

May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society

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



November 2025
Volume 88
Issue 11

HELLO
November



Nurturing Gratitude in Hard Times

This month, the Soul Matters theme invites us to nurture gratitude. And honestly... the timing feels complicated. With the elections looming and the weight of uncertainty pressing down on so many of us, gratitude might feel like the last thing we can access right now. The November Soul Matters packet has me thinking, how would my life change if I paused to reflect on the things that I have that I know that others don't?

During my sabbatical in 2024, I spent a month in Tanzania. I worked with women in Arusha who were learning trades to better their lives. I lived for two weeks with the Maasai tribe near the village of Makuyuni, in homes made of cow dung and mud, with grass thatched roofs. Their bomas were maybe 12 feet across, housing entire families. They cooked on small stoves when they had them.

And their joy? Unmatched. Absolutely unmatched.

Some days I think about how much joy they had that I've never had, despite all the things I own. And it makes me wonder if we're asking ourselves the wrong questions about our lives. Maybe it's not about the things. Maybe it's never been about the things.

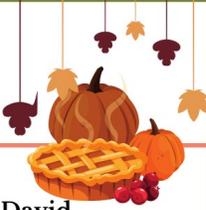
What we have here at May Memorial is each other. This beautiful, multigenerational, radically welcoming community. We have relationships. We have belonging. We have a place to bring our whole selves, even in the hard times... Especially in the hard times.

So here's my invitation this November: Practice gratitude not as a way to ignore what's broken or scary, but as a way to remember what sustains us. Notice the people who show up. Notice this community that holds you. Notice what you have that others are still dreaming of. And then? Use that gratitude as fuel. Let it strengthen you for whatever comes next. Because grateful people don't check out. Grateful people show up. They vote. They serve. They love fiercely.

That's how we nurture gratitude.
We let it make us brave.

I love you, and there's nothing you can do about it.
~Rev. Jo



		 
11/2	Seeds of Thanksgiving: Learning Gratitude from Indigenous Wisdom	Rev. Jo VonRue and Worship Associate David Mendelsohn
11/9	What Hope Requires of Us Now	Rev. Jo VonRue and Worship Associate Karen Sgarlata
11/16	Thanksgiving Uprising: Celebrating the Earth by Defending Her	Rev. Jo VonRue and Worship Associate Karen Sgarlata
11/23	In Remembrance and Recognition: Honoring Trans Courage	Rev. Jo VonRue
11/30	TBA	Worship Associate Ruth Yanai

<https://zoom.us/j/95274927371?pwd=H5pJFsXMxCMCfJIOWupV326HUr1Fo.1>



Meeting ID: 952 7492 7371

Passcode: 210281

One tap mobile

+19292056099,,95274927371# US (New York)

+16469313860,,95274927371# US



First Sunday Food Collection

Remember that each First Sunday we will do a special collection during worship when the children come forward for children's time to collect food for Gethsemane. Please be sure to bring a non-perishable food item with you if you are able. Our donations will go to our partners and family at Gethsemane United Methodist Church food pantry.

May Memorial UU Society

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November Artists

Linda Malik

clay artist



Cece Sutton

glass artist



Gallery Hours:
Monday 9am - 2pm
Thursday 9am - 2pm
Sunday 9am - 1pm

In November we will welcome two artists to exhibit their beautiful creations in our social hall. Linda Malik is a clay artist and Cece Sutton is a glass artist, both artists works are as wonderful as they are unique. Do enjoy this exciting new show.

WIP UUIP– Crafting Together

Welcome all crafters, regardless of skill level and type. Crafting is better done together, so pick up 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.

We will be meeting bi-monthly, alternating between Zoom crafting and In-Person crafting.

Join us online on the 2nd Friday of the month at 7 pm., first session 11/14

If you prefer in-person, we will be meeting on the 4th Sunday of the month in the Teenz Room at 12:15 pm, first session 11/23

If you have any questions, please contact Shana Fox at ladibluejay@gmail.com or contact Teri in the office.

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



[Acoustic Guitar Project](#) on Friday, November 7 @ 8pm.

Please visit the FOLKUS PROJECT website for details and tickets (folkus.org)

[The Rough and Tumble](#) on Friday, November 21 @ 8pm.

Please visit the FOLKUS PROJECT website for details and tickets (folkus.org)

Tickets available at folkus.org only

HISTORY CORNER



Follow-up to the 60th Anniversary Service

The history committee is devoting this newsletter article to a few of the questions that arose after the October 5 service celebrating the 60th anniversary of our building and organ. One entire file cabinet in our in-house archives contains documents concerning all aspects of the planning and building of our East Genesee Street church. Much of the information presented in our October 5 reflection can be found in *May No One Be A Stranger*, the 1988 history our of congregation written by Jean Hoefer and Irene Baros-Johnson to mark "150 years of Unitarian presence in Syracuse" (1838-1988). This is the small tan book that is available in the foyer and is free to anyone who would like a copy.

Why was the James Street church demolished? Couldn't it have been updated?

As mentioned in the October 5 service, church leaders had explored the possibility of expansion, but there was no available property nearby on which to expand. In addition, there were safety concerns with both the church and the parish house, where religious education classes were held. In fact, when the children were in Sunday School, a group of concerned parents kept watch in case of fire or other safety problem.

Parking was also an issue. When the church was constructed in 1885, congregants walked or took the trolley to church. By the 1950s, however, families were driving in from the suburbs. The church did not have a parking lot, and there was not enough parking on the streets for the growing congregation.

What is at 472 James Street now?

In September of 1964, the James Street church, including the parish house, was sold for \$75,000. As the value of the property was in the *land* rather than the *structures*, the church was demolished. The property then became a parking lot for the Century Club, at 480 James Street. The site still serves as a parking lot today.

The history committee welcomes questions and comments about our history.

Mary Louise Edwards & Kent Lindstrom

MMUUS History Committee, history@mmuus.org



MMUUS Thanksgiving Dinner

This year's Thanksgiving dinner will be held on **Thanksgiving, November 27th, from 4:30 - 7:00pm**. Last year's organizers, Kyle Brown, Josh & Leah Cronlund, Joey Favata, and Kristina Starowitz, are returning once again to share in the festivities! Sign up for the potluck style meal at the signup genius link located here [\[https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0A49A5AB2CA5F5C16-59961310-2025\]](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0A49A5AB2CA5F5C16-59961310-2025).

Bring a dish a pass, though it is not a requirement to attend. Tell your friends and family! It's open to everyone!

Inquiries regarding the event can be directed to Joey Favata - 315-491-3433





Community, Conversations, Connections with Rev. Jo



Democracy in Action: Building Community Power & Resilience

The times call for more than hope, they call for skills. Join Rev. Jo VonRue, and Rev Douglas Taylor as well as UUs from multiple cities for this powerful 6-part monthly series, on 2nd Tuesdays. The next session will be on **Tuesday November 11 6:30-8pm** via Zoom.

Learn: Strategic Action Design • Making Sense of Our Moment • Bridge Building Across Difference • Mutual Aid Essentials • Interrupting Violence & Building Peace • Scenario Planning Workshop

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 to register.

Join us in building the future we need.



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 November 23rd** 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!



Soul Matters
SHARING CIRCLE

The next Soul Matters Sharing Circle will be **November 9th** 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.



"Feeling Political" : November 7th from 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm via Zoom

A politically-themed peer support group for those feeling overwhelmed by the rise of authoritarianism in America, hosted online. Give voice to concerns, celebrate victories and learn ways you can make a difference with like-minded members of the May Memorial UU community.



Please register with Teri at the May Memorial (office@mmuus.org) to secure a spot and note that this is not professional therapy.



NEW YORK UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST JUSTICE

2nd annual Justice Convocation From Revival to Resistance

Join NYUUI for our annual in-person Justice Convocation. We will worship, network, connect, learn about making change in New York State, and take action on important issues. Our workshops will be interactive and energizing, and our day will inspire and connect us for the work ahead.

- Beyond the Climate Revival
- Defending Democracy
- Protecting Immigrants
- Engaging our Communities
- Advocating for a Just State Budget
- Taking Action

Join Us In Person or on Zoom!

To Register
<https://bit.ly/NYUUIConvocation>



For More Information:
nyuui.org

Saturday, November 15, 2025
10am-4pm
Albany UU
Sliding Scale Registration \$1-100

Join us Friday for an action to ask Governor Hochul to sign Medical Aid in Dying!

UPCOMING Events

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

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
Tuesday	11/4	Tai Chi	3pm	Social Hall
Wednesday	11/5	Vespers	8pm	Zoom only
Thursday	11/6	Tai Chi	3pm	Social Hall
		Depression Support Group	4:30pm	Memorial Room
		Choir Rehearsal	7:30pm	Sanctuary
Friday	11/7	FOLKUS	8pm	Sanctuary
		Feeling Political (see page 5 for details)	7pm	Zoom only
Sunday	11/9	Soul Matters	12:30pm	Teenz
Tuesday	11/11	Tai Chi	3pm	Social Hall
Wednesday	11/12	Vespers	8pm	Zoom only
Thursday	11/13	Tai Chi	3pm	Social Hall
		Depression Support Group	4:30pm	Memorial Room
		Choir Rehearsal	7:30pm	Sanctuary
Friday	11/14	November Artist Reception	5pm	Social Hall
	11/14	UUIP (see page 3 for details)	7pm	Zoom only
Tuesday	11/18	Tai Chi	3pm	Social Hall
Wednesday	11/19	Vespers	8pm	Zoom only
Thursday	11/20	Tai Chi	3pm	Social Hall
		Depression Group	4:30pm	Memorial Room
		Choir Rehearsal	7:30pm	Sanctuary
Friday	11/21	FOLKUS	8pm	Sanctuary
Sunday	11/23	Fresh Faces Coffee and Connection	11:45pm	Memorial Room
		UUIP (see page 3 for details)	12:15pm	Teenz room
Tuesday	11/25	Tai Chi	3pm	Social Hall
Thursday	11/27	Thanksgiving Dinner (see page 4 for details)	4:30pm	Social Hall

JOINT THANKSGIVING PROGRAM

SOCIAL JUSTICE CONCERT

WITH

- CONGREGATION BETH SHOLOM-CHEVRA SHAS
- MAY MEMORIAL UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY
- PEBBLE HILL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

FEATURING LOCAL, WELL-KNOWN ARTISTS:

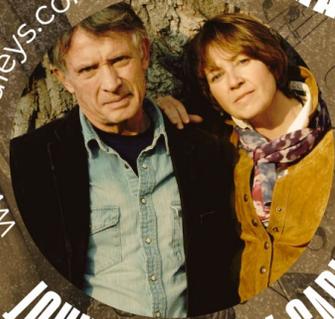
- + SOCIAL JUSTICE READINGS FROM EACH TRADITION
- + REFRESHMENTS AND TIME TO SOCIALIZE

DONATIONS APPRECIATED FOR Onondaga Nation Health Center either through scanning this QR Code or by check or cash at the Concert



COLLEEN KATTAU

colleenkattau.com



JOHN AND CATHY CADLEY

www.cadleys.com/about

SUNDAY, NOV 23
3:30 – 5:30 PM
DOORS OPEN AT 3 PM

LOCATION CONGREGATION BETH SHOLOM-CHEVRA SHAS
 18 PATSY LANE
 JAMESVILLE, NY 13078

TO RSVP BY NOVEMBER 17
 CLICK THIS FLYER OR GO TO
TINYURL.COM/SJ-CONCERT-2025

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
 CBS-CS OFFICE AT 315.446.9570

Christmas Eve Services - December 24, 2025

We invite you to celebrate the birth of hope with us this Christmas Eve!

We're offering two worship services, each with its own spirit and style:

6:00 PM - Family Friendly No Rehearsal Christmas Pageant

Bring the whole family for our beloved no-rehearsal Christmas pageant! Children are invited to help tell this Christian story from a UU perspective just as it unfolds, no preparation needed, just willing hearts and joyful spirits. This lively service is filled with singing, and wonder, and concludes with our candlelight singing of "Silent Night."

A note about our 6:00 PM service: We've noticed attendance at our early service has declined in recent years, and we want to hear from you. This Christmas Eve will serve as a trial run to help us discern the best way to celebrate this tradition moving forward. Should we continue the pageant on Christmas Eve at 6 PM, or might it thrive better on the Sunday morning before Christmas? Your presence and feedback will help shape this decision, so please join us if this service speaks to your family.

8:00 PM - Contemplative Candlelight Service "Defiant Hope: A Christmas Eve Celebration"

Our later service offers a quieter, more reflective space to encounter the Christmas story. Through music, words, and reflection, we'll gather around the theme of choosing hope as a radical act of resistance. A reminder of who we are called to be and why our witness matters now more than ever. This service includes a homily, some readings, and ends with candlelight and song.

Both services are open to all. Come as you are, and bring someone who needs to experience hope this season.

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?

2nd Saturday SoUUp & Soul

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

Beginning on the second Saturday in **January (that's January 11)**, 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 11).

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.



Sunday November 2 at 2am



There will be no Vespers on November 26th



There will be an **After Worship Lunch on Sunday, November 2nd**. Featuring soups, salads, casseroles, bread and desserts, this community-building fundraiser is fun for all ages. Sponsors include the History, Worship Associates, Personnel, Safe Congregations, Healthy Relations, Finance, and Buildings and Grounds Committees/Teams. If you are a member of one of these teams, and have not yet signed up to bring food or do a job, we would love to have your help.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1StuYkaTLKICxqppBQLUKeaEDjv5tQjCYk-wUD9bQiUQ/edit>

The cost of lunch is as follows: Adults \$0-\$10, Children \$0-\$6, Families \$0-\$10. Questions? Contact Eliza Bailey elizalafayette@gmail.com

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Coffee Hour Hosts

Welcome folks, pour coffee, offer treats, and share smiles. Sign up [here](#) or email the office.

Ushers and Greeters

There are still plenty of dates available and we will have some special opportunities for usher/greeters in December for our Christmas eve services, you'll find those dates & times [here](#)



To Denise Speicher who has done a bang up job recruiting **usher/greeters**.

We could use the same energy in recruiting **coffee hour hosts**. Let Teri in the office know if you can fill that role.



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|---------------------------------|-----------------|--|
| Minister | Rev. Jo VonRue | ministerjrev@gmail.com |
| Director of Religious Education | Stacy Sceiford | stacymaydre@gmail.com |
| Director of Music | Glenn Kime | gkimeorganist@gmail.com |
| Board President | Peter McClure | peterrogermccclure@gmail.com |
| Book Keeper | Leslie Dendy | lesliedendy@yahoo.com |
| Finance | Jennifer Newman | mamashlash@twcny.rr.com |
| Church Office | Teri Coon | office@mmuus.org |



Buildings & Grounds

When Stephanie Cross, the Buildings & Grounds chairperson, receives an email or call from Teri about building repairs, she often feels a panic.. “Ut oh (or another expletive).. Who?, When?, How much time and money?” . She always refers to Dale, her husband, who is a “fix-it extraordinaire” to discuss the situation.. This often turns into a trip into May to physically see the problem, purchase the materials needed for repair, or actually do the work.

At end of September one of these emails, with a photo, was received.. when a photo is attached, it is usually not good... this photo showed a 2” x 12” board hanging from the side of the bridge. This job needed a team! By Sunday, we gathered a group - Charlie Wilson, Pilar Lyons, Peter McClure, Mike Dillon, Dale and Stephanie met after church on October 5th to do this job.

There were 4 ledger boards used to provide a place to attach a rubber covering for the sidewalk and the railing. Although the other three boards had not fallen yet, they only needed a slight nudge to drop them as well. Charlie Wilson and Dale Sherman assessed the situation; it was determined that these boards were not needed any longer, and the railing needed to be re-attached to the concrete. Luckily, this made the work easier, but it still involved most work on ladders!

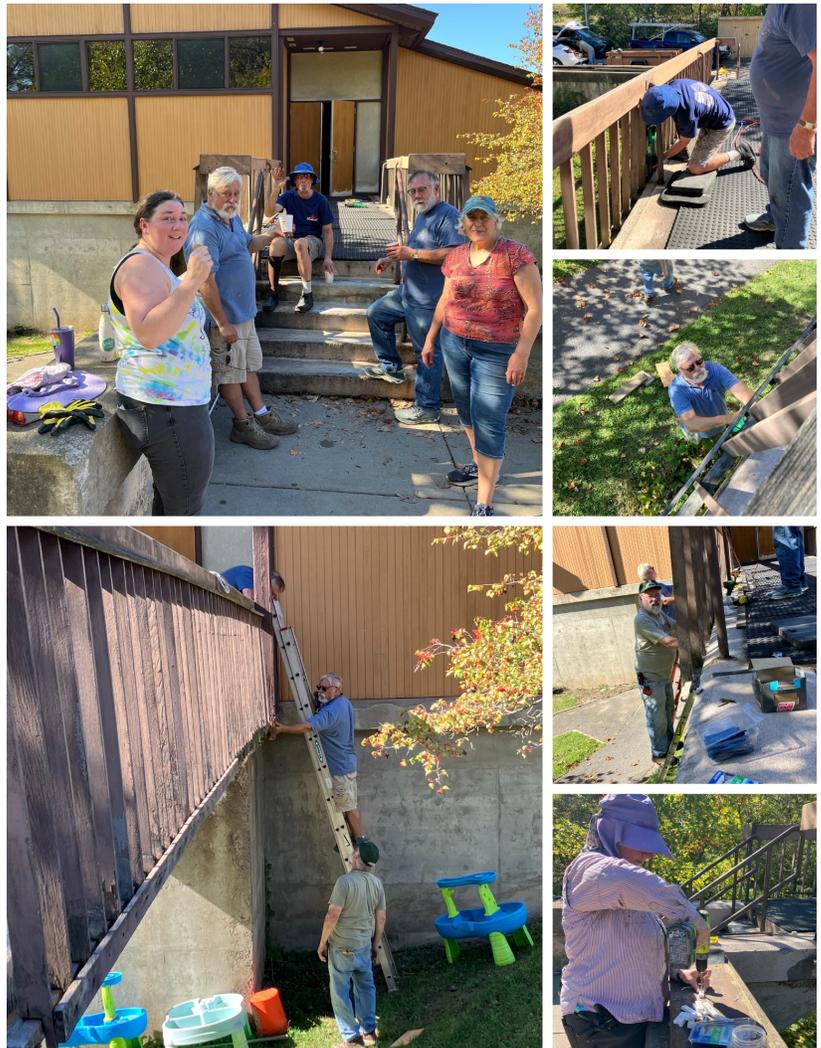
After removing all the old hardware, the repair began. Drilling concrete, adding spacers for drainage, then re-attaching the trim boards so that the base of the railing was fastened securely. In addition to this work, Peter and Pilar were able to weed the significant overgrowth of grape vines from the inside wall.

We finished the job around 6:00 pm. The bridge is safe to walk on.. the next repair is one we can't do ourselves.. a replacement/repair of the concrete on the bridge (and front entrance).. You can look forward to hearing more about that in the future..

The crew deserves a huge thank you for giving their time, energy and talents! They responded to a need and in the process, got to spend time together accomplishing a task as well as enjoying one another.

If you have an interest in being on the B&G “call list”, let Teri, our office admn. know! She will pass your name on to the Buildings & Grounds Committee

Stephanie Cross
Buildings & Grounds Chair



May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society

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Syracuse, NY 13214
315.446.8920
office@mmuus.org



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

