

The Communicator

October 2025

From the Pastor's Keyboard . . .

"All Saints and Protests"

At the end of this month, people all across our country will celebrate one of our culture's favorite holidays - Halloween. While this is basically a secular holiday today, Halloween has its origins in the church; a day structured to prepare our hearts and souls to recognize the sainthood of those who have gone before us.

All Saints Day began as a day set aside to honor those who are recognized by the church as "Saints" and, like other church holidays at the time, the actual celebration began the evening before. Halloween began in the church as "All Hallows Eve," the evening before All Saints Day. In this case, the "Saints" recognition began that evening with folks dressing up in costumes (often dressed as "Saints") dancing around bonfires and consuming sweet treats. *(All Saints Day and All Hallows Eve, like many Christian holidays, are adaptations of Pagan holidays that came first. Many Christians wanted to still celebrate the Pagan holidays, so the church adapted them as their own.)* All Saints Day was designated a church holiday in the 8th century by Pope Gregory III.

By the time of Martin Luther, All Saints Day was one of the most important days in the life of the church. It was one of the most important of the "Solemnities" (High Holy Days) at the time; a day when everyone was expected to go to church. It was only appropriate that Martin Luther used this High Holy Day to initiate a protest that would have reverberations across the known world at the time, empowering disenfranchised people to reconnect with the Divine in ways that had been formerly condemned. This gave rise to a multiplicity of denominational expressions, and in that spirit of protest the United Church of Christ (and predecessor denominations such as the Evangelical Church) have their roots.

But it is an over-simplification to believe that this explosion of identity happened with one Halloween incident of Protest. In fact, Martin Luther's actions spent capital that had been building up for several centuries. For centuries prior to Luther's protest, the powerful had imposed practices that separated people from orthodox expressions of faith. The powerful imposed regulations concerning the priesthood, the celebration of Communion, common access to the Bible, the structure of liturgy, the practice of confession and economic stewardship that did not bring people closer to God. In fact, these practices drove a wedge of separation between the ecclesia and God.

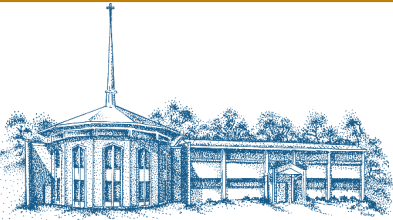
Several Reformers protested before Martin Luther. People such as John Wycliffe and Jan Hus acted to try to bridge the divide the powerful had created between the people and God, and they paid for it with their lives and had their reputations besmirched posthumously. Knowing this, Luther still protested, standing up for Justice and calling for reforms that would reconcile the people and God in faithful worship expression.

The culture of the day had created a chasm between the people and God. Luther tried to bridge that chasm. As we celebrate the Reformation here in worship on October 26, we will look at ways Martin Luther tried to help people return to God in their faith practice by bringing communion back to them, bringing liturgy back to them, bringing the Word back to them, and bringing the priesthood back to them, creating a new understanding of church while still honoring the Saints of the Church who went before him.



We will also celebrate All Saints Day here in worship, on November 2. As we do, we will remember the Saints of our Church who have died this past year, and the legacy they left behind. We will light candles in their memory and celebrate communion with them, building on the legacy they first shared with us.

We are entering a season of Saints and Protests and proclamations of faith; and as we live into the legacy of our ancestors, we do so looking ahead to the new challenges God is setting before us. The Saints of the Church have built something great in this place; now it is our turn to carry the load. How great it is that we get to do this work together
-Pastor Rick



Columbia United Church of Christ

**3201 I-70 Drive NW
Columbia, MO 65202**

Rev. Rick Oberle
Pastor

Rev. Fred Brandenburg
Pastor Emeritus

Mike Pierson
Music Coordinator

Alexandra Roper
Office Administrator

Sara Koenig
Director, Little One's Day Out

Caleb Berry
Custodian

Sunday Schedule:

9:00 a.m. Faith Education
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

FESTIVAL OF SHARING

The response to the August collection of Reading and Writing Kits for the Festival of Sharing was amazing. Thank you for your generous donation of 101 kits!

The Festival also collects hygiene items for female prison inmates to promote dignity and cleanliness and express support for continued healing. A small kit containing shampoo, lotion, deodorant, toothpaste, and an emery board can make a significant impact. Some inmates may get support from family and friends. Some facilities offer inmates the opportunity to purchase higher quality items from the facility's market. For those without supplemental finances, basic items are provided by the state.

Because of the restrictions on the contents of these items and the difficulty in finding acceptable products, monetary donations are the preferred method of support. This also gives the Festival of Sharing the ability to purchase the correct items in bulk at a lower cost.

A donation of \$10 will provide one pack per person. The collection for the Women's Prison Packs will begin October 12; [CLICK HERE](#) to donate. Thank you for your continuing support of the Festival of Sharing.

NEIGHBORS IN NEED SPECIAL OFFERING OCTOBER 5

Gifts to the Neighbors in Need (NIN) special UCC mission offering support ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. CUCC will collect this special offering on October 5, 2025. [CLICK HERE](#) to donate.

One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM), which provides Christian ministry and witness to American Indians and to the wider church. The other two-thirds support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, direct service projects, and grants awarded to UCC churches and organizations doing justice work in their communities. The funded projects range from direct service to community organizing and advocacy to address systemic injustice.

In 2025 the Neighbors in Need Offering supported 26 grant recipients across the UCC who were engaged in projects of service and advocacy.

Neighbors in need is one of the five special appeals of the United Church of Christ. CUCC has the honor of being a "five for five" church, participating in all UCC special mission offerings.

Neighbors in Need

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.
-Galatians 6:2



Moderator's Moment

All of us know Columbia UCC has experienced shortfalls in giving over the past three years. We made up for that deficit by using money from our "savings." This year, the Finance and Stewardship Committee, with the help of other committees, looked at each spending item and painstakingly pared it down. Rather than increasing the budget by 3-5%, they reduced it. Some of the savings will be from asking church members to do a little more cleaning and upkeep of our building and grounds.

The executive committee recommended pay increases to our pastor, administrative assistant, music director, accompanist, and custodian. The committees found it important to continue to reward the hard work of the individuals hired to make our worship and church experience the best it can be.

You, as a congregation, have increased your giving to help close the gap in giving this year. I appreciate your giving. Understandably, some of you are not in a position to give. With increased costs and fixed incomes for some, or being a young family with many expenses, giving more just may not be possible. Some may feel frustrated or sad that they cannot do more. We love our church, we love what it does for each other and the community at large, but God only asks us to do what we can do. The widow's mite comes to mind.

The budget meeting is on October 26. The proposed budget will be distributed in worship on October 12. I encourage you to take a copy of the budget and read through it. You will notice many line items are fixed costs (costs we cannot change), and others are more discretionary. The committees have also looked at our giving to other organizations and ensured our giving is in line with our values.

Again, I appreciate each of you as we worship together, do things for each other, and support those we don't even know as an expression of God's love.

They will know we are Christian by our love . . . and our love takes many forms.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jerry Kiesling,
Council Moderator



COLUMBIA UCC CHURCH COUNCIL

Moderator:	Jerry Kiesling	<u>rollzierp50@gmail.com</u>
Vice Moderator:	VACANT	
Secretary:	Alethea Tennill	<u>atennill108@gmail.com</u>
Treasurer:	Deborah Long Birkes	<u>dlong@elon.edu</u>
Recording Treasurer:	Christine Staelens	<u>tigersfour@gmail.com</u>
Building & Grounds:	Ted Dachroeden	<u>gpadoc4gd@gmail.com</u>
Fellowship & Hospitality:	Mary Lorber-Solt	<u>eldercow@gmail.com</u>
Finance & Stewardship:	VACANT	
Inclusion & Affirmation:	Ashley Ramirez	<u>ashknight0628@gmail.com</u>
Little One's Day Out:	Kristin Veteto	<u>kristinnoelveto@gmail.com</u>
Membership & Care:	Judi Privitt	<u>judiprivitt811@gmail.com</u>
Nurture & Education:	Lena Muench	<u>cfg323@yahoo.com</u>
Outreach & Advocacy:	Mahree Skala	<u>skalamahree@yahoo.com</u>
Worship & Music:	Edie Diel	<u>edie@thedandegroup.com</u>
Pastor:	Rev. Rick Oberle	<u>rick@columbiaucc.com</u>



Sunday Volunteer Schedule for October

Date	Greeter	Ushers	Worship Leader	Tech Booth
10/05	Jolene Kirchhoff	John Muench Brenda Muench	Pat Forward	Brent Marcks
10/12	Susan Dunham	Keith Birkes Deborah Long-Birkes	Ashely Ramirez	Judi Privitt Doug Privitt
10/19	Jessica Lucas	Phillip Neale	Tricia Soncasie	Ted Dachroeden
10/26	Carol Duermeyer	Llona Weiss Pat Forward	Lauren Lippincott	Josh Muench Lorry Dreier

October Birthdays

Laura Lentz - 10/01

Gina Pierson - 10/05

Wesley Wells - 10/06

Jane Duncan - 10/13

Rebecca Holley - 10/14

Alicia Wilson - 10/15

Ruth Hotle - 10/18

Norah Schultz - 10/22

Caleb Muench - 10/25

Carissa Graves - 10/26

Jessica Jenks - 10/28

Stephanie Lee - 10/03

Hugo Wilmsmeyer - 10/05

Dean Barry - 10/11

Chris Tennill - 10/13

Dominick Lee - 10/14

Charles Marcks - 10/16

McKinzie Arms - 10/27

Ron Tennill - 10/22

Dorothy Vetter - 10/25

Mariann Bullerd - 10/27

Hazel Keithahn - 10/28

Columbia UCC Council Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. on August 19, 2025 by Jerry Kiesling. Present: Jerry Kiesling, Deborah Long-Birkes, Christine Staelens, Ted Dachroeden, Mary Lorber-Solt, Lena Muench via zoom, Ashley Ramirez, Judi Privitt, Mahree Skala, Edie Diel, Rick Oberle, and Alethea Tennill. Judi Privitt made a motion to approve the agenda with a second from Ted Dachroeden. The motion passed.

Unfinished Business:

- ♦ New Light Sign: No news.
- ♦ Nominating Committee for 2025: Jerry Kiesling has been talking to several people about the open positions.
- ♦ Fire Update: We have received payment from insurance company.
- ♦ Bells update: The bells are at the company in Pennsylvania. We received an evaluation from the company costing \$4,255 not including shipping. We have also received over \$7,000 donations to repair the bells. Edie Diel will let the company know to proceed with the repairs.
- ♦ Retroactive Scholarship Application: We received a late scholarship application. Scholarship money comes from the Scholarship United Church Fund. So far this year we have gained about \$14,000. So far this year we have awarded two scholarships. After some more discussion Mahree Skala moved to provide a third scholarship; seconded by Edie Diel. Motion passed.
- ♦ COMO Mission Experience: The two groups have been here and had a great time. We raised \$2,175 with \$557 in expenses.
- ♦ Solar Columbia Report: The application has been submitted. We hope to hear back in the next week.
- ♦ Ministry Team Fair: On September 14.
- ♦ 2026 Budget Requests are due to Deborah Long-Birkes by September 1.

New Business:

- ♦ Finance and Stewardship Outreach Request: The Finance and Stewardship Ministry Team would like each Ministry team to pick a Sunday and present during worship service.
- ♦ Resignation: Steve Jannetti has tendered his resignation. His last Sunday with us will be September 7. Christine Staelens made a motion to accept his resignation, seconded by Deborah Long-Birkes. Motion passed. We will be looking for a new organist/accompanist.
- ♦ Western Association Fall Gathering: On September 20 in Kansas City. We can have three delegates. The speaker will be Jill Baker on "God's Call in Your Life."
- ♦ Historical documents/photos: Alexandra and some church members are working on identifying historical documents so we can keep the records, which Alexandra will scan in and organize.

Ministry Reports:

- ♦ Fellowship & Hospitality: Rally Day is coming up. Fred Malicoat and Ron Tennill will be cooking fish. The rest of the meal will be potluck. They will be making treat bags, Veterans breakfast on 11/9, and Advent Banquet on 12/14.
- ♦ Inclusion & Affirmation: Meeting is coming up. Mid-MO Pridefest is October 4.
- ♦ Membership & Care: Emotional Freedom Techniques class will be held September 18 at 6 p.m. at CUCC. We can be taught to calm or soothe ourselves when needed.
- ♦ Nurture & Education: Rally Day is coming up.
- ♦ Outreach & Advocacy: Festival of Sharing School kits is wrapping up. Food Bank is Tuesday evening. Neighbors in Need offering is October 5. They will be collecting for Women's Prison Packs, which is a monetary donation.
- ♦ Worship & Music: They are looking for a new organist/accompanist.
- ♦ Pastor Report: Discussed being active, not just passive.

Pastor Rick closed us in prayer. Motion to adjourn by Mary Lorber-Solt, seconded by Christine Staelens. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Alethea Tennill
Council Secretary



Finance & Stewardship Ministry Team

Financial Update

	Actual	Budget	Over/(Under)
August Income	\$54,421.01	\$24,768.00	\$29,653.01
August Expenses	\$27,703.00	\$29,664.00	(-\$1,961.00)
YTD Income	\$227,825.92	\$274,856.00	(-\$47,030.08)
YTD Expenses	\$284,362.73	\$278,451.00	\$5,911.73
Surplus/(Deficit)	(-\$56,536.81)	(-\$3,595.00)	(-52,941.81)
August Joyful Giving	\$53,384.90	\$23,701.00	\$29,683.90
YTD Joyful Giving	\$221,072.01	\$264,324.00	(-\$43,251.99)

Worship	08/03	08/10	08/17	08/24	08/31
	63	52	94	84	49

THREE WAYS TO GIVE ONLINE TO CUCC

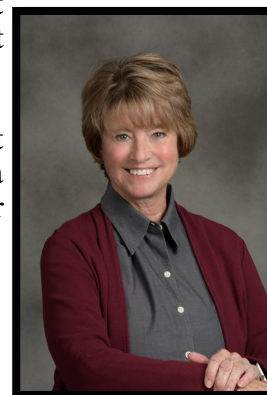
1. Click on this link (or type into your web browser): <https://www.kindridgiving.com/app/giving/cucc>
2. Visit our CUCC website: www.columbiaucc.com and click on the "Donate to CUCC" button.
3. Text "GIVE" to 573-240-4041 and follow the prompts to set up your one time or recurring gift.

As we embrace the beauty of the fall season, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering support. Your generous contributions of time and financial support have been instrumental in keeping the ministry of Columbia United Church of Christ going.

I know the shortfall of Joyful Giving is not new news. We are running behind and want to make sure we can continue our ministry. Absolutely, contributions are indeed a personal matter. Whether it's through financial donations, volunteering your time, or sharing your talents, each form of contribution is valuable and meaningful. It's all about finding the best way to give back that aligns with your personal values and capabilities.

How do you prefer to contribute?

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Ann Schaefer
Finance & Stewardship
Ministry Team Member



Inclusion and Affirmation Ministry Team

WORLD FOOD DAY - OCTOBER 16

2025 is the 80th anniversary of the “Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.”

World Food Day 2025 is calling for global collaboration in creating a peaceful, sustainable, prosperous, and food-secure future. By working together, across governments, organizations, sectors, and communities, we can transform agrifood systems to ensure that everyone has access to a healthy diet, living in harmony with the planet.

The goals: better production, better nutrition, better environment, better life. The 2025 theme: Hand in Hand for Better Foods and a Better Future In Our World of 2025; food insecurity is overwhelming with 733 million people living in hunger. In contrast, some areas are seeing rising obesity and incredible food waste. Both extremes often coexist side by side.

“Consumers carry part of the solution. Choosing healthy diets, wasting less, and helping to protect the soil, water and biodiversity that make food possible are small acts that add up. Speaking up for those facing hunger, engaging with decision-makers, and staying attentive to change; these are some of the ways to take part.” (Source: [Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations](#))

Unfortunately, the USA’s current administration is unconcerned about hunger. Per the Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF), a non-partisan organization that focuses on health policies, 53 million people of all ages in the US, currently, live in households that experience food insecurity. The much talked about ‘Big Beautiful Bill’ is poised to increase food insecurity within this country by several million more. The lack of healthy food choices is connected to multiple chronic conditions, higher health care utilization and lower rates of medication adherence.

The bill also cuts \$1 trillion dollars, over the next decade, to multiple health programs. Thus, families in need will lose both food assistance and health coverage. Hospitals that support these individuals (especially those who lose Medicaid) will not be able to carry the burden. (Source: kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/)

Remember the above KFF information only pertains to the USA, the wealthiest country in the world. Per [Concern Worldwide US](#), 9 million people die of hunger-related causes every year and half of all childhood deaths can be linked to malnutrition.

Hope lies in teamwork between individuals, organizations and governments. The attitude of, “this doesn’t affect me” must change. “The actions we take today will directly impact the future. We must produce more with less. Let’s work towards a future that is more inclusive and more equitable.” (Source: [Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations](#))



PRIDE CONTINUES - LOCAL PRIDEFEST INFO

COMO PRIDE– This year’s [Mid-Missouri Pridefest](#) will be October 4-5 in downtown Columbia in the north village arts district by Rose Music Hall and Café Berlin. This is the 25th anniversary of the Mid-Missouri Pridefest, and they will be celebrating that milestone! CUCC will have a booth there both days, doing glitter blessings and giving away affirming merchandise and CUCC swag. To sign up for our CUCC booth [CLICK HERE](#) or talk to [Ashley Ramirez](#).



LODO Ministry Team

The past month we had a *wonderful* turn out for our LODO Fall Family Picnic! This month has been a month of growth at Little One's Day Out! It is incredible that our teachers and aides have been able to make impactful relationships with our students in such a short time. Our teachers have continued to foster a growth mindset in our students. Each day is an opportunity to learn something new and better perfect emerging skills.

Next month's Parent Education Event will be a Parent Support Group. This is open to the public and will have a licensed counselor to help guide the conversation. We want to be a part of your village and help lighten your load so please join us so that we can provide support that the whole family will benefit from.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sara Koenig,
LODO Director



LODO Staff Spotlight: Lori Valleroy - Lions Teacher



I'm Mrs. Lori, and I'm thrilled to be your child's teacher this year! I have been working with children and families for over 35 years. I have a BS in Child Development from Truman State University. I have taught preschool, owned my own home daycare, worked for Columbia Public Schools as a parent educator, and, worked as a nanny. I always find my way back to preschool, my first love!

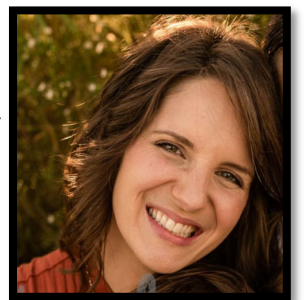
I recently celebrated my 31st wedding anniversary with my husband, Chris. We have two adult sons, and one daughter-in-law. We welcomed two little sister kittens, JoJo and Sami, to our home in June. In my free time, I like to read, do yoga, and sing in my church choir.

I'm thankful to join the LODO family, and I'm excited to get to know your child. Let's have a great year together!

School is off to a great start and we are thrilled with our LODO Staff and continue to be excited at all that Sara is bringing to the leadership! This year the Ministry Team would like to highlight all the ways church members can volunteer and support the LODO program. Here are two ways you can partner with LODO and support its mission: 1) volunteering in the classroom and bringing your unique skills and 2) volunteer for or attend LODO special events! Please contact the LODO Director, Sara, via email to signup to volunteer at LODO.Sara.Koenig@gmail.com. Some dates are below.

"Volunteers are paid in six figures... S-M-I-L-E-S."
- Gayla LeMaire

Respectfully Submitted,
Kristin Veteto,
LODO Ministry Team Chair



2025-2026 Enrollment August 25, 2025-May 15, 2026

Lightning Bugs Class: 1 year old before 8/1/25
(Only available 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.)

Lambs Class: 2 years old before 8/1/25

Lions/Leopards Class: 3 years old before 8/1/25

Leap Frogs/Leopards Class: 4 years old before 8/1/25

Upcoming Dates:

October 10 - Closed

*October 23 6:00 p.m. - Parent Support Group with
Allison Kemble

*October 24 9:00 a.m. - Pumpkin Fun Day

*November 13 5:00 p.m. - Thanksgiving Feast

(* indicates volunteers are needed; contact Sara for info)

Fellowship & Hospitality Ministry Team

Greetings! Another month has again flown by, where does the time go? I for one, sometimes wish things would slow down a bit; it seems there are always things to do, places to go, and people to see. Perhaps, as our days are getting shorter, its a good time to slow down, take a deep breath, and reflect on all the things we have accomplished, as individuals, as a church family, as a community. That's what our Ministry Teams are about, getting things done, that as an individual, would be impossible.

Ministry Teams are just like honey bees. Each team has a job to do. Each team relies on one another to get things done around the hive/church. The result is a strong, healthy, working hive. Let's be like the bees, volunteer, pitch in, help with the function and running of our church. Everyone needs to participate, in order to have a strong, healthy, working church.

I do want to remind everyone of the Halloween Potluck on October 26, after church service. Dress up, be creative with carry in dishes, play a few games, relax, and enjoy. As always, bee safe, bee kind, bee healthy, and always bee yourself.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Lorber
Fellowship and Hospitality
Ministry Team Chair



WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Women's Fellowship will meet Thursday, October 9 at 9:30 a.m. in the Gathering Area. All ladies are welcome for a time of food, fellowship and reflection. Our lesson focuses on Finding Resilience by listening and learning from Jesus through the eyes of Mary "of a Certain Village". Also, if you have empty jam or jelly jars from our earlier fundraisers, please bring them to church and leave them in the cloakroom. Women's Fellowship is glad to recycle them and return them to the Amish for credit on this year's purchases. Thanks!

Membership & Care Ministry Team

Membership and Care met on September 8. We looked over our inactive member list one more time and also revised a letter created by Pastor Rick. This will be our final mailing to inactive members asking for their response regarding their membership status information. Membership and Care discussed minor revisions to the church bus usage policy (thank you to Jolene Kirchhoff for composing). The draft was sent to Council for approval at the September meeting.

CARE ministry teams were highlighted at the Ministry Team Fair on September 14. Please let us know what your needs are, or please consider being part of one of our Ministry Teams to share doing good for members of the congregation. The CARE teams are as follows:

- ◆ Note Writers/Cards
- ◆ Prayer
- ◆ Meal Train (cooking meals for those in need)
- ◆ Health/Wellness
- ◆ Transportation (providing members a ride to church as needed)
- ◆ Prayer Shawl (creating prayer shawls for members/friends as needed)
- ◆ Handy Helpers (completing small household tasks for members)

We'd love to have you help us care for our church family.

Respectfully Submitted,
Judi Privitt
Membership & Care
Ministry Team Chair



Nurture & Education Ministry Team

NURTURE/EDUCATION SHINE BRIGHT

“SHINE BRIGHT” on Sundays!

- Adult Bible Study– 9:00–10:00 a.m. (upstairs in Education Wing, last room on the left). Meets weekly.
- Sunday School– 9:00–10:00 a.m., ages 3–12th grade. Meets weekly. **WE’LL TAKE CARE OF BREAKFAST!** So much fun planned for our kiddos and youth! Ages 3–5th grade meet upstairs in Education Wing, grades 6–12 meet downstairs in Youth Lounge.

Our Kids **NEED YOU**

- Sunday School Teachers– 3 age groups: preK–2nd grade, 3rd–5th grade, 6th–12th; help as much as you’d like or as your availability allows (we’ll show you the ropes!)
- Sunday School Greeters/Floaters
- Youth Group Leaders– the more the merrier!



Scan QR Code to sign up or contact

Lena Muench:
cfg323@yahoo.com,
call/text 573-881-2571

IT’S SONIC SUNDAY TIME.

AND WE’RE PAYING!!!

YOUTH GRADES 6-12

SEND US YOUR DRINK/SLUSHIE/SHAKE ORDER
EACH SATURDAY NO LATER THAN 5:00 P.M.
TEXT LENA: 573-881-2571.

WE’LL HAVE IT FOR YOU AT SUNDAY SCHOOL
THE NEXT MORNING (9:00 A.M.).

FRIENDS (AND THEIR ORDERS)
ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!!!



Outreach & Advocacy Ministry Team



Wow! Alpha Hart Lewis Elementary (AHL) is rockin' and rollin' this school year! Pastor Rick, Gail Marriott, and I were volunteers at AHL's Good Dads program on September 17 and we had 71 attendees! They talked together as families and worked on creating family flags as their project. It was quite a success with all breakfast food/drink gone.

The next Good Dads event is Wednesday October 22 at 7:00 a.m., and we will need CUCC volunteers. The next AHL PTA meeting is October 8 and we want to provide CUCC volunteers to babysit so the parents can be involved in their meeting. Also, the AVID Academy at AHL is Friday October 24 at 8:30 a.m. where the students talk about what they want to be when they grow up, and CUCC members are welcome to attend and support. AHL is having its Trunk or Treat event at school on Thursday October 30 from 4:30-6:00 p.m. and CUCC is invited to provide a "trunk with treats." CUCC will be doing a 5th Grade Snacks drive during September 28 through October 12, so look for the cart in the Gathering area (non-perishable snacks like Goldfish, pretzels, Cheez-its, granola bars, etc.). And on Wednesday October 22 at 4:00 p.m., CUCC members are invited to AHL to be presented with our full Partner in Education (PIE) certification (we were previously a Partnership Friend). Our PIE relationship with AHL is very special! Thank you, CUCC members, for being so supportive of our public schools and youth education. Any questions or for more information, just ask Pastor Rick or Llona Weiss.



The September 15 meal at Loaves & Fishes consisted of chicken & rice casserole, green beans, and a variety of desserts that were extra from the funeral luncheon for Alice Moon. In addition to that, we served spaghetti, lettuce salad (provided by Patty Beeson), bread, and lots of other yummy desserts. Jessica Jenks made and provided the peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. Donations of brownies were made by Connie Loveless, Jo Ellen Grace, Jolene Hackman, Jolene Kirchhoff, Brenda Muench, and Pastor Rick. Servers for the evening were Doug & Judi Privitt, Tom & Mary Lorber-Solt, Jo Ellen Grace, Patty Beeson, Wendy Vandegriffe, and Jim Loveless. We served approximately 150 servings. THANK YOU to everyone who helped in any way!

Electric lighting permeates our outdoor spaces at night. The resulting light pollution disrupts wildlife, impacts human health, wastes money and energy, contributes to climate change, and blocks our view of the universe. The good news is that we can use lighting more responsibly and have all its safety benefits without disrupting the natural world.

Many animals have evolved over time to be nocturnal. They can't immediately adapt to light pollution and suffer as a result. Artificial lighting can cause impaired vision, temporary blindness and disorientation, and drive them away from their habitat and food. Some examples include bats, foxes, owls, deer, cougars, raccoons, and many insects.

Ironically, LED lights tend to be brighter, whiter and scatter their light further. They are more energy efficient so people often install more (or more powerful) lights. How can we minimize the impact of our lighting on wildlife and other humans? Here are some tips from the Missouri Department of Conservation.

- ♦ Use light only when and where needed.
- ♦ Reduce light intensity by reducing lumen levels—saves money and reduces glare
- ♦ Use lights with an amber or yellow tone, between 2200K and 2700K (Kelvin)
- ♦ Ensure new outdoor light fixtures are fully shielded, so all light is directed downward
- ♦ Where possible, use motion sensors, timers and dimmers to save money and reduce unintended impacts.

To learn more about this important issue, see the Missouri Conservationist, Sept. 2025 issue at <https://mdc.mo.gov/magazines/missouri-conservationist/2025-09/dark-skies> or visit <https://darksky.org/>



Outreach & Advocacy Ministry Team

Ever wonder how the Food Bank can afford to feed so many people? Well, they receive donated food from individuals and corporations and purchase food in bulk quantities. And (most importantly) they use volunteer labor to package it in household-size portions. That's where we come in!

Working on the CUCC Food Bank team is fun and satisfying. It's a way to do good in the world while enjoying the satisfaction of shared work and conversation. Just ask any of our August cereal-packaging crew: Ted and Mona Dachroeden, Rita Grace, Llona Weiss, Mahree Skala, and Troy, Emma & Olivia Leewright (from Scout Troop #4475).



Our next scheduled shift is on Tuesday, October 28, 5:30-7:30 p.m. To sign up, [CLICK HERE](#) or contact Mahree Skala.

SOLARIZE COLUMBIA UPDATE

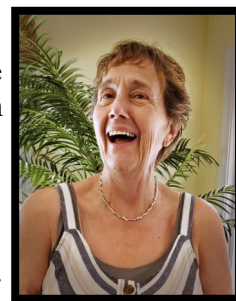
Exploration of the potential for "solarizing" CUCC continues. We received our free site analysis and estimate of the potential costs and savings, which has been reviewed by Pastor Rick and an ad hoc committee of the Council (Jerry Kiesling, Edie Diel, Christine Staelens, Ted Dachroeden, and Mahree Skala). We generated a list of questions and participated in a webinar about commercial solar installations on September 30. We'll keep you informed as we get more information, and we're happy to answer any questions you may have. If you have any questions, talk to [Mahree Skala](#).

Worship & Music Ministry Team

Welcome Fall! This year I'm especially glad to say farewell to summer. The Bells arrived at Malmark and are being repaired. We should see them in time for the holidays. The EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques) class at the church was a success. I think everyone who attended came away with something. Thanks to all who joined us in pursuing more ways to ease our stress levels.

The first week of questionnaires about the summer service schedule reflected a preference for the 10:30 a.m. service. I thought it would be closer. We'll be polling members in church 9/21 & 9/28, and if you are an online member, please email the church if you have a preference. Our next Music & Worship Ministry Team meeting is October 23 at 6:30 p.m. and all are welcome to join us in the fun and fellowship as we do God's work.

Respectfully Submitted,
Edie Diel,
Worship & Music
Ministry Team Chair



WELCOME TO QUORUS!

Columbia United Church of Christ is pleased to be in partnership with [Quorus, the LGBTQIAA Choral ensemble of Columbia!](#)

Quorus uses our facility for rehearsals, and we will the opportunity to work with them as they schedule performances around the area. We are also always thrilled to have Quorus join us for worship, praising God with their inclusive repertoire.

Quorus would love to have CUCC members join their choir! To learn more about Quorus, [CLICK HERE](#).



Scouting America

Troop 4475 had glorious weather for their first campout of the season. The Scouts camped at Onondaga Cave State Park in the special use area on September 5-7, 2025. Scouts enjoyed a guided tour of the cave, saw a few bats, and attended a naturist presentation on the American Black Bear. Did you know that Missouri has 7,301 caves? The only state with more is Tennessee with 10,385. Other activities on this campout included a nature walk and fishing in the Meramec River. One of the highlights of this campout was homemade funnel cakes. The Scouts got to customize their own. Delicious!



On September 12-14, our Order of the Arrow members attended the fall conclave at our council camp, Lake of the Ozark Scout Reservation. We had three scouts and one adult complete their ordeal. One additional scout and adult attended to offer their cheerful service.



Troop 708 had a Survivor themed campout earlier this month. Scouts were challenged to build emergency shelters to withstand a simulated storm, build a fire with limited resources, and brainstorm ways to signal for help. We also had a guest speaker from the popular show "The Hunting Public" that spoke to the scouts about responsible hunting practices and techniques.



Pack 5183 had its first campout of the year this past weekend. In honor of "National Talk Like a Pirate Day" the kids had lots of fun completing pirate themed activities including making eye patches and building their very own boats! The boats will be used later in the year as part of our annual Raingutter Regatta event where the kids will compete for best looking and fastest Regattas.



HALLOWEEN



Potluck



OCT 26 12:00 PM

Columbia United Church of Christ

Join us for a family friendly spooky potluck! Come to worship dressed up in your costume and stay after for bingo and food. Bring your favorite dishes to share with others and celebrate the late fall holiday.



THANK YOU!

Thank you for your donation to the United Church of Christ. Your gift of \$1,050.00 was received on April 24, 2025 for the Refugee Assistance program.

You are part of the United Church of Christ, uniting with us to give everyone a voice and working with the Holy Spirit toward a just world for all. As you stand with us, we confront the injustices of our day.

We offer extravagant welcome and radical hospitality to a world seeking lives of deeper meaning and greater value. Our churches are powerful in witness to Christ's love for all people.

Our witness matters in the world, and your witness matters in this world. With your generous gift, we can do this work.



Sincerely,
Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson
General Minister and President



Many persons have received amputations from causes such as landmine explosions, cancer, earthquakes, etc. They need your assistance with mobility. Thank you for your check for \$894.00.

You are helping more persons like this man in Kenya who had both lower legs amputated. You are also assisting our mission in sending another shipping container of Mobility Carts. The cost of shipping a container from our cart center to a port in Kenya is about \$7,000 or about \$35 per cart.

Thank you, Columbia United Church of Christ, for your generous partnership since 2006!



Providing independence,
Janet Epperson, Volunteer

We are filled with gratitude for your church's generosity in qualify as a **5 for 5 Church** in 2024! Your gifts to ***Our Church's Wider Mission, One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen the Church, Neighbors in Need, and The Christmas Fund*** are more than financial contributions, they are acts of love, compassion, and faith.

We know that every offering represents the prayers, commitment, and faithfulness of your church family. Together, we are building a stronger church, serving those in need, and showing the world what it means to be the United Church of Christ.

Thank you for making mission and ministry a priority.

Kristin Paul,
MMSC Communications and Fundraising Specialist

International Missions

CUCC IS WORKING IN LEBANON

In the Sabra and Shatila Refugee Camp, a small, enclosed space serves as a playground for kindergarten children. The Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees (DSPR) in Lebanon operates a kindergarten and school in the Sabra and Shatila Refugee Camp, providing crucial educational services to Palestinian refugee children. Located in Beirut, the school offers a safe and supportive environment where children can receive quality education despite the hardships they face in the camp. DSPR's efforts focus on academic development and emotional and social support, helping children build resilience and hope for the future. MECC-DSPR aims to empower young refugees through its programs, fostering a sense of dignity and community amid challenging circumstances.

Through [Global Ministries](#), CUCC is a partner in mission with over 200 mission partners around the world, including MECC and DSPR. Keep Global Ministries and the people of Lebanon in your prayers this month as they do God's work on our behalf!



THE UNHEARD VOICE– WOMEN'S CONFERENCE IN LEBANON

by Emma Perry, *Global Ministries Missions Intern*; originally published 5/8/25 at www.globalministries.org

On April 3-5, 2025, women from Syria, Lebanon, Ukraine, and Northern Ireland came together to share their stories of faith and perseverance in conflict. The conference, entitled “The Unheard Voice: Women’s Persevering Witness in War,” served as a space for testimony, reflection, and solidarity, offering a powerful witness to the strength and hope found in the face of hardship. Though each woman came from a different background and context, their voices echoed a shared resilience grounded in their faith and communities.

The primary aim of the conference was to build a foundation of understanding and solidarity between women living in conflict-affected regions and to establish a forum for sharing experiences. Women from each region shared through devotionals, panels, plenary, and small groups on various subjects such as reconciliation with the self, God, others, forgiveness and hope, struggles and opportunities for progress. The conversations underscored the imperative to peel back superficial distinctions of geography or language and to grasp the threads which tie each individual together. Herein, the reflections revealed a tapestry of vulnerability and pain, but also one of steadfast strength and dedicated faith.

A second element of the conference was to bring the voices of women to the forefront of the October General Council of the Churches, and especially to World Communion of Reformed Churches 2025, whose main theme is “Persevere in Your Witness.” Though women are often positioned as the backbone of the family, the community, and the church, their voices and experiences are too quickly forgotten by our world. Particularly in times of war, which this conference made clear, women assume extraordinary responsibilities and burdens within the family and the community. In addition to building a network for sharing their experiences and burdens, the conference encouraged women to also share what it means to them to persevere in their witness, however small or large a step.

Reflections and responses in this subject highlighted that despite how deeply personal experiences with this question may be, we are united in this journey through our faith, our commitment to one another, and as witnesses to God’s reconciling work in the world. The outcomes of the conference will be shared at the 2025 General Council, and future plans for a follow-up conference are in the planning stage.



On the Church Calendar in October

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
5 9:00 a.m. - Faith Education 10:00 a.m. - Fellowship 10:30 a.m. - Worship 12:00 p.m. - Mid-MO Pridfest	6 7:00 p.m - Scouting America	7 10:00 a.m. - Quilters 10:30 a.m. - Staff Meeting 5:30 p.m. - Team Earth 6:30 p.m. - Outreach & Advocacy Ministry Team	1 7:00 p.m. - Celebration Singers 7:00 p.m. - Confirmation Class	2 6:30 p.m. - Troop 4475	3	4 12:00 p.m. - Mid-MO Pridfest
12 9:00 a.m. - Faith Education 10:00 a.m. - Fellowship 10:30 a.m. - Worship	13 7:00 p.m - Scouting America	14 10:00 a.m. - Quilters 10:30 a.m. - Staff Meeting 6:30 p.m. - Troop 708 Meeting	15 7:00 p.m. - Celebration Singers 7:00 p.m. - Confirmation Class	16 5:30 p.m. - Finance & Stewardship Ministry Team	17	18 CONFERENCE ANNUAL GATHERING
19 9:00 a.m. - Faith Education 10:00 a.m. - Fellowship 10:30 a.m. - Worship 11:00 a.m. - Fellowship Hall Private Event	20 4:30 p.m. - Loaves & Fishes 7:00 p.m - Scouting America	21 10:00 a.m. - Quilters 10:30 a.m. - Staff Meeting 1:00 p.m. - Pause to Color 6:30 p.m. - Council Meeting	22 7:00 a.m.- Good Dads at AHL 4:00 p.m. - PIE Presentation at AHL 7:00 p.m. - Celebration Singers	23	24	25 9:00 a.m. - Quilts of Valor Craft & Bake Sale 11:30 a.m. - Down Syndrome Walk at Stankowski Field
26 9:00 a.m. - Faith Education 10:00 a.m. - Fellowship 10:30 a.m. - Worship 11:30 a.m. - Budget Meeting 12:00 p.m. - Halloween Potluck	27 7:00 p.m. - Scouting America	28 10:00 a.m. - Quilters 10:30 a.m. - Staff Meeting 5:30 p.m. - Food Bank	29 7:00 p.m. - Celebration Singers	30 4:00 p.m. - Trunk or Treat at AHL	31	

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.



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Interested in Church Membership?

If you are interested in joining,
please contact **Rev. Rick Oberle**.
rick@columbiaucc.com

**Become
Part of
Our
Church
Family**

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.

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!