

# 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 10, April 2021

## April 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 an email to [techhelp@uucomo.org](mailto:techhelp@uucomo.org) with your contact information. Someone will reach out to help!

**Sunday, April 4**

**“Hope Comes Anyhow”**

**Easter Sunday – Rev. Molly Housh Gordon**

This is our second Easter in pandemic life, and we are tired. We are grieving. We are getting through this last push. And hope comes, anyhow. The resurrection story of Easter is a story of hope persisting despite all odds, even against the violence of empire, even against the finality of death. Join us to reflect on this ancient story. We will also share a ritual of leave-taking for Rev. Molly as she departs for four months of sabbatical.

**Sunday, April 11**

**Rev. Dr. C.W. Dawson**

On this first Sunday of the sabbatical period, Rev. Dr. C.W. Dawson will offer his first service as Sabbatical Minister.

**Sunday, April 18**

**Earth Day Service**

**Green Sanctuary Team**

Our Green Sanctuary Team will lead a service celebrating Earth Day!

**Sunday, April 25**

**Rev. Dr. C.W. Dawson**

Join our Sabbatical Minister for an inspiring service.

## Stewardship 2021-2022

*“Love each other, love the world”*



**The official stewardship campaign may be over, but it's never too late to show your love for UUCC!**

You can submit your pledge at <https://uucomo.org/2021-22-pledge/>

## Message from the Minister

*“The mind that comes to rest is tended  
In ways that it cannot intend:  
Is borne, preserved, and comprehended  
By what it cannot comprehend.”*

– Wendell Berry

Dear UU Churchers,

This is my final newsletter message to you until September, as my sabbatical begins April 5 and ends Aug. 2. I am beyond grateful for this opportunity to take extended sabbath time for rest, creativity, and renewal. Theologian Walter Brueggeman writes: “Sabbath is not simply the pause that refreshes. It is the pause that transforms.” By stepping back from the workaday world for an hour, for a day, for a season, we find spaciousness that allows for transformation.

During this sabbatical time my plans are to write poetry, read abundantly, spend deeper time and fuller attention with my family, and rest from the pace of ministry. My dream is that through these things a small transformation works its way through me – a further opening of heart and deepening of spirit that I will bring back to our life together in August with great joy. My dream is that a spaciousness opens for you, too, as well as a new inspiration from the exciting sabbatical ministry of the Rev. Dr. CW Dawson. I can’t wait to see what transformations unfold for you in my absence.

Though I believe this time will be rich for you and for me alike, I want you know that I will miss you very much, dear ones. I cast my heart toward a reunion in the fall that I pray will be not just in spirit but in body too, as I dearly hope we find ourselves re-gathering from this pandemic time. I hope to see some of your masked faces on Easter Sunday afternoon on the church grounds (drop by from 3 to 4 p.m.) to say a very fond farewell-for-now.

With Love, Rev. Molly

### Highlights of what's inside

Rev. Dr. Dawson; Easter; summer worship.....	2
Minister’s Sabbatical .....	3
President’s Perspective; Grounds Team .....	4
Festival of Sharing; Social Action.....	5
Programs & Events .....	6
REflections .....	7

## Worship Zoom information

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

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

**coffee hour is:** [https://zoom.us/j/95152263717?  
pwd=SzJJeWdWV0d5QkU4MTdnK1U0b1ZDQT09](https://zoom.us/j/95152263717?pwd=SzJJeWdWV0d5QkU4MTdnK1U0b1ZDQT09)

Meeting ID: 951 5226 3717 – Passcode: coffee

You can also join by phone: 312-626 6799

**Services are also streamed live to Facebook at:**

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

### Worship Associates ask . . .

## ***Are you ready for the end of the pandemic?***

Of course you are! So are we. As we begin to see a light at the end of the tunnel, join your Worship Associates this summer for a lay worship series reflecting on where we've been and where we're going.

*What have you learned from the pandemic experience?*

*What have you lost? Gained?*

*What is your vision for what's next?*

What are your answers to these questions? We need everyone's insights to make sure we don't waste the opportunity to use the life-changing pandemic to make our world better.

Don't hide your light under a bushel! You may have something to share but feel that a whole service is too daunting. Let us know. We can work with you and others to create a service. Or you may have an idea for a whole service but could use some help navigating the process of creating a service online. We can do that, too.

The main point is, we can't do this alone. We need you. Please help. Contact Todd Iveson at [tiveson@socket.net](mailto:tiveson@socket.net) or 573-864-4613.

### From Rev. Dr. C.W. Dawson

## ***Embarking on a new journey***

Beginning in April 2021 we will be embarking on a new journey. Let me say that I am excited, honored and humbled to serve you as your sabbatical interim minister during Rev. Molly's Sabbatical leave. Who would have imagined 70 years ago that the UU congregation of Columbia, Mo. would hire a Black, progressive, Baptist preacher and philosopher to serve our majority-Anglo Unitarian Universalist Church?

During slavery the Black Church used to sing, "the Lord moves in mysterious ways, [Her] wonders to be known...." I do not know any UU churches within the UUA that have taken such a bold move. I believe we are making history.

On this journey we will strive to "do the work" in a continuous spirit of radical love and fellowship. My hope is that we will draw others in Columbia and surrounding areas who believe justice is something one does and not merely a concept affirmed. Together we can present a witness and testimony that will make Columbia take notice... again.

Your work for justice is known. How do we build on what you and Rev. Molly have already done? How do we improve on what we need as a congregation?

All in all, I look forward to working together. Let us not be weary in well-doing but continue the march toward excellence.

The Rev. Dr. C.W. Dawson, Jr.  
Interim Sabbatical Minister, 2021

## **Easter Hat Parade and Egg "Hunt"**

***Sunday, April 4, 2021 – 3 to 4 p.m.***

**Church grounds – masks and distancing required**

Show off your finest Easter bonnet in an outdoor, socially distanced parade on church grounds. Several large, artistic Easter eggs will be "hidden" along the parade path, with a different treat to collect at each egg. Rev. Molly will be waiting at the end of the path to say "farewell for now" as her sabbatical begins. This event is for *all* ages. Please wear a mask and help maintain safe distance.

Contact Jamila Batchelder at [dre@uucomo.org](mailto:dre@uucomo.org) to be a part of the egg art!

## ***Rev. Dr. C.W. Dawson's office hours***

**While times are not definite yet, we do know that Rev. Dr. Dawson will hold office hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Watch your email for details.**

# **About Rev. Molly's sabbatical – April 5-Aug. 2, 2021**

After a year that was taxing for all of us, I am so grateful to be able to take this time for renewal before our eventual return to in-person worship. I plan to be back in plenty of time to plan for the new church year – in high hopes that we will be able to re-gather in person sometime in the fall or winter.

## **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 six 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 re-charge my batteries in this way, especially after the grueling pandemic year we have all experienced. I hope to rest, do a lot of reading to renew my wells of preaching fodder, and also take on a small writing project that has been tickling my brain. I hope to return refreshed and full of fresh ideas and rekindled energy for a new church year and an eventual return to in-person worship!

## **What support will we have during the sabbatical?**

The board has been saving for sabbatical coverage since I arrived. We will have a part-time sabbatical minister to fulfill my executive and pastoral capacities and preach twice per month, as well as a

“digital liturgist” to help keep online worship running smoothly.

## **Who will be our sabbatical minister?**

Rev. Dr. C.W. Dawson has been hired as our sabbatical minister, as originally planned. 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. Rev. Dr. Dawson will be exploring multi-culturalism and growth with the congregation through his role as sabbatical minister.

## **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 pandemic-era lives close to home. If we run into each other around town and you recognize me all masked up, please do feel free to say hello. Just know I won't be able to talk church business with you!

## **What if I have more questions?**

Send them to our sabbatical minister, Rev. Dr. C.W. Dawson, at [philosopher@uucomo.org](mailto:philosopher@uucomo.org).

## **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.*

# Did you know?

by Rebecca Graves, 2020-21 President

Did you know that the board meetings are open? Held each month on the third Thursday, they start at 7 p.m. and run until 9 p.m. You are welcome to attend should you wish. For the past year we have been meeting over Zoom. To attend, simply ask me or one of my fellow board members for the Zoom link or find it on the password-protected Board Information page on our website. Once we are back to meeting in person, you will be able to simply show up at the church for the monthly meetings. We'll be sure to announce when that happy switch happens.

This month the board will welcome the Rev. Dr. C.W. Dawson to our meeting as he will be filling in for Rev. Molly while she is on sabbatical April 5-Aug. 2. We are very pleased and excited to have him join us. I, for one, am excited to work with him and learn from his experience.

The Executive Committee, composed of President-Elect Tim Dickerson, Secretary Jan Swaney, Treasurer Jeremy Duke, myself and Rev. Molly, meets the first Tuesday of each month. The focus of our meetings is to decide the agenda for the regular board meeting. We also discuss issues or items of importance to our mission, our yearly calendar, and our congregation.

As I mentioned in my last column, the board, the Building Task Force, and Rev. Molly met March 15 with Rachel Maxwell to discuss next steps on our capital campaign. Rachel is a stewardship consultant who works with Unitarian Universalist congregations and met with our congregation in December 2019. (Remember those days of meeting in person?) We – the congregation and the board – were working through her report and its implications when the

Covid-19 pandemic changed everything. (See the website for the work on this – <https://uucomo.org/uucc-building-task-force/>.)

It is daunting to consider changes to our physical space when we have not been in it for a year (longer by the time you read this.) We have not seen each other except onscreen. We have not hugged, touched, laughed together in the same room. Yet we will. We agreed at the meeting that our building will need changing – that the need for this has not gone away.

The need has not gone away, but it has changed. Rachel challenged us, asking: What have we lost? What were we on the verge of that is no longer relevant? What was undervalued before that is more valued now? What has changed? What do we need now? We had an honest conversation about where we are, our concerns, our ideals for the future. Our mission of radical welcome, love, and justice is even more important now. We can't go back to our previous plan. There is no back. There is forward – and, there is living into our mission. Be assured, we will be enfolding you all into this conversation in the months ahead.

Speaking of money, it is looking as if our budget is coming in under our goal and also lower than last year. The Stewardship Team did an excellent job, and there were circumstances beyond their control such as the pandemic and the realities of an increasingly unequal economy. In light of this, the board will be looking at our budget and financial plan and also congregational growth, guided by our mission and vision. It is early in the year and budget process, so we will be reporting more on this as well.

Finally, save the date, **Sunday, May 2**, for our Annual Congregational Meeting.

## From the UCC Grounds Team

*Spring is sprung, the grass is riz.  
I wonder where the birdies is?*

Several members of the Grounds Team have begun tidying up our beds of native plants. Give us a shout if you want to join the fun.

Contact Patty Daus at [pajods@gmail.com](mailto:pajods@gmail.com) or Jeanne Murphy at [jmurphy120333@gmail.com](mailto:jmurphy120333@gmail.com).

## Consider donating to others

### UCC 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.

### Community Foundation of Central Missouri's Covid-19 Relief Fund

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

Food Bank for Central and Northeast Missouri  
<https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/weblink.aspx?name=E164454&id=77>



## Please help support the UUCC Honduras education effort

Our congregation has for many years been in a relationship with a community in the Cangrejal River Valley of Honduras. Groups of UU Churchers have visited every couple of years to work on projects and have maintained relationships between trips with communications and material support for things like the health clinic. This has been mutually rich in learning and connection for both communities.

Two years ago our Social Action Team undertook a project to establish an Education Fund to aid community leaders in furthering their education and building skills to help in their community. The Honduras Education Fund provides scholarship funding for these local leaders, but it is currently running low on funds! The team is seeking individuals or families to pledge \$160/year (about \$15/month) for two years to keep the Education Fund up and running! One-time gifts of any amount also are accepted on our online donation page – select the “Other” option and note “Honduras Education Fund” for the explanation.

Can you help? Email Caya Tanski ([cayasadhana@yahoo.com](mailto:cayasadhana@yahoo.com)) with any questions.

## Festival of Sharing – April 2021

For the month of April, the focus is on the “Missouri Youth Personal Care Pack.” These packs are for youth ages 12-18 who have experienced a crisis situation and who have been placed in state care or are experiencing homelessness. Items will be placed in drawstring bags that will be provided by the Festival of Sharing Team.

- 1 chapstick
- 1 bottle hand sanitizer (3 oz)
- 1 fleece throw
- 1 washcloth
- 1 deodorant
- 1 comb or brush
- 1 journal
- 1 travel size lotion
- 1 box medicated facial cleansing pads (such as Stridex)
- 1 travel-size toothpaste
- 1 travel size shampoo and 1 travel size conditioner
- 1 men’s body spray or 1 small package of feminine pads

In 2019, there were requests for 390 of these packs statewide, but only 337 were provided. Collection boxes are available at the church office.

– Bonnie Johnson, Festival of Sharing Chair

## 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.

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

## Social Action Team April report Support for the African American Heritage Trail

The Social Action Team is providing funds for a marker on the African American Heritage Trail in central Columbia. Through a mix of SAT budget funds and donations from individuals, the team hopes to provide complete funding for a single marker. Later in the year, with warmer weather and (hopefully!) widespread Covid vaccinations, the team plans to organize a walking tour of the trail. Stay tuned!

You can find more about the trail at [como.gov](http://como.gov). Search for “African-American Heritage Trail.”

## Programs and events

### Kaleidoscope Pagan gathering

7 p.m. Saturday, May 1 - online

Join us as we celebrate Beltane, better known to most of you as May Day. We used to weave paper baskets, fill them with dandelions, and hang them on peoples' doors. Do you remember? Celebrate fertility and joy and (at last) fresh greens to eat.

Gather with us at 7 p.m. Saturday, May 1. All are welcome, no matter their personal paths.

Contact [BarbaraCarter@century-link.net](mailto:BarbaraCarter@century-link.net) for further information.

To find the Zoom link, go to <https://uucomo.org/zoom-links/>.

### Conversations, Etc.

Noon Monday, April 5 - online

Conversations, Etc., the UUCC women's group, will meet via Zoom and by telephone conference at noon Monday, April 5. 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](mailto:pspring@socket.net).

### Revelio Como

1 p.m. Sunday, April 11 - 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](mailto:rodegghero@gmail.com) or Jamila Batchelder at [dre@uucomo.org](mailto:dre@uucomo.org).

Check out our Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/796589344101673/?ref=share>

Unitarian Universalist Church of



### UU Life Writers

10:30 a.m. April 3 & 17 - online

UU Life Writers will welcome spring and try writing memoir poems! All are welcome. Contact Fran Reynolds at [freynolds@centurytel.net](mailto:freynolds@centurytel.net) for the Zoom link and/or more information.

We have a few copies of our anthology, *Stories, Just Stories*, left. It is full of great memoirs by UU writers and may be ordered from Fran for \$8 per copy.

### Green Sanctuary Team

7 p.m. Thursday, April 1 - online

Email [alliegassmann@socket.net](mailto:alliegassmann@socket.net) for details.

### UUCC Book Discussion

4 p.m. Saturday, April 10 - online

The group will meet online and by phone to briefly discuss books we have read. For questions, contact Pam Springsteel at 573-445-0642 or [pspring@socket.net](mailto: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

April 18 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 4 p.m. The volunteers who assemble the boxed meals also are asked to be at the church by 4 p.m. Sign up online at [uuomo.org](http://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](mailto:drsuhler@ccis.edu) for more information.

### Sanctuary/Immigrant Justice Team

1 p.m. Sunday, April 11 - online

Email [alliegassmann@socket.net](mailto:alliegassmann@socket.net) for details.

### Men's Group

8:15 a.m. April 10 & 24 - 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](mailto:millerwi@missouri.edu).

### Non-toxic Masculinity Men's Group

7 p.m. Mondays, April 5 & 19

Contact Jeff Ordway at 573-476-2834 or [ordwayj63@live.com](mailto:ordwayj63@live.com) for meeting information.

# Reflections

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

There are times when we feel like we are truly living our lives, and times when it feels like we are merely surviving. I was thinking the other day – what marks the difference between these two modes of being? And what came to me is whether or not we have the time, space and mindset to appreciate and nurture beauty. The beauty we create, the beauty that others create, the beauty that the world creates and that always surrounds us.

It is hard to explain the value of beauty in tangible terms to a child. But we can show its importance by making sure to set aside time and space to appreciate and nurture it. This can be an act as simple as taking the time to watch the sunset together, or to wonder over a new flower blooming in the spring, or to really give our full attention and appreciation to a child's latest art masterpiece.

Our lives are all tremendously busy these days, but over the next month, try to carve out a little time each day for beauty. And try to notice what spiritual impact this has on your children as well as yourself.

Sincerely,  
Jamila



## **Do you have a teen who is bridging this year?**

Every year we hold a service on the third Sunday in May to honor the young people in our church who are bridging from their teen years into adulthood. As part of the service, we read a letter parents have written to their teens.



If you and your teen would like to participate in the service, please contact Jamila Batchelder at [dre@uucomo.org](mailto:dre@uucomo.org). And get started writing your letter!

## **April R.E. Schedule**

### **April 1**

6:30 p.m. - Family Movie Night

### **April 4**

10 a.m. - Morning Tea Party

3 p.m. - Easter Parade

### **April 9**

6:30-8 p.m. - Junior Youth

### **April 11**

10 a.m. - Morning Tea Party

Noon - Adams Family Class

### **April 15**

6:30 p.m. - Family Movie Night

### **April 19**

10 a.m. - Morning Tea Party

Noon - Craft Workshop

### **April 23**

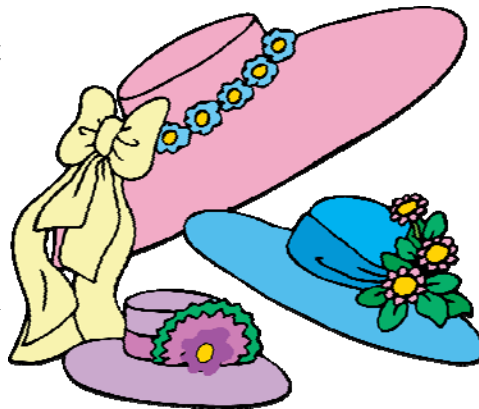
6:30-8 p.m. - Junior Youth

### **April 25**

10 a.m. - Morning Tea Party

## **Easter Hat Parade and Egg Hunt 3-4 p.m. Sunday, April 4**

We will wear our fanciest Easter hats (and of course our masks!) and have a socially distanced Easter parade, with Easter egg art to spot on the way (along with some candy!)



## ***THE SEARCHLIGHT***

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

**Return Service Requested**

### **Our Staff**

**Rev. Molly Housh Gordon, Minister**

On sabbatical April 5-Aug. 2, 2021

**Rev. Dr. C.W. Dawson, Jr., Interim Sabbatical Minister**

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday - times pending

Email: [philosopher@uucomo.org](mailto:philosopher@uucomo.org)

**Suzanne Clark, Administrator**

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Telephone: 573-442-5764

Email: [uuchurch@uucomo.org](mailto:uuchurch@uucomo.org)

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

**Jamila Batchelder, Director of Religious Education**

Office Hours: 10 a.m.-noon Wednesdays and by appointment

Email: [dre@uucomo.org](mailto:dre@uucomo.org)

**Jeremy Wagner, Director of Music Ministry**

Email: [music@uucomo.org](mailto:music@uucomo.org)

**Hans Bridger Heruth, Collaborative Accompanist**

Email: [music@uucomo.org](mailto:music@uucomo.org)

**April Rodeghero, Sunday Morning Assistant**

Email: [uuchurch@uucomo.org](mailto:uuchurch@uucomo.org)

### **2020-2021 Board of Trustees**

Rebecca Graves, President

Tim Dickerson, President-Elect

Jan Swaney, Secretary

Jeremy Duke, Treasurer

Mindy McPherson, Past President

Kara Braudis

Mark Johnson

David Leuthold

Ginny Winter

Unitarian Universalist Church of



Columbia, Missouri

*The Searchlight* is published monthly by the  
Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia, Missouri.

**Submissions:**

Email to [uuchurch@uucomo.org](mailto:uuchurch@uucomo.org)  
or mail to Church Administrator.

The deadline for submissions is noon on the third Monday  
of each month for the following month's edition.