

The Communicator

August 2025

From the Pastor's Keyboard . . .

“From the President”

General Synod, the United Church of Christ general meeting of delegates, representatives, and visitors from all across the world, took place in Kansas City, MO July 11-15. There were many business items discussed; but there were also opportunities for inspirational worship, educational forums, and spiritual growth. There were 36 different workshops on topics on spiritual formation, strengthening the church, leadership development, climate action, and decolonization. The keynote speaker was Jennifer Butler, a faith-based activist and author who spoke about how to bring faith into practice in daily life. Sunday brought a vibrant worship service, with diverse faith leaders from all across the world bringing God's wisdom to the gathered community in wonderful ways, glorifying God in the process.

Other commitments kept me from attending in person, but I did try to keep up with the proceedings by watching the livestream and videos that were presented. One video that really spoke to me was the “State of the Church” address given by the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ— the Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson. In this address, she talked about the numerical decline of all mainline protestant denominations, including the United Church of Christ, and the anxiety this produces.

As she names the decline of mainline Christianity, she offers a bit of hope. She asked the gathered crowd, “*How do we begin to talk about the things we are doing together, rather than counting the empty seats on Sunday mornings and thinking that is a measure of the vitality of who we are?*” She goes on to say, “*Our attention to the life of the church has to be disinvested from the ABCs that continue to distract us- Attendance, Buildings and Cash. These ABC distract us from the ways in which our congregations are showing up in the world in meaningful ways.*”

These are powerful words. I agree with them to an extent. We cannot *simply ignore* the ABCs of the church; they are factors of importance. ***But her point is not that we should ignore the numbers; her point is that the church should not let the ABCs deflate us and distract us from all the good the church is doing.*** Yes, the UCC is in decline, like every other denomination; but the good, prophetic work that is being done by our denomination to lift up Jesus Christ and glorify God is monumental. *We may not be big and powerful; but we are causing good trouble.* She then went on to detail some of the amazing work the UCC is doing.

Let's bring that message home to CUCC. While we don't want to ignore the ABCs of the church, we also don't want to let them distract us from the good work we are doing. Over the past few years, CUCC has made an amazing impact in God's world, and has brought a beacon of hope to the Columbia Community, just by being us. Our Vacation Bible Schools are legendary, our work with PrideFests, the annual MLK Day celebration, and Earth Day festivals are groundbreaking, and our musical reputation is stellar. Who else in Columbia can say that they host four very active Scouting America units, a queer choral ensemble, **and** the annual “Quilts for Valor” festival? Not to mention our Little One's Day Out Preschool, with its reputation for being one of the best preschool offerings in Columbia. We do amazing ministry here at CUCC, and we have a reputation in Columbia as being an amazing church. Yes, we do need to grow. We can't keep doing ministry the way we have been without concerning ourselves with the ABCs. ***But the trick is, not letting the ABCs get us depressed and distract us from doing the work we do so well.*** We are all only human; and worrying about the ABCs is a very human thing to do.

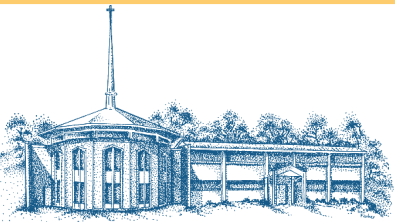


But- We are called to be something more than merely human; we are also called to be divine. We are all divine reflections of God's presence in the world, and 21st century incarnations of the wisdom of Jesus Christ; and as divine beings, we are called to put aside the human baggage that distracts us from the work of the church. As GMP Thompson said, “*We may not be big and powerful; but we are causing good trouble.*”

Churches that work together in unity despite the challenges of the ABCs grow and thrive; churches that let the ABCs divide them spend so much time worrying that they die out. Though we must not disregard the challenges of the ABCs, we must keep doing the work of Jesus Christ, and not let these challenges cause factors of division to overwhelm us.

We are beacons of light, vessels of hope, heralds of God's joy. Let us embrace that identity as we celebrate all the challenges of community!

-Pastor Rick



News & Updates

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

Steven Jannetti
Organist/Accompanist

Alexandra Roper
Office Administrator

Sara Koenig
Director, Little One's Day Out

Caleb Berry
Custodian

Summer Sunday Schedule:

9:00 a.m. Fellowship Time
9:30 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



2025 FESTIVAL OF SHARING

As a cooperative response to hunger, poverty, and justice in Missouri and beyond, the Festival of Sharing hopes to support projects and programs that help neighbors experience healthy and full lives. Their efforts include: providing funding, resources, and goods; sharing information on agency efforts in Missouri; and praying for the collective work of people of faith. This year, CUCC's focus is "Missouri Reading and Writing Packs." Beginning August 3, lists of needed items along with gallon size zipper storage bags will be available in the Gathering Area. Filled bags need to be returned by August 24. The cost of filling a bag is approximately \$15. Each bag will include six new pencils with erasers, one box of 10 markers (10 only,) one pair of child size metal scissors, one 12" ruler, two 70 or 80 page spiral or tape bound notebooks, one zipper pencil holder, four folders with pockets, one large eraser, and two medium point ink pens. The need is great. In 2024, over 2,100 packs were requested, with 1,300 shared. With back to school sales going on, this is a good time to fill a bag!

PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The Pastoral Relations Committee met on June 23 to review feedback from the annual Pastoral Evaluation Survey. These were completed by Council members and provide Pastor Rick an opportunity to reflect on his strengths and develop ideas for change or progress. As they do each year, the results led to rich discussion and goal-setting.

We would like to thank Pat Forward for serving on the Pastoral Relations committee for the past three years. Sue Ann Shaefer has joined the committee as of June to replace Pat, and Mark Duncan was appointed by the Council in July to fill the unexpired term of Mike Pierson. We will continue to meet throughout the year to support the important relationship between Pastor Rick and the congregation.

SUNDAY MORNING SAFETY

For the safety and security of our church, and the people present, a Church Council member is available in the Gathering Area each Sunday during worship. The Council Steward is 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.

The Nurture & Education Ministry Team has been talking to our children and youth 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 guidelines.

Moderator's Moment

I recently watched a TED Talk about a professor who would welcome students on their first day. He told about how a young lady stood in line to get things for her first day, and she was nervous, had apprehensions about her success and fit for college. He welcomed her as he always did and encouraged her. Behind her stood a young man who was noticing this young lady. The professor had a lollipop and he gave it to the young man and told him to give it to the young lady, hoping this would reduce her anxiety. Three years later, he received a wedding invitation and he reached out to the couple. He didn't know why he was being invited. The young man told him he was the one in line that he gave the lollipop to. The two started dating and now were getting married. He called this a lollipop moment: A moment in time when he did something for someone else and had no idea of its positive impact.

I often think about what lollipop moments we have as Christians. We may never know. It could just be showing up in the same place with a warm smile and accepting hug, bringing your signature dish to a church event, or making sure the plants at church get watered so the space is inviting.

We never know what impact we are making by coming together in worship and play through our church. Sometimes we do things we know make an impact, but sometimes seeing someone in church every week doing the little things they do in Christ's love can make just as much of an impact. I appreciate each thing you do for each other to make our church a great place to be. We may never know what kind of impact it is making.

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>kristinnoelveteto@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 August

Date	Greeter	Usher	Worship Leader	Tech Booth
08/03	Donna Marsh	Brenda Muench John Muench	Judi Privitt	Adam Veteto
08/10		Jerry Kiesling Keith Birkes	Tricia Soncasie	Ted Dachroeden
08/17		Pat Forward Christine Staelens	Ashley Ramirez	Josh Muench
08/24		Jane Duncan Mark Duncan	Jim Loveless	Lorry Dreier Doug Privitt
08/31		Llona Weiss Phillip Neale	Pat Forward	Brent Marcks

August Birthdays

Lauren Lippincott - 8/01	Kelsey Devenney - 08/02	Von Walker - 08/02
Chuck Lasley - 08/03	Kim Major - 08/04	Judi Privitt - 08/04
Diane Maxwell - 08/05	George Zimny - 08/07	Valerie Jannetti - 08/11
Evelyn Grace - 08/12	Jerry Kiesling - 08/14	David Forward Jr. - 08/16
Joe Remeika - 08/17	Sharon Crousore - 08/18	Chelsey Markway - 08/19
Everleigh Oberle - 08/21	Carol Stoll - 08/26	Sam Duncan - 08/26
Jolene Kirchhoff - 08/27	Troy Bintlage - 08/27	Adriana Nieman - 08/28
Andie Rapp - 08/29	Anita Sanderson - 08/29	Laurie Frew - 08/29
Elias Walker - 08/30	Harry Besleme - 08/31	Becky Weston - 08/31

Columbia UCC Council Minutes

The newly elected Columbia UCC Church Council gathered together in June for their first time; but we did not have an official meeting, so there are no official minutes. Our time together was spent sharing a meal, getting to know each other, and going over the official documents of the church. We played “table topics,” a question and answer game led by Pastor Rick, designed to share a bit about each other to build our community. We discussed the role and duties of a Council member, the financial responsibilities of our positions, and talked a bit about our strategic plan. Pastor Rick also introduced our new book study, “Not Your Parents Offering Plate.”

We look forward to another great year of service to the church!

VOLUNTARY ACTION CENTER SPOTLIGHT



“Pat” called our office needing a new pair of eyeglasses. Simple request, right? But when you're living on a fixed income and working a few hours a week to make ends meet, something as basic as replacing your glasses can feel out of reach.

Pat lives alone and simply. He wasn't asking for much, just the ability to see again. He's the kind of person who refuses to let life's limitations define him. He keeps showing up, doing what he can, and pushing past what's been put in his way. Pat called that day with a happy heart. He cracked jokes, shared stories, and somehow managed to lift *our spirits* while we were trying to lift his.

It happens more often than you'd think; the people we serve end up serving us. And every time, we're reminded that we really are better together.

Because of you, we were able to say yes. Yes to a free eye exam. Yes to a brand-new pair of glasses. Yes, to food for his pantry. Yes, to gas in his tank. Yes to household essentials that made life feel a little more manageable. Pat left our office with more than clear vision; he left with hope and was reminded that he's not alone. “What a relief to find VAC,” he said. “You've helped me more than I can even explain.”

This is what your support looks like in real life: every dollar becomes a name, every service connects to a story. Your giving is transformed into tangible acts of love that spark hope in the hearts of people right here in Boone County. If you ever wonder whether your giving matters, remember Pat. Because of you, he's got what he needs to keep going.



PRIDE CONTINUES - LOCAL PRIDEFEST INFO

MARSHALL PRIDE— The date is set for September 6! We will be there giving out glitter blessings and affirming merchandise! Watch for more information and the opportunity to sign up and help!

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. Watch Friday emails in late August and September (and the September Communicator) for links to sign up for our CUCC booth, or talk to [Ashley Ramirez](#).



Finance & Stewardship Ministry Team

Financial Update

	Actual	Budget	Over/(Under)
June Income	\$30,885.55	\$36,504.00	(-\$5,618.45)
June Expenses	\$43,058.59	\$34,404.00	\$8,654.59
YTD Income	\$135,760.94	\$218,915.00	(-\$83,154.06)
YTD Expenses	\$227,664.229	\$209,683.00	\$17,981.29
Surplus/(Deficit)	(-\$91,903.35)	\$9,232.00	(-\$101,135.35)
June Joyful Giving	\$29,967.05	35,437.00	(-\$5,469.95)
YTD Joyful Giving	\$131,560.44	\$210,516.00	(-\$78,955.56)

Worship Attendance

06/01	96
06/08	118
06/15	83
06/22	71
06/29	83

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.

STEWARDSHIP THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is a key part in expanding our church's presence and outreach in the modern era. Even if you rarely use social media, like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc. it is important to interact with social media posts made by Columbia UCC. You might be thinking to yourself "social media doesn't do much for me, why is it so important to do this?" It is important because sharing our social media posts means more people get to learn about CUCC and will be more inclined to join!

So, how does it work? Social media uses algorithms to determine what to show you. You often see things from groups, pages, or people you follow. This is direct content. When you like, comment, save, or share a post, this creates "engagement" and can make the post pop up on other peoples feeds.

When you "like" a post it has a small chance of popping up on a friends feed. "Liking" is a good start, but does very little for the algorithm. Commenting on a post is even better. Commenting on our posts will help boost our post to other people. These can be as simple as "wonderful service today" or "beautiful photo" or you can even put your favorite emojis! This tells the algorithm "this is an interesting post and more people would probably want to see it."

But "sharing" our posts are by far the best thing you can do! "Sharing" a post on your page allows others to directly see our content. People who may not follow our page are then able to see what we have going on without having to go and find our page - you bring it to them! This allows new people to discover who we are and our mission to spread the Good News. They might even end up coming to church the more they see our wonderful congregation and ministry teams at work.

Inclusion and Affirmation Ministry Team



“Happy Pride!” That was the joyful greeting heard over and over at Ashland Pride on July 12. It was a beautiful day, and many people lit up with beautiful smiles when Pastor Rick offered them a glitter blessing...there were even a few happy tears of those overcome with emotion at being told they are beloved children of God.

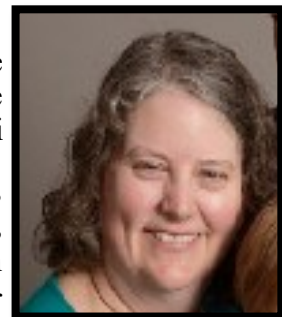
We met folks who live in Columbia, folks who live in Jeff City, folks who live in one town but work in the other, even someone from California. People came from all over to celebrate Pride! Some had seen or heard of our church, some just knew us as “the pop socket people” and were excited to get new pop sockets for their phones with the ONA rainbow comma logo. Others had no idea who we were, and some even needed clarification that the United Church of Christ is not the same thing as the Church of Christ. But we also saw friends, neighbors, Quorus members, and others familiar with our church. You may recognize Mason Aid, pictured here getting a glitter blessing, who is very familiar with CUCC because they helped to educate us about pronouns during our ONA process!



The CUCC members who helped staff the booth had a great time talking to people about our church. Quite a few people seemed interested and even grabbed a brochure to make sure they had all our information. Pride is also a great opportunity to network with other organizations doing good work in the community; our booth was right in between the Center Project booth and the Daniel Boone Regional Library booth. We got to talk to Vera Elwood, who's running for city council in Ward 2, and to members of We Stand United Missouri, who have organized some of the recent political rallies in Jefferson City.

If you're feeling sad that you missed this opportunity, never fear! We have two more opportunities for joyful outreach coming up this fall. CUCC will staff a booth at the PrideFest in Marshall on September 6; then the 25th Anniversary Mid-Missouri PrideFest right here in Columbia will be on October 4 and 5. There's even a parade on October 5— anyone interested in being in a Pride parade? If so, please talk to any member of the Inclusion & Affirmation Ministry Team!

Respectfully Submitted,
Tricia Price,
Inclusion & Affirmation
Ministry Team Member



NEW NAMETAGS

The Inclusion & Affirmation and Membership & Care Ministry Teams are working together to bring us new name tags! We are also using this opportunity to update info in our church membership database.

Our new nametags were distributed in church on June 29, for everyone who filled out an information update form. If you did not receive a nametag, or you need your nametag changed in any way, fill out an update form! There are forms available in the Sanctuary, as well as online. Please fill out a paper form in the rear of the Sanctuary and drop it in the wicker basket; or [CLICK HERE](#) to do it online

LODO Ministry Team

Hello, what an exciting summer it has been! We are excited to announce that we have filled all our vacant openings! We have some wonderful teachers and aides joining our LODO family for the 2025-2026 school year: Lori, Leia, Jenna, and Laura. We will be showcasing our talented staff as the year continues and hope to give you a glance at what our amazing ministry is doing for the children of our community! We are looking forward to the coming school year and would like to let members know that we are still enrolling students two and up for the school year. If you know a family that is looking to break the mold of full-time child care have them reach out to me at LODO.Sara.Koenig@gmail.com.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sara Koenig,
LODO Director



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

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

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

Contact us for information, openings, to schedule a tour, or to enroll!

lodo.sara.koenig@gmail.com
573-445-2661

Upcoming Dates:

August 1: Enrollment packets sent out

August 21: Meet the Teacher Night

August 25: First Day of 2025-2026
School year

Activities to Prepare for Back to School

Read a themed book

Pack a backpack together

Have a classroom material scavenger hunt

Play a "get to know me" game

Use stickers to make their name

Draw their favorite things

Encourage them to play "teacher"

Draw a self or family portrait

Use building blocks to build shapes

Practice choosing their outfit



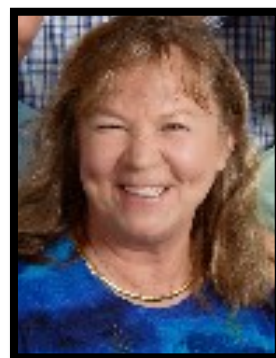
Fellowship & Hospitality Ministry Team

Greetings! Hoping this finds everyone keeping cool in these hot, dog days of summer. It never ceases to amaze me how each winter/spring I look forward to the wonders of summer: tomatoes, blackberries, corn on the cob, etc. But by August, I'm done and looking forward to the cool days of fall: bonfires, apple butter, and my favorite sweaters. Our Ministry team is already planning our back to (Sunday) school Rally Day, on September 7- Fellowship and Hospitality team will provide the meat, and we will have a carry in potluck for all the sides. So get your creative cookbooks out, and embrace a good chance to use up the remnants of your garden. October will provide the perfect time for a Halloween Potluck, which will include costume contests, for both adults and youth, games, and treats- mark your calendars for October 26. So relax this month, stay cool, sip on your lemonade, and look forward to our fall activities.

And always.... Bee safe, bee loved, bee healthy, and bee yourself.

(P.S. Our next Ministry team meeting will be September 8 at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall, everyone is welcome!)

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Lorber
Fellowship and Hospitality
Ministry Team Chair



**TROOP 4475, TROOP 708 AND PACK 5183
INVITE YOU TO CELEBRATE WITH US!**

BACK TO SCHOOL BBQ

COLUMBIA UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
3201 INTERSTE 70 DR NW

MONDAY AUGUST 18TH

ARRIVE AT 530PM, DINNER 6PM



Outreach & Advocacy Ministry Team

The July 21 meal at Loaves and Fishes consisted of spaghetti, chicken alfredo, salad, bread, and brownies as well as cookies. Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches were made and provided by Jessica Jenks. Servers for the evening were Tom & Mary Lorber, Debby (Mary's sister), Jim Loveless, Jessica Jenks, Anne Heine, Wendy Vandegriffe, and Tim & Tricia Soncasie. There were approximately 155 servings.



Many of us are asking “What can I do?” in light of the growing number of people who can’t afford the basics of life. Well, one great answer is “I can help feed hungry people” right here! Our volunteer labor is what makes it possible for the Food Bank to help meet this need in our local area.

CUCC’s regular shift will resume on August 26 at 5:30 p.m. Come be a part of the safety net while enjoying conversation and collaboration with CUCC folks and other community members. Sign up [HERE](#) or contact Mahree Skala at skalamahree@yahoo.com.



Team Earth has led CUCC to learn how we can reduce our individual and collective impact on God’s Creation. Lowering our electric bills and carbon emissions by generating our own solar power is one potential way to do that, and we have a unique, time-limited opportunity to explore that possibility.

The City of Columbia and Boone Electric Cooperative are offering a new initiative called Solarize Columbia. It’s designed to make it easier and cheaper to install solar panels to power homes, commercial buildings, and nonprofits- including churches. Key features are group discount pricing, streamlined installation, and permitting processes, and potential city rebates and loans.

The best news is that they will provide a free onsite analysis to help potential customers determine whether to proceed with solar installation. The CUCC Council voted in July to pursue this free evaluation process and we have signed up for it. Once the results are in, there will be further discussion of the possibilities.

For more information, see <https://www.solarcrowdsource.com/campaign/solarize-columbia/>. If you’re interested in installing solar panels at home you may want to sign up for the free evaluation, available to all customers of Columbia City Water & Light and Boone Electric Cooperative.

In other news, the City of Columbia has given an update on recycling! Effective immediately, the City of Columbia's Solid Waste utility will begin collecting some recyclable materials under new guidelines. Under these guidelines, the City will not be recycling glass or certain plastics.

The City asks customers to use their blue recycling bags for the following materials: plastic bottles, plastic containers, aluminum beverage cans, metal food cans. Material that should **NOT** be placed in blue recycling bags at this time: glass bottles, glass jars, yogurt cups, clamshell produce containers, dairy product tubs, black plastics or takeout containers, Styrofoam containers, packaging material, plastic bags, trash. Mixed fibers, including cardboard and paper can still be bundled and left on the curb for collection. Fibers should **NOT** be in the blue recycling bags.

Nurture & Education Ministry Team

Nurture & Ed



THANK YOU to our CUCC Family for making VBS 2025 a huge success! **Every single** volunteer, financial or item donation, item lent to us, Joyful Giving contribution, and prayer offered made this possible. We once again spread God's message of unconditional love for all to so many Columbia Youth- **SO awesome!**

SHINE BRIGHT



RALLY DAY- Sunday, September 7

- Join us as we return to weekly Christian Education for all ages and "SHINE BRIGHT" this year!
- 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.
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.

Greeters/Floaters and Leaders needed for Sunday School. Please contact Lena Muench (573-881-2571, cfg323@yahoo.com) if interested in learning more!

Membership and Care Ministry Team

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

On Sunday, July 20, we welcomed seven new members into the life of this church! Join us in welcoming our new members; and be sure to wear your nametags so we can all get to know each other better! Here are our new members, and a brief bio about each of them:



Welcome to **Rev. Lauren and Jesse Lippincott!** They moved here from Durham, NC, where Lauren served a local congregation. She is now the Children's Hospital Chaplain at Mizzou, where she provides spiritual care to the pediatric population and families. Jesse works remotely as a software engineer for a financial tech company out of NYC. They have two cats, Nala and Sailor, and two dogs, both schnauzers, Valley and Dahlia! Jesse enjoys woodworking and doing projects around the house; Lauren loves to read, cook, and host people in their home. Their favorite vacation destination is St. Augustine, Florida.

Welcome to **Lyn Eggemeyer!** She came to CUCC through Marsha Crousore; she is a Direct Support Professional who works with Marsha every weekend. Lyn grew up in Union, MO, attending Zion UCC and Camp MoVal! She and Pastor Rick were campers together many years ago! Lyn is married to Scott, and they live in Mt. Pleasant, MO. Her kids are all grown. Lyn loves listening to blues music, and loves to cook. She says that she is shy by nature, and does not often approach others, but loves to talk when others approach her. She loves to make new friends and is enjoying the new friends she has made at CUCC!



Welcome to **Alan and Marsha Posz!** They have been attending CUCC for several months now, and feel they have found a new home! They live just down the street, and were attracted to CUCC by our inclusive signage. Marsha grew up in Rosebud, MO. She is working on her Master of Library Science degree, and plans to begin a new career in academic librarianship. Her parents still live on the family farm, which has been in their family since 1901. She loves to knit, do paper crafting, write, read, and care for animals. Alan works for Job Point, coordinating services for clients. He loves to barbecue, and calls himself a "movie geek"- especially cheesy comedies. He loves video games and reading Dean R. Koontz books. They own five cats and one beagle.

Welcome to **Kieran Williams and Shayne Armstrong!** Kieran grew up at this church; Yvonne Williams is his mother. Kieran has always been a part of this community, but decided to make membership official when Shayne chose to join. Shayne has been attending CUCC for several months now, and feels that this is his home. Shayne grew up in the Midway area. Shayne and Kieran have literally known each other all of their lives; their mothers have been good friends since they were children. (Pictured with Augie, Kieran's brother.)



Worship & Music Ministry Team

Having retired from my previous career as a choral director and being out of the “game” going on 3 years, I’m finding myself reinvigorated by the challenges of picking anthems and preparing for the worship year ahead. The choice of anthem and special music, I feel, is just as important to the worship experience as any other aspect (scriptures, sermon theme, etc.) I enjoy puzzles, and selecting the right anthem to go with the pre-selected scriptures, hymns, and sermon themes has the same cathartic feeling of completing a challenging word or logic puzzle. My hope always is that your response to the anthem, whether as a singer or listener is equally as satisfying musically and spiritually.

In looking forward to the year ahead, I wanted to let you know of some specific dates that we have on the calendar in the music life of CUCC.

August 20 (7 p.m.) – First rehearsal for CUCC Celebration Singers (continuing every Wednesday at 7 p.m.)

August 24 (9:30 a.m.) – First worship service performance by Celebration Singers.

Our bells will be receiving a well-deserved/needed time at the “bell spa” starting August 18. We should receive them back mid-late September as shiny, reconditioned, well-tuned instruments. Thus, our bell choir rehearsals will not be re-started until October 2.

Until then, we do have openings for special music several weeks in early August. Please consider sharing your gifts of music in any form with us. Just reach out to me. I will be happy to help you select music and/or coordinate your performance!

In Harmony,
Mike Pierson,
Music Coordinator



MINISTRY TEAM NEWS

Another month has rolled around and we have some news this month! First, a big THANK YOU to the anonymous donor who is generously paying for the bells to be refurbished. The bells are in need of refurbishing and they leave 8/18 for a trip to Malmark Bells. They will be back in time for the fall season.

We have joined with the Membership & Care Committee to present an EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques) class at the church to help people learn tapping. It will be open to all, members as well as the public, and has been scheduled for Thursday, September 18 at 6:00 p.m. I think it’s a great way to help a person grow, emotionally, and spiritually.

We plan to survey the congregation this fall about summer services. Do we want to try leaving the worship time at 10:30 a.m. next summer? All opinions are welcome!

Our next Music & Worship Ministry Team meeting is August 26 at 6:30 p.m. and all are welcome to join us in the fun and fellowship as we do God’s work. Have a great summer, everyone!

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 708 had a great week at Summer Camp with nearly 30 scouts in attendance. A wide range of merit badges were earned as well as multiple rank advancements. 708 scouts also won the water polo tournament for the 4th year running and brought home a 1st place win in the Chess tournament.

"A week of camp life is worth six months of theoretical teaching in the meeting room."

-Lord Baden Powell, Scouting America's founder



Troop 4475 had a great week at summer camp. We had 25 Scouts and 14 adults who camped during Camp Session 5 at Lake of the Ozark Scout Reservation, near Laurie, MO. Many merit badges were earned and several Scouts advanced in rank. Four adults completed the Swimming and Watercraft Rescues course at camp so they can conduct our activities on water and our yearly swim tests. Four different adults completed their Intro to Outdoor Leader Skills training. We even celebrated one Scout's birthday at camp. While the girls competed in all the extra events (water polo, chess, shooting, archery, and pioneering) the troop did not bring home any official awards this year. None the less, it was a successful and fun-packed week! We even took time to get our official troop summer camp portrait!



YOU ARE INVITED TO A BBQ!

Our Scouting America units invite you to a "Back to School BBQ" at the CUCC Shelter House on Monday, August 18 at 5:30 p.m. This is the annual kickoff for the Scouting America program year. There will be food, fun and friends all waiting to greet you! All Scouts and CUCC folks are invited and encouraged to attend. Just bring yourself, and maybe a camp chair, as seating is limited at the Shelter House. We hope to see you on August 18!

THANK YOU!

Thank you for getting a group of volunteers (COMO Mission Experience - St. John UCC of Mascoutah, IL) to the house to prepare meals. The dinner they prepared that night was great, and the freezer meal will be utilized this weekend. The Family Meal Program is a vital component to making our House a "home". I have so much gratitude for those who contribute to the meal program. We sincerely appreciate your help in touching the lives and warming the hearts of those we serve! Every guest expresses genuine thanks for the ability to sit down and enjoy a delicious meal after a stress-filled day. Because of you, our families can focus on what matters most – the health and well-being of their children. You are providing that extra comfort necessary to help them recharge for the next day's challenges.



We couldn't do it without you! Thanks again.

-Alex Hedges

Volunteer Manager of
Ronald McDonald House Charities of Mid-Missouri

Thank you for all the well wishes, cards, and meals. I am getting better. It just continues to be a long, slow recovery process.

-Glenn Deuermeyer

WOW! Because of the generosity of congregations and donors like you, Church World Service has shared thousands of CWS Blankets and Kits during the first half of this year. Your faithfulness and compassion are making a powerful difference. Thank you!



CWS

Church World Service CWS Congregational Team

Gratefully,

Matthew Stevens,

Thank you to all of the families who brought meals to our home for the 'Meal Train' project while Sharon was still in Columbia. Thank you also for the special cards sent to Sharon while she was at Good Shepherd Hospice in Manhattan, KS. Thank you to anyone who sent memorial gifts to Good Shepherd Hospice in memory of Sharon. Thank you to everyone who sent sympathy cards to me, after Sharon passed. Thank you to the Women's Fellowship for the beautiful floral piece on the altar after Sharon passed.

-Jim Elliott

Our sincere thanks to the men and women of the congregation who helped in the arduous work of moving us into our new home. What a wonderful show of Christian love.

-Walter and Patty Schroeder

Please extend out sincere thanks to the members of your church for their generous contribution to our Strong Schools program at Alpha Hart Lewis. We are also beyond grateful for Rick's and Llona's help last year. You are all very much appreciated.



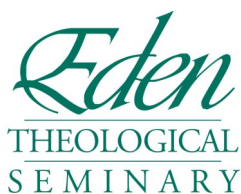
-Ava Summers

Director of
Good Dads Columbia

On behalf of everyone at Eden Theological Seminary, I would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude for your support of the seminary. Your financial contribution to the Annual Fund on 6/17/2025 is incredibly meaningful. It allows us to continue a 175-year tradition of educating and engaging the next generation of spiritual leaders - people who are developing theological imagination and faithful resilience to join God's loving and liberating work in the world.

Thanks to your generosity, we are building communities of learning not only across denominational lines, but across entire faiths. Our developing Network Model is set to help seminarians across the country adapt together to the ever-changing future. We are grateful to have you as a part of our community of supporters, and we are excited to keep you updated on how your donation is being used to further our mission.

Once again, thank you for your kindness and support.



In Gratitude,

Rev. Dr. Mary Schaller Blaufuss Vice President for Advancement

International Missions

CUCC IS WORKING IN MEXICO

The Institute of Intercultural Study and Research (INESIN) is a center dedicated to the education and growth of the people of Chiapas, Mexico. INESIN is a civil society organization that strives to contribute to the construction of peace in Chiapas by promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue in projects on topics such as the prevention of domestic violence, positive conflict transformation, migration, personal spiritual growth, Biblical translation and strengthening communities. INESIN collaborates with local communities, healthcare professionals, and other organizations to design evidence-based solutions that enhance the well-being of families and communities across Mexico. Through its work, INESIN strives to reduce disparities and contribute to the overall development of a healthier population.

Through Global Ministries, CUCC is a partner in mission with over 200 mission partners around the world, including INESIN. Keep Global Ministries, INESIN, and the people of Chiapas in your prayers this month as they do God's work



ESPERANZA IN CHIAPAS

Working with The Institute for Intercultural Studies and Research in San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico, the word "Esperanza" comes up frequently in workshops and presentations.

"Esperanza" in Spanish means "Hope."

In a culture where a history of oppression from multiple sources has fractured the very idea of community, The Institute of Intercultural Studies and Research (INESIN), one of our Global Missions Partners, is a beacon of hope; "Esperanza" for the people of Chiapas.

The Institute, one of our Global Missions Partners in San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas, helps facilitate hope through the workshops they offer; from sustainable living initiatives to reforestation to recovering from trauma and healing the heart. All of these and other programs offered by The Institute bring healing, health and hope to the participants. It is an infectious hope, as participants bring it back to their communities and share it with their people.

The Institute trains people to be trainers, prepares participants to be leaders. Hope shared is hope multiplied; and communities in Chiapas are changed as The Institute nurtures their already-present seeds of hope.

Nurturing hope in the midst of trauma is the work of our mission partners at The Institute distilled to its purest essence.

The Institute is served by Elena Huegel, our Global Ministries Mission Co-Worker in San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas. Elena visited CUCC a few years ago to tell us about her work, and we hope to have her back again this fall.



On the Church Calendar in August

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 2:00 p.m. - Sanctuary in use
3 8:30 a.m. - Bible Study 9:00 a.m. - Fellowship 9:30 a.m. - Worship	4	5 10:00 a.m. - Quilters	6	7 6:30 p.m. - Troop 4475 Meeting	8	9
10 8:30 a.m. - Bible Study 9:00 a.m. - Fellowship 9:30 a.m. - Worship	11	12 10:00 a.m. - Quilters 6:30 p.m. - Troop 708 Meeting	13 6:00 p.m. - Prayer Shawl Group	14	15	16
17 8:30 a.m. - Bible Study 9:00 a.m. - Fellowship 9:30 a.m. - Worship	18 4:30 p.m. - Loaves and Fishes 7:00 p.m. - Outreach & Advocacy Meeting 6:00 p.m. - Scouting America BBQ at the Shelter House	19 10:00 a.m. - Quilters 10:30 a.m. - Staff Meeting 1:00 p.m. - Pause to Color 6:30 p.m. - Council Meeting	20 7:00 p.m. - Celebration Singers	21	22	23
24 8:30 a.m. - Bible Study 9:00 a.m. - Fellowship 9:30 a.m. - Worship	25 7:00 p.m. - Scouting America	26 10:00 a.m. - Quilters 10:30 a.m. - Staff Meeting 5:30 p.m. - Food Bank 6:30 p.m. - Worship & Music Ministry Team	27 7:00 p.m. - Celebration Singers	28 6:00 p.m. - LODO Ministry Team Meeting	29	30
31 8:30 a.m. - Bible Study 9:00 a.m. - Fellowship 9:30 a.m. - Worship						

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!