



The Searchlight

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia, Missouri

2615 Shepard Blvd., Columbia, MO 65201 • 573-442-5764 • www.uuchurch.net • Volume 55, Issue 6, December 2015

Worship Services December 2015

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

Sunday, Dec. 6

“Hope for Humanists”

Youth Collaborative Service

Rev. Molly Housh Gordon

Join Rev. Molly and our high school youth group for this youth collaborative service. Molly will preach in response to conversation with our youth regarding hope for humanists. Whence comes our hope, when not from above? With special music and participation from our youth.

Sunday, Dec. 13

“Light One Candle”

Rev. Molly Housh Gordon

As our Jewish friends and neighbors reach the end of the Hanukkah holiday and celebrate the miracle of a light that did not go out, let us reflect together on the choice to hope in the face of great odds.

Sunday, Dec. 20

“Great Expectations”

Rev. Molly Housh Gordon

Let us imagine together the experience of Mary in the Christmas story, and the hope and trembling of a young girl who carried the little baby upon whom such great expectations would rest. How does each of us carry the burden of hope?

Sunday, Dec. 27

11 a.m. only

“At Year’s End”

Guest Preacher

Join us for a time of reflection and inspiration as we prepare to say goodbye to the year and welcome a new one!

The Christmas Season

Hangin' of the Greens

Sunday, Dec. 6

10 a.m. – between services

Bring a dozen of your favorite holiday cookies and join us for a time of hot chocolate, Christmas tree decorating and merriment between our 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. worship services.

Christmas Worship

Holiday Blues Service

7 p.m. Sunday Dec. 13

This celebratory time of year can be painful for we who suffer grief, loss, family conflict, depression, and more. Join us in the Sanctuary for a service that takes seriously the blues that exist amid the merriment.

Christmas Eve – Two Services

6 p.m. and 8 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 24

6 p.m. Family Service – Join us for the traditional carols and candlelight, and a family-friendly pageant with an accessible message of hope.

8 p.m. Candlelight Service – Join us for the late service, with the traditional carols and candlelight, and a Christmas homily from Rev. Molly.

Our December Worship Theme:

Hope

Details on page 2

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Beloved Community is... **Hopeful**

“Not only is another world possible, she is on her way.

On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing.”

– Arundhati Roy

It feels as though we welcome the holiday season into a space of turmoil this year, as powerful social movements for change help us question all we thought we knew, as continuing violence and displacement and terror around the world tear at our hearts and souls, as the drums of war begin to beat once more.

Yet the stories that human beings have told for millennia in the dark of December are resonant and powerful for just such a time as this: Lamps lit against the dark, great roaring bonfires calling back the sun, a single light that burned on days beyond the possible, a little baby holding the hope of an oppressed nation.

These stories all show us something profound about the nature of hope and our capacity to imagine the possibility of a world – and our hearts within it – made whole at last. These stories show us, in each of their traditions, that Beloved Community begins with hope, and can never come to be without it.

Join us this month as we grapple with the calling of hope: Where shall we place our hope? How can it be authentic and not false? How does it live with the reality of despair? How do we carry the weight of its burden? How do we share this calling to hope?

See you in church!

Hopefully yours,
Rev. Molly

Are you ready to join the church?

A New Member Ingathering will be held during the 11 a.m. service on Sunday, Dec. 6. If you have attended the Membership 101 class or have had a private conversation with Rev. Molly about joining the church, you are invited to join at this service.

Please call the church at 442-5764 or email us at uuchurch@uuchurch.net if you are interested, or simply come to the service.

If you are interested in joining, but cannot be present for the formal ceremony this time, you can also join by contacting Rev. Molly or any member of the Welcoming Team.

For further reflection on our worship theme

Wise Words

“Hope is a song in a weary throat.” – Pauli Murray

“Hope... is not a feeling; it is something you do.” – Katherine Paterson

“The very least you can do in your life is to figure out what you hope for. And the most you can do is live inside that hope.” – Barbara Kingsolver

“Hope, unlike optimism, is rooted in unalloyed reality... Hope is the elevating feeling we experience when we see – in the mind’s eye – a path to a better future. Hope acknowledges the significant obstacles and deep pitfalls along that path. True hope has no room for delusion.” – Jerome Groopman

“We know in our bones that hope is everything. In the back of our minds, we suspect that it is nothing at all.” – Maurice Lamm

“We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars.” – Oscar Wilde

Forum for December 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.

Dec. 6

The reintroduction to God in the life of a devoted UU follower – with Forum member observations.

Dec. 13

Dr. Jack Colwill returns for his periodic update on Obamacare.

Dec. 20

“40 years in the Jeff City Iron Bar Hilton,” a discussion led by Bill Clark.

Dec. 27

A holiday forum potpourri of joys and concerns regarding the human condition.

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.



Join Us to Share the Celebrations and Challenges of Our Growth

at a

Listening Circle Potluck Dinner

Wednesday, Dec. 2 at 6 p.m.

or

Saturday, Dec. 12 at 6 p.m.

Please bring a dish to share. Childcare will be provided.

Dinner will be served from 6 to 6:30 p.m.

Conversations will last from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. and raise such questions as:

- *What are the positive and negative feelings you experience regarding our congregation's growth?*
- *What creative opportunities arise for us amid the myriad feelings and experiences we share?*
- *What does Beloved Community look like as we grow?*
- *What do we do about potluck?*



Let us give thanks for the food that we share.
Let us give thanks for people who care.
Food fills the body and love makes us whole.
Let us give thanks deep down in our soul.

President's Perspective

The Challenge of Growth

Whenever I struggle with my place in this community, I find it comforting to reflect on the seven Unitarian Universalist Principles. These simple statements are, in the words of minister Rev. Barbara Wells ten Hove, “not dogma or doctrine, but more of a guide” for us as we participate in our church community.

As we struggle through the challenge of growth – ultimately a good challenge to have when you consider the alternative, death – I find the third principle to be most helpful to me. It is:

“Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.”

I would assert it is the congregation itself that is experiencing spiritual growth. Growth in who we are, what we do and what we can do. As our religious education program changes under new leadership and increasing attendance, and with the addition of a second Sunday service, how can we grow together?

Whatever the answer is, I know what it is not. The answer is not “alone,” or “separately,” or “in factions.”

Smart growth requires collaboration. It requires ideas. Put simply, in this context, it requires you.

Your church needs you to help it grow in an intelligent way. The change is already happening – we have already crossed the Rubicon, as it were.

We need your help. The church ministry, with the help of the board, is hosting a series of Listening Circle Potlucks to get your thoughts on the changes happening at UUC. I hope you’ll plan to attend.

Potlucks will be held:

- Wednesday, Dec. 2 at 6 p.m.
- Saturday, Dec. 12 at 6 p.m.

– Jeremy Milarsky, 2015-16 President



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 chalicecircle@uuchurch.net.

Ministry is what we do together

Grieving Circle plans three December gatherings



To people in grief, the calendar can quickly become a dreaded thing.

July 28... September 23...
October 31... December 24...
The anniversary dates that hold special meaning, reminding us of our dearly departed loved ones.

In December, any and all are invited to three events hosted by the UUCC Grieving Circle. If you are experiencing grief and would welcome some support, please join us. If you think a friend or an acquaintance is grieving, extend an invitation. You may not realize how that one small act of kindness can bring solace to a broken heart.

Dec. 9 – At a daytime Circle at 1:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary, we will share, listen to each other and have a special candle-lighting ceremony.

Dec. 13 – In conjunction with the scheduled “Holiday Blues” Sunday evening service, the Circle will gather at 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary for 30 minutes before the start of Rev. Molly’s special service. We will share, listen to each other and have a special candle-lighting ceremony.

Dec. 22 – We will hold a second evening service for that special time at 7 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Again, we will share,

listen to each other and have a special candle-lighting ceremony.

Follow us on FaceBook <https://www.facebook.com/GrievingCircleUUCC/?fref=ts>.

Meditation in Nature

December 20
9:45 to 10:45 a.m.

*Come into the peace
of wild things . . .*

If you are seeking a more inward expression for practicing your faith, Meditation in Nature may be just for you. Meditation in Nature gatherings will take place at the new fire circle behind the church from 9:45 to 10:45 a.m. on the third Sunday each month. There will be a fire if it is cold.

Our focus is being at home in nature and building a connection between spiritual practice and environmental consciousness. The format of the gatherings is silent meditation with some opportunity to share insights.

Meditation in Nature is sponsored by our Green Sanctuary Team. Meetings formerly took place at the Gans Creek Wildlife Area.

For information contact Peter Holmes at 573-239-7789 or naturemeditation@yahoo.com.

Sharing with others at Christmas

We are sponsoring a Voluntary Action Center family for Christmas again this year!

Our church will be responsible for gifts and Christmas dinner for seven people.

Look at the wish list, posted in the back of the sanctuary. Instructions about gift-giving are posted there as well.

Let’s do all we can to make this Christmas an extra-special one for our sponsored family.



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.

Social Action News

The Social Action Team has not only been busy, but also has been undergoing a few changes. Our team now has three action sub-teams: Anti-Racism and Justice, LGBT Justice, and Economic Justice. We also have three other sub-teams that help the team function: Communications, Education and Financial. At our last few meetings, we have been laying the groundwork for some big plans coming up in 2016 and setting goals for each team.

Recently, we participated in the CROP Walk, Loaves and Fishes, and the PrideFest Annual Trivia Night. The CROP Walk is an interfaith organization that puts on a 5k run and a walk every year. More details are in the separate article below.

On Nov. 7 members of the Social Action Team participated in Trivia Night at Shakespeare's Pizza, hosted by Mid-Mo PrideFest. Our team tied with another team. We took second place after underestimating how smart we really were! Our table also won the 50/50 raffle and t-shirts. All proceeds went to benefit the Mid-Mo LGBT Coalition.

Stay tuned in December for some exciting events coming up to benefit our anti-racism and more economic justice efforts.

If you are interested in joining the Social Action Team, we will be having our monthly meeting at 12:30 p.m. Dec. 6 in the Forum Room.

Honduras News

The health clinic in El Pital, Honduras, is under constant threat of closure from the health department of the state due to its disrepair. The villagers have made some good progress so that the clinic is currently open.

The Honduras group would like to keep supporting the villagers in their efforts and is hosting the viewing of the film **“Jaula do Oro” (“The Gilded Cage”)** at **4:30 p.m. Dec. 5 at the church.** The movie follows four Guatemalan children as they try to make their way through Mexico to the USA. The filmmaker spent a long time along the migration routes and based his film on what he saw and experienced, using children he met there as his actors. The film is a gut-wrenching depiction of the reality of what so many migrants face and have faced. **There is no charge to see the movie, but food and beverages will be on sale, and all proceeds will go towards the repairs of the El Pital health clinic.**

The third annual **Founders Day Trivia Night to benefit the UCC Honduras Group's service trips** (the next trip is planned for 2017) and its partners in Honduras will take place on **Jan. 23**, so mark your calendars!

– Allie Gassmann – alliegassmann@socket.net

CROP News

This year's Columbia CROP Walk to raise money to alleviate hunger here and around the world took place on Oct. 18. Seven UUs participated in the walk. They enjoyed being there for the cause and also really appreciated getting to know people from other religious communities here in town as they walked together.

The final count is not in yet, but more than \$10,000 was raised. Three-fourths of the proceeds will go toward fighting hunger worldwide, and one-fourth will stay local. This means that more \$2,500 is staying here in Mid-Missouri for distribution to Russell Chapel Food Pantry, Loaves & Fishes Soup Kitchen, the Latter House Kingdom Ministries and the Fifth Street Christian Church.

Thank you to all who participated and donated!

– Allie Gassmann – alliegassmann@socket.net

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.*

REflections

Simple & Complicated Gifts

It's the most wonderful time of the year...
Simple & Complicated Gifts time!



Please join us for the making of gifts for family and friends sponsored by the RE Team. Children in Pre-K through 4th grade are invited to attend a Simple Gift-Making Party on Saturday, Dec. 12 from 9 to 10:30 a.m. in the downstairs classrooms. If you get done early with your projects, you can make wrapping paper too!

5th graders through high schoolers are invited to help the little children with their activity on Saturday and will be making Complicated Gifts on Friday, Dec. 11 from 6 to 9 p.m. in the Greeting Area and Sanctuary. Pizza will be provided!

In order to participate in Simple & Complicated Gifts, all youth must sign up for the gifts you plan to make between Nov. 22 and Dec. 6. We ask that parents and older children sign up to assist as well for this beloved tradition. Contact Shanon Dickerson at dre@uuchurch.net for more information.

Simple Gifts

- Bath salts
- Cookie decorating
- Recycled Christmas trees
- Bottle cap snowmen
- Cookie mix
- Ornament station
- Recycled card tags

Complicated Gifts

- Pizzelle making
- Recycled Christmas cards
- Frames
- Jewelry
- Glass Gems
- Switch plate covers
- Crochet snowflakes

Halloween Party Photos

...see more on the
RE Blog!



Shanon Dickerson

Director of Religious Education
dre@uuchurch.net
573-442-5764
Office Hours: Sun. & by Appt.

Important December Dates

- 4 - Jr. Youth Group Christmas Party
- 5 - RE Teacher Training & Pizza
- 6 - YRUU Collaborative Service and lunch with parents
 - RE Team Meeting
- 11 - Complicated Gifts
- 12 - Simple Gifts
- 19 - Christmas Pageant Costume Party
- 20 - YRUU Cookie Sale
- 24 - Christmas Pageant

Michelle Sylvester Scholarship

Below is a photo of some of the girls we are sending to school with the funds we collected last year.



Christmas Pageant

This year we are planning a no-rehearsal Christmas Pageant for all ages on Dec. 24 at 6 p.m.

We will need extra helpers the day of the pageant and costume makers from 1 to 2 p.m. in the Centering Room on Dec. 19 to prepare for the pageant.

If you are interested, contact Shanon at dre@uuchurch.net.

Upcoming Events on the UCC Calendar

Annual Bake Sale Fundraiser by the YRUU

*Sunday, Dec. 20 before and after
the worship services*

Support our high school youth group by purchasing baked goods prepared by the youth! Goodies will include a variety of cookies and other snacks, reasonably priced for sale during this holiday season.



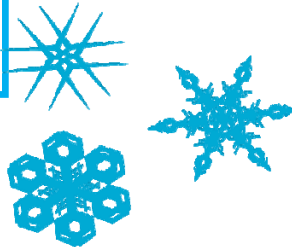
*Mark your calendars for
Saturday evening, Jan. 30, 2016
at 7 p.m. for a*

Founders Day Celebration

Celebrating our 65th Anniversary
and honoring
Minister Emeritus Rev. Bill Haney

To help plan this event,
please contact minister@uuchurch.net

To help fund this celebration,
please contact stewardship@uuchurch.net



The third annual

Founders Day Trivia Night

to benefit the UCC
Honduras Group's service trips
will be held on Jan. 23,
so mark your calendars!

New Year's Day Hike on Jan. 1 – meet at 1:30 p.m. at church

Come join us for an interesting and energetic walk in the good company of esteemed UU members. This is a chance to get off the couch, take a break from screen addictions, and burn off holiday calories.

The length and route of the walk will depend on the weather and who joins us, but we hope to hike at Three Creeks Conservation Area. Halfway through the walk, we will stop and build a small campfire.

Contact Peter Holmes if you have any questions.

Holiday Party

**Sponsored by the UCC
Dining Group –
5 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 6
at the church**

Members and prospective members of the Dining Group are invited to bring an hors d'oeuvre to share and get to know others in our UU community. Beverages will be provided.

For more information contact Linda Lou Brown at 573-447-3939.

Kaleidoscope Yule Celebration

Join Kaleidoscope at 6 p.m. Dec. 21 at the church as we celebrate Yule, the return of the Sun. The darkness has overwhelmed us, the long night of the Earth. Now, the Sun begins its slow return, the promise of and hope for Spring. Light and growth return to our lives.

The ritual at 6 p.m. will be followed by a potluck. All are welcome.

Adult RE Thoreau as Spiritual Guide

12:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 13

Join the conversation on "Cultivating a Self with Thoreau" We will be reading parts of Andrews' *Thoreau as Spiritual Guide* as a source for our discussions, as well as the first chapter of *Walden* (recommended but not required!). If you conceive of reading, conversation, and contemplation as important spiritual practices, this group is for you!

*The Honduras Ministry
is hosting a viewing of the film*

"Jaula do Oro"

("The Gilded Cage")

4:30 p.m. Dec. 5 at church

The movie follows four Guatemalan children as they try to make their way through Mexico to the USA.

The filmmaker spent a long time along the migration routes and based his film on what he saw and experienced, using children he met there as his actors. The film is a gut-wrenching depiction of the reality of what so many migrants face and have faced.

There is no charge to see the movie, but food and beverages will be on sale, and all proceeds will go towards the repairs of the El Pital health clinic in Honduras.

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.

For more information contact Wiley Miller.

Hook & Needle Group

Want to learn how to knit or crochet? Already know how? We meet at the church on Tuesdays at 2 p.m.

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

Reel UUs – Dec. 15

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 our website.

For more information, contact Janice Smith at janepicurean@gmail.com.

UU Book Discussion Group – Dec. 11

The UU Book Discussion Group will meet at 5 p.m. Dec. 11 at ABC Chinese Cuisine. Bring a book you have read to discuss briefly.

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

Conversations, Etc. – Dec. 9 at noon

There will be a soup, salad and dessert lunch. Bring a salad or dessert. Call Melinda at 445-6325 if you have questions.

Life Writers Group – Dec. 5 and Dec. 19

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.

Call Fran Reynolds at 573-443-4336 if you have questions.

Unitarian Universalist Church of



Columbia, Missouri

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2615 Shepard Blvd.
Columbia, MO 65201-6132

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Unitarian Universalist Church of



Columbia, Missouri

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