



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 6, December 2020

December Worship

Sundays at 10:30 a.m. – online only

As we continue worshipping 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, Dec. 6
“Delight Close In”

Rev. Molly Housh Gordon

With our lives so circumscribed by the pandemic, it is all the more necessary that we take delight in close-by, everyday things. How do we find the state of mind that allows us to notice and seek sustaining delight in this difficult time?

Sunday, Dec. 13
“Odes to Small Necessary Things”

Rev. Molly Housh Gordon and YOU!

Inspired by Pablo Neruda’s poetry collection *Odes to Common Things*, this Sunday’s service will be a collection of odes to the small things that bring delight, written and presented by members of our congregation. If you’d like to write and share a piece, email Rev. Molly at minister@uucomo.org.

Sunday, Dec. 20
“A Cozy Longest Night” Solstice Service

**Rev. Molly Housh Gordon and
DRE Jamila Batchelder**

Join us for a multi-media service celebrating the Winter Solstice and cozying down for what may feel like a long winter. How do we create warm space in cold times and prepare to welcome the dark and light alike?

Sunday, Dec. 27
“New and Not” New Year Service

**Rev. Molly Housh Gordon and
DRE Jamila Batchelder**

Many of us are very ready to wish good riddance to 2020, and yet we know that the challenges we are experiencing won’t magically vanish on Jan. 1. How do we mark a year that will be both new and not? Join us for our annual service helping us cast off the old year and enter with intention into the new year.

Please see our Special Holiday Services on page 2

From the Minister

Worship Arc 2020-21

How do we . . .

Seek Delight?

*“For everything that lives is holy,
life delights in life.”*

– William Blake

The winter holiday season has always been oriented toward light and delight in the darkening, colder months. It feels very strange to say it, but I have been experiencing more delight than usual in these pandemic times.

The why and the how of this points to the shades of meaning in the word. More than enjoying, or being content, or being happy, the word delight, to me, has a proactive shade to it. I delight in something by noticing it. Delight is a quality of attention, one we claim by reveling in things close in.

With my world so constricted by the pandemic, I find that I am paying closer attention to the everyday, and I am in greater need of delight – I am seeking it out. I am delighted by the new variety of winter squash (*delicata*) we’ve introduced into our regular diet this fall. You can eat the skin! I am delighted by the variety in the crowds of birds I had not before thought to notice in our overgrown garden.

In this season of light... and of ever-changing expectations... I’d love to hear where you are seeking, and finding, and claiming delight. Goodness knows we need it!

See you in (online) church,

– Rev. Molly

Highlights of what’s inside

Worship Information; Holiday Worship;	
Festival of Sharing	2
More Seasonal Activities; Donations.....	3
Caring Team; President’s Perspective	4
Programs and Events.....	5
REflections.....	6

Worship Zoom information

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/UnitarianUniversalistChurchOfColumbiaMO/videos/>

Special Holiday Season Opportunities for Worship

Holiday Blues Vespers
7 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 13

We hold a holiday blues service every year to be present to the less than merry feelings that holiday season can often exacerbate. This year, we may need it more than ever. Join your fellow UU Churchers on Zoom to stay with the hard parts of the season this year. Zoom Meeting ID: 959 8577 3766 Passcode: 012090.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
7 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 24

Join us for a digital version of our beloved Candlelight Christmas Eve Worship. We will ground and lift our hearts with the same words and songs that have been spoken and sung year after difficult year for generations. **Please submit a photo of you and your family in candlelight, and the names of any beloved ones who have died or been born in the past year to digitalarts@uucomo.org by Dec. 11** in order to be included in the service. Watch the service on our YouTube or Facebook page, or join the Zoom watch party. Zoom Meeting ID: 975 5226 8551 Passcode: 065078.

**See more
December holiday-related
activities on page 3**

Rev. Molly's

December office hours

Tuesdays on Zoom – 9:30-11 a.m.

Thursdays on Zoom or outdoors if the weather is particularly nice – 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

If Thursday office hours will be offered outdoors, I will send out an email announcement.

I remain 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

Festival of Sharing – December 2020

For the month of December we are continuing the “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

In 2019, there were requests for 6,953 boxes, but only 2,119 were provided. In 2020, your generosity allowed UUC to provide 25 boxes. Please drop donations at the church.

– Bonnie Johnson, Festival of Sharing Chair

Honduras Ministry update

Honduras and other Central American countries have been hit extremely hard by hurricane Eta, and hurricane Iota is also hitting the region. The Cangrejal River Valley, where the UUC Honduras Ministry has built latrines and done other projects desired by the community, has been severely affected. The bridge that leads from La Ceiba to the river valley, and the road that goes up to the river valley communities, have been washed out, and some people who lived along the banks of the river lost everything.

There are food shortages, and it's hard to imagine how people will be able to rebuild their lives after so much devastation. We are staying in touch with our Honduran friends and will be sending financial help from our congregation.

– Allie Gassmann
Honduras Ministry Chair
alliegassmann@socket.net

More December holiday-related activities

Waiting with the Animals

A Nature-Based Advent Study with Rev. Molly
7:30-8:30 p.m. Tuesdays, Dec. 1, 8, 15 and 22

We will use the book *All Creation Waits: The Advent Mystery of New Beginnings* by Gayle Boss, which offers daily reflections “depicting how wild animals of the northern hemisphere ingeniously adapt when darkness and cold descend.” At the first session on Dec. 1, we will spend time with the introduction and the themes of Advent. Then we will reflect each week on the animal stories from that week’s readings. While the book is centered in the Christian season of Advent, the content of the reflections themselves are appropriate for anyone who enjoys delving into the wisdom of the natural world.

Please RSVP here: <https://forms.gle/mbwo6ZycZDgaGbUT9>. The book is available from your favorite online bookshop, and ebooks are also available. If you would like to join us but purchasing the book is a hardship, we will be happy to have one sent to you.

Christmas Story Path

A socially-distant, interactive nativity on church grounds
4:30-5:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 12

Join us for a magical socially distant experience of the Christmas story on church grounds. Based on the traditions of our Family Christmas Eve service, participants will visit several different stations to interact with parts of the Christmas story, hear the beloved carols, and experience a taste of the magic of the season. Individuals and family units will start on the path one at a time to maintain distance. Masks are required. Please RSVP so we can plan appropriately for some holiday treats: <https://forms.gle/R8pAraLnA5hZid828>.

Holiday Treat Exchange

Porch drop-off before 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 19
Zoom gathering at 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 19

Cookies and candies, Chex mix and spiced nuts, latkes and fritters, OH MY! Sign up here to participate in a Holiday Treat Swap! Drop your treat by the assigned porch on Saturday, Dec. 19, and then gather on Zoom together to enjoy the treats and the stories that accompany them! Sign up by 5 p.m. Monday, Dec. 14 to participate: <https://forms.gle/twuqTmVZRxDpNf18>. Zoom Meeting ID: 962 9685 7041. Passcode: 110261.

Corona Christmas Caroling

5-6 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 20

Sign up to give or receive socially distant Christmas Carols! We will match folks who want to sing with folks who would like a safely distanced visit. Carolers can pick up carol books at the church at 5 p.m. before heading to their assigned destinations and are encouraged to maintain at least 12 feet of distance while singing from the yard or driveway. Sign up by 5 p.m. Monday, Dec. 14 to participate: <https://forms.gle/bkU3KJruTZk9eoXd8>

Christmas Day Share & Play

2-3 p.m. Friday, Dec. 25

Drop in to join your UU Church friends on Zoom to say a very merry Christmas hello and to share about your favorite gifts, present and past. Zoom Meeting ID: 939 8145 4230. Passcode: 831406.

Donate to others during the Covid-19 emergency

UUCC 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://cfcmfoundation.org/donations/covid-19-regional-relief-fund/>

Covid-19 Crisis Shelter for the Unhoused

<http://comocrisisshelter.com/>

Food Bank for Central and Northeast Missouri Covid-19 Response

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

Online payments to UUCC

For pledge payments, go to:

<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.

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

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

President's Perspective

Floating Together

by Rebecca Graves, 2020-21 President

No big news this month, more a patchwork of announcements. We are working through the board calendar: <https://uucomo.org/board-calendar/>. I admit that the pandemic, and somewhat the election, have pushed us behind a bit. We should be caught up by January, if not December. The Covid Advisory Task Force continues to provide the board with up to date information especially about how to host Room at the Inn (RATI) safely. Between their work and the work of the RATI staff, I am confident that we will make the hosting of RATI – its guests, staff and volunteers – as safe as possible in this pandemic.

Along with several other members of our congregation, I am taking the Beloved Conversations Virtual course on racial justice (<https://bcvirtual.meadville.edu/p/home>). I could simply say that this is a six-lesson online course that dives into our emotions and understanding around social justice; however, it is much more. The lessons are rich both in depth of content and type of material. It is not simply texts to read, but also podcasts, videos, poems, as well as embodied work such as dance, art, song. There is individual work and partnered work, along with small and large group discussions. Yet there are no grades, no tests, no requirement to “finish the list” of resources. This is a holistic way to encounter this topic; and, now in lesson three, I find that I am trusting the process, and the learning is deep.

The board is wrestling with the question, “How do we measure our execution of our mission?” beyond

door counts and money raised. Thinking of our mission in a pandemic when we are so separate sparked an image of all of us in life rafts, drifting. This image has been following me these past weeks as I think on the words in our mission and as I repeat our chalice lighting on Sundays – “Love is the spirit of this church and service is its law. This is our great covenant... to help one another.” How in this time can we help each other? How can we live our mission of deep connection and healing each other so that we can heal the world? How can we stay together while floating alone in our small rafts on this vast sea?

I pulled on this image and saw us paddling toward each other, tying our rafts together (safely distant of course), sharing water, light, and love. This is what we do already with our small group ministries, when we gather in a circle outdoors and share stories and music, when we meet over Zoom and see each other's faces. I have no way to measure this yet, but I ask us to keep reaching out, keep paddling over to each other and roping our rafts together. If you think of someone, message them, call them or mail them a note – perhaps we should bring Christmas cards back this year. If you are one who bakes or cooks, drop food by. Leave a picture drawn by your child in someone's mailbox (physical or online.) Share flowers or an interesting stone picked up on a walk. And, if you are alone, send up a flare (a text will do) so that we may paddle over to you, so that we may serve our deep connection and heal in this time of pandemic.

UUCC 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. There are many church members and friends who perform and support caring ministry activities. Please consider joining our team and/or helping out periodically.

Those needing help should contact the team in a time of need.

- Do you need temporary meals at home?
- Do you need telephone contacts?
- Do you have a financial emergency?

Email Meredith Donaldson at mjdonlsn@gmail.com or call the church office at 442-5764 if you need help or want to volunteer to help

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.

All are welcome, no matter what their personal paths.

Zoom link: [https://zoom.us/j/98856741664?](https://zoom.us/j/98856741664?pwd=dFNKbmtCV3RjQ2grN3M2NnpWYjR5UT09)
[pwd=dFNKbmtCV3RjQ2grN3M2NnpWYjR5UT09](https://zoom.us/j/98856741664?pwd=dFNKbmtCV3RjQ2grN3M2NnpWYjR5UT09)

Contact Barbara Carter for further information.

Conversations, Etc.

Noon Monday, Dec. 7 online
(*Change of Date!*)

Conversations, Etc., the UUCC women's group, will meet via Zoom and by telephone conference at noon Monday, Dec. 7. 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.

Revelio Como

1 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 13 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/groups/796589344101673/?ref=share>

Green Sanctuary Team

7 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 3 online

Unitarian Universalist Church of



UU Life Writers

10:30 a.m. Dec. 5 & 19 - online

UU Life Writers' 20th Year Anthology is just about ready for publication! We will let everyone know when copies are available.

The group will meet Dec. 5 and 19 on Zoom. The prompt is sent on the Monday before. We write stories and then read them to the group. It is not as great as being together, but it is working, and it is fun in another way.

There is always an open invitation to anyone who enjoys writing and sharing. All are welcome to join us. Contact Fran Reynolds at freynolds@centurytel.net or 573-881-3828 for additional information and Zoom information.

UUCC Book Discussion

5 p.m. Friday, Dec. 11 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.

Unlisted Meetings

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

Social Action T-Shirt!

Your \$20 helps UUCC with our many social action projects. Contact Caya Tanski, Allie Gassmann or Sarah Wolcott for more information.

UUCC provides Loaves and Fishes meal on third Sundays

Dec. 20 this month

The Social Action Team is looking for volunteers to prepare 20 servings of various dishes, which are assembled into boxed meals at the Wilkes Boulevard United Methodist Church.

This system requires the volunteers providing food to take the food to Wilkes Boulevard United Methodist Church by 3:30 p.m. The volunteers who 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://uuomo.org/donate>, specifying "Loaves and Fishes Fund."

Email Diane Suhler at drsuhler@ccis.edu for more information.

Sanctuary/Immigrant Justice Team

1 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 13 online

Email alliegassmann@socket.net for details.

Men's Group

8:15 a.m. Dec. 12 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, Dec. 7

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

Reflections

In all the challenges of the last year, sometimes the idea of maintaining a positive attitude feels daunting, perhaps even a little offensive. This December, our spiritual theme is “How do we seek delight?” The beauty of delight is its smallness. It doesn’t require us to move through every moment in a state of appreciative bliss, but to be open to the small moments that make us smile.

The holidays can feel overwhelming, and part of it is the expectation of a perfectionist state of joy that we create and maintain for our families. Perhaps we can settle into the understanding that next year, perhaps more so than this year, will be strange and different and difficult, that it won’t be perfect. And when we can let go of those expectations, we can open ourselves up to the small moments of delight that weave through the holidays as what will be remembered.

May you all find many moments of delight this holiday season!

Sincerely,
Jamila



Christmas Story Path

Saturday, Dec. 12, 4:30-5:30



This year we won’t be in-person for our Christmas Eve service in which children participate in each part of the Christmas Story. Instead, we will bring the story outside, where one at a time, families can move through and participate with the story, in magical tableaus across our church grounds. We will be socially distanced and masked, and take all safety precautions. Please RSVP at this link if you plan to attend: <https://forms.gle/R8pAraLnA5hZid828>.

Simple Gifts Workshop

Noon-2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 20

Every year at UUCU we do a Simple Gifts Workshop where children make crafts to give as gifts. This year we may be socially distant, but Simple Gifts will still go on! Please register for the workshop by Dec. 6, and a box of supplies will be delivered to your home. Then join our Zoom workshop to learn how to make each of the crafts in the kit! Register at the following link, and complete one registration for each child who will participate please. Visit https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdfNzq6fCnLp_Xep8VAE91d4QgeFz8JQ0CONDBVXdhsKSoSTg/viewform?usp=sf_link

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

Room at the Inn Service Project

Noon-1 p.m. Dec. 6

As the church prepares to host Room at the Inn for the winter, our R.E. community will do a service project to make them feel welcome. We will be creating a welcome sign, with each child who participates decorating a letter. Please let Jamila know by Dec. 2 if you would like to participate so she can deliver your letters to decorate. Please return decorated letters to the church by Dec. 11.



December Schedule

Dec. 4

6:30 p.m. - Family Movie Night

Dec. 6

10 a.m. - Morning Tea Party

Noon - Service Sunday

Dec. 11

6:30 p.m. - Junior Youth

Dec. 13

10 a.m. - Morning Tea Party

Noon - Adams Family Class

3:30 p.m. - YRUU

Dec. 18

6:30 p.m. - Family Movie Night

Dec. 20

10 a.m. - Morning Tea Party

Noon - Simple Gifts Workshop

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The Newsletter of:
Unitarian Universalist Church
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)
Email: minister@uucomo.org

Suzanne Clark, Administrator

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Unitarian Universalist Church of



Columbia, Missouri

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