

THE COMMUNICATOR

December 2019



From the Pastor's Keyboard

“The Toil of Love”

“The Toil of Love” is the name of an article written by Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer, the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ, on the occasion of the end of his first term as President and the beginning of his second term (*see page 8 for the full article*). In it he talks about his job, which he considers the greatest “gig” ever: travelling the world as an emissary of love, expressed thru the ministries of the United Church of Christ.

I have been reflecting on this phrase, and the entirety of this article, since reading it a month or so ago; and how we, as Christians, are also participants in the greatest “gig” ever. Our job, as Christians, is to be emissaries of love; sharing that love in words and in actions wherever we go. That is our job; “The Toil of Love;” and as a member congregation of the United Church of Christ, we are called to express that love thru our ministries.

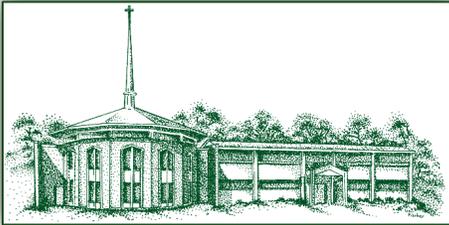
But as with any “Toiling” there are sacrifices to be made. In order to be emissaries of love, we must put aside the comfort and security of greed, narcissism, anger and fear. We must be brave enough to try something new, to allow ourselves to be vulnerable, to allow ourselves some insecurity. To truly love the way Dr. Dorhauer speaks of it in his article and the way Jesus speaks of it in his ministry requires sacrifice; but the “toil” is well worth the reward.

This is the purpose of the Advent Season. For us to truly be prepared to receive the gift of Jesus into our lives, we must prepare our hearts for the “Toil of Love.” Over the four Sundays of Advent we will look at themes of “Peace, Hope, Joy, and Love” and discuss how truly embracing the essence of these themes prepares our hearts so that when Jesus is born again, we can receive him whole heartedly. We will also discuss what fleeting comforts we must sacrifice to truly be open to these Advent gifts.

In the United Church of Christ and in Columbia United Church of Christ, we participate daily in the toil of love, sacrificing the comforts instant gratification brings us to play the long game; fully embodying the message and ministry of Jesus. In fact, the mission statement of the United Church of Christ encompasses what we call “The Three Great Loves: Love of Neighbor, Love of Children, Love of Creation.” The Mission Statement of Columbia United Church of Christ also encompasses God’s Love, expressed thru Welcoming, Nurturing, Challenging, Building and Transforming God’s World.

From our efforts to be “Open and Affirming” to our affirmation of “the Green New Deal,” our focus as the United Church of Christ is on God’s love in action, and the Three Great Loves. At Columbia United Church of Christ, as we move into the Advent Season and prepare for Christ’s birth once more, let the Toil of Love be your focus as well; preparing for the Love of Christ in our midst.

-Pastor Rick



**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

Kristin Veteto
Music Coordinator

Amy Crousore
Organist/Accompanist

Erika Maltsbarger
Director, Little One's Day Out

Lloyd Viehland
Building Monitor

Raj Tolani
Financial Secretary

Sunday Worship Schedule

9:00 a.m. - Coffee and Fellowship

9:00 a.m. - Sunday School

10:30 a.m. - Worship in Sanctuary

Office Hours:
Monday through Friday
9 a.m.- 3 p.m.

Phone:
(573)-445-7931

Email:
office@columbiaucc.com



HOLIDAY Calendar

Christmas Cantata and Christmas Banquet

The Choir Christmas Cantata and the Annual CUCC Christmas Banquet will be on December 8 this year. Come hear and worship as the choir prepares us for the Christmas season to come; and then share in Christmas Fellowship with your CUCC family at the Annual Christmas 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 15 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!

Pastor's Open House

The Oberles will be hosting an Advent Open House at their home on Friday, December 20, from 5:00-8:00 p.m. Come and go as you wish; there will be plenty of food for everyone! All are welcome to come, visit, and share in the joy of the season.



Christmas Caroling

This year CUCC will continue the tradition of Christmas Caroling at the local retirement communities where we have members residing. We will begin at Lenoir at 4:00 p.m. on December 15. All are welcome to join in the fun! Hope to see you there to sing the joys of the holiday season!



A Birthday Party!

On December 22 the children's Sunday School classes will join together to celebrate Jesus' birthday with various activities.

The fun will continue in Worship during Children's Time.

Happy Birthday Jesus!

Christmas Eve Worship

Christmas Eve Worship this year will be the same times as last year: 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!

Dear Friends in Christ:

Thank you for your generous donation to the United Church of Christ to support USA Emergencies.

Because of your kindness, we will help people rebuild their communities and bring comfort to their lives. Aid provided to individuals from the early days of recovery and relief through the long-term recovery phase makes a big difference. Communities faced with devastating challenges find strength and hope in knowing that you care. Your support helps bridge the gaps between the assistance offered by first-time responders and community revitalization.

Thank you again for spreading God's hope, peace, and love through your financial assistance as the UCC continues to build a just world for all.

Sincerely,
Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer
General Minister and President



Dear CUCC Congregation,

Thank you for your donation to the Western Association for use by the Association in promotion of Christ's work in the education programs and gatherings of our Association. We invite all members to take part in these gatherings so they might fill a void in their Church life.

Again, thank you for your generous gift that is a reminder of God's all-inclusive love.

Blessings,
Dennis Zeller, Treasurer

Wash Your Hands and Say Your Prayers because Jesus and Germs are Everywhere

Women's Fellowship has homemade soap in three scent options (Lavender Vanilla, Cinnamon Coffee, and Coconut Orchid) and bean soup available for sale in the coat room outside of the Sanctuary!

Be sure to bring cash with you on Sundays to purchase some goodies. Both items make great gifts or a great treat for yourself (or your spouse)!

All proceeds from sales go back into the local community through generous donations and involvement from Women's Fellowship.

Address Changes

Laura Koepke
2865 Gopher South Dr.
Columbia, MO 65201

Isaiah Jackson-Post
112 Jackson St. Apt. B
Macon, MO 63552



Room at the Inn

Room at the Inn continues its service this winter to the Columbia homeless by providing night time shelter, beds, food, and security at various Columbia churches. The dates are December 8 to February 22 from 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. Additional dates may be added later. The Unitarian Universalist Church on Shepard Blvd. will be the first host December 8-December 21.

This ministry is a collaboration of many Columbia churches and the entire community. Some churches have facilities that are the actual shelters. Other churches, businesses, and individuals support Room at the Inn through volunteering, donating money and supplies, and spreading the news of the ministry by word of mouth.

We have already had our first snow. We've already had bitter cold. If you are inspired to be part of this impactful ministry that helps relieve the suffering of the homeless, visit roomattheinncomo.org for details about volunteering requirements, descriptions of duties of each shift, and sign up opportunities. You will also find an extensive list of operational supplies and food needed and monetary donation instructions. Of course, monetary donations can also be made through CUCC as well.

Thank you for however you choose to participate. Room at the Inn couldn't do what they do without supporters like you.



MODERATOR'S MOMENT

Moderator's Moment

Another year is flying by, and here we are in our holiest of seasons and usually our busiest time of the year. It's so easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of shopping, decorating our homes, and preparing for either traveling to or hosting family and friends for the holidays. We often forget the true meaning of this special time of year.

We hope you will join us at CUCC and worship with us this holiday season. There are a number of exciting programs to enjoy:

- ◇ We will be celebrating our 2019 Confirmation Class and their first Communion on December 1, the first Sunday of Advent.
- ◇ Our amazing Music Coordinator, Kristin Veteto, and all our fabulous musical talent, will be presenting the Choral Cantata on December 8. Following the worship service we will be feasting together at our All-Church Family Banquet held in the Fellowship Hall. If there's one thing we do well at CUCC, it's sharing great food and fellowship.
- ◇ December 15 will be our Children's Christmas Program, and later that day we will gather together and go caroling for our shut-ins and to various nursing and retirement facilities.
- ◇ Our Christmas Eve services will be moving and joyous as we worship together at 4:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m., and 11:00 p.m.

As we finish out this calendar year, I can't help but give a sincere thank you to all my fellow Council members at CUCC who have worked tirelessly to make 2019 a year that we all can be proud of. And a special thank you to Pastor Rick for his leadership and friendship. The hard work has been put in, now let us all remember the true meaning of this Christmas season. Please relax and take time to celebrate this Advent season and remember to put "Christ" back in Christmas.

In faith,
John Graves
john@downtownappliance.com
573-999-2087

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.

**INCLEMENT
WEATHER
INFORMATION**



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 Facebook; at least the scriptures, sermon, and prayers. 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 may do some livestreaming on Sundays when worship is not cancelled at our facility, if it looks like a large portion of the congregation is unable to attend due to weather conditions. We hope not to cancel worship this winter, but your safety is paramount!

INCLUSION TEAM

Our focus on Veterans in November was so uplifting!! The breakfast on November 10 was very well received, and Pete Jarberg's talk during church was exceptional. Thanks to everyone for making that day especially heartfelt. And Thank You to every Veteran for your service!



The CUCC Inclusion Team has its next meeting on December 5. Elaine Trout and I attended Oasis Inclusion Team meeting on November 12. It was a lively meeting. Oasis has several LGBTQ educational and community based plans taking shape. We talked about partnering together for some of these events, specifically a series of movies with panel discussion, with the focus being to educate and enlighten.

December, as always, is going to be a celebration of the joyous birth of Baby Jesus. We can all spread that joy by picking an individual or a family to support during this blessed time.

January 2020 provides another opportunity for celebration: our 1st Anniversary of becoming a completely Open and Affirming congregation. No matter who you are . . . no matter where you come from . . . no matter your race . . . no matter your sexual identity . . . no matter who you love . . . no matter your economic status . . . no matter your education . . . you are welcome to join us in worship of the living God.

Blessings to all! Alisa Lau-Sieckman, Inclusion Team 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.

CHIAPAS TRIP 2020

In 2018, a group of 11 travelled to Chiapas, Mexico for our first ever CUCC Immersion Experience with our Global Ministries partners there. It was a fun and educational experience for all who went, and it helped develop a relationship with Chiapas that exists to this day. We hope to enhance that experience with another trip in 2020.

The dates for our next trip are June 30-July 7, 2020. While we are there, we will be working with the Institute for Intercultural Studies and Research, one of our Global Ministries Mission Partners in Chiapas, who will provide our room and board for the week. We will also work with Melel Xojobal, another Global Ministries Mission Partner, and participate in a special work project involving Chiapas children and youth!

Pastor Rick will be presenting more information about this trip in the weeks to come, and will have a special information session in early January. The cost of the trip will be \$1400, which will include airfare, transportation and almost all in-country expenses including lodging and food. Pastor Rick has full packets available with information for interested parties, email him to receive your packet today rick@columbiaucc.com and watch for more information.

FINANCE AND STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY TEAM

50 for 50 Final Tally



CUCC, you did it! The 50 for 50 campaign has closed and you exceeded your \$50,000 fundraising goal, raising a grand total of **\$63,592.40!** The first chapter has closed (50 years) and now we all look forward to the next 50 years. The difference is that the next 50 years are now enhanced because of your contribution to this campaign. Keep your eyes and ears peeled for where these funds will be specifically used! Your council will get those decisions to you in good time. The improvements we will make with these funds will enhance the spiritual worship experience for our current members and all those who join our wonderful congregation in the future! *(Any funds received designated for the 50 for 50 campaign will be redirected to Joyful Giving after November 30.)*

In addition to improving our current facilities we will be donating 10% of these proceeds to service agencies that we have historically supported over the past 50 years, serving those in need. I'm so proud to be a member alongside all of you here at CUCC. I never lost faith in this being a successful campaign, and it was inspiring to see everyone pull together at the end to make this happen. This is a true testament to our growing spirit of stewardship at CUCC.

What I would ask of you all (as we look at the final month of 2019) is that we turn our attention to our Joyful Giving to ensure we meet our annual budget goal. **As of November 30, we need to receive \$54,000 in Joyful Giving to meet our annual budget for the 2019.** Historically, we have brought in close to that amount in December, but we are cutting it close. A special emphasis on Joyful Giving (annual budget) will help us not only make the NEW improvements made possible by 50 for 50, but also continue the ongoing ministries of this church. We hope everyone will show strong support of Joyful Giving in this last month of this decade. I will do my part! Here is to the next 50 and beyond!



George Zimny, Chair
Finance & Stewardship Ministry Team

CUCC NOW 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 directions on the text you receive back to set up your one time or recurring gift.

Financial Update

	Actual	Budget	Over/(Under)
Oct. Income	\$20,296.91	\$26,608.99	(\$6,312.08)
YTD	\$243,317.05	\$254,213.45	(\$10,896.40)
Oct. Expenses	\$32,087.16	\$29,958.06	\$1,075.81
YTD	\$254,796.16	\$266,148.08	(\$11,351.92)
YTD Income	\$243,317.05	\$254,213.45	(\$10,896.40)
YTD Expenses	\$254,796.16	\$266,148.08	(\$11,351.92)
Surplus/(Deficit)	(\$11,479.11)	(\$11,934.63)	\$455.52
Oct. Attendance	486		

TREASURER'S REPORT Doug Privitt, Recording Treasurer

Date	Attendance	Actual	Budget
11/03/19	126	\$3,363.00	\$5,610.33
11/10/19	108	\$4,255.61	\$5,610.33
11/17/19	127	\$3,719.00	\$5,610.33
11/24/19	143	\$10,835.00	\$5,610.33



CUCC SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The Memorial Education Fund at Columbia United Church of Christ was established in 1972 by CUCC member Professor H. H. Krusekopf to memorialize his wife, Nancy Krusekopf, on her passing. Over the years, this fund has evolved in purpose and expanded to include donations honoring Professor Krusekopf on his death, as well as to memorialize Elsa Nagel, Seth Brandenburg, Wesley Kirchhoff and Rachel Kirchhoff. The historic purpose of the fund has been primarily to encourage theological or Christian education in the United Church of Christ and secondarily to support youth and college groups within the church and to support the education and training of teachers and leaders of Christian Education within the church.

This fund has grown significantly over the years, and in an effort to expand the use of this fund to enable education for more of the congregation, the Finance and Stewardship Ministry Team, working with the Brandenburgs, the Kirchhoffs and the Church Council, have redefined this fund as the **Columbia United Church of Christ Scholarship Fund**. The new definition for this fund can be found in the CUCC Designated Funds Policy Manual, approved by the Church Council October 15, 2019.

This fund is now open to **ACTIVE** members of Columbia United Church of Christ to apply for Scholarships to cover continuing education expenses beyond High School. Applications will be available in early 2020 for students seeking fall scholarships. Full details are available in the Designated Funds Policy Manual. Copies are available in the church Gathering Area, or email the church office for electronic copies.

Contributions to this fund are encouraged to enable its growth and service to the continuing education of our youth and young adults.

It is our hope that this expansion of definition will enable this fund to grow and to serve more of the congregation in the spirit of continuing education that was the basis for this fund when Professor Krusekopf started it 47 years ago. Praise be to God for this great ministry opportunity and for the blessings of our forerunners in faith, who laid the foundation for this ministry to thrive!

CUCC DESIGNATED FUNDS POLICY MANUAL

Columbia United Church of Christ has historically established special funds for ministry purposes, but over the years the intent of those funds has not been clarified, resulting in confusion and, at times, disagreement about how these funds should be used. What we have called "Historic Funds" in the past were defined over the years by the current Church Council and were spent wisely, but lacked ongoing definition to maintain consistency.

To rectify this, the Finance and Stewardship Ministry Team has been working for the past year on defining and consolidating what we are now calling our "Designated Funds." With the Church Council's approval and endorsement, we have worked with our Ministry Teams over the past year to look at the former "Historic Funds" and repurpose or define them to suit our current ministry needs as "Designated Funds." Currently, they have been defined in nine different funds:

1. Building and Grounds Fund
2. Chiapas Mission/Mayan Ministries Fund
3. Memorial Fund
4. Nurture and Education Ministry Fund
5. Outreach and Advocacy Fund
6. Scholarship Fund
7. Worship and Music Ministry Fund
8. Young Adult/Campus Ministry Fund
9. Youth Ministry Fund

These funds are defined in our "Designated Funds Policy Manual" which was approved by the Church Council on October 15, distributed to the Congregation at the Estate Planning Workshop on October 20, and is available at the usher's station in the Gathering Area at church (copies are on the wooden podium between the Sanctuary doors). Electronic copies can also be sent upon request thru the church office, or ask a Church Council member.

It is our hope that by clearly defining these funds we not only enhance their use for ministry goals, but we can also offer them as possible places for donations and estate planning. As members and friends of the church plan their estate and annual giving, these ongoing specific funds could be a place of comfort for their particular passion in ministry. Pick up your copy of the Designated Funds Policy Manual next time you are at church (or request an electronic copy) to see what great ministries are happening at CUCC!

The Toil of Love

by Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer

Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer was elected General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ in 2015. At General Synod this past June, he was elected to a second four-year term. His second term began October 1. On the occasion of his ending and beginning, he wrote this reflection (edited here for length) which originally appeared on the National UCC website, www.ucc.org.



It was a little over four years ago I was elected to serve in this office. I want to share a few thoughts about why I think this is the greatest gig ever.

I get to travel the world as an emissary of love. Not just any love, but the love of Jesus articulated through the UCC lens of “no matter who, no matter where.” Everywhere I go, someone stops to tell me their “the UCC saved my life” story. I never get tired of hearing it. Everywhere I go, I bear witness to the difference that is made by the simple acts of love you offer. We were inspired and we were right when we discerned that our singular purpose of the Body of Christ was to “love the Lord our God with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength; and our neighbor as ourselves.”

To this end, we adopted the mission initiative which we now call our “Three Great Loves” campaign. This was also an inspired vision. We have taken up the task, on your behalf, of narrating your stories of how love of neighbor, love of children, and love of Creation matter where you are. Our website has become a collection site for these stories; and reading through them gives me a great sense of satisfaction.

We are living in a time when differences between us are tearing us apart. We are seeing a rise in violence and hate crimes. Racist language and rhetoric demonizing the immigrant and the refugee are becoming far too commonplace. In such a time as this, our single-minded commitment to love becomes the antidote to the kind of fear and contempt we seem to find too easy to adopt. As Pastor Rob Bell said, “Love Wins!”

We have to believe that. We have to believe that the God who is Love reigns. We have to trust that the Jesus who incarnated Love lives. We have to live as though the Holy Spirit of the Living God and the Risen Christ are walking with us through these shadowed valleys and is inviting us to love neighbor, children, and Earth.

For each of the last four years, my greatest joy has been serving as a witness to your love. It matters. It changes lives and communities. It resonates in heart and soul and mind and body. May your toil of love be enough to change the heart of another and help usher in God’s vision of Shalom.

Evolving Christianity

by Fr. Richard Rohr

Fr. Richard Rohr is a prolific author on issues of Spiritual Development and Spiritual Reflection. His daily devotionals, from the Center for Action and Contemplation, focus on the intersection of faith and practice; and his wisdom brings new insight to the church. The following is an excerpt from one of those daily devotionals (edited for length).

Practical, practice-based Christianity has been avoided, denied, minimized, ignored, delayed, and sidelined for too many centuries, by too many Christians who were never told Christianity was anything more than a belonging or a belief system. We have made this mistake for too long. We cannot keep avoiding what Jesus actually emphasized and mandated. In this most urgent time, “it is the very love of Christ that now urges us.” (2 Corinthians 5:14)

Quaker pastor Phillip Gulley superbly summarizes how we must rebuild spirituality from the bottom up in his book, “If the Church Were Christian.” Here I take the liberty of using my own words to restate his message, which offers a rather excellent description of what is emerging in Christianity today. If these make sense to you, you are already participating in evolving Christianity. Do read this list several times. It only makes more and more sense:

1. Jesus is a model for living more than an object of worship
2. Affirming people’s potential is more important than reminding them of their brokenness
3. The work of reconciliation should be valued over making judgments
4. Gracious behavior is more important than right belief
5. Inviting questions is more valuable than supplying answers
6. Encouraging the personal search is more important than group uniformity
7. Meeting actual needs is more important than maintaining institutions
8. Peacemaking is more important than power
9. We should care more about love and less about sexuality
10. Life in this world is more important than the afterlife; Eternity is God’s work, anyway.

OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY MINISTRY TEAM

Christmas Eve Offering—Purchasing Medical Debt—MO Midsouth Conference Campaign

Medical debt contributes to 50% of bankruptcies, and nearly 80 million Americans carry medical debt. Almost half of people diagnosed with cancer deplete their assets completely within two years. Medical expenses make up a third of the asks on GoFundMe and similar sites.

Low-income people carrying medical debt are weighed down by it. They are often hounded by bill collection companies and find themselves unable to pay other bills like rent and utilities. A poor credit rating means they can't borrow money to fix or replace a broken down car. They often end up on the endless payday loan treadmill.

The good news is there is now an alternative. RIP Medical Debt (a nonprofit run by former collection agency executives) is using its expertise to abolish debt by buying it just like a collection agency would. Only people with low incomes, high debt in relation to their income, or more debts than assets are eligible.

Churches and charitable organizations, including the UCC, are stepping up to contribute money that RIP uses to buy out and cancel medical debt, thus removing it from the recipient's credit report. The cost is as little as a penny on the dollar (\$100 worth of debt purchased for \$1).

Churches of the Missouri Mid-South Conference recently concluded a St. Louis-area fund drive to cancel medical debt and ease the "Health-Poverty Trap." The Conference is planning a similar campaign in 2020 for people in rural areas of eastern Missouri. CUCC traditionally devotes the Christmas Eve offering to a UCC Missouri mission, and this year's offering will go to support this effort.

Shoelaces, Belts, and Ponchos, Oh My!

The male clients at Turning Point, the homeless day center CUCC supports, are in need of the above three items. There are constant requests for longer shoe laces, belts of all sizes (used are just fine) and rain ponchos.

Thanks in advance for any items you can provide. There will be a box in the gathering area, or you may drop off items at the Church Office Monday through Friday, 9-3.



Loaves N Fishes

The November 18 meal at L&F consisted of spaghetti, chili mac, salad (donated by Patty Beeson), brats, and a variety of desserts.

Servers were Patty Beeson and one of her students, Albertine, David Martin, John & Brenda Muench, Ann Stone-Meyer, Anne Heine, and Cindy Deegan.

We served approximately 75 firsts, 60 seconds and 20 carry-outs. Thank you to everyone who helped out.

No December Food Bank Serve Day

The December CUCC Food Bank shift is cancelled due to holiday season conflicts. Our next group shift will be on Tuesday, January 14 at 6:00 p.m. Please mark your calendars!



VAC Christmas Drive—Please Help Give Someone Christmas Cheer!



Christmas is a time to share our joy in Christ's birth and our love for family and friends. But it can be a sad and lonely time for those without resources to celebrate. You can help!

A gift or two, some simple household items, or a holiday meal can make the holiday bright for someone who would otherwise go without. CUCC has pledged to sponsor gifts, necessities and food for 34 people in families screened by the Voluntary Action Center (VAC). Please consider "adopting" a child, parent, or disabled adult.

It's easy! You may select someone to sponsor at the Christmas Card Tree in the gathering area. Just pick a card, sign and leave the attached slip in the box, and take (and read) the instruction sheet.

VAC suggests we purchase at least one new gift or household item (\$50-75 per person), and/or contribute \$15 per person for their holiday meal. If you plan to spend more, please consider adopting more than one person so we can help as many as possible.

Deadline for return of gifts and food money is December 8. Your expression of Christian love will be sincerely appreciated. One grateful parent wrote last year, "Thank you very much for helping my family this Christmas. May God bless you all for blessing us."

NURTURE AND EDUCATION MINISTRY TEAM

Sunday School

This Fall we have four Sunday School classes for our children and youth: Preschool/Kindergarten Grades 1-4, Grades 5-8, Grades 9-12.

If you would like to help lead our young people's Sunday School classes, contact Pat Forward, Chair of Nurture & Education Ministry Team at pdfoward@msn.com.

Bible Study 101

We invite you to join us in an adventure of reading and understanding the Bible. The Adult Bible Study group meets upstairs in one of the Sunday School Classrooms each Sunday beginning at 9 a.m. Come and learn about what God is *still speaking* to us about!



Christmas Symbols

The CUCC Children's Christmas Program will be December 15, 2019 during Worship Service. Jessica Lucas will be directing this year's program for our Children and Youth.

Linda Neale, Kristin Veteto, Lisa Jaberg and Paula Wilson will be assisting her.

Practices will be held during the Sunday School hour each Sunday leading up to Sunday, December 8, 2019. Please contact Jessica at JLucas@cpsk12.org if you have any questions.

Cookies/Candy By the Pound Fundraiser

December 8, 2019

New this year – Homemade Candies! This was a HUGE fundraiser for our Camp Scholarship Fund last year. Begin thinking of the cookies and candy you would like to bring to this year's event!

Cookies/Candy will be \$6/lb. Purchase as much as you would like. Please bring only home-baked cookies and candy to sell. Contact Pat Forward at pdfoward@msn.com if you have any questions.

Confirmation Reception on Confirmation Sunday

On Sunday, December 1, 2019, please join Nurture & Education for refreshments to honor our 2019 Confirmation students during Fellowship Time. All are welcome!

The children and youth are helping Ronald McDonald House by bringing aluminum can tabs to CUCC. Adults can bring tabs too! Please put your tabs in the boxes in the gathering area.



Thank you to everyone who donated generously to our Blessing Boxes project. We collected \$407! We sent 20 boxes of snacks and goodies to our young college students and military members at a cost of \$470.

Children's Sunday School Offering

Please send offering each Sunday morning with your children to Sunday School. Lloyd Viehland has created Offering Collection Jars for each of the children's Sunday School classrooms. The children's offering will be going to Heifer International during 2019-2020.

Our Halloween Bake Sale on October 27 raised \$127 for CUCC Camp Scholarships. Thank you to everyone who donated and purchased goodies. Thank you to Aimee Dennis for coordinating the sale.

Coming Up in January:

January 26, 2020 is Camp Sunday. Come learn about Camp Opportunities for our young people.

Jesus' Birthday Party

On December 22, the children's Sunday School classes will join together to celebrate Jesus' birthday with various activities.

The fun will continue in Worship during Children's Time.

Happy Birthday Jesus!

COMING UP ON THE CALENDAR

- ◆ **Confirmation Reception on Confirmation Sunday** – Sunday, December 1
Please join Nurture & Education for refreshments to honor our 2019 Confirmation students during Fellowship Time on this Sunday morning.
- ◆ **Cookies and Candies By the Pound Fundraiser** – December 8
This was a HUGE fundraiser for our Camp Scholarship Fund last year. Begin thinking of the cookies/candies you would like to bring to this year's event! Cookies will be \$6/lb. Purchase as many as you would like. Please bring only home-baked cookies and candies to sell please. Please contact Pat Forward at pdfoward@msn.com if you have any questions.
- ◆ **CUCC Children's Christmas Program** – December 15, during Worship
Jessica Lucas will be directing this year's Christmas Program for our Children and Youth. Linda Neale, Lisa Jaberg, and Paula Wilson will be assisting her. Practices are being held on Sunday mornings during the Sunday School hour. Please contact Jessica at JLucas@cpsk12.org if you have any questions.
- ◆ **Christmas Caroling** — December 15
We will meet at Lenoir at 4 p.m. to begin Christmas Caroling and will continue making the rounds to several retirement communities before ending at Doug & Judi Privitt's for a celebration gathering. All are welcome!
- ◆ **Jesus' Birthday Party** during Sunday School on December 22
The children's Sunday School classes will join together on this day to celebrate Jesus' birthday.

CUCC LUNCH BUNCH DECEMBER GATHERING

On the fourth Thursday of each month, a hearty group of Columbia United Church of Christ members and friends get together for a noon carry-in meal that we like to call the CUCC Lunch Bunch. This group is open to everyone regardless of age or any other determining factor. All are welcome and encouraged to attend. Bring a dish to share. After our meal at noon, we have a guest speaker who presents a program from 12:30-1:30 on topical issues in our community.

On December 19, LODO will perform their Christmas Program for us! Come join the fun!

WORSHIP AND MUSIC MINISTRY TEAM

From Your Music Coordinator

Our journey to the manger will be lit with singing, dancing, and instruments. I look forward to singing in this Advent season with each of you. The Christmas Cantata this year will be offered on December 8, where we will remember the birth of Christ and glean vision for our mission in the world. You can expect to hear from the Celebration Singers, Chapel Ringers, Young Adult Choir, Youth Choir, Youth Bells, Rainbow Bells, Special Ensemble, and a variety of instrumentalists this Advent season. Thank you to all who continue to share your gifts with CUCC.



MANY thanks,
Kristin
kristinnoelveteto@gmail.com
(309) 221-3198

Christmas Caroling

"Caroling, Caroling, now we go!" We hope you will all join us on December 15th for a night of caroling!

We will begin at Lenoir at 4 p.m. We will then proceed to the Bluffs, Columbia Manor, and Mill Creek. Our journey will finish at Doug and Judi Privitt's for fellowship and snacks.

If you plan to join us please contact Kristin Veteto or sign up at church so we know about how many to expect."



Missouri Mid-South Conference
High School Youth Event (CYE) 2020
"Embracing Our Stories"

February 15-17, 2020 at Camp MoVal
Featuring Keynote Speaker and Workshop Leader

Marcus Engel

Registration information can be found
at www.mmsuccyouth.org
and in the MMS Conference e-Courier.

Registration deadline: January 24, 2020.

Cost: \$140

For more information, contact
Cindy Birkner cindy@mmsucc.org

Marcus Engel grew up in High Hill, Missouri and spent his youth attending Missouri Mid-South Conference events, youth activities, and camping at MoVal. Marcus grew up attending the Conference Youth Event every year. His life was changed his Freshman year of college when a sudden car accident impacted his life forever.

Marcus speaks from experience. It's not theory, it's not academic, it's reality. It's a journey that isn't always pretty, but one that helps health care professionals understand their vital role in a patient's experience. Marcus holds a B.S. in sociology from Missouri State University and a Master's Degree in Narrative Medicine from Columbia University. He has authored four books which are being used by scores of nursing schools and allied health care programs to teach strategies for excellent patient care. Marcus and his wife, Marvelyne, are the co-founders of the "I'm Here" Movement, a 501(c)3 non for profit changing the culture of care through two simple words. He lives in Orlando, Florida with Marvelyne, and his Seeing Eye dog, Elliott.



MarcusEngel.com

MEMBERSHIP AND CARE MINISTRY TEAM

Yoga Fitness

Membership and Care is creating a way for members and guests to become involved in an activity after church one Sunday a month. Yoga is a great way to stretch, move and feel connected to your body. There are lots of speculations about if one can 'do' yoga or not. I always ask people if they can breathe. If the answer is yes, you can do Yoga! It doesn't take flexibility, balance or strength, just your breath and an open mind to giving it your best shot!

**The next "Yoga Sunday" is on
December 1**

Looking forward to sharing yoga with all of you!

Stefanie Zimny, Chair
Membership and Care Ministry Team



EXCITING THINGS...

COMING SOON!

- New Sign is being worked on and will hopefully be up by Christmas!
- Don't forget about Yoga Sunday on Dec. 1
- Opportunity to re-take pictures for the directory... date TBD

CUCC SERMONS ONLINE

Did you miss a Sunday? You don't have to miss the sermon! Catch up online...

Each Monday, the sermon from that week is uploaded to the CUCC website and to the CUCC Facebook page (also Pastor Rick's Facebook page). Check out what you missed!

Website: <https://www.columbiaucc.com/sermons>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Columbia-United-Church-of-Christ-145805378800233/>

HAVE YOU TOURED THE CUCC WEBSITE?

Have you been to the Columbia United Church of Christ website? Take a minute to check it out at www.columbiaucc.com and see what content we feature. There is much to offer!

- ♦ The home page features information about CUCC front and center including our worship times, contact information, and what is happening currently at your church.
- ♦ There are links to click on that page detailing more about what it means to be an "Open and Affirming" congregation of the United Church of Christ, pictures from our 50th anniversary, and Sunday's bulletin
- ♦ There are exciting videos from Audrey Lasley and George Zimny and a photo slideshow of our High School Youth Group Mission Trip
- ♦ Tabs on our home page will take you to links featuring:
 - ♦ The Mission, History and Staff of Columbia United Church of Christ
 - ♦ Information about Ministry Teams and Fellowship Groups at CUCC
 - ♦ Pastor Rick's sermons from almost every Sunday this year
 - ♦ The current and past issues of the Communicator
 - ♦ Our CUCC calendar, with all upcoming events listed
 - ♦ Information about LODO, our preschool program
 - ♦ Access to our "Donate Now" page to fund the ministries of the church

Take a moment to check out our website and learn more about Columbia United Church of Christ! *(We try to keep it updated weekly, but let us know if we miss anything! Extensive websites like this are hard to keep current. Email the church office with any suggested website changes or corrections!)*

FELLOWSHIP AND HOSPITALITY MINISTRY TEAM

Mark your calendars!

CHRISTMAS BANQUET

Sunday, December 8 – Christmas Cantata and Banquet

The Christmas Cantata will be held during Worship Service. Come enjoy the music and then stay after Service to enjoy a meal and fellowship at the annual Christmas Banquet. All will be provided so come as you are and bring a friend!

KITCHEN UPDATE – Our Church kitchen could use some new items. If you're interested in purchasing something, but would like to shop from home, please click the attached link:

www.walmart.com/lists/view-events-registry-items?id=f7321ea6-a473-49df-a37d-dcfe1ca4bf83

The items will be sent directly to the Church. Thanks to Val for setting this up.

Men's Fellowship

Please make note of the following upcoming events as we will need help to make them successful:

- ◆ The Men's Breakfast will be December 15 @ 7:30 a.m. in the CUCC Fellowship Hall.
- ◆ The annual meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 26, 2020. We will plan to have our chili cookoff in conjunction with this meeting.
- ◆ The pancake breakfast, which raises money for Habitat for Humanity, is scheduled for Saturday, February 22, 2020.

Sunday Volunteer Schedule for December

Below is the Sunday Volunteer Schedule for December. As you can see, we are in need of some spots to be filled, and other spots to be shared with new faces. Part of being in the church family is often expressed by sharing the roles that make all of our members and guests feel welcome.

If you can fill the needed role or a role in the future, please let one of the leaders know. We appreciate you and we're glad you have chosen CUCC as your church home!

Date	Greeters	Ushers	Worship Leaders	Acolyte	Sound Booth	Hospitality
12/01	Anne Heine Stefanie Zimny	Hugo Wilmsmeyer NEED	Ember Piersee Andie Rapp Ryan Schoeneberg	Kennedy Lucas	Pete Jaberg	Lena Muench
12/08	John & Brenda Muench	Llona Weiss NEED	Isaiah Jackson- Post	Riley Hayward	Carissa Graves	Val Schoeneberg
12/15	Carol Duermeyer Helen Schultz	Brent Marcks Charlie Marcks	Llona Weiss	Abby Dennis	Doug Privitt	Doug Privitt
12/22	Audrey Lasley Stefanie Zimny	Doug Privitt Mahree Skala	Judi Privitt	Aiden Pierson	John Graves	Sue Ann Schaefer
12/24 4pm		The Schoeneberg Family	Ally Jaberg	Abby Dennis		
12/24 7pm			Mark Duncan	Kennedy Lucas		
12/24 11pm			Bryan Crousore	Polly Fuller		
12/29	Paula Wilson Fred & Carolyn Malicoat		Audrey Lasley		Dennis Froeschner	Brent Marcks

LODO HAPPENINGS

We are thankful for the month of November at LODO! We enjoyed a wonderful feast with our preschool families on November 14. The food was delicious, and the conversations and connections made were wonderful. It is always a blessing to come together as a group to meet new friends and have a time for fellowship with current friends.

During the month of November, LODO collected donations for Rainbow House. We are grateful for the generosity of our LODO families. We made several ornaments during our Thanksgiving feast to donate to Rainbow House and share the Christmas spirit.

In December we will spread the joy of the Christmas season throughout our learning activities and culminate with our annual Christmas Program on Thursday, December 19. Each class will perform during our Christmas Program to celebrate the birth of Jesus and the joy of the season. Our Leap Frogs class will perform a mini-musical, "Don't Be Scared!" to tell how the angel of the Lord appeared to Mary, Joseph, and the Shepherd telling them not to be afraid.

December Themes:

Nursery Rhymes/Gingerbread
Christmas/Holidays
The Nativity

Important Dates:

Fri 12/13-Thu 12/19 - Christmas Program Rehearsals Daily @ 9:30 a.m.
in the Sanctuary

Mon 12/16 – LODO Pajama Day

Thu 12/19 – "Don't Be Scared!" performed at Lunch Bunch

Thu 12/19 – LODO Christmas Program @ 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary

12/23-1/3 – LODO Closed for Christmas Break

With love and laughter,
Erika Maltsbarger



The Giving Tree is a program organized each year by Columbia Foster and Adoption Project (CFAP) in coordination with Great Circle and Boone County Children's Division to provide Christmas gifts for Boone County children in foster care.

Foster parents or caseworkers assist children in filling out Christmas wish lists, then residents of the community adopt a child's list from which they can purchase and return the gifts to CFAP for distribution.

The Giving Tree is located in the Columbia Mall, outside of JC Penney. You can retrieve a name (or multiple names) off the tree and choose one or all of the gifts on the list to purchase and give. There will be instructions on how to return the gifts prior to Christmas to ensure these wonderful children are able to celebrate the season like the rest of us. Being able to give generously is one of the best parts of Christmas!



CFAP also collects iBelong baskets for foster children throughout the year. The iBelong baskets provide both useful and comforting items to children entering foster homes in central Missouri. Many times children arrive with only the clothes they are wearing. The baskets provide not only for the children, but also the foster family, as they hold supplies that are needed to care for each child. Contact [CFAP](#) for more information!

CUCC IS WORKING IN ECUADOR

FEDICE, the Ecumenical Foundation for Development, Integration, Training and Education is a Christian organization in Ecuador with a mission based on Jesus’ teachings that seeks justice, peace, and equitable development. The organization arose from a need to help Christian churches promote the defense of human rights, especially among indigenous people. FEDICE helps indigenous and rural communities to overcome poverty by promoting human development, raising awareness of social and economic change, creating jobs, and improving family income. FEDICE’s projects especially focus on ecology, ethnic groups, culture, and peace. Thanks to their partnership with Global Ministries, FEDICE provides loans and savings programs to community groups who are struggling, teaches rural communities about healthy living, implements income generating projects with rural communities in livestock production, and walks with communities in their journey to support each other and care for their neighbors.

FEDICE is a Global Missions Partner of CUCC through Global Ministries, our shared mission agency with the Christian Church/Disciples of Christ. Global Ministries provides special support for projects of this organization, and support for their ongoing efforts. Please keep Global Ministries and FEDICE in your prayers!

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

December 1-7	Kahala Cannon	working in eSwatini
December 8-14	Elena Huegel	working in Chiapas, Mexico
December 15-21	Jeff Wright	working in Israel/Palestine
December 22-28	Michael Joseph	working in Colombia
December 29- January 4	Judy Chan	working in Hong Kong



HIGH SCHOOL EVENT- CYE 2020

The CUCC High School Youth will be participating in the Conference Youth Event February 15-17, 2020 at Camp MoVal. They are in for a treat. This year’s Keynote Speaker will be Marcus Engel!

Marc grew up in High Hill, MO and spent his youth attending Missouri Mid-South Conference events, youth activities and camping at MoVal. His life was suddenly changed his freshman year of college when a car accident impacted his life forever.

Marcus speaks about his journey from experience, not theory. He is not academic, he is real. He speaks to High School students and physicians on the same level, one that relates to them and draws them in to his experience. He is the author of several books that examine life from “The Other Side of the Stethoscope.”

Our youth will have their lives changed forever after hearing Marcus speak. Spots will fill up fast for this one, We need to register by December 1. If your High School youth has not registered yet, talk to Pastor Rick, Lauren Helmerich, Kristy Odneal or Kurt Heine asap!

HIGH SCHOOL SECOND SUNDAY– DECEMBER 8

Our CUCC High School Youth meet the Second Sunday of each month at someone’s house for games, food and reflection on scripture or the challenges life is bringing them. This month, we will gather at Pastor Rick’s house from 5:00-8:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 8. All High School Youth are invited to attend!

We are also having a High School Lock-in at church on December 6-7 from 7:00 p.m.-7:00 a.m. All High School Youth are invited to attend- and bring a friend! If you have any questions, ask Lauren Helmreich, Kurt Heine, Kristy Odneal or Pastor Rick.

Looking For a Place to Serve Locally?

The Central Missouri STOP Human Trafficking Coalition is looking for volunteers who can give rides, deliver groceries, help at events, and more.

If you are over 18, have a vehicle, and a heart for those who have survived the harsh reality that is Modern Day Slavery, contact [Nanette Ward](#) at 573-289-1842 with any questions you may have, or to volunteer.



ON THE CHURCH CALENDAR IN DECEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Yoga Sunday Confirmation Sunday 9:00am Fellowship 9:00am Sunday School 10:30am Worship	2 6pm Finance & Stewardship Ministry Team	3 9am-1pm Quilters 10am Staff Meeting 6:30pm Membership & Care Ministry Team	4 6:30pm Chapel Ringers 7pm Confirmation 7:30pm Celebration Singers	5 11:30am By Laws Team Meeting 6:30pm Inclusion Team Meeting	6 High School Lock-In	7 9-12am Cantata Rehearsal High School Lock-In
8 Cookies by the Pound 9:00am Fellowship 9:00am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Christmas Cantata & Banquet HS Gathering @ Pastor Rick's	9 6:30pm Music & Worship Ministry Team	10 9am-1pm Quilters 10am Staff Meeting 4-6pm Chinese Choir 6pm Food Bank	11 6:30pm Chapel Ringers 7pm Confirmation 7:30pm Celebration Singers	12 9:30am Women's Fellowship	13 9:30-10am LODO Christmas Program Rehearsal in Sanctuary	14
15 9:00am Fellowship 9:00am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Children's Program & Cookie Sharing 4pm Caroling	16 9:30-10am LODO Christmas Program Rehearsal in Sanctuary 10am Worship @ the Bluffs 11:15am Worship @ Mill Creek 4:30pm Loaves & Fishes	17 9am-1pm Quilters 10am Staff Meeting 4-6pm Chinese Choir Ministry Team 6:30pm Council Meeting	18 6:30pm Chapel Ringers 7pm Confirmation 7:30pm Celebration Singers	19 12pm CUCC Lunch Bunch 6:30pm LODO Christmas Program 7:30pm Clergy/Personnel Committee Meeting	20 Church Office Closed Open House @ the Oberles	21
22 9:00am Fellowship 9:00am Sunday School 9am Jesus' Birthday Party 10:30am Worship	23 LODO & CPS Closed	24 LODO & CPS Closed 4pm Children's Service 7pm Family Service 11pm Christmas Eve Service	25 LODO & CPS Closed Church Office Closed 	26 LODO & CPS Closed Church Office Closed	27 LODO & CPS Closed Church Office Closed	28
29 9:00am Fellowship 9:00am Sunday School 10:30am Worship	30 LODO & CPS Closed	31 LODO & CPS Closed 9am-1pm Quilters 4-6pm Chinese Choir 	LODO & CPS Closed 	LODO & CPS Closed	LODO & CPS Closed	

THE COMMUNICATOR

Columbia United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation- ONA #1575
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Columbia, MO 65202-3296
573-445-7931



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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.

Interested in Church Membership?

If so, please contact
[Rev. Rick Oberle](mailto:rick@columbiaucc.com)
for further information
rick@columbiaucc.com

**Become
Part of
Our
Church
Family**

**Merry
Christmas**

ATTENTION

If you are in the Church building after office hours and the office staff (or another person) is still downstairs, please let the office (or that person) know so the alarm is not set while you are still in the building. We have had numerous alerts and calls from our security system team due to the alarm going off while someone was still in the building. We are charged if the police show up to check the premises, even if the alarm goes off by mistake.

Also, please make sure you check the building prior to setting the alarm and be sure it is set and all the church doors are locked prior to leaving. Thank you for your attention to this matter!



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.