

THE COMMUNICATOR

April 2021



APRIL IS NATIONAL
AUTISM
AWARENESS
MONTH

From the Pastor's Keyboard

"Miracles in our Lives"

As I am writing this, I am reflecting on the fact that I am the recipient of a miracle. I have been part of a life and culture changing event; God's blessings at work in the world. You see, I have been vaccinated!

I received my second COVID vaccine on March 25, and, after the appropriate two-week waiting time, I will consider myself "safe enough" to begin visiting people again; an aspect of ministry that has not been part of my life for over a year. I was thrilled to be able to receive the vaccine, thrilled that we have been blessed in Boone County with enough resources to make the vaccine plentiful, and grateful for God's provision in our world, making the vaccine possible.

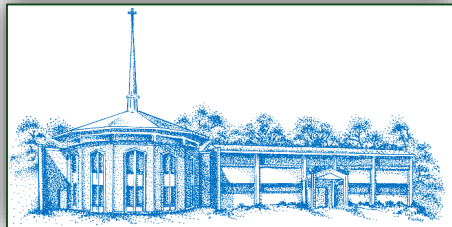
Now there are those who would question me calling the COVID vaccine a miracle. But I believe that miracles happen in our world every day, often through the systems God has put into place. The scientific world, acting on God given knowledge, investigates the intricacies of God's microscopic creations and, based on communal data gathered over many decades (God loves working in community), discovers how to engineer a microscopic solution to counteract the virus that has threatened our lives. God, working through the rules of science, working through scientific minds, working through economic systems, working through community; brings us a blessing that will allow us to return to normal lives. That is a miracle!

There is a scene in the TV show "Joan of Arcadia" where Joan asks God for a miracle to make her brother walk again. God explains that miracles often happen through the actions of people, through the rules of nature, and through the intricacies of scientific discovery. We expect miracles to be flashy and dramatic, like the parting of the Red Sea, but often miracles are small and indistinguishable from "coincidences" in our lives. Scientific discovery, especially discovery that will change the whole world for the better (including the COVID vaccine, flu vaccines, or other vaccines such as MMR), certainly fall into the miracle category.

God's miracles often happen through us. When we choose to receive the vaccine, we are participating in the miracle of herd immunity. Through our choice, we are not only making the world safer for ourselves and our families, we are also participating in community, making the world safer for everyone. This is God's miraculous power at work, and it is happening through us.

As we move into a managed COVID world, reopening ourselves to one another and the opportunities in our midst, it is easy to dismiss God's miracles as coincidences, human achievement, or opportune happenings. But God's miracles are around us every day. What miracle is happening in your life? Did you almost miss it? Keep alert! God's miracles are happening every day; and they are happening through you!

-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

[Ed Rollins](#)

Music Coordinator

[Amy Crousore](#)

Organist/Accompanist

[Erika Maltsbarger](#)

Director, Little One's Day Out

[Raj Tolani](#)

Financial Secretary

Sunday Worship Schedule

Sunday School
9:00am for all ages

10:30am- Worship
Online and in-person

Office Hours:
Monday through Friday
9am- 3pm

Phone:
(573)-445-7931

Email:
office@columbiaucc.com

Website:
www.columbiaucc.com

Women's Fellowship Update

Women's Fellowship will gather on **Thursday, April 8 at 9:30 a.m.** in the Gathering Area upstairs.

Our time together begins with a light brunch, supplied by two of the women on a rotational basis. The food is always good! After we eat, we begin our Bible Study. The current study is based on the topic of lamentation throughout the Bible. We use a curriculum titled, "Into the Light, Finding Hope Through Prayers of Lament." After Bible Study and prayer, we have a short business meeting to plan for upcoming activities.

All women of the church are invited to join us — no matter your age or who you are! This is a great time to make new friends, to renew old acquaintances, and to reconnect with God through the scriptures. For more information, contact [Mariann Bullerd](#), [Melba Shaffer](#), or [April Rothweiler](#).

CUCC Lunch Bunch

CUCC Lunch Bunch will meet on Thursday, APRIL 22, in the Fellowship Hall at noon with a carry-in meal. This group is open to everyone regardless of age or any other determining factor. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Cleo Kottwitz and Lloyd Viehland will present a program about Heifer International, including some video slides from Lloyd's father from over 60 years ago!

All are welcome to join us. Bring a dish to share, or a sack lunch if you wish. Wear your mask! We will practice social distancing and hygienic serving procedures. Come join the Fun!

**SAVE THE DATE TO
CLEAN UP COLUMBIA!**

(Or at least I-70 Drive NW)
Mark your calendars for
April 24, 9-11 a.m. as we will
"Clean Up [our portion of]
Columbia!"

**CORONAVIRUS VACCINE
INFORMATION**

The Boone County Health Department has released the COVID-19 Vaccine information. You can use this [link](#) to read up on the vaccine and hopefully answer any questions you may have.

UPDATES ON CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

May 16, 2021 — Annual Congregational Meeting hosted by the Church Council. This will be our first Annual Meeting under our new programming structure! Lunch will be served prior to the meeting. Mark your calendars!

2021 BUDGET — The 2021 Budget was approved unanimously at our Budget Meeting last fall. This Budget calls for a modest 5.2% increase in spending for 2021. If you would like a copy of the 2021 approved budget, contact [April](#) in the church office, and she will send you a copy. (Our fiscal year is still the calendar year; it did not change when the By-Laws changed the programming year to an academic schedule. The programming year is now June 1-May 31.)

Dear Pastor Rick and UCC,

Thank you for your generous gift. You are helping us start 2021 with the resources we need to serve our neighbors in need and to continue to help those hardest hit by the pandemic.

We started the new year with a new name, **Love Columbia**, and the announcement of a new location, 1209 E. Walnut. Our mission has not changed, but we are now 100% local in affiliation. None of this would be possible without donors like you.

Thank you again for your partnership and love,
Jane Williams, Executive Director



CUCC,

Thank you for your gift to the **Heart of Missouri United Way**. Through your investment, we are able to strategically fund and support specific programs that benefit our community for today and tomorrow. By standing together, businesses, volunteers, donors, and agencies impact the community and make everyone stronger, making a long-term and lasting difference.

You are the heart and soul of the Heart of Missouri United Way!

Dear **Emmaus Homes** friends,

I feel so lucky to be the one to say THANK YOU for your most recent gift to the men and women of Emmaus! We are proud to be a leader in providing services to people with developmental disabilities for over 125 years. Our standard of care could not be possible without you. Government funding may help subsidize our services, but it's people like you who help us go above and beyond providing basic care.

Wishing you a pot o' gold and all the joy your heart can hold!

Sincerely, Lisa A Key, CFO

Dear Pastor Rick and the CUCC family,

Thank you for your gift. Your generosity makes an impact in the lives of the individuals who **VAC** serves daily through our **FISH Fund**.

Your support helps the Faith in Service to Humanity (FISH) Fund, a partnership between VAC and local faith based organizations. Funds donated to FISH are designated for additional services an individual may need to bridge gaps between crisis and stability to improve their quality of life.

It continues to be a critical time for all of us, but for some, the crisis means making hard choices for themselves and their families. Many have lost their job, had hours cut, or other circumstances that have led them to need assistance. Partners like you help us keep them sheltered.

Thank you again,
Ed Stansberry, Executive Director
Heather Stewart, Director of Development

Dear Rev. Oberle and CUCC,

The **Food Bank for Central and Northeast Missouri** is grateful for your support as we start our new year. Your donation will make a difference in the lives of those facing food insecurity in our community, especially as the COVID-19 Pandemic continues to make life difficult for families.

Gratefully,
Lindsay Young Lopez, President and CEO

Dear friends and partners in ministry,

Thank you for your recent donation to the **Columbia Area Older Adult Ministry**. We appreciate your continued partnership.

2020 was a difficult year for so many, especially those living in long-term care and retirement communities. They were unable to see their families in person or receive hugs from them and others. Currently, I am allowed to be with the independent residents at Lenoir Woods. I co-lead a Caregiver Support Group there twice a month and a Bible study with their chaplain each week, as well as preach at the Sunday afternoon Vespers Service. As COVID numbers decrease, and vaccines are administered, we look forward to seeing the residents in person soon!

Praying 2021 will be a better year,
Sally A Robinson,

I wish to thank everyone for the cards, thoughts, prayers, and food during my recent bout of health issues. I received a good report during my last check-up on March 5. I am starting rehab and will be back on the road to recovery. Thanks be to God, and to all of you whom God has blessed me with.

Blessings to all of you,
Lloyd of London (Viehland)

CUCC LIVESTREAMING— NEW EQUIPMENT UPDATE



Our new livestreaming equipment was installed December 1, and over the past two months, James Melton and Mike Pierson, along with Brent Marcks, Pete Jaberg, and others have been honing their skills at using it.

Our two new cameras are controlled from the Technology Booth (formerly the Sound Booth) remotely to Zoom in on worship leaders. What was once a one person job in the old Sound Booth has quickly evolved into a three person job; one on sound, one on cameras, and one advancing slides.

If you are interested in learning how to operate this equipment, contact [Mike Pierson](#) or [James Melton](#). They are putting together training videos and would love to do some personal training for interested parties. With the new process, it will be more important than ever to expand our pool of volunteers.

UPDATE: Our third camera and ambient microphone have been installed! This will make the viewing experience even more enjoyable, as it will pick up sounds of congregational singing and speaking and will enhance the sound quality of the organ through the livestream. We hope those who are livestreaming will notice the upgrade!

Improved Home Heating Bill Assistance Through LIHEAP Energy Crisis Intervention Program

Governor Parson announced that the [Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program](#) (LIHEAP) Energy Crisis Intervention Program will improve assistance offered to eligible low-income Missourians.

When a household's energy source has been shut off or is at risk of disconnection, the winter Energy Crisis Intervention Program (ECIP), which runs November through May, pays the minimum amount needed on the fuel bill to get the household out of crisis. Starting this winter, ECIP will pledge the maximum disconnect amount (up to \$800) toward an eligible participant's owed balance.

In FY2020, Missouri provided \$78.6 million in LIHEAP assistance to over 108,000 households. In addition to meeting the income criteria, low-income Missourians must also meet the following criteria to be eligible for winter heating assistance through LIHEAP:

- Be responsible for paying home heating costs,
- Have \$3,000 or less in bank accounts, retirement accounts, or investments, and
- Be a U.S. citizen or legally admitted for permanent residence.

To learn more about the LIHEAP program, view this [short video](#). Missourians can submit the [LIHEAP application form](#) online.

NEW TRANSPORTATION FUND ESTABLISHED, READY FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

In 2021, the Finance and Stewardship Ministry Team will be working with the Membership & Care Ministry Team and the Church Council to set parameters for our new Transportation Fund and begin marketing it. We hope to set a "goal" for growth of this fund so we can begin utilizing it to meet transportation challenges in the congregation. This fund is open to contributions from fellowship groups or individuals through estate planning, recurring gifts, or one-time donations. For this fund to grow, it is up to individual members to make it happen.

VAN CONTRIBUTION RECEIVED— FUND TO START WORKING!

We are pleased to announce that the Gregory Family has donated their Handicapped Accessible Minivan to the church, and the church has accepted it! It is here! Ongoing maintenance for this van could come from the new Transportation Fund, after we establish the parameters for it. We have also received donations to this fund already from several members. Many thanks to the Gregory family and to members of CUCC who have made this new ministry a priority in the life of the church!

We have several church members with transportation challenges, especially our homebound members. The new van, donated by the Gregory Family, will be used to help address these challenges, utilizing the resources of this fund. We can also use this fund to purchase another vehicle when the time comes, to rent other vehicles on occasion, or to come up with some other creative option to provide transportation options to care for our members. This fund could also be used for short term rental goals to transport members to and from church or for special church trips or other special projects identified and authorized by the Church Council.

For years, some in the congregation have lamented our inability to provide transportation options to our homebound members, youth, fellowship groups, and others. Those dreams are becoming a reality! To contribute to this fund, check with [Sue Ann Shaefer](#), [Brent Marcks](#), [George Zimny](#), or another member of the Church Council. And thank you again to the Gregory Family for their donation!

MODERATOR'S MOMENT

MISSIONARY MOMENT– ELENA HUEGEL

“What do you need for tomorrow?” Jorge, a quiet, attentive twelve year old asks me in Spanish, unsure of the words to formulate the question in a language so different from Tzeltal Mayan, his mother tongue. I pantomime the items as I speak to make sure that he understands me. “Can you get a post hole digger, a bucket, and a wheelbarrow full of compost?” He seems unsure of the word compost. “Will old leaves do?” and smiles when I nod and say “yes!”



Before breakfast, just as the sun burns off the fog, Jorge slogs through the mud to the church. He motions for me to follow him down the path, and I welcome the opportunity for a walk. We reach his family’s adobe house and walk through his mother’s patio which is bursting with every color of flower imaginable. Pointing to the wheelbarrow full of composted leaves, a bucket with water, and the pothole digger, he looks shyly at me waiting for affirmation. “This is exactly what we need!” I exclaim, backing up my words with a pat on his shoulder.

After breakfast, a group of twenty or so children, ages 2 to 12, gather, wiggling and laughing in excitement. First, we play a memory game displaying different Chiapan trees. It doesn’t take long for them to get the hang of matching trees to their descriptions and identify three or so that they have in their own community.

Next, we play a composting game and again they are quick to figure out what items will biodegrade into compost and which will not. They understand that the seed of a tree can grow in the pile of leaves and vegetable peels, but not in the pile of plastic.

I show them the two native trees we are going to plant. Both have medicinal properties and will grow to provide good branches for firewood. I ask them to draw how they imagine the trees will look if we take care of them. Soon we have a forest of drawings which we proudly display on the church wall.

For the next part of the tree lesson, I pull out some play dough and ask them to shape all the things they can think of that either come from trees or depend on trees. Soon we have play-dough horses, who need the trees for shade and food, bird’s nests with eggs, snakes, bugs, books, pencils, shovels with wooden handles, and many other shapes appearing and disappearing as I try to learn their Tzeltal names.

Finally, I show them how to plant the trees and protect them from the cows. Then, with Jorge’s help, the children get to work. When the two trees have been planted with compost, watered and fenced, we choose names for the trees. One is “kuxlejal” which means “life,” in Tzeltal and the other is named “slamalil kinal,” which mean “quiet place,” but is also the expression for peace. We hold hands in a circle around both trees, and we pray a blessing over them that they might grow strong, full of life and provide a quiet place of peace.

Deforestation is one of many environmental challenges in the state of Chiapas, Mexico where Global Ministries partners with the Institute for Intercultural Studies and Research. As we drive into this village on the edge of the Lacandon Jungle, the largest rainforest in North America, we can see large swaths of denuded mountainsides. When the trees are replaced by grazing cattle, the rains subside, the soils erode, and the wildlife disappears. Timber companies, mining companies, and ranches either convince or coerce local indigenous groups to sell their lands. Meanwhile, local communities fight for remaining patches of woods to claim the firewood and lumber they need for daily life.

The members of the church in this community have invited the staff of Institute for Intercultural Studies and Research to come and talk about starting a three pronged family food security project which could include tree planting, organic vegetable gardens, and raising small farm animals, depending on interest and need. Even though the church will provide a meeting space, the project will be open to any family who is interested.

I doubt the children or the women will remember much of what I said in my visit with them, since we don’t speak the same language. I am convinced, however, that they will not forget what we *did* together: planting trees, playing games, making crafts, laughing, and getting to know one another. I hope that the two trees we planted will become tangible reminders that this project invites us to continue to learn from each other, care for the community and natural environment on which we all depend, and celebrate good “life” and “peace” with a blessing from the children.



LODO MINISTRY TEAM

LODO NEWS

LODO is back from Spring Break and ready to enjoy our last seven weeks of the school year! We have had so much fun in our classrooms this year, and we have many wonderful learning themes planned for the month of April!

As the annual Conference on the Young Years was moved to a virtual format this year, LODO planned its own Professional Development Day on Friday, March 12. We are very grateful to Judi Privitt for helping us create a full day of in-person learning for our staff. Presenters included Judi Privitt, Judi Schoonover, and Mickie Trim. We learned so much from these ladies who were CPS Early Childhood Educators!

Our teachers enjoyed meeting with parents in March for Parent/Teacher Conferences. We always love filling parents in on the amazing things their children are learning at preschool!

Little One's Day Out Important April Dates

April 4 & 5

Easter Celebration & Egg Hunts

April 14 & 15

KidSight Vision Screening

May 20

Pre-K Graduation, 6:30 p.m.

May 21

Last Day of 2020/2021 School Year

August 30

First Day of 2021/2022 School Year



Enrollment for the 2021-2022 School Year is in full swing! Please share with friends and family to let them know that we have limited space available for Fall 2021!

Interested families should contact Erika Maltsbarger at

LittleOnesDayOut@yahoo.com or 573-445-2661 for availability and to schedule a tour. Additional information can be found on our website at www.columbiaucc.com/lodohome.

With love and laughter,
Erika Maltsbarger, Director



INCLUSION AND AFFIRMATION MINISTRY TEAM

Happy Spring to everyone!

2021 continues to uncover racial disparities in our nation. This has been, and will continue to be, a major focus for us to share with the congregation.

We have also prioritized inclusion for individuals with developmental challenges. With assistance from their advocates at Emmaus Homes, we participated in a writing campaign to highlight and advocate for much needed funding increase from the Missouri lawmakers. (If you haven't yet sent in a postcard, let Pastor Rick or me know, and one of us will assist you.)

An upcoming emphasis will be supporting a ban on the practice of "conversion therapy" for teens and adults of the LGBTQ+ community. What is conversion therapy? Here is part of Wikipedia explanation: Conversion therapy is the pseudoscientific practice of trying to change an individual's sexual orientation from homosexual or bisexual to heterosexual using psychological, physical, or spiritual interventions. There is no reliable evidence that sexual orientation can be changed, and medical institutions warn that conversion therapy practices are ineffective and potentially harmful.

Missouri legislators have introduced several bills that are aimed at discriminating against that same community. One such bill would make it a crime for doctors, and even parents, to support gender identity treatments for transgender youth. To be clear, should this bill go forward, it would make it a crime for parents to accept their child's true identity and help them achieve it. We will be keeping an eye on this legislation and will advocate against its passing.

We continue to work toward providing church services to those without current assess. DVD's are being made, and I'm working towards getting equipment to those who need it. If you have a need, in this area, please let Pastor Rick or me know.

As we all go about our day in this wonderful diverse world that God has made, let us share joy, peace, and hope with all we meet. Alisa Lau-Sieckman, Chair



MAKE PLANS NOW TO ATTEND PRIDEFEST IN COLUMBIA AUGUST 28

The Mid-Missouri Pridefest will take place at Rose Music Hall on August 28, 2021. Make plans now to attend! The theme of this year's event is "Pride Lives On." This event is a great time to celebrate God's inclusive love for all of God's children, including and especially those who have been disenfranchised and oppressed by others. Columbia UCC will have a booth there, as we have in years past, and will be sharing the message of God's Inclusive Love with all who attend. We will be looking for people to staff the booth; if you are interested, contact [Alisa Lau-Sieckman](#), [Tricia Price](#), or [Pastor Rick](#)!



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.



Holy Week Schedule

Maundy Thursday *“Love One Another”*

Thursday 4/1, 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall

Special music by Harry Beckett

Good Friday *“Tenebrae”*

Friday 4/2, 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary*

Special music by Harry Beckett and Amy Crousore

Easter Sunday

Sunday 4/4

Easter Sunrise Service *“In the Garden”*

6:30 a.m. at the Shelter House

Special music by Kristin Veteto

Breakfast

7:15-8:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall

Hosted by Men’s Fellowship

Sunday School Celebration/Egg Hunt

9:00-10:00 a.m., PreK-8th grade, meet upstairs

To register: e-mail office@columbiaucc.com or scan box to the right

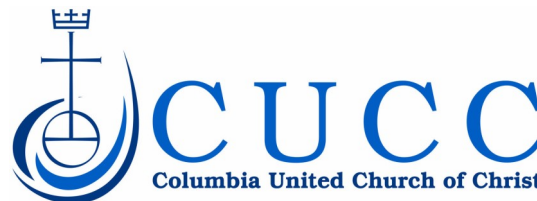
Easter Worship Service* *“He is Risen”*

10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary

*let's
Worship
together*



*- Indicates service will be livestreamed
www.columbiaucc.com



FINANCE AND STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY TEAM

Springtime is Stewardship Time!

Happy Spring!

The Resurrection of Christ and the renewal of nature gives us motivation to celebrate. Columbia UCC's stewardship is another reason we should celebrate. Our members are generous with their time and talents. This generosity many times is given quietly, but we all get to reap the benefits. Flowers on the altar, live streaming of our services, Sunday school for our kids and adults, a caring day care/learning environment for little ones, and ministry teams who care about providing CUCC a welcoming environment to worship. These ministry teams also give of their time to ensure the church stays on the path of our strategic current and future plan.

Our Outreach & Advocacy funds have helped to improve many lives in Columbia and around the world. The list is long but here are a few: Food Bank, Habitat for Humanity, VAC families, Loaves and Fishes, Refugee Resettlement, One Great Hour of Sharing, Blankets, for Church World Service, and Emmaus Homes.

Want to keep the joy of the season of renewal? Consider giving a piece of your time and talent to CUCC.

- Sue Ann



NEW ENTRY AT CHURCH- FAITHFUL CONGREGATIONAL STEWARDSHIP

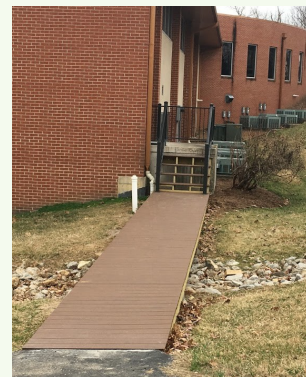
Have you noticed the new entryway at church? (Pictures below) The old wooden plank walkway and staircase to the north stairwell were in dire need of repair; some of the LODO kids even believed that a troll lived under it! The path was shaky and slippery; a good place for trolls to hide!

But thanks to the faithful stewardship of an "anonymous donor," this "Troll Bridge" has been replaced with a new walkway and staircase, complete with wrought iron railings! This expense and coordination of the project was completely donated by this "anonymous" church member.

Noticing the need, this member approached the Council with a proposal and bid for replacement. The Council discussed the proposal and, following our Gift Acceptance Policy, gratefully accepted the donation. The member then contracted with True Son Contracting, and the project was completed.

This is Stewardship in Action – seeing a need and using time, talent, and treasure to make it happen! We see many examples of that here at church, people doing tasks that keep things rolling, and making donations such as this. Other recent examples of faithful stewardship include a donation by a congregation member for a large portion of the new culvert work at our parking lot entrance, and the new Church van, donated by the Gregory Family. Many others also donate their time and talents all year long.

Look around; where are some areas where you can help enhance the ministries of CUCC with your faithful stewardship?



TREASURER'S REPORT

-Brent Marcks, Recording Treasurer

Financial Update			
	Actual	Budget	Over/(Under)
Feb. Income	\$17,619.07	\$27,863.52	(\$10,244.45)
YTD Income	\$35,440.03	\$53,985.62	(\$18,545.59)
Feb. Expenses	\$22,920.31	\$28,504.73	(\$5,584.42)
YTD Expenses	\$50,441.60	\$54,828.91	(\$4,387.31)
Surplus/(Deficit)	(\$15,001.57)	\$843.29	(\$14,158.28)
Feb. Attendance	N/A		

Date	Attendance	Received	Budget
02/28/20	47	\$4,147.11	\$6,854.39
03/07/20	38	\$4,195.06	\$6,721.58
03/14/20	44	\$4,549.17	\$6,721.58
03/21/20	62	\$8,398.96	\$6,721.58
Total	191	\$21,290.30	\$27,019.13

As of 03/21/2021, we are **\$14,029.97** behind in Joyful Giving for 2021.

CUCC HAS ONLINE GIVING!

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

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

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

Men's Fellowship Update

In 2021, Men's Fellowship wasn't able to plan and organize the Uel Blank Memorial breakfast to benefit Habitat for Humanity like we normally do. Instead, we coordinated an on-line campaign with the help of the congregation. It was a huge success!

We set a record by collecting \$1,935.00 for Habitat for Humanity. Thank you to everyone for the generosity!

DESIGNATED FUNDS UPDATE

If you read the CUCC Annual Report for 2020, you may have noticed the Designated Funds Activity Report (page 61). It detailed the amounts that were received and disbursed from our Designated Funds in 2020. A more thorough explanation of Designated Funds Disbursements was also included on page 15. To highlight, some of the funds that were working for you in 2020 include the following:

50 for 50 fund: This fund received **\$66,292** in 2019, in recognition of the 50th anniversary of this building. It was designated for five projects. So far we have spent **\$50,474** on three of those designated projects: Sanctuary technology, sound system, and livestreaming equipment, **(\$26,036)**; Landscaping Improvements **(\$10,544)**; and encasing the Sanctuary eaves **(\$7,265)**. We also donated a Biblical Tithe to four mission agencies **(\$6,629)**. The two final projects, replacing the Shelter House floor **(\$8,600)** and upgrading our security system **(\$7,000)**, will complete the 50 for 50 projects this spring. Hopefully both will be done before the Congregational Meeting.

Scholarship Fund: We awarded two scholarships in 2020 to Marcella Dolezal and Carissa Graves, totaling **\$2,000**. We added **\$50,000** from the Mader Estate to this Fund, and with unrealized gains and growth, the fund total at the end of 2020 was **\$147,574**. This Fund will be used for more Scholarships in the future, as well as our Organ Scholar Program.

Building Fund: We have been growing this Fund in 2020 with contributions from members, a directed amount from 2020 Joyful Giving (3%), and directed Funds from the Mader Estate. As of the end of 2020, this fund totaled **\$55,716**, but more gifts in 2021 have been received. We are anticipating major repairs and replacement of HVAC units in the next few years, as well as a need to reseal our entire parking lot. Growth in this fund will allow those projects to happen.

We have Ten Designated Funds for Special Projects at CUCC. For a complete description of each fund, contact the Church office, or ask [Sue Ann Schafer](#), [Brent Marcks](#), or [Pastor Rick](#).

OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY MINISTRY TEAM

LOAVES AND FISHES UPDATE

The March 15 meal at L&F consisted of spaghetti, salad (provided by Patty Beeson), cookies (provided by Jolene Kirchhoff), and brownies (provided by Llonna Weiss). Mahree Skala provided the PB&J sandwiches. Our servers were Seth & Lillian Smith, Patty Beeson, Judi Privitt, and Alexis (a MU student). We served approximately 85 servings.

Thanks again to everyone who helped out! We will continue to serve our guests outside, as long as the weather permits.

FOOD BANK NEWS—BACK TO VOLUNTEERING!

CUCC volunteers can work together again every 4th Tuesday evening at 5:30 pm. We moved to 4th Tuesdays to reduce schedule conflicts. For details on how to sign up for April 27, please contact Mahree Skala at skalamahree@yahoo.com or 573-474-2195.

Heifer International All-Church Mission Project—Care for God's Creation

"Many are the sufferings of the earth, but steadfast love surrounds those who trust in the Creator and care for all creation." -- from UCC Creation Justice prayer

CUCC will show our love for God's creation and people in need throughout the world from Easter until Mother's Day. We will celebrate the hope for redemption that comes to us through Christ, and the hope for our fragile planet highlighted during April (Earth Month), by filling a Heifer International "Ark."

Heifer is not just about heifers! Through special activities, we'll reflect on the incredible work they do in 21 countries including the USA. Their expert staff and volunteers work alongside local farmers and business owners. They invest in individuals and communities around the world, teaching effective tools of the farming trade and the tools of trade itself, to bring people to a living income. They also promote agroecology and work with farmers to protect local ecosystems and biodiversity, and to use climate-smart agricultural practices, clean energy, and water conservation methods.

Let's all pitch in to fill an Ark--\$5,000 to help advance the work of this incredible organization.

"Be glad in the Creator and rejoice for the healing of the earth, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you who seek justice for creation." (UCC Creation Justice prayer)

HOW TO SUPPORT MEDICAID EXPANSION IN MO

The UCC General Synod has declared that "Health is harmony with self and others, the environment, and with God—a continuum of physical, social, psychological, and spiritual well-being." Health insurance coverage is essential to achieve that harmony—people without it often have poorer health and shorter lives.

Missourians, including many committed Christians, voted last August to expand Medicaid coverage to include 275,000 more low-income, uninsured people, with or without children. Most of the newly covered people are workers in low-paying jobs that do not provide insurance. The new coverage is set to start on July 1, 2021.

The next step is for the legislature to appropriate funding for it. Fortunately, Governor Parson included the funds in his budget request, and he was still able to balance the budget without any tax increase or cuts to other programs (despite opponents' fears about the potential cost). 90% of the costs will be covered by our federal tax dollars. The state will also benefit from the increase in jobs and economic activity that results from the expansion.

The legislature may try to cut the Governor's funding proposal, so we'll keep you informed as the debate occurs beginning in March. Please consider contacting your legislator (by phone, email or letter) to encourage them to support full funding for Medicaid expansion in accordance with the Governor's recommendations. Legislator contact information can be found at:

<https://lwvcbc.org/voter-information/elected-officials/house-and-senate/>.

Let's Clean Up Columbia on April 24!

Help care for God's creation--beautify the road to CUCC

CUCC's "Clean Up Columbia Day" is Saturday, April 24. As in past years, we've "adopted" our own street, I-70 Drive NW, to beautify. In past years we've picked up more than 30 bags of trash between the Fire District office and the church. Many hands make light work, so please sign up to help.

Please let us know if you're coming. Fill out the sign-up form below and leave it in the gathering area, or you can call Mahree Skala at 573-474-2195 or e-mail her at skalamahree@yahoo.com.

The Fellowship and Hospitality Team will treat us to lunch afterwards!

Details: April 24, 2021
9:00-11:00 a.m.
Meet in the CUCC rear parking lot
Cloth gloves, reflective vests, pinchers and other supplies provided
Bring your favorite gloves if you like, and wear sturdy shoes/boots
Rain date is May 1

Name(s) _____

Email address _____

Phone number _____

Number in family participating _____

Invest in the Anti-Trafficking Movement Globally

Unfortunately, the 300 mile Key West Bike Ride I was intent on participating in didn't quite work out. My flight was delayed long enough to miss the departure from the starting line. So instead, I decided to [#prayedarepeat](#) right here in MO; both on my bike on sunny, non-rainy days, and in the gym on the spin bike during those not so sunny, rainy days to fulfill my commitment to raise awareness and funds for Missio International (MI). <https://missiointernational.org/>



Together, our team of cyclists, staff, support staff, and volunteers raised around \$35,000 for Missio International's ministry in Romania! That is on top of what was already raised last year (\$56,000) prior to the ride being cancelled due to COVID. That means around \$91,000 will go to our partners in the fight against Human Trafficking! I don't know about you, but reading that number gives me chills! We couldn't have done it without your generous prayer and partnerships. Thank you to all who gave and prayed!



That being said, I've decided to ride (yet again) in the TXBR (Texas Bike Ride) for the youth of Cambodia, April 9-14. Cambodia has been on my heart for several years. I've traveled there a few times to work with our partners and beneficiaries for this ride, Legacy of Hope International (LOHI). They are wonderful people who have a fierce love for God and God's people. You can check out their ministry [here](#). I again ask you for your prayers to get me through this 400 mile journey through TX! To God be the glory!!

April Rothweiler

NURTURE AND EDUCATION MINISTRY TEAM

CONFIRMATION CLASS OF 2021!

2021 Confirmation Class is well on its way! We have six students this year. Our students meet with Pastor Rick at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall (downstairs) with practiced social distancing.

This class will be confirmed on November 28, 2021 (the first Sunday of Advent). Please keep them in your prayers as they continue on this journey. For more information, talk to [Pastor Rick](#).

Parenting Resource:

Positive Parenting and the Seven Essential Life Skills for Children!

www.mindinthemaking.org



ATTENTION:

There will be no camping opportunities at Camp MoVal for Summer, 2021.

CONFIRMATION CLASS OF 2020! CONFIRMATION SUNDAY 4/25

Confirmation Sunday for our 2020 class is finally here! They will give their testimonies, be confirmed, and be received into membership all on one day – April 25. (Their original date was postponed due to increased COVID cases in Boone County.)



1 out of every 6

American women has been the victim of an attempted or completed rape in her lifetime.

VBS 2021 Is Coming! Discovery on Adventure Island!

Thank you to Lena Muench and Gina Pierson for coordinating this Annual Event! More details will be coming.

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH – APRIL 11-MAY 9, 2021

Heifer International will be the topic of Sunday School for our children and youth for five Sundays, as part of our church-wide focus on Heifer International.

Bring your children and youth to these fun and educational Sunday School classes, 9:00-10:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Thank you to Lena Muench and Gina Pierson for creating the fun and educational lessons for this session.

THANK YOU TO LENA MUENCH AND GINA PIERSON FOR LENT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Nurture & Education would like to thank Lena and Gina for their planning and creativeness for this year's Lent Sunday School.

We had wonderful attendance, having up to 21 kids on a single Sunday, socially distanced in the Fellowship Hall.

Thank You

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL IN APRIL, 2021

Plan on attending Adult Sunday School, 9:00-10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary, as we have special speakers from our congregation each Sunday in April whom we will all enjoy hearing. Details will be in each Friday email.

THANK YOU TO PASTOR RICK

Nurture & Education would like to thank Pastor Rick for all of the time and preparation he has taken to provide the instruction for the Adult Sunday School class he presented February 21- March 28, 2021, and for the Wednesday night Book Study he has held each Wednesday evening of Lent. We are fortunate to have the leadership of Pastor Rick who greatly values education and knowledge and loves to lead the congregation to learn more.

WORSHIP AND MUSIC MINISTRY TEAM

WORSHIP AND MUSIC COMMITTEE NOTE

Greetings CUCC family! My name is Mike Pierson. I am the newly-elected Worship & Music Committee chair taking over the reigns from the former chair, Pete Jaberg. Pete did an outstanding job of leadership of this committee, and I hope to continue in his footsteps.

It certainly has been a challenging year in terms of Worship & Music at our church and most churches around the nation, if not world! The very nature of both Worship & Music, at least within a church setting, is grounded in the direct interaction of people and communication of ideas and song. Much of our ability to conduct worship and share song has been altered in ways we never imagined or desired. Thankfully (some might say ‘providentially’), the leadership of our church had the foresight to begin the discussion of “distance worship” by seeking out ways to get the message out to the congregation through various means of technology even before COVID-19 was a thing. And even though the journey of the last year seems to be bringing many of us back to the physical building, the ways in which “church” is conducted continues to expand.

Current committee discussions include the return of the Chapel Ringers (bell choir) for Easter, the return of in-person Communion (yet to be determined), the return of the Celebration Singers (choir) – also to be determined. We are also starting a discussion toward physical changes and updating of several of the areas within the sanctuary, including the chancel area, walls, carpeting, windows, and treatments, etc. It is a very exciting undertaking that will bring some needed visual appeal to worshipers in-seat and virtually for years to come. This process is certainly in its infant stages, so we will update you as it continues and include the ability for all congregation members to provide feedback through the design phases.

I’m so happy to be a part of our this committee and the greater Council team under the leadership of Pastor Rick, James Melton, and the upcoming leadership of Kristy Odneal. Awesome things are happening and will continue. If you have a desire to get involved with any of our music ensembles and/or worship experiences, please don’t hesitate to contact Ed Rollins (Music Coordinator), Pastor Rick, or myself. The more, the merrier! Hope to see you in worship soon!

Mike Pierson



Please Join us for Easter Sunrise Service

We will have Sunrise Service on Easter Sunday, April 4, at 6:30 a.m. in the pavilion. Kristin Veteto will lead us in song, as she has in previous years, and we will social distance and enjoy fellowship, watching the sun rise together. We hope you’ll join us, and feel free to invite a friend!

WELCOME IRIS!

Congratulations to our Music Coordinator, Ed Rollins, and his wife, Jess Wolfe, on the birth of their daughter!

**Iris Mae Wolfe Rollins was born on
March 23, 2021!**

Blessings to her and her parents, as well as her brothers and sisters! We welcome Iris into our church family!



YOU CAN HELP SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT CUCC VIRTUAL WORSHIP

Most of you know that your CUCC worship service is live-streamed each Sunday, but here are a few ways that you can more fully appreciate that worship service and share it with others in the community! With your help, we can spread God's Word exponentially!

- **Watch it later!** Even though the CUCC Worship Service is livestreamed each Sunday, you don't have to watch it live! You can come back and watch it at other times, or watch it again if you want to recall something that was said. Past livestreamed services are all on the [CUCC Website](#) and on [Facebook](#).
- **You can host a "Watch Party!"** Select a worship service from Facebook and set up a "Watch Party." Invite several of your Facebook friends to watch it along with you at a time of your choosing. You can all comment together about elements of the service (just remember, the comments are public).
- **You can "share" the worship service on your Facebook page!** If you "share" it on your page, all of your friends will see it, too. If everyone in our church family would do this, our ministry reach would increase exponentially.

In this time of Coronavirus and social isolation, there are many ways to stay connected with CUCC, and there are also many ways to share CUCC with your friends through social media. Spread the Good News!

SUNDAY VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE FOR APRIL

Below is the Sunday Volunteer Schedule for April. We need some spots to be filled and we'd love to see some new faces sharing their time and talents in this capacity. 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!

Date	Greeters	Ushers	Worship Leaders	Acolyte	Tech Booth	Hospitality
04/04	Audrey Lasley	Donna Marsh	Mahree Skala	NEED	Mike Pierson	Stefanie Zimny
04/11	Jessica Lucas	John Graves	Pete Jaberg	Abby Dennis	John Graves Carissa Graves	Judi Privitt
04/18	Audrey Lasley	Mahree Skala	Seth Smith	Lilly Smith	Doug Privitt Judi Privitt	Melba Shaffer
04/25	Helen Schultz	NEED	Confirmand	Confirmand	Mike Pierson	Lena Muench

CORONAVIRUS AND CUCC UPDATE

The pandemic is not over yet, and we must continue to be vigilant and safe as we slowly emerge into more in-person activities and public gatherings. However, *as the month of March draws to a close, the 5-day average for new COVID cases in Boone County has dropped to 11 new cases/day!* This is down from our high of 168 new cases/day, reached on November 8, when we decided to close our Sanctuary for in-person worship for the time being. In September and October, when we were worshipping in person, the 5-day average was 60-70 new cases/day. *Currently, there are only 74 active cases of COVID in our county of 180,000 people.*

Throughout this pandemic, the leadership of CUCC has been very vigilant, never lax in their monitoring and response efforts. The congregation has been exemplary, as well, following our new hygiene standards admirably, thereby limiting the transmission of the virus and keeping CUCC a safe place. As we move towards emergence together, let us continue to be vigilant in our efforts at living with the Coronavirus.

Moving forward, we will continue to practice safety protocols, guided by the Boone County Health Department and the City of Columbia orders. These include wearing masks and social distancing.

There is one way for us to fully emerge safely from this pandemic — vaccination. We hope that everyone receives their COVID vaccine, for herd immunity in our community and to reduce the risk of infection to even lower levels. For information about vaccination options, [CLICK HERE](#).



CUCC IS WORKING IN KOREA

In 2020, partner church the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK) held a Peace Convocation marking the 70th Memorial Anniversary of the Korean War. The 1953 Armistice Agreement at the end of the Korean War did not lead to a peace agreement, and the Korean land and people, including many families separated by war, remain divided to this day. International partners have joined with Korean churches in calling attention to the need for an official agreement as “the first step toward ending this conflict and the military confrontation which threatens life on the Korean Peninsula.” Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ join the global campaign for a Korea Peace Treaty, seeking a new direction in US Policy that prioritizes negotiations for a Korea Peace Treaty to replace the Armistice Agreement. May we all pray for peace across the Korean peninsula and advocate for a permanent Peace Treaty.

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

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

April 4-10
Fiona Kendall
Working in Italy



April 11-17
Kahala Canon
Working in eSwatini



April 18-24
Carlos Sediles-Real
Working in Mexico



April 25-30
Jeffrey Mensendiek
Working in Japan



CUCC IS WORKING IN GUATEMALA

(condensed from www.globalministries.org)

The Ecumenical Christian Council of Guatemala is a place for Christian encounter, reflection, and action for those committed to working for peace, reconciliation, and ecumenism in Guatemala. The Ecumenical Council takes on the challenge of maintaining the Guatemalan Peace Agreements, upholding a prophetic voice of denunciation, and declaration of facts and situations of injustice, and other realities that hinder the fulfillment of the Realm of God.

The Ecumenical Christian Council is convinced that Christian unity, or ecumenism, is one way to develop a democracy that promotes tolerance, respect, ethnic and religious pluralism, and peaceful living together. The Council seeks to be an ecumenical instrument of reflection, action, and projection where the mainline churches of Guatemala learn to become advocates of their nation’s life through the perspectives of Christian values, the search for the common good, the construction of peace and reconciliation, and promotion of better living conditions for the Guatemalan population in the current context of violence and globalization.

The Ecumenical Christian Council focuses on six areas of work:

Developing a pastoral culture of peace, working for peace in a conflicted community; **Youth and Children**, creating conditions for empowering youth leadership; **Women and Gender Justice**, contributing to the generation of knowledge, learning, and intervention of women; **Stewardship of Creation**, learning about how to care for God’s good earth; **Ecumenical Celebrations**, organizing ecumenical events and points of advocacy for the participation of churches and individuals; and **HIV Care**, promoting pastoral accompaniment for those living with HIV, as well as promoting education and prevention.



ON THE CHURCH CALENDAR IN APRIL

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 7pm Maundy Thursday Worship	2 7pm Good Friday Worship	3 Holy Saturday
4 6:30am Sunrise Service 9:00am Sunday School 10:30am Worship in person Worship Livestreaming on our CUCC Website	5 Pastor Rick on Vacation NO Staff Meeting	6 Pastor Rick on Vacation	7 Pastor Rick on Vacation	8 Pastor Rick on Vacation April on Vacation 9:30am Women's Fellowship	9 Pastor Rick on Vacation April on Vacation	10
11 9:00am Sunday School 10:30am Worship in person Worship Livestreaming on our CUCC Website	12 April on Vacation 10:15am Staff Meeting 5:30pm Outreach & Advocacy Ministry Team	13 April on Vacation 6:30pm Nurture & Education Ministry Team	14 April on Vacation 6:30pm Music & Worship Ministry Team	15 April on Vacation 5:30pm LODO Ministry Team 6:30pm Inclusion & Affirmation Ministry Team	16 April on Vacation	17
18 9:00am Sunday School 10:30am Worship in person Worship also Livestreaming on our CUCC Website	19 10:15am Staff Meeting 6pm Confirmation	20 COMMUNICATOR ARTICLES DUE 6:30pm Church Council	21 2020 Confirmation Class Practicing Testimonies in the Sanctuary—6:30pm	22 12noon Lunch Bunch Heifer International 6:30pm Finance & Stewardship Ministry Team	23	24 9-11am Clean up [our part of] Columbia
25 Confirmation Sunday 9:00 Sunday School 10:30am Worship in person Worship also Livestreaming on our CUCC Website	26 NO Staff Meeting 6pm Confirmation 7:30pm Membership & Care Ministry Team	27	28	29 6:30pm Fellowship & Hospitality Ministry Team	30	1

THE COMMUNICATOR

Columbia United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation- ONA #1575
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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 you are interested in joining, please contact [Rev. Rick Oberle](mailto:rick@columbiaucc.com).
rick@columbiaucc.com

**Become
Part of
Our
Church
Family**

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

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

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

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

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

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