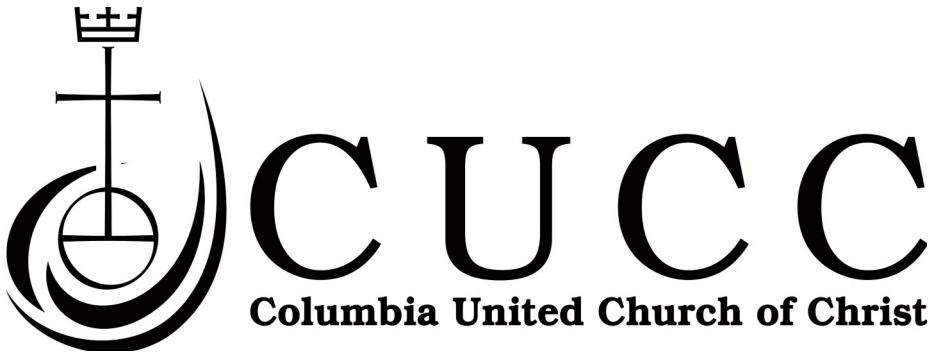


# Columbia United Church Of Christ

January 18, 2026  
“MLK Sunday”



## **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.

*Columbia  
United Church  
Of Christ*



January 18, 2026

10:30 a.m.

*"Nonviolence"*

*\*indicates that all are invited to stand, if comfortably able*

*"I put all my hope in God.  
God leaned towards me; God listened to my cry for help."  
-Psalm 40:1*

Welcome and Greetings

Pastor Rick

Prelude

*"Holy, Holy, Holy"*

Gina Pierson

*Arr. Carol Tornquist*

Carrying in the Light of Christ

\*Call to Worship *(based on Psalm 40)* Lydia Whitacre

Wait patiently for God.  
God will hear our cries and abide with us!

**God drew us up from despair.  
God set us on a high place and put a song in our mouths!**

Happy are those who put their trust in God,  
Who do not go astray after false gods.

**God's wondrous deeds and grace are unfathomable.  
We can not begin to proclaim how glorious They are!**

We call out to God: "Here we are! We delight to do your will!"  
We will tell the Good News of God's Salvation to all!

**God is our help and our deliverer; our rock and our Salvation.  
May all who seek God rejoice and say, 'Great is the LORD!'  
Come, let us worship God!**

\*Hymn *"Lift Every Voice and Sing"* #593

\*Opening Prayer Lydia Whitacre

**God of steadfastness; we know that You stick with us no matter what troubles the world throws at us. No matter the state of our culture, our world, our own personal lives, You give us strength and hope. Forgive us for the times we feel hopeless in the face of despair. Lift up our hearts, lift up our souls, lift up our voices, that we may always sing of the harmonies of liberty and the melodies of justice. Inspire us to always seek to glorify You in all that we say and all that we do. In Jesus' name we pray; Amen.**

## \*Assurance of Blessing

Pastor Rick

The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had a vision of a beloved community; one that embraced the principles of nonviolence while combatting the triple evils of poverty, racism, and antagonism. This is not a new call; it is the call of Jesus restated. For all the times we neglect to live into this call, we are already forgiven. God blesses and loves us, forgiving us always. Praise be to God!

## \*Prayer Response      “Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus”

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus;  
Look full in his wonderful face;  
And the things of Earth will grow strangely dim  
In the light of his glory and grace!*

## \*Sharing God’s Gift of Peace

May God’s Peace be with you!

**And also with you!**

## Children’s Time

Pastor Rick

“This Little Light of Mine”

*(Sung as children return to their seats)*

*This little light of mine; I’m gonna let it shine!  
This little light of mine; I’m gonna let it shine!  
This little light of mine; I’m gonna let it shine!  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!*

## Mission Moment

“MLK Day”

Lydia Whitacre

## Old Testament Lesson

Isaiah 49:1-11

Lydia Whitacre

*The prophet is writing in a time of national turmoil, speaking about the potential God has instilled in each one of them. Despite all the challenges they are enduring as a nation, there is still hope for a better tomorrow. God created them with dignity and worth, and will not forget them.*      Page #592

## Gospel Lesson

Matthew 4:1-11

Lydia Whitacre

*After Jesus’ baptism he was led by the Spirit into the wilderness for focused communion with God. After strengthening his faith, he is tempted by selfish desire. His focused faith allows him to live into God’s light.*      Page #785

## Anthem

“Like a Mighty Stream”

Celebration Singers  
Moses Hogan & John Jacobson

## Sermon

“Focused Faith”

Pastor Rick

## \*Hymn

“Precious Lord, Take My Hand”

#472

## Community Prayer & Silent Prayer;

## The Lord's Prayer

*In an effort to encourage inclusion, we suggest using the address "Creator God" in our unison recitation of The Lord's Prayer. You are certainly welcome to say "Our Father" instead of "Creator," "Trespasses" instead of "debts," or "Thy" instead of "Your" if you prefer.*

Creator God in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

## Stewardship Moment Deborah Birkes

## Invitation to the Offering

*To give online text "GIVE" to 573.240.4041  
You can also give online by visiting our website:  
[www.columbiaucc.com](http://www.columbiaucc.com)*

## \*Prayer of Dedication Lydia Whitacre

God, You encourage us to seek the non-violent approach to advocacy, standing firm against the triple evils of poverty, racism, and antagonism. We pray that our actions may always live into that call. We strive to work for justice, righteousness, and Shalom in Your world, bringing about Your Beloved Community. Now take these gifts we offer from our hearts. We give with a vision of that Beloved Community guiding us, praying that it may be realized right here in this community by the gifts we give today. Take these gifts and multiply them; and let them be used for your Kingdom goals. Amen.

\*Benediction Pastor Rick

## \*Response “Let There Be Peace on Earth”

*Let there be Peace on Earth and Let it Begin with me!  
Let there be Peace on Earth; the Peace that was meant to be!  
With God our Creator, Children all are we!  
Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony!*

*Let Peace begin with me; let this be the moment now!  
With every step I take let this be my solemn vow:  
To take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally!  
Let there be Peace on Earth; and let it begin with me!*

## Wisdom from Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

*“An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity.”*

*“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that.  
Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”*

*“We must develop and maintain the capacity to forgive.  
He who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love.  
There is some good in the worst of us and some evil in the best of us.  
When we discover this, we are less prone to hate our enemies.”*

*“Faith is taking the next step,  
even when you don’t see the whole staircase.”*

*“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is,  
What are you doing for others?”*

*“Never succumb to the temptation of bitterness.”*

*“Peace is not merely a distant goal that we seek, but a means by which we arrive at that goal.”*

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

# Columbia United Church of Christ

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**Organist/Accompanist:**

**LODO Director:** Sara Koenig

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**Custodian:** Caleb Berry

[calebprenticeberry@gmail.com](mailto:calebprenticeberry@gmail.com)

**Pastor Emeritus:** Rev. Fred Brandenburg

## TODAY IN WORSHIP:

Worship Leader: Lydia Whitacre

Song Leader: Sarah Young

Ushers: Llona Weiss & Keith Birkes

Greeters: Tricia Price & Norah Schultz

Technology: Adam Veteto & Josh Muench

Council Stewards: Christine Staelens & Deborah Long Birkes



Online Giving

## NEXT SUNDAY IN WORSHIP:

Worship Leader: Judi Privitt

Song Leader: Killian Boyd

Ushers: Pat Forward & Deborah Long Birkes

Greeters: Judi Privitt & Mary Lorber

Technology: Doug Privitt & Lorry Dreier

Council Stewards: Judi Privitt & Ashley Ramirez

## COLUMBIA UCC CHURCH COUNCIL

**Moderator:** Jerry Kiesling [rollzierp50@gmail.com](mailto:rollzierp50@gmail.com)

**Vice Moderator:** Corinne Remeika [remeikas@tranquility.net](mailto:remeikas@tranquility.net)

**Secretary:** Alethea Tennill [atennill108@gmail.com](mailto:atennill108@gmail.com)

**Treasurer:** Deborah Birkes [dlong@elon.edu.com](mailto:dlong@elon.edu.com)

**Recording Treasurer:** Christine Staelens [tigersfour@gmail.com](mailto:tigersfour@gmail.com)

**Building & Grounds:** Ted Dachroeden [gpadoc4gd@gmail.com](mailto:gpadoc4gd@gmail.com)

**Fellowship & Hospitality:** Mary Lorber [eldercow@gmail.com](mailto:eldercow@gmail.com)

**Finance & Stewardship:** *Vacant*

**Inclusion & Affirmation:** Ashley Ramirez [ashknight0628@gmail.com](mailto:ashknight0628@gmail.com)

**Little One's Day Out:** Kristin Veteto [kristinnoelveteto@gmail.com](mailto:kristinnoelveteto@gmail.com)

**Membership & Care:** Judi Privitt [judiprivitt811@gmail.com](mailto:judiprivitt811@gmail.com)

**Nurture & Education:** Lena Muench [cfg323@yahoo.com](mailto:cfg323@yahoo.com)

**Outreach & Advocacy:** Mahree Skala [skalamahree@yahoo.com](mailto:skalamahree@yahoo.com)

**Worship & Music:** Edie Diel [edie@thedandegroup.com](mailto:edie@thedandegroup.com)

**Pastor:** Rev. Rick Oberle [rick@columbiaucc.com](mailto:rick@columbiaucc.com)

**NURSERY CARE** is available for children in kindergarten and younger in the educational wing. If you need help finding it, ask an usher!

### **COMO VALUES DIVERSITY - 1/28**

The annual COMO Values Diversity Banquet will be 1/28 at 7:00 a.m. This event celebrates the diversity of the Columbia Community and encouraging us to strive for even more diversity. As usual, CUCC will sponsor a table. This year, Pastor Rick has been nominated for one of their Annual Diversity Awareness Awards! We have ten tickets available- if you want to attend, please talk to Ashley Ramirez or Pastor Rick!

### **SOUPERBOWL OF CARING- 2/8**

From now through February 8 (Superbowl Sunday), the Nurture & Education Ministry Team will be collecting soup for the Souperbowl of Caring! Bring your Soup in and put it on the shelf in the lobby. All soup collected will be shared with our mission partners here in Columbia. Financial donations are appreciated, too; all financial donations will go to benefit Loaves and Fishes.

### **FASTNACHT - 2/17**

Fastnacht will be here before you know it! Our annual German meal will be February 17 this year, the day before Ash Wednesday. Traditionally, Christians “fast” during Lent, so this is the “feast before the fast.” Whether you are fasting for Lent or not, plan to be here to celebrate Fastnacht!

### **OPPORTUNITIES AT ALPHA HART LEWIS ELEMENTARY**

Alpha Hart Lewis could use our help packing their Buddy Packs (take home food for kids for the weekend) on Thursdays from 10:30 a.m. to around 12 p.m. CUCC has volunteer opportunities through the end of the school year for this great, hands-on project. If you can spare a Thursday, talk to Llona Weiss.

### **THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR**

Sun	1/18	Bible Study/Sunday School	9:00 a.m.
		Fellowship	10:00 a.m.
		Worship (in person and livestream)	10:30 a.m.
		Chili Cookoff	12:00 p.m.
Mon	1/19	Church office/LODO Closed (MLK Day)	
Tue	1/20	Quilters	10:00 a.m.
		Staff Meeting	10:00 a.m.
		Pause to Color	1:00 p.m.
		Church Council Meeting	6:30 p.m.
Wed	1/21	Good Dads/Strong Schools at AHL	7:00 a.m.
		Pastor Rick leads worship at The Bluffs	10:00 a.m.
		Chapel Ringers/Celebration Singers	6:00/7:00 p.m.
		Confirmation Class	7:15 p.m.
Thu	1/22	Inclusion & Affirmation Ministry Team	6:00 p.m.
Sun	1/25	<b><i>Inclusion Covenant Seven-Year Anniversary Sunday</i></b>	
		Bible Study/Sunday School	9:00 a.m.
		Fellowship	10:00 a.m.
		Worship (in person and livestream)	10:30 a.m.
		Nurture & Education Ministry Team	12:00 p.m.

# **Columbia UCC Prayer List**

*Please keep in your prayers this week . . .*

The family of Jim Posz... on their loss (Allen's Father)

Linda Evans... recovering from a fall

Cliff Beckman... hospitalized this week

Jeff Kies... health issues

Phillip Neale's Niece... received her transplant

Brandon Brown... on the loss of his mother

Students and staff at Alpha Hart Lewis Elementary . . . our Partner in Education

Our Search for an organist/accompanist here at CUCC

All those whose lives are affected by state sanctioned oppression including:

Owen Ramsingh and family, and The family of Renee Good

*Health Issues:*

Harold Hackman, Barry Kirchhoff, Fred Wilke (Alethea's Father),  
Julie Roper (Alexandra's Mother), Karleen Martindale (Kasper's Mother),  
Mark & Connie Fairley, Cody Kile, Dr. Ryan Link; Peri Ann Gulerson;  
Julia Marsh (Donna Marsh's Daughter),  
Martha (friend of the Veteto family), Ken (Adam Veteto's Cousin);  
Marilyn Coronado & Beverly Wilcox (Corinne Remeika's friends)

*Challenges in Life:*

Sheila, The Koerkenmeier & Malicoat Families, Kieran Armstrong

*Living in Care Facilities:*

Gary Ehrhardt, Vernie Blank, Harold Hackman

*Living in Independent Living Facilities:*

Don Privitt, Cliff & Sue Beckman, Linda Evans, Walter & Patty Schroeder

*Serving us in the military:*

Christopher Tennill, Dane Wilson, Aaron Dachroeden

*If you are interested in joining our Prayer Team or have a prayer request  
for our team to lift up please contact*

*Melba Shaffer (573) 474-2997 [melbamaes@gmail.com](mailto:melbamaes@gmail.com)*

*Or Tricia Soncasie (314) 374-7477 [tsoncasie@aol.com](mailto:tsoncasie@aol.com)*

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## **Isaiah 49:1-11**

1 Listen to me, O coastlands; pay attention, you peoples from far away! The LORD called me before I was born; while I was in my mother's womb he named me.

2 He made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me a polished arrow; in his quiver he hid me away.

3 And he said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified."

4 But I said, "I have labored in vain; I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity; yet surely my cause is with the LORD and my reward with my God."

5 And now the LORD says, who formed me in the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him, and that Israel might be gathered to him, for I am honored in the sight of the LORD, and my God has become my strength—

6 he says, "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the survivors of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

7 Thus says the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One, to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nations, the slave of rulers, "Kings shall see and stand up; princes, and they shall prostrate themselves, because of the LORD, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you."

8 Thus says the LORD: In a time of favor I have answered you; on a day of salvation I have helped you; I have kept you and given you as a covenant to the people, to establish the land, to apportion the desolate heritages,

9 saying to the prisoners, "Come out," to those who are in darkness, "Show yourselves." They shall feed along the ways; on all the bare heights shall be their pasture;

10 they shall not hunger or thirst, neither scorching wind nor sun shall strike them down, for he who has pity on them will lead them and by springs of water will guide them.

11 And I will turn all my mountains into a road, and my highways shall be raised up.

## **Matthew 4:1-11**

1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. 2 He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. 3 The tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” 4 But he answered, “It is written, ‘One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’ ” 5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, 6 saying to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, ‘He will command his angels concerning you,’ and ‘On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’ ” 7 Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ” 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, 9 and he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” 10 Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! for it is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.’ ” 11 Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

## Lift Every Voice and Sing

James Weldon Johnson, 1921; alt.

1 Lift ev-ery voice and sing, till earth and heav-en ring, ring with the  
 2 Ston-y the road we trod, bit-ter the chas-tening rod, felt in the  
 3 God of our wea-ry years, God of our si-lent tears, God who has

har-mo-nies of lib-er-ty; Let our re-joic-ing days when hope un-born had died; Yet with a stead-y brought us thus far on the way; God, who by your

rise, high as the lis-tening skies, let it re-sound loud as the beat, have not our wea-ry feet, come to the place for which our might, led us in-to the light, keep us for-ev-er in the

roll-ing sea. Sing a song full of the  
 peo-ple sighed? We have come o-ver a  
 path, we pray. Lest our feet stray from the

Poet James Weldon Johnson was the first African-American to pass the bar examination in the state of Florida, and served as U.S. consul in Venezuela and Nicaragua. He collaborated with his composer brother, John Rosamond Johnson, to write Broadway operettas and edit song collections. John appeared in vaudeville, directed London musicals, and headed the Music School Settlement in New York.

Tune: LIFT EVERY VOICE Irr.  
 J. Rosamond Johnson, 1921

faith that the harsh past has taught us,  
way that with tears has been wa - tered,  
plac - es, our God, where we met you, Lest our

song full of the  
come, tread - ing our  
hearts, drunk with the

hope that the pres - ent has brought us;  
path through the blood of the slaugh - tered,  
wine of the world, for - get you;

Fac - ing the  
Out from the  
Shad-owed be -

ris - ing sun of our new day be - gun, let us march  
gloom - y past, till now we stand at last where the white  
neath your hand, may we for - ev - er stand, true to our

on till vic - to - ry is won.  
gleam of our bright star is cast.  
God, true to our na - tive land.

## Precious Lord, Take My Hand

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Thomas A. Dorsey, 1932; alt.

1 Pre - cious Lord, take my hand, lead me on, let me stand,  
 2 When my way grows drear, pre - cious Lord, lin - ger near,  
 3 When the shad - ows ap - pear and the night draws near,

I am tired, I am weak, I am worn;  
 when my life is al - most gone,  
 and the day is past and gone,

Through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the light:  
 Hear me cry, hear my call, hold my hand, lest I fall:  
 At the riv - er I stand, guide my feet, hold my hand:

*Refrain*

Take my hand, pre - cious Lord, lead me home.

Thomas A. Dorsey was known as "Georgia Tom" when he played piano for blues singer Ma Rainey. He started writing gospel songs after what he called "a definite spiritual change." This inspirational song, composed following the deaths of his wife, Nettie, and a newborn child, derives from the tune Maitland.

Tune: PRECIOUS LORD Irr. with refrain  
 Thomas A. Dorsey, 1932

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## Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior

Luke 18:35-43

Fanny Crosby (1820-1915); alt.

1 Pass me not, O gen - tle Sav - ior, hear my hum - ble cry;  
 2 Let me at your throne of mer - cy find a sweet re - lief;  
 3 Trust-ing on - ly in your mer - it, would I seek your face;  
 4 Be the Spring of all my com - fort, more than life to me;

While on oth - ers you are call - ing, do not pass me by.  
 Kneel-ing there in deep con - tri - tion, help my un - be - lief.  
 Heal my wound-ed, bro - ken spir - it, save me by your grace.  
 Not just here on earth be - side me, but e - ter - nal - ly.

*Refrain*

Sav - ior, Sav - ior, hear my hum - ble cry;

While on oth - ers you are call - ing, do not pass me by.

Fanny Crosby was already a successful writer when she became associated with gospel hymnists Sankey, Sweney, Root, and others. She directed her talent to gospel songs in her early forties, and collaborated with William Doane on many hymns.

Tune: PASS ME NOT 8.5.8.5. with refrain  
William H. Doane (1832-1915)