

THE COMMUNICATOR

December 2021



From the Pastor's Keyboard

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him. - John 2:1-11

The Miracle of the Wedding Party at Cana is considered by some (including the author of the Gospel attributed to John) to be the first of Jesus' miracles. This, along with the Sermon on the Mount (blending sources), sets the tone for Jesus' ministry. It is easy to look at this as simply a miracle story, noting that Jesus provided abundance where there was scarcity. This was, after all, the theme of Jesus' ministry; providing abundance in the midst of scarcity.

But I think we often overlook one of the details in this story. Jesus, the heavenly sommelier, did not just turn one water jug into wine; he turned SIX water jugs into wine. Each jug held 30 gallons of water. Certainly 30 gallons of wine would be enough. But Jesus turned all six jugs into wine. Do the math — that is 180 gallons of wine, for a party where everyone was already half drunk. The extravagance of this act is remarkable.

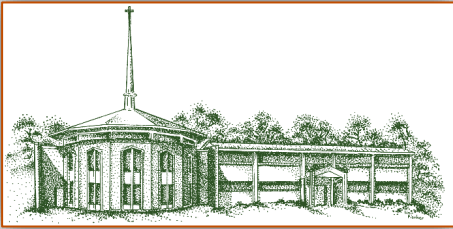
I feel that this first miracle is exemplary of Jesus' message for us all. In today's world, especially with all the modern "conveniences" (that make our lives less convenient), we have grown accustomed to taking the easy way out. What is the least we can do to get away with the task before us? How can we do as little as possible and still get by?

This is not the way of Jesus, and as Christians, this should not be the way of us. Jesus' message was one of going the extra mile, making the extra effort, expressing faith and love not just enough to get by, but in abundance. As we try to live Jesus' message in the world, we must not just get by; we must live and love in abundance. Perhaps this is why our church is growing so extraordinarily. We received 15 new members this year in a time when other churches are dwindling. We are not afraid to love extravagantly. This is, in fact, the root of our Open and Affirming expressions; loving boldly and extravagantly in spite of the scarcity identity found so prevalently in our culture.

This Holiday Season, extravagance can take the form of material possessions like more toys or more clothes or more electronic devices hoarded. I don't think this is the kind of abundance Jesus was exemplifying in his extravagant generosity. His abundance is abundance of the Spirit; an extravagantly generous portion of grace, compassion, and hospitality. As we celebrate the holidays, let us do so with generous spirits, exemplifying Jesus' message of Spiritual abundance in the scarcity of the world.

Happy Holidays!
Pastor Rick





Holiday Events

**COLUMBIA
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**
3201 I-70 DRIVE NW
COLUMBIA, MO 65202

[Rev. Rick Oberle](#)

Pastor

[Rev. Fred Brandenburg](#)

Pastor Emeritus

[April Rothweiler](#)

Office Administrator

[Brandon Brown](#)

Music Coordinator

[Amy Crousore](#)

Organist/Accompanist

[Erika Maltsbarger](#)

Director, Little One's Day Out

[Rai Tolani](#)

Financial Secretary

[Jeremy Sturm](#)

Custodian

Sunday Worship Schedule

9:00 Sunday School for all
ages
10:00 Fellowship Time
10:30 Worship

Office Hours:
Monday through Friday
9am- 3pm

Phone:
(573)-445-7931

Email:
office@columbiaucc.com

Website:
www.columbiaucc.com

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

Christmas Eve Worship this year will be the same times as previous years: 4:00 p.m. (children-themed service with cookie communion), 7:00 p.m. (special music ensemble), and 11:00 p.m. (Celebration Singers and Chapel Ringers). The 7:00 and 11:00 service will feature "Silent Night" sung by candlelight. Invite your friends!

ADVENT CANTATA AND ADVENT BANQUET

The Choir Advent Cantata and the Annual CUCC Advent Banquet will be on December 12 this year. Come hear and worship as the choir prepares us for the Christmas season to come, and then share in Christian Fellowship with your CUCC family at the Annual Advent Banquet!

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

The Sunday School Children will prepare us for the upcoming Christmas season by sharing the gift of wisdom that is Jesus' nativity on Sunday, December 19, during the worship service. We will also observe the CUCC tradition of cookie sharing at this time. Plan on attending and sharing in the fun with our Sunday School Students!

SUNDAY MORNING SNOW POLICY

In case of inclement weather on Sunday mornings this winter, please keep an eye on the cancellations listed on KOMU and KMIZ Television stations, as well as the CUCC website and Facebook page.

If cancelling worship is in question, the Pastor, Moderator, and Vice Moderator will make that call by 7:00 a.m. on a Sunday morning. They will then notify the media, send out a mass email to the congregation, and put notice on the church's Facebook page and website immediately. This information will be posted by 7:15.

If worship is cancelled at our facility, an abbreviated worship will be livestreamed on You Tube and Facebook; at least the scriptures, sermon, and prayers. The extent of what is livestreamed will depend on who can make it to church that morning. Please join with the congregation worshipping virtually as we livestream and join together in virtual community.

If worship is not cancelled, but you feel unsafe venturing out, please stay home. We will still be livestreaming every Sunday, so you can always enjoy worship from home. You can also view the worship at a time other than 10:30! Past worship services are all on our website.

**INCLEMENT
WEATHER
INFORMATION**



WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP UPDATE

Women's Fellowship will meet on Thursday, December 9 at 9:30 a.m. in the Gathering Area at CUCC. We will continue the Bible Study, "What My Grandmothers Taught Me," learning from the women in Matthew's genealogy of Jesus. It is very interesting, and includes Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba, Mary, and more!

A light brunch is provided on a rotation basis. The Women's Fellowship Gathering is open to all women. Join us and invite a friend! If you have any questions, please contact [Linda Evans](#), [Melba Shaffer](#), or [April Rothweiler](#) for more information. Hope to see you in December!

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST

Men's Fellowship will meet **in person** at Hy-Vee on West Broadway on Sunday, December 19, at 7:30 a.m. After breakfast, the men will assemble gift bags (at CUCC) to hand out to the children after the Christmas Program. All men of the church are welcome to attend! Join us at Hy-Vee or meet us back at church.

Back after a COVID year is the **Annual Chili Cookoff!** *Mark your calendars for Sunday, January 9, after Worship.* We are looking for about 20 chili chefs to compete in the contest. There will be signups in the Gathering Area in December. All are welcome to enter a chili into the contest. You are also invited to come and enjoy the food and fellowship. If you would like to be a judge, please let Brent Marcks, Doug Privitt, or Cliff Beckman know. Dust off those recipes — maybe you could hoist the Golden Ladle trophy in 2022!!!!

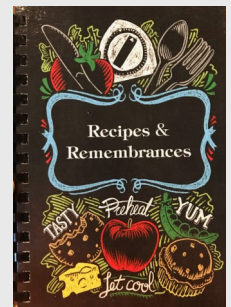
WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP HOLIDAY BAZAAR

Women's Fellowship will hold their annual Holiday Bazaar on Sunday, December 5. Bean Soup, Jam, Jewelry, Cookbooks, and more will be available for purchase in the Gathering area prior to Worship Service.

Recipes & Remembrances Cookbook

Christmas is just around the corner, and what better gift to give to your loved ones than the CUCC Recipes and Remembrances Cookbook!

You can get yours for \$15 while at Sunday service (just outside of the sanctuary) or through the week by contacting the [Church Office](#) or [Melba Shaffer](#). Proceeds go back into the local community through investment in various organizations. Thank you for helping support your neighbors!



LUNCH BUNCH—THURSDAY, DECEMBER 16

Join us for Lunch Bunch on Thursday, December 16. The Little One's Day Out (LODO) kids will perform their Christmas Program for us!



Most people at CUCC do not get a chance to see the incredible ministry that is our LODO program. This is your chance to see this program in action! The kids will be offering their Christmas praises at noon, then we will eat together afterward. This will be a Lunch Bunch you don't want to miss.

Lunch Bunch is open to everyone of all ages. Bring a dish to share for the community meal or, if you prefer, bring a sack lunch. We gather at noon in the Fellowship Hall. It is always a great time for fun, fellowship, and education!

We want to thank everyone who provided meals, transportation, and support for our daughter, Amy, and her children after the loss of her husband & their father. The love & support was very much appreciated.

We would appreciate continued prayers for them as they have relocated to Illinois.

Thank you, **Fred & Carolyn Malicoat**

THANK
YOU!

Many, many thanks and appreciation to my loving, caring, congregation for the cards, phone calls, hugs, kind words, and support when I lost my beloved daughter, Mary. It lifted my spirits at a time of grieving.

Donna Marsh

CHURCH COUNCIL

CHURCH COUNCIL NOTES

The Church Council met on Tuesday, November 16, 2021. Those present were: Pastor Rick Oberle, Kristy Odneal, Jessica Jenks, Brent Mareks, Linda Neale, Tricia Price, Kurt Heine, Mark Duncan, Lorry Dreier, Mike Pierson, and Stefanie Zimny.

- Kurt led a discussion on Chapter 9, “Mayday Moments,” in Cameron Trimble’s book Piloting Church. It is important to try to use foresight and be ready for things we can’t control. This includes dealing with change (cultural change, like open and affirming), running out of financial fuel, and losing control (conflict management). It is essential to address problems head on and find a solution, not to just treat the symptoms.
- Council members signed up for stewardship duties in December, including the Christmas Eve services.
- The Chancel lights have been delivered. The goal is to test and install by December 12.
- Additional Security for south basement door will be delayed due to delivery of the wrong parts.
- Sealing of the parking lot will be completed next summer when LODO is not in session.
- The second HVAC unit will be installed by year end. The final bid came in as \$7,300.
- COVID numbers are down again. 5-day average is 20 (was 30 last month). No change in church procedures.
- A Sabbatical Committee of five members is needed to coordinate preparation for Pastor Rick’s sabbatical: one representative from each team of Worship, Education, and Membership, as well as one representative from the Clergy Personnel Committee, and one from the Council Personnel Committee. A full list of tasks will be developed. The Committee will make a recommendation to the Council for a Sabbatical pastor.
- Council accepted a bid for snow removal from Commercial Outdoor Specialists, LLC.
- Pastor Rick encouraged everyone to write a review of the church on Google. The more reviews there are, the more times the church will pop up on Google search. This helps get our name out in the community. It is also helpful to “share” on Facebook and not just “like.”
- Council approved Keith Birkes as Chair of the Finance & Stewardship Team until May, 2022, to complete the term of George Zimny.
- Virtual voting at Congregational meetings was discussed. Voting by electronic means is not unconstitutional since the church constitution does not prohibit it. A policy will be developed to give direction on how voting can be done through electronic means. Discussion on this topic will be continued at future Council meetings.
- The next Annual Meeting is scheduled for May 15, 2022.
- Men’s Fellowship will host the Chili Cookoff on January 9, 2022, and the Habitat Breakfast on February 12, 2022.
- Fifteen new members have joined the church in 2021. The importance of an “extravagant welcome” to guests cannot be over emphasized.
- The “old” confirmation class will present their testimonies of faith on Sunday, November 21. The “new” confirmation class has begun and meets on Wednesday evenings.
- The custodian has resigned, effective at the end of November.
- Financially, October was a good month since expenses were down and Joyful Giving was up. The Joyful Giving deficit is now \$29,000.
- Submitted Team reports were viewed.
- Membership and Care will need donations of desserts for the Advent Banquet.
- LODO is still selling t-shirts. Approximately half of the 75 have been sold. The deadline is November 21.
- Nurture and Education will be selling Cookies by the Pound on December 12. Donations of cookies are needed. Proceeds go towards Camp Scholarships. The children’s program is December 19, during church.
- The Outreach and Advocacy Team is applying to support an Afghan refugee family through Catholic Charities. It is very labor intensive, therefore, CUCC will be working through City of Refuge and other local organizations to be supportive through an organized effort.
- Donations to the CROP Walk totaled \$4,291.75, exceeding the goal of \$3,000. CUCC was the top fundraising group for the second year in a row.
- The next Council meeting is December 21 at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Jenks, Secretary



MODERATOR'S MOMENT

Thank you to our ministry teams who have been collaborating to accomplish so many amazing things over the last month! We are grateful for everyone sharing their time and talents. Many of these efforts will come to fruition over the coming Advent season. We look forward to the Advent Cantata, Advent Banquet, and Children's Program leading up to our greatly anticipated Christmas Eve Worship Services. We are also excited about the ways we are reaching out to help those in need in our community and beyond. This includes our work with the Voluntary Action Center and support of Afghan refugees, just to give a couple of examples. It is truly amazing what we accomplish together for others, both financially and by offering our time.

Looking further ahead, and with the approval of our budget for 2022, we are also making plans for the year to come. The Church Council is developing plans to form a Sabbatical committee to coordinate and facilitate this great experience for our congregation. Finally, we have welcomed more new members in recent weeks! Our church family is blessed to be experiencing growth in so many ways. Please join me in extending a warm welcome to our newest members.

With gratitude,
Kristy Odneal, Moderator



COLUMBIA UCC CHURCH COUNCIL

Moderator:	Kristy Odneal	kristyodneal@gmail.com
Vice Moderator:	Kurt Heine	heinekurt@gmail.com
Secretary:	Jessica Jenks	Jessica.jenks@yahoo.com
Treasurer:	Sue Ann Schaefer	ssas3307@aol.com
Recording Treasurer:	Brent Marcks	rentmarcks@hotmail.com
Building & Grounds:	John Bullerd	jbullerd51@gmail.com
Fellowship & Hospitality:	Stefanie Zimny	stefanie.zimny@gmail.com
Finance & Stewardship:	Keith Birkes	kbirkes4@gmail.com
Inclusion & Affirmation:	Tricia Price	tricialprice@gmail.com
Little One's Day Out:	Lorry Dreier	llhd01@gmail.com
Membership & Care:	Jessica Lucas	jucas@cpsk12.org
Nurture & Education:	Linda Neale	lnealej@aol.com
Outreach & Advocacy:	Mark Duncan	markduncan2@mchsi.com
Worship & Music:	Mike Pierson	mpierson@cpsk12.org



MEMBERSHIP AND CARE MINISTRY TEAM

EAT WITH EIGHT IS BACK!

Eat with Eight is a great CUCC tradition that mixes up members of the congregation to spend fellowship time together for a few monthly meals. This great tradition took a COVID hiatus, but is back for 2022 and we plan to make it bigger and better than ever!

Here is all you need to do: [SIGN UP](#). When you sign up to participate, your name will be entered into an algorithm that will match you up with three different couples each month in the first quarter of 2022. You will eat dinner with one group in January, a new group in February, a new group in March and a new group in April. Group members take turns hosting and supplying sides; some groups meet at restaurants. Further instructions will be supplied after Christmas, when names are entered into the algorithm and distributed.

The deadline to sign up is December 26. You can sign up by clicking the blue link above, or you can email [Anne Heine](#) or sign up at the greeters desk on Sunday mornings. This will be a great time of fellowship for our CUCC family!

Jessica Lucas, Chair



December Birthdays to Celebrate!

Kelly Smith (12/02)	Josie Arms (12/03)	Diane Oerly (12/03)
Helen Schultz (12/04)	Elaine Trout (12/04)	Brad Marcks (12/07)
Deb Bernhardt (12/09)	Molly Baker (12/09)	Ben Crenshaw (12/10)
Grace Devenney (12/10)	Alethea Tennill (12/10)	Josh Muench (12/11)
Kristin Veteto (12/11)	Scott Webster (12/12)	Scott Rapp (12/14)
Lynn Tsapelas (12/14)	Emma Bredehoeft (12/15)	Ira Williams (12/15)
Axel Devenney (12/15)	Kelly Lavelly (12/16)	Lindsey Oberle (12/16)
Paula Wilson (12/16)	Jean Strothmann (12/17)	Melvin Wilson (12/19)
Kelli Bredehoeft (12/20)	Geri Critz (12/22)	Brandon Schoeneberg (12/22)
Darren Lasley (12/26)	Tiffany Brookshire (12/26)	Joan Bentlage (12/28)
Tom Solt (12/30)	Sam Tummons (12/30)	Jean Walker (12/30)

FELLOWSHIP AND HOSPITALITY MINISTRY TEAM

SUNDAY VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER

Below is the Sunday Volunteer Schedule for December. As many of our members travel during the holiday season, we are in need of several spots to be filled. We would love to see some new faces sharing their time and talents in this capacity, and now is the perfect time to jump in! Part of being in the church family is often expressed by sharing the roles that make all of our members and guests feel an extravagant welcome.

If you can fill a needed role now, or the future, please let one of the leaders know.

We appreciate you sharing your gifts of time and talent with our CUCC family!

Date	Greeters	Ushers	Worship Leaders	Acolyte	Tech Booth	Hospitality
12/05	Tiffany Brookshire	NEED	Audrey Lasley	Trenton Minor	Carissa Graves John Graves	Jo Ellen Grace
12/12	Anne Heine	NEED	Sue Ann Schaefer	Abby Dennis	Phillip Dennis Lorry Dreier	Lorry Dreier
12/19	Kristy Odneal	NEED	Kaden Lucas	Aiden Pierson	Mike Pierson Josh Muench	Stefanie Zimny
12/24 4:00	NEED	NEED	Seth Smith	NEED	John Graves	Council
12/24 7:00	NEED	NEED	NEED	NEED	Mike Pierson	Council
12/24 11:00	Tiffany Brookshire	NEED	Judi Privitt	NEED	Brent Marcks	Council
12/26	Susan Dunham	NEED	Seth Smith	NEED	Brent Marcks Matt Lucas	Brent Marcks

LODO MINISTRY TEAM

LODO NEWS

Little One's Day Out had plenty to be thankful for in November! Our teachers were grateful to meet with parents during Parent/Teacher Conference week to discuss student development and progress at preschool. Our classes celebrated America and our Veterans for a Patriotic Themed Week! They learned lots about presidents, stars and stripes, and had fun making a variety of American Flag crafts. November ended by learning all about Thanksgiving, as well as fall and leaves. We are VERY thankful for the abundance of leaf piles to play in outside!

Many thanks to our LODO families for supporting two of the VAC families being sponsored by CUCC this holiday. The generosity of our LODO families is amazing! We hope to make Christmas **Merry and Bright** for these two families.

Thank you to everyone that purchased a LODO T-shirt for our Fundraiser! Information will be sent out as soon as they arrive and are available for distribution.

We will begin December by learning about all things Dinosaur! The remainder of December will focus on Christmas and the Nativity. We are excited to have our Christmas Program return to the Sanctuary on Thursday, December 16, at 6:30 p.m. Our Lightning Bugs will help our audience sing "Jingle Bells," and our Lambs sing "Baby Jesus, We Love You" and "Up on the Housetop." Our Lions, Leopards, and Leap Frogs will join together to teach us all about Jesus' birth and love for us by performing "Jesus: Light of the World," by Bette Dale Moore. We can't wait for this night to celebrate Jesus and the joy of the season. We will end our evening with a cookie reception in the Fellowship Hall.



Wishing you a Merry Christmas!
Erika Maltsbarger



Important Dates:

Week of Dec. 10	LODO Christmas Program Rehearsal in Sanctuary 9:20 a.m.— 10:00 a.m.
Thu., Dec. 16	LODO Performing "Jesus: Light of the World" at CUCC Lunch Bunch
Thu., Dec. 16	LODO Christmas Program 6:30 p.m.
Fri., Dec. 17	Pajama Day
Dec. 22 – Jan. 3	LODO CLOSED (<i>School resumes Tue., Jan. 4</i>)

Did you know that **reading to children** helps develop their brain by improving memory, focus, concentration, social skills, vocabulary, writing, and communication skills, as well as enhancing imagination, and decreasing stress and depression? LODO loves to have church members and family come to share in story time. If you would like to read to a LODO class, contact [Erika](#) to set up a day and time.

INCLUSION AND AFFIRMATION MINISTRY TEAM

Blessings this December from the Inclusion & Affirmation Ministry Team!

Tricia Price has been our volunteer chairperson this year. We now have a new volunteer secretary, Tricia Soncasie. Thanks so much to both of you for taking on these important positions!

We continue to look at the need for a local PFLAG chapter to support families of LGBTQ+ individuals. This takes a bit of coordination and research. With COVID continuing to decline, we hope to have more movement on this item in 2022.

We have new photos of Chiapas that will be in the gathering area soon. We are also beginning to plan for Black History Month in February.

Every Christmas season holds both joys and sadness in any congregational family. There is never a year that goes totally as one plans or expects. Let's continue to pray for one another, and especially lift up those who are hurting during this time. Send a note or a text, arrange a visit, make a phone call, or surprise them with a meal. Let's be "doers" in the sweet name of Baby Jesus.

"What is Christmas? It is tenderness for the past, courage for the present, hope for the future. It is a fervent wish that every cup may overflow with blessings rich and eternal and that every path may lead to peace." Agnes M. Pharo

In Joy,
Alisa Lau-Sieckman, Member, on behalf of Tricia Price, chair



CUCC OPEN AND AFFIRMING/INCLUSION COVENANT

Columbia United Church of Christ celebrates God's boundless and unconditional love by intentionally welcoming and affirming all God's children.

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey;
No matter where you are on your faith journey;
No matter your sexual orientation, gender expression or identity;
No matter your race, culture, ethnicity, nationality or politics;
No matter your age, ability, health, relationship status or family structure;
No matter your social, economic, educational, legal or life circumstances;
You are welcome here!



Called by Jesus to be an Open and Affirming, inclusive faith community, Columbia United Church of Christ commits to welcoming everyone into the full life of our congregation. Our paths and voices may differ, but we journey in faith together.

INCLUSION IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF OUR 5-YEAR PLAN

Over the past few months, the Vision Team has been putting together a new 5-Year Plan for CUCC (2021-2026). This plan was approved by the Church Council on October 19, and presented to the congregation at our Annual Planning and Assessment Meeting on October 24. Aspects of this plan include how our nine Ministry Teams will intersect around our five Mission objectives: Welcoming all God's People, Nurturing Faith and Spiritual Growth, Challenging and Inspiring with Vibrant Worship, Transforming the Congregation and the Community through Service and Outreach, and Building a Supportive Church Family.

Aspects of Inclusion intersect with all of these themes, and are very present in our 5-year plan. Some of them include: work on making inclusion an integral part of our church identity, continue providing educational opportunities for the congregation about inclusion issues, host a PFLAG chapter, take our message of inclusive church out to the community and more. As we live into our 5-Year plan, inclusion is very much a part of it!

Welcome TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

Rev. Ira and Carol Williams met at and graduated from Baker University in Baldwin City, Kansas. They have been married for 53 years. They continue to be blessed with two grown children. Their son David, his wife Ariana, and a newborn grandson Sawyer, live in Karratha, Western Australia. They teach performing arts in an Aboriginal School. Their daughter, Ann, her husband Michael, and teenage grandson Mical, live and work in Tampa, Florida.



Carol and Ira retired from teaching and preaching in 2011. Both served on the Board of Directors in Iowa. Carol also served on the Tiger Tots Preschool/Day Care Board of Directors in Madrid, Iowa. Ira served parishes in Iowa and Florida, and as Associate Conference Minister in Rhode Island. He served as Camp Director/Youth Minister in Kansas and Oregon. At their parish in Windermere, Florida, Carol was Director of the church's pre-school.



Rev. Constance Tanis taught high school in KS, MO, and PA. Constance then went to seminary and became an ordained UCC minister in 1990. She had two marriages and has two daughters. The oldest lives in North Dakota and has two grandchildren, one due to graduate college this December, and one still in high school. The youngest daughter lives in Lawrence, KS, where all of them went to college. Constance was in theatre and film during most of her early life, as both an actress and director, all over the country. Before retirement, she served churches in Missouri, Kansas, and Montana. She's now retired, but preaches once a month at The Terrace where she lives.

Constance's new member sponsor is Melba Shaffer.

Ted and Mona Dachroeden have been married for 40 years. They have three grown sons: Aaron, Artie, and Adam; and five granddaughters, three of whom live in Columbia. Ted is a retired engineer, and Mona is a nurse. They both grew up in the St. Louis area where they were members of St. Peters UCC. Rev. Josh Privitt was their pastor! They came to CUCC because they wanted to be connected with a mission-minded congregation. They enjoy visiting their granddaughters and adventuring in the outdoors. Ted makes wine and enjoys fishing.



Their new member sponsors are Doug and Judi Privitt.



Sarah Smith grew up in Hermann, Missouri. In addition to her parents, she has older and younger brothers. She loves to spend time with family and friends. Sarah teaches 7th grade special education. She enjoys crocheting, reading, music, and Mexican food. Sarah was drawn to CUCC by the sense of community and music program.

Sarah's new member sponsors are Kurt and Emmalee Heine.

Please join us in welcoming our newest CUCC members. Be sure to introduce yourself before or after Worship Service and help make them feel "at home"!



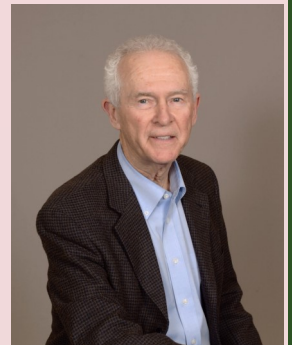
FINANCE AND STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY TEAM

The Finance and Stewardship Ministry Team is composed of an experienced group of veteran CUCC members who need little leadership, but the Church Council has asked if I will, in midterm, assume the chair's responsibilities. George Zimny, who was in his second term, ran into some challenging demands on his time as he is restructuring his business and needed a little relief. As you know, he has done great job, and he will continue as a much needed member of the team.

Much of the finance part of our job is done with next year's budget completed and approved. The stewardship part continues in an ongoing basis. We are running a bit behind in our joyful giving for 2021, but our congregation has always come through, and I know we will this year, also. Right now, we are around \$30,000 behind our goal, but we always make the most significant contributions at the end of the year, so I (along with the other members of the team) are expectant! With Giving Tuesday landing just after Thanksgiving, combined with year-end contributions, we should be back "in the black" by December 31. We will continue to give you a few friendly reminders in our communications, and if you have any questions, never hesitate to let any of us on the Finance & Stewardship Ministry Team know.

As we all celebrate our blessings during the holiday season, we can be very proud and thankful of what our church community is accomplishing! Thank you for your generosity in time, talent, and treasure!

Keith Birkes, Chair



UPCOMING CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

ANNUAL MEETING: May 15 @ 11:30 a.m. – Combined with a fellowship meal, this meeting will be the chance to review our activities for 2021, elect leadership for 2022-2023, and celebrate plans for ministry together. Put it on your calendar now so you are sure to be there!

ANNUAL REPORTS DUE 12/31: 2021 Annual Reports are due in the church office by 12/31. This is for all Ministry Teams, staff members, and other church leadership. If you have any questions about your Annual Report, talk to April Rothweiler or Kristy Odneal. We plan to distribute the reports by the end of January.

HVAC REPLACEMENT PROJECTS TO COME FROM INVESTMENT FUND

We have a new HVAC unit! In October, one of the two big units in the Fellowship Hall was replaced; the second one is still in need of replacement. At our October Council meeting, we approved replacing another HVAC unit (not sure which one yet) before the end of the year, at an expense not to exceed \$8,000.

We have 17 HVAC units that are 22 years old, greatly pushing the life expectancy of such items. Some of them are getting by just fine; others are held together with duct tape. We are planning to replace two units each year, but realize that there will come a year we have to do more. The total projected expense to replace all units is \$170,000+.

Where is the money coming from for these projects? Out of our Building & Grounds Designated Fund, one of our investments with United Church Funds. We currently have \$120,000+ in this investment account, but with \$170,000 in HVAC units needing replacement in the years to come, this fund could be depleted quite quickly. When an HVAC unit goes out, the need for replacement is urgent. We hope to increase the balance of this fund in the next year, so we can have funds ready for emergency situations. Currently, three percent of our Joyful Giving is put in this fund every month to help increase its value.

If you would like to contribute to the Building and Grounds Designated Fund to make ministry happen at CUCC, talk to [Sue Ann Schaefer](#), [Brent Mareks](#), or [Kristy Odneal](#)! Many projects are coming up, including resealing our Parking Lot next year (\$15,000), and we need you to help make them happen!

TREASURER'S REPORT

Financial Update			
	Actual	Budget	Over/(Under)
Oct. Income	\$33,216.03	\$28,447.52	\$4,768.51
YTD Income	\$273,551.51	\$273,678.14	(\$126.63)
Oct. Expenses	\$27,675.66	\$29,465.93	(\$1790.27)
YTD Expenses	\$285,955.65	\$292,355.85	(\$6,400.20)
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$5,541.30	(\$1,018.41)	\$6,558.78
Oct. Attendance	482		

Date	Attendance	Received	Budget
11/07/21	86	\$4,983.61	\$6,038.24
11/14/21	90	\$11,420.00	\$6,038.24
11/21/21	98	\$5,590.00	\$6,038.24
11/28/21	-	-	\$6,038.24
Total	274	\$21,993.61	\$24,152.96

As of 10/31/2021 we are **\$29,074.68 behind** in Joyful Giving for 2021.

CUCC HAS ONLINE GIVING!

You can now give online to Columbia United Church of Christ through our online giving partner, Kindrid!

There are several ways to make a one time or recurring gift through Kindrid:

1. Click on this link (or type into your web browser): <https://www.kindridgiving.com/app/giving/cucc>
2. Access the Kindrid giving site through our CUCC website: www.columbiaucc.com and click on the "Donate to CUCC" button.
3. Text "GIVE" to 573-240-4041 and follow the prompts to set up your one time or recurring gift.

Christian Stewardship:

The Belief that everything we have is a gift from God; and we are just stewards of it.

Rev. David Lewis Beebe

There are Ten Designated Funds at Columbia United Church of Christ. Several of these funds are invested with United Church Funds, and have shown tremendous growth in 2021. All of these funds are open to contributions and are great places for stock donations or to be the recipients of estate planning. To donate, talk to [Sue Ann Schaffer](#) or [Brent Marcks](#).

Building and Grounds Fund: The source for building improvements and repair.

Scholarship Fund: Provides \$1,000 college scholarships to CUCC members.

Transportation Fund: Enables our transportation ministry.

Chiapas Mission/Mayan Ministries Fund: Works to enable our mission with our ministry partners in Chiapas.

Memorial Fund: Receives donations in memory of friends who have died, for ministry programs of CUCC.

Nurture & Education Ministry Fund: Pays 1/2 of camp fees for our youth to attend Camp MoVal.

Outreach & Advocacy Fund: A "fund of funds," this is the pass-thru fund for our monthly mission work.

Worship & Music Ministry Fund: Enables worship upgrades.

Young Adult/Campus Ministry Fund: Provides ministry opportunities for CUCC Young Adults.

Youth Ministry Fund: Used for mission trips and other opportunities to enhance our ministry with our youth.

WORSHIP AND MUSIC MINISTRY TEAM

A MUSICAL CHRISTMAS AT CUCC!

Brandon Brown began his ministry with us on October 1. He is a graduate student in choral conducting at Mizzou, and comes to us with 13 years of experience as Minister of Music at Church of the Good Shepherd in the Chicago area. We are thrilled to have Brandon with us!

The music ministry featuring the Celebration Singers and Chapel Ringers is looking forward to presenting the Sermon in Song in celebration of Advent on Sunday, December 12, during morning worship. There is still time to participate! Rehearsals are Wednesdays December 1 and 8, from 7 to 9 p.m. and Saturday December 11, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. All are welcome! We are also looking forward to special music on Christmas Eve. Please contact [Brandon Brown](#) if you would like to join us.

Brandon Brown, Music Coordinator



OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY MINISTRY TEAM

LOAVES & FISHES

The November 15 meal at L&F consisted of spaghetti, rice & veggie casserole, lettuce salad (provided by Patty Beeson), and dessert. Brownies were donated by Llona Weiss, Brenda Muench, Mahree Skala, and Jo Ellen Grace, and we also served the leftover cake from Vernie Blank's 100th birthday celebration. Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches were made and donated by Jessica Jenks. Servers were Patty Beeson, Jo Ellen Grace, and Judi Privitt.

Thank goodness for the two door people who helped out tremendously. We handed out approximately 135 meals! It was a busy, but great night! Thanks to all!

DECEMBER FOOD BANK NEWS

Ten volunteers worked in October, and along with others, packaged about 4,500 pounds of fresh produce (limes, jalapenos, and peaches). It was a pleasant duty with good company! The crew included Jane and Mark Duncan, Jo Ellen Grace, Jolene Kirchoff, Brenda and John Muench, Philip Neale, Melba Shaffer, Mahree Skala, and Tricia Soncasie.

Please [SIGN UP HERE](#) to volunteer for the December 28 shift at 5:30 p.m.

If you have any questions contact Mahree Skala at skalamahree@yahoo.com or 573-474-2195.

HELP FOR AFGHAN REFUGEES

As an end finally comes to 20 years of war in Afghanistan, an estimated 75,000 Afghan refugees are coming to the United States to rebuild their lives. They are fleeing retribution or persecution from the Taliban and have one goal in mind, to live in safety. It is within our power to help them achieve this goal.

[The United Church of Christ](#) and [Church World Service](#) are both very active in helping Afghan refugees who are migrating to the U.S. If you would like to contribute to their efforts, click on the blue links above! Both agencies have very low overhead, and the money donated goes directly to the cause.

The Outreach & Advocacy Ministry Team is looking at how we can be a help here in Columbia. We have been looking at the work done by [Catholic Charities](#) and [City of Refuge](#) to aid in the Afghan situation. Both are working to address the basic needs of these refugees, including food, clothing, shelter, and household items, as well as navigating the complex paperwork involved.

For more information about what we can do here in Columbia to welcome these refugees, talk to [Mark Duncan](#).

CITY OF REFUGE & GIVING TUESDAY

The [City of Refuge](#) is a local agency that serves the refugee and immigrant families in our community with a variety of unique services that fall under three categories: Basic Needs Programs, Counselling, and Professional Development.

We are currently welcoming many Afghan refugees to our area, and [City of Refuge](#) is one of the agencies providing support for their basic needs. Sixty Afghan refugees have made Columbia their home in the past month, and we anticipate 200 more joining us in by the end of the year.

For [Giving Tuesday](#), the CUCC Finance & Stewardship Ministry Team has set a goal of \$25,000. 10% of the funds raised will be given away (a Biblical Tithes). 5% will go to the [Voluntary Action Center](#) and 5% to [City of Refuge](#) to address the needs of Afghan refugees.

STOP HUMAN TRAFFICKING COALITION OF CENTRAL MISSOURI

Human Trafficking is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of people through force, fraud, or deception, with the aim of exploiting them for profit. The STOP Human Trafficking Coalition of Central MO (CMSHTC) has been working in the local and surrounding communities, combatting Human Trafficking, for over thirteen years. Visit our [Facebook page](#) to see upcoming meetings, events, and volunteer opportunities.

Want to join me in supporting a good cause? This Holiday Season I'm raising money for the STOP Human Trafficking Coalition of Central MO, and [your contribution](#) will make an impact, whether you donate \$5 or \$500. **Every little bit helps.** On Giving Tuesday (Nov. 30), Meta (Facebook) will match \$8 million in qualifying donations. I am also matching \$100 for every \$1,000 raised. That a lot of matching!! Can you help make it happen? Businesses can double their impact with the tax credits (worth 50% of your gift) that the SHTCCM has been awarded (in addition to standard state and federal deductions)! The higher the income tax bracket, the lower the final cost of the gift to you, our donor. Thank you for [giving generously](#)—you are providing HOPE to survivors in your community! April Rothweiler, Education Specialist (*ask me about our FREE trainings.*)

VAC CHRISTMAS DEADLINE IS NEAR!

CUCC has undertaken to make Christmas a happy time for 40 people, and December 5 is the last day for contributions of gifts and food money. Please check the tree in the gathering area to see if there are any names left. If you have “adopted” someone, bring their gifts to the church no later than December 5. Be sure to clearly label them with the person’s name and family number. Funds are also needed to provide \$20 of holiday food money to each person. You may make a check out to VAC and leave it in the box on the tree, or contribute via Kindrid. Thank you for your kindness and generosity, which reflect the true meaning of Christmas.

CROP WALK - WE DID IT - AND MORE!

The generosity of this congregation in supporting special missions is consistently incredible. Our CROP WALK efforts this year did not disappoint. CUCC is the Top Fundraising Group for 2021 for the second consecutive year with \$4,291.75 collected. Our goal was \$3,000. Amazing!

Loaves and Fishes, Destiny Worship Center Pantry, Russell Chapel Food Pantry, and Fifth Street Christian Church Pantry all thank you. Your financial support of the CROP Walk will help them to continue their much needed ministries.

All those around the country and around the world who are helped by Church World Service because they are experiencing hunger and poverty, displacement, or disaster thank you. Your financial support of the CROP Walk will allow these people to receive the supplies they need to relieve their suffering.

Hebrews 13:16 says, “And don’t forget to do good and to share with those in need. These are the sacrifices that please God.” And so our congregation did. Thank you.

Jessica Jenks, Outreach & Advocacy Ministry Team



CUCC—AHL PARTNERSHIP FRIEND

Thank you to the CUCC folks who are volunteering to assist in the Media Center at Alpha Hart Lewis Elementary School (AHL), and to those of you who have made various donations to the school this semester. It is so greatly appreciated! We currently have three CUCC volunteers in the Alpha Hart Lewis Elementary School Media Center *every week*. That is an amazing accomplishment!

During the week of November 8, the Parent-Teacher Conferences were held at AHL, and CUCC provided snacks to help the teachers and staff make it through those long extra hours. Presently, the Assistant Principal Kelly Isenogle is on maternity leave, and April Sarff is serving as the interim Assistant Principal.

When I was a recent Sub at AHL, a couple of the students talked to me about a peacock in the yard! I couldn’t figure out where this was coming from until I was walking back to one of the classrooms and sure enough, there was a peacock eating seeds placed on the sidewalk in the back of the school. Evidently some peacocks came to AHL and decided to stay, and now they receive something to eat, and the students love seeing them and their beautiful feathers!

Again, thank you for what you do for our students in the public schools!

Llona Weiss, Liaison for CUCC with AHL Partnership



DINE TO DONATE FOR ALPHA HART

Would you like to have a nice dinner out and help our Partnership Friend School in the process? Several local restaurants have teamed up with Alpha Hart Lewis Elementary to donate a portion of their proceeds on given days through the “Dine to Donate” program. Here is an upcoming opportunity:

December 7: Freddy’s – 100 Brickton Road location only (off Conley Road). They will donate 15% of total sales.

NURTURE AND EDUCATION MINISTRY TEAM

CONFIRMATION 2021– Kennedy, Abby, & Zabibu

On Sunday, November 21, this year's three Confirmation Students presented their testimonies of faith in worship at CUCC. Kennedy, Abby, & Zabibu all shared a "sermon" reflecting on their journey of faith over the past fourteen months. They began their faith journey in October, 2020, amid a global pandemic. Since then, they have had to meet via Zoom, meet in person but socially distanced and masked, and meet in the Fellowship Hall instead of the Confirmation Classroom. They have had to compromise many of the customary Confirmation activities, but they persevered, and their faith shone through in wonderful ways! On November 28, they were all confirmed and became full members of Columbia United Church of Christ.

Reflecting on their Confirmation Journey, Pastor Rick commented on what he tells every Confirmation Class at the beginning of the year, "You will get out of it what you put into it. If you put forth effort, participate, and do the work given to you, you will find yourself on a fulfilling faith journey. If you put no effort into Confirmation, you will get nothing out of it." These three students put forth great effort, and their faith grew as a result.



Their transformation was evident over the past six weeks, as they worked on their testimonies together. Their bond grew stronger and their faith became more polished. By November 21, they were ready to testify and make their promises to God. They also led the congregation in worship, writing the liturgy, and taking care of Children's Time.

Now their journey begins in earnest. As they live into their role as members of Christ's Church and active members of Columbia United Church of Christ, they also live into the responsibilities of that role.

We will be starting up the **CUCC Prayer Group** again on Mondays at 9:00 a.m. in the Adult Sunday School classroom upstairs. If you are interested in joining, please contact [Donna Marsh](#) at 573-881-4740.

PRAYER GROUP

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School Openings have been lots of fun! We have a candlelighter each Sunday, as well as an offering collector (offerings are going toward helping families in need during the Christmas season). We sing songs, play rhythm instruments, move to the music. We've been learning (from Pastor Rick) about prayer, why we light the candles, why we sing, why we worship God. We sing a special "Happy Birthday" song to anyone who has a birthday each week. And then we go to our classrooms for Sunday School. If you are in preschool through 8th grade and haven't already, we'd love to have you join us at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings!

BIBLE STUDY CLASS

December 5, 12 & 19 Pastor Rick will be leading the Bible Study Class in the Adult classroom upstairs. We will be comparing and contrasting the birth narratives of Jesus and their implication for today. All ages are welcome— come join us!

On Epiphany Sunday, January 2, the church will be collecting items to be donated to an organization in need.

Children's/Youth Christmas Program

The Children's Christmas play, "Do Not Be Afraid," will be presented during the Worship service on Sunday, December 19. We will be rehearsing during the Sunday School hour on Sundays prior to the presentation (and possibly a Saturday rehearsal, if needed). Jessica Lucas and Linda Neale will be coordinating this.

There are brand new Children's Activity Bags (actually little backpacks) hanging in the coat room, to be used during the Worship service. Please have your children use and enjoy them, and then return them so they can be used again and again





ADVENT BANQUET RETURNS TO CUCC 12/12

One of the great traditions of Columbia United Church of Christ is our Annual Advent Banquet. With COVID concerns last year, we were unable to have it, but this year it is returning and you are invited to attend! If you are coming, you must RSVP. You can do so using the QR code below or [CLICK HERE](#). You can also RSVP by sending an email to [Stefanie Zimny](#) or by talking to Jo Ellen Grace or Melba Shaffer in church on Sunday. **RSVPs are due by December 5.** Please inform us of any food allergies when you RSVP. There is a spot on the online form to note food allergies. The Fellowship & Hospitality Ministry Team will do everything they can to provide alternatives for food allergies.

Menu: Pork loin, green beans, scalloped potatoes, applesauce, rolls, & dessert. Alternatives will be available for those with food allergies.

This is always a great “family reunion” time for CUCC. We look forward to seeing you!



Cookies by the Pound

Sunday, December 12 – 9:00 a.m.



The Nurture and Education Ministry Team is hosting the Annual Cookies by the Pound Fundraiser on Sunday, December 12, with all profits going to the Nurture & Education Fund for Camp Scholarships. Here is how you can help:

- ◆ Bring donations of Cookies & Candies to church early on December 12 or the week before
- ◆ Purchase Cookies and Candies on December 12 - \$8/pound

Enjoy a great assortment of cookies and candies this Advent Season with the diverse variety of Cookies – By the Pound!





CUCC IS WORKING IN GUATEMALA

Guatemalan Cultural Action (ACG) was established 30 years ago by Mayan Guatemalans affected by civil war in their country. The work of ACG includes community projects in education, culture, economics, and ecology, as well as income generating projects. ACG has provided loans and training for livestock raising and community development projects.

Carried out by over 600 trained local women in 20 communities in Guatemala, this project has proven successful in rebuilding agriculture and income generation. The work has included crop diversification, reforestation, and beekeeping. Additionally, ACG organizes skills-building courses such as training in traditional Guatemalan weaving. Instructors work with individuals who learn how to improve their abilities to create woven pieces for local use and sale at market. Global Ministries partner ACG honor indigenous Mayan and Christian spirituality and culture to build a climate of peace, solidarity, and improved futures for all.

ACG is a Global Missions Partner of Columbia United Church of Christ through Global Ministries, our shared mission agency with the Christian Church/Disciples of Christ. Global Ministries provides foundational support for the Guatemalan Cultural Action, and support for their ongoing efforts.

In December, please keep these UCC/DOC Global Ministries missionaries in your prayers:

December 5-11
Victor Makari
Working in Israel/Palestine



December 12-18
Phyllis Byrd
Working in Kenya



December 19-25
Andrew Larsen
Working in Philippines



December 26-31
Emmanuella Loccident
Working in Morocco



CUCC IS PROVIDING HOUSING FOR SENIORS IN CHILE



The Pentecostal Church of Chile (IPC) is a denomination born in Chile that has been a partner of Global Ministries for many years. The Bethany House Project was established by the IPC in 1995 in response to the need for safe and adequate housing for many elderly who lived in poverty and solitude in and around the city of Curico, where the IPC has its headquarters and many congregations. The Chilean national social services program for senior adults did not adequately meet the needs of this segment of the population. IPC determined to build a facility that would provide improved and secure standards of living for seniors who needed a place to live out their remaining life with peace and dignity.

The Pentecostal Church of Chile had available to them property in Curicó, south of the capital city of Santiago, that would be a good place for the project. Bethany House was designed as a national project of the IPC, although the local IPC church of Curicó would administer the project. Bethany House offers housing for seniors, both men and women, regardless of church affiliation.

With substantial financial support of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ, the project was completed and provides housing for 15 seniors. The common denominator among the residents was a low self-esteem rooted in loneliness. The project has made a vast difference in the lives of the residents.

IPC is currently proposing an expansion project to build four more dormitories, two full baths, a multi-purpose dining room, a central hall, and a food storage pantry. Expansion will include the hiring of four additional caregivers. The estimated budget for the proposed expansion is \$87,400 for building construction and \$4,220 for furnishings and equipment. Through Global Ministries, the people of Columbia United Church of Christ are making a difference in the lives of these Chilean Seniors!

ON THE CHURCH CALENDAR IN DECEMBER

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>5 9:00am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Worship Livestreaming on our CUCC Website Women's Fellowship Holiday Bazaar 11:30- Outreach & Advocacy</p>	<p>6 10:15am Staff Meeting 6:30pm Finance & Stewardship Ministry Team</p>	<p>7 10am Quilters</p>	<p>8 6pm Confirmation 6-7pm Chapel Ringers 7-9pm Choir</p>	<p>9 9:30am Women's Fellowship</p>	<p>10 9-12:30 Church Women United in Gathering Area</p>	<p>11 9-12:30 Advent Cantata Rehearsal Fellowship Hall Booked 8-5</p>
<p>12 Cookies by the Pound 9:00am Sunday School 10:30am Worship 12:00pm Advent Banquet Worship Livestreaming on our CUCC Website</p>	<p>13 10:15am Staff Meeting 6:30pm Membership & Care Ministry Team</p>	<p>14 10am Quilters 6:30pm Worship & Music Ministry Team</p>	<p>15 10:00am Pastor Rick leads worship at The Bluffs 6pm Confirmation 6:30pm Chapel Ringers 7:30-9pm Choir</p>	<p>16 12pm Lunch Bunch 6:30-8pm LODDO Christmas Program in Sanctuary/Fellowship Hall</p>	<p>17 Open House at Pastor Rick's House 5-8pm</p>	<p>18</p>
<p>19 7:30am Men's Fellowship Children's Program 9:00am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Worship Livestreaming on our CUCC Website</p>	<p>20 10:15am Staff Meeting 4:30pm Leaves & Fishes</p>	<p>21 10am Quilters 6:30pm Church Council</p>	<p>22 6pm Confirmation 6:30pm Chapel Ringers 7:30-9pm Choir</p>	<p>23 CPSILODO Break CUCC Office CLOSED</p>	<p>24 CPSILODO Break CUCC Office CLOSED Christmas Eve Services 4pm, 7pm, 11pm</p>	<p>25 </p>
<p>26 9:00am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Worship Livestreaming on our CUCC Website</p>	<p>27 10:15am NO Staff Meeting CPSILODO Break</p>	<p>28 10am Quilters 5:30pm Food Bank</p>	<p>29 NO Confirmation NO Chapel Ringers</p>	<p>30 CPSILODO Break</p>	<p>31 ANNUAL REPORTS DUE CPSILODO Break</p>	<p>1 </p>

THE COMMUNICATOR

Columbia United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation- ONA #1575
3201 I-70 Dr. NW
Columbia, MO 65202-3296
573-445-7931

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Columbia, MO
Permit No. 74

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

The Communicator is a publication of Columbia United Church of Christ. The stated purpose is to communicate with the congregation and our friends concerning the organizations and events of the church. It is published once each month. The deadline for articles is the 20th of each month.



"I've been as good as I CAN be.
I have red hair, you know."



Interested in Church Membership?
If you are interested in joining, please contact [Rev. Rick Oberle](mailto:rick@columbiaucc.com).
rick@columbiaucc.com

Become Part of Our Church Family

**Columbia United Church of Christ
Open and Affirming/Inclusion Covenant**

Columbia United Church of Christ celebrates God's boundless and unconditional love by intentionally welcoming and affirming all God's children.

- No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey;
- No matter where you are on your faith journey;
- No matter your sexual orientation, gender expression or identity;
- No matter your race, culture, ethnicity, nationality or politics;
- No matter your age, ability, health, relationship status or family structure;
- No matter your social, economic, educational, legal or life circumstances;
- You are welcome here!

Called by Jesus to be an Open and Affirming, inclusive faith community, Columbia United Church of Christ commits to welcoming everyone into the full life of our congregation. Our paths and voices may differ, but we journey in faith together.

LODO PLAYGROUND RESPECT
Please help us keep our playground safe for all children by following these guidelines:

- ◆ The CUCC playground is designed for, and should be used by, *only children ages 8 and younger*.
- ◆ Adult supervision is required while children are on the playground.
- ◆ Mulch must stay on the ground. When children dig up mulch it creates holes that are tripping hazards. Children should only dig in the sandbox.
- ◆ Sand should stay in the sandbox. Please do not allow sand to be carried and dumped in the playhouse or on play structures.
- ◆ Use playground equipment in the manner it is intended.