



## Our 2021 CommUUnity Connection Project

The goal of our CommUUnity Connection Project is to strengthen intersectional bonds within the congregation by connecting interested families of any configuration with each other during the months of March, April, and May. We have covered everything we can think of below, but if you have additional questions, our contact information is at the end.

### Who Can Participate?

Any size family can participate. You can be a family of one, a couple, a nuclear family, a multigenerational family, or a blended family.

### How Can I Participate?

Use this link to sign up. Our project organizers will partner you with another family and provide each family with contact information. (if you have trouble with the link, just copy and paste it into a web search engine).

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Gazgt3gALarvqhI9jsK7c\\_L9eLfFmkep7vazJfloHUK/edit?gxids=7628](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Gazgt3gALarvqhI9jsK7c_L9eLfFmkep7vazJfloHUK/edit?gxids=7628)

### Expectations for Participants

- Make contact with your partner family within two weeks of being paired up.
- Make one connection each month in March, April, and May.
- If you have to leave the project, let your partner family and us know.

### Rules for Interactions with Minors

- Parents should be present for all contact with minors, whether by zoom, phone, in person, etc.
- Include parents on emails, messages, texts, etc.
- Adult friends should not contact minors without a parent's knowledge.
- Check with parents before giving gifts to children.

### Sign-Up Deadline

We have no firm deadline for sign up, but if you are interested, aim to sign up before March 7.

### Making that First Contact

Some folks have lots of experience meeting new people. Others less so. Here is a script and some questions for getting a conversation going. Adapt and improvise to make it feel right for you. You can use email to set up a time to meet by phone, online, or face to face for your first contact.

#### Openers

- "Hi, I'm \_\_\_\_\_ your CommUUnity Connection partner. How are you doing today/this evening? (
- These are the family/ household members from our household who will be participating (*others introduce themselves.*) Will you introduce yourselves? (*partner family introduces themselves*)
- How long do you have for today's contact? I will be able to spend up to \_\_\_\_ minutes. Will that work for you? - If not, how much time do you have? (*Settle on approximate time. Later, if you find it is going longer, consider checking see if that's okay*)

### **Follow-up Questions**

- Why did you decide to participate in the CommUnity Connection Project and what are your hopes for this interaction?
- How long have you lived in Columbia?
- How long have you been a member of Columbia UU church?
- What other faith traditions have been part of your life, if you haven't always been UU?
- Where did you grow up, or go to school? (high school, college or other school experiences)
- Will you tell me about your family/family of origin?
- How do you like to spend your time? (hobbies, pets, activities, volunteering)
- For children - what are your favorite things to do? (toys, games, sports, pets)
- Are you currently employed? If yes, what kind of work, and how long you have been doing it? If not currently employed, what type work have you done in the past?

### **During the last few minutes:**

Discuss making plans for your next contact. Will it work best to communicate by email or phone? When will it be? Will it be virtual? Would you consider meeting outdoors? Refer to **Ideas for Ways to Connect** below for ideas.

### **Ideas for Ways to Connect in March, April, and May**

The ideas below are just a few of the things that you may consider doing together. The relationship you develop may be limited to the 3-month time frame or it could be the start of something more long term. It's all up to you.

#### **In-Person Activities**

Meet to talk on your porch or deck, or at a nearby park

Meet to talk and hike (at a distance) at a park, hiking trail, Columbia Mall, etc.

Drop off a surprise on the porch

Run errands for each other like recycling, grocery pick ups

Share outdoor tasks - raking leaves, cleaning up gardens, picking up sticks, etc.

If you are creative and can manage the distance of working more than 6 feet apart, share or teach a craft technique or something you love to do

#### **Virtual Activities (FaceTime, Zoom, or another platform)**

Follow up on topics of interest from your initial contact/interview

Share favorites- stories, books, poems, movies, foods, recipes, music

To include kids, ask them to talk about favorite colors, toys, books, friends, games,

Share recent activities - crafts, show pictures kids have made

Share tips – kids' activities, cooking, cleaning, gardening, media viewing (Netflix, Hulu, etc)

Share ways you have connected with friends and family in the past year

### **If Your Situation Changes**

When you signed up for this project, you expected to have enough time for full participation, including one contact per month. If your situation changes, be sure to let your partner family know that you won't be able to continue because of the new circumstances and contact the project organizers. That will allow us to help them find a new family partner if they wish.

### **Project Organizers**

Jan Weaver, Susan Even, Todd Iveson, Steve and Joan Mudrick, Jamila Batchelder, and Rev. Molly Housh Gordon.

If you have any questions, please contact Jan at [jan.weaver57@gmail.com](mailto:jan.weaver57@gmail.com)