



The Searchlight

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia, Missouri

2615 Shepard Blvd., Columbia, MO 65201 • 573-442-5764 • www.uuchurch.net • Volume 53, Issue 5, January 2014

Worship Services
January 2014
Services begin at 10:30 a.m.

Sunday, Jan. 5

“Commitment and Faith”

Rev. Molly Housh Gordon

As a creed-less tradition, we root our communities in a deep commitment to one another and to an ultimate concern. We will begin our month of exploring the theme of Covenant with reflections on the role covenant plays in our faith tradition and church, both historically and currently.

Sunday, Jan. 12

“Terms and Conditions”

**Rev. Molly Housh Gordon
and James Gordon**

In today’s highly connected, email-and-Facebook-centric world, we enter into contractual and covenantal relationships all the time, but do we know with whom? This Sunday we will explore our relationship to “Big Data” and its potential impact on the human spirit.

Sunday, Jan. 19

**“Martin Luther King Service:
A Call to Action”**

Lay-Led by the Social Action Team

On this Martin Luther King Jr. Sunday, our Social Action team will reflect on the long path to social justice – the path we still journey together. Where have we been, and where are we going? Join us for this inspiring service.

Sunday, Jan. 26

“Vows and Promises”

Rev. Molly Housh Gordon

How does the religious concept of covenant apply to our relationships with partners, families, friends, and loved ones? How are our lives enriched by relational vows and promises, and how do we renew and keep those promises? Join us to explore these questions and more.

Our January Worship Theme: **Covenant**

*Love is the spirit of this church, and service is its law;
this is our great covenant: to dwell together in peace,
to seek the truth in love, and to help one another.*

– James Vila Blake, 1894

As a people of diverse belief and life experience, we are united, not by creed or dogma, but by a solemn and joyful promise – to walk together in the spirit of love toward our vision of deep connection and a world made whole. We are joined together by our covenant. Covenant is a rich concept in the Abrahamic religious traditions and also a historic concept in our particular faith tradition, as it descended from our Puritan ancestors.

Entering a relationship through covenant creates deep connection because it is a choice made freely and intentionally, not by happenstance or coercion. With the vow of covenant, we choose to walk together through the joys and sorrows of life. We experience these vows in many ways in our life together, in marriage vows and the dedication of children, in new member ceremonies and in small groups.

Over and over, as a community of faith, we make promises of compassion and commitment to one another and our community – promises that make possible both trust and vulnerability – and through them a path to spiritual growth.

This month, let us consider deeply our commitments to one another and to the calling of our faith.

See you in church!

Rev. Molly

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January Worship Theme: *Covenant*

Wise words:

“Promises are the uniquely human way of ordering the future, making it predictable and reliable to the extent that this is humanly possible.”

– Hannah Arendt

“Freedom is not the absence of commitments, but the ability to choose – and commit myself to – what is best.”

– Paulo Coelho

“Commitment is an act, not a word.”

– Jean-Paul Sartre

“Without commitment, you cannot have depth in anything, whether it’s a relationship, a business or a hobby.”

– Neil Strauss

Want to reflect further? Check out these resources...

Walking Together: Polity and Participation in UU Churches by Conrad Wright

A House for Hope: The Promise of Progressive Religion for the Twenty-first Century by John Buehrens and Rebecca Parker

Personal Commitments: Beginning, Keeping, Changing by Margaret A. Farley

The Ten Commitments: Translating Good Intentions into Great Choices by David Simon and Deepak Chopra

When you come to a potluck, remember to feed our food barrel...

Planning on attending a potluck? In addition to your food item, please remember to bring non-perishable food items for the food barrels upstairs near the coat rack. When the barrels are full, the food is taken to the Central Pantry, which serves Columbia and Boone County. Many of our neighbors still need help; times are still tough for many.

‘Creativity and Aging through Film’

- *Five Sunday afternoon sessions starting Jan. 26*
- *Contact Rev. Molly if you are interested*

Dr. Rita Cavigioli, University of Missouri professor in Language and Literature, will present this five-week workshop, using film clips as a means to explore five themes relating to creativity and aging:

- **Mentoring:** Transmitting wisdom from elders to younger people.
- **Music:** Engaging with music in later life as performer, composer, conductor or critic.
- **Preserving Cultural Tradition:** Passing on lineage traditions to the next generations.
- **Relationships:** Relating to others and to one’s own process.
- **Service:** Committing to community service as a lifetime discipline.

This class is best suited to individuals who are 40 or older.

YRUU January Schedule

YRUU (Young Religious Unitarian Universalists) is our youth ministry program for high school age youths. Jamilya Batchelder (256-8688) is the adult advisor for the group.

Meetings are generally from noon to 2 p.m. in the lower level of the church.

Jan. 5:

Planning our upcoming semester

Jan. 12:

Ice skating

Jan 19:

City Walk: A tour of Columbia from the eyes of the homeless

Jan 26:

A discussion of privilege led by Colleen Cutts

Minister's Message

'Courageous Love and Radical Welcome'

I want to tell you how very proud I am of our congregation's efforts to open and operate an emergency winter overnight shelter in December for our Columbia neighbors who were without shelter during this cold time of year.

More than 35 individual church members filled one or more of the dozens of shifts it took to run this effort, and at least 10 members helped with cleaning, laundry, and other details. Many more of you flooded our kitchen and halls with much needed donations of food, juice, blankets, pillows, toiletries, and warm clothes for our guests.

I have worked a couple of shifts myself, but other than that, I have largely been only a witness to this herculean effort, this leap of faith.

Led by your Social Action Team with particular coordination by Caya French, Diane Suhler, and Wiley Miller, this incredible undertaking has been *your* doing – *your* hands and hearts stepping fully into our mission of courageous love and radical welcome.

During this holiday season, your hospitality has given sanctuary and shelter to at least 30 individuals whose lives might have otherwise been threatened by dangerous weather conditions.

I could not be more proud or more inspired by you, our community of faith and love.

With Awe, Rev. Molly

Forum Schedule for January 2014

9 a.m. Sundays

The UU Forum, an adult discussion group open to the public, meets on Sundays from 9 to 10 a.m. Conversation and light refreshments are offered along with the discussion. Childcare is offered at no charge in our nursery. If you have ideas for a program or would like to make a presentation at Forum, contact the coordinator, Bill Clark, at 474-4510.

Sunday, Jan. 5

The UUC Peace Building Team will lead us on the topic of "Active Listening."

Sunday, Jan. 12

Dr. Hal Williamson will tell of a career in Health Services. He is director of Health Services for the University of Missouri.

Sunday, Jan. 19

Milbre Burch, master storyteller, will entertain by "Being Milbre."

Sunday, Jan. 26

Dr. Jack Colwill will present on the "Affordable Health Care Act and the Changing Health Care System."

Exploring Spirituality Group

9 a.m. Sundays

On the last Sunday of every month, we will do a Socrates Circle as we have been doing them for the past several months. On other Sundays, we will have a predetermined topic and a presenter who will introduce and set up/facilitate discussion. Everyone is welcome. No fees or registration required. Free childcare is available in the nursery.

Pagans: Exploring our presence at UUC

I have heard from several people lately that they would be interested in a re-energized, re-invented, re-defined Pagan group within the church. So, just in time for Imbolc/Brigid's Feast/Ground Hog Day, I am officially calling a meeting to discuss what kind of presence we would like to have in the church.

Join me at the **Feb. 2 potluck** to talk about the whats, whens and whys of such a presence, and how (or if) you feel you could contribute to make such a group go and grow. We will find a table or a room, and talk until we run out of either ideas or time. I'm betting it will be time.

If you have questions or comments, call me at 696-1784 or email me at oakshaven@socket.net.

– Barbara Carter

Policy governance: Light at the end of the tunnel?

By Steve Scott, 2013-14 President

In the past two months, I have used this pulpit to highlight some of the implications of the growth we are experiencing. Now it's time for a progress report on one of the key tools we're using to deal with growth – policy governance.

As this year's President, I am honored to follow in the footsteps of the visionary predecessors who worked so hard on our move toward policy governance in the past couple of years, including Gregory Brown, Rexanna Ipock-Brown, Stephanie Dorman and Maria Oropallo.

Simply stated, under policy governance, the board develops policies and delegates to the minister as chief of staff the direction of the day-to-day ministries and operations of the church. This enables the board to 1) focus on large issues, 2) delegate with clarity, 3) without meddling, hold the minister, staff and volunteers accountable for achieving the church's ends, and 4) rigorously evaluate the accomplishments of the church – in other words, to truly lead the church.

Many other UU churches have adopted the policy governance model, and their experience has been that it takes several years to put everything in place. We are no exception, but we are now at the point where perhaps we can see the light at the end of the tunnel.

Major progress was made this past year with the adoption last April of three major policies covering "Governance Process," "Board Management Delegation" and "Executive Limitations," which everyone can review along with other policies at http://uuchurch.net/board_policies.htm. Another major accomplishment this past year was the adoption by the congregation of new mission and vision statements developed after an intensive listening campaign.

Here is the status of the main steps necessary to complete our move to policy governance:

- **Creation of "Ends Statements":** Early in 2014 the board expects to endorse ends state-

ments now being created by a board task force based on our mission and vision. The ends statements will define the end results for which our church exists, the beneficiaries of those results, the worth of those results for the beneficiaries, and the costs involved. They will serve as the basis for the board's evaluation of the performance of the minister, staff and volunteers by asking, "Have we achieved or made progress toward our ends?"

- **Oversight and Strategic Planning:** This spring, after the ends statements are in place, the board plans to develop a policy defining how it will oversee accomplishment of the ends and a strategic plan setting out the means by which we will fulfill our mission and vision over a five- to ten-year span. The strategic plan will address program and membership development, staffing, and facilities needs, among other things.

- **Policy Review:** A Policy Review Task Force composed of board and non-board members is making good progress in reviewing old policies, determining which are appropriate as board policies and which should be the subject of administrative policies adopted by the minister, and rewriting policies as needed. We expect to complete this process before June.

- **Bylaws Revision:** A Bylaws Revision Task Force, also composed of board and non-board members, is working on updating our bylaws to conform to policy governance principles and make other desirable changes. After review by the board, proposed bylaws revisions will be submitted to the congregation for approval, perhaps as early as the Annual Congregational Meeting in May.

Even after all these tasks are completed, everyone should keep in mind that church governance will always be a work in progress, requiring continual review and adjustment as we periodically revisit our mission and vision statements and revise our ends statements to meet changing circumstances.

Programs and Events

UUCM Men's Group

The UUCM Men's Group meets on the second, fourth, and fifth Saturdays of each month at 8 a.m. at the Holiday Inn Executive Center. The group is open to all men. There are no fees and no reservations are necessary. The agenda is an open discussion of whatever is on the minds of those in attendance – and breakfast! For more information contact Mehdi Farhangi at 445-6325.

Conversations, Etc.

Conversations, Etc. will meet at the church at noon Wednesday, Jan. 8. Bring a brown bag lunch and a snack to share if you wish. Contact Melinda Farhangi at 445-6325 if you have questions.

UU Book Discussion Group

The UU Book Discussion Group will meet at Upper Crust, 3107 Green Meadows Way, at 5:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 10. Bring a book you have read to discuss briefly. Call Pam Springsteel at 445-0642 if you have questions.

UU Book Table

The Book Table is open the second, third and fourth Sundays before and after services. Newcomers might want to check out the many books on Unitarian Universalism. Parents might want to note the many books on effective parenting and on being a UU Parent. There are books by our own authors, plus books on theology, meditation, current events and just living.

UU Life Writers

UU Life Writers will meet next on Feb. 1 and then will meet on the first and third Saturdays through May and first Saturday of June. All are welcome at 10:30 a.m. in the Centering Room. For more information contact Fran Reynolds at 443-4336 or freynolds@centurytel.net.

Our Presence on the Web

Go to

<http://uuchurch.net>

for complete information on church activities
and our online calendar of events.

Meditation in Nature

Come into the peace of wild things...

Meditation in Nature takes place at Gans Creek Wildlife Area every third Sunday from 9 to 10 a.m. Its purpose is to build a connection between spiritual practice and environmental consciousness, and it is open to all people who love nature. For more information, contact Peter Holmes at 239-7789 or naturemeditation@yahoo.com.

Fair Trade Sales

Starting in January fair trade sales of coffee, tea and chocolate will be held on the second Sunday of each month, rather than the first Sunday as in the past. The sales are sponsored by the Green Sanctuary group and take place in the Greeting Area before and after worship (until 11:45 or noon). Purchases support coffee time after worship and help fund programs for our youth.

If you're interested in working at our fair trade sale table, please contact Ellen Thomas at 999-4615 or ellen.thomas@centurytel.net.

First Sunday Potluck: Jan. 5

On the first Sunday of each month from September through June, we gather for our "First Sunday Potluck" immediately following the worship service. We invite all guests to join us, whether or not they have brought food. Everyone pitches in, making light work of setup, serving and cleanup. We ask those attending to bring a main dish or side dish sufficient to serve six-eight people so we will have plenty of food.



Friday Pie-Day!

Gather with us on the fourth Friday of the month for pie, conversation, and further learning about our month's worship theme.

Join us for pie at 7 p.m. Jan. 24 and stay for our program beginning at 7:30. All ages are welcome. Pie will be provided.

Additional News and Events

New to Unitarian Universalism?

Here are two opportunities to get to know us better:

Jan. 12: On the second Sunday each month, the Membership Team offers “Discover UU.” This is a short (20-30 minute) session after church to answer questions you might have. Whether you are new to Unitarian-Universalism, or coming from another UU church and wanting find out where you fit here, we welcome you.

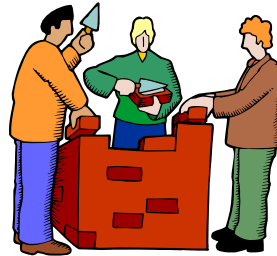
Jan. 19: Do you think you might be ready to join, but still have some questions? On Sunday, Jan. 19, we will offer “Membership 101,” a longer session (from noon to 2 p.m.) which will include more in-depth information. Lunch and child care are provided, so we do request that you RSVP to Barbara Carter at 696-1784 or oakshaven@socket.net.

FOUNDERS DAY

Trivia Night and Chili Cook Off

6 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 25

All proceeds will go to support the Honduras Latrine Project



\$20 per person, \$12 for students, \$100 for a team of six.
Tickets for sale at the door or at UUCS on Jan. 5, 12 and 19.

Cash prizes! Child Care! Silent Auction! 50-50 Raffles!
Confident in your chili? Enter the cook off for \$10 and win big!

Join us for a night of fun, prizes, and good food.
For more information contact Allie at alliegassmann@socket.net

Diversity Breakfast and other Social Action Team news

The Social Action Team invites you to attend the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Diversity Breakfast and related events. Our church is a major sponsor of the 21st annual Columbia Values Diversity Celebration to be held on Thursday, Jan. 16. Related event information, including the MLK March on Monday, Jan. 20, should be in the papers and on www.GoColumbiaMo.com.

Our “Guest at Your Table” fundraiser for the UU Service Committee ends this month. Why support the UUSC? Quick answer: Go to www.uusc.org, click on “What We Do,” then on “Partnership Model.” Some in our congregation made contributions to the UUSC via a Faith-to-Action collection in December. That money was sent in as a church contribution. If you would like to give individually or become a UUSC member, now is the time to do it.

If you took a Guest at Your Table box, convert the cash into a check made out to “UUSC,” *not* the church, and write “Guest” or “Guest at Your Table” on the memo line. Place the check into a Sunday collection basket soon. If you did not take a box, just

write out a check, as above. Any amount will help. Membership levels are: Individuals, \$40; Dual, \$75; Youth/Student, \$10 per person; and Senior (65+), \$20 per person. Thanks much for helping the UUSC do its work for social justice, worldwide, in our name.

And thank you to all who helped last year:

Thanks to everyone who gave to the Faith-to-Action collections in 2013.

Thanks to all who helped to provide holiday cheer to the Voluntary Action Center family our church supported last Christmas.

Thanks to everyone who worked with our December nightly shelter.

Thanks to those who fed the food barrel – by Dec. 9 almost 200 pounds went to the Central Pantry to help our neighbors (and us – people from our church have used it). Please continue to bring in food.

Happy New Year to all!

Reflections

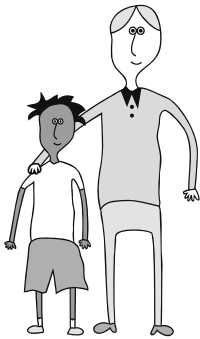
Birthday Cakes for the Congregation

On Jan. 5 the Service Sunday crew will decorate 12 cakes for our church-wide potluck. There will be one for each month of the year, and they will be placed at different tables in the sanctuary.

Please find the cake for your birth month, and eat at that table. You can get to know church friends, new and old, who share your birth month!



Something to Think About in January



Reverend Molly's theme for January is "**Covenant.**" A covenant is a promise shared between people. Here are some questions for you to talk about with your family this month:

- Are there promises that you have made to people in your family?
- How do you feel if you are not able to keep a promise that you made?

Third Sunday Lunch – Yoga with Pack Matthews

Our Jan. 19 lunch will wait until after we do a bit of yoga with Pack leading us. Please meet in the Centering Room right after church. We'll relax and stretch, and then move into the Thoreau room for our light lunch. Everything will wind up by 1 p.m. Hope to see you there!



Mystery Friends Begins!

Every Sunday morning you will see the Mystery Friends bulletin board filling with mail! Participants can drop off any notes and Lisa will make deliveries after church is done. Have fun getting to know your Mystery Friend!

January 2014

Lisa Fritsche

Director of Religious Education

dre@uuchurch.net

573-442-5764

Office Hours: Wed. 9-3 and Sun. 8-12

Important Dates

Jan. 3 - Jr. Youth Zombie Night

Jan. 5 - Cakes for the Congregation Service Sunday, and Mystery Friends begins

Jan. 19 - Yoga at Third Sunday Lunch

It's time to turn in your Guest at Your Table box!

Simple and Complicated Gifts a BIG SUCCESS!

Attendees at these workshops went home with many gifts to give to their friends and families. Older kids created charms, badges, key chains wallets and colorful mugs, while younger kids crafted chalices, bath salts, flower pens, flower jars, colorful mugs and snowman cups.





Many Thanks!

Our VAC Christmas families had a very merry Christmas, thanks to the generosity of our congregation.

Hang on to Those Broken Small Appliances!

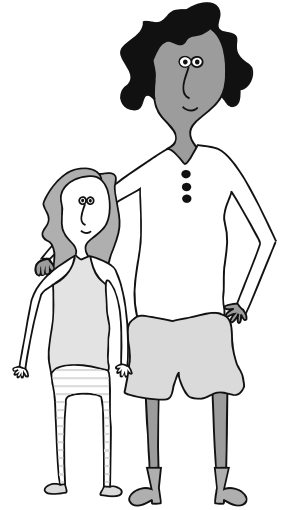
Our Third Sunday Lunch in February will involve exploring small appliances. We will take them apart and peek at what's inside.



So, if you have a radio that won't receive a signal, a curling iron that no longer heats up, or a fan that won't spin, bring them to church where they will be de-constructed by curious kids! (Any curious adults are encouraged to come as well!)

Classroom Aides Still Needed!

As the second semester begins, we have a renewed need for helpers in our Sunday school classrooms. This is a great opportunity to get to know the fantastic, interesting kids of our church family. Please go to Sign Up Genius and choose a class and date that will work for you!



<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0E44AFA72EA02-uusunday>



Over \$135 collected so far at Centering for the church's Honduras team... \$265 more to go to reach our goal. Please be generous! We need to build those latrines!

Sunday Snow Day?

It's Sunday morning and you wake up to snow falling and wind blowing. The tree in your front yard is bowed under the weight of the ice. The plow has not visited your street. What to do?

Check the church's website (<http://uuchurch.net>), our Facebook page, or turn on KFRU (AM1400) to hear if we have cancelled.

If we have not, should you try and fight your way to church? Please use your own judgment. We don't want anyone to put themselves or their children in danger just so they can get to church!



Expanding Heart, Mind and Soul

Peace Building Team plans workshop on change

“Living together in interesting times” is the underlying theme of a Peace Building Team-sponsored workshop that will be an opportunity for our UU congregation to experiment with ways to positively engage each other in these times of change. The workshop will be held on Sunday, Feb. 23, 2014, so mark your calendars now. (More details later.)

The church is in the midst of growth and change. Coincident with the arrival of Rev. Molly, our congregation has grown and experimented with new ways of doing things – in our committees, in our social gatherings, in the format and content of our services.

While these are exciting times, change can also be disruptive, and it’s hard to find a path forward that everyone embraces equally. (I’d like us to change in *this* way, you’d like us to change *that* way, and that fellow over there would like us to *not change at all!*)

Sometimes change leads to conflict, where people experience distress or negative reactions to what someone else has done (or hasn’t

done) or said (or didn’t say). While some of us may want to find a safe corner to hide in until everything blows over, that rarely leads to reconciliation or greater understanding.

Both because conflict is unavoidable and because it can be an amazing growth opportunity, we’re excited to learn better how to work with it constructively – where we not only survive, but thrive. We want to learn how to encounter conflict and come out of with more love and respect for each other than at the beginning; where we can harness the energy and passion to find more elegant solutions to our challenges.

“Conflict: Flight, Fight, or Opportunity?” will be an opportunity for us to better understand and engage each other in moments of reaction and disagreement. Nationally recognized group dynamics expert Laird Schaub will lead

the group in exploring why this is hard, why we need to do it anyway, and how to do it well. We hope you’ll join us for an illuminating day of skill building and connection. There will be more details about the workshop in the February newsletter.



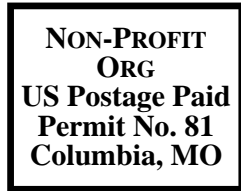
Our Mission

In the spirit of courageous love, we forge a community of radical welcome and deep connection that moves us together to heal the world.

Need a Ride? Do you need a ride to church on Sunday, or a church function at another time? Margaret Tyler is coordinating rides as part of the Caring Ministry. Please call the church office at 442-5764.

THE SEARCHLIGHT

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Unitarian Universalist Church
2615 Shepard Blvd.
Columbia, MO 65201-6132



Return Service Requested

Our Staff

Rev. Molly Housh Gordon, Minister

Office Hours: Mondays 1-5 p.m., Wednesdays 3-7 p.m.

Community Office Hours: Tuesdays 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

Email: minister@uuchurch.net

Lisa Fritsche, Director of Youth Religious Education

Desiree Long, Music Director

Kathie Bergman, Administrator

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Telephone: 573-442-5764

Email: uuchurch@uuchurch.net

Visit our Website: <http://uuchurch.net>



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The Searchlight is published monthly by the Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia, Missouri from September through June.

Submissions:
Email to uuchurch@uuchurch.net,
or mail to Church Administrator.

The deadline for submissions is noon on the third Monday of each month for the following edition.