

May Memorial

Unitarian Universalist Society

Newsletter



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

May 2023
Volume 86
Issue 5

Mary Oliver As Spiritual Renewal



Twice a year our St. Lawrence UU Minister's Association (UUMA) goes on retreat together for three days. In the Spring, our Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA) chapter members join us. This past year we moved locations from White Eagle Retreat center to a place called Casowasco, a religious retreat center located on Owasco Lake, an incredibly beautiful setting. On Thursday before dinner, a colleague approached me and asked, "Right before dinner, do you want to go on a little hike to a waterfall and read a Mary Oliver poem?" to which I replied, "Definitely yes" and then he said, "Good, we only have to trespass a little bit" and then walked away from me.

Our meeting ended and it was time to hike out. The path was beautiful and as we passed several "private, no trespassing" signs we wondered if our colleague, a Canadian who was with us would be deported if we got caught! Now, to be fair, we weren't hurting anyone, just walking a little bit onto some land owned by a different retreat center that seemed to be vacant at the time. We started walking up this slight hill covered in giant trilliums alongside a beautiful gently rolling waterfall that had carved its way through slate.

When we got to the base of the waterfall my colleague begins to read the Mary Oliver poem "The River Clarion." I'm not a Mary Oliver aficionada, but I always connect with her work when I hear it. This beautiful poem (<https://wordsoftheyear.com/2018/04/14/at-the-river-clarion-by-mary-oliver/>) describes life and the flow of our lives and compares life to a river on a great journey. This time invited me to spend a moment giving thanks for all the journeys in my life. The people I have met, the places I have been, the animals I have loved.

I hope you will visit the link to read the poem, and that you too will take time to give thanks for the many journeys in your life.

~ Rev. Jo



Memorial Service for **Harsey Leonard** will be Saturday May 6, time 1pm



Come join us for the First Sunday Lunch. May 7

Thank you to the Souls Matter group, OWL parents and Twisted Sisters for hosting this church year's finale First Sunday Lunch of a variety of soups, salads and delicious desserts. The best part is the chance to enjoy lunch with May Memorial folks! This is a fundraiser with a sliding scale of \$5-10 pp.



May 7	The Spirituality of Creativity interactive multigenerational	Rev. Jo VonRue and Director of Religious Education Stacy	Join us in person or virtually on Zoom
May 14	The Spirituality of Creativity the sequel	Rev. Jo VonRue and Worship Associate Tosca Bruno-van Vijfeijken	Join us in person or virtually on Zoom
May 21	Sam May Day	Rev. Jo VonRue and Worship Associate Bob Schulz	Join us in person or virtually on Zoom
May 28	Watch Party in the Social Hall with coffee. Watch eblast for		Join us in person or virtually 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.



NOTES FROM YOUR PREZ

As we approach the end of a joyous church year, be sure to put these two important events in your calendars.

1. Annual Meeting of the Society - **Sunday, June 11 at 6:30pm via Zoom only.**
While we'd love to be able to gather in person for the first time after the pandemic, New York state law prohibits hybrid voting for non-profit organizations. Consequently, it's either meeting in person or via Zoom. Because we want to include all who might otherwise be unable to attend, we'll meet via Zoom only.
2. Presentation of the proposed 2023-'24 budget - **Sunday, May 21** in the Sanctuary at noon in person only.

The timing after the worship service will let us to grab a cuppa and peruse the Goods & Services Auction to scoop up any remaining bargains!

Because of technical limitations, the meeting will be in person only. To accommodate those unable to come, the budget will be sent out electronically a few days beforehand so you can contact the Finance Committee with questions: Jane Fagerland, Jennifer Newman, John Percival & Deidre Stam.

Don Milmore,
Board President



The **Nominating Committee** is happy to announce the nominees for Board Officers and Members and for the Nominating Committee to be submitted for election at the June Annual Meeting. More information on the Annual Meeting will be forthcoming. Board Officers and Members who have been elected previously do not need to be elected again in June, but are listed for your information. Nominating Committee Members are elected for a one year term, but can be reelected for up to a total of three terms.

We deeply appreciate the commitment of these members who have agreed to serve our beloved community in these positions of leadership. We hope you will all take the opportunity to thank them for their willingness to serve.

In addition, we would like to recognize the following members who have so willingly served, please thank them as well.

Don Milmore who has served as President for two years

Matracia Powell who has served as secretary for two years

Rob Neimeier who has served on the Nominating Committee for two years

Laura Kreidler who has served on the Nominating Committee for three years

Returning and Nominated Board Officers and Members

- Mardie Ninno Continuing as Vice President
- Molly Letsch Continuing on the Board
- Eliza Bailey Continuing on the Board
- Cynthia Carter Continuing on the Board
- Peter McClure Nominee for President
- David Mendelsohn Nominee for Secretary
- Rob Neimeier Nominee for Board

Returning and Nominated Nominating Committee Members

- Tosca Bruno Van Vijfeijken (Has served 1 year)
- Caitlin Cunningham (Has served 1 year)
- Peter Coleman (Has served 1 year)
- Jennifer Newman (New Nominee)
- Ryan McCarthy (New Nominee)

**From Bat Houses to Rabbit Hutches, Window Washing to Chair Caning, Spinning
Wheels to Bulova Clocks, High Teas to Peruvian Feasts
There is something for Everyone at the 2023**

GOODS AND SERVICES AUCTION ON SATURDAY, MAY 20 @ 5:30pm!



Each week, we tease you with new donations to this amazing event in the Thursday E-blast -- but there is still time to put your thinking caps on and decide what YOU can add to the growing list of treasures being auctioned off! As you have read in prior E-blasts, the most successful donations are foods (dinners, soups, cookies), experiences and events! Be brave! Donate a place at your table (or four, or six) and make that special dish that you learned from your grandma that always gets rave review! Even if you're just contemplating this, get in touch with Cynthia or Jennifer to brainstorm, and be honest about what might be holding you back -- we have lots of experience and some tips that might help you decide that this year, you're going to do it!

The online catalog will be available around the 15th of May. It will include a modest number of Buy It Now items for those people who are not able to attend the in-person auction or who "must" have that item and are willing to pay the Buy It Now price instead of risking being outbid.

However, most items will be won at the actual auction itself.

If you cannot attend but want to bid on something which does not have a Buy It Now option, we hope to have Proxy Bidders available to bid on your behalf. On that note -- would you enjoy coming to the auction and bidding with someone else's money? Contact us prior to the auction if you would like to be a Proxy Bidder!

We urge you to read updates every week in the E-blast -- there will be important details disseminated there, in addition to highlights of new donations.

We are really hoping for a good turnout -- yes, this is a fundraiser for MMUUS, but, it is also a wonderful opportunity to enjoy the camaraderie of your fellow May Memorial members, partake in generous finger foods, and it is a very family friendly evening! If you are bringing children under 10 and would like childcare available for them, please let us know by May 14 so that we can make those arrangements.

Cynthia Carter (ccarringtoncarter@verizon.net) and Jennifer Newman (mamaslash@twcny.rr.com) are hoping this will be the best Goods and Services Auction in May history, but we need you! We are looking forward to receiving your donations as soon as possible (deadline May 14), and any questions you have or clarifications you need!

P.S. The bidding will run from 6:00 to 8:00 pm, and we have decided to continue the tradition of significant chaos at closing!



Art Gallery

Artist for May

Tom Hussey

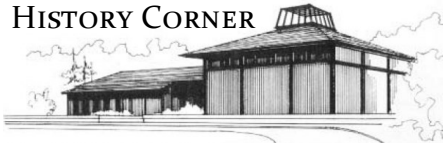


Tom Hussey, an artist living and working in Auburn, New York, will be our featured artist for the month of May. Inspired by grandfather George T. Miller, Tom began painting in oils at age twelve. Forty years later he has not lost enthusiasm for putting paint on canvas.

Hussey opened his Auburn studio in 1998 and has since completed hundreds of landscapes. His favorite subjects include the hills and streams of Central New York and the beaches and harbors of the Atlantic Coast.

The artist cites the work of French painter Jean Baptiste Camille Corot and American Winslow Homer among his primary influences. His favorite aspect of life in the Finger Lakes is the richness of terrain and atmospheric conditions, of which he frequently enjoys painting on location. Tom finds Central New York a landscape painter's paradise.

HISTORY CORNER



For the past several years, the history committee has been accumulating a list of “tidbits” about the church’s remarkable history. We started doing this in 2018 in anticipation of Reverend Samuel Joseph May’s induction into the National Abolition

Hall of Fame. Since then, we have added questions about other ministers, our buildings, church leaders, etc. Some of those questions have been posted on the bulletin board.

A few of them are presented here:

Q. *The Central Library downtown has a portrait of Rev. May (our second minister and namesake) honoring his contributions to the Syracuse City Schools. What were his contributions?*

A. At a public meeting in 1848, Rev. May worded the resolution that established the school system for the newly incorporated city of Syracuse. In 1865 he was elected to the Board of Education, serving as board president from 1866-1869. Rev. May supported racial integration of the schools and was responsible for eliminating corporal punishment. (A photograph of the portrait, taken R. Burdick, hangs in our Memorial Room).

Q. *Why does Cornell University hold many of Rev. May’s writings, as well as an original portrait of him?*

A. Rev. May was a friend and mentor to Andrew D. White, co-founder and first president of Cornell (1866-1885). This moved Rev. May to leave his large collection of antislavery writings and materials to Cornell, the first institution of higher learning in the US that was not affiliated with a particular religion.

Interesting “Tidbits” from May Memorial’s History

Q. *Why did May Memorial vote to withdraw from the Syracuse Council of Churches in 1959 after being actively involved in the organization since its formation?*

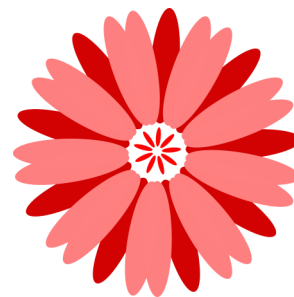
A. In 1959 the Council adopted a membership test requiring “acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.” That excluded May Memorial because most Unitarians embrace broader religious values that are not specifically tied to Christianity.

Q. *Which “pioneering woman” of the congregation left to May Memorial the oriental rugs in our building and the Victorian furniture in the Memorial Room?*

A. The rugs and furniture are part of the legacy of Rev. Elizabeth Padgham, the second woman of the congregation to be ordained (1901) and a member of the “Iowa Sisterhood.” After serving for over 20 years as a minister in Iowa and New Jersey, Rev. Padgham retired to Syracuse. She remained a loyal supporter and contributor to May Memorial until her death in 1953. (See Roger Hiemstra’s 2015 book for more about Rev. Padgham.)

Mary Louise Edwards

MMUUS History Committee history@mmuus.org



This winter MMUUS partnered with Gethsemane Methodist Church on the North Side to support their mission to support refugees, immigrants & others in need. Many thanks to those of you who donated much needed towels!

For the months of May/June we will be collecting dried lentils, paper and cleaning products (4 packs of toilet paper and full size boxes of tissues, laundry detergent & liquid dish washing detergent).

Collections boxes will be in the foyer...your donations are so needed and appreciated!

(Question? Contact Julie Daniel or Mardie Ninno)

The 8th Principle Work

The 8th Principle Team will be offering several learning and discussion activities in the months to come. The first activity on tap will be

watching and discussing the movie, 13th, a powerful documentary which introduces the words of the thirteenth amendment of the United States Constitution: “Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, **EXCEPT AS A PUNISHMENT FOR CRIME WHEREOF THE PARTY SHALL HAVE BEEN DULY CONVICTED**, shall exist within the United States, or any place, subject to their jurisdiction.” 13th argues that clause of the thirteenth amendment allowed a form of enslavement into American institutions even though slavery was ostensibly abolished in 1865. This loophole has since been wielded as a devastating political tool in the form of mass incarceration and criminalization. The film is 1 hour and 40 minutes long.

Please join us on May 13 at 1:00 in the Social Hall to watch this documentary together. Alternatively, you may wish to watch the movie at home on Netflix and join us for the discussion only which will be at 2:45 for about 45-60 minutes. Please feel free to bring your own lunch if you wish. It would be helpful for us to know how many people to prepare for, so please email either David Mendelsohn at DHMendelsohn@gmail.com Or Mardie Ninno at mpninno@gmail.com and let us know if you will be watching the movie and/or participating in the discussion.

Drop ins are welcome too if you find you can join us at the last minute. We hope to have child care for this event. If you need child care, please let us know at least a week in advance, and we will try to arrange.

We will also arrange to hold a Zoom discussion of this documentary at another date and time to be determined.



What a Crew! Thank you!

It is estimated that 40 -60 folks of all ages helped with our Spring Clean-Up on Sunday, April 23 and they accomplished a huge amount in 1-2 hours. Outside, folks worked together to:

Gather the cut long grasses

Clear the playground of leaves and branches,

Pickup garbage and sticks on the property

and many other individual tasks.. such as:

Freeing a lilac bush of grapevines

clearing the leaves and debris from the walkway down from the parking lot.

Inside, there was as much activity.. cleaning and organizing the shelves in the kitchen, the storage area behind the chancel, the religious education closet and taking apart and getting rid of the items stored on the balcony.

The time ended with a simple make your own lunch which people enjoyed after a worthwhile community event. It was great to work side-by-side with other May Memorial folks. Thank you to everyone who participated!

A HUGE “Thank You” goes out to Lida Black, who not only planted, but has been taking care of the tall grasses inside our concrete wall for years. She cut them for the last time this spring.... Who will take over the task of thinning and cutting them? If you are interested in being on the “Tall Grass Team” let me know!

Stephanie Cross B&G chair mscross1234@gmail.com





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

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.

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

From Judy Jerome: I will be attending the Women's Weekend at Unirondack this year, June 2 - 4. The weekend is open to all women and those who identify as women.

I have attended every year (8 years now) and wouldn't miss it for the world.

Does anyone want to carpool or go with me? Please contact me at judy_jerome@hotmail.com

<https://unirondack.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/1614222>



A place to find community with transgender, nonbinary folk and our allies
A conference for us to gather, learn and grow.



Keynote speaker
Andie Davis

Andie Davis is a 17-year-old genderfluid playwright from Ontario Canada. They are writing and co-directing a documentary style play about Florida’s ‘Don’t Say Gay Bill’ to bring awareness to the reality of the situation that students are facing in the state. They are hoping to bring a new perspective to how social justice topics are discussed and presented by encouraging the use of art to promote social change.

For more information and registration



May 6th 8:30-4:30



First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse
Justice with Love and Joy, Open to All!



The Syracuse **PRIDE** Fest and Parade for 2023 is on Saturday, June 10th. Let us continue a May Memorial tradition and march in the parade in support of the LGBTQIA+ community. The parade starts at the Solar Street lot across from Destiny. Parking is available right across the street from the parade lot. Participants are asked to be there by 10:15 am, with the parade starting at 11am. Please contact Bess Kameronance if you will be joining our group and proudly carrying out MMUUS banner.

bkameronance@gmail.com or 315-402-2591; text 315-720-3494

CNY Gay 5K to benefit Sage Upstate

CNY GAY 5K is being held on June 17, 2023 at Long Branch Park in Liverpool. All proceeds benefit Sage Upstate, serving older LGBTQ people. Sage has been offering programs to reduce isolation and improve health for 25 years in Central New York. You can run or walk to show your support and there is even a virtual option available. Go to CNYGAY5k.org for further information.



The Folkus
Project of Central New York

The Folkus Project presents **Le Vent du Nord** on Friday, May 5 @ 8pm. This award-winning and highly acclaimed band is a leading force in Québec’s exciting and progressive Francophone folk movement. On stage these five musicians create intense, joyful and dynamic live performances that expand the bounds of tradition in striking global directions. For tickets and

more information go to folkus.org.

The Folkus Project presents **Dar Williams** on Friday, May 19 @ 8pm. Known as much for her staunch progressive ideals as her raw acoustic energy, for decades Dar Williams has been captivating audiences with her sheer elegance and honesty in her folk-pop songwriting. For tickets and more information go to folkus.org.



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 MM calendar as we will have some form of gathering, alternating between FUUS and MMUUS on an every other week schedule. 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!



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May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society

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Syracuse, NY 13214
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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