

THE COMMUNICATOR

February 2021



“Thru Epiphany to Lent”

From the Pastor’s Keyboard

January 6, 2021, was the feast of Epiphany; the day commemorating the visit of the Magi to the manger. Their visit “revealed” Jesus’ true nature as the Messiah, and their expression of faith caused Mary, Joseph, and Herod to begin to ponder the implications of that expression. *The word “Epiphany” means “to be revealed” or “to reveal,” and what was “revealed” that day would change the world forever.*

January 6, 2021, was the day of another revelation. Is it a coincidence that on the day of revelation armed domestic terrorists attacked the bastion of democracy, desecrated the flag, killed police officers, and attempted to assassinate Mike Pence, the Vice-President of the United States?

This fact that this event happened on Epiphany is not coincidental, for it was certainly a revelation. It revealed the extent of narcissism present in our country, the depth of racism that is part of our national identity, and what happens when people are corrupted by one person’s lust for power. It revealed the extremes that hatred, if left unchecked, can cause. It revealed that, as a society, we are very much in need of healing, but we also have issues we need to address.

As a society, we cannot heal by simply sticking our head in the sand and pretending the Epiphany Revelation of 2021, the armed insurrection against the United States, did not happen. We cannot just “move on.” We must confront the demons that have plagued our country since its inception; the demons of racism, narcissism, and greed. We must shed light on the darkness of evil, wherever it has taken root, revealing the evil so healing can begin. As Christians who champion the Good News of Jesus Christ, it is up to us to be this beacon of light, this beacon of hope.

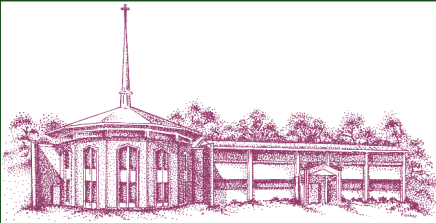
In February, we continue the Epiphany journey we began in January. The Epiphany journey contains many elements. After the visit of the Magi, we hear about Herod’s Massacre of the Infants; we see Anna and Simeon proclaim baby Jesus’ divinity as he is presented in the Temple; we celebrate Christ’s baptism; we witness Jesus calling his Disciples; and we climb with Jesus up a mountain where he communes with God, Moses, and Elijah and is Transfigured. In each of these stories, Jesus’ true nature is revealed to those who witness the moment. All are amazed, and the presence of God in each of their lives is revealed in the true nature of this man, this Messiah.

Epiphany is about revelation, but it is also about reaction. In each of the instances listed above, those who receive “Epiphanies” react, based on the revelation they received. The Magi react, defying Herod by taking another road. Anna and Simeon react, proclaiming the Messiah for all to hear. John’s disciples react at Jesus’ baptism by telling everyone what they saw. Jesus’ disciples react at his call, dropping their fishnets and immediately following him. Peter, James, and John react at the Transfiguration, proclaiming their faith in the Law and the Prophets by offering to construct tabernacles for them. Receiving an Epiphany is the first step; how one reacts afterward brings definition to the moment of Epiphany.

How we react to the 2021 Epiphany Revelation, the armed insurrection against our country, will bring definition to that moment. If we react in unity, denouncing acts of domestic terrorism and racist abuse while seeking ways to lift up and affirm the worth of all God’s children, the 2021 Epiphany Revelation will be defined as a call to justice, reconciliation, and reform, a call to true unity emblematic of Martin Luther King’s dream, Jesus’ prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, God’s Vision for Creation. If we react with increased division, or if we try to stick our heads in the sand and “just move on,” pretending it did not happen, the 2021 Epiphany Revelation will be defined as just an incident of cowardly domestic terrorism with no redemptive value.

This month, we move through Epiphany and enter the Season of Lent. Ash Wednesday is February 17 and we will celebrate it together, with in-person worship for the first time in a long time. Let us do so together; united, learning and growing from the revelations Epiphany brought us, and reacting as God’s children, living God’s Vision in the world.

-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
Not meeting due to COVID

10:30am- Worship
Online only

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

Phone:
(573)-445-7931

Email:
office@columbiaucc.com

Website:
www.columbiaucc.com

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.)

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.

With this new technology, our livestream is much more sophisticated, but it cannot be streamed to both You Tube (our website) and Facebook at the same time; so from now on, we will only be streaming to You Tube (accessible through our website on Sunday morning) and not Facebook. The service will be uploaded to Facebook later that day.



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.

Until you are able to receive the vaccine please continue to follow the safety guidelines to help keep everyone safe.

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.

Thanks to everyone who has sent cards, prayers, and called over the past weeks. I was touched by how many friends reached out. I'm glad to be home and recuperating, learning to take it easy.

Love, Jan Barry

Dear Columbia UCC Congregation,

I would like to thank you for all of the loving support I received while recovering from COVID 19. Your prayers, cards, Facebook comments and messages were so encouraging during my long hospital stay. I am home now but still on oxygen. I am able to do physical therapy via zoom and hoping for a full recovery soon. It is wonderful to belong to such a caring Church Family.

Yours in Christ, Mariann Bullerd

CUCC Lunch Bunch

CUCC Lunch Bunch will meet on Thursday, FEBRUARY 25, 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!

Women's Fellowship Update

Women's Fellowship will gather on **Thursday, February 11, 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, 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! 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 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

GONA/HONA OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONVOCATION MARCH 6, 2021– ONLINE ONLY!



Austen Hartke is the author of *Transforming: The Bible and the Lives of Transgender Christians*, a book on theology and personal narratives published by Westminster John Knox Press in 2018. He is also the founder and director of [Transmission Ministry Collective](#), an online community dedicated to the spiritual care, faith formation, and leadership potential of transgender, nonbinary, genderqueer, and gender-expansive Christians.

From 2015 to 2018 Austen created one hundred videos for the *Transgender and Christian* YouTube series, which sought to share parts of the Bible that relate to gender identity and the lives of transgender individuals.

He is a graduate of Luther Seminary's Master of Arts program in Old Testament/Hebrew Bible Studies, and is the winner of the 2014 John Milton Prize in Old Testament Writing from the same institution. He has spoken at conferences all over the country, including events for The Reformation Project, Gender Spectrum, Evolving Faith, Q Christian Fellowship, the Philadelphia Transgender Health Conference, and the Why Christian Conference.

Austen is a [2019 Bush Foundation Fellow](#), and is currently researching the use of online ministry as support for gender-expansive Christians. As a transgender person of faith, Austen's greatest passion is helping other trans and gender-expansive people see themselves in scripture.

Welcome to the 10th Annual Open and Affirming Convocation. This year's Convocation will be completely online!

Planning:

This year's planning committee has consisted of representatives from **GONA**- Gateway Open and Affirming (St. Louis); **HONA**-Heartland Open and Affirming (Kansas City) and by representatives of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Location:

On Zoom from a comfortable seat of your choice. The whole day will be presented on Zoom, including workshops, which will be offered in Zoom breakout rooms.

Program:

Austen and others will be presenting a program based on Isaiah 43:14-19. We will begin gathering virtually at 8:30am, and Worship will begin at 9:00. We will break into workshops starting at 10:30, and there will be several workshops offered. The day will end with closing worship at 2:30pm. We will be celebrating communion, so have your elements ready at home!

Registration:

This will be online; a link will be sent out in an upcoming Friday email. Everyone will need to have a unique email address when registering. The registration fee is \$15.00 per person, to be paid in advance when you register. If anyone needs help registering, or paying for the event, talk to [Pastor Rick](#).

You will make workshop choices when you register, but you will be able to change your workshop choices before the registration deadline.

Registration Deadline is Firm:

Registrations **must** be received by 11:59 p.m. (CST) on **Wednesday March 3, 2021**. For any questions, or for help registering, talk to [Pastor Rick!](#)

LODO MINISTRY TEAM



Parenting in a Pandemic: Tips to Keep the Calm at Home

Fear, uncertainty, and being holed up at home more to slow the spread of COVID-19 can make it tough for families to keep a sense of calm. But it's important to help children feel safe, keep healthy routines, manage their emotions and behavior, and build resilience.

Here are some tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) to help your family get through the stress of the pandemic..

- ◆ Address children's fears. Children rely on their parents for safety, both physical and emotional. Reassure your children that you are there for them and that your family will get through this together.
- ◆ Answer questions about the pandemic simply & honestly. Talk with children about any frightening news they hear. It is OK to say people are getting sick, but remind them that following safety steps like hand washing, wearing cloth face coverings, and staying home more will help your family stay healthy.
- ◆ Recognize your child's feelings. Calmly say, for example, "I can see that you are upset because you can't have a sleepover with your friends right now." Guiding questions can help older children and teens work through issues. ("I know it is disappointing not to be able to do some of the things you did before the pandemic. What are some other ways you can have fun with your friends?")
- ◆ Keep in touch with loved ones. Children may also worry about a grandparent who is living alone or a relative or friend with an increased risk of getting COVID-19. When safe, physically distanced visits aren't possible, video chats can help ease their anxiety.
- ◆ Model how to manage feelings. Talk through how you are managing your own feelings. ("I am worried about Grandma since I can't go visit her. I will put a reminder on my phone to call her in the morning, and in the afternoon until it is safe to see her.")
- ◆ Tell your child before you leave the house for work or essential errands. In a calm and reassuring voice, tell them where you are going, how long you will be gone, when you will return, and that you are taking steps to stay safe.
- ◆ Look forward. Tell them that scientists are working hard to figure out how to help people who get sick, how to prevent it, and that things will get better.
- ◆ Offer extra hugs and say "I love you" more often.

Click below to read the rest of the article that also discusses bedtime, discipline, and routines at:

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Parenting-in-a-Pandemic.aspx>

LODO NEWS

We blinked and now it is February! When we returned from Christmas Break, we jumped right back into learning. Our classes started off with a focus on kindness and friendship. We also learned all about winter, winter animals, and hibernation. I heard many giggles after reading "Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus" during our author spotlight week for Mo Willems. We finished up the month of January learning about Outer Space.

February Themes

Bucket Filling, Friendship, and Love

Valentine's Day

Around the World:

The World God Made



February is full of promise with many exciting learning themes focused on love, kindness, and celebrating our differences.

With Love, Ms. Erika

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- Feb 10th & 11th: Classroom Valentine Celebrations
- Feb 10th & 11th: KidSight Vision Screenings
- Feb 12th: LODO CLOSED
- Feb 15th: LODO CLOSED
- Feb 26th: LODO CLOSED
- Feb 28th: 21-22 Enrollment (Current Families)
- Mar 8th: 21-22 Enrollment (New Families)

INCLUSION AND AFFIRMATION MINISTRY TEAM

This ministry met January 7, one day after the siege on the US Capital. We spent some time reviewing that event. Pastor Rick led us in devotion and prayer for the healing of our country.

We continue to pursue networking with local churches on racial and LGBTQ issues. With COVID-19 still raging, that work is tentative, until we can safely gather together .

Our Inclusion Covenant Anniversary is Jan 31. We are working on decorations and videos to celebrate. Our usual refreshment and gathering time will have to come at a later date.

Black History Month will be observed in February. There will be a person-of-color highlighted during each Sunday service. We are also going to show the documentary "Accidental Courtesy" on February 26 in the fellowship hall. If you are concerned about gathering there, it can also be seen anytime on Amazon Prime or on PBS February 13. We plan to have a group discussion after the movie. We will zoom that event. So, please contact April or Pastor Rick if you plan to attend so they can send you the zoom link. (The documentary is about a Black musician who reaches out to KKK members. His question to them is, "How can you hate me, when you don't even know me?") We encourage everyone to check it out and join the zoom.

The poet D. Awanis wrote this in April 2017:

Beauty in Diversity

Not a single embryo was able to decide their DNA or blood type
But that shouldn't make us less human than the others
It's the diversity that makes us exquisite and beautiful

Break down the stereotype that beauty is fair skin,
that beauty is a skinny and blonde-haired lady
that beauty is wearing clothes with branded labels
that beauty is applying tons of foundation and mascara

Who are we to determine the standard of beauty, anyway?
While each of us is God's creativity,
authentically made by God's hands

Who are we to judge God's taste in art, anyway?
While each of us is uniquely magnificent,
as God's creations are never less than a masterpiece

Keep in mind that real beauty lies within ourselves,
beneath our skin, between our thoughts, and inside our soul
Embrace your inner beauty



In Peace and Joy,
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

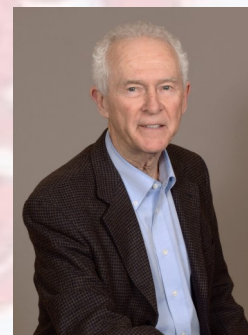
TIME, TALENT AND TREASURES DURING A PANDEMIC

by Keith Birkes

On behalf of the Finance and Stewardship Ministry Team, I want to thank the members and friends of CUCC for your very generous financial support this past year. It has been a very challenging and unusual year for all the reasons that are very familiar to you. Once again in 2020 we have reached and slightly exceeded budgetary goals, both for Joyful Giving and for Giving Tuesday. Thank you very, very much!

Just as important as our financial gifts is the time and effort we all put into the activities, mission, goals, and leadership of our church and its community. Our congregation is small but very dedicated and active in all aspects of our church. With the dedicated leadership of Pastor Rick, we have stayed strong and faithful through all challenges. We should all congratulate one another and prepare for a return to normalcy later in the year. What a relief to begin to think about in person worship services and all the other fellowship and service opportunities CUCC offers.

Your continued support in all ways will, as always, remain essential to our success in service to God. Please keep up the good work and also keep your spirit strong. Our church family is unique in its commitment to making great things happen in God's universe. I'm looking forward to seeing you in person this year, and thank you!



CUCC SCHOLARSHIP FUND NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

Did you know there is a Scholarship fund at CUCC? The Memorial Education Fund, established in 1972 by Professor H. H. Krusekopf, and contributed to over the years by many others, was redefined in 2019 as “The Columbia United Church of Christ Scholarship Fund.” (The definition of this fund is available on request; copies have been available for the past year on the wooden rack by the Sanctuary doors.) By definition, scholarships awarded from this fund are available to all active members of the congregation who are pursuing an education beyond High School.

There is an application process and qualification criteria. Application forms are available in the church office. All applications are due by April 1, 2021, and will be considered by a team composed of the Vice Moderator, the Nurture and Education Ministry Team Chair, the Finance and Stewardship Ministry Team Chair, and Pastor Rick. Awards from the fund will be disbursed after July 1 for the fall semester.

If you would like to learn more about the application process for the new Scholarship Fund, you can request a copy of the definition, criteria, and application by contacting [April Rothweiler](#), [Pastor Rick](#), [James Melton](#) (Moderator), [Kristy Odneal](#) (Vice-Moderator), or one of the Ministry Team Chairs listed above.

2020 YEAR END FINANCIAL UPDATE

By Brent Marcks

The spirit of stewardship is very much alive in this congregation! In a year that has been largely uncertain, one thing that has been certain is the spirit of faithful stewardship in this community. As we entered March, we were already significantly behind in our budgeted Joyful Giving amount. Throughout the year, we closed the gap, and we will end the year having met our Joyful Giving budgeted goal for 2020.



Our **FINAL** Joyful Giving total for 2020 was \$353,970! Our **BUDGETED** Joyful Giving total was \$330,223, so we **EXCEEDED** our goal by \$23,747, or 7%! We exceeded our 2019 Joyful Giving total by \$30,159.

I want to take this time to thank each member of the congregation for their generosity and for finding new and faithful ways to support the church when, most of the year, we couldn't place our offerings in the offering plate. I also want to encourage this faithful stewardship to continue into 2021. In 2020, January and February were low giving months, and we spent the year behind because of that. Hopefully in 2021, we won't be playing catch up all year! I am looking forward to 2021 and what it will bring to our congregation.



TREASURER'S REPORT

-Brent Marcks, Recording Treasurer

Financial Update			
	Actual	Budget	Over/(Under)
Dec. Income	\$96,030.93	\$54,161.72	\$41,869.21
YTD Income	\$360,073.82	\$336,800.99	\$23,272.83
Dec. Expenses	\$42,840.37	\$34,436.84	\$8,403.53
YTD Expenses	\$324,992.20	\$336,800.89	(\$11,808.69)
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$35,081.62	\$0.10	\$35,081.62
Dec. Attendance	N/A		

Date	Attendance	Received	Budget
01/03/20	N/A	\$300.00	\$5,550.66
01/10/20	N/A	\$4,030.00	\$5,550.66
01/17/20	N/A	\$6,600.00	\$5,550.66
01/24/20	N/A	\$2,560.00	\$5,550.66
Total	N/A	\$13,490.00	\$22,202.64

As of 01/24/2021, we are **\$8,712.64 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.

SEMINARY SUNDAY– FEBRUARY 28

The last Sunday in February is traditionally recognized as Seminary Sunday in the United Church of Christ, and here at CUCC, we give special recognition to "Our" Seminary, Eden!

Eden Theological Seminary is the Alma Mater to many members of the CUCC family, including Pastor Rick! Eden was formed in 1850 by our ancestors in faith who saw the need for an educated clergy and prophetic preaching. Eden has evolved over the years, always a voice for Progressive Theology in a world where that voice is needed.

Now and throughout its history, Eden affirms that Christian faith and critical scholarship are compatible, and dedicated discipleship is neither alien nor hostile to the truth of love. Faith is nurtured and openly affirmed at Eden, and the discussions nurtured at Eden continue to serve us well, spreading the greater good into the twenty-first century and beyond.

On Sunday, February 28, we will focus on Eden Seminary in worship with recorded videos and special presentations. Don't miss worship on February 28 as we recognize "our" Seminary, Eden!



ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP– FEBRUARY 17

Ash Wednesday is an unusual day in the liturgical life of the worshipping community. It is about penance, humility, and the realization that life is fragile. It is a day that we talk about death, and recite the mantra, "from ashes we come, to ashes we will return." *It is a time to remember that God is God, and we are not.*

This year, Ash Wednesday will be our first time back together, worshipping in person. We will have a special reflection about the trauma we have experienced this past year, and the fragility we realized in our personhood. We will reflect on our traditions in new ways, and give special remembrance to lives lost due to COVID-19.

Ash Wednesday worship will begin at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary; masks and social distancing are required. It will also be livestreamed on our CUCC website, like on Sunday mornings. Join us for worship on Ash Wednesday!

OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY MINISTRY TEAM

LOAVES AND FISHES UPDATE

The January 18 meal at L&F consisted of spaghetti, salad, and cookies. The salad was provided by Patty Beeson, and Llona Weiss made cookies. Mahree Skala provided the peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. Servers were Judi Privitt, Patty Beeson, Pastor Rick, and Jean (a student who volunteers). We served approximately 80 servings which included firsts, seconds, and carry-outs.

If there is anyone who would like to volunteer to help as a server, please let [Audrey Lasley](#) know! CUCC could use some more names on the volunteer list!

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY BREAKFAST ALTERNATIVE

Habitat was formed to help low income people own an affordable home. A number of our Church members have volunteered at Habitat over the years. Uel Blank was a member who committed a lot of his life to Habitat. Unfortunately, Men's Fellowship has decided to cancel the Uel Blank Memorial Breakfast this year due to COVID. In its place we are sponsoring a fundraiser for Habitat through the end of February. You can give through Kindrid, on the Church [website](#), or send a check to the Church. Please make your check out to Men's Fellowship. Our goal is \$2000. Thank You for your help! If you have any questions, contact [Doug Privitt](#).

NURTURE AND EDUCATION MINISTRY TEAM



- For ages 3-12th grade. Everything will be multi-age friendly!
- 6 Sundays of fun: 2/21, 2/28, 3/7, 3/14, 3/21, 3/28
- 9-10 a.m.- each week a different theme!
- COVID protocols in place
- **Everyone MUST sign up to attend** (sign up for as many weeks as you're able!)
- To sign up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E49ADA72FAAF49-cucc1> or scan this:
- Questions? Please e-mail Lena Muench (cfg323@yahoo.com)



Sunday School During Lent – February 21-March 28, 2021

Preschool through High School Youth will celebrate each Sunday in Lent, 2021 with a special Lent program organized and created by Lena Muench and Gina Pierson during the Sunday School hour, 9:00-10:00 a.m. Pre-registration for children and youth will be required in order to provide supervision and a safe, healthy environment.

Lenten Fun!

Children, youth, and young adults—this is for you! Follow this [link](#) for a Lenten adventure.

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.



Valentine Blessing Bags for our Sunday School Children and Youth

The Nurture & Education Ministry Team will be delivering Valentine Blessing bags to the 65 children and youth on our Sunday School Roster prior to Valentine's Day. These bags will have items to celebrate Valentine's Day and an activity book about Lent.



Souper Bowl Fundraiser Sunday, February 7, 2021

Please help our local Food Pantry with this Annual Souper Bowl Fundraiser, raising funds that stay in our local community. Please donate by Kindred (or during worship on February 7, 2021 if in-person worship is held).

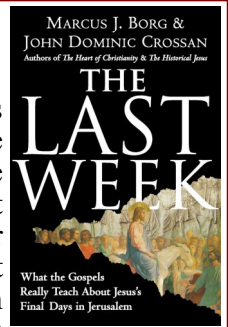
CONFIRMATION CLASS OF 2021!

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](#).

LENTEN BOOK/BIBLE STUDY—THE LAST WEEK

Join Pastor Rick for six Wednesdays during Lent as we take a look at the last week of Jesus' life and the crucial events that took place that week. We will be focusing our study around the book "The Last Week" by Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan. Other materials will be incorporated, as well, and we will be looking at and comparing Gospel narratives.



Starting on Wednesday, February 24, we will look at Palm Sunday, Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, and what that meant to the first century world. The next five Wednesdays (March 3, 10, 17, 24, & 31) we will look at each day of Jesus' last week, examining what these Gospel narratives would have meant to first century readers, and what wisdom these narratives hold for us today.

We will meet at 6:30 each Wednesday in the Fellowship Hall, socially distanced, wearing masks. Copies of the book can be purchased on Amazon for \$10.99 and can also be found at local booksellers. While you can certainly join the discussion without having read the book, it is recommended that you do so to get the full impact of the class. Pastor Rick will be sending out a Study Guide before each class to get us started (and also a Zoom link, if anyone wants to join that way).

ADULT EDUCATION SERIES – YOUR BIBLE

Have you ever wanted to participate in a basic, beginner's level Bible Study? A "Bible 101" that takes you back to your first steps in Biblical knowledge and reintroduces you to the basics? Have you ever felt that you don't know enough about the Bible to go to a Bible Study class, that before you can study the Bible you need to start at the beginning?

Pastor Rick will be leading a "beginner's Bible Course" in February and March! For six Sunday mornings, we will share a course called, "Your Bible – the Study Begins." This is a Kerygma series that introduces participants to the Bible on a very beginning level, but enjoyable even for more advanced students.

The Series outline is broken up into several units:

- "What is the Bible?"
- "How Did the Bible Come to Be?"
- "What is the Old Testament About?"
- "What is the New Testament About?"
- "How Has the Bible Been Preserved and Handed On?"
- "How Shall We Study the Bible?"
- "What is the Place of the Bible in Our Lives?"



By exploring these topics with the [Pastor Rick](#) and the class, you can lay the foundation for a much more comprehensive understanding of the Bible. The class will meet Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. in the downstairs Fellowship Hall starting February 21 and running thru March 28 (Palm Sunday).

Look who was featured in the City of Columbia *City Source* Publication! Our very own Ed Kaiser! Volunteering is not only helpful, it is also rewarding—Way to “pay it forward” Ed!



Volunteer of the Month: Ed Kaiser

Volunteer Columbia celebrates 25 years of connecting residents to service opportunities in local government in 2021. Throughout the year, we will highlight the efforts of long-time volunteers.

After an attempt to get into the Air Force, Ed Kaiser subconsciously found himself being a volunteer officer in the Columbia Police Reserves. The reserves were a diverse force of 40 dedicated volunteers serving their community.

Through the Police Reserves, Ed met a battalion chief with the Columbia Fire Department who requested Ed accompany him on an inspection tour for his company to look for hazardous materials. Ed realized storage and disposal of hazardous materials was an issue that needed a solution immediately.

After being made aware of extremely harmful hazardous materials in local buildings, it dawned on him the possible hazardous materials in homes. This concern led him to pen a letter to the City of Columbia.

With his “Ivory tower” experience as he explained (thanks to his Ph.D. in organic chemistry from Purdue University) Ed made it a priority to teach firefighters about hazardous materials. Ed then developed a program for residents to dispose of their hazardous materials in cooperation with the City’s Solid Waste Utility. Household Hazardous Waste collection, developed by Ed, accepts your materials on the first and third Saturday mornings, April through November, at the Grissum Building, 1313 Lakeview Ave.

In approaching the 25th anniversary of Volunteer Columbia, Ed responded: “To thine own self be true...”. Ed and his wife, Judy, have visited all seven continents. Congratulations to Ed Kaiser on this honor and thanks for your impact as a volunteer.

Written by volunteer Maggie Brown



Looking For a Place to Serve or Give Locally?

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.

Have you ever wondered what role you could play in the anti-trafficking movement? Here are some steps you can take to help!

- ⇒ Get trained—Victims are everywhere. Know what the indicators are and be willing to report what you see. The Coalition offers free trainings and educational materials. Contact us to schedule a presentation.
- ⇒ Raise your voice—Giving victims and survivors of human trafficking their voice back is vital. Utilize your favorite social media platform to educate those within your sphere of influence, raise awareness, and/or fundraise for organization, like the Coalition, that are working in the thick of it. The toll free National Human Trafficking Hotline is 888-373-7888. Put it in your phone. *If you see something, say something.*
- ⇒ Volunteer your time, talents, or become a donor—There are many needs to run an anti-trafficking organization successfully. Volunteers are needed, including different talents to help with social media, education, creating platforms for awareness (including artistic ways to reach others), rides, admin work, and so much more. Donors are needed to keep the organizations running. Donor partnerships provide access to healthcare, mental and health services, rides, groceries, living assistance, and more.

If any of this sounds like something you can and want to do, reach out to us at help@stophumantraffickingmo.com.



WORSHIP AND MUSIC MINISTRY TEAM

SPIRIT, GRACE BY WHOM WE LIVE

I grew up in the Washington DC suburb of Rockville, Maryland in a time when there were riots over race and the Vietnam War, when a disgraced President resigned, and when the country grieved the assassinations of the Kennedys and a King. Even in that challenging time, we had a government that worked together to do what they thought was best for our country.

There have always been divisions in our country, but none so ugly as what we are seeing now. Pandemic fights over wearing a simple mask that has been proven to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Airline passengers attacking ticket agents over the size of carry-on luggage. Democracy threatened by attempts to manipulate election results. An insurrection that threatened the very nature of our government. Elected officials who have forgotten the meaning of working together for the greater good.

Closer to home, we find school board officials derided and threatened over decisions that are being made for the safety and education of our children. They were not elected to have their homes vandalized and their lives threatened. They were elected to represent their constituency to the best of their ability, those who agree with them and those who don't. It is an injustice to our community to witness the attacks being made on these well-meaning people.

There have always been divisions, but there have not always been such egregious reactions to someone who doesn't agree with you.

Susan Palo Cherwein, who is a poet, hymn writer, theologian, has written a text called, "Rise, O Church, as Christ Arisen," a text that reminds us to rise above hatred and division just as Christ did. Stanza one reminds us that the table of our Lord is for everyone and that through Christ we will see an example of love and grace, and it will help us to know that we are Christ's and that we must be like him.

Rise, O church, like Christ arisen,
from this meal of love and grace;
may we through such love envision
whose we are, and whose, our praise.

And following the meal, "Rise, transformed, and choose to follow after Christ, though wounded, whole;" Then, the text reminds us how to live our days.

Rise, remember well the future
God has called us to receive;
present by God's loving nurture,
Spirited then let us live.
Alleluia, alleluia;
Spirit, grace by whom we live.

Service be our sure vocation;
courage be our daily breath;
mercy be our destination
from this day and unto death.

What beautiful images for our world today! Grace and mercy from the table of love. Rise, O Church, because we need to lead the way to remind our world that we treat everyone with love, respect, grace, and mercy.

-Ed Rollins



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 FEBRUARY

Below is the Sunday Volunteer Schedule for February. 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	Tech Booth	Hospitality
02/07	Judi Privitt	N/A	Seth Smith	Lilly Smith	NEED	N/A
02/14	NEED	N/A	Isaiah Jackson-Post	Abby Dennis	NEED	N/A
02/21	NEED	N/A	Audrey Lasley	NEED	NEED	N/A
02/28	NEED	N/A	Connie Loveless	Abby Dennis	NEED	N/A

CORONAVIRUS AND CUCC UPDATE – IN PERSON WORSHIP RESUMES 2/17

What do the Coronavirus numbers look like in Boone County? The CUCC COVID-19 Response Team has been keeping a close eye on them. On January 18, the 5-day average for new cases dropped to 78; the high, back in November when we chose to go online-only, was 168. We are definitely seeing improvement!

With the distribution of vaccines and the hope that most Boone County citizens will be vaccinated, we expect numbers to decrease even more in the weeks to come. With this in mind, the CUCC COVID Response Team met on January 18 and put together a recommendation that we continue to livestream-only our worship services through Epiphany, and begin opening to in-person worship for Lent.

Our first in-person worship service will be Ash Wednesday, February 17. Our first in-person Sunday worship service will be February 21. Sunday School will also resume at that time.

We will observe the social distancing policies we implemented in 2020. Masks will be required, distancing policies will be in place, and bathrooms will be limited to one person at a time. The nursery will only be open from 10:00-Noon, with staff, and will not be open for parents to utilize earlier. We will have coffee available in the Fellowship Hall from 9:00-10:30, but we will not have the gathering area (sofas) open upstairs.

The church family did a great job of following these rules in 2020, which kept our congregation healthy. With continued vigilance, we can remain healthy as we all become vaccinated and defeat this pandemic together!

CUCC IS WORKING IN CUBA

The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Center (CMMLK) is an organization of Christian inspiration focused on educating Cubans in critical, liberating and contextual theology. They give hope by organizing social participation, ministering with the Cuban people, and actively striving for social justice. The Trauma Recovery and Income Generation Project for women of the center is a network of social support, skills training, and income generating projects for women from difficult circumstances. Using the model of popular grassroots education, many women find healing from domestic violence situations in the group and find a network of support from women in the community. Each woman in the project learns an artistic skill and means of self-expression such as doll making, sewing, cooking and more. Women in the group use these skills to generate income and to contribute back to the project for other women to join.

The CCMLK 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 CCMLK in your prayers!

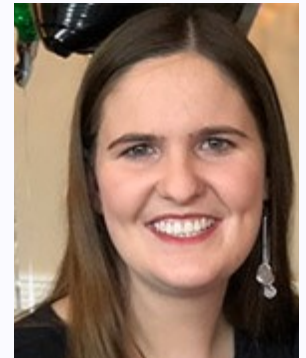
In February, please keep these UCC/DOC Global Ministries missionaries in your prayers:

**February 1-6
John Campbell-Nelson
Working in Indonesia**

**February 7-13
Maria Abigail Hernandez
Working in Japan**

**February 14-20
R.J. Howard
Working in Fiji**

**February 21-28
Abby Fate
Working in Mexico**



CUCC IS WORKING IN MEXICO

(condensed from www.globalministries.org)

Melel Xojobal in Tzotzil, an indigenous Mayan language, means "True Light." They are a social organization founded in San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico in February 1997. Melel Xojobal primarily works with indigenous populations through education, advocacy, health services, and community engagement.


During its first years, the organization focused on educational programs with children living on the street. Subsequently, their work has been transformed and expanded to contribute more effectively to the fulfillment of the rights of indigenous children, and other children and youth in situations of marginalization and social risk.

Melel Xojobal works with the indigenous children and young people of the state of Chiapas in the promotion, defense, and exercise of their rights through participatory processes for the improvement of their quality of life. They strive to be a sustainable organization with a focus on rights and gender perspective.

The work of Melel Xojobal can be broken into three areas: early childhood work, support, and advocacy for the rights of child workers, and work with young people. They work with children and their parents to address topics such as nutritional, physical, and social skills. Their work with child workers seeks to defend the rights of indigenous children who work in the streets, markets, and public areas of the city. They also work with young people ages 13 to 18 to encourage and promote healthy lifestyles and self-protection strategies that revolve around prevention of substance abuse, as well as finding dignified work. Their work seeks to fundamentally change the conditions that exclude and marginalize indigenous children and youth.



ON THE CHURCH CALENDAR IN FEBRUARY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 NO Staff Meeting Pastor Rick on Vacation	2 Pastor Rick on Vacation	3 Pastor Rick on Vacation	4 Pastor Rick on Vacation	5 Pastor Rick on Vacation	6 Pastor Rick on Vacation
7 10:30am Worship Worship Livestreaming on our CUCC Website Pastor Rick on Vacation	8 NO Staff Meeting 5pm Outreach & Advocacy Ministry Team 6:30PM Music & Worship Ministry Team	9 6pm Nurture & Education Ministry Team	10 6:30pm Finance & Stewardship Ministry Team	11 9:30am Women's Fellowship 6:30pm Inclusion & Affirmation Ministry Team	12 April on vacation	13 COMMUNICATOR ARTICLES DUE
14 10:30am Worship Worship Livestreaming on our CUCC Website Happy Love Day! 	15 10:15am Staff Meeting 6pm Confirmation	16 6:30pm Church Council	17 Ash Wednesday April on vacation 7pm Ash Wednesday Service	18 April on vacation 5:30pm LODO Ministry Team	19 April on vacation	20 COMMUNICATOR ARTICLES DUE
21 9:00am Sunday School 10:30am Worship in person Worship also Livestreaming on our CUCC Website	22 10:15am Staff Meeting 6pm Confirmation	23	24	25	26 "Accidental Courtesy" Inclusion & Affirmation Ministry Team Movie Night 6:30pm	27
28 Seminary Sunday 9:00 Sunday School 10:30am Worship in person Worship also Livestreaming on our CUCC Website	1	2	3	4	5	6

THE COMMUNICATOR

Columbia United Church of Christ
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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.