



# The Searchlight

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia, Missouri

2615 Shepard Blvd., Columbia, MO 65201 • 573-442-5764 • [www.uuchurch.net](http://www.uuchurch.net) • Volume 55, Issue 5, November 2015

## Worship Services November 2015

**Services begin at  
9 a.m. and 11 a.m.**

**Sunday, Nov. 1**

**“Día de Los Muertos”**

**Remembrance Sunday**

**Rev. Molly Housh Gordon  
and DRE Shanon Dickerson**

Join us for an Intergenerational Service of Remembrance. We will learn about the Mexican tradition of El Día de Los Muertos, and together we will create an altar remembering our deceased loved ones. *Please bring a photo or memento of a loved one to add to our altar.* Children are welcome to wear their Halloween costumes to church this Sunday.

**Sunday, Nov. 8**

**“I Am An Hysterical Woman”**

**Guest Preacher Karen Bray**

You won't want to miss this Sunday's sermon as we hear from the 2010 winner of the prestigious Harvard Divinity School Billings Preaching Prize, Karen Bray. Karen is currently a doctoral candidate in philosophical and theological studies in religion at Drew University and an adjunct professor at the New School in New York City. Her research concerns post-secular theology, affect theory, and queer temporality.

*(Continued on Page 2)*

## November Worship Theme

# Beloved Community is... **Compassionate**

*“We urgently need to make compassion a clear, luminous and dynamic force in our polarized world. Rooted in a principled determination to transcend selfishness, compassion can break down political, dogmatic, ideological and religious boundaries. Born of our deep interdependence, compassion is essential to human relationships and to a fulfilled humanity.”*

– Karen Armstrong

In her book *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life*, renowned religion scholar Karen Armstrong reflects that compassion – the ability to empathize with the pain of others and therefore seek to avoid causing such pain – may be the most important ingredient for the building of the world-wide beloved community we so desperately need.

Though religious people and communities have not always lived up to the claim of compassion, she argues that the golden-rule-like mandate at the heart of each of the world's spiritual and religious traditions is essentially a call to compassion.

This compassion takes the courage and commitment of spiritually rooted individuals, because compassion requires us to be present to pain without running or turning away. It takes open-heartedness to reach out to others and break down boundaries.

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## Worship Services

November 2015

9 a.m. and 11 a.m.

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**Sunday, Nov. 15**

**“In the Broken World  
of Loss and Sorrow”**

**A Grieving Circle Service**

**Jeff Ordway and Maria Oropallo**

What do you say when nothing will make it better? What does compassion look like in the face of grief, loss, and sorrow? How do we find ways to be present to one another in life's most painful moments? Join our newly formed Grieving Circle Group to explore these important questions and more.

**Sunday, Nov. 22**

**“Together at the Table”**

**Rev. Molly Housh Gordon  
and DRE Shanon Dickerson**

Join us for our annual Intergenerational Thanksgiving Service, when we will explore compassion and solidarity and wonder how to make room at the table for all. With our annual cornbread communion, join us to celebrate the abundance in our lives and commit ourselves to sharing our bounty.

**Sunday, Nov. 29**

**11 A.M. ONLY**

**“Compassion in Action”**

**Intergenerational Service Sunday**

**Rev. Molly Housh Gordon**

Join us as we move church outside our walls! After Thanksgiving, let us put our gratitude into action with a service Sunday for the whole church! We will gather at **11 a.m. only** to light our chalice, sing together, and prepare to serve. Then the whole church will be unleashed to complete service projects in our community. At least one project will stay at the church for those who prefer not to or cannot be out and about.

## Beloved Community is...

# *Compassionate*

(Continued from Page 1)

Join us this month to explore the calling of compassion and solidarity in our own tradition, and in our own lives. What does it mean to be present to another in pain? How do we do the least harm in our globalized, entangled world? How do we balance compassion to self with compassion to others? Can we extend compassion beyond human communities to all creatures and our earth?

How do we live the Love beyond belief at the center of our tradition? Together, let's find out.

See you in church!

– Rev. Molly

## For further reflection on our worship theme

### *Wise Words*

“If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion.” – The Dalai Lama

“Compassion is sometimes the fatal capacity for feeling what it is like to live inside somebody else's skin. It is the knowledge that there can never really be any peace and joy for me until there is peace and joy finally for you too.” – Frederick Buechner

“Compassion is the basis of all morality.” – Arthur Schopenhauer

“The whole idea of compassion is based on a keen awareness of the interdependence of all these living beings, which are all part of one another, and all involved in one another.” – Thomas Merton

“The dew of compassion is a tear.” – Lord Byron

### *Want to reflect further?*

**Check out these resources, which  
Rev. Molly has available to borrow**

*Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life* by Karen Armstrong

The Charter for Compassion, founded by Karen Armstrong: <http://www.charterforcompassion.org>

*Compassion: Listening to the Cries of the World* by Christina Feldman

*An Open Heart: Practicing Compassion in Everyday Life* by the Dalai Lama

*The Mindful Path to Self-Compassion* by Christopher K. Germer

*The Compassionate Mind* by Paul Gilbert

## Minister's Message

# Monthly Potluck and Adaptive Challenges

We heard back from 68 of you on our survey regarding potluck and breaking bread together as a congregation. We've discovered from this survey what we might have guessed: this is a more complicated question than it seems!

Regarding alternative models to our 12 p.m. First Sunday Potluck, answers were fairly evenly split among the options provided, with at least 12 additional write-ins that we should keep it like it has been.

We found out that those who love potluck value the convenient way to connect with one another and socialize. It is your way in to connection at the church. For some, potluck is your very favorite thing about UUC. For those who do not attend potluck, you find it socially overwhelming or too crowded. You may find it hard to find a place at the table with established groups. Some of you avoid potluck at all costs.

Many, many of you are somewhere in the middle: You enjoy potluck and see its value, and you see its struggles and particularly the struggles we encounter as we grow: struggles with overcrowding and having enough food and cleaning up so many dishes.

From your responses, it is clear that this is a question with emotional content – as it should be! Connecting with one another and breaking bread together is a deeply emotional human experience, as is the desire to have a place at the table, both literally and figuratively.

What has also become clear is that the conversation around potluck is about more than just potluck. It is also about grieving that we are no longer small enough to fit in one room together, all connected. It is also about wondering together what deep connection looks like as we grow. And it is about managing the competing claims of our mission statement calling us to radical welcome *and* deep connection.

In the world of folks who study organizational dynamics, there is a word for a challenge like this. It is an “adaptive challenge.” Unlike “technical challenges,” which have a clear question and a clear best answer, “adaptive challenges” have no clear best answer and tend to only bring up more layers of questions.

Adaptive challenges require emotional work and dealing with change. They arise when there is no single great solution that will make things once again “the way they were.” When we are feeling confused, and maybe a little anxious, and probably a little sad, we are facing an adaptive challenge.

*So here's the plan:* For November and December we will not be holding a Sunday morning potluck. Instead, we will be holding several Listening Circle evening potlucks to gather together and grapple with some of these larger questions. These will occur on:

- Monday, Nov. 16 at 6 p.m.
- Sunday, Nov. 22 at 6 p.m.
- Wednesday, Dec. 2 at 6 p.m.
- Saturday, Dec. 12 at 6 p.m..

Please sign up for a dinner in the greeting area. Your board will be helping to facilitate these conversations. By January, we will assess where the conversation stands.

In the meantime, we encourage you to bring snacks and treats to social hour each Sunday between 10 and 11 a.m. if you feel so moved, to join a Chalice Circle for deep connection if you haven't already, and to join us for some of the events planned for November for socializing, service, and fun:

- **Nov. 7** – 9 a.m. – Grounds Team Workday
- **Nov. 14** – 1 p.m. – Winter Wonderland Social and Snowflake Making
- **Nov. 21** – 6 p.m. – Guest At Your Table Pot-Luck Dinner

– Rev Molly

## Forum for November 2015

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. Forum coordinator: Bill Clark, 573-474-4510.

**Nov. 1:** Dan Viets, a local proponent for the legalization of marijuana, will give an update on the possibility for legalization in our state and nation.

**Nov. 8:** Mark Dorsten will speak on his role in life as a minister in the Spiritual Church.

**Nov. 15:** Peggy Gray, director of the STEP program – Senior Teacher Educator Partnership – will explain this unique experience, matching senior volunteers with MU medical students.

**Nov. 22:** Rev. Mel West will return to give the “The Rotary Four-Way Test.”

**Nov. 29:** Bill Clark will lead an open discussion with the holiday crowd.

### UU Grounds Work Day

**Saturday, Nov. 7  
9 a.m. to noon**

Please come and help our Grounds Team with some outside maintenance work before winter sets in.

Projects that need attention are:

- Resealing tables and benches
- Releveling stairs
- Removing rickety play equipment
- And much more!

The next Grounds Team meeting will be held at 9 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 14 at church.

For more information, contact Peter Holmes.

## Green Sanctuary Team news



Did you “shift gears” in October? If you made efforts to re-think your transportation to church – whether that was parking and walking, carpooling, riding a bike, or re-arranging your schedule to combine trips – you are invited to a celebratory light breakfast!

On Nov. 8, before the 11 a.m. worship service, the Green Sanctuary Team will provide fruit, bagels, and coffee, plus a chance to share stories and ideas. Please join us!

GS Team invites you to look at the information on the bulletin board regarding the solar energy produced by the roof panels and the reduction in energy required by us from the city.

Patty Daus and Peter Holmes are planning to organize a weekend campout for UUs next fall. The Bergfried Area near Hermann, owned by Eliot Chapel in Kirkwood, is a beautiful place for camping and spiritual reflection. Consider a family drive there to visit the property. If you have ideas or want to help plan a weekend campout, contact Peter or Patty.

Meditation in Nature will be moving to the fire circle behind the church. It is held on the third Sunday of each month. Tentatively, the first time it will be held at church will be Nov. 15, anticipating that the gravel will have been put down and the area around the fire circle will be finished by then.

Meatless Monday Potlucks are temporarily discontinued. Kathie Bergman and Lisa Guillory welcome ideas for a different format. Please chat with Kathie or Lisa about ideas to reduce consumption of meat produced on factory farms and a format for sharing information and discussing similar topics with others.



## **President's Perspective**

### ***On leadership and volunteerism in our community***

This past month, I was honored by an invitation to speak to a very special audience. New Director of Religious Education Shanon Dickerson asked a group of volunteers to visit the Schweitzer Class during the Sunday religious-education program in mid-October.

Children in the Schweitzer class are a sharp, inquisitive and energetic bunch. Our job as class visitors – there were four of us – was to answer questions from the children about all the different jobs we do at church.

I answered questions about being the church president – a comparatively dry topic next to my co-interviewees: Patty Daus, who serves on the Green Sanctuary Team; Lisa Boyer, who serves on the Religious Education (RE) Team; and Marta Ferguson, who has volunteered to mentor youth in our Coming-of-Age program. The children, of course, kept us on our toes.

The experience got me thinking how much becomes possible when people step up to various tasks. UUCC has only a handful of paid staff members (all of them very hard-working folks), but with a small army of dedicated volunteers, we accomplish so much more than the staff alone could.

That volunteerism has a spiritual root. Radical welcome is a central tenet of our church philosophy – and that welcome extends not only to worship and membership, but also to leadership and work. I know I'm not the only person who feels a special connection to this community when working at a task I feel is suited to me.

Volunteer opportunities are numerous at UUCC. It is my hope (and, again, I know I'm not alone in this) that we all feel welcomed into those opportunities. If you are looking for an opportunity to volunteer in our church community, ask one of our staff how you can help make a difference today!



### ***Chalice Circles***

**Joining together for deeper connection and spiritual growth**

Are you looking for a place to build deeper connections with the congregation and with your own spiritual journey? Well... the search is over!

Our Chalice Circles meet monthly to connect and grow from further reflection on our worship themes.

Chalice Circles are formed based on availability and are led by supported facilitators trained in reflection and conversation. Chalice Circles are open to anyone age 16 or older, are made up of 7-10 individuals each, and are open to newcomers. Groups meet once a month (or more often, at the discretion of the group).

For more information, contact the Chalice Circles Leadership Team by email at [chalice-circle@uuchurch.net](mailto:chalice-circle@uuchurch.net).

# Ministry is what we do together

## Social Action Team news

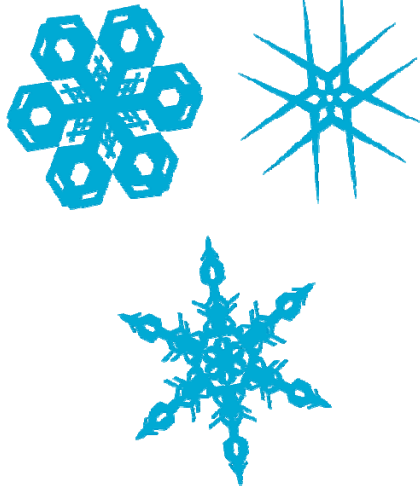
The Social Action Team has been busy this past month! On Sept. 29, we had 31 UUs participating in the Planned Parenthood Pink Out Rally, and eight UUs participated in the Crop Hunger walk on Oct. 18.

Does this interest you? Our Social Action Team has three sub-teams to serve our community: Anti-Racism, LGBT, and Economic Equality. We are also seeking members to help on our communications and financial sub-teams. If you'd like to work with the Social Action Team, join us for our next meeting at 12:30 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 8 at in the Forum Room.

Future social action dates to consider:

- Memorial for Transgender Day of Remembrance on Nov. 20. More details will be announced soon.
- Team Trivia Night on Nov. 7 at Shakespeare's on Peachtree to benefit the Mid-Mo LGBT Coalition, hosted by Mid-Mo PrideFest. For more information and to buy tickets, go to [www.midmopride.org](http://www.midmopride.org).

Also, UUC serves at Loaves and Fishes, the local soup kitchen at Wilkes Boulevard United Methodist Church, on the third Sunday every month. Your participation is so important to this effort. Please consider signing up to help! Find the signup on our website at <http://uuchurch.net>.



## Our chancel needs your help!

We need snowflake makers to help us create our beautiful banner for winter. Please join us on both or one of the following days for some snowflake-making fun:

- Saturday, Nov. 14, from 1 to 2 p.m. in the Centering Room.
- Sunday, Nov. 22 from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. in the Forum Room.

If you have any questions, please contact Melissa Ensign Bedford by email: [mbedford0202@gmail.com](mailto:mbedford0202@gmail.com).

## Our presence on the web

Go to <http://uuchurch.net> for complete information on church activities and our online calendar of events

## Grieving Circle

We are here. To talk. To listen. To connect. You need not grieve alone. We are here.



Grieving Circle will meet at the church two times in November: 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 11 and 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 19.

Grieving Circle is facilitated by Rev. Molly Housh Gordon, Barbara Carter, Greg Bergman, and Maria Oropallo.

## UU Dinner Club invites you to join!

It's not too late to join the UU Dinner Club. We have a dinner for eight each month in someone's home and frequently need substitutes (someone or couple to complete the group and who does not have to be a host).

If you (single or couple) would like to join, contact Linda Lou Brown, 573-864-1775 or [linda@katfishkatycampground.com](mailto:linda@katfishkatycampground.com).

If you are new to the church, Dinner Club is a great way to get acquainted.

## Need a ride?

Do you need a ride to church on Sunday, or a church function at another time? We are coordinating rides as part of the Caring Ministry. Please call the church office at 573-442-5764 or contact Meredith Donaldson or Win Scott, Team Leaders.

# Reflections

**Shanon Dickerson**

Director of Religious Education  
dre@uuchurch.net  
573-442-5764

**Office Hours:**

Sunday mornings and by appointment

## ***UUSC Guest at Your Table Potluck***

**Saturday, Nov. 21 from 6 to 8 p.m. in the Greeting Area**

This is an event for **all ages** co-sponsored by the Social Action and R.E. Teams. The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) holds an annual fundraising and education program called "Guest at Your Table," which has raised millions of dollars for human rights projects over the last 40 years.

This year, we invite everyone to figuratively invite some of these grassroots leaders in advancing human rights to be a "guest" at your table. You can do this by sharing their stories at your dinner table and making a donation (check made out to UUSC) to support their work around the world. Donations of \$40 or more are eligible for member benefits.

Informational pamphlets and donation boxes/envelopes are located upstairs by the Social Action bulletin board and downstairs under the R.E. bulletin board. These donations will be collected at a celebratory potluck in the Greeting Area on Saturday, Nov. 21 from 6 to 8 p.m.

We hope you all will join us!

Sincerely,

The Social Action and R.E. Teams



## **Important November Dates**

**6th** - Jr. Youth Group Game Night

**14th** - Winter Wonderland Social

**14th-15th** - YRUU Trip to St. Louis

**21st** - Guest at Your Table Potluck

## **Day of the Dead Service: Nov. 1**

We will be talking about death and loved ones who have passed. In case you have any concerns regarding your child, the Story for All Ages will be the short video in the link below.



<http://safeshare.tv/v/ss56255f776fc8b>

## **Winter Wonderland Social**

**Saturday, Nov. 14 from 1 to 2 p.m.  
in the Centering Room**

Our chancel needs your help! We need snowflake makers of **all ages** to help us create our beautiful banner for winter. Enjoy hot chocolate, cookies, snowflake-making and socializing with one another.

For questions, contact Melissa Ensign Bedford at [mbedford0202@gmail.com](mailto:mbedford0202@gmail.com) or Shanon Dickerson at [dre@uuchurch.net](mailto:dre@uuchurch.net).



## **Great Big Spooky-Wooky Recycled Costume Contest Photos See more on the RE Blog!**



## Programs and Events

### Men's Group

The UCC 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 Wiley Miller.

### Hook & Needle Group

Want to learn how to knit or crochet? Already know how?

Take a break and join our church's Hook & Needle Group. Yarn, patterns and tutoring are available.

We meet at the church on Tuesdays at 2 p.m.

For more information, call Marian Hjelmfelt at 573-449-5118.

## **An Invitation from Welcoming Team**

### **Welcome to all! An invitation to join UCC**

The mission of the Welcoming Team is to make visitors feel welcome, to guide people into membership, and to facilitate the integration of new members into the life of this congregation.

Every quarter the team conducts a "Membership 101" class for people interested in joining our church community. The next class is scheduled **Sunday, Nov. 15** after the 11 a.m. worship service.

To reserve your place in the class, email Jan Swaney: [jjswan56@gmail.com](mailto:jjswan56@gmail.com).

### 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.***

### UU Book Discussion Group – Nov. 13

The UU Book Discussion Group will meet at 5 p.m. Nov. 13 at ABC Chinese Cuisine. Bring a book you have read to discuss.

Call Pam Springsteel at 573-445-0642 if you have questions.

### Conversations, Etc. – Nov. 11

The Conversations, Etc. women's group will meet at noon Nov. 11 at the church. Bring a brown bag lunch and a snack to share if you wish.

Call Melinda Farhangi at 573-445-6325 if you have questions.

### Life Writers Group – Nov. 7

The Life Writers Group meets on the first and third Saturdays each month at 10:30 a.m. in the lower level of the church. *However, the Nov. 21 gathering has been cancelled.*

### Reel UUs – Nov. 17

The Reel UUs Film Group gathers on the third Tuesday of each month to view a film and hold a discussion immediately following.

The film and location are announced each month in the weekly emails and on the website.

For more information, contact Janice Smith at [janepicurean@gmail.com](mailto:janepicurean@gmail.com).

### Adult RE

## **Thoreau as Spiritual Guide**

Join the conversation on "Cultivating a Self with Thoreau." We will be reading parts of Barry M. Andrews' *Thoreau as Spiritual Guide* as a source for our discussions, as well as the first chapter of *Walden* (recommended but not required).

Print copies of Andrews' book are available through the Book Table (the title is also available as an ebook). Childcare can be provided *if requested in advance* of the meetings. Participants are encouraged to arrive early to the Centering Room with their own brown bag lunch to enjoy with others. We'll begin the conversation at 12:30 p.m. on Nov. 8, Nov. 22 and Dec. 13.

If you conceive of reading, conversation, and contemplation as important spiritual practices, this group is for you!

For more information, see the Adult R.E. page on our church website at <http://uuchurch.net/adult-re/>.



## Rev. Haney designated 'Minister Emeritus' at special meeting

A special congregational meeting of UUCU members was held at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, Oct. 11. President Jeremy Milarsky called the meeting to order. A quorum was present.

The sole item on the agenda was membership approval to designate our former settled minister, the Rev. William Haney, as Minister *Emeritus*.

The Rev. Molly Housh Gordon briefly discussed the practice of honoring former ministers in this manner and noted that the Rev. Gertrude Lindener-Stawski is not only still a member of our church but was previously designated as Minister *Emerita*.

Rev. Molly also noted that if the members approved naming Rev. Haney as Minister *Emeritus*, we could expect Rev. Haney and his wife to join us in January for our celebration of the 65th anniversary of our church's founding.

The president called for a motion. It was moved and seconded that Rev. Haney be designated as Minister *Emeritus*, and the motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

## Community Office Hours

Rev. Molly will be holding community office hours every Tuesday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Kaldi's Coffee downtown.

Stop by to say hello, chat briefly, or settle in for a longer conversation.



## FESTIVAL OF SHARING INGATHERING IN SEDALIA

Your kits and packs are on their way carrying your hope, compassion and love. They will be appreciated by all who receive them.

David Leuthold and I took all of your gifts to the Ingathering in Sedalia on Saturday, Oct. 17. The youths and adults unloading our gifts were very efficient, and the workers seemed to enjoy being helpful.

The atmosphere inside the arena was so friendly. There were many charitable organizations – local, national and international. We talked with a number of the representatives and received helpful pamphlets.

It was fun to browse the display tables of crafts from Missouri and other countries. I could not resist buying a few fair trade items for holiday presents. We toured the rows of quilts to be auctioned, but did not stay to bid.

I felt so appreciative of the experience of engaging with people who have many different beliefs, but who all share our desire to help make a difference to others in need. I hope you will consider joining us next October to experience what could be meaningful for you.

Feel free to contact me if you would like more information or have questions.

– Marian Hjelmfelt ([hjelmfeltm@yahoo.com](mailto:hjelmfeltm@yahoo.com))



## ***THE SEARCHLIGHT***

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Columbia, MO 65201-6132

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Unitarian Universalist Church of



Columbia, Missouri

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#### **Submissions:**

Email to [uuchurch@uuchurch.net](mailto:uuchurch@uuchurch.net),  
or mail to Church Administrator.

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