

THE COMMUNICATOR

February 2024

From the Pastor's Keyboard...

“Love and the Church”

Paul is an interesting character in New Testament stories. We are familiar with Paul's discussions about love and the church, most notably 1 Corinthians 13 where he speaks of love being patient and kind, never boastful or jealous or envious or rude. This verse has been popularized in modern culture to refer to romantic love and is even one of the most popular Bible verses to be shared at weddings. But all throughout his life, Paul had a complicated relationship with the people he claimed to love. Faith was not easy for Paul, despite the love he wound up exemplifying in his life.

Paul began his life as a religious authority with a passion for killing other religious people. As a Pharisee, he was one of the religious elite who were charged with “keeping the faith.” He grew up in religious life, was schooled in the practices of religion, and taught to guard those practices in his life and community. When the followers of Jesus' teachings came along, expressing new ideas about love, grace, and inclusion, he saw them as a threat. He did not see the love they expressed; he saw their clothing, their dietary practice, and their stance on traditional doctrine and found them wanting. Breathing threats of murder against the followers of Jesus' teachings, he even went out of his way to get permission from the High Priests to exact vengeance on these people.

Even after Jesus converted him on the Road to Damascus, Paul still had issues with the church. He was viewed with skepticism by leaders in the early Christian Church, was disregarded by some of the Apostles, was involved in personal attacks and disagreements with other Apostles, and was disappointed by their behavior. At times, he even felt abandoned by those who claimed to be the church.

But Paul learned to love through the intervention of Jesus and Ananias and he strived all his life to express that love to the Christian Community. He chastised that community at times when he felt they were not being very loving, but even then, he did so in a loving way. After his conversion, he embraced the love that Jesus exemplified and made it the guide for his own life.

In our world, there are many voices that proclaim hatred loudly and clearly and encourage division among children of God. Race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression have been, for centuries, convenient wedge factors to divide one group of people against another, and those with privilege have used those divisive factors to sow hatred. It is not unusual today in our media cycle, especially in an election year, to hear very un-loving proclamations using the politics of personal destruction as the basis for division.

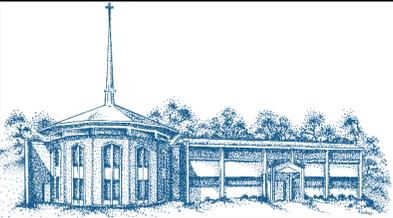
But as Christians, we are called to rise above the politics of personal destruction. This does not mean we ignore our differences. In a loving world, diversity in color, ethnicity, and gender identity are lifted up and celebrated, not ignored. Diversity is a fact, and we have the ability to act. The choice: to be loving and embrace diversity, or to be hateful and diminish the worth of others because of that diversity.

Here at CUCC, we made a conscious decision five years ago to be more like Jesus by embracing God's gift of diversity in race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and so much more. We made a decision to express God's inclusive love by being loving Christians ourselves. Over the past five years we have lived into that expression well; and as loving Christians, we have committed ourselves to being that loving expression well into the future.



This month, as we celebrate the many ways “love” is expressed in our consumerist culture, let us remember Jesus' command to love fiercely, generously, inclusively, just as he first loved us; and in all things, let love be our guide.

-Pastor Rick



**COLUMBIA
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**

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

Rev. Rick Oberle

Pastor

Rev. Fred Brandenburg

Pastor Emeritus

Shelly Adams

Student Pastor

Casey Wood

Music Coordinator

Steven Jannetti

Organist/Accompanist

Alexandra Roper

Office Administrator

Erika Maltsbarger

Director, Little One's Day Out

Caleb Berry

Custodian

Sunday Schedule:

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

Office Hours:

**Monday through Friday
9am- 3pm**

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

**Email:
office@columbiaucc.com**

**Website:
www.columbiaucc.com**



News & Updates

Ladies - Mark Your Calendars!

The Women's Fellowship will meet again on February 8 in the Gathering Space at 9:30 a.m. We will have breakfast together, share our Bible study lesson for the day, and do the work of the church.

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

SUNDAY MORNING SAFETY

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

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

SUNDAY MORNING SNOW POLICY

In case of inclement weather on Sunday mornings this winter, please keep an eye on the cancellations listed on KOMU and KMIZ Television stations, as well as the CUCC website and Facebook page.

If cancelling worship is in question, the Pastor, Moderator, and Vice Moderator will make that call by 7:00 a.m. on a Sunday morning. They will then notify the media, send out a mass email to the congregation, and put notice on the church's Facebook page and website. This information will be posted by 7:15.

If worship is cancelled at our facility, an abbreviated worship will be livestreamed on YouTube and Facebook, at least the scriptures, sermon, and prayers. The extent of what is livestreamed will depend on who can make it to church that morning. Please join with the congregation worshipping virtually as we livestream and join together in virtual community.

If worship is not cancelled, but you feel unsafe venturing out, please stay home. We will still be livestreaming every Sunday, so you can always enjoy worship from home. You can also view the worship at a time other than 10:30! Past worship services are all on our website.



February Birthdays

Amanda Forward 2/2	MJ King 2/4	Lori Melton 2/6
Joseph Oberle 2/7	Melba Shaffer 2/7	Elias Nieman 2/8
Zabibu Kibaro 2/9	Sofia Marienfeld-Crenshaw 2/9	Tricia Price 2/9
Maia Marienfeld-Crenshaw 2/11	Cindy Deegan 2/14	Danielle Dreier 2/14
Theodore Eveler 2/14	Ed Rollins 2/14	Debby Duermeyer 2/15
Imani Kibaro 2/15	Abigail Dennis 2/16	Liz Fischer 2/16
Devin Burrow 2/17	Donna Wilmsmeyer 2/17	Pat Forward 2/18
Mike Rapp 2/20	Jane Klick 2/21	Lorry Dreier 2/23
Stefanie Zimmy 2/25	Gene Lavelly 2/26	Samantha Hall 2/27
Tim Grace 2/28	Darla Privitt 2/28	

Sunday Volunteer Schedule for February

DATE	GREETERS	USHERS	WORSHIP LEADERS	TECH BOOTH
2/4	Helen Schultz	Llona Weiss & Charlie Marks	Mark Duncan	Judi Privitt & Doug Privitt
2/11	Anne Heine	Jerry Kiesling & Mary Lorber	Lena Muench	Mike Pierson & Trevor Pierson
2/14	Donna Marsh		Judi Privitt	Doug Privitt
2/18	Brenda Muench & John Muench	Christine Staelens	Mahree Skala	Brent Mareks & Lorry Dreier
2/25	Carol Duermeyer	Mary Lorber & Mark Duncan	Pat Forward	Josh Muench

COLUMBIA UCC CHURCH COUNCIL

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



Moderator's Moment

The Sundays following the Epiphany are marked with hope and optimism. How could a world not feel optimistic after witnessing the birth of our savior, Jesus Christ? "But Kurt", some would say, "there are two major conflicts going on that threaten to draw many counties into war and causing major humanitarian crisis for the individuals caught in the middle!" That is certainly true and we shouldn't ignore it. However, when I get overwhelmed with big problems that seem unsolvable, I try to get outside. I go fishing or on a hike where I can enjoy silence and reflection. Maybe this is how Jesus felt when he was drawn to the wilderness by the Holy Spirit. When I go out I certainly am not tempted by the devil, unless the devil is in the form of a 14 point buck that struts in front of me after I've already filled my antlered tag earlier in the season on a much smaller buck (yes this happened and I'm happy to say I looked temptation in the eye and let it walk on by.) As Pastor Rick pointed out in his sermon on Jan 21st, the real temptation is to give up and give in to inaction. We can't just bury our heads in the sand and hope the world fixes itself. We also can't fix those bigger problems in one day. However, we can continue to support local charities that fight homelessness and hunger both here and abroad. We can continue to provide a space for anyone to come and hear Jesus's message of love for all mankind. These are things we can do and I would much rather focus on the things we can do than the things we can't. You also can bring a friend or friends to our Fasnacht celebration, because who doesn't love a party? See you there!

Respectfully Submitted,
Kurt Heine, Moderator



**Habitat
for Humanity**

The Annual Uel Blank Memorial
**Pancake & Sausage
Breakfast**

**February 24, 2024
7 a.m. to 11 a.m.**

**Adults: \$6
Children 6-12: \$3**

**Columbia United Church of Christ
3201 I-70 Drive Northwest**

<https://www.columbiaucc.com>

CUCC Church Council

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. on December 19, 2023 by Jerry Kiesling.
Pastor Rick opened us with prayer.

Present: Jerry Kiesling, Christine Staelens, Ted Dachroeden Mary Lorber-Solt, Tricia Price, Lorry Dreier, Judi Privitt, Pat Forward, Mark Duncan, Pastor Rick Oberle, and Alethea Tennill.

Mark Duncan made a motion to approve the agenda with a second from Mary Lorber-Solt. The motion passed. Christine Staelens made a motion to approve the November minutes with a second from Lorry Dreier. Motion Passed.

Unfinished Business:

- * Policy and Procedures Manual Update – Personnel Committee will meet before the January Council meeting.
- * Inclusion Ramp for sanctuary – Tricia is still working on collecting all the information needed.
- * New keyboard arrives this week.
- * Annual Congregation Meeting is May 19, 2024.

New Business:

- * We received a possible donation of land – Sue Ann is handling the donation.
- * Nominating Committee candidates need to be asked so they can be appointed at the January Council Meeting.
- * Council Stewards/Usher duties during worship – It has been noticed that some of the kids are wandering about the church instead of in worship. The Ushers and Council Stewards for that Sunday should walk the church during service to send them back to service.
- * Cancellations procedures for snow days – Pastor, Moderator and Vice-Moderator will decide early in the morning if church will be cancelled or online only. This information will be posted with the other cancellations for the day on the local channels.

Pastor's Report:

How can we reach out to new people? We cannot keep doing the same things and expect to get different results. Please share on Facebook, like our Instagram, and write Google reviews with 5 stars. How would you tell someone about our church in 60 seconds? Invite your friends to church. Ask our partners that we support to put a link to our church on their website. Financials were presented. We were under budget in Joyful Giving and over budget on expenses. We received \$9,000 of Giving Tuesday.

Ministry Reports:

- * Building & Grounds: Ted has worked on a few issues this month.
- * Fellowship & Hospitality: We served 130 plates at the Advent Banquet. Fasnacht is coming up in February.
- * Finance & Stewardship: We received \$9,000 on Giving Tuesday. We need to start thinking about other sources of income. Can we utilize our space better? Can we use it as a wedding venue?
- * Inclusion & Affirmation: June 1 and 2 a choir from Kansas City will be here.
- * LODO: Lorry Dreier: Enrollment dipped a bit in December as some families moved away.
- * Membership & Care: 18 people have signed up for the Mindfulness Stressed Reduction Class. The Church Directory is expected next month. Eat with Eight will start in January.
- * Nurture & Education: Cookies by the Pound collected over \$800. January 7 is Star Sunday.
- * Outreach & Advocacy: VAC collected presents for 40 people and \$1500 for food and others that were not selected. Christmas eve offering will go toward RIP medical debt.
- * Worship & Music: Report attached.

Pastor Rick closed us in prayer

Motion to adjourn by Judi Privitt, second by Mary Lorber-Solt. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:21 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Alethea Tennill, Secretary



Fellowship & Hospitality Ministry Team

CUCC 40th ANNUAL FASTNACHT CELEBRATION!!

Greetings! I hope this finds everyone with their New Year's resolutions still intact, and preparations for the upcoming season of Lent started. As we get ready to celebrate our 40th Fastnacht Festival, Feb. 13, let's not forget what Fastnacht is about. Shrove Tuesday, dating back to the Middle Ages, was already established in Cologne by the year 1234. It included feasts, satirical speech, parades and costumes, in preparation for the Lenten fast. Historically, eggs, sugar and fats were commonly forbidden during the Lenten fast, so had to be used up prior to Ash Wednesday, (waste not, want not) thus we have our wonderful celebration of brats, donuts, and of course German style potato salad.

So let's prepare for the Lenten season, by celebrating Fastnacht, Shrove Tuesday, Fat Tuesday, call it what you may, with joy, good food, friends, and music, (yes, the Loehnic German band will be there). Sign up sheets for the many wonderful volunteers needed are in the narthex. [CLICK HERE](#) to RSVP for Fastnacht!

Hope to see you there!

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Lorber

Fellowship and Hospitality Ministry Team Chair



SAVE THE DATES!

STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY– MARCH 17

Matt Wagner, the Vice President of United Church Funds (our investment vehicle) will be here to share wisdom about Estate Planning, Living Trusts, and other Planned Giving models that could suit our church and ensure a secure financial future for CUCC! Matt will share wisdom during the Sunday School hour at 9:00 a.m., say a few words in worship, and then be the keynote speaker at our **STEWARDSHIP BRUNCH!** This will be a potluck meal after worship, so plan on bringing a favorite dish to share! Mark your calendars for March 17!

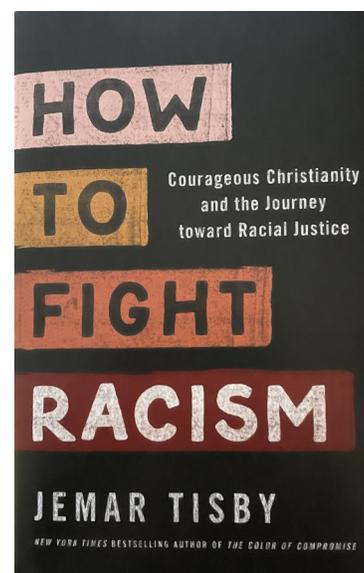
BRING A FRIEND SUNDAY– APRIL 21

Call the neighbors and wake the kids! Bring a Friend Sunday is April 21! Invite your friends to come and join you for special activities during worship, and a Taco Bar after worship! We will have CUCC SWAG for friends who join us! World renowned Psalms theologian and Eden Seminary professor, Clint McCann, will be joining us for a special Adult Bible Study event that day, and will bring us wisdom in worship as well! Mark your calendars for April 21 and **BRING A FRIEND!**

BOOK STUDY WITH PASTOR RICK– JANUARY/FEBRUARY

Book Study: In recognition of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday and Black History Month, we are studying the acclaimed book, "How to Fight Racism" by Jemar Tisby. We are studying this book four Thursday evenings at 6:30 p.m. in January/February, which started on January 18th. This book is about taking a stand for justice in our world today by confronting racial injustice. It is unapologetically Christian; the subtitle is, "Courageous Christianity and the Journey toward Racial Justice." The author speaks to this in the first chapter as he writes, "*Christianity provides a transcendent narrative for why racial justice is important. Christianity teaches that all people are made in the image of God. Their physical appearance, including skin color, are part of bearing God's image and should be respected as such.*"

Copies of the book are available in the church office; you can still pick up yours today and read ahead! If you have any questions, talk to Pastor Rick.



Tuesday
Feb. 13



Fastnacht Sign-ups



Fastnacht 2024

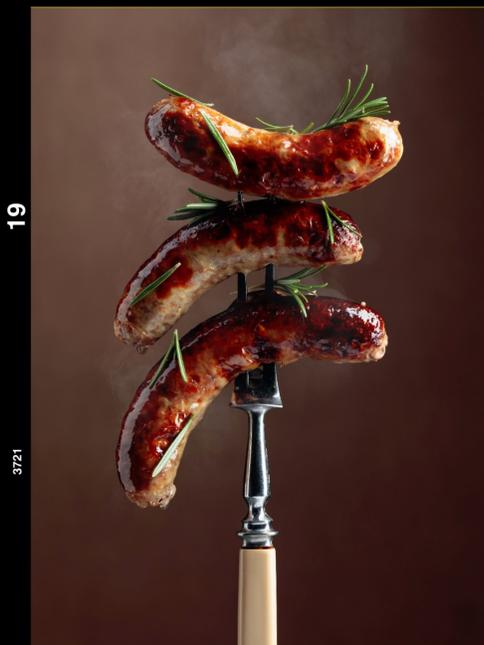
5:30 p.m.



It's that time again! Fastnacht 2024 is almost here! German Potato Salad, Brats, Fastnachts, Great Music, and the Duck Dance are waiting for you at Columbia UCC! Come join the fun!

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

website: www.columbiaucc.com
email: office@columbiaucc.com



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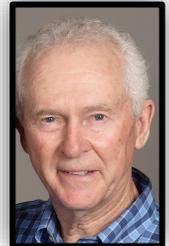
Finance & Stewardship Ministry Team

CUCC is an amazing church and we do really important things on a very modest budget. Our 2024 budget is approximately \$400,000 and almost all of that comes from “Joyful Giving”. The annual budget pays for salaries, utilities, repairs, and other normal expenses that households and churches incur as well as the cost of our various ministry teams and charitable donations. All of these expenditures are monitored very closely and every effort is made to efficiently and economically control our spending.

We have approximately \$390,000 in various reserves and dedicated accounts which each have a designated purposes. We sometimes receive unexpected bequests, gifts, and earnings from our funds which are invested with United Church Funds. Some of these funds can be used for unexpected shortfalls. Such expenditures require the approval of our Church Council as does the annual budget which also has to be approved by the congregation.

Our team is looking at all ways to increase revenues for 2024 and future years. A particular focus will be on encouraging our members to consider making specific bequests to CUCC in their wills and by encouraging other types of planned giving. Our **Stewardship Sunday on March 17** will focus on the topic and other things we can do support our church financially.

Respectfully Submitted,
Keith Birkes



Financial Update

	Actual	Budget	Over/(Under)
December Income	\$75,375.27	\$91,591.37	(\$16,216.10)
December Expenses	\$37,837.48	\$40,460.49	(\$2,623.01)
YTD Income	\$347,221.30	\$392,908.00	(\$45,686.70)
YTD Expenses	\$407,321.76	\$392,330.00	\$14,991.76
Surplus/(Deficit)	(\$60,100.46)	\$578.00	(\$60,678.46)
December Joyful Giving	\$74,028.27	\$90,908.00	(\$16,879.73)
YTD Joyful Giving	\$336,261.54	\$384,908.00	(\$48,646.46)

Joyful Giving January 2023 to December 2023



Date	12/3	12/10	12/17	12/24 morning	12/24 7p.m.	12/24 11P.m.	12/31	Total
Attendance	113	154	109	101	118	25	60	680

CUCC ONLINE GIVING

You can now give online to Columbia United Church of Christ through our online giving partner, Kindrid!

There are several ways to make a one time or recurring gift through Kindrid:

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

Inclusion and Affirmation Ministry Team

FACING CHALLENGES YESTERDAY AND TODAY: PART 1 - "YESTERDAY" (PART 2 IN FUTURE BULLETINS)

Bessie Coleman, born in 1892, faced multiple challenges: she was female, poor, Black and Native American. Her story is featured in the National Women in History Museum.

Growing up in Texas with 12 siblings, she picked cotton and washed laundry. At 23, she attended beauty school. Her brothers served in France during WWI and returned with stories about the freedoms that all women enjoyed there. One job that was available to women in France was piloting airplanes.

Ms. Coleman was fascinated and inspired, but no school in the US would accept her for pilot training due to her ethnicity and gender. Thus, she studied French, moved to France, and got her international pilot's license in 1921.

Returning to America, her goal was to open a flight school. She traveled, gave speeches and performed air shows with loop-the-loops and figure 8's. She gave flight lessons and encouraged women, especially African Americans, to learn to fly.

She survived a crash when her airplane engine suddenly stopped working mid-flight. Though badly hurt, she was determined to continue

piloting. In 1925, she was invited to perform in her hometown for a large crowd. She refused to do so unless the organizers allowed for a single entry gate open to both Black people and White people. After several meetings, the organizers agreed. Ms. Coleman became famous for publicly standing up for equal rights.

Unfortunately, she died in 1926 while on a test flight that a mechanic was piloting. At 3,000 feet, a loose wrench got stuck in the aircraft engine causing the plane to flip over. Ms. Coleman was not wearing a seatbelt and, at the time, airplanes did not have tops. She fell to her death from the plane.

Though she died young, her legacy continues to inspire communities throughout the country. The Challenger Pilots' Association of Chicago traditionally flies over her grave site every year in remembrance and to salute this amazing woman.



CUCC OPEN AND AFFIRMING/INCLUSION COVENANT

Columbia United Church of Christ celebrates God's boundless and unconditional love by intentionally welcoming and affirming all God's children.

- * No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey;
- * No matter where you are on your faith journey;
- * No matter your sexual orientation, gender expression or identity;
- * No matter your race, culture, ethnicity, nationality or politics;
- * No matter your age, ability, health, relationship status or family structure;
- * No matter your social, economic, educational, legal or life circumstances;
- * You are welcome here!



Called by Jesus to be an Open and Affirming, inclusive faith community, Columbia United Church of Christ commits to welcoming everyone into the full life of our congregation. Our paths and voices may differ, but we journey in faith together.

LODO Ministry Team

**LODO returned from Christmas Break on Tuesday January 3
and our students have been hard at work**

Upcoming February Events:

Thu Feb 22 – 6:00-7:30pm - Math & Science Night (VOLUNTEERS NEEDED)
Tue Feb 13 & Wed Feb 14 – Classroom Valentine Celebrations
Fri Feb 16 – LODO Closed
Mon Feb 19 – LODO Closed



Do you like to see young learners experience learning new things and their curiosity? Their excitement is infectious and it's wonderful to see our building buzzing with the energy the children have in absorbing new ideas. Have you ever thought about volunteering at LODO? Would you like to read a book with a preschool class or lend an extra set of hands helping out at math and science night? Or are you a behind the scenes kind of person and would rather serve on the LODO Ministry Team?

Please contact **Lorry Dreier** for more information about how to share your time and talents serving our preschool in whatever capacity you are able to share. Thank you for considering volunteering at LODO. It is a wonderful experience watching our young students on their learning journey.

Respectfully,
Lorry Dreier



What to Say to Kids Instead of "Be Careful!"

Help Your Child **Foster Awareness** by Saying:

- Notice how... these rocks are slippery, that branch is strong.
- Do you see... the poison ivy, your friends nearby?
- Try moving... your feet carefully, quickly, strongly.
- Try using your... hands, feet, arms, legs.
- Can you hear... the rushing water, the singing birds, the wind?
- Do you feel... stable on that rock, the heat from the fire?
- Are you feeling... scared, excited, tired, safe?

Help Your Child **Problem Solve** by Saying:

- What's your plan... if you climb that boulder, cross that log?
- What can you use... to get across, for your adventure?
- Where will you... put that rock, climb that tree, dig that hole?
- How will you.... get down, go up, get across?
- Who will... be with you, go with you, help you if?



2024-2025 Enrollment

Enrollment for the 2024-2025 School Year will begin for current families on Sunday February 25. Enrollment will be open to new families on Monday March 4. If you, or someone you know, is looking for a loving preschool for next school year, please let them know that NOW is the time to tour to be ready to register. They may contact me at littleonesdayout@yahoo.com or 573-445-2661. Additional information about the LODO program is available at www.columbiaucc.com/lodohome.

Lightning Bugs Class: Students must be 1 year old before August 1, 2024

Lambs Class: Students must be 2 years old before August 1, 2024

Lions/Leopards Class: Students must be 3 years old before August 1, 2024

Leap Frogs/Leopards Class: Students must be 4 years old before August 1, 2024

**Our Leopards Class will be assigned and utilized for the age group that has the most need for extra classroom space. This classroom may be a duplicate age group class, or utilized for a mixed age (3-5 years) group based on enrollment and classroom space needs.

February Learning Themes:

- * Animals (Zoo/Jungle/Farm)
- * Friendship/Love/Valentine's Day
- * Science & Sensory
- * Opposites & Prepositions

In Love and
Laughter,
Erika



Nurture & Education Ministry Team

Sunday School - 9:00-10:00 am – Sunday Mornings - There are classes for all ages.

Pre-K through High School – We are using Mini Revolutions curriculum to engage our young children and youth in learning.

Adult Bible Study – The Adult Bible Study class starts with the lectionary text for the Sunday Service. We may explore the text for the entire class or it may just be the starting point for wherever our thoughts take us. Come explore with us.

Nursery – Laynee, our Nursery Supervisor, is in the nursery every Sunday, starting at 10:00 am until the end of Worship. The nursery welcomes all children, ages kindergarten and younger.

Special Event Sundays Coming Up!
Please bring your children and youth for these Special Days:
February 11, 2024 – Valentine’s Celebration
March 14, 2024 – St Patrick’s Celebration
March 31, 2024 – Easter Sunday Celebration

Star Sunday on January 7, 2024 was attended by 15 youth and children, along with teachers, parents, and adult helpers. Thank you to Linda Neale for a wonderful telling of the Epiphany story, to Paula for the magic toothpick trick and the star craft, to Audrey Lasley for the home baked Star cookies the kids decorated, and the fun by all playing Left-Right-Center with STARburst candies.

Why should I bring my children to church?

If you’re a parent, chances are you go to church. You’ve probably been going for years, and as your child gets older, they may ask why you go. Here are some ways you can answer them:

- ✂ To learn about faith and religion
- ✂ To be a good person who cares about others
- ✂ To learn how to be a good friend
- ✂ To understand how to be a good citizen in your community (and the world)

The benefits go beyond just Sundays - many people who were raised with regular church attendance continue to attend throughout adulthood because it gives them a sense of community and spiritual grounding in their lives.

You might not know everything there is about your religion as a whole, but if your kids are going to have good relationships with people who share your values, then taking them along will give them an opportunity to see what those values look like in practice!



Submitted by Pat Forward, Nurture & Education Ministry Team

Membership and Care Ministry Team

Membership and Care Ministry February Updates

MBSR (Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction) 8 week class led by Terry Wilson (M.Ed, RN, and MBSR educator) is off to a great start. Many thanks to Anne Heine for coordinating.

Eat with Eight also began in January, providing CUCC members an opportunity to fellowship with CUCC members in a small group setting. Please contact Anne Heine with any questions.

CUCC Prayer Ministry Team is underway, thanks to the organizing efforts of Tricia Soncasie and Melba Shaffer. This group will pray with intention for those included in the Columbia UCC prayer list as well as specific prayer requests. Specific prayer requests will be kept private to respect the confidentiality of those we are lifting up. If you have a specific prayer request, please email Tricia Soncasie (tsoncasie@aol.com) or Melba Shaffer (whals@centurytel.net).

If you'd like to join the CUCC Prayer Ministry Team, please contact Tricia, Melba or Judi Privitt (judiprivitt811@gmail.com)

Respectfully Submitted,
Judi Privitt



BRING A FRIEND TO CHURCH: SUNDAY, APRIL 21ST

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

Health Ministry Care Network:

Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) Classes are going great for the 15 people attending our MBSR training. This class is for adults but if there's enough interest, we can offer it to our youth. So if any youth want to participate, let me know and we'll make it happen.

We're here for you and welcome anyone who wants to join our Team:

We're here for you so let us know if you need help getting to a doctor appointment or with any health care questions or concerns. If you want to join our team, we'd love to have you. Contact Anne Heine.

Anne Heine & Team: Mona Dachroeden, Mary Lorber-Solt, Emmalee Heine, Stefanie Zimny.



EAT WITH EIGHT UPDATE

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

-Anne Heine & Your Membership Care Team

Worship & Music Ministry Team

Each week, as the Celebration Singers perform their anthem, you will have noticed that we perform pieces of different styles and historical periods - some come from composers from the 19th century. These tend to be Protestant hymn arrangements. We've also performed arrangements from modern-day gospel writers. If you're paying close attention, you'll know that one composer has shown up multiple times on the bulletin. His name is John Rutter.

John Rutter is a living composer from England, one of the most prolific choral composers of the last 50 years. My father, a choral director himself, raised me on John Rutter's music, which has subsequently become some of my favorites.

In October, we performed Mr. Rutter's setting of "God Be In My Hand". This short text is a prayer that reminds the speaker to be mindful of God's presence in mind, words, and feelings. Though it is an acapella piece that includes only four vocal parts, it is rich in its development of musical material. Its wandering melody and complex harmonies suggest the depth and power of contemplative prayer.

Perhaps my most fond association with Rutter's music was my opportunity to perform his "Requiem."

A Requiem is a type of mass that is used specifically during funerals. Sometimes referred to as a "Mass of the Dead", most well-known composers have taken their turn on a Requiem Mass. Rutter's setting is 40 minutes long and I was blessed to conduct this piece with 200 singers and a full orchestra.

It is some of my favorite music in the modern canon and I'm sure you will hear more over the next year.

Respectfully Submitted,
Casey Wood



ASH WEDNESDAY AND LENT

Easter is a "moveable feast" in the life of the church, because the date for Easter varies. Some years it is as early as March 22, others as late as April 25. The date for Easter is determined by the Paschal Moon. This year, Easter is March 31. Since Ash Wednesday is celebrated 40 days (not counting Sundays) before Easter, it is a "moveable feast" as well. This year, we will celebrate Ash Wednesday on Wednesday, February 14.



Ash Wednesday is the kickoff to the Lenten Season. On Ash Wednesday, we begin our journey with Jesus to the cross and crucifixion. For forty days (not counting Sundays) we adopt practices to focus our lives even more intently on Jesus' ministry and how that ministry is lived in our lives. Some folks choose to give something up for Lent like chocolate, soda, TV, or other enjoyable distractions in life. Other people choose to take something on during Lent like studying the Bible, more focused prayer time, or being intentional about attending church. All of these practices, whether giving something up or adopting something new, should have as their purpose a closer walk with Jesus.

To recognize this turn away from the material things in life and towards Jesus, we begin the Lenten Season with Ash Wednesday worship and the symbolic imposition of ashes and facing our ultimate end with the reflection that "we are from dust, and to dust we shall return." This is not meant to cause misery, but to reflect on the joy that we are all finite and when our time here is over we will return to God. As finite creatures, we are called to make the most of our time here on earth. We do that by focusing our lives and our journey through that life on God; we do that by walking closely with Jesus.

Join us for worship on Ash Wednesday, February 14 at 7:00pm. We will have the traditional imposition of ashes, we will celebrate communion, and we will even see how Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday tie together! We hope to see you in worship on February 14!

International Missions

CUCC IS WORKING IN ISRAEL/PALESTINE

Rawdat el-Zuhur (Garden of Flowers) primary school is a distinguished educational institution in Jerusalem, providing vital opportunities for Palestinian children who live in a challenging environment. The school offers quality education while nurturing creativity, leadership, cultural awareness, and values. Located near Jerusalem's Old City, Rawdat el-Suhur preserves Palestinian heritage and empowers children to navigate the challenges they face. The school serves mainly lower-income families and is a partner of the Global Ministries Child and Elder Sponsorship Program. Sponsorship offers individuals and groups the opportunity to make a tangible impact on Children's lives and foster a brighter future.

Through Global Ministries, CUCC is a partner in mission with the Rawdat el-Zuhur (Garden of Flowers) primary school, and through them, we are actively working in many Christian and Muslim children and families in Israel/Palestine. In this time of conflict, please keep Global Ministries, Garden of Flowers Primary School, and the people of Israel/Palestine in your prayers!



GLOBAL MINISTRIES CHILD AND ELDER SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

Supporting children and elders with the love and services they deserve is one of the greatest gifts of kindness you can share. Through your support, the Global Ministries Child and Elder Sponsorship Program partners with churches and agencies all over the world to provide services that create opportunities and affirm dignity.

Child Sponsorship Opportunities

Your gifts through Global Ministries Child Sponsorship make a difference! The Child Sponsorship program works closely with partner organizations that have long-established links with the UCC and Disciples. Collaborating with partners, your gifts to Child Sponsorship provide food, basic health care, clothing, and in some cases housing, school fees, uniforms, books, and training.

Elder Sponsorship Opportunities

In many countries, an individual is not entitled to government assistance after retirement unless they have worked for the government. Global Ministries Elder Sponsorship centers assist elders who have no place to live and no family to care for them. Your sponsorship of an elder helps provide shelter, medicine, and meals. Elders are given the opportunity to live out their lives in dignity and solace in an environment where they feel loved and cared for.

Sponsorship gifts can be given as holiday gifts, in honor or memory of someone, or a one-time gift to use where most needed. **100 percent** of your sponsorship gift will be designated for the use of the child or elder you sponsor and is not used to support the Child and Elder Sponsorship program costs. To make a general gift in support of the Child and Elder Sponsorship program, you may do so online or by check. For more information visit the Global Ministries Sponsorship Page on their website.

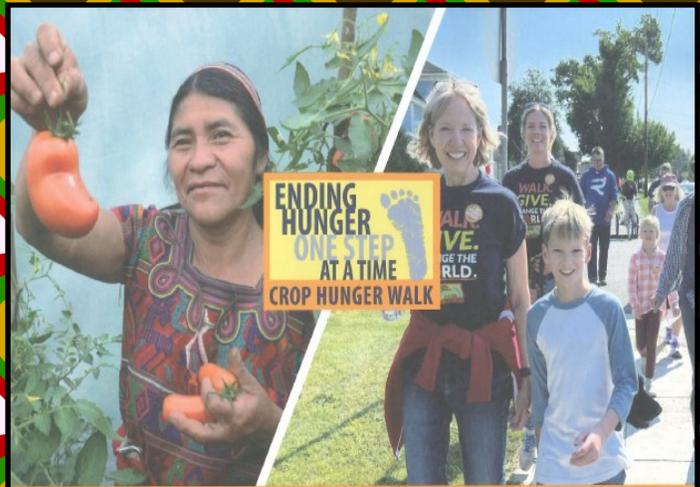


Outreach & Advocacy Ministry Team

Go Alpha Hart Lewis Elementary (AHL) "Trusty Huskies"!

Our Partnership Friend is amazing. Last month I told you about AHL being in the local newspaper several times for the innovative and positive programs and work they are doing with our youth. On February 9 they are showcasing their work on multiculturalism from 2:15-3:00 p.m. entitled, "AHL Around the World" (date changed from January 23, 2024 because of the recent snow days). They have invited us to join them as their students share what they have learned from their exploration of different countries and traditions from around the world. If you would like to visit, you will need to sign in at the front doorway of the school.

In February, during the week of February 26, we will help "stock the lounge" for the Parent-Teacher Conferences. I will have a donation box/cart in our CUCC entryway for you to donate foodstuffs. You may have noticed a box labeled "AHL" in the coat room, and you are welcome at any time to make any donations you have to AHL by placing items in that box and I will happily transport them to school. If you have any questions, just ask me (573-999-3319 Llona's cell phone).



BUILDING *global* RESILIENCE



Gratitude to
Columbia United Church of Christ
for your participation
in the
28th Columbia CROP Hunger Walk
on September 17, 2023.

Your generous contributions totaling \$1,495 not only helped us exceed our goal of "\$23,000 for '23", but brought us to the most ever donated to sustain food for today and tomorrow to our neighbors near and far - \$25,028.25. Thank You!

Sincerely, the Columbia CROP Walk Coordinating Committee

PH 2204

Time to step up to feed the hungry! Our next Food Bank Shift is February 27

You can do a lot of good in a short period of time by helping at the Food Bank. Our next shift will be on Tuesday, February 27. In December, Ted and Mona Dachroeden and Mahree Skala along with four other volunteers helped sort out over a ton of donated food. We never know what the assignment will be, but whatever it is it puts food into hungry mouths.

[CLICK HERE](#) to sign up for February or contact [Mahree Skala](#)!



LOAVES AND FISHES

The January 15th meal at L&F consisted of: Spaghetti (made by Mary Lorber & Audrey Lasley), Salad (donated by Patty Beeson), Bread and brownies/cookies, and PB&J's (made by Mahree Skala). Our servers for the evening were: Anne Heine, Doug & Judi Privitt, Patty Beeson, Tom & Mary Lorber-Solt, Keith Birkes, and Pastor Rick. We served approximately 160 servings! It was a busy evening! Thank you so much for everyone's help!

If there are any church groups that would like to prepare food or help with serving at L&F, please let me know.

Thanks so much! -Audrey Lasley



Thank You!

“Pat and I thank the congregation for providing the wonderful drivers that you organized through Meal Train. Every meal was very ample and so delicious! Please make sure every participant receives our thanks!”

- Walter and Pat Schroeder

“To the Congregation of
Columbia Church of Christ,

Thank you for coming to sing Christmas Carols at the Columbia Manor Care Center. All of your voices were praising God!”

-Columbia Manor and Care Center

“Dear Friends,

Thank you for your generous donation of \$1,100 to Growing Hope Globally. We are grateful that you have joined us in growing lasting solutions to hunger. For more than 20 years we have worked alongside our partners, helping people around the world to improve their incomes and food security. Your gift means even more people will experience the dignity and hope of providing for themselves!

Thank you for loving your global neighbors
Mark Swanson

“Dear Friends,

Your gift of \$1,000 on 12/19/2023 will make an immediate difference in the lives of the abused women and children we serve at Lydia’s House.

Many of our women come to Lydia’s House full of fear and uncertainty about the future. Here, we give women and children the time and resources necessary to rebuild their lives in the wake of domestic violence. Your gift will make a direct difference for these women, helping to provide housing for up to two years in a safe and stable environment while the women begin the healing process.

One of the strengths of Lydia’s House is our investment in the spiritual growth and healing of the women and children. Our goal is to help women get in touch with their own unique spiritual self and to offer resources and practices that can help them to nurture and care for that spiritual self. Our open and inclusive atmosphere honors women wherever they are on their spiritual journey and ultimately supports their independence.

Lydia’s House will continue to provide domestic violence survivors and their children a safe place to heal, a voice for justice, and an opportunity for better and sustainable lives. With the help of donations from supporters like you we will continue to be a bridge to freedom for the women and children who seek to escape violent homes.

Gratefully,
Karen T. Kirk
President and CEO of Lydia’s House”

WALK TOGETHER FOR A BETTER WORLD
Columbia CROP Hunger Walk - 2023



Congratulations to
COLUMBIA UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
for tying with Fifth Street Christian Church for the
MOST WALKERS AWARD

Many walkers bring energy to our Columbia CROP Hunger Walk. This year, you fielded a walker team of 18 people to support our commitment to food today and sustainable food security for tomorrow, for our neighbors near and far.

On the Church Calendar in February

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>4 9:00 a.m. - Sunday School 10:00 a.m. - Fellowship 10:30 a.m. Worship 12:00 p.m. - Inclusion & Affirmation Ministry Team Meeting</p>	<p>5 5:30 p.m. - LODDO Ministry Team Meeting</p>	<p>6 10:00 a.m. - Quilters 10:30 a.m. - Staff Meeting 6:30 p.m. - Outreach & Advocacy Ministry Team Meeting</p>	<p>7 6:00 p.m. - Chapel Ringers 7:00 p.m. - Celebration Singers</p>	<p>8 9:30 a.m. - Women's Fellowship 5:00 p.m. - Coyote Hill Support Group 6:30 p.m. - Book Study</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>
<p>11 7:30 a.m. - Men's Fellowship 9:00 a.m. - Sunday School 10:00 a.m. - Fellowship 10:30 a.m. Worship 3:00 p.m. Cub Scouts in Fellowship Hall</p>	<p>12 6:00 p.m. - Girl Scouts in Fellowship Hall</p>	<p>13 10:00 a.m. - Quilters 10:30 a.m. - Staff Meeting 5:30 p.m. - FASTNACHT!</p>	<p>14 6:00 p.m. - Chapel Ringers 6:00 p.m. - Prayer Shawl Group 7:00 p.m. - Ash Wednesday Worship</p>	<p>15 6:30 p.m. - Finance & Stewardship Ministry Team Meeting</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p>
<p>18 9:00 a.m. - Sunday School 10:00 a.m. - Fellowship 10:30 a.m. Worship</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20 10:00 a.m. - Quilters 10:30 a.m. - Staff Meeting 6:30 p.m. - Council Meeting</p>	<p>21 10:00 a.m. - Pastor Rick leads worship at the Bluffs 6:00 p.m. - Chapel Ringers 7:00 p.m. - Celebration Singers</p>	<p>22 6:00 p.m. - LODDO Math & Science Night</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24 7:00 a.m. - Habitat for Humanity Pancake Breakfast</p>
<p>25 9:00 a.m. - Sunday School 10:00 a.m. - Fellowship 10:30 a.m. Worship</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27 10:00 a.m. - Quilters 10:30 a.m. - Staff Meeting 5:30 p.m. - Food Bank</p>	<p>28 6:00 p.m. - Chapel Ringers 7:00 p.m. - Celebration Singers</p>			

The Communicator

Columbia United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation - ONA #1575
3201 I-70 Dr. NW
Columbia, MO 65202-3296
573-445-7931



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ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

The Communicator is a publication of Columbia United Church of Christ. The stated purpose is to communicate with the congregation and our friends concerning the organizations and events of the church. It is published once each month. The deadline for articles is the 20th of each month.



Interested in Church Membership?

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

**Become
Part of
Our
Church
Family**

Columbia United Church of Christ Open and Affirming/Inclusion Covenant

Columbia United Church of Christ celebrates God's boundless and unconditional love by intentionally welcoming and affirming all God's children.

- No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey;
- No matter where you are on your faith journey;
- No matter your sexual orientation, gender expression or identity;
- No matter your race, culture, ethnicity, nationality or politics;
- No matter your age, ability, health, relationship status or family structure;
- No matter your social, economic, educational, legal or life circumstances;
- You are welcome here!

Called by Jesus to be an Open and Affirming, inclusive faith community, Columbia United Church of Christ commits to welcoming everyone into the full life of our congregation. Our paths and voices may differ, but we journey in faith together.

LODO PLAYGROUND RESPECT

Please help us keep our playground safe for all children by following these guidelines:

- ◆ The CUCC playground is designed for, and should be used by, *only children ages 8 and younger*.
- ◆ Adult supervision is required while children are on the playground.
- ◆ Mulch must stay on the ground. When children dig up mulch it creates holes that are tripping hazards. Children should only dig in the sandbox.
- ◆ Sand should stay in the sandbox. Please do not allow sand to be carried and dumped in the playhouse or on play structures.
- ◆ Use playground equipment in the manner it is intended.