

THE COMMUNICATOR

March 2024

From the Pastor's Keyboard...

"Imagine Together"

When I was a small boy, my father took me to a working dairy farm. "Modern technology", at the time, consisted of having cows line up and hooking each one to a device that milked them automatically. My father, who grew up on a dairy farm, lamented the fact that no longer did people sit on a stool next to the cows and milk them manually. As a child, this was his job each morning before going to school and, though he hated it at the time, he longed for those days as an adult.

As a child, he used a typical three-legged stool to milk the cows. I am sure that many of you have seen three-legged milking stools; maybe you even have one in your house as a beloved antique. Have you ever tried to sit on a two-legged stool? Or a one-legged stool? They don't have much stability. But the three-legged stool is very sturdy, each leg providing a degree of stability to keep the stool from rocking and to keep the cow calm.

Like a sturdy milking stool, faithful stewardship has three legs. One leg is Annual Giving, the budget that funds the day-to-day operations of a church. We like to call this "Joyful Giving" here at CUCC, and we examine the excess or deficit of such giving every month. The other leg is "Capital Campaigns," which are building campaigns, remodeling campaigns, or anything that calls for major giving over a limited time span. Historically, this church has done very well with Capital Campaigns, from The Chapel renovations to our New Century Sanctuary.

The third leg of our milking/stewardship stool is where our congregation needs some more intentional education and practice. Churches today that are very active in **mission impact** are often ones that have accumulated a significant endowment over the years. More and more often we see that churches (and other institutions) that lack a significant endowment are the ones who are downsizing, closing, or minimizing their **mission impact**.

Over the past couple of years, we have spent much time here at CUCC talking about the future. We have discussed the financial realities of our changing culture and the loss of major donors, both past and in the future. We have articulated a Strategic Plan and dreamed about ways we can live into it over the next few years. Now it is time to "*Imagine Together*" how we can take action today to enable financial stability in the future.

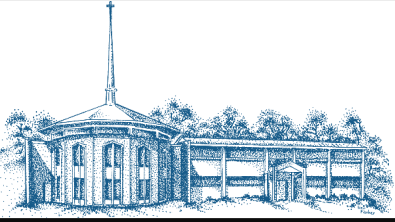
This will be the theme for our Stewardship Sunday activities on March 17; from the Adult Bible Study Class, through worship, and the **pot-luck meal** after. Our guest will be Matt Wagner, the Vice President of United Church Funds (our investment vehicle), who will Imagine with us the possibility of establishing and funding a CUCC Endowment Fund and how that will enable us to continue our **mission impact** well into the future. We will continue to "*Imagine Together*" even after that Sunday is over, as we embark on a campaign to grow this Endowment Fund to critical capacity. When we do, our ability to glorify God in the world will become even greater and our **mission impact** will grow.

This is one part of the Strategic Plan that the Finance and Stewardship Ministry Team is running with to enhance the ministries of this congregation in the next decade. But enhancing the relevance of this church over the next decade will not be done by endowment funding alone. Every area of ministry, from Worship & Music to Membership & Care, from Inclusion & Affirmation to care for our Building & Grounds, must work to "*Imagine Together*" what could be and envision how we can achieve what we are imagining. The Strategic Plan that we articulated last fall is just the beginning; now is the time to hit the ground and start living into that plan.



What do we want this church to look like in 2034? What can we do today to help it get there? These should be our questions as we live into our ministry practices in 2024 and beyond. We had a great time celebrating 100 years last year. Now it is time to start on 100 more.

-Pastor Rick



**COLUMBIA
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**

**3201 I-70 DRIVE NW
COLUMBIA, MO 65202**

Rev. Rick Oberle

Pastor

Rev. Fred Brandenburg

Pastor Emeritus

Shelly Adams

Student Pastor

Casey Wood

Music Coordinator

Steven Jannetti

Organist/Accompanist

Alexandra Roper

Office Administrator

Erika Maltsbarger

Director, Little One's Day Out

Caleb Berry

Custodian

Sunday Schedule:

9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
10:00 a.m. Fellowship Time
10:30 a.m. Worship

Office Hours:

**Monday through Friday
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.**

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

**Email:
office@columbiaucc.com**

**Website:
www.columbiaucc.com**



News & Updates

LADIES - MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The Women's Fellowship will meet again on March 14 in the Gathering Area at 9:30 a.m. We will have breakfast together, share our Bible study lesson for the day, and do the work of the church.

All meetings will be held the second Thursday of each month through May 9, 2024. Plan to attend for good food, good fellowship, and inspiration as we study *Sacred Encounters – The Power and Presence of Jesus*. All ladies are welcome! Come join us for food and fun and Bible Study!

SUNDAY MORNING SAFETY

For the safety and security of our church, and the people present, a Church Council member will now be available in the Gathering Area each Sunday during worship. The Council Steward will be available to greet visitors who arrive after worship has begun, assist those who may not feel well, answer questions and give directions to people who need to step out of worship, and monitor the Gathering Area as needed.

Pat Forward, Nurture & Education Ministry Team Chair, will be talking to our children and youth over the next several Sundays about being safe at church including walking - not running - inside our church building, and staying only in the Gathering Area or the sanctuary during Worship. We ask that parents and guardians help reinforce these safety standards and ensure that our children and youth follow these worship guidelines.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS DUE 4/1

Scholarship Applications are available in the church office for all ACTIVE CUCC members who are pursuing higher education in the 2024-2025 school year. Applications will be reviewed after April 1, and distributions will be made to the student's school after July 1. If you or your student would like an application, talk to Alexandra in the church office, or pick one up on Sunday!

BIG EASTER BREAKFAST ON EASTER SUNDAY 3/31

The Men's and Women's Fellowship are teaming up again for a fantastic Easter breakfast! On Easter Sunday, March 31, we will be serving breakfast from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. for all to enjoy! We will have egg casseroles, fruits and pastries, yogurts, juices, and of course, pancakes and sausage! Come join us for breakfast and all the Easter fun!

6:30 a.m.	Sunrise Worship at the Shelter House
7:30-9:30 a.m.	Breakfast in the Fellowship Hall
9:00 a.m.	Easter Egg Hunt and Sunday School games
10:00 a.m.	Fellowship Time in the Gathering Area
10:30 a.m.	Celebration Worship with music and praise

We hope to see you this Easter Season!



March Birthdays

Steve Keithahn - 3/1
 Katie Marienfeld - 3/3
 Alan Bernhardt - 3/7
 Fred Brandenburg - 3/9
 Linda Simmons - 3/11
 Sue McDaniel - 3/13
 Phillip Neale - 3/18
 Harold Hackman - 3/21
 Christine Mseke - 3/23
 Susan Dunham - 3/26

Tim Soncasie - 3/1
 Linda Graves - 3/5
 Steve Camden - 3/7
 Katelin Odneal - 3/9
 Emily Malicoat - 3/12
 Sharon Rapp - 3/14
 Jessica Lucas - 3/20
 Eleanor Bashinski - 3/23
 Lena Muench - 3/23
 Aidan Pierson - 3/27
 Ron Schmidt - 3/28

Jim Buesing - 3/2
 Johnathon Schultz - 3/6
 Russell Eveler - 3/8
 Paul Sanderson - 3/10
 Laura Gartner - 3/13
 Adelynn Zimny - 3/16
 Jason Schoeneberg - 3/20
 Marcia Crousore - 3/23
 Edie Diel - 3/24
 Trevor Pierson - 3/27

Sunday Volunteer Schedule for March

DATE	GREETERS	USHERS	WORSHIP LEADERS	TECH BOOTH
3/3	KRISTY HAYWARD	PAT FORWARD & PHILLIP NEALE	LLONA WEISS	LORRY DREIER & JOSH MUENCH
3/10	DONNA MARSH	KEITH BIRKES & DEBORAH BIRKES	KENNEDY LUCAS	MIKE PIERSON & JOHN GRAVES
3/17	BRENDA MUENCH & JOHN MUENCH	MARY LORBER & CHARLIE MARCKS	LYDIA WHITACRE	TED DACHROEDEN & BRENT MARCKS
3/24	HELEN SCHULTZ	LLONA WEISS & CAROLYN MALICOAT	SUE ANN SCHAEFER	JUDI PRIVITT & DOUG PRIVITT
3/29	JUDI PRIVITT	AUDREY LASLEY & MAHREE SKALA	SHELLY ADAMS	DOUG PRIVITT
3/31	SUSAN DUNHAM	LLOYD VIEHLAND	JESSICA LUCAS	JOHN GRAVES

COLUMBIA UCC CHURCH COUNCIL

Moderator: Kurt Heine heinekurt@gmail.com
Vice Moderator: Jerry Kiesling rollzierp50@gmail.com
Secretary: Alethea Tennill atennill108@gmail.com
Treasurer: Sue Ann Schaefer ssas3307@aol.com
Recording Treasurer: Christine Staelens tigersfour@gmail.com
Building & Grounds: Ted Dachroeden gpadoc4gd@gmail.com
Fellowship & Hospitality: Mary Lorber-Solt eldercow@gmail.com
Finance & Stewardship: Keith Birkes kbirkes4@gmail.com
Inclusion & Affirmation: Tricia Price tricialprice@gmail.com
Little One's Day Out: Lorry Dreier llhd01@gmail.com
Membership & Care: Judi Privitt judiprivitt811@gmail.com
Nurture & Education: Pat Forward pdfoward@msn.com
Outreach & Advocacy: Mark Duncan markduncan2@mchsi.com
Worship & Music: Mike Pierson mike.pierson.1969@gmail.com
Pastor: Rev. Rick Oberle rick@columbiaucc.com



Moderator's Moment

Spring may bring many of you outside for a number of reasons: To wash your car from all the road salt accumulation from winter, to seed a bald patch in the lawn, or to plant flowers or a vegetable garden, maybe you need to power wash your house? It seems to me like sometimes we might even invent reasons to get out of the house, to bust out of our protective shells we've been hiding in all winter. Let's consider the shell of an egg. It serves the little chick to be in many ways. It protects the soft bits inside so the chick can develop. It grows a beak, legs, wings, all from the proteins and fats contained within. It's truly amazing. But the chick within can't stay in its shell forever! It must break out so it can grow into, well whatever its purpose may be. As the nominating committee starts its search for the next round of church leaders we are looking for folks like the little chick who are ready to grow into a new role and lead the ministries of our church. We don't want to keep relying on the same old hens and roosters (that's not directed at anyone!). The committee is doing its best to search and find those leaders but we're also open to the possibility that we don't know everything (imagine that!) and there is someone who may really want to chair a ministry team. Openings are as follows: Secretary, Treasurer, Building & Grounds, Finance & Stewardship, Little One's Day Out, Nurture & Education, Worship & Music. Please contact Jerry Kiesling or myself if you are interested.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kurt Heine, Moderator



Clergy Personnel Committee

The Clergy Personnel Committee, including John Graves, Pat Forward and myself, convened on January 30th with Pastor Rick. We discussed many positive happenings in the life of CUCC. We also considered ways to disseminate and address suggestions from the congregation, and we pondered challenges within our UCC conference. The committee spent much of the meeting discussing revisions for this year's pastoral evaluation, which will be distributed in late Spring. Goals include increasing accessibility for respondents, distributing to a wider variety of active members and ensuring that included questions will lead to usable feedback. The committee plans to meet again in late April and will make final adjustments to the evaluation at that time.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kristy Hayward



Thank You!

"Thank you for making a memorable holiday for our family this year. You all are truly angels. May God bless you."

A Family through the
Voluntary Action Center

"Thanks to all of you who sent cards and gave in so many ways to make my holiday so special! It was a time to remember! This helps blot out the time that followed with a short stay in the hospital where, again your thoughtfulness was appreciated.

Much love to all of you!
Alice Moon"

"Thank you for acting against hunger with your recent gift of \$707.00 made in December 2023. Your act of kindness goes a long way in making a tangible difference in the lives of people in our communities. One in seven Missourians faces food insecurity on a regular basis, and we remain committed to making a difference in the lives of those who need it the most.

Gratefully,
Lindsay Young Lopez
President and CEO of The Food Bank
for Central and Northeast Missouri"

CUCC Church Council

The meeting was called to order at 6:36 p.m. on January 16, by Kurt Heine. Pastor Rick opened us with prayer.

Present: Kurt Heine, Jerry Kiesling, Christine Staelens, Mary Lorber-Solt, Tricia Price, Lorry Dreier, Judi Privitt, Rick Oberle, and Alethea Tennill. Sue Ann Schaefer, Mark Duncan, Ted Dachroeden, and Pat Forward joined by Zoom.

Lorry Dreier made a motion to approve the agenda with a second from Judi Privitt. The motion passed.

Mike Pierson made a motion to approve the December minutes with a second from Mary Lorber-Solt. Motion passed.

Mark Duncan discussed our book Reorganized Religion, Chapter 8: Organized Disbelief. This chapter discusses Sunday Assembly, NONEs (people who claim no religious identity, but enjoy the community of church), and how churches are adapting to the changing religious landscape.

Unfinished Business:

- Policy and Procedures Manual update: Personnel Committee met before the January Council meeting and continued making changes to the Manual. We will meet again before the February Council meeting.
- Inclusion ramp for sanctuary: Mike Pierson made a motion to purchase a ramp from Guard Home to be used in the sanctuary as needed. The money will come from the Building Fund. Judi Privitt seconded the motion. Motion passed.
- Land Donation update: Sue Ann Schaefer is still working on this.
- Annual Congregation Meeting is May 19, 2024.
- Nominating Committee: Jerry Kiesling proposed some members for the nominating committee. The committee needs one male (along with Jerry Kiesling), two female, and one youth. The council approved the committee with any of the members on the list, so Jerry can move forward before the next council meeting.
- Council Steward/Usher duties update: Pat Forward and several others met with the youth during Sunday school to remind them that due to safety issues during Worship Service, they either need to stay in the sanctuary or in the Gathering Area. Pat Forward will write something to be put in the next Communicator.

New Business:

- New Admin Assistant: MJ tendered her resignation. She suggested Alexandra Roper as a replacement. The Personnel Committee met with Alexandra Roper before the council meeting. The Committee made a motion to the Council for us to hire Alexandra to replace MJ. The motion passed.
- An e-mail was received from a church member remarking on some budget issues and amounts listed in the budget. The Finance and Stewardship Ministry Team will work on communicating what some of the categories cover (phone category covering both phone and internet service). During the annual meeting, F&S will spend time on Budget explanations. They are also working on Planned Giving to build an endowment for the church.
- Next Level is the company that covers our server, backups, and computer issues. The proposed 2024 contract will not cost us any extra money. Mark Duncan made a motion to accept the contract from Next Level, Keith Birkes seconded, motion passed.

Pastor's Report: Pastor's Report is attached. He ended his report with a quote from Jerry Keisling, "Let's be intentional and not reactive to the budget shortfalls, so we can do the most with which we have been blessed."

Financials were presented. We ended the year under budget in Joyful Giving. However, our Designated Funds in 2023 increased \$46,000.

Ministry Reports:

- Building & Grounds: Ted has worked on a few issues this month.
- Fellowship & Hospitality: Fasnacht is coming up in February.
- Finance & Stewardship: Report Attached and discussed above.
- Inclusion & Affirmation: Report Attached. Diversity Breakfast is January 24.
- Membership & Care: Report attached. Eat with Eight has started.
- Worship & Music: Report attached

Pastor Rick closed us in prayer. Motion to adjourn by Lorry Dreier, second by Christine Staelens. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Alethea Tennill, Secretary



Fellowship & Hospitality Ministry Team

Greetings and Salutations!

First of all, I would like to sincerely thank everyone who participated in our celebration of Fastnacht. From those who set-up, cleaned up, washed dishes, cooked food, fried donuts, and grilled brats, to those who came to eat, dance, and enjoy the evening, I thank you. My favorite saying, "Many hands make light work," is truly exemplified in this celebration! Now we move forward to Spring, putting behind us another winter. My honey bees have taken advantage of the few warm days we have had, out doing their "cleansing flights," even taking in some pollen from my silver maples, getting ready for the busy season ahead. We, too, have many things to prepare for this month: daylight savings time (March 10), Spring (March 19), Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and most important, Easter Sunday (March 31).

So as we prepare for March, let's take time to reflect on the past season and then look forward to spring, to renew our spirit and enjoy the 'rebirth' of everything. I know I will.

Respectfully submitted,
 Mary Lorber
 Fellowship and Hospitality
 Ministry Team Chair



COME GOLF WITH EMMAUS

Date: April 26, 2024
Time: 8:00 a.m. Registration | 9:00 a.m. Shotgun Start
Location: Bear Creek Golf Club
 (158 Bear Creek Dr. Wentzville, MO)

Come and support Emmaus Homes by participating in the annual Emmaus Golf Tournament! Teams are registering now, and spots are going fast! Early Bird Registration for Teams of four are available until March 15! Secure your spot today before we sell out once again.

The Emmaus Annual Golf Tournament returns on Friday, April 26! With lunch provided, a day out of the office, a highly-anticipated Whiskey Pull, and NEW features this year- this is one tournament you don't want to miss! All proceeds raised will go towards supporting the mission of Emmaus. With your support, we can continue to support people with developmental disabilities independently!



Emmaus

APRIL 26, 2024 ANNUAL
 GOLF TOURNAMENT

Finance & Stewardship Ministry Team

I had the opportunity to serve as the Recording Treasurer for the sanctuary renovation project in 2023. The response from this congregation was amazing, but it was not a surprise to me that when this congregation was presented with a challenge, it rose to the challenge and exceeded a very lofty financial giving goal. We now have a wonderfully updated sanctuary to show as the fruits of our labor.

We face a similar challenge with Joyful Giving. This challenge is that we have these wonderful services and outreach into the community that we currently offer, and we want to continue to offer, but it takes money to support these programs.

Let's rise to this challenge and meet our Joyful Giving goal in 2024, so that we can continue to see the fruits of our labor in the church and in the community.

Respectfully Submitted,
Brent Marcks



"Faithful Christian Stewardship is the understanding that everything we have; our time, our talent and even our treasure; belongs to God, and we are just stewards of it."

-Rev. David Lewis Beebe

Financial Update

	Actual	Budget	Over/(Under)
January Income	42,597.81	28,570.00	14,027.81
January Expenses	32,537.81	30,265.46	2,272.35
YTD Income	42,597.81	28,570.00	14,027.81
YTD Expenses	32,537.81	30,265.46	2,272.35
Surplus/(Deficit)	10,060.00	(1,695.46)	11,755.46
January Joyful Giving	41,947.81	27,500.00	14,447.81
YTD Joyful Giving	41,947.81	27,500.00	14,447.81

JOYFUL GIVING EXCEEDS BUDGET FOR JANUARY

For the first January in a long time, our Joyful Giving exceeded our anticipated revenue! We received \$14,478 more in Joyful Giving than anticipated!

However, our expenses were up, due to the weather. All the ice and snow in January resulted in a plowing/salting bill of \$3400 (budget was \$500).

Even with the added expense, we still realized a positive cash flow of \$10,060 for the month. Let's keep the momentum going in February! Can you help?

Date	1/7	1/14	1/21	1/28	Total
Attendance	111	62	100	67	340

CUCC 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.

Inclusion and Affirmation Ministry Team

Facing Challenges Yesterday and Today: Part 2 - "When There's a Woman, There's a Way"

"When there's a woman, there's a way"... that is a quote from Jazz singer Mindi Abair. Her song, by the same title, talks about a single mother, trying to make ends meet. She encourages her daughter to be positive and know that women are resilient and strong. They can and will find a way.

Nadia Murad was 19, the youngest of 11 children, when she was kidnapped and enslaved by ISIS. Her mother and six brothers were among 600 Yazidi believers killed that day. It came to be known as the Kocho massacre. (Yazidi people are a religious group indigenous to the Kurdistan region of Western Asia. They are among the most persecuted people on earth.)

She was held as a slave: beaten, burned, and assaulted regularly. She escaped after three months when a house door was left unlocked. She was smuggled out of that Islamic-State-controlled area by a neighboring family.

Nadia was the first person to speak to the United Nations Security Council on human trafficking in conflict areas. In 2016, she announced "Nadia's Initiative" providing advocacy and assistance to victims of genocide. She was awarded the Nobel

Peace Prize in 2018 for her efforts to end sexual violence as a weapon of war. In 2019, she laid out a five-point plan of action to address the challenges the Yazidis face in Iraq. In 2020, Nadia worked with international organizations to establish the Murad Code, which is a global consultative initiative. Its goal is to build and support a community of better practices for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence.

Through her work, in 2021, the Iraqi Parliament passed the Yazidi Female Survivors Law that formally acknowledges the Yazidi genocide and gender-based trauma against Yazidi women and other ethnic minorities. It laid the ground work for reparations, guarantees of land, and job opportunities for survivors of ISIS captivity.

Nadia is married to a fellow human rights activist and lives in Germany.



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.

LODO Ministry Team

“Wisdom begins with wonder.” – Socrates

In addition to celebrating Valentine’s Day with learning focused on kindness, we also focused on Math and Science in February. On Thursday, February 22, families enjoyed an evening of fun at our annual Math & Science Night. While the students thought they were playing, they were really learning these STEM topics and skills: Primary/Secondary Colors, Gravity, Engineering, Problem Solving, Critical Thinking, Cause & Effect, Hand-Eye Coordination, Spatial Reasoning, Geometry, Density, Buoyancy, and Predictions. We appreciate the CUCC members who volunteered to make this evening successful!

In Love and Laughter,
Erika Maltsbarger



Important March Dates

- Mar 1 – LODO CLOSED (CPS Closed)
- Mar 4 – New Family Enrollment Begins for 2024-2025
- Mar 5-6 – KidSight Vision Screenings
- Mar 8 – LODO CLOSED
(LODO Staff Attending Conference on the Young Years)
- Mar 20 – LODO CLOSED (CPS Closed)
- Mar 21-Mar 22 – Classroom Easter Celebrations
- Mar 25-Mar 29 – LODO CLOSED (Spring Break)

2024-2025 Enrollment **August 26, 2024-May 16, 2025**

Additional information about the LODO Program is available at www.columbiaucc.com/lodohome.

Lightning Bugs Class:
1 year old before Aug 1, 2024
(Only available 9 a.m.-1 p.m.)

Lambs Class:
2 years old before Aug 1, 2024

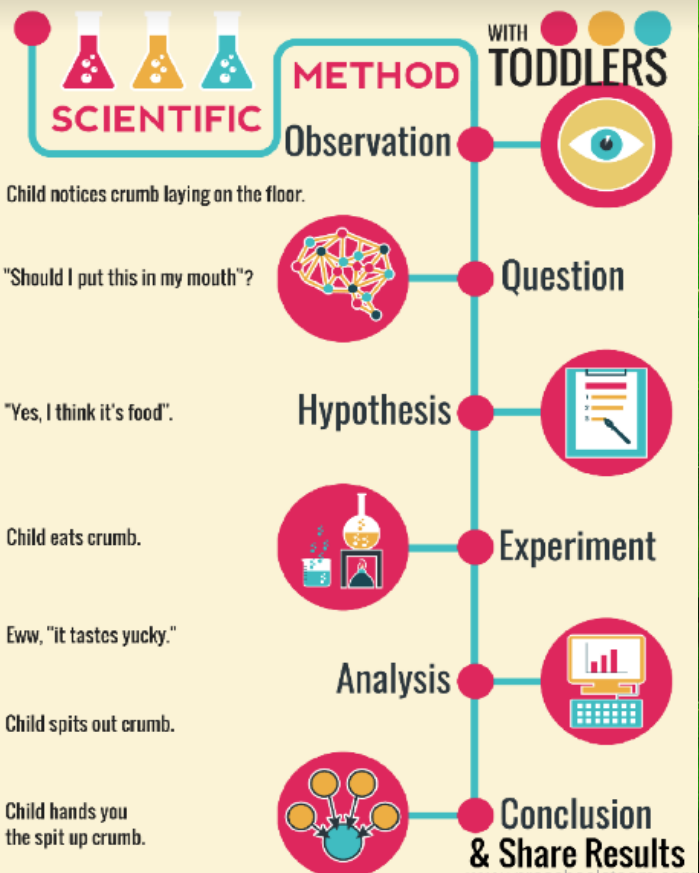
Lions/Leopards Class:
3 years old before Aug 1, 2024

Leap Frogs/Leopards Class:
4 years old before Aug 1, 2024

*Our Leopards Classroom will be assigned and utilized as either a 3-4’s class or 3,4,5’s class.

Contact our Director, Erika Maltsbarger, for information, openings, to schedule a tour, or to enroll!

LittleOnesDayOut@yahoo.com
573-445-2661



Membership and Care Ministry Team

MBSR (Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction) 8 week class led by Terry Wilson (M.Ed, RN, and MBSR educator) wrapped up at the end of February. Many thanks to Anne Heine for coordinating.

Eat with Eight continues - providing CUCC members an opportunity to fellowship with CUCC members in a small group setting during the winter months.

CARE (Compassionate Actions Reward Everyone) continues to work to meet the various needs of our members.

Barry Kirchhoff and Elaine Trout share the following testimonies of the love and care they've received from two of our CARE Ministry Teams - the Prayer Shawl/Blanket (facilitated by Elaine Trout) and Handy Helpers (facilitated by Doug Privitt) Ministry Teams.

Barry Kirchhoff:

"While I was in Boone Hospital recently, Pastor Rick stopped by. We visited and we prayed. Before he left he gave me a prayer shawl from the ladies at church. What a beautiful expression of the love this church has for one another. It warmed me even before I covered myself with it."

Elaine Trout:

"I was very pleased with Handy Helpers. I have no uncles or brothers nearby to ask for advice or question about concerns around the house. So, I called upon Handy Helpers. I had quite a list. I was helped in numerous ways. A canoe rack on the garage wall made it possible to get the second car in the garage. A wall mounted TV was once again hung on the wall. A low bench will be raised to a "sittable" level. A very heavy grindstone was removed from its rotted base. And my questions about the washout area of gravel and loose cupboards doors were answered. Very helpful helpers!"

The Prayer Ministry Team continues to intentionally pray for those included in the Columbia UCC prayer list. If you have a specific prayer request, please email Tricia Soncasie (tsoncasie@aol.com) or Melba Shaffer (whals@centurytel.net). Specific prayer requests will be kept private to respect the confidentiality of those we are lifting up. If you'd like to join the CUCC Prayer Ministry Team, please contact Tricia, Melba, or Judi Privitt (judiprivitt811@gmail.com)

Respectfully Submitted,
Judi Privitt



Bring a Friend to Church Sunday: April 21

Be thinking of whom you want to invite for our annual "Bring a friend to church" on April 21. We'll have a taco luncheon after church in the Fellowship Hall. Let's be intentional about inviting others to join us – and ask others you know to come. Spread the word about our Open and Affirming church and make everyone who comes through our doors feel a warm welcome. If you don't recognize someone, introduce yourself and get to know them better.

Eat with Eight:

We hope you're enjoying your dining experiences. Those who still want to be put on a substitute list, contact Anne Heine. You may still be able to join in the food, fun, and fellowship. Bon appetit.

The Health Ministry Care Team is here for you and welcomes anyone who wants to join our Team! So let us know if you need help getting to a doctor appointment or with any health care questions or concerns. If you want to join our team, we'd love to have you. Contact Anne Heine for more information!

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Heine & Team: Mona Dachroeden, Mary Lorber-Solt, Linda Grotewiel



Nurture & Education Ministry Team

UPCOMING EVENTS AT CUCC IN NURTURE & EDUCATION

Weekly Events:

- **Sunday School:** 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Sunday Mornings. There are classes for all ages.
- **Pre-K through High School:** We are using Mini Revolutions curriculum to engage our young children and youth in exciting learning adventures.
- **Adult Bible Study:** The Adult Bible Study class starts with the lectionary text for the Sunday Service. We may explore the text for the entire class, or it may just be the starting point for wherever our thoughts take us. Come explore with us.
- **Nursery:** Laynee, our Nursery Supervisor, is in the nursery every Sunday, starting at 10:00 a.m. until the end of Worship. The nursery welcomes all children, ages kindergarten and younger. Children older than kindergarten are invited to attend worship with their parents.

Thank you to everyone who donated Soup and money for this year's SOUPer Bowl. Pastor Rick delivered the soup to the Food Pantry, and the money is being donated to Loaves and Fishes. We collected around 350 cans and \$307!

Coming Up! Please bring your children and youth for these Special Days:

- **March 17, 2024** – St Patrick's Celebration 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 am,
- **March 24, 2024** – Palm Sunday! Our children and youth will be carrying in palms at the beginning of worship. Please have your children and youth here to participate in this annual event to start Holy Week.
- **March 31, 2024** – Easter Sunday Celebration with Annual Egg Hunt at 9:00 a.m.
- Easter Bake Sale – 9:00 a.m. on Easter Sunday, March 31, 2024, in the Gathering Area. Be thinking about the Easter Goodies you would like to bring. Funds raised go to the Nurture and Education Fund. Thank you to Lorry Dreier for coordinating this event.
- **Vacation Bible School (VBS) is July 29-31, 2024.** Save these evenings for your children, 3 years old through 5th grade, to experience our exciting annual VBS. Thank you to Lena Muench and Gina Pierson for co-chairing this event. The theme is, "Camp Firelight."

Adult Bible Study: Beginning March 5 and each following Tuesday in March (3/5, 3/12, 3/19, & 3/20) Pastor Rick will be leading us in a special Lenten Bible Study examining the often overlooked women in the Bible. Bring a sack lunch; we will gather in the Fellowship Hall at noon. We will eat lunch together, then begin our Bible Study around 12:15 p.m. Each week we will look at a couple of women from the Old and New Testaments, and be done by 2:00 p.m.; but if you have to leave before 2:00 p.m., that is okay, too! Come and go as your schedule permits.

Why Should I Bring My Children to Church?

There are lots of reasons why a church is important for adults. It helps us connect with our communities, learn more about ourselves and others, and find support during challenging times; but it is also important for our children and youth. It helps teach kids that they're part of something bigger. Taking your children to church is a good opportunity for them to see how their lives fit into the bigger picture. Sure, taking care of yourself and your immediate family is essential, but there's also a larger world out there; and if we don't take care of one another as part of that world, nothing will get done. This is why churches exist: so we can come together to learn more about God and serve others in God's name.

The importance of faith in your life is something that you probably already know, but if not, here's a quick recap: Faith is one of the most essential things in our lives. It gives us strength and hope, and love. Faith helps us get through hard times and helps us understand God better. Faith isn't just a grownup thing; it's also an essential part of growing up for children and teens to learn about faith, too! When we teach our children about God, Jesus, and all their other spiritual gifts—like prayer—not only do they get closer to their Creator, but also have an easier time finding direction in their own lives when things get challenging or confusing.

-Pat Forward, Nurture & Education Ministry Team Chair



Worship & Music Ministry Team

Over this past year, I've been learning about how the world of choral music is influenced by the history of the Christian worship service. As you may or may not know, the sacred choral music canon developed over history through the development of the Catholic Mass. Many of history's most famous composers, from Bach to Mozart to Fauré wrote their own musical settings of the Mass, frequently multiple times.

In many cases, choral mass settings include the standard movements of the Mass Ordinary, i.e. Kyrie, Gloria, and Credo. However, composers frequently take significant liberty in setting mass texts. For example, one of the most famous mass settings is Johann Sebastian Bach's Mass in B Minor. In that piece, Bach includes extra texts not included in the Mass Ordinary, i.e. Symbolum Nicenum and Osanna. An addition of texts can serve a specific ecclesiastical purpose, though frequently it may also aid in the shaping of a musical narrative. These pieces are used both in churches for the purpose of worship, as well as in the concert hall. Another type of mass setting that is frequently used in choral music is the Requiem Mass, also referred to as the Mass of the Dead. These are masses that are used in funerals.

Some of the most famous large choral works of all time are Requiem settings. Perhaps the most famous of these is the Requiem set by French composer Gabriel Fauré. This piece includes text like Requiem Aeternam or "Grant them rest." In these masses, there is typically an element of being saved by the Lamb of God from the Day of Judgement.

Furthermore, masses are still being set today by living composers, and many of these modern masses are being written in modern musical styles. In the 1970s, Robert Ray wrote a setting called "The Gospel Mass," which includes gospel rock, pop, and disco elements.

Respectfully Submitted,
Casey Wood,
Music Coordinator



WELCOME TO QUORUS!

Over the next few months, the leadership of Columbia United Church of Christ will be looking for new and exciting ways we can be in partnership with [Quorus, the LGBTQIAA Choral ensemble of Columbia!](#)

Quorus was looking for a church with whom they could partner for rehearsal space in the Columbia area, and our reputation for Inclusivity made us their first choice! After a few discussions, they began using our rehearsal space on February 15, 25, and 27. They will be using our rehearsal space again in April, and as needed in the future.

Quorus is well known in the Columbia area for their Progressive and Affirming musical productions, and having them at CUCC will bring quite a bit of notoriety to our congregation. Quorus will be paying a small stipend to CUCC to use the space, but both Quorus and the leadership of CUCC would like this to be more than just "a group renting space." We would like that to be a true partnership. What does that look like? We are still exploring that. But we want this to be a mutual relationship where we support one another and enhance each other's ministries.

A true partnership could mean...

- Sharing information about each other on our respective websites, brochures, and social media
- Publicizing each other's events and mission among each group's membership
- Providing space for CUCC to distribute information at Quorus performances
- Quorus singing in worship at CUCC from time to time
- CUCC providing performance space for Quorus events from time to time
- Publicizing to the community our existence and location (we are very well hidden)
- Who knows what other great opportunities may arise?

Quorus would love to have CUCC members join their choir! To learn more about Quorus, [CLICK HERE](#). If you are interested in joining them or talking to Audra Sergal, their director and coordinator, [CLICK HERE](#). Who knows? This could be the beginning of a beautiful partnership!

Outreach & Advocacy Ministry Team

ROOM AT THE INN NEEDS VOLUNTEERS!

Room at the Inn provides overnight shelter for unhoused people in a safe, clean facility near the power plant in east Columbia. They are now able to operate year-round. Volunteers are needed to help with food prep, serving breakfast and dinner, checking in guests, and transporting laundry. Shifts are no longer than three hours, and the latest one ends at 9:00 p.m. Please consider devoting a few hours to helping our community's most vulnerable members.

[CLICK HERE](#) to learn more and click on the "volunteer" tab to sign up!



MISSOURI INITIATIVE PETITIONS WILL BE AVAILABLE DURING MARCH

Public policy impacts our lives in many ways. Sometimes our faith calls us to take action consistent with our values. Two such policy issues, described below, are facing Missourians right now. The Outreach and Advocacy ministry team has prayerfully considered these issues and plans to offer opportunities to make our voices heard during the month of March.

The first issue is the question of Reproductive Freedom. Missouri has the most restrictive laws in the nation, so strict that doctors are sometimes not able to treat women who are experiencing miscarriages for fear of being charged with a crime. Rape and incest victims (including children) are not allowed to terminate their pregnancies in Missouri. Proposed state legislation would make it even harder for low-income women to access women's health services such as cancer screenings and contraceptives.

The [Missourians for Constitutional Freedom](#) initiative petition would amend the Missouri State Constitution to affirm the right of all people to make their own decisions about reproductive health care, including abortion and contraceptives. It would, however, allow regulation of such health care to improve or maintain the patient's health, and restrictions on abortion after fetal viability except to protect the life or health of the woman. To read the proposed constitutional amendment, [CLICK HERE](#).

The other issue is the question of fair treatment of Missouri workers. The Missourians for Healthy Families and Fair Wages Initiative would change state law to gradually raise the minimum wage to \$15 by 2026, which would increase the income of half a million Missouri families. It would also require employers to provide paid sick leave, varying by the size of the business, which would extend this basic benefit to around 900,000 front line workers in the state. For more information [CLICK HERE](#).

CUCC members have gone through State training to learn the process to collect signatures and will make these petitions available before and after services during the month of March. The full wording of each petition will also be available. Any registered voter in the state can sign either or both petitions. We encourage you to prayerfully consider if you are being called to sign either or both petitions, to read up on the amendments. For more information, talk to [Mark Duncan](#), [Mahree Skala](#), or [Llona Weiss](#).

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY TUESDAYS IN MARCH

Elizabeth, Mary, Anna, Eve, Susanna, Salome, Miriam, Rachel, Sarah, Leah, Tamar, Rebekah, Delilah, Jezebel, Gomer, Sapphira, Lydia, Potiphar's wife, and others whose name is not known; all women of the Bible, all often overlooked. Beginning March 5 and each following Tuesday in March (3/5, 3/12, 3/19, & 3/20) we will be looking at these overlooked women in a special daytime Bible Study with Pastor Rick.

Bring a sack lunch; we will gather in the Fellowship Hall at noon. We will eat lunch together, then begin our Bible Study around 12:15 p.m. Each week we will look at a couple of women from the Old and New Testaments, and be done by 2:00 p.m.; but if you have to leave before 2:00, that is okay, too! Come and go as your schedule permits. For more information, email [Pastor Rick](#). All are welcome and bring a friend! Bibles will be available, but you may want to bring your own as well. We look forward to seeing you in March at our Bible Study!

Outreach & Advocacy Ministry Team



The theme for the 2024 One Great Hour of Sharing offering we will observe on March 10, 2024 is "Share the Light."

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) special mission offering of the United Church of Christ involves you in disaster, refugee/immigration, and development ministries throughout the world. When a disaster strikes, people are displaced, made refugees by violence or extreme poverty, you are part of the immediate response and of the long-term recovery.

Through One Great Hour of Sharing, you engage in holistic development programs including health care, education, agriculture, food sustainability, micro-financing, and women's empowerment. Because the UCC relates in mutual partnership to churches and organizations through Global Ministries and worldwide response & recovery networks, your contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing put you in the right place at the right time for the relief, accompaniment, and recovery of the most vulnerable. You meet immediate needs, and you address the underlying causes that create those needs in the first place.

We look forward to Sharing the Light with others on March 10!

Mark Duncan,
Outreach and Advocacy Ministry Team Chair



The February 19 meal at Loaves and Fishes consisted of: brats and German potato salad (left from Fastnacht), chili mac made with chili from the chili cookoff, lettuce salad, bread and brownies. PBJ's were made and provided by Mahree Skala. Servers were Anne Heine, Tom & Mary Lorber, Debby (Mary's sister), Val & Bill (friends of Tom & Mary), Doug & Judi Privitt, and Keith & Deborah Birkes. We served approximately 129 firsts and seconds. Thanks to everyone!



Thank you to members at CUCC for helping "Stock the Lounge" for Alpha Hart Lewis (AHL) Elementary's Parent-Teacher Conferences week in February! You are so giving! I know those teachers and staff really appreciate it during those long days. Every time I visit AHL, the folks are constantly thanking CUCC for our support.

"Read Across America Week" is March 4-8, 2024, and if you are interested in being a guest reader to AHL students during that time, [CLICK HERE](#) or email [Llona](#). In April we will collect snacks for students to help them during their MAP Testing week. The collection cart will be placed in the Gathering Area in April. They enjoy packages of goldfish, fruit snacks, granola, and mints (no dairy & no peanuts).

Also, save the date of Friday, May 10 for AHL School Carnival from 5:30 p.m.-7:00 p.m. We can help them have fun by being Volunteers for the different booths.

-Llona Weiss,
CUCC Liaison to Alpha Hart Lewis Elementary



Volunteer at the Food Bank—it's fun, it's easy, it's good work!

The next CUCC shift at the Food Bank on Vandiver Drive will be on Tuesday, March 25 at 5:30 p.m. Volunteering gives us the opportunity to meet new people, help feed the hungry, and get tired enough to get a good night's sleep afterwards.

Hope you can join the crew! To register, [CLICK HERE!](#)

For more information or if you have trouble signing up, email [Mahree Skala](#) or call 573-474-2195



International Missions

CUCC IS WORKING IN ZAMBIA

The United Church of Zambia (UCZ) has grown to become one of the largest Protestant churches in Zambia. The UCZ plays an important role in Zambia's spiritual, social, and educational landscape. It is known for its commitment to social justice, community development, and holistic well-being. The church operates schools, hospitals, and various community-based programs contributing to Zambia's progress. With a focus on inclusivity and spiritual growth, the UCZ continues to influence the nation's moral fabric and actively addresses the challenges facing Zambian society.



Calling all Sunday School Kiddos/Youth!

(ages 3+)

**Join us for
SHAMROCK SUNDAY
Sunday, March 17 @ 9:00
In the Fellowship Hall**

**A fun-filled time with crafts,
games, and snacks!**

**Bring a Friend
(or a few!)**



Have kids? This is for YOU.

We are trying something new. We met for our first time in February and had a great time! Join us for a casual, light-hearted, judgment-free zone to share and laugh about all things kid-related...or whatever else comes up! Drop your kiddos/youth off at Sunday School and join us!



**Sunday, 3/3...9-10 a.m.
Sunday, 3/17...9-10 a.m.**

**Upstairs in the room @ the end of the hall
(we'll have it marked!)**

Nursery care provided for littles ages 2 and under.

**We'll take care of the doughnuts
& coffee for the grownups.**



Save The Date for VBS!

**AFTERNOONS
JULY 29-31**



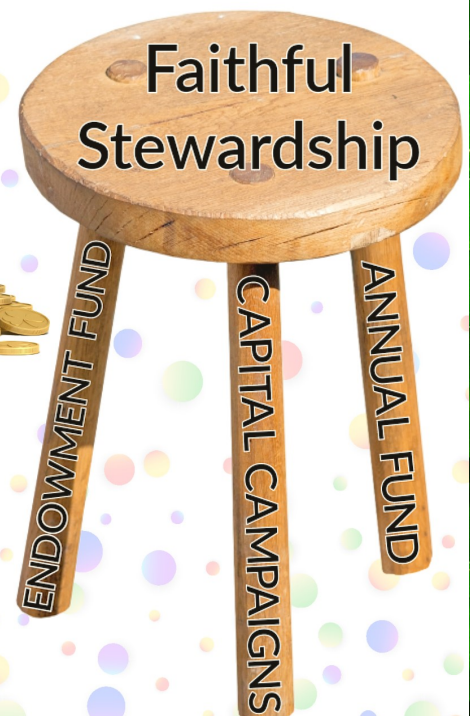
**MORE INFO
TO COME**

"IMAGINE TOGETHER"

Stewardship Sunday and Potluck

Sunday, March 17

You are invited to join the fun as we imagine together how Faithful Stewardship can enable our congregation to continue the way we impact our world through mission, witness, and service, as well as empower future generations to imagine new ways of doing ministry!



Bring a food item for the potluck and stay after for an educational presentation with special guest Matt Wagner of United Church Funds!

On the Church Calendar in March

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>3 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Fellowship 10:30 a.m. Worship *Worship livestreaming on our CUCC Website</p>	<p>4 <u>OFFICE CLOSED</u> 6:30 p.m. Worship & Music Ministry Team</p>	<p>5 10 a.m. Quilters 10:30 a.m. Staff Meeting 12 p.m. Bible Study</p>	<p>6 6 p.m. Chapel Ringers 7 p.m. Celebration Singers</p>	<p>7 9:30 a.m. Women's Fellowship 5 p.m. Coyote Hill Support Group 6:30 p.m. Finance & Stewardship Ministry Team Meeting</p>	<p>8 <u>OFFICE CLOSED</u> 9 a.m. LODD Staff Meeting</p>	<p>9 2 ONA Convocation in St. Louis</p>
<p>10 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Fellowship 10:30 a.m. Worship 12 p.m. Nurture & Education Meeting *Worship livestreaming on our CUCC Website</p>	<p>11 5 p.m. Membership & Care Meeting 6 p.m. Girl Scouts</p>	<p>12 10 a.m. Quilters 10:30 a.m. Staff Meeting 12 p.m. Bible Study</p>	<p>13 6 p.m. Prayer Shawl Group 6 p.m. Chapel Ringers 7 p.m. Celebration Singers</p>	<p>14 9:30 a.m. Women's Fellowship 5 p.m. Coyote Hill Support Group 6:30 p.m. Finance & Stewardship Ministry Team Meeting</p>	<p>15 <u>LODD OFF</u></p>	<p>16</p>
<p>17 <u>STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY</u> 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Fellowship 10:30 a.m. Worship 12 p.m. Stewardship Meal *Worship livestreaming on our CUCC Website</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19 10 a.m. Quilters 10:30 a.m. Staff Meeting 12 p.m. Bible Study 6:30 p.m. Council Meeting</p>	<p>20 LODD/CPS Closed 10:00 a.m. Pastor Rick leads worship at The Bluffs 6 p.m. Chapel Ringers 7 p.m. Celebration Singers</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>
<p>24 <u>PALM SUNDAY</u> 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Fellowship 10:30 a.m. Worship *Worship livestreaming on our CUCC Website</p>	<p>25 <u>LODD SPRING BREAK</u></p>	<p>26 <u>LODD SPRING BREAK</u> 10 a.m. Quilters 10:30 a.m. Staff Meeting 12 p.m. Bible Study 5:30 p.m. Food Bank</p>	<p>27 <u>LODD SPRING BREAK</u> 6 p.m. Chapel Ringers 7 p.m. Celebration Singers</p>	<p>28 <u>MAUNDY THURSDAY</u> <u>LODD SPRING BREAK</u></p>	<p>29 Good Friday <u>LODD SPRING BREAK</u> 7 p.m. Good Friday Worship Service</p>	<p>30 <u>HOLY SATURDAY</u> <u>LODD SPRING BREAK</u></p>
<p>31 <u>EASTER</u> 6:30 a.m. Sunrise Service 7:30 a.m. Breakfast 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Fellowship 10:30 a.m. Worship</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

**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.