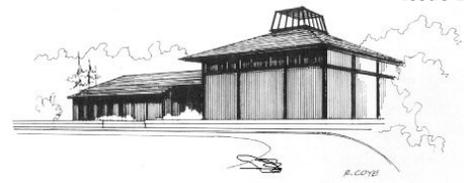


# May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society Newsletter

January 2026  
Volume 89  
Issue 1



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

Sunday worship service 10:30am



## I Was Created For Joy

I've never really been one to participate in New Years Resolutions.

Some years I would joke that I resolve to eat ice cream every day or something to buck the system that thinks New Years resolutions should somehow make you a better person. And they often imply you need to be better in the eyes of society. A perfect example? Almost every single year someone I've never met sees me and my powerful fat body at the gym in January and says something like "So great you're here, New Years Resolution?" To which I want to reply "I can probably bench press you." But I don't. This is just one example. We fat folks are always being pressured by society to become thinner, and the New Year is the perfect time, right? WRONG!

I get annoyed when I see so many posts from folks on social media who say things like "this year I'm going to eat less dessert" or "stop being so sensitive" or "stop watching TV." These are fine as long as they are what YOU want to do. As we lean into the theme of resistance for the month of January, I want you to think about how you can resist the pressure of society. How can you look towards your year and live it with joy and abundance of spirit FOR YOU!? I want to share a poem that my Spiritual Director shared with me a few weeks ago. My loves, live your life FOR YOU, lean into your joy and our world will be a more compassionate place. These words are attributed to 14th century the Persian poet Hafiz:

I sometimes forget that I was created for Joy.  
My mind is too busy  
My heart is too heavy for me to remember  
That I have been called to dance  
the Sacred dance of life.  
I was created to smile  
To love  
To be lifted up  
And to lift others up.  
O Sacred One  
Untangle my feet  
From all that ensnares  
Free my soul  
That we might dance  
And that our dancing might be contagious.



~Rev. Jo



## Worship Calendar



1/4	We will be at First UU in person or on Zoom "Unconditional Love as Radical Resistance"	<a href="https://zoom.us/j/92757934913">https://zoom.us/j/92757934913</a> Meeting ID: 927 5793 4913 Passcode: chalice	
1/11	Ancient Courage, Modern Call: The Edict of Torda and Our Work of Justice	Rev. Jo VonRue Worship Associate Karen Sgarlata	
1/18	The Arc Bends With Us	Rev. Jo VonRue Worship Associate Ruth Yanai	
1/25	They Cannot Burn What We Remember: Celebrating Banned Books	Rev. Jo VonRue Worship Associate David Mendelsohn	

<https://zoom.us/j/95274927371?pwd=H5pJFsXMxCMCfJlOwupV326HUrh1Fo.1>



Meeting ID: 952 7492 7371

Passcode: 210281

One tap mobile

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### Book Communion - January 25th

Bring **ONE** book that means something to you. Not the stack you're clearing out, just one favorite. A book that changed you, made you laugh, or helped you see the world differently.

During worship, we'll share in a Book Communion, exchanging books with each other as a sacred act of connection. You'll go home with a new story, and your favorite book will be in someone else's hands.

The service will explore education as liberation and tackle the rise of book bans across the country. In a time when people are trying to control what we read, we'll remember that free people read free books.

What's the one book you want to share?

## HISTORY CORNER



### **Why was May Memorial's congregation so much larger in 1964 than it is today?**

In this newsletter article we address another question from the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of our building and organ. As mentioned in our Oct. 5 reflection, “...with 500 members and 250 children in RE ..., there was no choice but to relocate.” That led to the question posed above.

To understand our congregation's growth in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, it is important to consider the larger context. It may be hard to believe now, but in the 1950s and '60s, the greater Syracuse area was a booming manufacturing center, home to many large companies. Examples include: General Electric (GE), Carrier Corporation (air conditioners), New Process Gear (car transmissions), Fisher Body (a Division of General Motors), Solvay Process (manufacturer of soda ash), Crucible Steel (specialty steel), Bristol Myers (pharmaceuticals).

In addition to all the manufacturing companies, each of which employed thousands of people, Syracuse University was rapidly expanding. As a result, many families that were drawn to May Memorial during that time included engineers or professors. For example, Malcolm (Mal) Clark, who died in 2021, moved his family to Syracuse in 1960 and worked as a radar systems engineer/manager at GE for many years. He was an active member of May Memorial and served as president of the board of trustees in 1973-74. Doug Aird, who died last January, was another GE engineer. He joined May Memorial in 1961 and sang in the choir for many years.

Most of the May Memorial members who relocated to the greater Syracuse area during the period of growth in the 1950s and 1960s are no longer with us. The one exception that we know of is Gary Droege. Gary worked for the Carrier Corporation in Dallas, TX, before being transferred to Syracuse in 1964. He was a long-time member of the choir and president of the MM board from 2002-2004.

Like many northern industrial and manufacturing cities, Syracuse began a downturn in the 1970s that continued into the early 2000s. Some of the companies that had been here for years started cutting back on their Syracuse operations or moving their manufacturing to the south or out of the country. To give an example, when Carrier was taken over by United Technologies Corporation (UTC) in 1979, their headquarters were moved away from Syracuse. Although some manufacturing remained here until 2004, Carrier's work force shrank steadily from a high of about 7000 in 1980.

If you are curious about some aspect of May Memorial's history, don't hesitate to email us at [history@mmuus.org](mailto:history@mmuus.org) or look for us in the social hall during coffee hour. We would also love to hear from anyone who is interested in helping with history committee projects.

Mary Louise Edwards & Kent Lindstrom

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



Community,  
Conversations,  
Connections  
with Rev. Jo

## Democracy in Action: Building Community Power & Resilience

The next session will be on **Tuesday January 13th 6:30-8pm** via Zoom.

### Class 4: Mutual Aid Essentials *Taking Care of Each Other*

*Strong communities take care of their own. Learn the principles of mutual aid; how neighbors support neighbors through everyday challenges and crisis moments. Discover how to start or join a neighborhood pod, map community resources, and build relationships that make resilient communities possible.*

Whether you're a seasoned activist or just getting started, these workshops will equip you with practical tools for the challenges ahead. Our communities need people prepared to act with wisdom, courage, and love. Please contact [office@mmuus.org](mailto:office@mmuus.org) to register.

*Join us in building the future we need.*



## 2nd Saturday SoUp & Soul



We're starting something new, and I hope you'll join us.

Beginning on the second Saturday in **January (that's January 10)**, we'll gather monthly for soup, conversation, and real connection. We'll share a simple meal together, and then we'll spend time in intentional structured conversation, getting to know each other in ways that go deeper than our usual Sunday morning hellos.

This is another way for us to be intentional about building the kind of community where we actually know each other's stories, hopes, and struggles. Where we can be ourselves and feel seen.

All are welcome. Come hungry. Come curious. Come ready to connect.

**When:** Second Saturday of the month, 5-7 PM (first gathering January 10).

Please bring a slow cooker or pot of soup if you are able (but not required), or some bread or crackers, but we are going to stick with just soup for the main meal.

Please also bring a place serving for yourself.



The next Soul Matters Sharing Circle will be **January 11** at 12:30pm in the Teenz Room.

If you are interested in joining the group please contact the office to get on the distribution list. You'll receive a monthly reminder with the reading materials for the month.



Fresh Faces,  
Coffee and  
Connection  
with Rev. Jo

Join us for Fresh Faces, Coffee and Connection every fourth Sunday directly after worship at 11:45am. Our next meeting is **Sunday January 25th** in the Memorial Room! This monthly gathering welcomes newcomers to MMUUS with coffee, snacks, and friendly conversation. It's a perfect opportunity to learn more about our community, meet our minister and fellow congregants, and ask questions in a relaxed setting.

You are welcome exactly as you are, we're excited to get to know you better!



## UUIP– Crafting Circle

Welcome all crafters, regardless of skill level and type. Crafting is better done together, so bring your favorite or forgotten WIP and join us for two hours of conversation. If you don't have a craft but are interested in learning something new, feel free to join us anyway because you never know what you might pick up.

Join us on Zoom every 2nd Friday at 7:00 pm and/or in-person on the 4th Sunday in the Teenz Room at 12:15 pm.

Zoom Link:

<https://zoom.us/j/97854397378?pwd=VaJaYKE2DzK9VeW8oR6mFrwavDjUEh.1>

If you have any questions, please contact Shana Fox at [ladibluejay@gmail.com](mailto:ladibluejay@gmail.com) or see Teri in the office.

## New Magnetic Nametags!!

We're refreshing our name tag system starting in January with a new basic design for everyone. This helps us create a more unified look and makes it easier for people to connect. If your current name tag has sentimental value, you're welcome to keep it. Teri will have a box set aside for anyone who wants to claim theirs by March 1st. We just ask that you wear the new name tag we'll provide when you're here at church. After March 1st, unclaimed tags will be recycled.



As we enter the winter months with unpredictable weather patterns please remember:

- If you do not feel safe coming to church for service please stay home and enjoy church right in your own living room! We offer service on Zoom each Sunday.
- If we need to cancel service we will run the announcement on local channels.
- We will also send out an eblast on Sunday morning, just as we send out the reminder announcement.
- And you can always call the office. Sunday's can be super busy for the office so if we don't answer please leave a message and you'll get a call back.
- If you are attending Tai Chi closures follow the Syracuse City School district and again you can contact the office.



Minister

Director of Religious Education

Director of Music

Board President

Book Keeper

Finance

Church Office

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Stacy Sceiford

Glenn Kime

Peter McClure

Leslie Dendy

Jennifer Newman

Teri Coon

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### Do you enjoy the art exhibits in our Social Hall?

Would you like to be involved? If so, there are many ways you could become part of the team, from identifying artists to the actual hanging of the exhibits. Maybe writing is your special skill and you would enjoy writing articles for the newsletter or e-blast. Or, if you are a people person who likes parties, how about volunteering to help with the openings? Below is a partial list of possible ways to get involved.

If you would like to learn more, please contact Cynthia Carter [cynthiacc@verizon.net](mailto:cynthiacc@verizon.net)

#### Arts committee activities

- Help identify prospective artists
- Contact perspective artists
- Hanging shows - once per month September - May (not necessary to be present for all)
- Taking the exhibits down – as above (Oct – June)
- Help host the art openings
- Write E-blast and newsletter articles - 1 each per month
- Typing labels – once per month
- Keep the gallery open during regular public gallery hours when Teri is off (couple times/year)
- Keep the exhibit open one evening per month

## May Memorial UU Society

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### January Artist Manya Goldstein

Chaos and the  
Rubble of Archeology

Gallery Hours  
Mon 9am-2pm  
Thursday 9am - 2pm  
Sunday 9am - 1pm



The making of objects is what humans have done for millennium. Archeological rubble tells us what people did; how they lived, how they cooked, what they thought and believed. I try to look, to see, to observe life in all its chaos, then transform thought and matter into artifacts so others can also feel joy. I have been working with stuff that is discarded, unrecyclable, valueless. By turning it into "ART", it gains a new life, rescued from the landfill, but it's the making that is personally important. As a child I made art, like anyone else. I did not study art until I met potter/art historian Cleota Reed in the late 1970's. She said I was an artist, so I went on from there. I made dysfunctional pottery: clay masks, fish, clocks, mirrors, Judaica, and odd tchotchkes. For many years I sold my work at art and craft shows up and down the East coast and shipped to galleries around the United States. In the early part of this century, I embraced assemblage and collage totally and switched to gluing my life's treasures into stories that, hopefully, amuse and entertain.



The next "First Sunday Lunch" will be on January 11 following the worship service. This meal will be a New Year's Brunch put on by Sister Circle, the Thursday Spiritual Enrichment Group, and Twisted Sister. You can look forward to a variety of egg casseroles, French Toast casseroles and potato casseroles. We will have blueberry pancakes with real maple syrup, oatmeal with a variety of toppings, fruit salads, milks and juices. There will be vegetarian, vegan and gluten free options available, so no one should leave hungry. The cost for the brunch is \$0-\$10 per adult, \$0-\$5 per child with a maximum of \$20 per family. You can pay by cash, check or Venmo, but no one is turned away if you are not able to pay anything that day. Please mark the Brunch on your calendar and come join us for fantastic food and even better company in the Social Hall on January 11, 2026!



### Imbolc Celebration: A Cozy Potluck, Games & Crafts Day

**Saturday, January 31st 11:00am-3:00pm**

Join us for a cozy Mid-Winter Celebration! There will be games to play, crafts, snacks and hot beverages. Imbolc and Brigid's Day are the official halfway point between winter solstice and spring equinox. It's a time for the community to come together and help each other get through the second half of the winter. We'll celebrate with friendship and cozy activities.

Wear your coziest clothes, bring a snack to share and a game to play if you like.

### Save the Date April 18, 2026 for the Talents and Treasures Auction



Our annual FUNdraising auction has a new date. Please save the weekend of April 17 and 18th to participate in the May Memorial **Talents and Treasures Auction**. We have expanded the auction to two days so that we can gather and stage items on Friday and hold the auction on the evening of April 18th. For those new to May Memorial this is our biggest FUNdraiser and we hope that everyone can find a way to participate.

The Holiday season is a great time to start thinking about the auction. If you receive a holiday gift that is not right for you, think of re-gifting it to our April auction. If you see a great price on 2 for one gift cards you could gift one and save one for the auction. If you are a crafter and are making gifts for the family, maybe you have time to knit an extra hat and mitten set to give to the auction.

"Many hands make light work" and there are many ways you can help make the Talents and Treasures auction a fun and successful event. If you have questions or suggestions or NEW IDEAS please contact Cynthia Carter, Stephanie Cross or Dawn Mendelsohn.



The Folkus  
Project of Central New York

**CNY Songbirds - The Big Motown Review** on Friday, January 9 @ 8pm.  
Please visit the [FOLKUS PROJECT](http://FOLKUSPROJECT.org) website for details and tickets ([folkus.org](http://folkus.org))

**Livingston Taylor** on Friday, January 23 @ 8pm.  
Please visit the [FOLKUS PROJECT](http://FOLKUSPROJECT.org) website for details and tickets ([folkus.org](http://folkus.org))

## UPCOMING Events

These are events happening in the church that are open to anyone to attend

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
Sunday	1/4	Artist Reception	1pm	Social Hall
Tuesday	1/6	Tai Chi	3pm	Social Hall
Wednesday	1/7	Vespers	8pm	Zoom Only
Thursday	1/8	Tai Chi	3pm	Social Hall
		Depression Support Group	4:30pm	Memorial Room
		Choir Rehearsal	7:30pm	Sanctuary
Friday	1/9	FOLKUS	8pm	Sanctuary
		UUIP - Craft Circle	7pm	Zoom Only
Saturday	1/10	Second Saturday SoUUP and Soul	4pm	Social Hall
Sunday	1/11	Soul Matters	12:30pm	Teenz
		Sunday lunch	After Service	
Monday	1/12	Twisted Sisters	7pm	Teenz
Tuesday	1/13	Tai Chi	3pm	Sanctuary
		Democracy In Action	8pm	Zoom Only
Wednesday	1/14	Vespers	8pm	Zoom Only
Thursday	1/15	Tai Chi	3pm	Social Hall
		Depression Support Group	4:30pm	Memorial Room
		Choir Rehearsal	7:30pm	Sanctuary
Tuesday	1/20	Tai Chi	3pm	Social Hall
Wednesday	1/21	Vespers	8pm	Zoom Only
Thursday	1/22	Tai Chi	3pm	Social Hall
		Depression Support Group	4:30pm	Memorial Room
		Choir Rehearsal	7:30pm	Sanctuary
Friday	1/23	FOLKUS	8pm	Sanctuary
Sunday	1/25	Fresh Faces, Coffee and Connection	11:45am	Memorial Room
		UUIP - Craft Circle	12:15pm	Teenz
Tuesday	1/27	Tai Chi	3pm	Social Hall
Wednesday	1/28	Vespers	8pm	Zoom Only
Thursday	1/29	Tai Chi	3pm	Social Hall
		Depression Support Group	4:30pm	Memorial Room
		Choir Rehearsal	7:30pm	Sanctuary
Saturday	1/31	Imbolc Family Pot Luck/Game Night	11am	Social Hall

May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society

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office@mmuus.org



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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