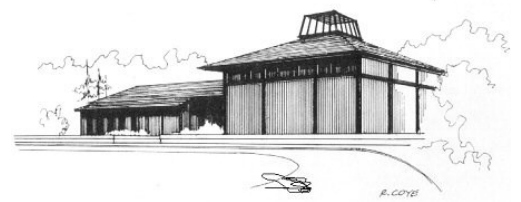


# May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society Newsletter



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

April 2023  
Volume 86  
Issue 4

## Ministerial Sabbatical is Coming!



Friends, it is with so much joy that I share with you that I am planning to take a sabbatical from ministry for March 2024 (that's right, NEXT YEAR) through the summer, I will return to May Memorial at the

end of August 2024. As part of my minister's contract, this sabbatical is a piece of ministry that you value enough to offer your settled minister every 4-6 years. Sabbatical serves many purposes. It allows your minister to have time to rest from the daily life of the congregation, and more importantly, it allows the minister unobstructed time to engage with activities and practices that will help them become a better minister. Uninterrupted time is something that is not always possible while I am attending to all the needs of the congregation and creating worship each week.

Sam May has been a true inspiration for me since beginning my time serving you, and so I will continue to serve others while I am on sabbatical. While details are not finalized, here is what I am planning for while I am away from you: I will be traveling to Tanzania and volunteering for a few different programs there. I will be serving children in some way; either teaching or helping to provide much needed childcare support. I will be working with disadvantaged and abused women to help them create their own businesses or learn a new skill. Lastly, I will be traveling to Zanzibar to work on an environmental project. I will be on the African continent for about 6 weeks. Upon my return, I will be resting a bit, and working locally in PA (where my husband lives) on a housing support program for financially disadvantaged people. And my final major endeavor will be a spiritual pilgrimage in the form of a backpacking trip. My spiritual advisor and I will be working on a plan for a self-guided spiritual renewal for myself and my ministry while spending time in the woods disconnected from technology.

During down time I will be reading for joy! I am really into murder mysteries; Ruth Ware is my favorite author though I also LOVE Kristin Hannah and Jodi Picoult. You should check them all out! I will also be quilting, playing my ukulele, hiking with my friends, and watching terrible scripted reality shows (90 Day Fiancé is my FAV!).

I will return to you rested and spiritually uplifted for the next 5 years of our ministry together (because my next sabbatical will be in 5 years). Upon my return I plan to have fun potluck meals where I share photos and experiences of my trips and my service to others. I am so thankful to you, this congregation, for seeing the importance of ministerial sabbatical, and I am very excited about the opportunities it will provide me to serve others and to rest.

Most importantly, I want you to know how much this congregation means to me. I love you very much and as I say every Sunday I am very thankful and humbled to serve as your minister. I will return from sabbatical and plan to continue serving as your minister in the years to come!

As far as housekeeping items you may be wondering about:

- No, we are not hiring a sabbatical minister, but there will be a minister named to cover emergencies.
- There will be a sabbatical team set up that can help answer any questions and offer reassurance while I'm gone.
- Sunday worship will be a wonderful mix of guest ministers in the pulpit - either in person or by sharing a sermon video at an in-person worship service. This is one of the wonderful ways technology can help us when we don't have the funds to pay guest ministers every Sunday for their time and travel.



## Worship Service Information

<b>April 2</b>	Resistance: Transgender Day of Visibility <i>This is not a multigenerational service</i>	Rev. Jo VonRue and Worship Associate Ruth Yanai	Join us in person or on Zoom
<b>April 9</b>	Evidence of Things Not Seen: a Multifaith Easter Experience	Rev. Jo VonRue and Director of Religious Education Stacy Sceiford	Join us in person or on Zoom
<b>April 16</b>	Joy and Pleasure: An Act of Resistance	Rev. Jo VonRue and Worship Associate David Mendelsohn	Join us in person or on Zoom
<b>April 23</b>	Spring Clean Up (see page 3 for details)	Rev. Jo VonRue and Worship Associate Tosca Bruno-van Vijfeijken	Join us in person or on Zoom
<b>April 30</b>	Music Sunday Earth Day Theme (see page 4 for details)	Director of Music Glenn Kime and Worship Associate David Mendelsohn	Join us in person or on Zoom

### Join us Sunday at 10:30am For our Worship Service

<https://zoom.us/j/95127684023?pwd=aERpeGNVUWZIZjMQUtZcDVJMENYQT09>

Meeting ID: 951 2768 4023

Passcode: 607275

One tap mobile

+19292056099,,95127684023# US (New York)

Dial by your location

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)



Sign up for usher/greeter slots for upcoming services here:

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



### 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.

### Sunday April 23, 2023



We will begin our service in the sanctuary for about 20 min, then we will form teams to disperse around the church to get some clean up projects accomplished. All ages are welcome! If the weather permits( cold ok, not rain or snow) we will be doing outside cleanup; please dress accordingly (work clothes and boots). Please bring rakes, tarps and work gloves.

### 'First' Sunday Lunch April 16th



We've all enjoyed "First" Sunday Lunches (FSL's) to have a sit-down chat over a tasty meal. Plus, these are significant fundraisers for our church.

But FSL's do not just magically happen. Instead, many wonderful people devote considerable time to plan, set up, cook, serve, wash dishes and cleanup afterwards. Already, every available group has volunteered to cover these tasks to create FSL's. They've done wonderful conscientious jobs!

Although the May 7th FSL is covered, there are no groups available for April! Consequently, we are asking you to bring a favorite dish, enough for ~ 10-15 servings, and make this a pot-luck lunch. If enough people contact Alexa Carter that they'll provide the potluck, she will arrange that the other tasks are covered. Thanks, Alexa!

If not enough people volunteer to potluck, we might instead have a pizza buffet for lunch. Wouldn't a selection of homemade morsels be more appealing? The choice is yours!

We've delayed April's FSL until the 16th because of spring vacation when many leave town.

Let Alexa Carter know before April 7 what dish you will bring on April 16:

[alexacarteralexa@icloud.com](mailto:alexacarteralexa@icloud.com) 315-593-7974.



*You're Invited!*

MMUUS COMMUNITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES



**Saturday April 15th** (6-9pm) We will have an all-ages Trivia night! Come with all your awesome and weird knowledge. We will create mixed teams and have a great time together!

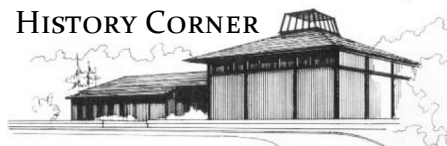
**Pre-registration is a must 5 days prior to the event by contacting the office.**

**Monday May 1st** We will do something to celebrate the First of May with FUUS!!

**Saturday May 20th** will be our annual church auction! This year we are hoping to have a live auction as well as a silent one. It will be a night of great fun and giving to our congregation! (see page 6 for more information about this annual event.

**Sunday June 11th** We will wrap up our church year with our annual flower communion and annual meeting.

HISTORY CORNER



**A Note on May Memorial’s Religious Education in the Mid-20th Century**

Room 8 on the lower level of May Memorial contains the society’s in-house archives. Among the many items found there are religious education resources from years past. Although they do not concern major events or decisions in the history of the church, they do provide insights into what our forebears considered to be of value in educating the children of the congregation. Recently we reviewed the contents of one file cabinet drawer labeled “RE Materials.” We aren’t sure when the materials were used, but those that have dates are mainly from the 1950s and 1960s. They were of interest to us as older members who were raised in more traditional Christian churches, where Sunday School focused on Bible stories.

The drawer that we looked through contains many file folders of resources on different countries and cultural groups, such as Eskimos, the Mayas, and the Navajo. Several folders contain whole sections from the National Geographic magazine (a wonderful source of information for students in a time before the internet). For example, there is a 1944 article on Greece as the birthplace of science and free speech that also has beautiful photographs of the country. A 1960 article talks about exploring “roadless Nepal” on foot. A section of National Geographic from 1936 describes Lunar New Year celebrations in Beijing (then called “Peiping” or “Beiping”).

Additional RE resources in the file drawer include booklets and brochures, some from embassies (e.g., India, 1953) or travel bureaus (e.g., Japan). A 1956 booklet from the Chicago Natural History Museum talks about “a day in the life of an African king,” and a 1947 brochure from the Metropolitan Museum of Art describes “the home life of the ancient Egyptians.” Some folders hold pictures cut out from popular magazines or maps, including one of Japan and Korea from 1945 and one of Mexico and Central America from 1953.

In addition to the resources on about a dozen countries and cultures, there are biographical materials on famous people, from Lincoln to Einstein to Jack Benny. Other folders have pictures and stories about world religions (e.g., Islam, Hinduism),

art, and the natural world (e.g., snowflakes, spiders, birds, and fossils). The children of May Memorial in the mid-20th century were exposed to a wide variety of topics and ideas, as they are today.



The history committee would love to hear from anyone who remembers using these RE materials, as well as anyone with an interest in looking at them.

Contact us at [history@MMUUS.org](mailto:history@MMUUS.org) or look for us in the social hall on Sunday morning.

Mary Louise Edwards & Kent Lindstrom

MMUUS History Committee [history@mmuus.org](mailto:history@mmuus.org)

**Writers Group Reorganization Meeting**

Join us on Tuesday April 11 at 10am in the Teenz room as we plan to reorganize the MMUUS Writers Group

If you are interested but can not attend please contact Ann and Dick Pearson



Memorial Service for **Nan Gartner** will be Saturday April 15th at 10am

Memorial Service for **Harsey Leonard** will be Saturday May 6, time TBA

**Sunday April 30th**

Earth Song

The choir will observe Earth Day with music centered on our natural world, and our relationship to it.

The spoken service will feature the poetry of the late Mary Oliver

## The 8<sup>th</sup> Principle Work

### Ida B. Wells (1862-1931): A Courageous Voice for Civil Rights

By Dawn Mendelsohn



Ida B. Wells, one of the most important civil rights advocates of the 19th century, was born in Holly Springs, Mississippi, just before the Emancipation Proclamation was signed. She was the first child of James Wells, an apprentice carpenter, and Elizabeth Warrenton, a cook.

When Ida was born, both of her parents were enslaved. Ida's father, James Wells was the son of his enslaver. This relationship afforded him the opportunity to become an apprenticed to learn the building trades. After emancipation, over 450,000 African Americans in the state of Mississippi had to look for work. Wells became a skilled building craftsman, helping to repair and rebuild Holly Springs after the war.

James and his wife quickly exercised the privileges of freedom. They legalized their marriage, and as their family grew they deepened their commitment to education as a way out of poverty. The couple eventually had four boys and four girls.

When Ida Wells was sixteen, both of her parents and her infant brother died in the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1878, a plague that killed over three hundred people in Holly Springs. Ida Wells took on the task of rearing her five remaining brothers and sisters. Ida got a job teaching in a rural school and with her family's savings, attended Rust College.

Some eighty years before Rosa Parks refused to move to the back of a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, twenty-two-year-old Wells refused to move out of her train seat for which she had paid. She had bought a ticket for the first-class ladies' car and refused the conductor's order to move to the smoker car. The authorities forcibly removed her from the train.

Backed by the Civil Rights Act of 1875, Ida filed and won a lawsuit against the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad in 1887. She was awarded \$500 damage, but the Tennessee Supreme Court shortly reversed the victory. Frustrated, she began writing political columns in church newspapers. Having secured a job in the Memphis public schools, she saved her money and became part owner of a small newspaper called Free Speech and Headlight in Memphis.

In 1891 she was dismissed from the Memphis school system for a strong article she wrote pointing out unequal funding of the Black schools by the board of education.

For the rest of her life she would be an outspoken and courageous voice for civil rights, fighting educational inequities, lynching, and segregation, and supporting economic boycotts and women's rights.

**The persistent efforts and steady vision of Ida B. Wells-Barnett, and many other anti-lynching activists, finally materialized in 2022. On March 29, 2022, President Joe Biden signed legislation making lynching a federal hate crime, over 100 years after the first measure was introduced in Congress.**





## Goods and Services Auction Inspiration!



As we start to prepare for an even more successful GSA this year on May 20 at 5:00pm we thought we would provide you with some fascinating information from last year's auction.

In 2022, 30 generous donors from May Memorial donated 162 "items" for our auction.

Some of these items received winning bids from multiple bidders, e.g. "Small Plates" for up to 11 individuals. Some of these items were one of a kind. A total of 32 members and friends of MMUUS bid on 91 of the offerings, for a total of \$2,900 to go towards the operating fund. Combined with the outright donations made by people who were unable to bid in person or via the online catalog, the GSA from 2022 brought in over \$3,500, well above our stated budgeted goal of \$3,000! Six individuals donated items in the "Good Eats" category -- from jams to gin, from Peru to England, from cookies to soups. EVERY SINGLE EDIBLE CONTRIBUTION SOLD! And the total amount earned by the Good Eats category, donated by these 6 individuals, netted \$1,553 -- 54% of the total bid earnings of \$2,900!

Does this mean that May Memorialites like to eat? Yes!

Does this mean that only 6 of us are skilled enough in the kitchen to deserve a spot in the Good Eats category? No! A thousand times NO!

We would like to heartily encourage anyone even remotely tempted to cook, bake, barbecue, mix, sauté, or host to please think seriously about donating a dinner, a cake, a barbecue, in a way that would be most enjoyable to you! We are happy to help you brainstorm -- and new ideas are always welcome! Maybe you have the skills but lack the space? We can find a solution! Talk to us about the possible variations -- pick a date that works for you (and your bestie at May so you know you're going to have fun!) and give us an idea of the menu! Or, let us know the menu and coordinate the date once the diners have signed up. The possibilities are endless -- please help us "beef up" this section of the catalog and DOUBLE our goal of \$3,000 again this year to \$6,000!

Cooking not your thing? Not to fear -- experiences, adventures, enlightenment, and practical magic were also categories of great success -- netting almost 30% of the total bids received. Your time, your energy, and your expertise are of great value to your fellow MMUUS members! Does this mean we do not want your serendipitous treasures? Not at all! Keep them coming, as well! Get in touch with Jennifer Newman at [mamaslash@twcny.rr.com](mailto:mamaslash@twcny.rr.com) or Cynthia Carter at [ccarringtoncarter@verizon.net](mailto:ccarringtoncarter@verizon.net) to talk about anything auction related.

We look forward to hearing from you!



Continued from page 1

- This would be a great time to volunteer as a worship associate or if you would like to lead a project or a worship service, I would love to help cultivate your ideas!

My loves, this time away will only strengthen our ministry together. I am so happy to answer any questions you may have about this, please do not hesitate to call or email before I leave. Once I am away (March 1st 2024) I ask that you do not try to contact me either on my cell, email, or by Facebook Messenger as I will be completely disconnected from the congregation. While I love you, the time I spend disconnected from you will help me focus on rest and my own personal growth. I am very much looking forward to my time serving in Africa, and even more so looking forward to returning to share my experiences with you!

~Rev. Jo



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.



### Vespers

Join us on Wednesday evenings at 8pm 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!

<https://zoom.us/j/97595560626?pwd=Sk5EL1IKd2xPNTJoUHUVyWQ0NjRGQT09>

Meeting ID: 975 9556 0626

Passcode: 210723

One tap mobile

+19292056099,,97595560626# US (New York)

Dial by your location

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

### Summer Worship Series

This summer (as in the past several years) we will be sharing worship with First UU Society of Syracuse! Keep an eye on the schedule as we will have some form of gathering at MMUUS every other Sunday, and some form of gathering at FUUS every other Sunday. To change things up for summer, we will be having something a bit different. We will gather in the social hall at MMUUS, open our services with a chalice lighting and then likely watch a Ted Talk or some other video and then have a discussion about the ideas that came up. If you have any suggestions on topics, please contact Reverend Jo. We will also have a few hymn sings this summer with Fred Fiske!



Church Office

Teri Coon

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

Minister

Rev. Jo VonRue

[ministerjrev@gmail.com](mailto:ministerjrev@gmail.com)

DRE

Stacy Sceiford

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Dir of Music

Glenn Kime

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Board President

Don Milmore

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

Book Keeper

Leslie Dendy

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

Finance

Jane Fagerland

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



Mark your calendars! UNIRONDACK WEEKEND for the MMUUS, FUUS and other New York UU communities – Sept 22-24, 2023

New and returning families, individuals and people of all ages are encouraged to participate in the Fall family weekend at Unirondack - Friday Sept 22 (starting at 4:00) - Sunday Sept 24 (ending at 2-3 pm). This weekend is a week later than our usual September weekend. Other congregations from Central New York are invited to participate as well.

Unirondack is a UU Camp and Conference Center, 2 - 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. We often have space for more folks, so invite a few friends and family to participate in our community gathering.

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. We ask that there be no electronic games since this is a weekend to spend in community with other UUs from the area. 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 at home.

The 2023 cost is expected to be: \$110/PP for those over 12 years old; Children 4-12 years \$100; Children 3 and under are free. This is inclusive of 2 nights (F, S) lodging, Friday night welcome light meal, 3 meals Saturday and Sunday breakfast & lunch. Meals are prepared 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. Reservations can be made by sending your names/ ages of children to Stephanie Cross at [mscross1234@gmail.com](mailto:mscross1234@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





### **PART-TIME CUSTODIAN POSITION**

May Memorial Unitarian-Universalist Society is seeking reliable candidates for a part-time custodian position.

The custodian will provide custodial services under the direction of our Office Administrator, as an hourly wage employee expected to work about 15 hours/week between September 1 through June 30 and about 10 hours/week during July and August.

Wages will be \$14.50 /hour, with paid sick leave and paid holiday benefits.

The MMUUS Custodian will perform regular cleaning duties and light handyman services in all parts of the building, except for The Growing Place wing, with moderate supervision.

#### Responsibilities:

##### Cleaning tasks:

- Sweeping

- Mopping

- Vacuuming

- Bathrooms: including toilets, sinks and wiping down walls

- Kitchen: including cleaning inside the fridge and pulling it out to clean behind, wiping down the walls, mopping and sanitizing the counters, high dusting

- Dusting (high and low areas),

- Removing all trash and recycling from the building and placing it in the appropriate receptacles,

- Windows inside and outside,

- Making sure all areas of our outside properties are free from trash and debris

- Keeping inventory of maintenance supplies including paper products, chemicals, and other cleaning supplies and reporting to the Office Admin when supplies are running low

##### Light handyman duties including:

- Replacing lightbulbs,

- Replacing broken toilet seats,

- Replacing furnace filters

Keeping all areas of the church neat and organized

Communicate with Office Admin any maintenance issues that might arise.

For an application, contact MMUUS's Office Administrator, Teri Coon at 315 446-8920 or [office@mmuus.org](mailto:office@mmuus.org).

The MMUUS Congregation affirms its commitment to inclusion and equal employment opportunity for all individuals. Employment decisions will be made in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws and without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, genetic information, or any other classification protected by law.

May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society

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



Office Hours:

Sunday: 7am-12pm

Mon - Thurs: 8am-4pm

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