

The Searchlight

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia, Missouri

2615 Shepard Blvd., Columbia, MO 65201 • 573-442-5764 • <https://uucomo.org> • Volume 61, Issue 5, November 2020

November Worship

Sundays at 10:30 a.m. – online only

As we continue worshiping online, if you have any trouble accessing the technology to join us, please send a note to techhelp@uucomo.org with your contact information. Someone will reach out to help!

Sunday, Nov. 1
“How We Thrive”

Rev. Molly Housh Gordon

On the Sunday before what may be the most important election in many of our lifetimes, let us gather together to center ourselves in a vision of thriving and love that guides us, no matter the season. Let us be sustained in anxious days by one another and clarity of call.

Sunday, Nov. 8
“Now We Keep Working”
Rev. Molly Housh Gordon and
Rev. Dr. C.W. Dawson

A just world is not created by elections, but by the ongoing work of dreaming, organizing and loving that we do in our communities year round, year after year. No matter the outcome of our elections, now we keep working on bringing about the world we dream of. Rev. Molly Housh Gordon will be joined by Rev. Dr. C.W. Dawson, and both will share homilies making meaning of this time.

Sunday, Nov. 15
“Radical Amazement in the Time of Covid”
Rabbi Phil Cohen, Pulpit Guest

Rabbi Phil Cohen is a graduate of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, NYC campus. He holds a Ph.D. in Jewish thought from Brandeis University. He also holds an MFA in fiction from Spalding University. His novel, *Nick Bones Underground*, won a Finalist Award for Debut Novel from the Jewish Book Council in 1999. He is married to Betsy Gamburg and is the father of Elly and Talia, and the grandfather of Ava Ruth, about whom he is nuts. Rabbi Cohen is currently the interim rabbi serving Congregation Beth Shalom here in Columbia.

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From the Minister

Worship Arc 2020-21

How do we . . .

Keep Going?

“If you’re going through hell, keep going.”

– Winston Churchill

How do we keep going? In the constraints of pandemic life with winter quickly approaching, sometimes it feels that it is all so hard and there is no end in sight. We will keep going because that is what we do... Across millennia, and in unimaginable circumstances, our ancestors just... kept going... but, how, exactly? The answer is, in part, the inarticulate mystery of the human spirit.

But perhaps there are some practical ideas too. We keep going by:

- Radical presence to what is. Letting go of normal in favor of survival.
- Paying attention close in. Finding agency and connection in the small Venn diagram of what we *do* have some control over.
- Practicing the theology of “and” by holding at once all that is unbearably hard and all that is unspeakably beautiful. Not trying to smooth away the one, but also not forgetting the presence of the other. Notice how the difficult and the lovely rise to meet each other.
- Sustaining spiritual practice. A friend taught me a trick the other day: Can you commit to meditate or pray for two minutes every day? Two minutes is totally doable, and the “trick” is that usually it feels good enough that you want to go another 10.

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Worship (continued from page 1)

Sunday, Nov. 22

“Feasting Anyhow” – Thanksgiving Sunday

Rev. Molly Housh Gordon and

DRE Jamila Batchelder

The Food Network show *Chopped* challenges competing chefs to make something delicious out of mystery baskets full of odd or incongruous ingredients. This year, life has given us a pretty difficult mystery basket, but we will find a way to feast anyhow. Across millennia, humans have shared food in scarce and bountiful times alike with ingenuity and cooperation, because that is just what humans do.

Sunday, Nov. 29

Rev. Sally Fritsche, Pulpit Guest

Rev. Sally Fritsche is a lifelong Unitarian Universalist who grew up right here in our Columbia Missouri congregation. She graduated from Harvard Divinity School in 2018, and was ordained into UU ministry in June 2020. She is currently serving as the Associate Minister for Congregational Life at the UU Church of Urbana-Champaign in Illinois. Having been nurtured her whole life by the warmth and depth of UU community, Rev. Sally is committed to creating and sustaining that same sense of spiritual home for others. She is excited to be visiting her home congregation to see the familiar faces who have centered and supported her on her journey toward ministry.

Worship services are offered via Zoom. Services are followed by a weekly digital coffee hour.

The Zoom web address for our Sunday 10:30 a.m.

worship is: <https://zoom.us/j/380411489>

You can also join by phone: 312-626 6799

Webinar ID: 380 411 489

The Zoom web address for our weekly 11:30 a.m.

coffee hour is: <https://zoom.us/j/652315354>

You can also join by phone: 312-626 6799

Webinar ID: 652 315 354

Services are also streamed live to Facebook at:

[https://www.facebook.com/pg/](https://www.facebook.com/pg/UnitarianUniversalistChurchOfColumbiaMO/videos/)

[UnitarianUniversalistChurchOfColumbiaMO/videos/](https://www.facebook.com/pg/UnitarianUniversalistChurchOfColumbiaMO/videos/)

We are still looking for new people to join the Investment and Endowment Committee

This committee monitors and directs the church's investments with a special focus on growing the endowment. We meet quarterly and choose socially conscious and sustainable investments so that we can live our values. Contact Pam Springsteel at pspring@socket.net or Jeremy Duke at jduke@imfcounseling.com if you're interested.

Keep Going? (continued from page 1)

- Drinking plenty of water, and feeding and moving our bodies in ways that feel good.

- Remembering that you are not alone. Call your granddaughter. Call your mom. Call your best friend from high school. Call your church friends. Please, call your church friends. We need each other. The directory is at <https://uucomo.org/directory/>.

- Be a part of something bigger. Make masks for the free pantry outside my house. Get involved with Missouri Faith Voices. Think about that world of Beloved Community you want to see and take one small step toward it in your daily life.

When all else fails, when the best you can do for the day is maybe brush your teeth, remember that we love you, I love you, and together we can keep going. This particular struggle will end, and we need each other to be here when it does. Hang in there, dear ones.

What would you add? How do *you* keep going? See you in church!

– Rev. Molly



Weekly activities to stay connected

Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9 a.m.

Sacred Readings

Rev. Molly will be on her [Facebook page](#) around 9 a.m. for a Sacred Reading practice, sharing a poem three times for you to listen for inspiration and an invitation for your day.

Wednesdays at noon – Lunchtime Chats on our UUCC Facebook Page

Rev. Molly is offering a series of “Lunchtime Chats” with wise members of our community. She will ask them questions related to these uncertain times as well as questions posed by those who tune in. Please join us on the UUCC Facebook page.

Wednesdays at 7 p.m. – Virtual Choir Hangout

Hosted by Jeremy Wagner

Fridays at 1 p.m. – Crafting Club

Robin Yoerger Duple hosts UU crafters and friends to share ideas or chat while knitting, crocheting or crafting from the comfort of your home.

You can find the Zoom links for these virtual activities at <https://uucomo.org/zoom-links/>.

Rev. Molly's November office hours

Tuesdays on Zoom – 9:30-11 a.m.

Thursdays outdoors if possible, or on Zoom – 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

I'm hoping for more lovely weather ahead of us, so we will try to continue Thursday office hours outdoors. The difference from our October plan is that if the weather is not agreeable I will hold Thursday office hours on Zoom. Here are the outdoor, in-person expectations:

- If it's raining, I will hold office hours on Zoom.
- I generally wait in the foyer of the Greeting Area, or I'll be in the Memorial Garden or the Fire Circle in the back part of the church property.
- Obviously, only join me if you feel comfortable doing so with regard to your own risk assessment.
- We'll maintain a distance of 6 feet or more and wear masks.
- While we may feel the urge to hug after so long apart, it is important for the safety of all I serve that we have no physical contact during in-person visits.
- Because office hours are drop-in, it is possible more than one of you will arrive at the same time. If this is the case, we will converse together and maintain appropriate distance between parties.
- Please be extra respectful of the space of others and default to more caution rather than less.
- Please only bring children if they are able to maintain proper distance.

I am also available to you outdoors, in person, by appointment. There will be the same requirements regarding outdoor space, masking and distancing. I have edited my scheduling software to allow for outdoor in-person appointments – calendly.com/revmollyhoushgordon.

I remain equally available to you by Zoom and phone if in-person outdoor visits do not fit your risk level. Simply select “virtual meeting” on the scheduling app – calendly.com/revmollyhoushgordon.

– Rev. Molly

An expression of gratitude from Rev. Dr. C.W. Dawson

Our Board of Trustees authorized the church to provide financial assistance to the Rev. Dr. C.W. Dawson for the purchase of a new laptop computer after his old computer failed. This assistance was provided in view of Rev. Dr. Dawson's exemplary performance as our Philosopher-in-Residence this past summer and his upcoming service next year during Rev. Molly's delayed sabbatical.

Rev. Dr. Dawson sent the following expression of gratitude:

“I just wanted to send you this note to tell you thank you for purchasing my computer. As many of you know, I am currently teaching six courses this semester. All of them require Zoom ability. Without your help I would not be able to teach, which in turn would cause Maria and me great financial hardship. But because of you, I can fulfill my obligation to MACC, Columbia College, Westminster College, and my other endeavors.

“You all have treated me wonderfully and I hope that I have brought a blessing to you as well. Take care, and again, thank you!”

New member ingathering

During our worship service on Sept. 27. we welcomed the following new members to our congregation:

Camden Daily
Robin Duple
Justin Hatcher and
Tonette Rippetto
Mel James
Jessica McKee
April Rodeghero

We are a congregation of radical welcome and religious pluralism. It's nice to add a few more to our membership. Welcome!

Donate to others during the Covid-19 emergency

UUCB benevolence funds

You can donate to our church's benevolence funds at <https://uucomo.org/donate/>. Be sure to note “benevolence funds” as the purpose of your donation.

Other community organizations

Other community organizations working to help those in need during the crisis include:

Community Foundation of Central Missouri's COVID-19 Regional Relief Fund

<https://cfcfoundation.org/donations/covid-19-regional-relief-fund/>

COVID-19 Crisis Shelter for the Unhoused

<https://comocrisisshelter.com/>

Food Bank for Central and Northeast Missouri COVID-19 Response

<https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/weblink.aspx?name=E164454&id=77>

President's Perspective

Living our mission

by Rebecca Graves, 2020-21 President

Over the past two months, the board, with input from the Covid-19 Advisory Task Force, has considered Room at the Inn's request for use of our church building this winter. As many of you know, Room at the Inn is a community-based organization that provides overnight shelter to our homeless neighbors from mid-December through mid-March. Our church is one of several that has opened our building for two or more weeks each year as a host. Many of us have volunteered to assist with food, registration, laundry, setup or take down, and other duties.

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed much in our lives including logistics for Room at the Inn. This year, only two churches were willing to even consider hosting, Rockbridge Christian and ourselves. The staff at Room at the Inn, in consideration of CDC guidelines for shelters and in consultation with our public health department, realized that moving from site to site this winter is not wise. The work is too close and too risky for transmission of SARS-CoV-2. They sought other options and with a HUD grant were able to secure 37 rooms at a local hotel. However, this is not enough to cover the need for shelter in our city.

Our Covid-19 Advisory Task Force did diligent work weighing the known risks of COVID-19, the ventilation system of our building, and the needs of the Room at the Inn guests. The safest course is to turn the building over to Room at the Inn for the four months they provide shelter. This means that our staff would work elsewhere, and that we would need to move furniture and supplies to provide space because physical distancing requirements mean that Room at the Inn would also use downstairs rooms as well as the sanctuary.

During this time, the board has also been discussing our mission and vision. What is important to us? What do we need to do? It is clear that one mission in these pandemic times is to hold ourselves together, to keep our church community strong. We are also clear that we have a mission to help our community and to change it for the better. And, here, Room at the Inn is a chance to do just that – to live our mission. Our staff had already agreed that they were willing to move temporarily out of the building for Room at the Inn. We have already made the decision to hold our worship services online through May. We have not yet opened up our building to groups for meetings. And what is a more important use of our building than a safe place to weather the nights of winter? At the end of our questioning and discussion, when it came time to vote, all board members were in favor of offering up our church home to Room at the Inn.

Now, there is work to be done. Rev. Molly and I will be meeting (or will have met by the time you read this) with the principal at Shepard Boulevard Elementary School and with the neighborhood association. There is furniture to move and cupboards to empty. The staff will need assistance with moving to their temporary homes. Room at the Inn will need volunteers.

We can do this work of our mission and be safe in regard to our health and that of our families during this pandemic. While some of this work will need to be done in the company of others, some of this work can be done alone, physically distant. We will also be reaching out to other churches for their assistance with Room at the Inn. And, in the weeks and months ahead, hold to this – that the work of our church community feeds our souls.

UCC Caring Ministry

The Caring Ministry Team is based on the belief that we are all inherently worthy of care and meaningful connections with others. This ministry provides support in times of celebration and challenge. Support may include cards, calls, visits, meals, and assistance with errands, transportation, or other needs. Please consider joining our team and/or helping out periodically. And let us know if you, or someone you know, needs our help!

Email Meredith Donaldson at mjdonlsn@gmail.com
or call the church office at 442-5764

Online payments to UCC

For pledge payments, go to:

[https://uucomo.org/financial-support/
#Pay](https://uucomo.org/financial-support/#Pay)

Fill out the brief form there to make your payment.

For other donations, go to:

<https://uucomo.org/donate/>

Be sure to indicate the purpose of your donation.

Festival of Sharing - November 2020

For the month of November, the focus is on “Missouri Family Food Boxes.” These are targeted at families with low incomes. At this time, the pandemic has driven increased need for these products. Each box will consist of the following items:

- 3 different cans of vegetables
- 3 different cans of fruit
- 3 cans of chicken
- 3 cans of tuna
- 1 can of pasta sauce
- 1 lb pasta (any type)
- 3 packages of macaroni and cheese
- 1 jar of peanut butter

There is a great need for the food boxes. In 2019, there were requests for 6,953 but only 2,119 were provided. In 2020, your generosity allowed UUCC to provide 25 boxes. Please drop donations at the church.

Report on Festival of Sharing for 2019-2020

September finished up the Festival of Sharing year, and the in-gatherings were held. Mark and I loaded all the kits that UUCC created into our minivan and drove them to Tipton United Methodist Church, the in-gathering location for Central Missouri, on Oct. 10.

With the new Covid-19 instructions not to get out of the vehicle, we were to only roll down the window to hand over the paperwork, then unlock the doors to let them unload without contact. We arrived after they had been open for about 30 minutes, and we seemed to *wow* them with what we brought. They were impressed with the quantity of paper products packs and family food boxes we delivered.

Following is a comparison between the 2018-19 year and the 2019-20 year Festival of Sharing giving from UUCC. It is down, but given that seven months of the year were under Covid restrictions, I think we did well.

<u>Project</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Cash	\$700	\$400
CWS Hygiene Kits	10-\$150	
School Kits	20-\$300	1-\$15
Eyeglasses	27-\$27	30-\$30
Missouri Baby Bundles	6-\$210	7-\$245
Backpacks of Love	17-\$595	14-\$490
Backpack Blankets	1-\$6	12-\$60
Blankets	2-\$24	2-\$24
Family Food Boxes	12-\$336	25-\$700
Paper Products	10-\$150	14-\$224
Personal Hygiene Kits	10-\$200	11-\$231
Reading & Writing Kits	12-\$168	6-\$90
Student Dental Packs	21-\$231	28-\$308
Youth Personal Care Packs	9-\$315	<u>3-\$105</u>
Empty Backpacks	<u>14-\$70</u>	
Totals	\$3,482	\$2,922

– Bonnie Johnson, Festival of Sharing Chair

Sanctuary/Immigrant Justice Team update

Recently Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) entered a church property under false pretenses and arrested the undocumented caretaker of a church in Maryland. His appeals were still pending. Such an arrest on church property is unprecedented.

Our team has decided to organize a “Know Your Rights” refresher, and we will invite anyone who is interested when we have the date and time.

The asylum-seeking family we are helping support is doing well. Yadira has gotten her work permit, and Edler is still waiting for his. Edler’s next court date is in March 2021. The girls are excited to be going back to school in person.

Allie Gassmann
alliegassmann@socket.net
 Dave Gibbons
dgibbons@mchsi.com

Columbia CROP Hunger Walk news

The Sept. 20 CROP Hunger Walk (a yearly event organized by the Church World Service) was modified this year because of the pandemic. People were asked to walk individually or in small and distanced groups – and of course everyone was encouraged to donate whether they walked or not!

So far \$11,883 has been raised to provide hunger relief here in Columbia, around the country and around the world.

Allie Gassmann
alliegassmann@socket.net
 Social Action Team

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

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

Programs and Events

Kaleidoscope Pagan Gathering

7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 19 online

Join us to celebrate the return of the Sun, the symbol of hope and the promise of returning warmth.

Gather with us on Dec. 19 via Zoom. All are welcome, no matter what their personal paths.

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/98856741664?pwd=dFNKbmtCV3RjQ2grN3M2NnpWYjR5UT09>

Contact Barbara Carter for further information.

Conversations, Etc.

Noon Thursday, Nov. 12 online

Conversations, Etc., the UUCC women's group will meet via Zoom and by telephone conference at noon Thursday, Nov 12. We get together to enjoy the company of good friends.

If you have questions or would like to join us, contact Pam Springsteel at 573-445-0642 or pspring@socket.net.

UUCC Book Discussion

5 p.m. Friday, Nov. 13 online

The group will meet online and by phone to briefly discuss books we have read. If you have questions, contact Pam Springsteel at 445-0642 or pspring@socket.net.

Sanctuary/Immigrant Justice Team

1 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 8 online

Email alliegassmann@socket.net for details.

Unitarian Universalist Church of



Columbia, Missouri

Green Sanctuary Team

7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 5 online

UU Life Writers

10:30 a.m. Nov. 7 and 21 - online

UU Life Writers are mastering Zoom for their meetings. We are working on the Great Questions as prompts – “who-what-where-when-why-how?”

All are welcome to join us. Contact Fran Reynolds at freynolds@centurytel.net or by phone at 573-881-3828 for additional information and Zoom meeting information.

Revelio Como

1 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 8 online

The local “Harry Potter and the Sacred Text” group meets on the second Sunday of each month from 1 to 2:30 p.m. Join us to use rigor and sacred practices to explore along with the podcast.

For more information, email April Rodegghero at rodegghero@gmail.com or Jamila Batchelder at dre@uucomo.org. Check out our Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/>

Unlisted Meetings

Contact your team leader if you are unsure of meeting status.

UUCC provides Loaves and Fishes meal on third Sundays

Nov. 15 this month

The Social Action Team changed the Loaves and Fishes procedure in September because of the difficulty in getting enough volunteers to prepare entire boxed/sack meals. We have returned to the old system of having volunteers prepare 20 servings of various dishes, which are now assembled into boxed meals by additional volunteers.

The change in procedure will require the volunteers providing food to take the food to Wilkes Boulevard United Methodist Church by 3:30 p.m. instead of 4:30 p.m. The volunteers who will assemble the boxed meals are asked to be at the church by 3:15 p.m. Sign up online at uuomo.org.

You can also support this effort by making an online donation at <https://uucomo.org/donate>, specifying “Loaves and Fishes Fund.” Email Diane Suhler at drsuhler@ccis.edu for more information.

Men's Group

8:15 a.m. Nov. 14 and 28 - online

The UUCC Men's Group ordinarily meets in person on the second, fourth, and fifth Saturdays of each month. The group has now arranged for online meetings. For more information, contact Wiley Miller at 573-864-8574 or millerwi@missouri.edu.

Non-toxic Masculinity Men's Group

7 p.m. Monday, Nov. 2

Contact Jeff Ordway at 573-476-2834 or ordwayj63@live.com for meeting information.

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.

Reflections

I was pondering this month's spiritual theme question, "How do we keep going?" at 3 a.m. after being awakened for the fourth time by a restless child and finally giving up on trying to sleep.

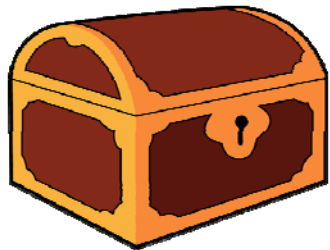
It is a question that all parents have contemplated at some time or another – how do we keep going? And the only answer I seem to be able to come up with is – I don't know, we just do. We find strength we didn't know we have; we tap into the limitless wellspring of love for our children; we find those moments of beauty, and joy, and intensity, and ability to laugh at the absurdity of it all to keep calling us on. We just keep going, from one day to the next, one moment to the next.

How do we keep going? I don't know, we just do. And for all the parents up at 3 a.m. or going through any of the other impossible moments we just keep struggling onward and through, I am holding you in so much love and solidarity. Let's keep struggling together.

Sincerely,
Jamila

UCC Lending Library Noon-2 p.m. Nov. 1

We will open for our second lending library from noon to 2 p.m. Nov. 1 when you can come borrow a book from the church library. We will also have a few toys that can be checked out. If you borrowed at our library day in August, please return your book.



UU Treasure Hunt

I have been hiding treasure boxes along trails all over Columbia for you to find! In each box is a tiny treasure for you to take, and a story from UU history.

I have posted directions to the treasure boxes on our FB group, and emailed out my guide to our treasure boxes.

If you missed them, I can get them to you.

Finding them is a lot of fun!

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

Crafting for UCC Service Sunday Noon-1 p.m. Nov. 15

Join us for a Zoom crafting session when we will be creating art to make cards, calendars, etc. that we can sell as a fundraising project.



November Schedule

Nov. 1

10 a.m. - Morning Tea Party
Noon - Lending Library Event
3:30 p.m. - YRUU

Nov. 3

6:30 p.m. - Junior Youth

Nov. 8

10 a.m. - Morning Tea Party
Noon - Adams Family Class

Nov. 15

10 a.m. - Morning Tea Party
Noon - Crafting Service Sunday
3:30 p.m. - YRUU

Nov. 22

10 a.m. - Morning Tea Party
10:30 a.m. - Intergenerational
Cornbread Communion Service

Nov. 29

10 a.m. - Morning Tea Party
Noon - Adams Family Class

THE SEARCHLIGHT

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

Return Service Requested

Our Staff

Rev. Molly Housh Gordon, Minister

Online office hours at <https://zoom.us/j/2115663859>:

Tuesdays 9:30-11 a.m.

In-person or Zoom office hours Thursdays 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

By appointment (including evenings and weekends)

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Telephone: 573-442-5764

Email: uuchurch@uucomo.org

Visit our website: <https://uucomo.org>

Jamila Batchelder, Director of Religious Education

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Unitarian Universalist Church of



Columbia, Missouri

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or mail to Church Administrator.

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