

# THE COMMUNICATOR

December 2020



“While We Wait”

## From the Pastor’s Keyboard

Unlike the other Gospels, the author of the Gospel attributed to Luke makes us wait a long time for the infant Jesus to be born. While Mark and John begin with an adult Jesus, and the author of the Gospel attributed to Matthew brings us Jesus by verse 18 of the first chapter, Luke makes us wait 80 long verses before Jesus is born. In that time of waiting, we prepare ourselves for Jesus’ birth by visiting with Elizabeth and Zechariah, hearing their songs and testimony; Mary makes two arduous journeys, one to visit Elizabeth and one to give birth; and we hear words of anticipation from angelic messengers. The Gospel attributed to Luke knows that Jesus is worth the wait, and he makes us wait for the Good News that is to come.

In Advent, we enter a season of waiting. Christ is not here yet, so we must wait; and during the waiting time, we must prepare ourselves for Jesus’ eventual advent. We traditionally do this by focusing our worship around four themes: Hope, Peace, Joy and Love; and examine how these themes intersect with our lives. In Advent, we wait, and we prepare.

In many ways, 2020 is an extended Advent Season. We are waiting. We are waiting for vaccines, concession speeches, and the ability to make plans without burdensome caveats about virus numbers. We are waiting, but we are also grieving. We are grieving the traditions that will not be part of our life this year. Holiday traditions, from Thanksgiving through Advent, will not be practiced as they have in the past. Here at church there will be no Cookie Communion, no Advent Banquet, no Cantata, and in our personal lives, our holiday gatherings will be much different.

But in the midst of this waiting, we have the opportunity to do what Zechariah, Elizabeth and Mary did during their waiting time; they reflected on what matters most in life. They reflected on their faith, the witness of the angelic host, God’s presence in their lives, and what God was calling them to do. As they waited, watched, reflected and anticipated, they discerned their next steps; and when the one who was to prepare the way was born, they faithfully named him John. When the Blessed Messiah was born, they faithfully named him Jesus; both of these naming ceremonies were reflections of the faith that had grown within during their times of waiting.

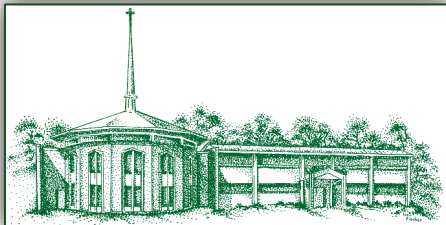
We must wait. The cultural reaction to the Coronavirus caseload numbers and our own diligence as a congregation require us to wait at this time; but while we wait, our faith is shaping our eventual response. What kind of church will we be when the waiting is over? What kind of people of faith will we be when this is over? The nine-month gestation period of this Coronavirus (so far) has given us a chance to form our Christian identity, as people of God and as a church. In the last few months of this, while we wait, what can we do to emerge as the people whom God calls us to be?

*-Pastor Rick*



**MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE STAFF OF COLUMBIA UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST!**  
APRIL ROTHWEILER; ED ROLLINS; AMY CROUSORE; ERIKA MALTSBARGER; RAJ TOLANI; AND 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

9:00am- Sunday School  
for all ages

10:30am- Worship

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

**Phone:**  
(573)-445-7931

**Email:**  
[office@columbiaucc.com](mailto:office@columbiaucc.com)

**Website:**  
[www.columbiaucc.com](http://www.columbiaucc.com)

### CUCC LIVESTREAMING TO CONTINUE

The COVID pandemic has not only brought anxiety to our world, it has also brought a share of positive innovation, not the least of which is the opportunity to livestream our worship services at CUCC and reach a new demographic of viewers anxious to hear the Good News of our Savior, Jesus Christ!



We plan to continue livestreaming our worship services indefinitely, but for those of you who have been watching at home, you know the quality of the feed has been challenging. Limitations in technology and internet service have made some livestreams spotty.

We are waiting for cameras! Nelson Audio, the company doing this work for us, has told us that the rest of the equipment has arrived. They are just waiting for the cameras to come in so they can do the installation. As of writing this newsletter, the cameras have not arrived. Once they come in, Nelson will schedule the installation. You should see an immediate upgrade in the quality of our livestreaming production when this happens.

The total cost of this upgrade is around \$7,500. That includes installation and training, as well as programs and servicing. This is not part of our 50 for 50 project. That was the sound system installation only, which has been completed. We will be tapping into Memorial Funds and other Designated Funds for this purchase.

If anyone wants to contribute to offset the cost of this technology, over and above your regular Joyful Giving, contact [Sue Ann Schaefer](#), or just send a check to the church office with "Memorial Funds" in the memo line. Thank you! And please be patient— the best is yet to come!



### PLEASE HELP US KEEP OUR PLAYGROUND SAFE FOR ALL CHILDREN BY FOLLOWING THESE GUIDELINES:

- ◆ The CUCC playground is designed for, and should only be used by, 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.

### 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 on November 8. 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 Friends,

It was of the greatest surprise to find in our mail box this past month so many Birthday cards celebrating my 80th Birthday. It was so heart warming to have received all the good wishes from dear friends at CUCC. I couldn't have been given anything better as a Birthday celebration gift. It is so comforting to know that even when times are difficult, expressions of love and kindness still prevail at CUCC.

Cliff Beckman

Congratulations to:  
**Isaiah Jackson-Post &  
Audrey Peavler**  
on their Marriage!

Address Change:

**Hugo & Donna Wilmsmeyer**  
5613 Abercorn Dr.  
Columbia, MO 65203



### Women's Fellowship Update

Women's Fellowship will gather on **Thursday, December 10, 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](#).

### NEW TRANSPORTATION FUND ESTABLISHED

At the October Church Council Meeting, the Council heard a recommendation by the Membership & Care Ministry Team, the Inclusion & Advocacy Ministry Team, and the Finance & Stewardship Ministry team to establish a new Designated Fund— the Transportation Fund. After discussion, the Council voted to establish this fund with \$10,000 from the Alan Mader Estate.

The primary purpose of this fund is to accumulate donations that can be used for purchasing or renting transportation, specifically a church van or bus, as well as maintaining and insuring such a vehicle. 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.

Approval to utilize this fund to purchase vehicles will require specific ministry plans and schedules attached which designate usage, maintenance, and amortization. This means that no purchases can be made from this fund until all details are worked out and listed exhaustively, including the items mentioned above.

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.

We have several church members with transportation challenges, especially our homebound members. This fund could, if it grows, be used to help address these challenges, whether we purchase a vehicle, rent vehicles on occasion, or come up with some other creative option to provide transportation options to care for our members.

For years, some in the congregation have lamented our inability to provide transportation options to our homebound members, youth, fellowship groups, and others. This is your chance to make these dreams a reality! To contribute to this fund, check with [Sue Ann Shaefer](#), [Brent Marcks](#), [George Zimny](#), or another member of the Church Council. We can make this happen if we all work together!

# GIVING TUESDAY



## GET READY FOR GIVING TUESDAY– DECEMBER 1, 2020

Giving Tuesday is a grassroots, non-profit campaign the Tuesday after Thanksgiving each year to lift up churches and other non-profits serving the community in the midst of the Holiday Season. It is a way to express Thanksgiving for all they are doing and to make Advent more meaningful. It is a day to give back after the excesses of Black Friday and Cyber Monday. This year, CUCC will be participating in Giving Tuesday, and we invite you to plan now to be part of it!

Here is how it works: On Tuesday, December 1, simply go to our [CUCC Website](#) and click on the [“Donate”](#) tab. Select “Giving Tuesday” in the dropdown menu, and make your donation. It is that easy! You can also give to CUCC on Giving Tuesday by texting the word “GIVE” to 573.240.4041 and then follow the prompts. *You can also “drive by” on Giving Tuesday and drop a check off at the church office any time between 8:00am and 9:00pm! Pastor Rick, April and/or George Zimny will be there to accept your donation!*

We have an ambitious goal for Giving Tuesday — **\$20,000!** Yes, you read that right. As a congregation, we need to bring in \$102,000 in November and December to make our budget for this year, and by donating to CUCC thru “Giving Tuesday,” you will help us reach it!

### *Here is how the funds designated for “Giving Tuesday” will be allocated:*

- **80%** of what is received on Giving Tuesday will be allocated for “Joyful Giving,” the funds needed to meet our budget goal for 2020. (\$102,282 is needed between now and December 31.)
- **10%** of what is received on Giving Tuesday will be allocated to our **Little One’s Day Out preschool ministry**, to help offset their shortfall this year due to COVID-19.
- **10%** of what is received will be given away. In keeping with the Biblical mandate to Tithe 10% of our blessings, we will allocate 10% of Giving Tuesday receipts to the Voluntary Action Center, to help fund their Christmas Drive.

This is an ambitious goal, but CUCC has always lived up to this sort of challenge! *You will be hearing much more about this in the coming month!* (Watch for our videos on social media!)

Thank you in advance, CUCC!

Click here for video: [George Zimny](#)

# LODO MINISTRY TEAM

## TEACHING GRATITUDE TO CHILDREN

Gratitude is when we express appreciation and thanks for the good things in our lives. With so much negativity in this world, it can be difficult to shift our mindset to think of the good. Gratitude is one of the key resilience builders. It allows us to celebrate the present. It dispells negative emotions. Teaching gratitude cultivates a higher sense of self-worth.

In this era of instant gratification, teaching gratitude is SO important. Studies have shown that grateful children tend to be happier, more engaged with hobbies and schoolwork, have better relationships, and report greater satisfaction in general. Instilling gratitude in young children can literally help them grow up to be happier people. How do we teach such an abstract concept?

Gratitude is so much more than the simple act of saying thanks. It requires children to use a set of complex social-emotional skills, including perspective taking and emotional intelligence. Gratitude involves much more than simply learning how to say thanks.

Gratitude has 4 parts:

1. Noticing: What we NOTICE in our lives for which we can be grateful.
2. Thinking: How we THINK about why we have been given those things.
3. Feeling: How we FEEL about the things we have been given.
4. Doing: What we DO to express appreciation in return.

While saying thanks is a way to show gratitude, it is important that children learn all 4 of the components of gratitude. We tend to focus on what we see as we work with children because it is an outward expression. But it's even more important to teach the deeper parts of gratitude by helping children think about the things they are grateful for and recognize the thoughts and feelings tied to what makes them grateful.

## LODO NEWS

During the month of November, LODO held a Coat Drive to benefit children at Alpha Hart Lewis Elementary. We are so very grateful for the generosity of our LODO families and CUCC members. We collected 20 coats, 74 pairs of gloves, 36 hats, 2 scarves, 1 ear warmer, and 5 pairs of tennis shoes to keep children warm this winter.

Parent/Teacher Conferences were held November 16 – 20. Our teachers enjoyed spending fifteen minutes with each family to discuss their child's development. We have amazing children in our program! Conferences will be held again in the Spring.

In December we will spread the joy of the Christmas season throughout our learning activities. This year, our Christmas Program will take place virtually. During the week of December 14 – 18, we will create a video of each class performing their Christmas songs in the Sanctuary. The video will be made available to LODO parents only. We will look forward to an in-person Christmas Program in 2021.

### December Themes

Nursery Rhymes/Gingerbread  
Christmas/Holidays  
The Nativity

### Important Dates:

Mon 12/14-12/18 – Recording Christmas Performances (9:30-10:00am in the Sanctuary)  
Fri 12/18 – LODO Pajama Day  
12/23-1/4 – LODO Closed for Christmas Break

Thankfully, Ms. Erika



# MODERATOR'S MOMENT

## FROM THE MODERATOR

Greetings to all,

It continues to be my deepest wish that this Moderator's Moment finds you and yours in good health. To keep this wish true — and as we again find ourselves moving from in-person worship to virtual worship — phone calls, Facebook, Zoom, and email are the primary forms of socialization, connection, and support. Your church council continues to meet to deliberate and act upon the church's business, and I ask that you keep us in your prayers as we do our best to lead and learn.



During our most recent council meeting, Pastor Rick helped us close our meeting in a prayer that looked towards the season of Advent, which is just around the corner. His prayer reflected upon the idea that Advent is a season of waiting and anticipation. The anticipation of Hope, Joy, Peace, and Life! We are all anxiously awaiting and anticipating whether Advent and the Christmas season will be filled with our typical traditions and worship, or will it be one of new opportunities that we may not be fully ready to embrace. For now, we wait, but I believe and share that regardless of what the future brings, we can all work to turn our waiting away from possible disappointments to genuinely celebrating the birth of Jesus. His arrival sets into motion the story that brings us together year after year in service and love despite the pandemic.

Many ministry teams are working diligently to offer interactive activities that will help us connect and build upon our existing traditions. Specifically, look for information coming from Fellowship & Hospitality and Membership & Care.

In the recent video that I shared with Pastor Rick's message detailing our return to virtual worship, I shared two poems from a book of poetry entitled "Keep Moving," by Maggie Smith. This book has become a bit of a guidance manual for lifting my spirits and urging me not to give up, even when I might feel like it. I thought I would close this note to all of you with another short, but powerful poem.

"Trust that as fast and far as your fear can travel,  
your courage will outrun it.  
Focus on a point in the distance.  
Imagine a tether of light pulling you toward it,  
widening the distance between you and whatever would snap at your heels.  
Eyes ahead. - **Keep Moving.**"  
*Poem by Maggie Smith*

I continue to be inspired by all of you. Grateful for your prayers and that we are in ministry together.

With love, James Melton, CUCC Moderator



## CUCC LUNCH BUNCH

**CUCC Lunch Bunch will meet on Thursday, DECEMBER 17**, 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.

**Our own April Rothweiler will be speaking for the STOP Human Trafficking Coalition of Central MO. Come learn how human trafficking affects your community and how you can be a part of the solution!**

**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!

# INCLUSION AND AFFIRMATION MINISTRY TEAM

My favorite hymn is, "It is Well With My Soul." This was penned by Horatio Spafford in 1873. He lost his four year old son and prosperous business in the 1871 Chicago Fire. He lost three young daughters in a shipwreck in 1873. His wife, who was traveling with their daughters, survived. Here are some of my favorite verses:

*"When peace like a river, attendeth my way, When sorrows like sea billows roll,  
Whatever my lot, Thou has taught me to know, It is well, it is well, with my soul.*

*Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come, Let this blest assurance control,  
That Christ has regarded my helpless estate, And hath shed His own blood for my soul.*

*My sin, oh, the bliss of this glorious thought! My sin, not in part but the whole,  
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more, Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!*

*It is well, (it is well), With my soul, (with my soul), It is well, it is well, with my soul."*

Every Christmas season there are people suffering a loss of some kind: the passing of a loved one, family estrangement, joblessness, racial unrest, significant illness, poverty, losses related to natural disasters such as fires, hurricanes, tornadoes. This can be a very tough time in any year. 2020 has imploded for a record number of us.

In this world of social distancing, let us not forget that this church family is here for you. Call a Council member. Call the person that usually sits next to you in church. Sometimes just talking it out helps. We will get thru this COVID time together!

This month, our Inclusion and Affirmation Ministry Team discussed our new **MONA** (Mid-Missouri Open and Affirming) Facebook group. If you are on Facebook, the team encourages you to request to join. This group is designed to be a collaboration of several UCC and Disciples of Christ (DOC) churches in the area, including Oasis UCC in Jefferson City, and several DOC churches, as well. We hope our efforts will help form a strong Open and Affirming coalition in Mid-Missouri! Posts are designed to support the LGBTQ+ community and educate all of us, and are moderated by the group administrators before being posted.

There is a new addition to our seasonal decorations . . . a Rainbow Tree! You will either see it in the fellowship area or in the sanctuary. It is designed to be a symbol of welcome for all who enter our doors. January 31 we will celebrate our 2nd Anniversary of becoming an Open and Affirming Congregation. The current plan is to have cake and punch in the fellowship area. Come and celebrate our anniversary! We are also making plans to observe Dr. Martin Luther King day in January and Black History Month in February.

I pray that the joy embedded in God's gift of Jesus Christ lifts your soul this Christmas season.

In Peace,  
Alisa Lau-Sieckman, Chair



## CUCC OPEN AND AFFIRMING/INCLUSION COVENANT

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

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



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

## FINANCE AND STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY TEAM

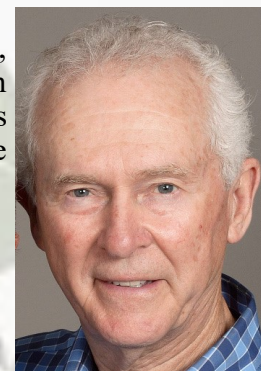
The challenges of 2020 have been significant and largely unprecedented. We at CUCC are fortunate that our church community is strong and resilient. Pastor Rick has been and is "our Rock" and our Church Council and Ministry Teams have continued to provide leadership and guidance in all our programs and activities. We are blessed!

As a member of the Finance and Stewardship Ministry Team, I see the results of our stewardship each month in the church financial statements. To our amazement and despite the pandemic and all it portends, our members have continued to make significant financial contributions, as well as amazing contributions of time and talent to our church. Understandably, our financial contributions have been less than anticipated in the budget we all approved for the year to date. Our relatively small congregation has always been generous and dependable, and I am hopeful, and even in a year as challenging as 2020, we will meet our budget and be able to fulfill the commitments we made in that budget. The purpose of my article is to let you know that we are significantly behind, and only a little more than a month remains in the year to meet our commitments. There are many reasons why giving in December is a good opportunity, and I am asking you to consider all the reasons you have chosen to be a member of CUCC and be as generous as you possibly can, even in a year like 2020!

We have many reasons to be optimistic about 2021. Effective vaccines will be available, and life can begin to get back to normal. Even in a year like this one, CUCC has been there for us. Please do all you can for our church through your prayerful contributions before year end. Depending on your situation, there are tax advantaged ways to make contributions, and checking with your financial advisor may offer some opportunities.

Please continue to do all you can, and I hope we can all be together in worship early in 2021. Thank you very much!

-Keith Birkes



### 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](http://www.columbiaucc.com) and click on the "Donate to CUCC" button.
3. Text "GIVE" to 573-240-4041 and follow the directions on the text you receive back to set up your one time or recurring gift.

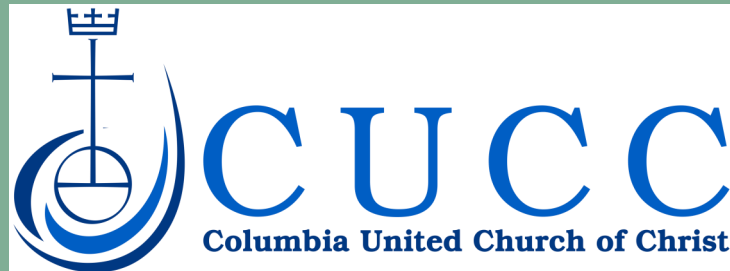
### TREASURER'S REPORT *Brent Marcks, Recording Treasurer*

Financial Update				Date	Attendance	Received	Budget
	Actual	Budget	Over/(Under)	11/01/20	65	\$5,695.00	\$4,809.41
Oct. Income	\$25,630.65	\$26,917.17	(\$1286.52)	11/08/20	80	\$4,685.50	\$4,809.41
YTD Income	\$233,111.58	\$259,037.21	(\$25,925.63)	11/15/20	12	\$3,080.00	\$4,809.41
Oct. Expenses	\$15,100.28	\$25,023.94	(\$9923.66)	11/22/20	12	\$2,820.00	\$4,809.41
YTD Expenses	\$257,786.20	\$272,265.10	(\$14,478.90)	<b>Total</b>	169	\$16,280.50	\$19,237.64
Surplus/(Deficit)	(\$24,674.62)	(\$13,227.89)	(\$11,446.73)	As of Oct. 31, we are behind by <b>\$25,662.27</b>			
Oct. Attendance	196			in Joyful Giving for 2020.			



## FELLOWSHIP AND HOSPITALITY MINISTRY TEAM

FEELING SMART? JUST WANT TO HAVE FUN?  
WE MISS SEEING YOU . . . JOIN US!



# ON-LINE TRIVIA NIGHT

(USING Zoom technology to unite us)

**Saturday,  
December 5th**  
  
**at**  
  
**7:00pm**

**Amazon Gift Cards  
Awarded to the Top 3  
Winners!**  
  
**Only 20 spots available,  
so reserve your spot  
now!**

**[Click here to RSVP](#)**

PRESENTED BY YOUR  
FELLOWSHIP AND HOSPITALITY MINISTRY TEAM  
**[REGISTER HERE VIA SIGN-UP GENIUS LINK](#)**  
QUESTIONS? CONTACT **[STEFANIE ZIMNY!](#)**

## OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY MINISTRY TEAM

### LOAVES AND FISHES UPDATE

The Nov. 16 meal at L&F was provided by the Men's Fellowship. They had lasagna and cookies and Patty Beeson provided the salad. Jessica Jenks once again provided the peanut butter & jelly sandwiches. Thank you to everyone who helped in any way! Servers were Judi Privitt, John Graves, Anne Heine, Keith Birkes, and Patty Beeson. We served approximately 137 guests. If there is a group within the church who would want to help out in any way, please let [Audrey Lasley](#) know!

### CROP WALK THANK YOU

The 2020 CROP Walk was a resounding success in spite of the changes made necessary by the pandemic. The Columbia CROP Walk, held on September 20, received \$17,013 in donations, of which \$2,761 was contributed through CUCC.

*That makes us the top contributing organization*, with Broadway Christian Church a close second at \$2,741. Thank you to Jessica Jenks for coordinating this effort, and to all of you for supporting it!

### 2020 VAC Christmas Drive—Last Call!

Let's finish up our VAC Christmas Drive by exceeding our goal! CUCC agreed to help 40 people realize their Christmas wishes by contributing a total of \$3,600. Although most of our donations have been turned in (exact total not known at "press time"), we can still help more people live the promise of hope and joy during this holy season.

There are two ways to give: 1) directly to VAC Christmas via Kindrid or a check, or 2) via the CUCC Giving Tuesday fund drive, 10% of which will go to VAC Christmas.

Please give generously so people in need will know someone cares about them during these difficult times. All funds must be received by Friday, Dec. 4 at the latest. Thank you!

### Christmas Eve Special Offering: EMMAUS HOMES

In its 125 year existence, Emmaus Homes has a long, rich history of caring for the handicapped and developmentally disabled.

With a mission of providing a home and an array of services to its clients, Emmaus Homes currently serves over 300 adults in homes located throughout eastern Missouri. Training by dedicated staff in self-care, in-home management, employment and other skills, allows residents to reach their maximum potential physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.

Go to [www.emmaushomes.org](http://www.emmaushomes.org) to read about award winning staff, how COVID-19 has affected Emmaus, and client stories that will tug at your heart strings.

CUCC has supported Emmaus Homes for many years. Our support will continue by donating this year's Christmas Eve Special Offering to Emmaus. God willing and if COVID does not spread, there will be an in person Christmas Eve service and an offering collection. Mailing offerings to church is always an option, or go online to the [CUCC website](#) and, through Kindred, select Emmaus Homes in the drop down menu. May we continue to support Emmaus Homes generously as we follow the Christ Child to serve the least among us.



### CUCC ASSISTS COMO HELPS IN MEETING THE NEEDS OF COLUMBIA FAMILIES

The CoMo Helps Fund was created to meet local needs caused by the pandemic. They recently announced a \$50,000 grant to Columbia Public Schools to purchase school supply kits for children. This funding (and the generous online contributions of individuals) allows CPS to make sure all children have the things they need to learn in this difficult new environment. CUCC donated \$5,000 from our 2020 Special Mission Project budget to CoMo Helps.

Other recent grants were awarded to Phoenix House for rent assistance for its outpatient clients and to the Columbia Homeless Outreach Team to provide survival essentials like tents, sleeping bags, etc. to homeless people facing fall and winter outdoors. Thank you for your generosity in supporting these essential needs.

## Share the Warmth

The Voluntary Action Center is not able to hold the Warm Up Columbia drive this year, but there are several local organizations that receive donations of warm winter items — especially coats, hats, gloves, scarves, and socks.

Please consider donating your gently used warm gear to one of the following agencies. VAC recommends you contact them prior to dropping off donations.

- o **Refugee and Immigration Services:** (573) 442-7568
- o **Columbia Public Schools:** 573-214-3111 ext. 33451 (Leslie Thalhuber)
- o **The Wardrobe:** (573) 442-3260
- o **Great Circle:** (573) 874-8686
- o **Coyote Hill:** (573) 874-0179 – Ask for Sarah
- o **Phoenix Programs:** (573) 875-8880 ext. 2204 (Amanda Haynie)
- o **Salvation Army:** (573) 443-2786



## CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICES

As we assemble this month's Communicator, we are unsure of how COVID-19 will affect our Christmas Eve schedule. Prior to the rise in cases that began November 4, our plan was to have three services as usual, 4:00, 7:00, and 11:00 p.m.; all in-person at church.

However, all indications appear that may change. The Church Council will be meeting after this Communicator is printed, and will make a decision about December services. But there is one change that we are planning already that affects our Christmas Eve Schedule:

**The 4:00 Christmas Eve Service will be via Zoom only. Not livestreaming, but Zoom.**

The reason we are doing this is because Zoom allows many participants to join in the service from many locations. So, we hope to harness many of our CUCC talents to put together one live service that we can livestream later, or enjoy in real time.

**WE NEED YOU TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN.** Are you willing to read a scripture or a poem? Are you willing to sing, play an instrument, or praise God in some other way? Are you willing to share a story about a special Christmas in your family and how you saw God very present in that moment? **ALL OF THIS WILL BE DONE FROM YOUR OWN HOME, VIA ZOOM.**

If you are willing to participate, contact [Ed Rollins](#) or [Pastor Rick](#) ASAP. We will be working on the logistics for this service in the weeks to come, so we need to know who is willing participate. Even if you are out of town, you can still participate via Zoom.

This will be a very different Christmas this year, but utilizing this technology, we can see each other and share the glory of the season in a whole new way as we celebrate God's love embodied in our midst once more.

## NURTURE AND EDUCATION MINISTRY TEAM

*Kindness is a language  
that the deaf can hear  
and the blind can see*  
- Mark Twain

### Children's Christmas Program December 20, 2020

This year, each Sunday School class will be presenting their own skit or play to tell the story of Christmas.

Teachers will be practicing with their classes on December 6, 13, and 20, during the Sunday School hour.

Please let your child's Sunday School teachers know if your child will be participating.

### "BLUE CHRISTMAS" GATHERINGS

Pastor Rick will be leading a "Blue Christmas" Book Study in December, on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom. We will gather on December 2, 9, 16, and 23 for about 90 minutes. During this time, we will look at several texts on grief, loss, and healing.

This time of year is difficult for those who have suffered loss in recent years, and this year we are all grieving the things we are missing, including the holiday traditions we hold dear and we cannot practice during COVID. Watch for emails from [Pastor Rick](#) or [April Rothweiler](#) with Zoom links and study materials to look at prior to the gatherings.

### ADULT EDUCATION SERIES RECAP

Each Thursday evening in the month of October and early November, 21 CUCC members gathered (some in person, some via Zoom) to discuss a new book on Antiracism, How to be an Antiracist by Ibraham X. Kendi. For those who gathered, it was a very formative time.

In the genre of studies on racism, this is a whole new perspective. The author wrote this book paralleling his own life, taking us through his childhood, matriculation to college and post-graduate school, and on to his career in academia. Throughout the journey, he explored how he expressed himself in racist ways, and how racism intersected with his own life and agenda.

This book examines biology, ethnicity, body, culture, behavior, color, class, space, gender, sexuality, failure, success, and survival, and how racism intersects with all those aspects of being human. There are four main topics that are interwoven throughout all these chapters:

- We are all racist at times; White and Black and Brown and everyone in between. Racism is an expression, not a label, and everyone has tendencies to express themselves in racist ways at times.
- We have a choice to be racist or antiracist. There is no "not racist," no neutral position. When we say we are "not racist" or "color blind" we are enabling racism to exist. The choice is ours, to be racist or antiracist, and we have to actively make that choice every day in all our expressions.
- Racism (racist ideas) do not create racist policies; racist policies are the result of those in power wanting to seize more power or maintain power. They create racist policies to solidify their power, then create racist ideas (racism) to rationalize those policies.
- Racism victimizes everyone, the oppressor and the oppressed. Everyone is a victim of racism, no matter the color of our skin or our level of power. We all benefit when we act in antiracist ways.

This book differs from other books you may have read on racism because it talks about unity, not division. It does not seek blame, it seeks reconciliation. It seeks to bring all people together, not ignoring but rather celebrating our diversity. The purpose of the book is stated on page 11:

*This book is ultimately the struggle we are all in;  
the struggle to be fully human and to see that others are fully human.*

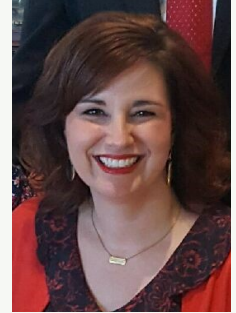
This book is not as much about racism as it is about being fully united as God Created us to be. If you have not read it yet, check it out! It is well worth your time. To discuss it further, feel free to contact [Pastor Rick](#)!

## MEMBERSHIP AND CARE MINISTRY TEAM

### NEW SIGNS, NEW MEMBERS, AND A NEW DIRECTORY

The Membership & Care Ministry Team has several new items to report!

- **New Signage:** Our parking lot directional signage has recently been installed! The new signs are in the same theme as the big sign at the road and provide clear direction around our parking lot.
- **New Directory:** Our new Pictorial Directory has arrived! We will be handing them out on Sundays, prior to Worship Service. If you are not attending in person and would like a directory, you can pick up your copy at the Church Office Monday — Friday between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Don't forget, this directory is also online! The link was sent out a while back, so if you do not have it saved, email the church office.



The Membership & Care Ministry Team has also been focusing on calling church members during this time of social isolation, offering a friendly voice and words of comfort and encouragement. If you would like a phone call or know a church member who would like a call, please let us know!

If you know someone who has been joining us for on-line worship and would like to be contacted by Pastor Rick, please let [Jessica](#) or [Pastor Rick](#) know! We've reached many people through online worship, and we'd love to connect with them in additional ways.

-Jessica Lucas, Ministry Team Chair

## WORSHIP AND MUSIC MINISTRY TEAM

### FROM YOUR MUSIC COORDINATOR

#### COVID and Church Music

by Ed Rollins

In early October I started giving thought to what we could do musically for the annual Cantata during Advent. If we scale things down and intersperse with small group music, maybe we could do something different and inspiring for the Advent season. As plans began to take shape, I put together an extensive email for the handbell ringers to consider doing some socially distant ringing. However, the email never got sent.

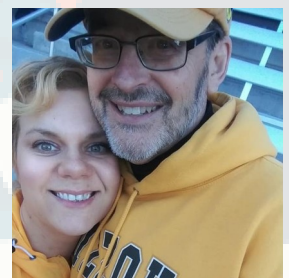
I was ready to send out the email when COVID numbers began to spike in Boone County, Missouri, and the rest of the USA. It was harrowing to watch the numbers climb and climb. I thought I'd wait to send the note when the numbers started to decline a bit. And then, COVID arrived in my home. I felt fatigued climbing steps – then I was dizzy while laying in bed – then my muscles ached – then my sinuses went nuts. Testing confirmed our worst fears – I tested positive for COVID and was sent into isolation for 10 days and quarantine for 14. Jess's test was negative, but presumed positive, and the kids have fared better. Thankfully, our COVID experience was minor compared to many (though recovery continues at a very slow pace). Please continue to be diligent in your prayers for those with COVID, and for those in the medical profession front lines; and please be diligent in your masking and your social distancing.

Needless to say, I have always said that church music is often about adapting to your situation. It's difficult to make music 52 Sundays a year. What might work one week may not work the next for many reasons, like personnel, scheduling, illness, life circumstances, and so on. COVID is happening and challenging us a bit more than usual. We will continue to make music, but we'll have to adapt our plans a bit every now and then.

Even if it looks different, Advent is an annual reminder that "God is With Us." That is the good news that we proclaim!

#### Many Thanks

CUCC is so blessed musically and I would like to express my thanks to those who have continued to help make music during my time of quarantine: Amy Crousore, Lucy Smith, Harry Beckett, Connie Loveless, Lindsey Oberle, Shelby Oberle, James Melton, Elizabeth Tummons, and Sadie Tummons.



## YOU CAN HELP SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT CUCC VIRTUAL WORSHIP

Most of you know that your CUCC worship service is livestreamed 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 DECEMBER

Below is the Sunday Volunteer Schedule for December. As you can see, we are in need of some spots to be filled and other spots to be shared with new faces. Part of being in the church family is often expressed by sharing the roles that make all of our members and guests feel welcome. If you can fill the needed role or a role in the future, please let one of the leaders know. We appreciate you, and we’re glad you have chosen CUCC as your church!

Date	Greeters	Ushers	Worship Leaders	Acolyte	Sound Booth	Hospitality
12/6	Jolene Kirchoff	N/A	Connie Loveless	NEED	Carissa Graves	Lena Muench
12/13	Anne Heine	N/A	Seth Smith	Lilly Smith	Phillip Dennis	Sue Ann Schaeffer
12/20	NEED	N/A	Darren Lasley	NEED	Pete Jaberg	Melba Shaffer
12/27	NEED	N/A	Jim Loveless	Lilly Smith	Brent Marcks	Brent Marcks

## CORONAVIRUS AND CUCC UPDATE

So much can change in a month! We have gone from a five-day average of **143** new daily cases on September 5 to a five-day average of **38** new daily cases on October 20 and now, back to a five-day average of **161** new cases on November 15. What a see-saw!

Throughout this time, your Church Leadership Team has not been lax in their vigilance. We monitor both the Boone County and State of Missouri COVID information hubs daily, noting the five-day infection rate, the positivity rate, and the hospital status as our benchmarks. We meet regularly, several times each month, to discuss procedures moving forward. With prayer and discernment, we make our decisions about how the church will move forward in light of data provided.

To this end your Church Leadership Team has decided, in light of the rising COVID-19 numbers that began on November 4, to suspend all in-person worship through the end of November, and we will be meeting in the next few weeks to make decisions about December and Christmas Eve Services.

The fact that CUCC has not had any major outbreaks due to Congregational gatherings is not just due to luck; it is due to the continued vigilance of your Church Leadership Team throughout this COVID-19 pandemic. It is with this vigilant practice that we make these decisions, and move forward with livestreaming worship only for a few weeks.

The good news is – there is a light at the end of the tunnel. We know that God is guiding us through this, and though this Holiday Season will be different than others, an end to this global pandemic is in sight. Though we worship apart for now, we will be worshipping together again soon. Watch for email updates from your Church Leadership Team about plans for December worship, including Christmas Eve.

## CUCC IS WORKING IN HAITI

The Ecumenical Foundation for Peace and Justice (FOPJ) is a Christian non-profit and a Global Ministries Partner in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. FOPJ's programs include a primary school, technical school, health services and programs for young mothers and elderly individuals without family. FOPJ also runs the House of Hope, an educational program for children and youth living as indentured servants or "restaveks." As most restavek children have minimal to no schooling, FOPJ works to provide a primary education to children living as restaveks. Normally, it takes six years to complete a primary education in Haiti, but FOPJ has worked diligently to create a state-approved curriculum that will allow students to receive a primary education in four years. While students are in the program, they also gain access to a school nurse, one hot meal per day, positive social interaction and opportunities for artistic expression and learning.

FOPJ is a mission 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 FOPJ in your prayers!

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

**December 6-12**

**Danielle Murry-Knowles  
Working in Lesotho**

**December 13-19**

**Maria Bakalian  
Working in Lebanon**

**December 20-26**

**Jeffrey Mensendiek  
Working in Japan**

**December 27- Jan 2**

**Ignacio Salinas  
Working in Nicaragua**



## GLOBAL MINISTRIES CALENDARS FOR 2021 AVAILABLE AT CHURCH!

Do you want to keep up to date with [Global Ministries](#) activities all year long? Global Ministries Wall Calendars will be available in the church office beginning on December 1. These great wall calendars not only help you keep your appointments up to date, they also help keep our UCC/DOC missionaries front and center in your life all year long! Stop by the church office and pick one up today, or pick one up from the back of the Sanctuary. They are full of missionary stories to keep you informed all year long. Global Ministries is just one of the ways we are God's hands and feet in the world, the direct recipients of One Great Hour of Sharing and Our Church's Wider Mission funding.

## Looking For a Place to Serve Locally?

Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery in which traffickers use force, fraud, or coercion to control victims for the purpose of engaging in commercial sex acts, labor services against his/her will, and/or the sale of organs on the black market.



The Central Missouri STOP Human Trafficking Coalition (CMSHTC) has been serving the local and surrounding communities for over twelve years, providing assistance to victims, survivors, and their families, in many holistic ways. We want to give a voice to the voiceless and empower the powerless.

If you haven't decided on who you will give to this year for CoMoGives, please consider the CMSHTC. CMSHTC is a non-profit organization that uses 90% of their donated funds to serve victims and survivors of trafficking. The other 10% helps cover administrative costs and fees. You can help us reach our goal of \$7,500, which will help provide shelter, health, and mental health services for individuals who have faced the reality of the modern day slave trade. You can give [here](#). Thank you for considering giving to help fight Human Trafficking!

# YOUTH MINISTRY

## HIGH SCHOOL AND MIDDLE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES THIS FALL

Pastor Rick, Lena Muench, and Lauren Helmreich are working to put together Middle School and High School activities for this program year. Planning during a pandemic is not easy. We would appreciate suggestions from anyone (not just youth)! Are there activities you want to do or ideas you have for creative programming?

If so, contact Lena (Middle School) at: [cfg323@yahoo.com](mailto:cfg323@yahoo.com)  
or Lauren (High School) at: [lauren@downtownappliance.com](mailto:lauren@downtownappliance.com)

## MIDDLE SCHOOL EVENT– POPPIES FOR VETERANS

Our Middle School Youth gathered on November 8 for Pizza, Poppies, and Puzzles! Eight Middle School youth joined Lena, Judi, and Jo Ellen to make poppies for Veterans. These poppies were used to decorate our Sanctuary for Veterans Sunday, November 15! They also learned about the poppy as a symbol for new life and remembrance. They wore masks and socially distanced themselves very well, making it a very safe event. Thank you to our Middle School Youth and leaders for contributing to our worship service in this way!



## CONFIRMATION CLASS OF 2021 HAS BEGUN!

Calling all 8th graders (and 9th graders who have not been confirmed yet): Confirmation has begun! The first gathering for our 2021 Confirmation Class was Monday, October 26, at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall (downstairs) with practiced social distancing. This is a big class. We have ten (or so) students this year! This class will be confirmed on November 28, 2021 (the first Sunday of Advent next year). Please keep them in your prayers as they continue on this journey. We will meet on Mondays during the Academic Year at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Do you have a friend who does not go to this church but would like to participate, too? Bring them along! All are welcome! For more information, talk to [Pastor Rick](#).

## CONFIRMATION CLASS OF 2020 IS ON HOLD!

As you might expect, the Confirmation Class of 2020 has had an unusual year! Lily Jaberg, Hazel Keithahn, and Brandon Lavelly began the year together, went totally online this past Spring with Zoom Confirmation classes, met again in person this fall, and worked quite admirably on their testimonies. They practiced those testimonies in the Sanctuary on November 4, and then the COVID numbers began to rise. Their Testimony Sunday and Confirmation Sunday, originally scheduled for November, has been put on hold due to our transition to online worship only. As of right now, Testimony Sunday is scheduled for January 24, and Confirmation Sunday January 31, but those dates could change if COVID numbers continue to be on the rise. Please keep your 2020 Confirmation Class in your prayers as they complete this phase of their journey!

## POINSETTIAS FOR THE SANCTUARY

If you would like to donate a poinsettia for the Sanctuary this Advent Season, please email (or snail mail) [April](#) in the church office by December 6.

Please include the following information:

- Is it in honor of (passed away) or in memory of (living) the person you are recognizing?
- The name of the person you are recognizing
- Your name (as you want it printed)

Poinsettias are \$8.00 each. We will have them in the Sanctuary by December 13, and will keep them up thru the 11:00 Christmas Eve service. You can pick up your poinsettia on Christmas Eve if you would like, or donate it to a homebound member!

## “HANGING OF THE GREENS”



Thank you to all who helped with the “Hanging of the Greens”! You are appreciated, and all will see the beauty of Christmas as they visit CUCC!

## ADVENT BANQUET

We will not have our Advent Banquet this year, due to COVID numbers and a desire to be safe in our conduct as a church. However, the Fellowship and Hospitality Ministry Team has other activities planned for December to gather us as a church family! (See separate article for more information.) We look forward to Advent, 2021 when we will resume our tradition of having a wonderful Advent Banquet!



**ON THE CHURCH CALENDAR IN DECEMBER**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>6 1st Sunday of Advent JOY 9am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Worship Livestreaming on our <a href="#">CUCC Website</a></p>	<p>7 10:15am Staff Meeting  6pm Confirmation</p>	<p>8 6:30pm Church Council 7:15pm Nurture &amp; Education Ministry Team</p>	<p>9 6:30pm Blue Christmas Group Meeting</p>	<p>10 9:30am Women's Fellowship</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12 Fellowship Hall is Booked—SHTCCM</p>
<p>13 2nd Sunday of Advent PEACE 9am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Worship Livestreaming on our <a href="#">CUCC Website</a></p>	<p>14 9:30-10am LODO using Sanctuary 10:15am Staff Meeting  6pm Confirmation</p>	<p>15 9:30-10am LODO using Sanctuary</p>	<p>16 9:30-10am LODO using Sanctuary  6:30pm Blue Christmas Group Meeting</p>	<p>17 9:30-10am LODO using Sanctuary 12pm Lunch Bunch 6:30pm Membership &amp; Care Ministry Team</p>	<p>18 9:30-10am LODO using Sanctuary</p>	<p>19 Communicator Articles Due</p>
<p>20 3rd Sunday of Advent LOVE 9am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Worship Livestreaming on our <a href="#">CUCC Website</a></p>	<p>21 10:15am Staff Meeting  6pm Confirmation</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23 LODO CLOSED</p>	<p>24 LODO CLOSED CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED Christmas Eve Services 4pm, 7pm, 11pm</p>	<p>25 LODO CLOSED CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED </p>	<p>26</p>
<p>27 9am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Worship Livestreaming on our <a href="#">CUCC Website</a></p>	<p>28 10:15am Staff Meeting LODO CLOSED</p>	<p>29 LODO CLOSED</p>	<p>30 LODO CLOSED</p>	<p>31 LODO CLOSED</p>	<p>1 LODO CLOSED CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED </p>	<p>2</p>

# 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](mailto: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.