

## Celebration of Life Services



### February 15 The "No Hell" Church

*Rev. Jean L. Wahlstrom*

Our Universalist forbearers rejected a faith based on punishment and retribution. Many of us still struggle, however, to live every day as in an earthly paradise. How can we celebrate Heaven on Earth, without denying the ongoing presence of war, famine, and other inhumanities? Special music will be provided by the folk duo Mustard's Retreat.

### February 22

#### Veritas

*Rev. Jean L. Wahlstrom*

What is Truth? What are we prepared to take "on faith"? How do we ascribe meaning to the information we have?

### March 1

#### Guest Minister

Garnett Hill Ski Weekend

## President's Letter

### What Our Spiritual Enrichment Group Means to Me

Last spring, when Jean introduced the Spiritual Enrichment Group to the congregation I immediately thought, "spiritual" enrichment? The word spiritual brought back some childhood memories. I was brought up in the protestant faith. As a child, I thought that my spirit or my soul was hovering about me and always watching over me. I remember my Sunday school teacher saying that we must attend church so that our spirit or soul would be replenished. Otherwise, it would shrivel up and die and only a shell of our body would be left. Since going to our spiritual enrichment group meetings, I have discovered that spiritual enrichment has many meanings and can happen just about anywhere.

Our facilitator's group has been meeting every two weeks since early April. During the first couple of meetings, we created a list of "Shared Understandings" or a covenant that gave us the guidelines we needed to form a trusting relationship and a comfortable environment to work in. The various topics we have discussed have broadened our understanding of each other and ourselves. We listen as each of us shares how our life experiences have shaped the way we think about such topics as prayer, after life or spirituality.

I believe that spiritual enrichment does define our group. By listening to each other and sharing our experiences, we have gained new insights as to who we are. We have explored some difficult topics that have allowed us to appreciate each other as the unique people that we are. I feel that we have developed a special relationship over the last few months that will continue as we try to pass on to you what we have shared in our group. I hope that our groups will look forward to the time they spend together as it offers an opportunity to step back from daily life and think about and sort out some of life's complexities.

~ Joyce Leonard, Spiritual Enrichment Facilitator's Group



## Wheel of Life

**Nan Gartner** took an awful fall on Sunday, January 11. She had hip surgery, and has now returned home after a rehab stay at Minora Park.

**Barbara Mihalas** is the proud grandmother of twin baby boys, born to Robin Rickey on January 30. Robin and the babies will be staying with Barbara and Len.

Longtime member **Ute Haynes** died peacefully at the Nottingham on January 28. A memorial Celebration of Ute's life was held at May Memorial this past Saturday. Please keep Bill in your thoughts and prayers.

**Catherine Knowles** has been dealing with back pain, and unable to work. She'd appreciate our thoughts, prayers, and healing energy.

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### **Awad Family Update/Request for Volunteers:**

A core group of people continue to help the Awad family settle into life in Syracuse, and sincere thanks go to everyone who has contributed in major or minor ways. They have been moved to a safer, healthier house (although the location is problematic). Medical and dental needs are being addressed. Accommodations to the realities of CNY winters are being made. Both our experiences and feedback from the Center for New Americans indicates that this resettlement has been unusually complex. We are again looking for additional people who might be able to help in some small, concrete way. Perhaps you have an hour or two to help tutor, or simply play Chutes and Ladders with the two youngest while Mom works on her English. Please contact Judy Antoine at [jeantoin48@gmail.com](mailto:jeantoin48@gmail.com) or Jennifer Newman at [mamaslash@twcny.rr.com](mailto:mamaslash@twcny.rr.com) to discuss the possibilities!

## **“What happened to my January *MMU*letter?”**

**T**he entire January *MMU*letter bulk mailing was lost – and hasn't yet been found. Many of our members barely noticed – either because they are used to downloading it from the website, or because they picked one up from the brochure rack here. For the rest of our readership, we are repeating several columns from the January newsletter in this mid-February update – the President's Letter, History Corner – and some other items you may have missed.

### **From January's View from the Study Window...**

**O**ur treasurer and bookkeeper have noted that *MMU*US finances are tracking reasonably well with our projections for this point in the fiscal year. We are thankful, for it reflects May Memorial's worth and potential for ministry. Contributions at our Winter Solstice and Christmas Eve services added nearly \$500 to the Minister's Discretionary Fund. This small reserved account is funded entirely by special contributions and some honoraria I receive. The MDF makes possible some unbudgeted expenditures, such as occasional direct aid to May Memorial households. Thank you to all who contributed.

In 2002-03, at the start of U.S. warfare in Afghanistan and Iraq, I and other church leaders (where I then served) were urged by some to take a strong, public stance against the war. In conversation with one another, we discovered something valuable about ourselves as a congregation: before we could take purposeful, constructive action, we needed to know one another's hearts and minds. We needed to know who had loved ones serving in the military or otherwise at risk. We needed to hear how these people felt, how they heard pacifist expressions, and how we could care for and minister to one another. In small groups and other opportunities for sharing, we created space for all voices to be heard – and we were the stronger for it.

In 2009, we are feeling the need to know one another in a similar way. Just as it was not easy then, in that strongly pacifist congregation, to voice ambivalences and divided loyalties, so it is not easy for many of us at May Memorial to speak about our personal financial situations. But the result of avoiding awkward conversations is not ease, but greater anxiety all 'round.

Here are some suggestions about how you can help us, as a religious society, counter the mounting economic anxiety...

- Don't isolate – keep up your attendance, your fellowship, and your faith.
- Sign up for a spiritual enrichment group, to reach beyond your current circle of connections here.
- Schedule a chance to speak to me about what is on your heart and mind.
- Find someone here, or a small group, with whom to share and to listen.
- Contact treasurer Joan Weiser if you find yourself needing to adjust your pledge downward – or able to adjust it up.
- Remember that the Minister's Discretionary Fund is available as a safety net.

Together, we are stronger; in sharing, we prosper.

~Blessings, Jean



## Marvelous History Corner

### From Prisoner of War to Prisoner of Conscience

Those who have read this column for a while know that I feel the privilege is all mine in being able to pour over our archives. There is so much to learn, I gain so much inspiration from our past leaders, and my awe on what has already been accomplished by May Memorial people over the years continues to grow. This remains so true as I now go through the material of Rev. Dr. Nicholas C. Cardell, Jr., our 10<sup>th</sup> minister (1974-1995).

Many readers know that Nick spent time in prison on two occasions. Once was as a Prisoner of War during WWII and 54 years later as a Prisoner of Conscience when he served time in a Federal Prison Camp, joined by active members Dan and Doris Sage, for their demonstrations against the School of the Americas. You can read more about the despicable background of the U.S.'s School of the Americas at <http://history.mmuus.org/judasbyproxy.pdf> in a sermon by Nick in the fall of 1997. Several months years later Dan, Doris, and Nick's prison terms began. Go here to read some about his experiences: <http://www.uuworld.org/1999/0799feat3.html>. Such commitments based on conscience establish a role modeling atmosphere explaining so well why I am a Unitarian Universalist and why I so love this church. I encourage parents with young children to talk about this with them and read some of Nick's words.

I recently discovered an undated sermon by Nick entitled *From POW to POC*. It was written sometime in 1999. You can see it at <http://history.mmuus.org/From%20POW%20to%20POC.pdf> It, too, is well worth reading. Nick talked about the feelings people have when they do something that is truly based on their conscience and knowing that they know how to distinguish right from wrong in terms of the way you deal with others: "There is a joyful exhilaration in risking something with others for the sake of some deep-down fundamental conviction that has to do, I think, with belonging and caring—with loving. It is a spiritual experience." In essence, I believe Nick was describing how spirituality comes about in so many different ways.

~ Rog Hiemstra, Chair, History Committee

### Merger, Memories and Materials to Share

Many members of our congregation were living and worshipping in Syracuse fifty years ago at the time of the historic merger between the Unitarians and the Universalists. The final negotiations to join these two groups took place in the Hotel Syracuse on October 31, 1959. The final legal work and announcement is observed as 1961, but the real hammering out of the wording took place right in our own back yard on the 1959 date.

The St. Lawrence District is sponsoring a terrific conference to commemorate the event on **Saturday, October 31, 2009** at the hotel. We will be meeting on the exact spot where our forbearers took their brave first steps into UUism. We will be joined by the most learned people from both denominations. Liz Strong, David Bumbaugh, Dick Gilbert and David Parke will all join us to share their unique perspectives and lead us through the momentous events of the past and into a discussion of our highest hopes for the future of the denomination. This conference is a 'must' for all UUs. We are especially lucky to live so close to the historic spot. Mark your calendars now.

Planners of the conference are interested in talking with people who have first hand knowledge of this event. We would like to prepare a display of pictures and other documents that would bring the era back to life. If you have either memories or materials of this historic time and are willing to share them, please contact Alexa Carter [garlex@aol.com](mailto:garlex@aol.com) 315-593-7974.



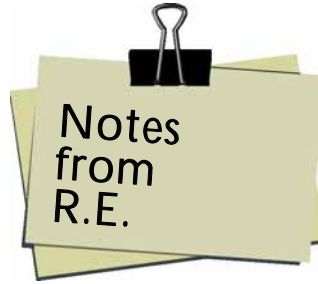
## UUSC Guest at Your Table Wrap-up

In a recent newsletter it was reported that UUSC celebrated International Human Rights Day and the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) on December 10, by awarding Reverend Gloria White-Hammond the UUSC Eleanor Roosevelt Human Rights Award at a ceremony in Boston, Mass.

As part of the commemoration of the UDHR's anniversary, UUSC President and CEO Charlie Clements sent a letter to President-elect Barack Obama. The letter congratulated him on his election and offered him our support and assistance, stating, "We hope the UDHR will inspire your administration with a vision of a world free from oppression and injustice, where all can realize their full human rights." The full text of Clement's letter can be accessed on the UUSC website [www.UUSC.org](http://www.UUSC.org).

May Memorial's continuing support of UUSC in all their activities helps to make the ideals of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights a reality.

~ Dan Sage  
UUSC Rep, MMUUS



**F**ebruary 22 will be a Special Programming Sunday. We will have RE for our children here at May but on a smaller scale. There will not be a Coming of Age class. Teenz will meet.

Coming up March 1 is the monthly RE committee meeting at 12:30 at May. Are you interested in being on the RE committee? Please contact Jennifer Hamlin-Navias our DRE.

This spring is a busy time in the life of May and in our RE program. We have three groups from RE doing special projects with special fundraising.

Our Teen Group is going to New Orleans through the UUSC to help in the rebuild of New Orleans. They will be traveling on July 19-25. We are collaborating with Plymouth Congregational Church on this. We think it will be a wonderful opportunity. But this kind of justice work does take prep work before we go. The youth will be having some fundraisers and also contributing their own money. Please be on the lookout for their fundraisers and support them where you can.

FEB. 15 - The Coming of Age group will have a bake sale during coffee hour. This bake sale is to support their Heritage trip to Boston in early May where they will learn more about the UUA. Feel free to have something a little sweet and tasty with your coffee.

Our first and second grade group, The Peace Pals have been doing some work and will continue to do some work to erect a Peace Pole here on the grounds of May. This is a project that has been approved by the Board of trustees and Buildings and Ground committee.

It seems like a lot, but with a larger RE program does come more activity and that is something to be thankful for. Hopefully you can support where you can.

~ Jennifer Hamlin-Navias  
Director of Religious Education

# Picture the Possibilities



**O**ur MMUUS Stewardship theme for this year's campaign is "Picture the Possibilities." If you did not receive the bright new Stewardship brochure in your mailbox, please pick one up at the meetinghouse, or **pledge online at [mmuus.org](http://mmuus.org)**.

Imagine what a successful pledge campaign will mean for us next year:

- More learning and growth opportunities for our children and ourselves.
- Strengthening May Memorial's presence as the voice of liberal religion in central New York.
- Necessary maintenance that will allow our building to continue to serve us well.

May Memorial exists because friends and members become involved...find spiritual support, connections and meaning—and help meet our financial obligations. When everyone pitches in with the work, it goes quickly. When everyone pledges their fair share, May Memorial thrives.

~ the Stewardship Team:

Diane Hainsworth, Janet Hiemstra, Joyce Leonard, Barbara Mihalas,  
Bob Schulz, Scott Severance, Joan Weiser, Jason Winkler



## Fine Craft Fair 2008 a Success!

**D**espite the struggling economy and all our worries, this year we had the best Fine Craft Fair fundraiser ever!

The final bottom line for net income was: \$5,761.54. Gross sales including sales tax came to: \$23,623.63. The \$3 entry fee netted \$1060, which means at least 350 people came in addition to many MMUUSers and a few Folkus concert-goers. The raffle brought in another \$531 and the booth fees came to \$875. Total expenses for postcards and postage, advertising, credit card charges and supplies came to \$1306.22.

Support from the MMUUS community was tremendous, and the committee thanks all the many folks from MMUUS who volunteered to spend hours at May helping, to bring the delicious food that kept the crafters and volunteer workers all going, to help make all the publicity happen. It was a good time!

~Barbara Mihalas

## MMUS Financial Update

**O**ur fiscal year is from July 1<sup>st</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup>. This means, with the end of November financial reports we are nearing the half way point. While we are currently on track with our budgeted expenses, we must remember we are approaching the cold months and the utility bills are likely to rise. The finance committee would like to thank all of you who continue to meet your pledges even as the economy is experiencing financial difficulty.

~Joan Weiser-Treasurer

## MMUSletter Mid-Month Update

Beginning this month, *MMUUSletter* will have a mid-month update. The update will contain announcements of upcoming events – including changes or additions submitted after the monthly newsletter was compiled. It will also include descriptions of the month's remaining Sunday worship topics and speakers. The mid-month update will *not* include the longer monthly columns. *View from the Study Window, Notes from R.E., President's Letter, Marvelous History Corner, GoingGreen, and the Quest for Social Justice* will continue to appear monthly, in the full, regular newsletter.

The **deadline for the regular monthly newsletter** will continue to be the **15<sup>th</sup> of the month** preceding.

The **deadline for the mid-month update** will be the **5<sup>th</sup> of the month**.

You can help the MMUUS Office and your committee by honoring these deadlines and re-submitting items which need to go in a subsequent edition. Thank you.

~Karen Love and Rev. Jean



May Memorial is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association and the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee.

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**MMUUSletter** is a publication of events and information at May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society. To be included on our mailing list, please contact our office at 315.446.8920 or [office@mmuus.org](mailto:office@mmuus.org), or visit our website at [www.mmuus.org](http://www.mmuus.org).

**The next two deadlines for the newsletter 5 pm, and.** To submit an article, please leave it in the newsletter box on the office door or email to [newsletter@mmuus.org](mailto:newsletter@mmuus.org).

**Note:** Articles may be edited for length and/or content.

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**TIME VALUE**

**Calendar**

**Sunday, February 15**

10:30 am	Service	Sanctuary
10:30 am	Teenz	Teen Room
12:00 pm	Green Sanctuary Committee	Sanctuary

**Monday, February 16**

7:00 pm	Buildings & Grounds Committee	Memorial
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**Tuesday, February 17**

10:00 am	What in the World discussion	Memorial
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**Wednesday, February 18**

6:30 pm	Men's Fellowship	Social Hall
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**Thursday, February 19**

3:00 pm	Tai Chi	Creekside
7:30 pm	Choir	Sanctuary

**Friday, February 20**

8:00 pm	Folkus Concert	Sanctuary
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**Saturday, February 21**

7:00 pm	Twisted Sisters	Social Hall
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**Sunday, February 22**

10:30 am	Service	Sanctuary
10:30 am	Teenz	Teen Room

**Tuesday, February 24**

6:00 pm	Writer's Group	Teen Room
7:00 pm	Board of Trustees	Sanctuary

**Thursday, February 26**

3:00 pm	Tai Chi	Creekside
7:30 pm	Choir	Sanctuary

**Saturday, February 28**

6:30 pm	Family Movie Night	Gym
Evening	Teenz	Teen Room