

THE COMMUNICATOR

January 2019

HAPPY NEW YEAR

From the Pastor's Keyboard

"Kingdom of God"

"When Jesus spoke about the Kingdom of God, he was not talking about an afterlife, about how to get to heaven, but rather about the transformation of life here on earth." This bit of Wisdom was shared often by Marcus Borg, Professor of Religion and Culture at Oregon State University and author of many books on various aspects of Theology. Discussing the Kingdom of God, Professor Borg says, "The Kingdom of God was utterly central to Jesus." Professor Borg points out that one of the many times we see this is in the inaugural address of Jesus in Mark's Gospel (Mark 1:15) where Jesus says "the Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the Good News."

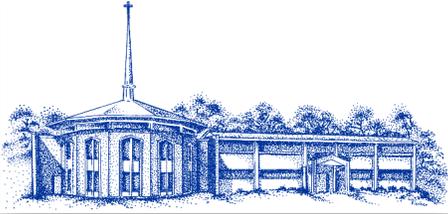
Now obviously Jesus must not have been talking about the end of the world, as dispensationalist theorists would have you believe, or impending death on all his listeners when he said, "The Kingdom of God is at hand." He was talking about the possibility of transformation in the here and now. It is possible, Jesus asserts in this address, to transform the world into something better; something more hopeful, peaceful, joyful, lovable; something closely resembling the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is at hand; it is possible here and now in this life, not just in the hereafter.

How do we achieve the Kingdom of God in this life? Jesus tells us in that very same verse: "Repent; and believe in the Good News." Repent means simply to "turn around" or "turn away" from one thing and to another; and this, plain and simple, is what we are called to do to realize the Kingdom of God here on earth. We are called to "turn away" from the things that distract us from God's will and turn back towards God.

This New Year is a great time for soul searching. Many people will commit to going to the gym or eating right or maybe spending less time glued to their phones each day; these are all good and healthy commitments to make. But don't forget your soul. What is it that you need to turn away from, in order to turn to God? What is binding you in one place and is keeping you from realizing the Kingdom of God here on earth? How can you be more open to God's will and less enamored with your own personal agenda?

The Kingdom of God can be a reality in the here and now; not just the hereafter. The Good News is much more about personal transformation than it is about the afterlife. Repent; turn around this New Year and be transformed; and let the Good News be yours.

-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. - Faith Education
for ALL Ages

10:00 a.m. - Coffee and
Fellowship

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

Dear Congregation,

Thank you for your donation of \$1,000 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 always 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
Western Association MMSUCC

Dear CUCC,

Thank you for thinking of me when you sent the college care pack. It really brightened my day when I opened it. Everyone is so friendly at CUCC and I really enjoy going to church with all of you!

Thanks again,
Alex Oberle

Dear CUCC,

Thank you so much for my care package. It means so much to me that you would think of me during my school process.

Happy Holidays!

-Madison Wipfler

I want to thank all of you who have supported Cliff and I in the past weeks. My initial surgery went well, and so is my early recovery. We have more surgeries ahead of us, which we will face as they come. Your prayers, cards, phone calls, positive thoughts, and the meal train have been much appreciated. I cannot imagine taking this cancer journey without the love and support of CUCC. Our church is such a good example of what a caring and compassionate community of faith should be.

With love and joy, Sue Beckman

Cookies By the Pound Was a HUGE Success!

Thank you to everyone who baked cookies, helped with the sale, and purchased cookies. Over \$573 was raised for Camp Scholarships.

Our next fundraiser for Camp Scholarships will be the Valentine's Day Bake Sale on Sunday, February 10, 2019.

Thank you to the Nursery Volunteers!

Amanda Dwyer, our Nursery Supervisor, provides wonderful care for our young people, kindergarten age and younger, in the nursery during worship. When she has more than ten children in the nursery, an additional adult is needed to help supervise. Members of N & E volunteer every week to check in with Amanda, following Children's Time, to see if their help is needed. Thank you to these people for volunteering in October, November and December – Lena Muench, Gina Pierson, Kristy Odneal, Kurt Heine, Audrey Lasley, Kim Oberle, Paula Wilson, Jamy Preul and Linda Neale.

Annual Congregational Meeting & The Chili Cook-Off

The Annual Congregational Meeting and Men's Fellowship Annual Chili Cook-Off is coming on Saturday, January 27th, immediately following Worship Service.

Come enjoy the culinary creations of some of the best chili chefs north of the Big Muddy. Enter your own special chili recipe in pursuit of the elusive and coveted traveling Golden Ladle Award. Ladies, gentlemen, and youth are invited to enter by signing up on the entry sheet located in the gathering area on January 6, 13, and 20.

Entries should be made for 8-10 servings, noted if they are meat or vegetarian, given a name, and delivered warm between 9:30-10:15 a.m. on Sunday, January 27th to the Fellowship Hall. Volunteers for bringing cookies and other dessert donations may also sign up in the gathering area. Sandwiches and veggies for those wanting other choices will also be available.

For more information, contact Cliff Beckman at 573-443-3444 or at bocomo82@gmail.com.

Moderator's Moment

Call to Meeting

January 27 will be our Annual Congregational Meeting to conduct the business of the church. This year will be a special meeting for us as we consider affirming a covenant produced by 100+ members of the congregation who dedicated themselves to education and research over the past year; coordinated by our Open and Affirming Core Team. The covenant is still evolving and will reach its final form at the next and final Inclusion Initiative Gathering January 6. After that gathering, the Church Council will vote on approving the covenant and recommending it to the Congregation. The final form of the covenant and the Council recommendation will be presented to the Congregation on January 13 with the Annual Meeting materials and Annual Report.

Over the past few months Pastor Rick and others have had many conversations with selected congregation members about any issues or anxiety surrounding this affirmation. *The following page shows some of those questions.* Input gathered from these Congregation members have led to the Church Council deciding, at our December meeting, to establish some concrete procedural rules regarding this special vote. Those rules are detailed in this Communicator on **page four** and will be distributed after worship on December 30.

These procedural rules discourage, but will allow, a limited amount of absentee balloting, if the balloting conforms to the established procedure. They eliminate any question of compromised integrity surrounding the vote count and allow as many voices as possible to be heard. These procedural rules also outline a process for presentation of the Covenant on the day of the Congregational meeting that will allow discussion and voting to happen in an orderly fashion, while allowing as many Congregation members as possible an opportunity to speak concisely.

If you have any questions or anxiety regarding the Open and Affirming/Inclusion Process, or the process the Church Council has implemented to present and discuss this at our Congregational Meeting, feel free to contact me, Vice-Moderator John Graves, or Pastor Rick. Blessings to you all this Christmas Season and Happy New Year!

- Judi Priitt

Open and Affirming Questions

On January 27, the congregation of Columbia United Church of Christ will vote on a recommendation by the Church Council to affirm an Open and Affirming/Inclusion Covenant articulated by over 100 members of this church that reflects our identity as Christians in this context. Over the course of this past year, the Open and Affirming Core Team has addressed several questions regarding this Initiative. Some of the questions we discussed this past year are:

Does the vote on January 27 change who we are as a church? Yes and no. We have historically been open to everyone from many walks of life; so, this Covenant is just a reflection of who we already are. But passage of this Covenant does open new avenues for growth as a congregation that could change who we are by making us more accessible to those in need, more loving, more Christ-like as a church family in the world.

If we approve the Open and Affirming/Inclusion Covenant will we be an Open and Affirming Church in the UCC? What does this mean? What obligations does this place upon us? Yes, passage of this covenant will affirm us as an Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ. This means that, when people who have been hurt by churches in the past search the National UCC Website for an Open and Affirming Church, our church will be listed. The National Church places **NO** obligations on Open and Affirming Churches to participate in anything. How we live into this is up to us; and is between us and God.

Why do we need a covenant? Aren't we already Open and Affirming? We are; and we are also the best kept secret in town. The purpose of this covenant is two-fold. By voicing this covenant, we are reminding *ourselves* that God calls us to be Inclusive of all; but also, by putting this covenant on our website we are able to convey to *our community* that we are Inclusive of all God's children. This covenant tells those who have been hurt by church that they do matter, are loved, and are truly welcome here.

Why is necessary to have such a detailed statement? Doesn't "all" mean "all"? A more concise covenant would be nice; but unfortunately, those who have been hurt by church have learned that "**all does not mean all**". Many churches express that "all are welcome" and when people who do not "fit in" arrive, they are told they must change to be accepted. We heard several testimonials during our Inclusion Gatherings this past year from people who have found out that "**all does not mean all**". We learned, through story and testimony, that "**all does not mean all**" and it is vitally important to list those who have been hurt by church in the past in our Covenant. This verbiage may not be important to us, but it is important to those who are hurting.

Is this about political correctness or someone else's agenda? No, it is about love. As God's children we are called to love one another; especially those who are hurting. There are many people in Columbia who have been hurt by church. Our job is to love them. It is not about politics, it is about people; people who are hurting. We can make a difference in their lives.

Procedural Rules

The Executive Committee of the Church Council put together the following procedural rules for the January 27 Congregational Meeting and presented them to the Church Council, who approved them unanimously at our December 10 Council meeting. These rules specifically apply to our vote on affirming the Open and Affirming/Inclusion Covenant that will be presented in final form to the Congregation on January 13.

Procedural Rules

In order to give voice to the maximum number of CUCC members, the following are the procedures for the January 27 Congregational Vote concerning the Open and Affirming/Inclusion Covenant:

- ◆ The Church Council will meet after the January 6 Inclusion Initiative to consider the final iteration of the Open and Affirming/Inclusion Covenant and, if affirmed, submit it to the Congregation by January 13 for consideration at the January 27 Congregational meeting.
- ◆ The 2019 Congregational Meeting will be called to order in the Sanctuary immediately after the last hymn; The Council Secretary will determine a quorum is present.
- ◆ The first order of business will be the introduction by the Council of the motion to affirm the Open and Affirming Inclusion Covenant affirmed by the Church Council.
- ◆ The motion on the floor is submitted by the Church Council so it does not need a second.
- ◆ There will be 20 minutes allotted for discussion and questions. Any time beyond that must be approved by the assembled body via a motion and a second to extend time.
- ◆ There will be two microphones set up. All who wish to ask questions or comment will line up at one of the two microphones. Special consideration will be given to those with physical challenges.
- ◆ Speakers will be limited to 2 minutes each.
- ◆ Everyone will have an opportunity to speak once before anyone is allowed to speak a second time.
- ◆ Discussion is open to Members of Columbia United Church of Christ only.
- ◆ Voting will commence at the end of 20 minutes of discussion, or at the discretion of the Church Council Moderator viewing no further interest in discussion, or by an affirmative vote by the Congregation to end discussion after an appropriate motion to end discussion and second to the motion is received by the chair.
- ◆ Voting will be by confidential (but not anonymous) ballot; all ballots must have the CUCC member's name printed on them and must be signed by the same member and presented by that member.
- ◆ Anonymous votes will not be considered.
- ◆ Votes will be tallied by two tellers designated by the Church Council, who will compare the names on the ballots with the official membership roster of Columbia UCC.
- ◆ After the vote, the Moderator will entertain a motion to recess the meeting until after lunch. The meeting will resume after lunch, in the Fellowship Hall. The tellers will count the ballots during lunch and announce the count when the meeting resumes.
- ◆ The names on the ballots will not be revealed by the tellers unless a challenge to the integrity of the election is brought to the Church Council; in which case the Executive Committee of the Church Council will verify the ballots and the count.
- ◆ After the vote, ballots will be retained, locked in a secure location for one year.
- ◆ Absentee Balloting is not encouraged; but can take place within the following parameters:
 - ~Absentee ballots can only be submitted between the hours of 9:00am-Noon on the following Sundays: January 13, 20 & 27.
 - ~Absentee ballots must be presented on those Sunday mornings in person by the CUCC member whose name and signature is on the ballot.
 - ~A member of the Church Council Executive Committee will receive absentee ballots and deposit them in a secure container that will be placed in a secure location during the week. The container will be opened on Sunday, January 27 by the tellers for counting and not before.
 - ~Those who submit absentee ballots will not be eligible to vote at the Congregational Meeting January 27.

Maximum Impact in 2019

How can your faithful Stewardship make the Maximum Impact on Ministry with God's Creation in 2019? The suggestions below will help you make an informed decision about your Stewardship focus in the coming year.

Be Intentional: Intentional giving of your Time, Talent and Treasures is a major factor in making a Maximum Impact. Don't give God your leftovers after everything else in life has taken your time, your talent and your money. Make an intentional commitment about how much Time, how much of your Talents and how much Money you will give to God's work in 2019. Just like everything else in life, set your goals and then make a plan to achieve them.

Consistency: Faithful stewardship is not about the amount of money, time, or talent you give; it is about consistency. After you make your intentional decision about the amount, be consistent!

Serve on a Ministry Team: We have seven ministry teams at CUCC that undergird God's work through this Church. Is there an area of ministry in which you hold interest? The ministry teams and leadership are listed in the bulletin each Sunday. Inquire of that leader how you can help enable their team's ministry.

Give Your Treasures

There are several ways to give your money to the work of Columbia United Church of Christ. Choose the way that works best for you.

ACH: Several people have set up a weekly/monthly automatic ACH (withdrawal) with their bank and we receive a check in the mail from them at the frequency they have determined. You can set this up easily online, or ask your bank to set it up. Your weekly/monthly donation is automatically sent to the church. (This can be set up for other agencies you support as well).

Envelopes: Do you receive offering envelopes? If you do not and you wish to receive them, send a message to the church office or talk to Doug Privitt. Envelopes help you track your giving if you are writing a check each week.

Fund Giving: We have several special funds at CUCC to enable special and specific ministries of the church. The Finance and Stewardship Team can help identify certain funds for you.

Estate Planning: Have you remembered CUCC in your will? It can be as simple as adding a line that says a certain percentage or amount will be given to CUCC upon your death. Your gift could leave a legacy that helps others for many future generations.

Online Giving: The Finance and Stewardship Ministry Team will be rolling out a new online giving platform in 2019 to make financial stewardship easier. Watch for more details!

Website Giving: In the next few weeks we will be setting up a giving option on our Columbia UCC Website as well. Watch for this to happen and check us out at www.columbiuucc.com.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT STEWARDSHIP @ CUCC CONTACT
GEORGE ZIMNY, CELL: 573-808-4818, EMAIL: GZIMNY@ZEALFINANCE.COM**



TREASURER'S REPORT *Doug Privitt, Recording Treasurer*

Date	Attendance	Actual	Budget
12/02/18	193	\$2,305.62	\$7,685.80
12/09/18	165	\$4963.65	\$7,685.80
12/16/18	158	\$16,047.00	\$7,685.80
12/23/18	112	\$17,430.00	\$7,685.80



Welcome New Members!!



Welcome Amy Crousore!

Amy's face might be familiar to you as she is seated behind the organ or piano most every Sunday providing music for our church services!

Amy grew up in a small town in southeast Indiana, which was settled by Germans, on the Ohio River. She has many jobs, but is a musician at her core; always longing to play and always wanting to explain and teach what she does! Her family consists of what she describes as the best parents, siblings, nephews and nieces in the world!

In her free time Amy enjoys cooking, crafting, traveling, hiking, camping, reading, volunteering and meditating. She loves the music of J.S. Bach (especially the French suites), Asian Culture and food, and giving the organ portion of the tour at the Churchill Museum and Church in Fulton MO.

Amy's new member sponsor is Audrey Lasley.



Welcome Alisa Lau-Sieckman

Alisa joins us from her hometown in Iowa, and more recently from Peace UCC in Hartsburg.

She will celebrate 25 years of marriage this year with her husband, Gary. Her family also includes a daughter, son-in-law and step granddaughter.

Alisa works as an RN with pediatrics, cardiology and research at MU.

In her spare time she enjoys babysitting a two year old boy, gardening, and caring for her husband and nine pets. She also enjoys reading and visiting the gym every day!

Alisa's new member sponsor is Elaine Trout.



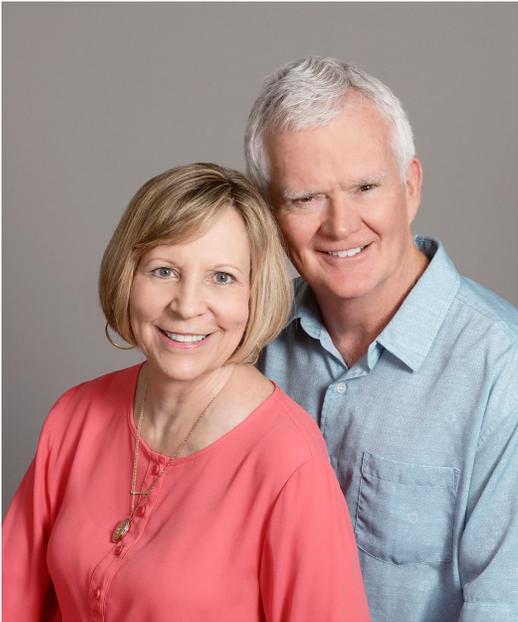
Welcome Shelby Oberle!

Shelby came into our church family when her father, Rev. Rick Oberle, was called as our pastor. At the time, she was attending Missouri State University in Springfield. This year she transferred to Mizzou and has become part of the worship life at CUCC!

Shelby has two brothers and one sister, two cats and two sugar gliders! She works at Wal-Mart as a cashier; so if you see her, say hello!

Shelby enjoys singing, acting and watching TV. Her favorite food is steak because "it tastes amazing!"

Shelby's new member sponsor is Jamy Preul.



Welcome Harry and Jane Beckett!

The Becketts were not only drawn to CUCC because of our friendly congregation, but were introduced to the church by the Veteto family. Harry grew up in New Mexico and Jane grew up in Kansas City. Jane has also lived in California and spent several years in Europe.

Both have a passion for art, music, and education. They love music, art, and riding their bikes. Harry is a professional musician; a music therapist, an MU accompanist, and played in several bands professionally for a number of years. Jane is an art teacher for children at Art Underground and has also pursued Italian education. Harry and Jane have two children (a son and a daughter) and four grandchildren. They love to travel and meet new people while learning their culture.

The Becketts new member sponsors are Jim and Connie Loveless.



Welcome Shari Schubert!

Shari grew up in Lamar, Missouri (Southwest Missouri) and has also lived in Arkansas and Florida.

Shari is retired from the University of Missouri School of Medicine where she was an administrative assistant in family medicine research. She used to work in church- related journalism.

Shari enjoys cooking, photography, graphic design, family history/ genealogy, and travel.

She has also jumped right in volunteering in the church office and helping with special events. We are thankful for her servant heart!

Shari's new member sponsor is Alice Moon.



Welcome to our Confirmation Class!

Our NEWEST CUCC members are:

- Kaden Lucas
- Morgan Lavelly
- Emmanuel Kibaro
- Josie Arms
- Claire Kespohl
- Samantha Schupp

Welcome to membership at Columbia United Church of Christ!

**MISSOURI MID-SOUTH CONFERENCE and
our UCC Financial Ministry Partners
present**

MONEY and MINISTRY



**Saturday, February 23, 2019
10:00 AM – 3:00 PM**

Columbia United Church of Christ
3201 Interstate 70 Dr. NW – Columbia, MO 65202
Cost: \$20/person (includes lunch)

Please register by Wednesday, February 20, 2019

Workshop topics include:

Trends in Giving: What Donors Want
Planned Giving: Utilizing an On-line Tool to Get Started
Roundtable Discussion – Best Practice Sharing

Supported by OPTICS, Church Building & Loan Fund, Cornerstone Fund, Insurance Board,
and the United Church Funds

LODO HAPPENINGS

Happy New Year from everyone at Little One's Day Out! We are excited to welcome back our LODO families after a wonderful holiday season with families and friends.

December brought much excitement as we neared Christmas and all its joyfulness as we celebrated the birth of Jesus. The students learned many concepts through our weekly themes: Gingerbread/Nursery Rhymes, Christmas, and the Nativity. LODO offered a special showing of "The First Noel" on Friday, December 14th.

Students were very excited to bring their favorite stuffed animal to snuggle during the show. Monday, December 17th was Pajama Party Day! Students and staff wore their favorite pajamas to school and celebrated with a special treat!

Our Christmas Program on Thursday December 22nd was full praise for our savior, Jesus!! Each class performed songs for LODO and CUCC families and enjoyed a cookie reception afterwards. Our pre-K class also had the opportunity to perform their portion of the program, "My Best-est Friend" by Bette Dale Moore, during the December Senior Luncheon.

Little One's Day Out is excited for the New Year! Our students will return from Christmas break on Thursday January 3rd. 2019 promises to be an exciting time for learning and friendships! Our January themes include New Year's, Winter/Winter Animals/Hibernation, Jonah and the Whale, Science, and Dental Health.

In January, KidSight will visit LODO on January 16th and 17th to give vision screenings to our students. This program is free and in past years has caught several vision concerns that alerted parents to the need for a vision screening by an ophthalmologist resulting in glasses and better vision for our students. It's amazing to see what a difference vision makes in a child's learning and behavior. We are very thankful for the KidSight program.

With love and laughter,
Ms. Erika



**Cheers to a
new year and
another
chance for us
to get it right.**

PARKING LOT SAFETY

Please drive slowly in the parking lot. Students and siblings can easily break away from adults in the parking lot. Please be diligent in keeping children with you at drop-off and pick-up times. Many concerned parents have noted students running back and forth, unattended, in the parking lot after school/at pick-up. Please remember that it is very difficult for those in vehicles to see children running in front of, between, and behind large vehicles. We appreciate your diligence in keeping everyone safe at LODO.

Mission with Chiapas

by Pastor Rick

Churches of the Missouri Mid-South Conference have travelled to Chiapas four times in the past six years, working alongside the Institute for Intercultural Studies and Research, one of our Global Ministries Mission partners in Chiapas. We have worked alongside them in towns and villages, learning about the people of Chiapas and the ways of life in the communities of Chiapas. We have also helped construct a new facility on the grounds at The Institute, a facility that will more than triple their institutional capacity and ability to do ministry with the people of their communities.

But the Institute is not the only Global Ministries Mission partner in Chiapas. On our last trip, we had the opportunity to work with another one of our Mission Partners; Melel Xojobal, an agency that works solely with children in need. Melel Xojobal means “True Light” in the indigenous Tzotzil language, and they focus on being a light of hope for children whose only other alternative is the dark of hopelessness.

The work of Melel Xojobal can be broken into three areas; early childhood work, support and advocacy for the rights of child workers, and work with young people. Melel Xojobal’s early childhood work focuses on girls and boys from 0 to 4 years old. Melel Xojobal works with children and their parents to address topics such as nutritional, physical, and social skills. Their work with child workers seeks to defend the rights of indigenous children who work in the streets, markets, and public areas of the city. Melel Xojobal seeks to see the children's working conditions improved through self-care strategies and risk reduction. Melel Xojobal also works with young people ages 13 to 18 to encourage and promote healthy lifestyles and self-protection strategies that revolve around prevention of substance abuse as well as finding dignified work.

Cara McKinney is our Global Ministries Missionary at Melel Xojobal. She worked with us on our last trip and she is going to be in Missouri early in 2019. We are working with Global Ministries to schedule Cara to come to our church and speak about her time with Melil Xojobal and the children we support through our gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing and Our Church’s Wider Mission. Watch for more information about when she will be here!



Middle School/High School Mission Plans for 2019

Summer 2018 offered two mission trips for our MS and HS youth; trips that took us to St. Louis and to Arkansas working with Heifer Project, Lydia’s House, several community gardens and food pantries, and other mission agencies. Summer 2019 promises to be an even bolder expression of faith as we plan our mission trip activity

Senior High Mission Trip July 21-25: We are talking to Hiram Farm in Ohio, a “sheltered workshop” for adults with autism and other developmental disabilities about the possibilities of a mission project with them, working in community with their clients.

Middle School Mission Trip June 9-12: We will travel to St. Louis and work with Lydia’s House, Every Child’s Hope (ECH), Unleashing Potential (formerly Neighborhood Houses), and other service agencies to immerse ourselves in God’s Loving Community

These mission trips will require funding, and we will be participating in several fundraisers this spring to fund the trips. If you would like to help underwrite the cost of this mission activity, talk to Pastor Rick or Christine Staelens.

OUTREACH & ADVOCACY MINISTRY

December Food Bank News



On December 11 a small, but mighty crew from CUCC, along with several other volunteers, sorted and bagged over 4300 pounds (yes, 2 tons) of fresh potatoes donated by Backer's. Many thanks to those who took time out during the holiday season to help: Isaiah Jackson-Post, Connie Loveless, Alice Moon, Shari Schubert, and Mahree Skala. Next date is January 8 at 6:00 pm; please put in on your calendars!

Loaves N Fishes

The December 17th meal at L&F consisted of Mostaccioli left from a church luncheon, chili mac (made with chili left from the Festival of Sharing quilt auction), lettuce salad, and an assortment of desserts. Servers were Shari Schubert, Brenda & John Muench, David Martin, Kim Oberle, Nikki Aguerro and one of her students, Nina. We served approximately 80 guests with twenty seconds and twelve carryouts. Thanks to everyone!

VACC—Gratitude for Your Generosity

The members and friends of CUCC again showed their generosity and concern for others during the 2018 VAC Christmas drive. Thanks to your support, 35 people from 10 families received gifts and food money for a Merry Christmas. Your monetary gifts also helped another 30 people with holiday food.

We have received numerous thank-you notes. Here are some samples:

"Thank you for having a good heart to think about others . . . we are very thankful for everything."

"Muchas gracias por darnos estos regalos que Dios los bendiga."

"My family and I would like to thank you for making our Christmas wonderful. We are having hard times right now with paying bills on time. but you saved us by adopting us with Christmas gifts. We really appreciate it."

"We thank you for your generosity. May God bless you! My children are happy with their gifts and they also thank you."

"May God continue to bless you and we hope you have a wonderful Christmas."

Camp MoVal Summer 2019

Camp MoVal is the place to be this Summer! The following camps and activities are happening at MoVal this summer and you are invited to be part of the fun:

April 26-28	Conference Women's Event	All CUCC women are invited!
May 24-27	Family Camp	A special time for families to enjoy camp
June 2-7	Adventures in Community	Adults with Developmental Disabilities
June 2-8	Counselors in Training	Ages 16 and up
June 9-12	Beginners Camp	for those entering 1-3 grade in the fall
June 12-15	Lower Junior Camp	for those entering 2-4 grade in the fall
June 9-15	High School Outback Camp	a more rugged camp for High Schoolers
June 16-22	Middle School Outback Camp	a more rugged camp for Middle School
June 23-29	Upper Junior Camp	for those entering 4-6 grade in the fall
July 7-13	High School Camp	for those entering 10-13 grade in the fall
July 14-20	Middle School Camp	for those entering 7-9 grade in the fall
July 26-29	Grandparents Camp	a special time for grandparents and their grandchildren to enjoy camp together

The registration materials for Camp MoVal Summer 2019 will be mailed to former campers the first week in January, and to churches shortly after. We will strive to have all our registrations returned to church by March 1, so they can be mailed to camp by the registration deadline. Watch for more information and materials soon!

NURTURE AND EDUCATION TEAM

Confirmation Journeys

On December 2, six CUCC confirmation students were confirmed and welcomed into the life of Columbia United Church of Christ as full communicant members. Josie Arms, Claire Kespohl, Emmanuel Kibaro, Kaden Lucas, Morgan Lavelly and Samantha Schupp are our newest members as of December 2. Make sure to welcome them and congratulate them on beginning this next stage of their Christian journey!

Our newest confirmation class has begun. Ember Piersee, Noah Braedehoft, Sophie Schupp, Ryan Schoeneberg and Andie Rapp have all made the commitment to put aside the other distractions in life that keep us away from God; ball games, dance rehearsals and other extra-curricular activities; and focus on developing their journey of faith more closely this year.

We meet most Wednesdays, and with three months in, the class is almost ¼ over! We have spent the past two months digging deep into who God is and who Jesus is. The rest of the year, our classes will build on the firm foundation of faith we have already built. Please keep our Confirmation Students in your prayers this year, and thank God for the blessings these youth are in the life of Columbia UCC!

The primary purpose of the Memorial Education Fund is to encourage theological or Christian education in the United Church of Christ. The fund is to provide financial aid in the form of grants to any woman or man in the congregation who is preparing for ordained ministry, or other religious vocations. Persons are to be (1) encouraged by the church to pursue their religious educational goals, and (2) assisted financially as funds will allow.

Funds may secondarily be used 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 as the committee shall determine on a case by case basis.

Greeter for Sunday School

Beginning on Sunday, January 6, 2019, Nurture & Education will be having a greeter available from 8:45-9:15 a.m. each Sunday morning, at the front doors to welcome everyone, and help anyone with questions, including where classes are located.

The RUBRIC for our Sunday School classes – Preschool through 8th Grade

Nurture & Education, along with leadership from Pastor Rick, has developed a RUBRIC, noting what information each Sunday School class will cover at their grade level. This has been designed to show that our Sunday School is providing intentional teaching. The RUBRIC is posted in each Sunday School classroom, Preschool-8th Grade. This month we will share the items on the RUBRIC for the PRESCHOOL Class:

Preschool

- ✦ Memorize: The Lord's Prayer
- ✦ Introduce the Ten Commandments
- ✦ Learn about Prayer – how do you pray, where can you pray, what do you pray for
- ✦ Names in the Bible: Mary & Joseph; Zacchaeus; Ruth & Naomi; Noah; Moses
- ✦ Bible Stories: Jesus' Birth; Palm Sunday; Easter; Noah's Ark; Tower of Babel; Creation
- ✦ Christian Principles: Care for Creation; Love God; Love our Neighbors; Share; Love and Respect our Parents; Pray; Give Thanks; Accepting of Diversity; Forgive Others

Copier Donation Opportunity

The new copier is here! It is installed, set-up, and working well. At our November Council meeting, the Church Council voted to purchase our new office copier from GFI Digital for \$5,618. It is a thirty-five page per minute Ricoh copier; a much better one than the one we were leasing. As part of the deal, Ricoh paid off our remaining lease term, and is shipping the copier back to the distributor for us; saving the church approximately \$2,165 in anticipated expenses on the old machine in 2019.

This new machine is a purchase, not a lease, which is a much more economical plan in the long run for CUCC. However, this does mean that we had to spend \$5,618 from our Memorial Funds Historical Fund for the purchase. If anyone would like to make a donation to the Memorial Funds Historical Fund to offset the purchase of this copier, in whole or in part, perhaps in memory or honor of a loved one, your donation would be greatly appreciated. See Judi Privitt or Christine Staelens if you have any questions, or you can leave a check in the church office or offering plate designated "Memorial Fund-copier."

Do You Like Food and Fellowship?

On the fourth Thursday of each month (excluding the summer months of June and July) we get together for a Luncheon we like to call the CUCC Lunch Bunch (formerly known as the Senior Luncheon). This luncheon is open to EVERYONE!

It happens at noon and is a potluck style meal, most times with a speaker who informs us of needs or events in the community.

The next luncheon is scheduled for January 24. Come, bring a dish to share, enjoy a meal, great conversation, and listen to Pastor Rick share about INESIN's mission in Chiapas, Mexico.

New Bible Study – The Season of Epiphany

"January 6th is the first Sunday in the church season of Epiphany! It is the Season of Light! The theme, Jesus is the Light of the World. The Christmas Star has come to symbolize the Light of Christ, illuminating a world shrouded in darkness.

During January, we will be studying two Scriptures, one from Matthew (2:1-12, 16) and one from Luke (2:1-20) in an effort to better understand why each one of these writers included nativity stories in their gospels. We will also shed light on whether or not the Christmas Star is legend or historical reality.

Reverend Beckmann will lead the discussion! Beckmann is a retired pastor having served churches in Maine, Indiana, Michigan and Missouri. He is also an amateur astronomer who has won international recognition for his work as a visual nova hunter. He has studied the Christmas star nativity stories in the gospels for more than twenty five years."

Everyone is welcome to join us!

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.

Columbia United Church of Christ Eat with Eight 2019

Want to get to know others in the congregation better? Sign-up for Eat with Eight/Dine with Nine by Jan. 6th in the gathering area, posted on the bulletin board, or email Anne Heine at Heine@missouri.edu with your contact info. (name, address, phone). Ideally this gathering begins in January and ends in April, with May as a catch-up month if needed. It's open to all and we encourage singles to join in the fun. We will match you up with someone or seat you with Dine with Nine. Subs are needed to fill seats of people who aren't able to make it, so sign-up if you want to fill in and try it out.

The meal can be at any time of the month that is most convenient to the group. It can be at the host's home or at a restaurant. If it is at a restaurant, each person pays their own bill. It can be an evening meal, a breakfast, or a picnic. Be creative!

If it is at the host's home, each couple will be responsible for a part of the meal. Couple #1 is host and responsible for the main dish and beverages. Couple #2 brings a salad. Couple #3 brings a vegetable dish and bread. Couple #4 brings desert.

Hosts have the responsibility of contacting the group and firming up a date that works best for the group. If someone can't make it, ask a couple on the sub list, invite another couple from the congregation who might like to fill-in for one month, or invite a couple you might like to introduce to our church family.

It is a good idea for the host couple to contact their group as soon as possible as we are all busy with other commitments. You can double up in any particular month if it is agreeable to others in the group, but we try to stick with the schedule of Jan. through April, with May used as needed.

If you have any questions, call (or [e-mail](mailto:Heine@missouri.edu)) Anne Heine at 573-529-1543. Looking forward to this fun fellowship activity!

Youth Groups Looking Forward to a Busy Year!

The CUCC Middle High and High School Youth Ministry Team has put together an ambitious year of programming for our MS/HS crowd! Our objective, as we put together our schedule, was to have one Middle School event each month, one High School event each month, and one combined MS/HS event. The goal for our MS/HS Youth Ministry Program is to have a schedule that intentionally combines Fun/Fellowship, Education, Worship, and Service in our Youth Ministry Program.

For our Youth Ministry Program to be successful, we would ask that your youth participate in as many programs as possible. As they live and learn and grow together, a bond is formed that truly exemplifies God's love in the world.

We have several Youth Leaders working with the Youth and chaperoning these trips, but we could always use more help. Talk to Pat Forward or Pastor Rick if you would like to help with this program!

Upcoming Youth activities include:

January 6 HS only	Prepare a meal at RMD House
January 11-12 MS/HS	Lock-in at church
January 13 MS only	Prepare a meal at RMD House
January 20 HS only	Trip to Sky Zone
February 16-18 HS only	Conference Youth Event at MoVal
February 23 MS/HS	Fundraising Meal at Church for Conference Event

Young Adult Ministry Takes Off!

The CUCC Young Adult Ministry is starting off well, gathering a critical mass of College Students and other Young Adults who are excited to be participating in this opportunity to share and grow their faith. With only a month or so since this ministry began, we have a steady core of eight college students who are participating regularly, with another dozen or so who have shown up a few times, or at least expressed interest in participating once the hectic pace of September slows down to a steadier beat.

There have been two key components to this Young Adult Ministry. The first is a Sunday Morning Faith Formation Class. This group has met in the rear of the Sanctuary each Sunday since September, with six—eight Young Adults participating each week. They have gathered to share stories of their common life and relate how their faith holds them in tension with the culture of today's world. They have enjoyed learning and laughing together, building community.

The other component has been a weekly meeting downtown. We have met at either the Heidelberg or at Kaldi's Coffee on Thursday evenings from 8:00-10:00 p.m. We have had as many as 13 participate in this activity, not always the same group from week to week.

We have also talked about mission opportunities we can participate in together. As this group solidifies, we will be planning work at Loaves and Fishes, the Food Bank, and Ronald McDonald House. We also hope to take a Mission Trip this Spring, and in 2020 a Mission trip to Chiapas!

The process of building a new ministry such as this is slow going, but we are off to great start. We hope to draw more UCC Young Adults into our activities as we go, and others as well. Keep this ministry in your prayers as these Young Adults claim their identity as God's children, active in the world!

If you receive an e-mail from Helen Schultz (hschultz@centurylink.net), with the Membership and Care Team, please respond as quickly as possible as she is working on updating church information in the record book. Keeping all our member and non-member information up to date allows us to be good stewards. Thank you for your cooperation!

ATTENTION!

Lost and Found

We have a lost and found drawer in the office. It is located in the island and labeled "Lost & Found."

Here are the current contents:

- A small gold hoop earring with blue, pink, green, and orange bling
- A stainless steel ring with "friends" stamped into it
- A Life Factory travel mug covered in holey blue silicon sleeve
- A black headband with a pink elastic section on it
- A black t-shirt
- A black belt
- A lavender glasses case with cheater in it
- A Christmas gift—Snowman gift bag with cookies in it

If any of these items are yours, you may claim them at the church office.

Reminder:

The Church Administrator, April Rothweiler, will be out on maternity leave in February and March.

The Church Office will be staffed with volunteers during those months. Please be gracious and kind to the ladies who will be running the show while April is out. Show them your appreciation for giving their time so generously to our church.

Memorials Given in Memory of Dave Schroer

Given By:

Tim & Christine Staelens

Memorials Given in Memory of Dorothy Kyger

Given By:

Walter & Carol Stoll
James & Connie Loveless
Charlie & Evenlyn Marcks
Tim & Christine Staelens
Dean & Jan Barry

Sunday Volunteer Schedule for January

Below is the Sunday Volunteer Schedule for January. 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 one of these roles or a role in the future, please let one of the leaders know. We appreciate you and we're glad you have chosen CUCG as your church home!

Date	Greeters	Ushers	Worship Leaders	Acolyte	Sound Booth	Hospitality
01/06	Helen Schultz Audrey Lasley	NEED	Josie Arms Claire Kespohl	Abby Dennis	Brent Marcks	NEED
01/13	Carol Duermeyer Tracy Bach	NEED	Ember Piersee Andie Rapp	Riley Hayward	Jamie Rapp	NEED
01/20	John Muench Brenda Muench	NEED	Pat Forward	Grace Evans	John Graves	NEED
01/27	Stefanie Zimny Pat Forward	NEED	Jessica Lucas	Grace Evans	Pete Jaberg	NEED

ON THE CHURCH CALENDAR IN JANUARY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>6 9:00am Sunday School 9:30am Fellowship 10:30am Worship 12pm Inclusion Initiative 2-5pm MS to RMDH</p>	<p>7 10am Staff Meeting 6:30-8pm Chinese Choir</p>	<p>8 9am-1pm Quilters 6:30pm Music & Worship</p>	<p>9 6:30pm Chapel Ringers 7:30pm Celebration Singers 7pm Confirmation</p>	<p>10 9:30am Women's Fellowship 7pm ONA</p>	<p>11 Young Adult Camp @ MoVal Middle/High School Lock-in</p>	<p>12 Young Adult Camp @ MoVal</p>
<p>13 7:30am Men's Breakfast 9:00am Sunday School 9:30am Fellowship 10:30am Worship 12pm Nurture & Ed 2-5pm HS to RMDH</p>	<p>14 10am Staff Meeting 6:30-8pm Chinese Choir</p>	<p>15 9am-1pm Quilters 6pm Finance & Stewardship</p>	<p>16 6:30pm Chapel Ringers 7:30pm Celebration Singers 7pm Confirmation</p>	<p>17 5:45pm LODO Board 6pm Membership & Care 7pm CoMO Values Diversity</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p>
<p>20 9:00am Sunday School 9:30am Fellowship 10:30am Worship Communicator Articles Due</p>	<p>21 LODO CLOSED 10am Staff Meeting 6:30-8pm Chinese Choir</p>	<p>22 9am-1pm Quilters</p>	<p>23 6:30pm Chapel Ringers 7:30pm Celebration Singers 7pm Confirmation</p>	<p>24 12pm Senior Luncheon</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p>
<p>27 9:00am Sun. School 9:30am Fellowship 10:30am Worship Annual Meeting Chili Cook-Off</p>	<p>28 6:30pm Council</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30 6:30pm Chapel Ringers 7:30pm Celebration Singers 7pm Confirmation</p>	<p>31</p>		

THE COMMUNICATOR

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



“Approach the *New Year* with **Resolve** to find the **Opportunities** *hidden* in each *New Day*.”

Interested in Church Membership?

If so, please contact
Rev. Rick Oberle
for further information
rick@columbiaucc.com

**Become
Part of
Our
Church
Family**

Columbia United Church of Christ Mission Statement

CUCC celebrates God's boundless love by:
Welcoming all God's Children;
Nurturing Faith and Spiritual Growth;
Challenging and inspiring everyone
with vibrant worship;
Building a supportive church family;
Transforming both the congregation and community
through service and outreach