

THE COMMUNICATOR

April 2024

From the Pastor's Keyboard...

"Christ is Risen!"

Happy Easter!

The eight-week Easter Season has begun, and we are going to be spending the next few Sundays reflecting on what the wisdom of the Resurrection means for us. God brought New Life to Jesus, just as Jesus brought New Life to his followers through his wisdom teachings. From fishers of fish who became fishers of men to Lazarus, literally raised from the dead, Jesus brought New Life and Hope wherever he went; before and after the Resurrection. How are God's promises of New Life and Hope seen in our world, in our lives, every day?

Look outside. You will find a world that is being reborn. Trees are budding, flowers are blooming, the browns of winter are turning into the greens of spring. In the bulb, there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree. New Life is "springing" up everywhere, and we are witnesses to it. All of this beauty speaks wonders about God's Creation.

On the national scene, New Life is abundant as well. All of the Stock Market indexes are at record highs, the economy is stronger than it has been in 40 years, unemployment is at record lows, and nationwide crime has dropped significantly. We have conquered the pandemic with God's gift of a miracle vaccine. Medical miracles are restoring our quality of life. We don't often hear the good news amid the sensationalistic fear mongering of the ratings-driven news cycle, but the reality is that nationwide, New Life and Hope is also "springing" up in abundance at the national level in our country.

Here at CUCC, that New Life is seen in the dreams and visions of church leadership as we strive to ensure the relevance of this congregation for generations to come. The first quarter of 2024 has been a time of walking a Lenten journey for us. Church leadership has walked a path of discernment, dreamed about the possibilities, and has begun setting goals for where this church could be in the future. Establishment of an Endowment Fund, our new Strategic Plan, and other new initiatives are creating new possibilities we would not have imagined a few years ago. New Life is "springing" up in this congregation and I can tell you, without question, that the best days of CUCC are still ahead of us!

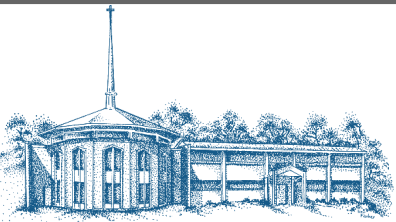
The Gospel attributed to Matthew tells us that even some who witnessed the Resurrection tried to deny it. They made up a story that the disciples came and stole Jesus away while the guards were sleeping. They were afraid of the new possibilities that Jesus' Resurrection meant for them. They were afraid they may have to change or do something outside of their comfort zone. Fear kept them from embracing the New Hope that Jesus offered. Their fear led them to stick their head in the sand and miss the blessings that Jesus had to offer them. Sadly, we are often like those Resurrection deniers. We often let fear keep us from embracing new possibilities. Often, we let fear keep us from embracing the Hope and possibilities that Jesus offers us, individually and corporately.



How is New Life and Hope being revealed in your life this Easter Season? What are the possibilities that are surrounding you every day? How is God calling you to do a new thing? As a church, what new things is God calling us to do as we embrace the Resurrection promises and the New Hope Jesus offers?

Alleluia— Christ is Risen! Christ is Risen, indeed. Let us live as Easter People, embracing the Hope of Jesus Christ.

-Pastor Rick



**COLUMBIA
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**

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

[Rev. Rick Oberle](#)

Pastor

[Rev. Fred Brandenburg](#)

Pastor Emeritus

[Shelly Adams](#)

Student Pastor

[Casey Wood](#)

Music Coordinator

[Steven Jannetti](#)

Organist/Accompanist

[Alexandra Roper](#)

Office Administrator

[Erika Maltsbarger](#)

Director, Little One's Day Out

[Caleb Berry](#)

Custodian

Sunday Schedule:

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

Office Hours:

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

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

**Email:
office@columbiaucc.com**

**Website:
www.columbiaucc.com**



News & Updates

LADIES - MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The Women's Fellowship will meet again on April 11, in the Gathering Area at 9:30 a.m. We will have breakfast together, share our Bible study lesson for the day, and do the work of the church.

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

SUNDAY MORNING SAFETY

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

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

BRING A FRIEND SUNDAY! TACO BAR- APRIL 21

Statistically, 80% of people who visit a church, do so because someone invites them.- so let's send out the invites! Everyone at CUCC is invited to Bring a Friend to church on Sunday, April 21. This is a special opportunity to share God's love as exemplified in the ministries of the church. There are many instances where Jesus calls us to share the Good News of his ministry with everyone; yet often our faith is our best kept secret. So if you know anyone in your circle of friends and family that are looking for an inclusive and kind faith community, don't miss the chance to tell them about CUCC!

What to expect:

- ☛ Sunday School for all ages - 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. (Including Adult classes).
- ☛ Worship in an inclusive community with everyone welcome.
- ☛ Childcare available in the nursery during worship (Kindergarten age and under).
- ☛ Special gift for the kids at Children's time.
- ☛ Special gift for all guests in worship.
- ☛ Taco Bar lunch following worship.
- ☛ The loving, inclusive, and affirming identity of the CUCC Congregation.



🌸 April Birthdays 🌸

Brent Marcks 🌸 4/6

Linda Grotewiel 🌸 4/7

Chantal Kibaro 🌸 4/8

Chris Bach 🌸 4/10

Evelyn Marcks 🌸 4/13

Mary Lorber-Solt 🌸 4/14

Virian Scallion 🌸 4/17

Jan Barry 🌸 4/18

Connie Loveless 🌸 4/18

Addison Melton 🌸 4/18

Trenton Minor 🌸 4/20

Brandon Lavelly 🌸 4/21

Mark Eveler 🌸 4/23

Mike Van Hove 🌸 4/23

Devin Hall 🌸 4/25

Amy Crousore 🌸 4/28

Carolyn Malicoat 🌸 4/30



Sunday Volunteer Schedule for April

DATE	GREETERS	USHERS	WORSHIP LEADERS	TECH BOOTH
4/7	MARY LORBER		CONNIE LOVELESS	BRENT MARCKS & CARISA GRAVES
4/14	JESSICA LUCAS	LLONA WEISS	TRICIA SONCASIE	MIKE PIERSON & AIDAN PIERSON
4/21	CAROL DUERMAYER	JOHN MUENCH & BRENDA MUENCH	MAHREE SKALA	LORRY DREIER & DOUG PRIVITT
4/28	SUSAN DUNHAM		LENA MUENCH	JOSH MUENCH & TED DACHROEDEN

COLUMBIA UCC CHURCH COUNCIL

Moderator:

Kurt Heine

heinekurt@gmail.com

Vice Moderator:

Jerry Kiesling

rollzierp50@gmail.com

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Alethea Tennill

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Little One's Day Out:

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Membership & Care:

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Nurture & Education:

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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

Sundays have gotten a little more lively for parents at CUCC thanks to Lena and others in the Nurture and Ed committee who came up with the "Raising Good Humans" discussion group. We have met several times over the past couple months to talk about the joys and challenges of raising children. It's a judgement-free zone where we can both vent frustrations and celebrate milestones that come with being parents. And it doesn't hurt that there are doughnuts! The parents of the older kids have been answering questions like "at what age are sleep overs appropriate"? While the parents of the younger kids spark memories for others on those words that keep getting mispronounced and may or may not sound like words no two year old should know! The group plans on continuing to meet about twice per month and welcome anyone who needs a space to share community of parenthood.

The Nominating Committee is also hard at work finding new Council members for the next term! If you are interested in church leadership, talk to Vice Moderator [Jerry Kiesling](#)! Our Annual Meeting will be May 19. We will be electing the new Council, talking about our budget, and asking the Congregation to approve the Endowment Fund guidelines.

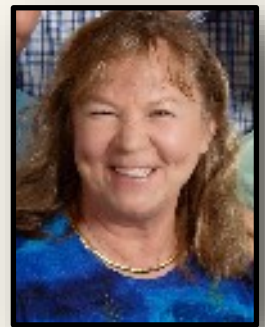
Respectfully Submitted,
Kurt Heine, Moderator



Fellowship & Hospitality Ministry Team

Greetings! Well, Spring has sprung, and I and my bees are enjoying the bounteous offerings of this time of year. The trees, flowers, and even some weeds are in full bloom, offering their nectar and pollen to the bees, who in return, pollinate the plants. The old adage, "to give is to receive," comes to mind. When we offer our time, talent, and resources to our church family and beyond, we receive joy, compassion, contentment, and so much more in return. A friend of mine, who occasionally helps us at Loaves and Fishes, states, "It just makes me feel good." How wonderful is that? If you too, want to feel Blessed, you can volunteer to help with the Easter bake sale and breakfast (set-up, clean-up), or on Earth Day there will be a taco bar, or plan to plant a new tree in the church yard! There are always things to do. If you are interested in giving your time, talent, energy, thoughts, etc.... Please come to our next Fellowship and Hospitality Ministry Team meeting on April 22 at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. I look forward to seeing you there.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Lorber
Fellowship and Hospitality
Ministry Team Chair



Save The Date for VBS!

EVENINGS
JULY 29-31



MORE INFO
TO COME

CUCC Church Council

CUCC Council Meeting—February 20, 2024

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

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

Christine Staelens made a motion to approve the agenda with a second from Lorry Dreier. The motion passed. Tricia Price made a motion to approve the January minutes with a second from Sue Ann Schaefer. Motion passed. Kurt Heine discussed our book *Reorganized Religion* Chapter 9, "Choosing the Future". This chapter discusses 2 Different churches that were each having issues so they merged so they would continue to thrive. We must be willing to embrace change to survive and thrive in the future. Mary Lorber Solt will discuss Chapter 10 next time.

Unfinished Business:

- Policy and Procedures Manual Update - Personnel Committee did not meet before the Council meeting.
- Erica and LODO team have made suggestions to Policy and Procedures Manual. It will be discussed at the next meeting.
- The Inclusion Ramp for Sanctuary has arrived
- Land Donation Update - Sue Ann Schaefer e-mailed a signed contract to the owner.
- Nominating Committee - Jerry Kiesling proposed that Brent Marcks, Jerry Kiesling, Kristy Hayward, Lea Marienfeld and Danielle Dreier for the nominating committee.
- Outreach Events - The Trivia Night on May 11 has been confirmed and more information is being gathered for the Car Show on August 24.

New Business:

- Partnership with Quorus - Quorus contacted Pastor Rick about using our space when they need to rehearse for their shows. After some discussion, Ted Dachroeden made a motion to allow Quorus to share our space. Lorry Dreier seconded the motion. Motion passed.
- Establish an Endowment Fund - On March 17, Fellowship Sunday, Matt Wagner will discuss endowments at a luncheon after church. The Endowment Funds would be used to supplement the budget of the church. Motion coming from committee to ask membership to establish an Endowment Fund at CUCC. Motion passed. There is also talk of establishing a LODO fund that would go out to LODO alumni.
- Open and Affirming Convocation will be held on March 2.
- LODO is planning on holding a Rummage Sale in June.
- Shelly Adams is graduating May 17.

Pastor's Report: Pastor's Report is attached. He talked about how a three-legged stool is like faithful Stewardship: Annual Giving, Capital Campaigns and Endowments. Financials were presented. We were above budget in Joyful Giving in January.

Ministry Reports:

- Building and Grounds - The fire department asked us to add a Knox Box to our building that will have to be wired into the alarm system for emergencies.
- Fellowship and Hospitality - Upcoming Events: 3/17 Fellowship Sunday, 5/11 Trivia Night, 5/19 Congregational Meeting, 6/2 End of year Picnic.
- Finance and Stewardship - Report Attached and discussed above.
- Inclusion & Affirmation - Report Attached.
- LODO: Lorry Dreier - Report Attached.
- Membership & Care - Report attached. Bring a Friend Sunday is April 21. There will be a Taco Bar after church.
- Nurture & Education - Report Attached.
- Outreach & Advocacy - Habitat for Humanity Breakfast is February 24. March 10 is OGHs. Missourians for Constitution Freedom Advocacy Issue is going on the first 3 Sundays of March.

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Alethea Tennill, Secretary



Bring a Friend Sunday!

Taco Bar- April 21

Everyone at CUCC is invited to Bring a Friend to church on Sunday, April 21! This is a special opportunity to share God's love as exemplified in the ministries of this church. There will be special gift bags given to all guests on that Sunday, as we worship and celebrate fellowship together. Do you know of people in your circle of friends are looking for a faith community?

Don't miss this chance to tell them about CUCC!

Plus- a Taco Bar after worship! The Membership & Care Ministry Team will be supplying all the fixings; you just need to show up *(and bring a friend)!*

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations..." -Matthew 28:19

There are many instances where Jesus calls us to share the Good News of his ministry with everyone; yet often our faith is our best kept secret! "Bring a Friend Sunday" gives us the chance to follow Jesus' Great Commission to share the Inclusive Love of Jesus with everyone!

All dressed up and
no place to grow?
Come to worship on April 21!

*Statistically, 80% of people who
visit a church come because
someone invites them. Don't
underestimate the power of a
personal invitation!
Think outside the box- invite a
friend to church on April 21!*

On Sunday, April 21, your friends will have a chance to experience:

- Sunday School for all ages, from 9:00-10:00 a.m. (including Adult Class)
- Worship in an inclusive community with everyone welcome and included
- Childcare available in the nursery during worship (Kindergarten age and under)
- Special gift for the kids at Children's time
- Special gift for all guests in worship
- Taco Bar following worship
- The loving, inclusive, and affirming identity of the CUCC Congregation

Finance & Stewardship Ministry Team

Can CUCC do a potluck meal? Absolutely! Yummy food, good fellowship and interesting information about how we can keep this good thing going. Matt Wagner from United Church Funds shared information about United Church Funds and how they can provide financial support to our church. We learned how an Endowment Fund for our church could help sustain CUCC and its ministry in the future.

Sharing is such a strength we see every day at Columbia United Church of Christ. Sharing good food at church. Sharing time and food at Loaves and Fishes and the Food Bank. Sharing the good news of Easter with Sunday school activities and Adult Bible study. Sharing your talent singing or playing the bells. Sharing time folding bulletins, giving rides to church, helping with projects for others that they can't do themselves. Financial sharing is something that each of us do. This keeps the ministry of our church going. These are just a few examples of our sharing and I don't get enough space to list them all.

Thank you all!

Respectfully Submitted,
Sue Ann Schaefer



Financial Update

	Actual	Budget	Over/Under
February Income	\$38,190.83	\$27,990.00	\$10,200.83
February Expenses	\$30,332.75	\$32,478.06	(\$2,145.31)
YTD Income	\$80,788.64	\$56,560.00	\$24,228.64
YTD Expenses	\$63,216.67	\$62,743.52	\$473.15
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$17,571.97	\$6,183.52	\$23,755.49
February Joyful Giving	\$36,532.83	\$26,500.00	\$10,032.83
YTD Joyful Giving	\$78,480.64	\$54,000.00	\$24,480.64



Worship Attendance

Date	2/4	2/11	2/14 (Ash Wed.)	2/18	2/25	Total
Attendance	119	97	40	62	84	402

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

April is Autism Awareness Month. Autism is formally known as ‘autism spectrum disorder’ or ASD. Approximately one in 36 children are affected. Through years of scientific study, researchers have gained the increased ability to recognize and diagnose the various characteristics of the condition. Individuals with autism tend to have difficulty with communication and social interactions in comparison to those who are neurotypical. They often have specific interests, and repetitive behaviors making school, work and other areas of life challenging.¹

What causes autism is still under investigation. Possible factors are: older parents, certain genetic conditions, and low birth weight. Some studies show that the rate of autism is increasing. There are several hypotheses as to why, including: prenatal exposure to air pollution and/or certain pesticides; maternal obesity, diabetes, a compromised immune system; a difficult delivery causing oxygen deprivation to the baby.¹

Some examples of symptoms of ASD are: delayed language and movement skills beginning in infancy; delayed cognitive or learning skills; hyperactive, impulsive, or inattentive behavior; anxiety, stress, or excessive worry, repetition of words or phrases (echolalia); repetitive body movements (stims); difficulty adapting to minor changes; obsessive interests; difficulty comprehending social and emotional cues.² These are some of the major symptoms that doctors and parents look out for in children especially.

A diagnosis is the result of examining symptoms to determine an illness or other issue. Diagnosing is the first step to open the doors to understanding what is going on and what to expect from it. In terms of

autism, like many other mental and physical disorders, a diagnosis not only normalizes what's going on with those around us, but opens a dialogue and lets education flow. Like any disorder, autism can vary in intensity for each person living with it. One person may be labeled as what is called “low-functioning”, meaning they need more aid to function at a neurotypical persons level. Another person may be labeled as “high-functioning”, meaning they may only need help sometimes or on certain things or maybe not at all. While some may fall into the low or high functioning categories, some may be in the middle. It is known as an Autism Spectrum Disorder because each person is somewhere on a *spectrum*.

Part of awareness month is not just reading articles or donating money, but truly understanding all sides of the community. Some people with ASD strongly dislike the idea of a cure, because they are not broken or ill. Some people with ASD strongly want a cure to be found or created so they can live a “normal” life.³ This is just one example of discussions going on in the community. There are also talks of what therapies and symptom controls are helpful versus harmful, such as Applied Behavior Analysis therapy. The best way to learn about ASD and what life is like for people who are diagnosed with it is to talk to them in person or read their books or articles - learn from the source.

¹ <https://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/topics/conditions/autism>

² <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/signs.html>

³ <https://www.nbcnews.com/health/kids-health/cure-autism-not-so-fast-n1055921>

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

KidSight Vision Screenings

Free vision screenings were provided by KidSight on Mar 5 and Mar 6. KidSight uses a completely non-invasive method to screen young children for Nearsightedness, Farsightedness, Astigmatism, Amblyopia, Anisometropia, Anisocoria, and Misalignment. Each year, KidSight alerts parents of vision concerns that were previously unknown, allowing for follow-up with an eye doctor. You can give to this important non-profit organization at <https://kid-sight.org/give/>. Every \$8.00 you give supports a free vision screening and follow-up services for one child. This screening could lead to the early detection of vision problems and prevent a lifetime of possible vision loss. Make a donation today!

Conference on the Young Years

LODO Staff attended the 51st Annual Conference on the Young Years on Friday March 8 and Saturday March 9. By providing professional development opportunities, we invest in our staff to provide an intentional, loving, and developmentally appropriate preschool experience for our LODO students. Conference on the Young Years also serves to provide team building for our staff, which creates a cohesive teaching team. We enjoyed three keynote speakers as a group: Kim Strobel's, "The Science of Happiness: Ignite Your Spark & Increase Your Potential", Dr. Joe Sanfelippo's, "Lead From Where You Are", and Mr. Roye Moye III's, "Changing the Future of STEM Education with STEMusic".

Strobel's presentation educated the audience on what happiness scientifically is and how it works. She goes on to explain how we can reprogram our brains to become more fulfilled and positive and step into our own power of happiness. A statistic that stood out was that employees are ten times more engaged, thirty-one percent more productive, and three times more creative when happiness and well-being are prioritized.

Dr. Sanfelippo's keynote focused on the word "just". He explained that we are conditioned to think we are "just"- just a teacher, just a director, just so on and so forth. This "just" is followed by reasons we think something *can't* happen. Leadership is not a title- it's an action. Leading with INTENTION creates purpose. Leading with CONNECTION creates momentum. Leading with DIRECTION creates collective efficacy. Leading with all three in mind will not only build your capacity, but foster an environment where everyone in your organization has the best opportunity to lead from where they are.

Mr. Moye's talk discussed the lack of racial diversity in STEM. As an aerospace engineer, he has witnessed this first hand. His experiences encouraged him to create STEMusic, an organization that encourages students to pursue STEM fields by educating through the medium of music. Moye performs songs that describe how chemical reactions work, the formulas used to solve equations, and more. He shares these songs and musical examples with educators so they can empower their students seeking STEM in a relatable and memorable way.

Staff also took various breakout sessions during the conference for training in a variety of developmental areas. Our staff were eager to share the information from their individual sessions to help our team grow as a whole.

In Love and Laughter,
Erika Maltsbarger



2024-2025 Enrollment Is Open

Little One's Day Out is enrolling for the
2024-2025 School Year!

August 26, 2024-May 16, 2025

Lightning Bugs Class

Age 1 Before Aug 1, 2024

Lambs Class

Age 2 Before Aug 1, 2024

Lions/Leopards Class

Age 3 Before Aug 1, 2024

Leap Frogs/Leopards Class

Age 4 Before Aug 1, 2024

www.columbiaucc.com/lodohome

LittleOnesDayOut@yahoo.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL

8

APRIL 8
LODO CLOSED

11

APRIL 11
LITERACY NIGHT - 6:00-7:30PM

15-19

APRIL 15-19
STUDENT CONFERENCE WEEK

APRIL LEARNING THEMES

Community Helpers/Giving to Others
Transportation
Creation
Spring/Bugs/Flowers

Membership and Care Ministry Team

Welcome Roger and Debra Meers!

Roger and Debra previously attended St. John UCC in St. Charles, MO. Roger was an accountant and enjoys fishing, hunting, woodworking, and gardening. Debra enjoys crocheting, reading, fishing, and baking. They have one daughter who lives in Overland Park, KS, one son who lives in Columbia, MO, and one son who lives in Chesterfield, MO. They have seven grandchildren. You may not see Roger and Debra around Columbia UCC from spring-fall. They spend these months relaxing at Lake of the Ozarks. Ted and Mona Dachroeden are their sponsors. Join me in welcoming Roger and Debra to our church family!



Health Ministry Care Team Lunch & Learn: Coping with Emotions from Life Changes: April 28

You won't want to miss our next Lunch & Learn on April 28 by Corinne Remeika. It will be in Fellowship Hall right after church. It's a topic that has touched us all: coping with emotions from life changes. Changes in life occur constantly. They can be gradual or sudden and unexpected. These changes evoke feelings ranging from happiness to sadness and everything in between. They present us with new opportunities for emotional healing, new meaning in our life's journey and in our understanding of God's will for us. Come learn strategies to help you and your loved ones cope with these changes, embrace your feelings, and grow toward acceptance. Corinne will have activities to help move you through this process. This session will include the phases of grief, the process of actively mourning loss, and resources available to help. Information will also be shared to help children become aware of changes they experience from minor day-to-day ones to major life changes and losses. This approach can help develop resilience in adapting to changes we all face.

Please RSVP to [Anne Heine](#) or sign up in the Narthex by April 21 so we have enough food. Let me know if you have any questions. Thanks in advance to Corinne for sharing her wealth of knowledge and personal experiences to help us all.

Grief booklets for members

Did you know the membership and care ministry team distributes grief booklets to members during times of loss? In the following excerpt, Alisa Lau-Sieckman describes the booklets. Grief - we all experience it at one time or another. It is mostly associated with loss: the loss of a job, a home, a beloved pet, or one's health to name a few. But the biggest loss we experience seems to be the loss of a loved one. In 1975, Kenneth C. Haugk, a psychologist and pastor, created a non-denominational, not-for-profit Christian educational organization known as Stephen Ministries which is based in St. Louis. The main function is to train leaders capable of assisting those who are facing the crisis of loss. Rev. Haugk has written four pamphlets specifically on grief. They are given to a family experiencing loss, one at a time, over a period of a year. They are entitled: *A Time to Grieve*; *Experiencing Grief*; *Finding Hope and Healing*; *Rebuilding and Remembering*. CUCC has purchased sets of these pamphlets to be given, at timed intervals, to assist families experiencing loss. I received my first pamphlet three months after my husband's passing. I found all of them to be extremely helpful in my journey through grief. He includes quotes, anecdotes, personal experience and scripture to guide the reader through the maze that encompasses one dealing with such a heavy loss. It is such a blessing to be in a congregation that supports and advocates for the mental and spiritual health of each member, through all walks of life and beyond.

"Death leaves a heartache no one can heal, Love leaves a memory no one can steal"

~ An Irish headstone

Health Ministry Request: We want You!!!

Requests are picking up, so if you have a car and a desire to help someone in need of transportation, you'd be a perfect addition our team! Contact

[Anne Heine](#) or call her at 573-529-1543. We'd love to have you!

Thanks in advance for your consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,
Judi Privitt



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 a.m. until the end of Worship. The nursery welcomes all children, ages kindergarten and younger.

Events Coming Up

Earth Day – Sunday, April 21 – Nurture & Education Ministry Team will be hosting a CUCC Table at Columbia's Earth Day Celebration downtown. If you would like to help staff the table, anytime between 11:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., please contact Pat Forward at pdfoward@msn.com. We will also be having a Special Sunday during the Sunday School hour on April 21, celebrating Earth Day, for all children and youth.

Summer Camp at Camp Mo-Val – Please see Pastor Rick if you are interested in your children attending camp this summer at Camp Mo-Val. CUCC will pay \$400 towards each camper's fee to attend.

Vacation Bible School (VBS) - July 29-31, 2024. Save these evenings for your children, three years through 5th grade, to experience our exciting annual VBS. Thank you to Lena Muench and Gina Pierson for co-chairing this event.

Why We Need to Read Bible Stories to Our Young Children

Article by Zrinka Peters

It is important and valuable for those of us who are parents (or grandparents!) to read the Bible with our children, starting very young with simple, sweet toddler Bibles, and progressing through the more age-appropriate children's Bibles as they get older. Kids find the stories interesting and exciting, and love to hear about the adventures of Moses, David, Jonah, Esther, and others. For young children, many of the Old Testament stories, in particular, are colorful, easy to follow and dramatic.

We are helping them understand that:

- The Bible is God's book and it is important. Kids quickly pick up on the fact that, if it is important enough to mom or dad to keep on coming back to that children's Bible again and again, there is something really important about it. It will become important to them too.
- God is a miracle-worker and helps Their people. It's impossible to read about the Exodus, even in the simplest children's Bible, and miss the lesson that God is active in human affairs and wants to help Their children. The lesson that God is powerful, loving, and deeply interested in human beings is a simple and obvious, but deep lesson.
- God works in ways that we don't expect. Blood on doorposts? Manna from heaven? How surprising! The walls of Jericho crumbling without any physical human effort? Shocking! God using a great fish to teach Jonah a lesson? Who would have thought? Kids are rightfully amazed and surprised by these things, as they should be. Without the cynicism and doubt that prevents so many adult minds from experiencing awe, children read and develop a simple, beautiful faith in an amazing God whose ways are higher and more powerful than our own ways.
- Faith and obedience lead to blessings, and sin can lead to problems. From Adam and Eve, to Sarah, to David, Jonah, Hannah and more, the message that to trust and obey God is clearly the better way to go is woven through the Bible from beginning to end.
- God makes — and keeps — promises. When God promised to save Noah and his family from the Flood, They did. When God promised Abraham and Sarah a long-desired son, Isaac was the answer. When God promised to fight for Joshua and lead him into the Promised Land, They did. Through these stories our children learn that God can be trusted to fulfill Their Word.

Sitting down regularly with our kids and reading Bible stories seems like such a simple little thing. It doesn't take a theology degree or advanced learning to sit and lovingly read with our kids. But that time together gives them a valuable foundation to build on. The seeds that are planted in the process promise to take root and flower into greater spiritual and personal growth down the road.

Respectfully Submitted,
Pat Forward



It's Time to Clean Up!
Come Celebrate Earth Day on April 20
by showing our love for God's creation

CUCC's "Clean Up Columbia Day" is Saturday, April 20, 9-11 a.m. We'll clean up the trash along I-70 Drive NW—last year we picked up 43 bags full. Many hands make light work, so please sign up on the list in the Gathering Area, email [Mahree Skala](mailto:Mahree.Skala) or you can call her at 573-474-2195.

RAIN DATE is May 4, 9:00-11:00 am.

Let us know if you're coming so we have plenty of supplies. Cloth gloves, reflective vests, etc. will be provided. Bring your favorite gloves if you prefer and wear sturdy shoes/boots. Older children and youth are welcome to come with their parents.



**Calling all Sunday School
Kiddos/Youth! (ages 3-12th grade)**

**Join us for
EARTH SUNDAY
Sunday, April 21 @ 9:00**
Upstairs in Sunday School rooms

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

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



**RAISING
GOOD
HUMANS**

**Have Kids?
This is for
YOU!**

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

Sunday, April 14: 9-10 a.m.
Sunday, April 28: 9-10 a.m.
Sunday, May 19: 9-10 a.m.

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

Nursery care provided for littles ages 2 and under.

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



CUCC ANNUAL MEETING

Mark your calendars for the CUCC Annual Meeting, May 19 right after worship!

We will gather together for a potluck meal and conduct the annual business of the church.

The focus of this meeting will be educational; to illustrate the way our Annual Budget works in a fun, creative way. The Church Council is planning skits, graphics, and other artistic expression to make this a dynamic, interactive event. Who knows? You may learn a thing or two about "how the sausage is made."

We will also elect new Council members, vote on the establishment of an Endowment Fund, and talk about other new and exciting ideas that will be coming our way in the years to come! Be here on May 19!

Worship & Music Ministry Team

As we enter the Easter Season, I have been revisiting all of the great choral music associated with the Easter season. The piece I most frequently associate with Easter is "The Messiah" by George Friedrich Handel. If you don't know that piece by name, you will likely know its most famous movement, "The Hallelujah Chorus". This piece is a nearly 3 hour long oratorio. Like an opera, an oratorio is a musical dramatic work with a full orchestra. It tells an extended story. Unlike opera, there is no scenery, costumes, and stage acting. Singers frequently refer to oratorio as "park-and-bark," i.e. they stand in one place and sing.

The text for Handel's Messiah comes from the book of Isaiah and it is divided into three parts: the first are prophecies regarding the Messiah that will come, second is the birth and life of Jesus, the third the death and Resurrection of Jesus.

This story is told in a number of ways. Soloists will sing speech-like figures that we call "recitative". It is mostly expository and sets the music up for the chorus pieces.

In what some believe to be "Heavenly inspiration," Handel wrote the entire oratorio in 24 days. The Messiah is likely the most-frequently used piece in all of choral music.

Respectfully Submitted,
Casey Wood,
Music Coordinator



SPECIAL GUEST BIBLICAL SCHOLAR AT CUCC APRIL 21 & 28

On April 21 & 28, we will have as our guest Rev. Dr. Clint McCann, Eden Seminary Professor of Old Testament Studies as our guest! He will be leading a special expanded Adult Class on these two Sundays and will be featured prominently in worship as well. Professor McCann is an authority on the Old Testament, especially the Book of Psalms. He is the author of several Psalms studies and interpretive texts. Watch for more information in Friday emails as we get closer to April 21, and plan to be here at 9:00 a.m. to hear more from Dr. McCann!

WELCOME TO QUORUS!

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

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

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

A true partnership could mean...

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

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

Outreach & Advocacy Ministry Team

The April CUCC shift will be at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 23 at the Food Bank on Vandiver Drive. Sign up at [here](#) to join the fun, fellowship, and good work. We had 15 adult and youth volunteers in February - let's see if we can keep it up! Helpers included: Jo Ellen Grace, Rita Grace, Mark Duncan, Lauren Helmreich, Connie Loveless, Jessica Lucas, Kennedy Lucas, John, Brenda, Lena and Landon Muench, Judi Privitt, Mahree Skala, Tricia Soncasie, and Llona Weiss. For more information or if you have trouble signing up, contact [Mahree Skala](mailto:skalamahree@yahoo.com) at skalamahree@yahoo.com or 573-474-2195.



Alpha Hart Lewis Elementary School (AHL) is so thankful for our CPS Friend Partnership! They tell me every time I am at the school. Again, and again, thank YOU, CUCC members for your support for our public schools. In case you did not see them, Principal Minear, Assistant Principal Isenogle, and Teacher Tawya Rivers were at our CUCC Habitat for Humanity breakfast on February 24 and had the opportunity to visit with several folks. After receiving a call from AHL, we were able to help another family by purchasing needed pants for a student. We will be collecting snacks for students in April (deadline April 14) to help them during their MAP testing week (goldfish, fruit snacks, granola, mints, etc. - no dairy & no peanuts), and looking for CUCC volunteers to help at the AHL School Carnival on Friday, May 10 from 5:30-7:00 p.m. Pastor Rick and I will be meeting with AHL on April 10, and with the Superintendent/CPS Faith community advisory group on April 22.



The March 18 meal at L&F consisted of chicken tetrazzini with veggies (prepared by Mary Lorber and Val Young), salad (donated by Patty), bread and an assortment of cookies.

Approximately 100 people were served and 45 seconds were given out. Servers were Pastor Rick, Patty Beeson, Judi Privitt, Jim Loveless, Bill & Val Young, Debby, and Tom & Mary Lorber-Solt. Thank you to everyone! This was our last month serving at Wilkes. Starting in April, we will move to RATI.

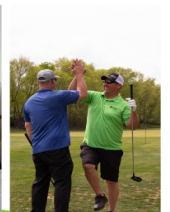


COME GOLF WITH EMMAUS

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

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

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



Emmaus

APRIL 26, 2024 ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

Thank You!

“Dear Collaborators,
The Food Bank’s vision to end hunger in the communities we serve is an immense challenge, but generosity like yours gives us confidence that food security for all is possible. Thank you for your donation of 183 pounds of food in October-December of 2023. With your help, we will be able to provide more meals to more people in our service area. Thank you for entrusting us with your charitable donation. Your gift truly makes a difference in the lives of those in your community.

Gratefully,
Tony Wirkus
Director of Food Strategy and Safety”

“Dear Columbia United Church of Christ,
On behalf of the Harry S. Truman Memorial VA Hospital patients and staff, we would like to extend our appreciation to your for the following donation of \$916.50 to Fisher House.

It is through the efforts of community partners like you that allow us to continue the quality care and services that we seek to provide for our deserving Veterans. We look forward to the opportunity to work with you again for future events. Thank you for your continued support and advocacy.

Sincerely
Ron Graves
Chief, Center for Development
& Civic Engagement”

“Thank you for acting against hunger with your recent gift of \$200. Your support makes a tangible and lasting difference in the lives of many individuals and families across our 32-county service area.

About one in nine Missourians struggles with hunger regularly. Many of these individuals are facing difficult trade-offs, especially now as they choose between purchasing groceries and paying other necessary bills like heat. The reality of food insecurity keeps our organization committed to helping those who need it the most. Through the generosity of community members like you, though, The Food Bank is able to serve around 100,000 Missourians each month.

Thank you for your meaningful contribution to ending hunger.

Gratefully,
Lindsay Young Lopez
President and CEO”

“We deeply thank you for your generous donation to Show-Me Central Habitat for Humanity. One of our future Habitat Homeowners, Erica, says, ‘Thank you for helping bring my dream to fruition. Thank you for helping bring me a sense of grounding, a safe and clean space to call home. Thank you for helping me build generational wealth. Thank you for the confirmation that all my hard work through the years has not been in vain.’

Thanks to donors like you we were able to build 4 homes in 10 days in Boone Prairie, our new subdivision dedicated to affordable housing in Columbia.

Sincerely,
Ashley Switzer
Director of Community Outreach
Show Me Central Habitat for Humanity”

“Thank you so much for starting out the new year with giving! We are so grateful for your gift to support the work of Love Columbia. It takes faith and courage to begin a new year with generosity. It shows that the value you place on helping others is deeply rooted and part of your routine life practice. Your example is very encouraging to us and demonstrates exactly what we hope to promote in the lives of those we serve. Thank you again for your January gift to launch Love Columbia into another year of helping our neighbors chart a positive course for their lives. You are starting us off with encouraged hearts and the resources we need to do our best work.

With appreciation,
Jane Williams
Executive Director
of Love Columbia”

“We are so grateful for all of the contributions we received in 2023, including direct financial gifts like yours. You contributed a total of \$250 in 2023, which we greatly appreciate. Your support helps us raise awareness and makes it possible for the Coalition to offer critical resources and assistance to those affected by trafficking.

Many thanks!
Audrey Kauffman
Executive Director
Stop Human Trafficking Coalition

International Missions

CUCC IS WORKING IN INDIA

Family Village Farm (FVF) in India is a home, community, and school for children and older adults without families and homes. Children and adults live and work together, creating a community that benefits all. FVF is a Global Ministries Child and Elder Sponsorship partner, providing children and elders with food, clothing, shelter, education, training, and, most importantly, love and a sense of family. FVF helps children and elders claim and develop their identity, dignity, and self worth. By addressing the needs of vulnerable people, Family Village Farm plays a crucial role in creating a brighter and more secure future for children and elders while contributing positively to the community.

Through [Global Ministries](#), CUCC is a partner in mission with Family Village Farm (FVF) and, through them, we are actively working in many families in India. This month, please keep Global Ministries, Family Village Farm, and the people of India in your prayers!



The Global Ministries Advocacy and Education team engages the church in addressing systemic inequalities, advocating for human rights, and promoting social justice on a global scale. To learn more, [CLICK HERE](#).

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% of sponsorship gifts will be used for 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.



On the Church Calendar in April

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
		10 a.m. - Quilters 10:30 a.m. - Staff Meeting	6 p.m. - Chapel Ringers 7 p.m. - Celebration Singers			
7	8 LODO OFF	9	10	11	12	13
9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Fellowship 10:30 a.m. Worship 7:00 p.m. Quorus Rehearsal	9 a.m. - LODO Staff Meeting 6 p.m. - Girl Scouts 6:30 p.m. - Outreach & Advocacy Ministry Team Meeting	10 a.m. - Quilters 10:30 a.m. - Staff Meeting	6 p.m. - Prayer Shawl 6 p.m. - Chapel Ringers 7 p.m. - Celebration Singers	9:30 a.m. - Women's Fellowship 6 p.m. - LODO Literary Night		
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Fellowship 10:30 a.m. Worship 12:00 p.m. - Inclusion & Affirmation Ministry Team 12:00 p.m. - Youth Event 7:00 p.m. - Quorus Rehearsal	4:30 p.m. - Loaves & Fishes 5:30 p.m. - LODO Ministry Team Meeting	10 a.m. - Quilters 10:30 a.m. - Staff Meeting 6:30 p.m. - Council Meeting	10 a.m. - Pastor Rick leads worship at The Bluffs 6 p.m. - Chapel Ringers 7 p.m. - Celebration Singers			9:00 a.m. - Clean Up Columbia
21 Bring a Friend!	22	23	24	25	26	27
9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Fellowship 10:30 a.m. Worship 12:00 p.m. - Taco Bar 7:00 p.m. - Quorus Rehearsal	6:30 p.m. - Fellowship & Hospitality Ministry Team Meeting	10 a.m. - Quilters 10:30 a.m. - Staff Meeting 5:30 p.m. - Food bank 6:30 p.m. - Clergy Personnel Committee Meeting	6 p.m. - Chapel Ringers 7 p.m. - Celebration Singers			
28	29	30				
9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Fellowship 10:30 a.m. Worship 7:00 p.m. - Quorus Rehearsal		10 a.m. - Quilters 10:30 a.m. - Staff Meeting				

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](mailto:rick@columbiaucc.com).
rick@columbiaucc.com

**Become
Part of
Our
Church
Family**

Columbia United Church of Christ Open and Affirming/Inclusion Covenant

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

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

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

LODO PLAYGROUND RESPECT

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

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