org and there is also a sign-up sheet available during coffee hour most weeks. If you are new to these roles, training will be provided.

Getting Involved at May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society

Many Different Beliefs, One Loving Community

Sunday Morning Worship Team

Ushers

Two ushers serve as greeters at each Sunday service. They hand out any materials needed for the service or large print orders of service to those who would like one. They also help during the collection. It is an easy job and a valuable addition to the worship team. Sign up here:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0A4CA8AC28A4F94-20232024>

Audio Visual

May Memorial has a large video projection screen installed at the front of the sanctuary and cameras to share the service for members watching at home. The LED screen is used for displaying text, visuals, and videos throughout each service. This allows us to be paper free in the sanctuary in support of our commitment to a sustainable future. Learn to operate our equipment during worship services and other events. Contact Teri office@mmuus.org

Worship Associate

The Worship Associates are a diverse group of church members, youth and adults who support the minister in planning and conducting worship services. Church members who would like to join the Worship Associates should contact Rev. Jo.

The summer services from June through August are organized by the Worship Associates and are entirely lay-led. The summer lay-led services are often non-traditional and unique, and allow individuals to speak to a topic of interest or lead the congregation in exploring a variety of activities related to the many facets of worship and spirituality.

Vespers

Join us on Wednesday evenings at 8p.m. for a short 30-minute time of connection and reflection. We will listen to a short reading, a piece of music that expands on the topic, and we connect with one another through check-ins and conversation. You can find a zoom link each week on our website! Or ask Teri in the office office@mmuus.org

More Formal Committees that support the operation of May Memorial

Art Committee

Throughout the church year (Sept. - May) local artists are given the chance to show their work in May Memorial's social hall. The Art Committee works to find and support a diverse group of artists that support UU principles. The opportunity to show their work in our gallery has helped some new artists jumpstart their careers and has exposed May Memorial members and friends to a wide variety of local art work. *Contact: Cynthia Carter Cynthiacc@verizon.net*

Building and Grounds Committee

The Committee provides consultation and supports for the management of preventive and routine maintenance, major maintenance, and emergency response issues; engages MMUUS members as volunteers to complete building and grounds maintenance tasks; maintains a long-term maintenance plan that assures appropriate stewardship of MMUUS facilities; provides leadership for the annual budget planning process and the long-term capital planning needs related to MMUUS building and grounds. *Contacts: Stephanie Cross mscross1234@gmail.com Dale Sherman wingsinger@gmail.com*

Getting Involved at May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society

Many Different Beliefs, One Loving Community

CareRing Committee

The Care Ring is a lay extension of the professional ministry of May Memorial. Responsibilities include recruiting church and committee members to provide meals, transportation, phone calls, visitation, or written communication on a short-term basis whenever possible, and informing the minister of those who may need help. It is a unique committee that gives one the opportunity to meet and develop special relationships with members and friends in our community. The CareRing is currently working to get each MMUUS member to complete an emergency contact form. *New coordinators to be added soon*

Committee on Ministry

The Committee on Ministry is accountable to the Congregation and is responsible for the overall evaluation of our effectiveness in realizing the mission of MMUUS. The Committee conducts a regularly scheduled ongoing cycle of evaluation of our various ministries. The Committee also facilitates the Congregation's regular evaluation of the Senior Minister. The CCM develops the process for these evaluations which must be conducted openly and must include Trustee input from the varied stakeholders in the congregation. In addition to conducting the evaluation process, the Committee is responsible to share the evaluation findings with MMUUS members. *Contact: LeeAnn McKinney*
lamckinney425@gmail.com

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee assists the board and the Treasurer in monitoring and managing the congregation's financial resources. The authority to make decisions from this information rests with the Board of Trustees. *Contact: Treasurer, Jane Fagerland* jane_f@sbcglobal.net

Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee operates like Human Resources departments in that they don't hire, manage or supervise staff, but advise the Board of Trustees and the senior minister on best practices. The Council is responsible for annual review and revision of staff job descriptions and contracts, salaries and benefits; consultation with the UUA as needed on human resources/personnel matters; management of MMUUS staff search processes; consultation with the Finance Committee on matters of compensation; consultation with members of the staff, as needed, on personnel matters. *Contact: Peter McClure*
peterrogermclure@gmail.com

Safe Church Committee

The goal of the Safe Church committee is to ensure the safety of church members and attendees, as well as to protect church property. *Contact: Kevin King* kkingjag@gmail.com