

Columbia United Church Of Christ



January 28, 2024

“Inclusion Covenant Sunday”



CUCC

Columbia United Church of Christ

CUCC Open and Affirming/Inclusion Covenant:

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

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

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

*Columbia
United Church
Of Christ*



January 28, 2024

10:30 a.m.

"Inclusion"

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

*"... God alone is my Rock and my Salvation;
My fortress, I shall not be shaken..." -Psalm 62:6*

Welcome and Greetings

Pastor Rick

Prelude

"Theme with Variations "

Steve Jannetti
Robert Schumann

Carrying in the Light of Christ

*Call to Worship

(Based on Psalm 62)

Jim Loveless

Our souls wait for God;
Our Salvation comes from God.

**God alone is our rock and our salvation.
God is our fortress; we shall never be shaken.**

Our Souls wait for God;
Our Hope comes from God.

**God brings us deliverance and honor.
A mighty rock; our refuge is in God.**

We put our trust in God and pour out our hearts.
God is a refuge for the weary and the longing.

**No matter who we are, we are equal in God's eyes;
Steadfast Love is God's gift to each one of us!
Come, let us worship God!**

*Gathering Hymn

"O Lord, You Called Disciples"

(insert)

*From "Songs of Grace" by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, 2000
To the tune "The Day of Resurrection" found on page #245*

*Opening Prayer

Jim Loveless

God of challenge and call and incredible fish stories, we give thanks for the Wisdom found in the story of Jonah and the Galilean fishers, Simon, Andrew, James, and John. We know you call us to do great things in the world but sometimes all we want to do is sit and fish. Forgive us our times of complacency, patient God; that we may be inspired to put down the nets that bind us and chose to fish for people instead. In Jesus' name we pray; Amen.

*Assurance of Blessing

Pastor Rick

Jonah heard God's call and resisted. Often we are like Jonah, trying to be God rather than do God's work. But even when we err in such ways, God loves us and forgives us. Through our repentance and God's grace, we are forgiven, beloved, and blessed. Praise be to God!

*Prayer Response

“Weave”

*Weave, weave, weave us together!
Weave us together in unity and love!
Weave, weave, weave us together!
Weave us together; together in love!*

*Sharing God's Gift of Peace

Pastor Rick

May God's Peace be with you!
And also with you!

Children's Time

Pastor Rick

Response:

“This Little Light of Mine”

#525

(Sung as children return to their seats)

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

Old Testament Lesson

Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Jim Loveless

The story of Jonah has very little to do with fish, despite what Veggie Tales tells you. The lesson of the castor bean plant is much more important. What concern does Jonah have for the people of Nineveh, compared to the castor bean plant? What is really “fishy” here?

Page #753

Gospel Lesson

Mark 1:14-20

Jim Loveless

Jesus goes fishing for disciples; in doing so, he finds four fishers, Simon, Andrew, James, and John. They are doing what they have always done, but Jesus challenges them to do something new— fish for people. Immediately, they follow him.

Page #812

Anthem

“Saints Bound for Heaven”

Celebration Singers
Mack Wilberg

Sermon

“God is Still Speaking”

Pastor Rick

*Hymn

“You Have Come Down to the Lakeshore”

#173

***Affirmation of Faith (*CUCC Open and Affirming/Inclusion Covenant*)**

God of rainbow covenants and inclusive love, we gather here as your church, committed to actively pursuing inclusion and affirmation in our interactions with everyone but especially your most vulnerable children, those who have been disenfranchised and dismissed by others.

Exemplifying your love, we now gather at this time, reciting together the Open and Affirming/Inclusion covenant we, your people, have adopted as our guide:

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.

God of love and grace, help us to keep this covenant close and fresh in our hearts, in our minds, and in our interactions in your world.

This we pray in the name of the one who taught us to exemplify love, your son Jesus Christ. Amen.

Community Prayer & Silent Prayer

The LORD's Prayer

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

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

Columbia United Church of Christ

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Organist/Accompanist: Steve Jannetti	steve.jannetti@yahoo.com
LODO Director: Erika Maltsbarger	littleonesdayout@yahoo.com
Custodian: Caleb Berry	calebprenticeberry@gmail.com

Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Fred Brandenburg

TODAY IN WORSHIP:

Worship Leader:	Jim Loveless
Ushers:	Lloyd Viehland & Phillip Neale
Greeters:	Brenda & John Muench
Technology:	Carissa Graves & John Graves
Hospitality:	Mary Lorber
Council Stewards:	Mary Lorber

NEXT SUNDAY IN WORSHIP:

Worship Leader:	Mark Duncan
Ushers:	Llona Weiss & Charlie Marcks
Greeters:	Helen Schultz
Technology:	Judi & Doug Privitt
Hospitality:	Pat Forward & Tricia Price
Council Stewards:	Pat Forward & Tricia Price



Online giving

COLUMBIA UCC CHURCH COUNCIL

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Worship & Music:	Mike Pierson	mike.pierson.1969@gmail.com
Pastor:	Rev. Rick Oberle	rick@columbiaucc.com

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NURSERY CARE is available for children in kindergarten and younger in room #201 in the educational wing. If you need help finding it, ask an usher!

ROOM AT THE INN

Room at the Inn is open and looking for volunteers! If you would like to sign up, or for more information, talk to Shelly Adams. Thank you for volunteering!

BOOK STUDY WITH PASTOR RICK – JANUARY/FEBRUARY

We are studying the acclaimed book “How to Fight Racism” by Jemar Tisby four Thursday evenings at 6:30 p.m. in January/February, thru 2/8. This book is about taking a stand for justice in our world today by confronting racial injustice. Copies are available in the church office. The book is also available as an audio book through the Columbia Public Library online app.

DAYTIME BIBLE STUDY DURING LENT

Pastor Rick will be hosting a daytime Bible Study once a week during Lent! We will meet at 12:00, four Tuesdays in Lent– March 5, 12, 19 & 26. Bring your lunch and eat with us! We will be studying several women of the Bible, from both the Old and New Testaments.

FASTNACHT

Fastnacht is Tuesday, February 13! There are many volunteer opportunities for you to help. Please indicate how you are willing to serve; sign up sheets are in the Gathering Area by the coatroom.

PANCAKE BREAKFAST FOR HABITAT– FEBRUARY 24

The annual Pancake Breakfast to benefit Habitat for Humanity will be February 24 this year, serving starting at 7:00 a.m. There are many opportunities to help serve, and tickets available to sell. See Brent Marcks or Doug Privitt if you would like to help; and plan to bring a crew to eat!

THIS WEEK’S CALENDAR

Sun	1/28	<i>Inclusion Covenant Sunday– 5 year celebration!</i>	
		Sunday School	9:00 a.m.
		Fellowship Time	10:00 a.m.
		Worship (in person and livestream)	10:30 a.m.
		MBSR Class in Fellowship Hall	12:00 p.m.
Mon	1/29	Clergy Personnel Committee	6:30 p.m.
Tue	1/30	Quilters	10:00 a.m.
		Staff Meeting	10:30 a.m.
Wed	1/31	Chapel Ringers/Celebration Singers	6:00/7:00 p.m.
Thu	2/1	Book Study in Fellowship Hall	6:30 p.m.
Sun	2/4	Sunday School	9:00 a.m.
		Fellowship Time	10:00 a.m.
		Worship (in person and livestream)	10:30 a.m.
		MBSR Class	12:00 p.m.
		Inclusion & Affirmation Ministry Team	12:00 p.m.

Columbia UCC Prayer List

Please keep in your prayers this week . . .

Barry Kirchhoff... health issues

Mike Rapp . . . recovering from surgery

Shelly Adams . . . recovering from knee surgery

Steve . . . challenges in life (Pastor Rick's Cousin)

Don Privitt and Family . . . on the loss of Don's sister, Charlene

Students and staff at Alpha Hart Lewis Elementary . . . our partnership friend

The People of Israel/Palestine and Ukraine

Health Issues:

Cliff Beckman, John Adams, Cheryl Cobb

Neal Stumbo (Jean Strothmann's nephew)

Terry & Mike Freeman (friends of the Remeikas)

Stephanie Porter (Phillip Neale's niece)

Sheila . . . challenges in life and faith

The Koerkenmeier & Malicoat Families

Living in Care Facilities:

Bea Gordon, Neal Sprick, Gary Ehrhardt, Vernie Blank,

Living in Independent Living Facilities:

Helen Graves, Don Privitt, Jean Strothman

Serving us in the military:

Christopher Tennill, Dane Wilson, Aaron Dachroeden, Jeffrey Sanderson

Did you know we have a Prayer Team here at CUCC, lifting up the prayer concerns of our congregation? If you are interested in joining our Prayer Team or have a prayer request for our team to lift up please contact

Melba Shaffer (573) 474-2997 whals@centurytel.net

Or Tricia Soncasie (314) 374-7477 tsoncasie@aol.com

CUCC celebrates God's boundless love by:

Welcoming all God's Children;

Nurturing Faith and Spiritual Growth;

Challenging and inspiring everyone with vibrant worship;

Building a supportive church family;

***Transforming both the congregation and community
through service and outreach***

15. O Lord, You Called Disciples

O Lord, you called disciples, proclaiming, "Come and see!"
And so an invitation began your ministry.

Then Andrew called his brother, and Peter came to you;
More men and women followed, and little children, too.

You met a busy woman out in the noon-day sun.

You shared God's love, you listened; you told all she had done.

She called her friends and neighbors and brought them face to face
With you, the living water, the bearer of God's grace.

O Christ, your invitation has reached from year to year!

Through some who heard you calling, a church was founded here.

As faithful people served you a century ago,*

They soon invited others; your church began to grow.

God, by your Holy Spirit, now send us in your name

To serve the lost and outcast, the poor for whom you came.

Through gifts of hope and healing, through loving ministry,

May we reach out, inviting the world to "Come and see!"

*Or "as faithful people served you so many years ago,"

Tune: LANCASHIRE 76.76 D ("The Day of Resurrection!"), Henry Thomas Smart, 1835.

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EQUITY AND INCLUSION

What are the differences between diversity, equity and inclusion?

Diversity refers to representation and acceptance of all genders, all ages, all ethnicities, different physical and neurodiversity abilities, and socioeconomic status.

Equity refers to fair treatment of all people so that norms, practices and policies are in place to ensure identity is not predictive of opportunities or outcomes.

Equity differs from equality in a subtle but important way. While equality assumes that all people should be treated the same, equity takes into consideration a person's unique circumstances, adjusting individual treatment accordingly so that the end result is equal.

Inclusion refers to embracing all peoples allowing them to make meaningful contributions.

This requires the development of an inclusive culture so that all individuals feel that their voices may be heard. An example would be LGBTQ+ folks being comfortable expressing their true selves without fear; that is an inclusive culture.

(Adapted from McKinsey and Company, Aug 2022)

CUCC acknowledges diversity as a fact and is committed to equity and inclusion as acts. Why?

Because, that is what Jesus taught his disciples in so many ways:

Luke 14:13-14 – invite the poor, the lame, the blind to your dinner party

James 2:1-4 – show no partiality between the rich and the poor

John 13:34 – love one another, period

Matthew 8:5-13 – Jesus proclaims God's grace to those not accepted by the majority

And the list goes on... and on... and on

INCLUSION COVENANT FIVE YEAR ANNIVERSARY

CUCC began exploring the idea of becoming an Open and Affirming Congregation in 2016. The congregation took two years to study and educate ourselves on this important step. An Inclusion statement was crafted and we voted in January 2019 to affirm that statement.

Leaning into this ONA statement means we are constantly seeking and learning. We have hosted book studies, inclusive congressional presentations both written and

verbal, and movie nights. We have had guest speakers, participated in peaceful protests for inclusivity as well as taken tours of historical ONA events- both tragic and uplifting. Members have attended Columbia Values Diversity Celebration, Pridefest and engaged with other ONA church families. And, the list goes on. The following is OUR track record since becoming an Open and Affirming congregation 5 years ago...

Accomplishments in 2019:

- We voted to affirm our Inclusion Covenant and become a certified Open and Affirming congregation in the United Church of Christ with an 85% majority.
- We began meeting with the ONA team at Oasis UCC in Jefferson City to see how we could collaborate.
- We hosted a booth at PrideFest in conjunction with Oasis.

Accomplishments in 2020:

- We added an Inclusion and Affirmation Ministry Team to our CUCC by-laws.
- We co-sponsored an event that brought Austen Hartke to Columbia to discuss Christianity and Transgender Inclusion.
- We joined with Oasis UCC to form MONA, the Mid--Missouri Open and Affirming Coalition, to provide a space of welcome and support to other churches seeking to be Open and Affirming (not just UCC), and to provide educational experiences and affirmation for people in the LGBTQIA community.
- We added a rainbow tree to our Christmas decor.
- Responding to the racist abuse experienced in the nation this summer, we focused several events on racism in America.

Accomplishments in 2021:

- The pandemic led us to explore more flexible options this year, like recording videos instead of speaking live in church during Black History Month, and offering hybrid in-person and Zoom discussion after a movie night.
- We investigated how best to provide access to the videos of church services to members who don't have internet access, and the end result was a set of DVDs of recorded services for those members.
- We held a letter-writing campaign to try to get more funding for services for people with developmental disabilities.
- We learned about the General Synod resolution against conversion therapy and hosted a movie night and other activities around that theme.
- We hosted a booth at PrideFest.
- We looked into adding more inclusive artwork to our building, and Lisa Jaberg volunteered to paint three amazing pieces that are now hanging in the gathering area.

Accomplishments in 2022:

- We hosted two book studies on books with racial justice themes.
- We organized an African American history tour of St. Louis, and 12 people participated.
- We installed more diverse artwork: photos from Chiapas, and a new, diverse, Last Supper painting.
- 11 members helped staff our booth at PrideFest.

Accomplishments in 2023:

- Black History tour of downtown Columbia
- Implementation of the Children's Inclusion Bookshelf in the Sanctuary
- Celebrated Black History Month and Pride Month
- Staffed a booth at Pridefest
- Sponsored the Women's Day of Music at the Blue Note
- Provided information about hidden figures in history in worship presentations, bulletins and the Communicator

Moving into the future, CUCC is committed to not only saying we are an Inclusive church, but also, embodying the mission of Jesus Christ, living that ideal of inclusion in all aspects of our ministry.

Jonah 3:1-5

The word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time, saying,

"Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you."

So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days' walk across.

Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's walk. And he cried out, "Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"

And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth.

Jonah 3:10

When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

Mark 1:14-20

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God,

and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."

As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen.

And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people."

And immediately they left their nets and followed him.

As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.