



The Searchlight

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia, Missouri

2615 Shepard Blvd., Columbia, MO 65201 • 573-442-5764 • <https://uucomo.org> • Volume 58, Issue 6, December 2018

December Worship

Sundays at 9 and 11 a.m.

Sunday, Dec. 2
“The F-Word”

Rev. Molly Housh Gordon

Faith can be a loaded word for Unitarian Universalists, as it is often set up in opposition to reason or doubt. But can it be of use in our thought and practice?

Sunday, Dec. 9
“No Guarantees”

Rev. Molly Housh Gordon

How do we move through the world with any measure of trust, when there are no guarantees? Where are the small places in our lives where we place our faith?

Sunday, Dec. 16
“Stepping Out and Stepping Up”
Alexis, Intern Minister

Join Intern Minister Alexis this week to consider what faith can call us to do for ourselves and what it calls us to be for others.

Sunday, Dec. 23
“Sweet Dreams” Solstice Service
Rev. Molly Housh Gordon and
DRE Jamila Batchelder

Join us at this intergenerational service to mark the solstice, the longest night, with a dreamy service for all ages exploring the importance of cozy time in the dark and the act of dreaming.

Sunday, Dec. 30
“Begin Again in Love” New Year’s Service
Rev. Molly Housh Gordon and
DRE Jamila Batchelder

Join us for an intergenerational service to prepare for the new year by reflecting on the year now past, burning away our grudges, and regrets, and setting intentions for 2019.

**Special Holiday
Worship Services**

See page 2



**Our 2018-2019 Theme is Loaded Words –
December’s Loaded Word is . . .**

FAITH

“Faith is the strength by which a shattered world shall emerge into the light.”

– Helen Keller

Unitarian Universalism is steeped in a history of rationalism, stretching back from our Enlightenment origins and through the Humanist movement still forming us. We also carry personal histories of faith into Unitarian Universalism, which are often complicated. These truths make “faith” a loaded word for us.

Faith is often framed as belief, and indeed as irrational belief. This is not the only definition of faith, which can also be an attitude of trust or trustworthiness or even an identity.

But I wonder what it would be like for us, as Unitarian Universalists, to lean into faith as unproven belief. What if our “faith” was our wild claim about the world, despite all evidence to the contrary? What if our “faith” is what we believe fiercely, and even irrationally, as a part of dreaming better for our world?

My faith is that love will win. My faith is that beauty matters. My faith is that our communities will save us. None of these claims is strictly rational or likely to be proven in some final way. But I choose them, and they deeply impact the way I live my life. In fact, they make all the difference. See you in church!

In Faith,
Rev. Molly

Highlights of what’s inside

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EvenSong

An evening of prayer, meditation, and song.

Monday, December 3
7pm

Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia

2615 Shepard Blvd.
Columbia, MO 65201
uucomo.org

Holiday Worship @ UUCC

Holiday Blues Service Sunday, Dec. 16 at 7 p.m.

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

Christmas Eve – Monday, Dec. 24 – Services at 6 and 8 p.m.

A cookie reception will be offered between the two services

Family Service – 6 p.m.

Join us for the traditional carols and candlelight, and a family-friendly telling of the Christmas story with an accessible message of hope.

Candlelight Service – 8 p.m.

Join us for the later service, with the traditional carols and candlelight, and a Christmas homily from Rev. Molly.

Room at the Inn at UUCC Dec. 9-23

Room at the Inn provides a warm and safe place to sleep for Columbia's homeless during the winter months. It will be hosted by six different churches this year, with ours being the first.

Last year our two weeks of RATI were staffed almost 100% by volunteers from UUCC (along with a few paid staff). We hope this year will be the same. Training will be at 12:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 2 in the Sanctuary, but in the meantime, please sign up!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0c49afaa29abf94-room6>

December focus for Festival of Sharing

This church year collection for the Festival of Sharing will be somewhat different. Each month, the team will collect donations for one specific "Sharing Pack." This format will make the process of collecting and assembling donations less stressful for the team as the ingathering approaches each fall.

For the month of December, the focus is on the "Missouri Student Dental Pack" project. These are targeted for elementary school children. Each pack should contain:

- 4 child-size soft toothbrushes (in original package)
- 2 adult soft toothbrushes (in original package)
- 1 fluoride toothpaste (6 oz. or more)
- 1 dental floss (any size)

The need for these packs has exceeded the number available. In 2017, there were requests for 3,535 student dental packs, but only 2,922 were provided. Collection boxes are available in the church Greeting Area.

– Bonnie Johnson, Festival of Sharing Chair



Founders' Day Service Auction Jan. 26, 2019

Let's make a deal! You give us \$10, and at the Founders' Day Service Auction at 6 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 26, 2019, we'll give you:

- A festive evening of fun and fellowship
- Heavy appetizers and beverages
- Two raffle tickets
- Free child care for those who need it (with pizza, games and movies for the kids)
- The opportunity to bid on services donated by our members and friends
- The pride of knowing that you helped UUCC
- Freedom from remorse over missing our premier fund-raising event of the year

We'll gather for tasty snacks and beverages from 6 to 8 p.m. and bid on things like computer help, professional or business services, fancy meals... on and on the list will go.

Your help is needed to make this church fund-raiser a success:

Go to <https://uucomo.org/founders-day-service-auction-jan-26-2019/> and:

- **Purchase auction tickets** for \$10/person on the [Auction Tickets](#) page. (No tickets are required for children who will be in childcare.)
- **Donate services.** Can you change someone's oil? Host a game night? Cut someone's hair? Bake cookies? Donate time at your vacation cabin? Provide babysitting? Shovel snow? Provide professional or business services? You can find more ideas and make your donations on the [Auction Service\(s\) Donation](#) page. *Feel free to come up with your own service ideas!*
- **Contribute food/drinks and/or volunteer to help with setup and cleanup** on the [Auction Food/Drinks and Help](#) page.

If money is tight, there are still ways to participate:

- **Volunteer to help with one of the Saturday night tasks.**
- **Donate a simple service** that costs you little to nothing, *e.g.* several hours of yard work, a game night with simple snacks, or co-host a soup and movie night with a friend! It doesn't have to be fancy or budget-busting, and you get the fun of the group event that was won at auction.

Forum – December 2018 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. 2 – George Lombardi, former director of the Missouri Department of Corrections, will discuss the history of the department in which he spent 31 years as an administrator.

Dec. 9 – TBA (Tentatively, Bill Fisch, retired MU professor, will discuss “The Supreme Court – Then, Now and in the Future.”)

Dec. 16 – Our own Fran Reynolds will be joined by some of her UU Life Writers group to discuss “Your Story Matters – You Don’t Have to Be Thoreau.”

Dec. 23 and 30 – Holiday programs will be generated from within Forum.

New Year’s Day Hike

Meet at the church at **1:30 p.m. Jan. 1, 2019** for our annual New Year’s Day hike. 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 the tentative plan is to hike at Three Creeks Conservation Area. Halfway through the hike the group will stop and build a small campfire. Bring nibbles to share.

If you have questions, contact Peter Holmes.

**UCC hosts Room at the Inn
Sunday evening, Dec. 9 through
Sunday morning, Dec. 23**

Don’t be caught by surprise! Sunday worship services will be in the Sanctuary, but all other groups and meetings will be on the lower level.

Adult RE **December Mini-mester**

Our Adult Religious Education program continues in 2018 with a series led by Jan Weaver – not so much a class as a time and space to think about what you want from the winter holidays, to plan for what you want, to reflect on how you might have to change, and to be ready for what actually happens.

Planning Your Holiday Experience **6:30 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 4**

If things are going to change, you need to create new systems to support that change. Take some time to make a plan for how that change is going to happen.

The Only Person You Can Change is Yourself **6:30 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 11**

The only way to really change things is to change yourself first. Take some time to reflect on what you might need to do differently for the holiday you want.

So It’s Not Going Like You Planned **6:30 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 18**

Stuff happens. Take some time to prepare yourself for when things don’t turn out the way you planned.

Come to any or all sessions to gain some perspective on the holidays, and take some time to make them meaningful for you. Free childcare will be provided.

2019 Programs

We will resume classes in January with two new offerings on Tuesdays from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Classes will meet from Jan. 15 through March 19, with free childcare provided. We will kick off with a potluck for all who are interested at 5:30 p.m. Jan. 15.

One class will be an antiracist, multicultural program called “Building the World We Dream About.” The other option is called “Spirit in Practice” and is designed to help UUs develop regular disciplines or practices of the spirit to help them connect with the sacred ground of their being, however they understand it.

UCC Caring Ministry

We need many hands and caring hearts! Contact Meredith Donaldson by email at mjdonlsn@gmail.com or call the church office at 573-442-5764 to volunteer.

Programs and Events

UCC Book Discussion – Dec. 8

The Book Discussion Group will meet at noon Saturday, Dec. 8 at Bamboo Terrace, 3101 W. Broadway, Suite 101. Bring a book you have read to discuss briefly. If you have questions, call Pam Springsteel at 445-0642.

UU Life Writers 'Our Stories... Our Voices'

Saturday, Dec. 1

10:30 a.m. – Centering Room

We will conclude our fall session with a celebration of "Our Stories - Our Voices."

The Winter/Spring 2019 session will begin in February - the first and third Saturdays. The joy of being a UU Life Writer is not only writing one's own story, but hearing others' stories. Everyone is welcome to bring their favorite writing instrument and paper and write.

For more information contact Fran Reynolds at 573-881-3828 or Reynoldsf@missouri.edu.

Mindfulness Meditation Sunday mornings

Mindfulness Meditation takes place from 10:05 to 10:45 a.m. every Sunday downstairs in the Centering Room or the Schweitzer classroom. If the weather is suitable, the group sits outside around the Fire Circle.

Conversations, Etc. – Dec. 12

Conversations, Etc., the UCC women's group, will meet at the church at noon Wednesday, Dec. 12 to celebrate the annual holiday soup, salad, bread, and dessert luncheon. Soup and dessert will be provided. Please bring a green or fruit salad and dressing, vegetable or bread.

We will enjoy the good company of friends. If you have questions, call Melinda Farhangi at 573-445-6325.

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 at 573-864-8574 or millerwi@missouri.edu.

Kaleidoscope – Dec. 22

Join Kaleidoscope to celebrate the return of the Sun, the symbol of hope and the promise of returning warmth, at 6 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 22 at the church.

We will join in ritual, followed by a potluck and friendship. All are welcome, no matter what their personal paths.

UCC provides Loaves and Fishes meal on third Sundays – Dec. 16

UCC provides the evening meal at Loaves and Fishes on the third Sunday each month – Dec. 16 this month.

Please sign up on the church website to prepare food for this meal and/or to help set up, serve, and clean up.

Serving meals at Loaves and Fishes is a project of our Social Action Team. Email Diane Suhler at drsuhler@ccis.edu for more information.

Non-toxic masculinity men's group – 7 p.m. Mondays at church

The Non-Toxic Masculinity Men's Group meets at the church at 7 p.m. Monday evenings.

The group serves cisgendered, straight, white men who are actively working to detoxify their masculinity and privilege so that they can stop doing damage to others and learn how to become active allies of other, more marginalized, groups.

For more information, contact Jeff Ordway.

UCC

Mission Statement

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

Our presence on the web

Our website address is now <https://uucomo.org>.

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

Note: If you forget and go to <https://uuchurch.net>, you will be redirected to <https://uucomo.org>.

Social Action Team selects Faith-to-Action Recipients

By Fred Young, SAT Communications Coordinator

The Social Action Team reviewed the applications for the twice-monthly Faith-to-Action Sunday service collections for the 2018-2019 church year. All of the applicants were determined to be aligned with the mission and vision of our church. Fortunately, we were able to accept all of these worthy applicants. Many thanks to the individuals who took the time to fill out applications for these organizations; your efforts will literally “pay off” for the deserving organizations that have been selected.

Here are those organizations, in no particular order:

- Race Matters Friends
- Humanity for Children
- Hickman High School Amnesty International
- Minority Men’s Network
- Missourians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty
- Centro para el Desarrollo Político, Educativo y Cultural (Puerto Rico grassroots recovery and development initiative)
- First Chance for Children
- Tiger Council of the Blind
- Literacy Action Corps
- Voluntary Action Center
- City of Refuge
- Centro Latino de Salud
- UUCC Honduras Ministry
- Welcome Home, Inc.
- Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
- No More Deaths
- Children’s Grove Kindness Libraries
- The Center Project

In addition, members of the team feel strongly that the Rural Crisis Center and the Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture should be considered for Faith-to-Action collections.

We are not suggesting this as the final, definitive list of Faith-to-Action recipients. Other organizations, such as the Festival of Sharing, or situational relief efforts that require a timely response, may be selected at the discretion of the minister. We intend to post information about each of these organizations, ideally in the week preceding each of their respective Sunday collections.

There is plenty more “action” among Social Action Team members that is not covered here. I recently volunteered to direct communications concerning social action that our church is actively involved with and/or that individual members are passionate about and involved with. I am now starting the process of determining how best to accomplish that, via the SAT Facebook page, the UUCC Facebook page, the UUCC website, the monthly newsletter, the weekly news email, order of service announcement inserts, church bulletin board postings... did I miss anything?

I welcome your comments, suggestions – and of course *action* items – at fred_young_3@yahoo.com.

A message from Alexis, our ministerial intern

Highlights during my first few months at UUCC include meeting members between services, during meetings, and over coffee. If you would like to meet with me, you’re welcome to contact me to set up an appointment by email to internminister@uucomo.org.

Part of my work this year and next will be related to membership, so you’re also invited to contact me if you have thoughts to share about what it means to be a community of radical welcome and deep connections.



Welcoming Team Announces:

**For Our Newcomers:
“Getting to Know UU”
(for all those who want
to know more about us)**

On the first Sunday of each month in the minister’s office after the 11 a.m. worship service for about 30 minutes.

Child care is provided.

And, suddenly, the holiday season is upon us . . .

By Barbara Rupp, 2018-19 President

Fall has been busy for so many of us, both with activities in our homes and work, and activities here at the church. Sometimes, especially as colder weather moves in, it's ever-so-tempting to avoid yet another commitment and to curl up at home with a good book or good movie, and sometimes that nesting behavior is needed for our own mental and physical health! Still, assuming you are well and able, I hope you'll find the energy to plunge into some important things going on at our church in the coming weeks and months.

By the time you see this newsletter, the Building Needs Task Force will have held two informational meetings at the church. I hope you were able to attend one of them. If not, I hope you will reach out to someone on the task force to learn more about the efforts to prioritize many needed updates to the church facility. This group continues to put in untold hours in efforts to make sure the congregation has as much information as possible before voting on proposals that will affect all of us, and they are more than willing to share the information they have gathered with you. Members of the task force are Larry Lile, Keven Fritsche, Jeremy Bossaller and Gretchen Maune. I have also

recently joined the task force.

Members of our congregation are involved in a wide variety of worthy social causes within our community and beyond. I saw a list recently that included more than two dozen organizations, and I doubt that it was complete. So, by mentioning the following two projects, I by no means intend to diminish the importance of all of the others. I suspect these two things come to mind because of winter and the holiday season. These two particular service projects are the monthly Loaves and Fishes and the annual Room at the Inn. The first provides a hot meal to large numbers in our community who depend on that service and who have the misfortune of food insecurity. The second provides a warm, safe shelter for homeless on the coldest winter nights. Both are worthy efforts that cannot be sustained without volunteers from our congregation. Your efforts toward either or both would be much appreciated by many.

My holiday wish is for you all to have a healthy, safe holiday and the good fortune to be surrounded by loved ones.

Good cheer to all! Barbara

Sanctuary Team Report

On Sunday, Sept. 23, 2018, the congregation held a dedication of our remodeled bathroom with the wonderful shower. During this ceremony, congregants submitted one-word definitions of sanctuary. Rev. Dottie Mathews used the submissions to create the word tree at the right.

Sadly, the demonizing of immigrants has intensified, and those seeking asylum are facing greater challenges. We at UUC ally ourselves with folks across our nation who are preparing to help them meet those challenges.

Your Sanctuary Team is organizing a fundraiser for this effort. We hope to combine pleasant company, good food and presentation of personal stories about asylum seekers. The stories will be told by several people. UUC members Dottie Mathews and Dave Gibbons have traveled to the border recently to offer service and to provide witness. Their stories will be among those presented. The tentative date for this event is Feb. 10, 2019.



A message from Honduras Team member Caya Tanski-French



I am scheduled to leave in late November for a trip to Honduras with a Unitarian Universalist Service Committee social justice delegation to support groups of women who are fighting for their lives, fighting to protect their land against mining and dams, and fighting for a Honduras where people can live in dignity and aren't forced to leave out of desperation and misery.

After the delegation trip, I will be visiting the

community where our church has established projects to build latrines with the local people. As I'm sure you know, the people in this community barely have sanitation, let alone decent clothing, footwear, medicine, food, etc.

I am taking two large suitcases full of gently-used children's (summer) clothing, shoes, ecologically friendly toys, and other items. Many thanks to those who contributed!

Reflections

This month, we are exploring the meaning of the word “faith” and its value to us as UUs. It is a complicated question for we UU parents who want our children to have belief only in what is real and are uncomfortable with the idea of believing in something that can’t be shown to be true. . . .

Which brings us to the question of Santa Claus. How do you approach this in your family? I have loved the conversations I have had with many UUs families and their various understandings of the beautiful legend of Santa Claus and how they talk about it in their own families. I encourage you to have some of these conversations with other UU parents, as it has enriched my understanding of the tradition and of the deeper underlying message of faith in goodness and love and care for each other.

Whatever your family’s approach to the Santa Claus legend, it is a wonderful way to begin the conversation about what it means to have faith. So many beloved stories and movies of Christmas (and Hanukkah as well), from “Miracle on 34th Street” to *The Grinch Who Stole Christmas*, give us a chance to explore just what it is we believe in about the holiday season. One quote that stuck with me from my own childhood was the passage from *On the Banks of Plum Creek* by Laura Ingalls Wilder:

Christmas Eve was the one time when everybody was unselfish. On that one night, Santa Claus was everywhere, because everybody, all together, stopped being selfish and wanted other people to be happy. And in the morning you saw what that had done.

“If everybody wanted everybody else to be happy, all the time, then would it be Christmas all the time?” Laura asked, and Ma said, “Yes, Laura.”

– Jamila Batchelder, Director of Religious Education

Simple Gifts Workshop 12:15 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 9

Our annual simple gifts workshop is coming up at 12:15 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 9. Children and their parents are invited for a time of holiday crafting and gift making.

Please RSVP to dre@uucomo.org if you plan to attend, and let me know if you would like to volunteer to lead a craft.

We will have a potluck before we begin crafting. I will provide soup, salad, bread, and hot apple cider. Please bring whatever else you would enjoy sharing.



Jamila Batchelder
Director of Religious Education
dre@uucomo.org
573-442-5764
Office Hours: Wed. 10 a.m.-noon
and by appointment

Hanging of the Greens



At 10 a.m. Dec. 2 (between services), we will be decorating our sanctuary for the holidays and hanging ornaments. You are invited to join us and enjoy a few holiday treats while you work!

High School OWL Parent Orientation 4 p.m. Dec. 8



We will be offering our highly acclaimed high school level sexuality education classes starting in January 2019. Classes will be offered from 12:30 to 3 p.m. on Sunday afternoons.

For their teens to participate, parents **must** attend a parent orientation. To register your teen for the program, please fill out the online registration on our website. Space is limited, so sign up soon!

<https://uucomo.org/2019-high-school-owl-class-registration/>

December R.E. Schedule

- Dec. 2:** Service Sunday
- Dec. 9:** Regular R.E. Classes
- Dec. 16:** Regular R.E. Classes
- Dec. 23:** Intergenerational Service
- Dec. 30:** Intergenerational Service

THE SEARCHLIGHT

The Newsletter of:
Unitarian Universalist Church
2615 Shepard Blvd.
Columbia, MO 65201-6132

Return Service Requested

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Unitarian Universalist Church of



Columbia, Missouri

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