



The Searchlight

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia, Missouri

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March Worship Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

Sunday, March 1
“How Can We Help?”
Rev. Molly Housh Gordon and
Honduras Ministry Team

Join Rev. Molly and members of our Honduras Ministry Team to explore what it means to be of service, but also be in solidarity. How can we help in a way that is responsible to the agency and dignity of our partners? Honduras Team members will share reflections from their recent trip.

Sunday, March 8
“Don’t Just Do Something, Sit There!”
Rev. Molly Housh Gordon

Often it is not actually what we *do* that is most supportive to our loved ones, but rather a quality of our presence. Join us to explore what it means to be a healing presence with those we love, especially in the times when we feel most helpless.

Sunday, March 15
“Deconstructing Ally-ship”

Youth Sunday - YRUU High School Youth Group

Join us for this beloved annual service, when we hear wisdom from the teenagers of our church. This year as they plan their youth conference on DeCONstruction, they’ll explore and deconstruct the idea of what it means to be an ally in the work of justice.

Sunday, March 22
All-Church Service Sunday
Ministry Teams

We’ve spent the first half of the month thinking about how to be of service... now let’s act! Join us for an all-ages Service Sunday, when we will take on projects of service to our community, our church, and the world. Join a postcard advocacy campaign with your Green Sanctuary Team! Help clean up our beautiful Memorial Garden with your Grounds Team! Make Loaves and Fishes dishes for the freezer with your Social Action Team! And more... All projects will be at church and led by our various ministry teams.

Sunday, March 29
“Helping 101: Whether and How”
Disability Justice and Inclusion Team

Join your Disability Justice and Inclusion Team to explore... and perhaps complicate... the notion of service through a disability justice lens.

2019-2020 worship theme – Living 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.*

March’s theme is: *To Help*

*“If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your
time. But if you have come because your liberation is
bound up with mine, then let us work together.”*

– Lilla Watson – the Aboriginal
Women’s Movement in Australia

This year we are spending each month reflecting on a phrase from our church’s mission statement, but this month you may or may not have noticed something a bit different... This month’s phrase isn’t actually in our mission statement.

“To Help.” I’ve been calling it the silent phrase, because although it’s not actually in the mission statement as adopted, it is implied by the reality of our world. Even moving together, our congregation cannot heal the world. But we can help. We can join our hands with the mass movements all over the world who are putting in the work of healing and wholeness for and with our communities.

The more we reflect, the more we understand that nothing is ever as simple as we’d like it to be, and helping can be complicated. Sometimes our help is welcome, sometimes it is not. Sometimes putting our hands beside someone in the work of justice is solidarity, and sometimes it is savior-ism. And sometimes, we are simply helpless. Yet, often the most meaningful thing we can do as humans is being of service to others. Join us this month to explore how we can serve well in this messy, huge, never-ending work of healing our world.

See you in church,
Rev. Molly

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Forum
March 2020
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 co-ordinator: Bill Clark, 474-4510.

Sunday, March 1: David Schenker will return for his annual visit with an unusual topic: "Revenge: Greek, South African and American."

Sunday, March 8: Dr. Jack Colwill return to Forum with Part 2 of his look at "Health Care in the U.S. – Now and in the Future."

Sunday, March 15: Jeff Stack, Coordinator of the Mid-Missouri Fellowship of Reconciliation, will discuss several subjects including the death penalty.

Sunday, March 22: George Frissell will present on "The Jewish Roots of the Jamaican Religion – Rastafarianism."

Sunday, March 29: A Forum-generated program concerning the future of the UU Forum.

All-Church Service Sunday

Sunday, March 22

Join us for an all-ages Service Sunday when we will take on projects of service to our community, our church, and the world

Join a postcard advocacy campaign with your Green Sanctuary Team! Help clean up our beautiful Memorial Garden with your Grounds Team! Make Loaves and Fishes dishes for the freezer with your Social Action Team! And more...

All projects will be on site and led by our various ministry teams.

Mindfulness Meditation

9:30 a.m. on Sundays

Join us for Mindfulness Meditation every Sunday from 9:30 to 10:15 a.m. We meet in the Centering Room – or the Fire Circle when the weather is good. Meditators of all levels of experience are welcome.

This is mainly silent meditation with some instruction, if needed, and with brief selected readings from eminent teachers.

For more information, contact Peter Holmes.

No Walk on the Wild Side in March

**Look forward to a hike
the fourth Sunday in April!**



Call for summer lay-led worship volunteers – exploring our theological diversity

Exploring our theological diversity is our worship theme for this summer. In keeping with our longstanding tradition, the Worship Associates are looking for six people (or groups) to share their theologies and spiritual practices in lay-led worship services.

- Are there beliefs, traditions or practices from your religious upbringing that still inform your spiritual life? Please share them with us.
- Have you drawn on other sources you have been exposed to along your way that you have incorporated in your current theology or practice? Let us know what moved you.
- Are you currently exploring spiritual teachings that inspire you, even if you have not fully integrated them into your religious beliefs? Explore them with us.

Whether Buddhist, Jewish, Christian, atheist, Hindu, Muslim, agnostic, deist, or any other "ist," we want to learn about what is meaningful to you. Help us to continue to question our answers and to more fully understand this beautiful religious tapestry we have woven.

You won't be in this alone. An experienced Worship Associate will be assigned to assist you, and Rev. Molly is planning to offer a worship training May 2.

Available dates are June 7 and 21, July 5 and 19, and August 2 and 16.

If you are interested in doing a service or have any questions, please contact any member of the Worship Associates (Tim Dickerson, Rebecca Graves, Cande Iveson, Todd Iveson, Jeff Ordway, Sam Otten) or send an email to worship@uucomo.org.

Rev. Molly's office hours

Rev. Molly's weekly Community Office Hours are at Kaldi's Coffee downtown from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Thursdays. She is also always happy to meet by appointment. You can schedule an appointment by email to minister@uucomo.org. Please reach out if you'd like to chat about life, find your place in the church, process something difficult, find a listening ear, or discuss a project!

As spring is nearly upon us

by Mindy McPherson, 2019-20 President

February saw the kickoff of the 2020 Stewardship Campaign – *Moving Together*. The Stewardship Campaign theme was derived from our Mission Statement and based upon the idea of creating a community that moves us together in the work of healing our world. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I want to say thank you. Thank you for your stewardship pledge. We value your spiritual and financial commitment to our church. We look forward to the upcoming fiscal year that through your generosity is full of promise and possibility.

Moving together remains the focus of the Board of Trustees as we look toward the spring and beyond. We continue to build upon the work emphasized during the Next Steps Weekend; our attention is on the building needs and planning for a related capital campaign. Part of this work has centered on the evaluation, clarification and transformation of the vision for our collective movement. We are evaluating planning and execution timetables and beginning to recruit for leadership and volunteer positions in this important work.

In addition, the BOT is planning and preparing to ensure continuity of our work during Rev. Molly's sabbatical over the summer months. What an amazing opportunity for Rev. Molly to devote focused time and energies to exploring new ideas, learning and growing. What

an amazing opportunity for the congregation to devote focused time and energies to not only moving together, but learning together, as we welcome the Rev. Dr. C.W. Dawson to the pulpit as our Sabbatical Minister.

As spring is nearly upon us, I want to share a short meditation entitled, "In this time of anticipated spring" from Terasa Cooley. May you all find joy and wonder in the revelation of the season.

In this time of anticipated spring let us allow ourselves to extend the anticipation - to value the time of budding before blooming, of seeding before sprouting.

This is a time of revelation: the revealing of that which is eternal, which we see every year, but still need to be reminded to see it in a new way.

There is also the revelation of that which is new. Every spring we encounter something never before seen. It is that very newness which embodies hope and potential for the wholeness which is yet to be.

Let us allow spring to unfold slowly that we may appreciate the true mystery of rebirth and renewal.

Building Task Force still wants to hear from YOU!

By the time you read this, the second Building Task Force (BTF) listening session may have already happened. If you were unable to attend the BTF listening sessions on Jan. 26 or Feb. 29, it's OK – the BTF is still listening and wants your input!

What would you like to see if we were more fully living our mission of radical welcome and deep connection?

The answer to this could be a physical requirement: – e.g., an elevator. Or it could be aesthetic – maintain the beauty. Or it could be supporting our larger community – have space for others in our community to meet and network. What is important to you?

The BTF is listening and gathering data for our next meeting with Simon Oswald Associates (SOA), the architectural firm we have engaged to help us improve our physical space to further our goals of radical welcome and deep connection.

Our first listening session held Jan 26 yielded over 40 comments, many of which were identified more than once. For a full list of the comments, please go



to: https://uucomo.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/2020-01-26_feedback_session.pdf.

Additional BTF information is on the website at <https://uucomo.org/uucc-building-task-force/>.

To schedule a time to talk, please email Patty Daus at pajods@gmail.com or reach out to any of the other BTF members: Barbara Rupp, Larry Lile, Kevin Fritsche, Jeanne Murphy, and Rosie Geiser.

– Patty Daus
Chair, Building Task Force

Update from the Reparations Working Group

We in the Reparations Working Group have begun our work! Just what exactly is that work? Our charge, first articulated by Rev. Molly in her February 2019 sermon, “Reparations and Soul Repair,” is to conceive of a small-scale, hyper-local reparations project. How might we leverage and redistribute a portion of our congregation’s resources to African American residents of Columbia and/or Boone County as an admittedly small act of repair to the systemic impacts of slavery and ongoing racial injustice? We will grapple with this question and present a detailed project proposal to the congregation by late fall 2020.

To get from here to there, we have formed sub-teams in these three intersecting areas:

1. **Truth Telling:** How have white residents suppressed black residents throughout the founding and growth of Columbia and Boone County? How is that past still present in our community today? We are diving into Columbia’s history (including archival research and oral history gathering) to uncover and to shift the narrative of race in our community.

2. **Project Dreaming:** We are researching examples of other reparations projects around the coun-

try to inspire and inform us as we envision and plan our own small-scale project.

3. **Relationship Building:** We will identify and deepen relationships with black community members who are willing to offer insights into the history and the effects of systemic oppression in our community and to advise us on project design.

We are clear in understanding that our work:

- Must go beyond apologies, however heartfelt, and enter the realm of physical, material repair.
- Will be small in scale and cannot undo generations of past suffering.
- Involves, for those of us who identify as white, humility and an ever-deepening understanding of our own individual and familial roles in historical and present-day systems of racial oppression.

We move forward with this hope – that the work of small-scale repair, while modest, can still be profound. Small steps can also be bold.

The working group meets twice monthly. Members are Amie Burling, Andrew Twaddle, Charles Swaney, Dan Bugnitz, Dave Gibbons, Fred Young, Gretchen Maune, Kim Wade, Rev Molly Housh Gordon, Sam Otten. Contact Rev Molly if you would like to join us.

Reparations study series

**Sundays, March 8, 15 and 29 and April 5
9 to 10 a.m. in the Sanctuary**

Join Rev. Molly for a four-session study series using the Movement for Black Lives “Reparations Now Toolkit” to study the historical and contemporary cases for reparations. Sessions guided by the toolkit will include:

- Why Reparations? - March 8
- Defining Reparations - March 15
- Reparations History - March 29
- Case Studies - April 5

Prior registration is requested, as copies of the toolkit will be provided. A small donation of \$5 is welcome, although not required, to help defray the cost of printing.

Childcare will be available. Please register by Sunday, March 1 by emailing Rev. Molly at minister@uucomo.org.

Sanctuary/Immigrant Justice Team news

Team member Dottie Mathews has taken on a new position with the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, and it involves travel to various Central American countries. Her first trip was to El Salvador, where she learned and experienced many deeply moving things.

Much of Central American strife like rising violence, government corruption and abject poverty are a result of past and present US foreign policy. It is a direct result of US foreign policy that many people flee to the US, afraid for their lives and in search of economic survival.

Several team members are participating in the anti-racist “Changing Systems, Changing Ourselves” series of webinars. If you are interested in participating and in learning more, please join us – contact a co-chair, Dave Gibbons at dgibbons@mchsi.com or Allie Gassmann at alliegassmann@socket.net.

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

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

Festival of Sharing – March 2020

For the month of March, the focus is on the “Missouri Personal Hygiene Pack.” These packs are for adults who have experienced a crisis situation or are experiencing homelessness. Place all items in a large ziplock bag (2-2.5 gallon).

- 1 fluoride toothpaste (6 oz or more)
- 1 toothbrush (in original package)
- 1 bath-size bar of soap (in package)
- 1 bottle skin lotion (11-14 oz)
- 1 bottle shampoo (11-14 oz)
- 1 washcloth
- 1 deodorant
- 2 razors (disposable)
- 1 comb or brush
- 1 hand towel

In 2018, there were requests for 9,831 of these packs statewide, but only 3,140 were provided. Collection boxes are available in the church Greeting Area.

– Bonnie Johnson
Festival of Sharing Chair

Green Sanctuary Team

The Green Sanctuary Team meeting will be held on Thursday, March 12 (instead of March 5) at 7 p.m. in the Centering Room. All are welcome.

Instead of our usual meeting on the March 5, the team will be attending a program at the Bond Life Sciences Center that will feature excerpts from a new documentary called “Hometown Habitat: Stories of Bringing Nature Home.”

All are invited to this free event. More information will be posted on the Green Sanctuary bulletin board, or email ellenthomascomo@gmail.com with questions.



Spring is just around the corner...

... and the Grounds Team is excited to see our native plants pushing their heads up through the soil and reaching for the sunlight. Not only do native plants beautify our grounds, they also nurture and sustain the living landscape for birds and other animals.

The Grounds Team cares for the woods and field behind the church, the Memorial Garden and the flower beds around the church. We meet every third Saturday at 9 a.m. during the growing months and always welcome folks who want to learn about native plants, or who want to give a hand weeding, moving mulch, or trimming back honeysuckle.

For more information or to be placed on our “we have a work day” list, please email Jeanne Murphy at jmurphy1203@socket.net or Patty Daus at pajods@gmail.com.

March news from the Social Action Team

Faith-to-Action collections scheduled in March are:

- March 1 The Honduras Project
- March 8 The Spay-Neuter Project

Brief information on each of these organizations can be found on the church website, under the Social Action Team section.

Remember that if you are unable to attend church service or Forum March 1 or 8, you can always send in a check any time in March. Make the check out to UUCC, with FTA and the organization’s name in the memo line, and the Church Administrator will include it in our church’s total donation.

Dinners for Eight Supper Club

We welcome new singles or couples to our membership. Please send a request for information to Linda Lou Brown at brownlindalou@icloud.com, or call her at 447-3939. These in-home dinners in January, February and March may be the link you are looking for to strengthen your connections at UUCC.

UUCC Welcoming Team offers...

For our newcomers: “Getting to Know UU” (for those who want to know more about us)

The first Sunday each month in the minister’s office after the 10:30 a.m. service for about 30 minutes. Childcare will be provided.

Rev. Molly's Sabbatical Plans

I am very grateful to announce that this summer, at the end of my eighth year of service as minister of our congregation, I will be taking a four-month sabbatical from May 11 (the day after our Flower Communion Service) to Sept. 8 (in time to resume the pulpit for the first Sunday of the church year).

What is a sabbatical?

Sabbatical is a long tradition in ministry and academia alike, allowing for an extended time of study, reflection, rest, and renewal... all ingredients for effective ministry. In our Unitarian Universalist tradition, sabbatical leave is part of the congregation's covenantal agreement with their minister, who generally earns one month of sabbatical per year of service up to a limit of 6 months.

What will you be doing with your sabbatical?

I know this opportunity for extended renewal is a rare gift in our American culture of overwork and grind, and I am humbled and grateful for the chance to recharge my batteries in this way. I hope to do a lot of reading to renew my wells of preaching fodder and take on a writing project that is tickling my brain. I plan to return refreshed and full of new ideas and rekindled energy!

What kind of support will we have during the sabbatical?

The board has been saving for sabbatical coverage since I arrived. As well as our usual robust summer lay-led worship and excellent volunteers, we will have a part-time sabbatical minister to fulfill my executive and pastoral capacities and preach twice per month.

I am very pleased to announce to you that the Rev. Dr. C.W. Dawson has been hired as our sabbatical minister. The Rev. Dr. Dawson is a progressive pastor, professor of philosophy and religion, prolific columnist, and a regular and beloved guest preacher and teacher here at UUCC. I am elated that he is available to work with us in this way – to guide the congregation and to provide new perspective to our ministry during this period.

Does sabbatical benefit the congregation?

Yes! A sabbatical can be a time of mutual growth and exploration for minister and congregation alike, as the congregation has the chance to benefit from different perspectives and ideas.

For this sabbatical period, as well as fulfilling the roles listed above, Rev. Dr. Dawson will specifically be working with the congregation on its desire to grow in radical welcome and multiculturalism. At worship on Sunday, Feb. 23, Rev. Dawson and I discussed our hopes and wonderings regarding this work.

Will you be around during sabbatical?

I will be on full leave from all church duties and will not be available for anything church-related, including pastoral care. But I will mostly be in town as my family members go about their usual lives. It is very likely that we will run into each other around town, in which case, I will be very glad to say hello in my private citizen capacity. I know that I will miss seeing your faces week after week!

I have more questions.

Ask me at minister@uucomo.org or 573-442-5764.

A standing invitation from the UUCC Social Action Team

We invite all church members and all friends who have an interest in social justice to join our Social Action Team. Help us shape and strengthen our work. There are five aspects of our social justice work:

1. **Direct Service** (e.g. Loaves and Fishes, Room at the Inn)
2. **Fundraising** (e.g. through Faith-to-Action, fundraisers such as the Honduras Trivia Night, sales of artisan crafts, etc. to support social justice work)
3. **Education** (learning about systems of injustice, our role in them, and how to effect systemic change)
4. **Advocacy and Witness** (e.g. work with Race Matters, Friends, showing up at City Council, Solidarity Network events, working with Missouri Faith Voices, the Sanctuary Team, letters to congressional representatives, work with MADP, the Center Project, etc.)
5. **Community Building and Deep Connection** (to sustain ourselves in the work, but also to create the world we want to see)

Please consider participation in any of our subcommittees or teams such as the Anti-Racism Subcommittee, Economic Justice Subcommittee, Honduras Team, Sanctuary Team, the Missouri Faith Voices work, or the Green Sanctuary Team. Together we create the change we want to see while being who we want to be in the world.

Programs and Events

Kaleidoscope Pagan gathering

6:30 p.m. Saturday, March 20

Come celebrate the rebirth of the Earth – bunnies and eggs and Nature courting. Celebrate all things new and joyful and wonderful.

Join Kaleidoscope as we celebrate Ostara, the spring equinox, on March 20 at 6:30 p.m. We meet at the church. We will join in ritual, followed by a potluck and friendship. All are welcome, no matter what their personal paths.

UU Life Writers

Spring Meetings:

March 7 and 21
April 4 and 18
May 2 and 16
June 6

The UU Life Writers' Group will meet on Saturday, March 7 and 21 at 10:30 a.m. in the Centering Room. We are continuing to write stories on the theme of "Inheritances." All are welcome!

Conversations, Etc.

Noon Wednesday, March 11

Conversations, Etc., the UUCC women's group, will meet at the church at noon Wednesday, March 11. Bring a brown bag lunch and come and enjoy the company of friends. If you have questions, call Melinda Farhangi at 573-445-6325.

UUCC Caring Ministry

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

Unitarian Universalist Church of



**No
Walk on the Wild Side
in March**

***Look forward to a hike
the fourth Sunday in April!***

UUCC Book Discussion

Noon Saturday, March 14

The UUCC Book Discussion will meet at noon Saturday, March 14 at Surah Korean Restaurant, 3510 I-70 Dr. SE. Bring a book you have read to discuss briefly.

Contact Pam Springsteel at 573-445-0642 or pspring@socket.net if you have questions.

X-ennial Supper Club

5:30 p.m. Sunday, March 15

If you are somewhere in your 20s-40s and interested in new connections with fellow UU Churchers, join us at the church for this potluck-style dinner and socializing at 5:30 p.m. Feb. 15.

Child care and pizza for kids will be provided. Please bring a dish to share if you can!

Get your UUCC Social Action Team T-Shirt!

*Your \$20 helps UUCC with our
many social action projects.*

*Contact Caya Tanski,
Allie Gassmann or Sarah Wolcott
for more information or
to place your order.*

UUCC provides Loaves and Fishes meal on third Sundays

March 15 this month

UUCC provides the evening meal at Loaves and Fishes on the third Sunday each month – March 15 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.

Men's Group

8 a.m. March 14 and 28

The UUCC 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.

Non-toxic Masculinity Men's Group

7 p.m. Monday, March 2

The Non-Toxic Masculinity Men's Group meets at the church at 7 p.m. on the first Monday of each month. The group serves cis-gendered, straight, white men who are working to detoxify their masculinity and privilege so they can stop doing damage to others and become active allies of marginalized groups.

For more information, contact Jeff Ordway.

Reflections

Our theme for this March at UUCC is “To Help.” This concept is at the heart of our monthly Service Sunday program, so this month we have decided to expand it – on March 22, we will be doing an All Church Service Sunday, with a variety of projects for your whole family to work on, from putting together birthday packages for children in foster care to doing grounds work for the church to writing postcards to legislators.

This year in particular, I have noticed a real increase in the interest of our youth in getting involved in service, which absolutely thrills me. We are looking for more opportunities for kids to get involved in service projects. We will have the first meeting of our RE Loaves and Fishes Team after the service on March 19. Look for more information on how to get involved in that.

And I want to invite anyone who is interested in attending our Youth Service Leaders meeting before the service on May 17 to plan out service projects for the summer.

Sincerely,
Jamila
Director of Religious Education



Midwest Unitarian Universalist Summer Assembly (MUUSA) June 28-July 4, 2020

As you start planning your summer vacation for your family, I encourage you to consider attending MUUSA, the UU family camp held at Trout Lodge in Potosi, Missouri.

It is a wonderful experience for the whole family, with programming for children and adults in a beautiful and relaxing setting. Check it out at <https://muusa.org/>.



Jamila Batchelder
Director of Religious Education

dre@uucomo.org
573-442-5764
Office Hours: Wed. 10 a.m.-noon
and by appointment

Junior Youth Night March 13 6:30-8:30 pm

Junior Youth will be participating in a cooking competition in the style of the TV show “Chopped!” It is going to be a lot of fun!



YRUU Lay-Led Service March 15

The YRUU youth will be exploring the topic of allyship, thinking about what we get wrong when we try to help.



March Schedule

March 1: Service Sunday
March 8: Regular RE Classes
March 15: Regular RE Classes
March 22: All Church
Service Sunday
March 29: Service Sunday

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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