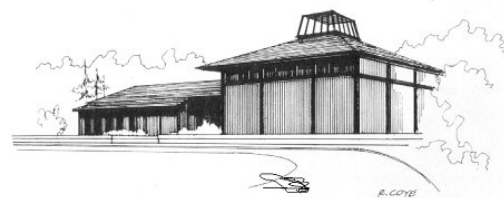


# May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society Newsletter



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

September 2023  
Volume 86  
Issue 8

## And just like that our sixth year together begins...



Beloveds, I cannot believe we are already beginning our sixth year together!! What a wild ride we have had through these last five years! I feel so lucky to continue to serve as your minister. I am looking forward to this year together as our board works to vision a future for our congregation, as we, together as a society, figure out how we want to move forward in the world of social justice, to take a congregational vote on adopting the 8th Principle of Unitarian Universalism, to examine our UUA Article II changes, and what it looks like to do some internal work on ourselves during my sabbatical time (among many other things).

At the end of last year, I'm not sure if I clearly communicated that the Committee on Ministry, together with the Board of Trustees completed a thorough review of our shared ministry. My ministry (our shared ministry) is evaluated by the board annually. If you would like to see those evaluations, please reach out to me or the Board of Trustees.

I hope you spent time this summer renewing yourself and your spirit. I hope you spent some time in the sun soaking up the warmth, I hope you spent time in nature, I hope you spent time connecting with those you love. I hope you were able to spend some time on introspection on yourself and your life. This summer I was able to do all of these things and more.

As I hope most of you already know, I will be going on sabbatical beginning in March, 2024, and I will return to the congregation September, 2024 (5 months of Sabbatical, and 1 month of vacation time). During my time away I will be traveling to the country of Tanzania in Africa to work with disadvantaged women and children and doing whatever else is thrown my way. I will also spend time working in Pennsylvania with some of our unhoused population, and taking a week-long spiritual direction backpacking trip somewhere on the east coast. I hope during my time away that you, as a congregation, will spend time talking about who you are and who you want to become. I promise, I will be back, and there is no part of me who thinks that our work together is finished.

Here are a few dates to mark on your calendar: **Sunday September 10th** is our Homecoming and Water Communion Sunday. Please bring some water with you to share in our communal bowl; it is later purified to use for baby dedications and other events for which we need beloved water. The following Sunday, **September 17<sup>th</sup>**, we will have a picnic with First UU (FUUS) at Santaro Park on the west side of Syracuse. MMUUS and FUUS will provide grilling meat (and portobellos mushrooms) and buns. If you are able, please bring picnic side dishes to share and your own place setting(s). The park has an awesome pavilion, nature trails, a water stream (I can show you!), a great playground, as well as a space dedicated for kids to ride their bikes or other wheeled toys. I'm looking forward to all of us being together again!

My loves, I am so thankful to begin this year with you. I cannot wait to see what lies in store for us this year.

I love you,

Rev. Jo



9/3	We will be at First UU on Zoom or in person in their Fellowship Hall		
9/10	Water Communion	Rev. Jo VonRue and Worship Associate David Mendelsohn	In person and on Zoom
9/17	We Bid You Welcome!	Rev. Jo VonRue	In person and on Zoom
9/24	Shrinking to Expand Our Welcome	Rev. Jo VonRue and Worship Associate JoJo Higgins	In person and on Zoom

<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



## Water Communion

**Join us Sunday Sept. 10 at 10:30am for our first service of the new church year.**

**Bring some water from your travels to share.**

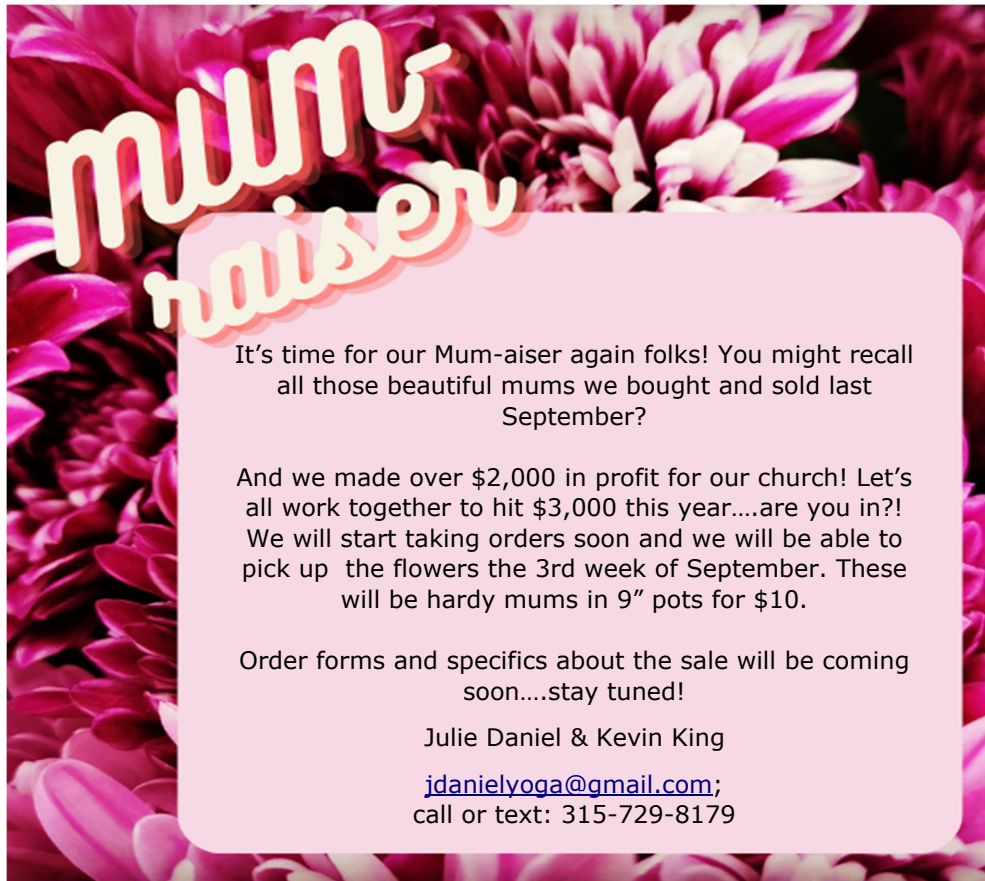


Meat, and portobello mushrooms as well as buns (with and without gluten) will be provided for grilling.

Please bring your own place settings and a dish to share. This park is a great spot for young kids to be able to play right next to the picnic pavilion. A large field for flying kites, And there is even a stream and some woods for exploring!

Please contact Rev Molly if you would prefer to have a portobello mushroom for grilling.

We are so excited and can't wait to have some time to spend together!!



It's time for our Mum-aiser again folks! You might recall all those beautiful mums we bought and sold last September?

And we made over \$2,000 in profit for our church! Let's all work together to hit \$3,000 this year....are you in?! We will start taking orders soon and we will be able to pick up the flowers the 3rd week of September. These will be hardy mums in 9" pots for \$10.

Order forms and specifics about the sale will be coming soon....stay tuned!

Julie Daniel & Kevin King  
[jdanielyoga@gmail.com](mailto:jdanielyoga@gmail.com);  
 call or text: 315-729-8179

## SEPTEMBER Artist

*Michael Field*

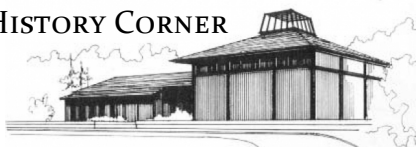
### Gallery Hours:

Sunday: 8am-1pm  
 Monday: 8am-1pm  
 Thursday: 8am-1pm

Michael Field has been a landscape painter and portrait artist for over 20 years. He grew up in Syracuse and was an art teacher in the City of Syracuse Schools for 21 years. Since 2012, he has served as Vice President and then President of the Central New York Scholastic Art Show, which is held annually at Onondaga Community College in January. He considers himself a Romantic Landscape Painter and he states:

"I prefer to paint outside on site (Plein Air), but I also do studio paintings with photographs that I have taken as reference material. I am drawn to water, most of my paintings feature some type of water element in them whether it is a stream, river, lake, or a waterfall. I want to give my paintings a sense of atmosphere, color, and a sense of magic. I want to create an emotional response for the viewer. I want the viewer to feel like they have been to that very spot before or they wish they could go to that place. We live in such a fast-paced society. I am trying to get the viewer just to slow down and appreciate nature. I want my paintings to touch something in your soul."

## HISTORY CORNER



## Two Awards that Honor Reverend Samuel Joseph May's Legacy



Reverend Samuel Joseph May was the second minister (1845-1868) of the Unitarian Congregational Society of Syracuse. Although best known for his work to abolish slavery, Rev. May was actively involved in every major social justice cause of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, including racial equality and women's rights. Rev. May died in 1871, and when the congregation later dedicated its new church building, they called it May Memorial to honor their beloved minister.

It is not surprising that May Memorial has two awards named for Rev. May. This past spring, MMUUS president Don Milmore noted that some members were confusing/conflating the awards. He then suggested that the history committee write a newsletter column about the two awards and how they differ.





According to descriptions of the May Memorial awards given at the end of the church year, the **Samuel Joseph May Citation for Community Action**, which was *established in 1967*, honors an *individual, group or organization* that exemplifies the qualities embodied in Rev. May's work. It is given *periodically* "for actions taken to promote the betterment of the larger community." Recipients have included *individual members and friends of May Memorial* (e.g., Vicky Schipper, Bess Kamerance); *groups* (e.g., Women Transcending Boundaries); and *organizations* (e.g., the Samaritan Center of Syracuse). When given, this award is presented at the annual meeting.

Through the years, many services have focused on Rev. May and his legacy, but it was Rev. Scott Tayler (1997-2004) who made *Sam May Sunday/Sam May Day* into an annual event. He introduced this tradition in 1997 to mark the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Rev. May's birth. Each year an individual whose social justice work echoes that of Rev. May was invited to speak from the pulpit. These special Sundays were meant to celebrate Rev. May's legacy and to honor a speaker whose message would *inspire and challenge the congregation*. After the sermon/lecture was delivered, Rev. Tayler presented the **Sam May Day Award** or **Sam May Sermon Award** to the speaker. A reception was held in the social hall following the service. Most of the activists invited by Rev. Tayler were ministers (UU or other denominations). One, Audrey Shenandoah, was a spiritual advisor for the Onondaga Nation. An album in the archives contains pictures of the speakers, along with excerpts from their presentations. \*

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

\* A number of services honoring Rev. May's legacy have been held since Rev. Tayler's ministry, but not on an annual basis. The history committee would appreciate hearing from anyone involved in those services.

We always have something happening here at May Memorial!  
Here are just a few offerings available.

<b>Choir</b> 	Thursday's at 7:30pm in the Sanctuary. New session begins: Sept 7	We hope to have enough members to sing for the opening service on September 10. Anyone who has been thinking of singing, this first rehearsal would be a great time to try it out.  New members would be a real gift!  Any questions? Call Glenn at 315.729.3734
<b>Depression Support Group</b>	Meets Thursdays 4:30-6pm in the Teenz Room	
<b>Soul Matters Sharing Circle</b>	2nd Sunday each month 12:15pm Starting October 8th	This year we are using Soul Matters monthly themes each month for worship. After Worship on the second Sunday of each month we will meet at 12:15pm (after coffee hour ) to go deeper into our monthly themes to explore how these themes may work in your life when you invite them in. There will be some nominal work required ahead of each class, but it is very nominal, and you can still come to class even if you don't have time for the pre-class work! This class will be offered in person, if there is interest in running an online class, that is a possibility. You're welcome to bring your bagged lunch. We do need at least 5 people to run this class, please contact Teri in the office to register.
<b>Spiritual Enrichment Group</b>	2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month at 6 PM in the Teenz Room	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.
<b>Tai Chi</b> 	Tues and Thurs at 3pm in the Social Hall—Sessions start Sept 12	This is a free class, just show up and join in!  Leader: Ann Pia
<b>Twisted Sisters</b> 	Meets the 2nd Monday of the month in the Teenz Room	Bring a beverage or snack to share if you feel like it. Twisted Sisters is a social group open to adult women and those identifying as female.  No commitment is required. Meetings will be held on the 2nd Monday of each month for the foreseeable future, so mark your calendars.  Join us for conversation, camaraderie and support as we navigate this life together.
<b>Writers Group</b> 	Tuesday, 9/12 10am-12pm Teenz Room	MMUS Writers Group will meet to reconnect and plan for the year ahead. New members welcome.  If you are interested, but unable to attend, or if this time slot is generally not possible, please let us know so that information can be factored into the planning.  Questions? Contact Ann ( <a href="mailto:awpearson1@yahoo.com">awpearson1@yahoo.com</a> ), or Dick Pearson ( <a href="mailto:rpearso@syr.edu">rpearso@syr.edu</a> )





## Going Green and Seeking Social Justice

With supporting measures from the federal Inflation Reduction Act, which provided for financial incentives for sustainable energy improvements, the state of New York has several programs which can help low and middle income qualifiers. These are part of the New York State Energy Research Development Agency offerings.

The EmPower+ New York program.

EmPower+ helps low- and moderate-income households save energy and money toward energy improvements made to their property.

Through EmPower+:

Households can receive a no cost comprehensive home energy assessment to pinpoint where energy and dollars are being wasted and receive a customized plan to lower energy usage.

No-cost direct install improvements identified during the assessment can be installed by participating program contractors.

Households can receive financial discounts on the cost of energy efficiency improvement, such as heat pumps and energy efficient appliances.

For more information, go to [nyscrda.ny.gov/All-Programs/EmPower-New-York-Program](https://nyscrda.ny.gov/All-Programs/EmPower-New-York-Program)



## 2023 NYSCU Annual Meeting

Greetings, friends! As the President of the New York State Convention of Universalists, it is with pleasure that I invite you to make plans to attend our **2023 Annual Meeting!**

Here is the basic information:

Today's Universalism: Audacity, Courage, and Grace.

October 20 & 21, 2023

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Binghamton, NY

Rev. Verdis LeVar Robinson, Keynote Speaker

Workshops on Finance, Advocacy, and Social Justice

The meeting will be held in person, with virtual participation available as well.

If you are not familiar with NYSCU, please check out our [website](https://nyscu.org/) (<https://nyscu.org/>)

We support congregations with workshops, grants and loans. Our Annual Meeting can be a great way to connect with others who are involved in this faith.

We hope that you will spread the word among your congregation, and plan to attend this year's meeting! The official call to meeting, with registration and hotel information, will be sent out later this summer. Please visit our website, or reach out to me at [president@nyscu.org](mailto:president@nyscu.org) for further information!

Yours in our shared faith,

Ann Rhody, President

New York State Convention of Universalists



## Unirondack weekend Sept 24th - Waiting list open

This year, we have had a stupendous early registration for the Sept 22-24 Unirondack weekend ! I will be starting a waiting list if anyone wants to attend since we are close to our max of 50 folks. Since we are sharing the weekend with the UU congregation in Kingston, Ontario, Canada there are less options open for accommodations. Let me know if you would like to be on the waiting list.

Stephanie Cross [mscross1234@gmail.com](mailto:mscross1234@gmail.com)

## UU Campership Fund

For several years, we have had the opportunity to provide scholarships for youth and adults to attend Unirondack (or another UU camp), thanks to the generous donations of friends and members who appreciate the importance of a camp experience. The scholarship fund has been used by several of the May Memorial youth over the past years, and is now in need of replenishment, so we will have funds to help youth attend camp next summer.

If you would like to contribute to this fund so that it is rebuilt and youth can apply for a May Memorial scholarship to assist with the week's tuition costs, please send a check to May Memorial and specify "UU Campership Fund" in the memo line, or use the "Donate" option on the MMUUS webpage to donate online.

Stephanie Cross

Unirondack/ MM liaison

Scholarship facilitator



Looking for ways to get involved?

Check out these opportunities:

- \* Usher on Sunday morning!  
Sign up here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0A4CA8AC28A4F94-20232024>
  - \* Sign up to be a money counter! We need 2 folks to count the Sunday offerings and other various moneys that arrive during the week and prepare the bank deposit. Background check is required.
  - \* Help host coffee hour! Or join the clean up team!
  - \* Help with Buildings and Grounds. Your skills are needed in various ways around the building.
- ...just to name a few!

**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/96509877539?pwd=ZmZPQllaTlhkSFNETW5yQmszMXdYZz09>

Meeting ID: 965 0987 7539

Passcode: 513494

One tap mobile

+19292056099,,96509877539# US (New York)

+16469313860,,96509877539# US

Dial by your location

- +1 929 205 6099 US (New York)
- +1 646 931 3860 US

**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/CvrpTSW>



**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.



Church Office	Teri Coon	<a href="mailto:office@mmuus.org">office@mmuus.org</a>
Minister	Rev. Jo VonRue	<a href="mailto:ministerjrev@gmail.com">ministerjrev@gmail.com</a>
DRE	Stacy Sceiford	<a href="mailto:stacymaydre@gmail.com">stacymaydre@gmail.com</a>
Board President	Peter McClure	<a href="mailto:peterrogermclure@gmail.com">peterrogermclure@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>





## Updated Covid-19 Pandemic Policy Starts Sept 1

This revised Covid Policy assumes we hope to provide worship, education and social activities in person whenever possible while keeping our members, friends and staff as healthy as possible. While the Pandemic Emergency is over, the risk of Covid infection is not.

- Masks are always an option for anyone who feels more comfortable wearing one. Research has demonstrated that a good fitting mask can help prevent the spread of Covid and other viruses.
- We ask that if you feel ill or are symptomatic, please stay home.
- If you find that you test positive for Covid within 5 days after attending a May Memorial activity such as Worship, Religious Education, a small group, etc., please inform Teri in the office. She will then send out an email to the congregation letting them know of their possible exposure. She will only share your name if you give her your permission to do so.
- Teri will share the COVIDACTNOW risk information for Onondaga County each week in the eblast, the order of service and on the front door. The risk information at this point is based on Hospital Admissions, and the risks will be listed as low, medium or high.
- When Onondaga County is in low, masking is not required.
- When Onondaga County is in medium, masking is recommended but not required for those aged 2 and older, including while singing.
- When Onondaga County is in high, masking is required for those aged 2 and older, including while singing.
- Masking will not be required while eating and drinking at any level.
- If you or a member of your household has Covid, please follow the CDC recommendations around isolating and masking.

The Board reserves the right to change this policy if significant changes occur.

Adopted by the Board on August 15, 2023.



"...one of Central New York's  
hidden treasures"  
— Chris Baker, syracuse.com

**The Folkus**  
Project of Central New York



The Folkus Project presents [Annie & the Hedonists](#) on Friday, September 22 @ 8pm. Comprised of Annie Rosen (lead vocals), Peter Davis (clarinet, guitar, piano and vocals) and Don Young (upright bass and vocals), Annie & the Hedonists interpret the songs of the great female blues artists of the 1920s-40s: Bessie Smith, Billie Holiday, Ella Fitzgerald and more. Other styles include western swing, bluesy country and roots Americana.

For tickets and more information go to [folkus.org](http://folkus.org).

## UPCOMING Events

Sept 7	Thursday	Depression Support Group	4:30pm - 6pm	Teenz Room
Sept 7	Thursday	Choir Practice	7:30pm - 9pm	Sanctuary
Sept 10	Sunday	Water Communion/In Gathering	10:30am	Sanctuary
Sept 11	Monday	Twisted Sisters	7pm - 9pm	Teenz
Sept 12	Thursday	Writers Group	10am - 12pm	Teenz
Sept 12	Tuesday	Tai Chi	3pm - 4pm	Social Hall
Sept 14	Thursday	Tai Chi	3pm - 4pm	Social Hall
Sept 14	Thursday	Depression Support Group	4:30pm - 6pm	Teenz
Sept 14	Thursday	Spiritual Enrichment Group	6pm - 7:30pm	Teenz
Sept 14	Thursday	Choir Practice	7:30pm - 9pm	Sanctuary
Sept 17	Sunday	MMUUS/FUUS Joint Picnic	12pm	See page 2 for details
Sept 19	Tuesday	Tai Chi	3pm - 4pm	Social Hall
Sept 21	Thursday	Tai Chi	3pm - 4pm	Social Hall
Sept 21	Thursday	Depression Support Group	4:30pm - 6pm	Teenz
Sept 21	Thursday	Choir Practice	7:30pm - 9pm	Sanctuary
Sept 26	Tuesday	Tai Chi	3pm - 4pm	Social Hall
Sept 28	Thursday	Book Enders	1:30pm - 3pm	Memorial Room
Sept 28	Thursday	Tai Chi	3pm - 4pm	Social Hall
Sept 28	Thursday	Depression Support Group	4:30pm - 6pm	Teenz
Sept 28	Thursday	Spiritual Enrichment Group	6pm - 7:30pm	Teenz
Sept 28	Thursday	Choir Practice	7:30pm - 9pm	Sanctuary

# MMUUS Fall Mum Sale

Buy some hardy, potted 9" outdoor mums and raise funds for MMUUS!  
 Mums are \$10 each. Please plan to buy some for yourself and sell some to your friends,  
 family, neighbors

All orders + payment must be placed by **Tuesday, September 12th**.  
 Mums will be delivered to MMUUS on **Tuesday, September 19th** (10-5pm).





**If receiving checks for your orders, please have them written to you.  
 Then send 1 check to MMUUS for payment**

BTW...if you don't want mums for yourself, how about buying and few a donating them  
 to the church? They will look lovely & welcoming adorning our entryway this fall....

Questions? Contact Julie Daniel at [jdanielyoga@gmail.com](mailto:jdanielyoga@gmail.com) or call/text: 315-729-8179

Indicate below number of plants for each purchaser

Name of Purchaser

	Orange	Red	Yellow	Purple
				

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-1pm (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