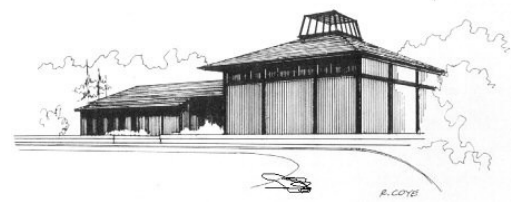


May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society Newsletter



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

January 2025
Volume 88
Issue 1

Existing As Love



A few years ago I was out grocery shopping and, a woman, about my age, was looking at me rather perplexed. As I got closer to her, she got right in front of me and asked,

“Are you a real priest?”

I don't remember the context of why I was wearing my clerical collar, many UU ministers only wear clerical collars for specific tasks like social justice events, or getting visitation access to a congregant hospital room outside of regular visiting hours. I must have been coming home from some kind of protest. I was wearing my collar and had my red hair in it's naturally curly state, a full face of makeup including a bright pink lipstick... because bright pink lipstick gives me super power.

I said to her “No, I'm not a priest, I'm a Unitarian Universalist minister”

“I did not know priests could look like you” she said to me with a look on her face that made me a little concerned for her.

“Well, I am a Unitarian Universalist minister, and we look many different, and wonderful ways. You look like you're a little in distress, what's going on?”

The woman told me a story of how she used to love going to church until some rather unfortunate things happened in their church leadership. She told me she had never seen a woman priest, or a priest who looked so kind was not scary. We talked for a while about my Unitarian Universalist religion and how we welcome and love all people because of exactly who they are.

She thanked me for our conversation, she told me she was going to find a church that had a priest that looked like me, and we both went our own ways.

I know it is the case that many UU's have aversions to folks wearing clerical collars. I do too. It is also the case that right now, this world needs more love, and it


needs more of us who are called by love to show up in visible and radical ways. To exist as love. There are so many times when I have been stopped while wearing my collar because some stranger needs support or prayer or love. And friends, I am here for that. I don't care if they think I'm Christian, my goal is to show up in this world as love for anyone who might need it.

I have decided, given the upcoming administration change, that every time I leave my house (except on Sunday mornings), that I will be wearing my clergy collar, generally under some kind of t-shirt with a social justice message. I want people to see me in public and to know that clergy can look many different ways, that loving clergy exist in many different spaces, that we are a welcoming place for everyone who seeks care and support.

Seeing me in a collar may make you uncomfortable, I understand that. But I want you to remember who I am, and who I will always continue to be for our congregation. If it makes you feel squirmy when you see me, I also want you to remember that I am wearing it to show up as love in this world and hopefully that will make you feel a little more comforted.

Love, Rev. Jo



1/5	Service at First UU	
1/12	Growing Together!	Rev. Jo VonRue and Worship Associate David Mendelsohn
1/19	Together We Rist!	Rev. Jo VonRue and Worship Associate Eliza Bailey
1/26	Interconnection to Our Animal World	Visiting minister Rev. Stacey Mitchell and Worship Associate Sandy Greenberg

Link for January 5 service:

<https://zoom.us/j/97323249174>
password: chalice

This service will be on Zoom or in person at First UU 109 Waring Road. We will NOT meet at May Memorial



<https://zoom.us/j/91328201757?pwd=gKDU2sIVTRxcLUP44zwpOXpZq9rb8L.1>

Meeting ID: 913 2820 1757

Passcode: 098900

One tap mobile

+19292056099,,91328201757# US (New York)

+16469313860,,91328201757# US

Dial by your location

• +1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

• +1 646 931 3860 US



Welcome Rev. Stacey Mitchell to the pulpit on **Sunday January 26th**

Bio: Rev. Stacey is Minister at UU Society of Oneonta and Board Member of UU Animal Ministry. Before becoming a UU Minister, her career has included working for environmental organizations, engaging in human rights issues at the United Nations, and working at various Buddhist Centers across North America.



*Community,
Conversations,
Connections
with Rev. Jo*

Build Your Own Democracy

Saturday 1.25.25 6-7:30pm

Are you lying awake at night, worrying about where our democracy is headed? Finding yourself doom scrolling through social media when you'd rather be having real conversations with real people? Ready to make friends and maybe, just maybe, help save the world while you're at it?

We've got something for you.

Join us at May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society for BYOD (Build Your Own Democracy), a new casual, non-religious discussion salon and workshop where the Syracuse progressive community can connect, share ideas, and turn anxiety into action. Bring your passion and your friends so that we can build this world better together.

Registration is necessary to ensure we have enough folks for hearty discussion. Please register by contacting our office administrator at office@mmuus.org

Resisting Fascism

A three-session class for adults

by Rev. Jo VonRue - May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society

Sunday: 2.23 12:15-2pm

Sunday 3.23 12:15-2pm

Sunday 4.27 12:15-2pm

Inspired by Rev. Cecilia Kingman's 2023 Berry Street Essay "My Little Pony Was Right: Fascisms Without and Within", and the popular work of Dr. Jason Stanley and Dr. Timothy Snyder, both of Yale University, this class seeks to help adult students make connections between the rise of fascism and the institution of the church, and develop practical strategies for living a life that resists the habits of mind that allow fascism to take root in society.

Please feel free to bring your own lunch.

Registration Required: office@mmuus.org

(Teri, I will get you the reading list)



“...one of Central New York's hidden treasures”
 —Chris Houser, syracuse.com
The Folkus
 Project of Central New York

THE FOLKUS PROJECT presents ELLIS PAUL on Friday, January 10 @ 8pm.



Ellis Paul is an award-winning songwriter, author, illustrator, and teacher. He has been a constant presence on the American folk circuit for over 30 years; in that time, he has released 22 albums of original music and performed over 5,000 shows. His songs have made their way into big screen features including blockbuster films such as *Me, Myself & Irene*, *Shallow Hal*, and *Hall Pass*, as well as having been recorded by Grammy award-winning country artists. His stage performance combines humor, improv, and poignant story songs. His work has been described as descriptive narratives of people at a crossroads in their lives, and the humanity in the writing makes them about all of us. For tickets and information go to folkus.org.

THE FOLKUS PROJECT presents BARRIGAR/CADLEY/COLTON--ALL FOLKED UP! on Friday, January 24 @ 8pm.

Deeply rooted in the rich sounds of American folk and country music, Loren Barrigar, John Cadley, and Donna Colton have captivated audiences across the region for many years. Each performer, with their respective partners, will present their unique version of this authentic sound as they come together for this very special evening of music. These folks are Syracuse Area Music Award Artists and Hall of Fame Inductees and are honored to share their original and some familiar tunes with the audience and each other. Join us for a night of song swapping, humor, and artistry--All Folked Up! For tickets and information go to folkus.org.



Items needed for Gethsemane this month:

Personal Care Items: clothes detergent (42oz); dish detergent (18oz); tissues; shampoo (30-40 oz) toothpaste (large size: 5.7oz), toilet paper (4 pack from Walgreens is best!),

Food: cooking oil, sugar, flour, black tea bags, herbs, cake mixes, pasta (spaghetti noodles) frosting, small prepackaged snacks (ie: cookies, pretzels) for the little children who come with their parents to shop

Clothes: winter clothes (new or gently used, clean) for children and adults


Housewares: towels, sheets, blankets, small appliances, dishes, toys, decorative items, holiday items

If you want to contribute but don't want to shop, you can make a donation and we will shop for you! Just send a check made out to MMUUS and put "Gethsemane" on the memo line.



Giving Tree

We did it! Thanks to all of your generous donations we were able to provide toys, clothes and gift certificates for 28 adults and 22 children who are Hispanic migrant farm workers. We completed sorting and packing by noon on Tuesday and off they went with volunteer drivers from SIRDN. Feliz Navidad



White Antiracist Spirituality
Grounding Ourselves in the Historical Legacy

An event by CrossCulturalSolidarity.com

There are two session times to choose from:
Tuesdays throughout January at 4PM Pacific / 7PM Eastern, OR
Thursdays throughout January at 6PM Pacific / 9PM Eastern

These times call on us to deepen our White antiracist path and practice... and to ground ourselves in sources of antiracist wisdom and inspiration. Join us throughout January, to learn together from the legacy of White antiracist spirituality in US history.

Email Burnett.Lynn@gmail.com for the event link.

In January, I'll be hosting the third annual workshop series on *White Antiracist Spirituality in U.S. History*, which will include powerful examples of UU spirituality in action. We'll explore ideas and practices around beloved community, cultivating hope in difficult times, taking effective action, and the groundedness that comes with being rooted in history. It will provide nourishment and inspiration for these times. Can you share this event with the congregation? [Here's the workshop link to sign up.](#)

Lynn Burnett
 Creator of [The White Antiracist Ancestry Project.](#)



**First Unitarian
 Universalist Society
 of Syracuse**

A few offerings from our friends at First UU
 109 Waring Road
 Syracuse

Climate Justice Circle At FUUS-Join Us for A Step Toward Climate Justice Renewal

Our Purpose is to advance climate justice initiatives, to envision a positive climate-just future and our roles in creating that future, and to support each other in the challenges of this path going forward. The circle is open to anyone who feels that climate change is a serious problem, and that society needs to make significant changes to minimize future negative impacts that would compromise justice. We have a Covenant: We agree to respect each other's opinions, to maintain confidentiality within the group, and to intentionally listen to, and hear, each other.

We will typically meet the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM, in the Parlor of First UU, or via Zoom.

Jim D'Aloisio of FUUS facilitates the agenda.


Contact Jim - jaiibes@aol.com

UU Book Group will meet at 2PM January 13 in the Parlor at First UU. All are welcome to come and share what they have been reading. Yes, it is the same day as Date With Death Club at May Memorial. For more information check with Felice at feliksakb@gmail.com or Judy at judy_jerome@hotmail.com.


UPCOMING Events

Tai Chi


 Tuesday's and Thursday's
 3pm in the Social Hall
 Free and all are welcome!


DATE WITH DEATH CLUB
 Monday January 13th at 1pm

Depressive Disorders Support Group
 Thursday
 4:30pm
 Open only to those diagnosed with some form of
 depression or bipolar depression


Soul Matters
 SHARING CIRCLE
 Sunday January 12th at 12:15pm
 In the Teenz Room

All men at May are invited to the monthly **Mens Lunch**. We meet on the first Thursday of the month at 12 noon at Munjed's restaurant on Westcott Street. Contact Anton Ninno to RSVP. antonninno@yahoo.com


Twisted Sisters
 Monday January 13th 7pm
 Teenz Room

MMUUS ART GALLERY

Gallery Hours
 Sun 9am - 1pm
 Monday 9am - 2pm
 Thursday 9am - 2pm

Our **January** artist is **John Anatrella**.

John's interest in art goes way back.


He stated – "I told my teachers 'I wanted to be a painter when I grow up!'

My art teacher in grade school used to make "squiggles" with a black magic marker on big sheets of paper; and we would make something out of them. That was my most favorite thing to do. Years later, after studying art in school, not much art had been produced until recently. I got interested in painting again when I got an iphone and started taking pictures of the landscape. At first, I did oils in a tonalistic style; then my interest shifted into an acrylic and collage mixture. Trying to remain open to intuitions in art and in life is always the challenge for me."

John hopes you will enjoy what you see and hopes something you see moves you.

He would be pleased to know if that happens.



 Celebration of Life service for Bob Burdick will be Saturday January 4th at 1pm at May Memorial UU.

 Celebration of Life service for George Kirkpatrick will be Sunday January 19th at 2pm at May Memorial UU.

From the Church Office



Admin office hours:

Mon-Thurs drop in hours: 9am—2pm

Sunday: 7am—1pm

Additional hours available by appointment, contact the office to get on the schedule.

The office is closed on Friday and Saturday and on government holidays, please refer to the eblast and the Monday Office Update for closings.



Do you join services by calling in?

If so, please let Teri in the office know, so if there are changes, you can be notified.

It doesn't happen often but when it does we want you to be informed of changes.

Do you get our weekly E-Blast?

If not please take a moment to sign up.

This is where you will get updates on any changes or special events that don't quite make it for the newsletter.

<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/CvrbTSW>



Please let the office know if you have any changes that need to be reflected in the directory.

Updates to the directory are vitally important so we may effectively communicate with you.



Minister

Director of Religious Education

Director of Music

Board President

Book Keeper

Finance

Church Office

Rev. Jo VonRue

Stacy Sceiford

Glenn Kime

Peter McClure

Leslie Dendy

Jennifer Newman

Teri Coon

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May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society

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Office Hours:

Mon - Thurs: 9am-2pm (other times by appointment only)

Days off are Friday and Saturday

Contact us:

office@mmuus.org

315-446-8920