

# The Searchlight

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia, Missouri

2615 Shepard Blvd., Columbia, MO 65201 • 573-442-5764 • <https://uucomo.org> • Volume 63, Issue 3, September 2021

## September Worship

**Online and in-person outdoors at UCC**

We will continue worshipping online and begin outdoor, in-person worship in September. If you have trouble accessing the technology to join us online, please send an email to [techhelp@uucomo.org](mailto:techhelp@uucomo.org) with your contact information.

**Sunday, Sept. 5**

**10:30 a.m. – ONLINE ONLY**

**“Worth More”**

**Rev. Molly Housh Gordon**

In 2013 our congregation participated in “Fight for 15” protests in Columbia. One of the slogans then was “We Are Worth More.” This year we return to the phrase... what is our current economic and public health crisis telling us about the worth of work and of human life?

**Sunday, Sept. 12**

**9:30 a.m. ONLINE – 10:30 a.m. OUTDOORS**

**Water Ceremony and Homecoming Sunday**

**Rev. Molly Housh Gordon and**

**DRE Jamila Batchelder**

Join us for joyful music, our beloved annual water ceremony, and blessings for our space as we re-gather this fall. Online participants will help us bless our indoor space. Outdoor participants will help us bless our gathering and create our “UU holy water” for stones of joy and sorrow by mingling waters they bring from home or other locales.

**Sunday, Sept. 19**

**9:30 a.m. ONLINE – 10:30 a.m. OUTDOORS**

**“Holding Each Other”**

**Rev. Molly Housh Gordon**

During a time of World War, Irish political unrest and flu pandemic, the Irish poet W.B. Yeats wrote in an essay: “Too many things are occurring for even a big heart to hold.” Perhaps we may feel the same in our own time. Yet if we cannot hold it all, perhaps we can hold one another.

**Sunday, Sept. 26**

**9:30 a.m. ONLINE – 10:30 a.m. OUTDOORS**

**“Threshold Moments”**

**Rev. Molly Housh Gordon**

In the life of our congregation, community, country and world, we are living in a time in-between. Not quite through the pandemic, but wishing we could just move on. Not quite through upheaval, but looking around for a solid path forward. Join us to ponder how we keep going when the threshold stretches on and on and on.

## Minister’s Message

### To Gather Together Again

Dear ones!

Your Board of Trustees, Covid Advisory Task Force and staff team have been hard at work on a safe, inclusive plan for gathering together this fall after 18 months of all-online programming. We want to acknowledge right up front that things are not where we hoped they would be with the pandemic and that the local situation and therefore our plans will continue to evolve. We thank you for joining us in the difficult/beautiful spiritual practice of moving through uncertainty together. Here is what we know:

- Beginning Sept. 12, we will be re-gathering at the church, outdoors for now, with worship services and children’s religious education programs. We will also continue offering online worship. We will continually assess local transmission numbers, congregational comfort levels, and, of course, the weather, to determine when we will move inside.

- Our outdoor service will be at our usual 10:30 a.m. time on church grounds, and because simultaneous live-streaming outdoors presents many technical difficulties, we will be offering a separate online service at 9:30 a.m. on Sundays while we are outdoors. Children’s programs will be offered at 10:30 a.m. alongside outdoor services.

For those joining us online, note the time change and join us as you have been these many months! We will continue to offer online coffee hour.

For those joining us in person, we request universal masking, and we invite you to bring your own coffee,

**Continued on page 2**

### *Highlights of what’s inside*

Chalice Circles signups; Zoom information .....	2
Covid TF; Membership Events; Volunteers .....	3
President’s Perspective; Social Action Team .....	4
Crop Walk; Festival of Sharing; SIJ Team .....	5
Programs and Events.....	6
Reflections.....	7

## Worship Zoom information

Worship services are offered in person and via Zoom. Online services are followed by a weekly digital coffee hour.

### The Zoom address for our Sunday

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

coffee hour is: <https://zoom.us/j/95152263717?pwd=SzJJeWdWV0d5QkU4MTdnK1U0b1ZDQT09>

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/>

## Minister's Message

Continued from page 1

water or other morning beverage. We are working on shade and good sound as I write. We will have chairs available but invite you to bring a lawn chair if you'd like and spread out.

We know that this is a highly vaccinated, socially responsible, warm and flexible community. We also know this evolving time of re-gathering may be awkward, or anxious, or have some false starts. Let's lead with love and be gentle with one another! And, let's remember to look out for new faces to warmly welcome the beloved ones who have previously only been with us online. It will be an adventure, but we've always been on an adventure of the spirit here. Onward!

See you in church!

## UCC Chalice Circles invite participants for the 2021-2022 year

*"We cannot live only for ourselves. A thousand fibers connect us with our fellow men; and among those fibers, as sympathetic threads, our actions run as causes, and they come back to us as effects."*

– Herman Melville

- What makes you feel connected – to individual, groups, and/or organizations?
- What do you value the most about the connections you have in your life?
- What do you do to maintain the important connections in your life?
- What new connections would you like to make in your life? Have you thought about what you need to begin making those connections?

### Would you like to join a UCC Chalice Circle? It's time to sign up for the 2021-22 church year!

The intimacy of the UCC Chalice Circle groups is one way to enrich our members' lives with greater depth of meaning. This regular spiritual practice complements our Sunday morning services as it builds on the monthly themes set by the minister and worship team. It is a place to share deeply with each other, to build lasting and caring relationships, and to strengthen our church's sense of community. Each Chalice Circle has seven to 10 members and meets at least once a month. Following the church Covid safety guidance, some group meetings will be held in the church whenever possible. At this time we are planning for seven groups for the 2021-22 year:

- **2nd Mondays at 7 p.m.** – Larry Lile, facilitator – meeting via Zoom
- **2nd Tuesdays at 6:45 p.m.** – Connie Ordway, Women's Chalice Circle facilitator – meeting via Zoom
- **2nd Wednesdays at 9 a.m.** – Lisa Fritsche and Jeanne Murphy, co-facilitators – meeting at the church
- **2nd and 4th Wednesdays at 7 p.m.** – Qhyrrae Michaelieu and Crystal Buffalo, co-facilitators – meeting at the church.
- **2nd Thursdays at 7 p.m.** – Christine Heath, facilitator – meeting at the church
- **3rd Thursdays at 7 p.m.** – Peter Holmes, facilitator – meeting at the church
- **4th Sundays at 4 p.m.** – Dottie Mathews and Rosie Geiser, co-facilitators – meeting via Zoom or in their home

If you would like to join a Chalice Circle, starting Sept. 1 you will be able to sign up on the church website (<https://uucomo.org>) or by emailing [chalicecircle@uucomo.org](mailto:chalicecircle@uucomo.org). A signup list will be closed when 10 people have signed up for a specific group. There will be no early priority signups.

The Chalice Circles Leadership Team that guides the overall program consists of Rev. Molly Housh Gordon, Peter Holmes and Kathie Bergman. You can read more about Chalice Circles on the website at [uucomo.org/chalice-circles](https://uucomo.org/chalice-circles) or you can contact the team by emailing [chalicecircle@uucomo.org](mailto:chalicecircle@uucomo.org).

## Upcoming membership events

### **Newcomer Picnic Sunday, Sept. 26**

All newcomers and new members are invited to join us for a newcomer picnic in the backyard of the church at noon Sunday, Sept. 26. Lunch will be provided. RSVP with number of people and dietary restrictions to [membership@uucomo.org](mailto:membership@uucomo.org).

### **Membership Class (required to join)**

Choose either 7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 7 via Zoom or noon Sunday, Oct. 10 outdoors in person on the church grounds.

RSVP to [membership@uucomo.org](mailto:membership@uucomo.org).

### **New Member Ingathering in Worship**

Sunday, Oct. 24 online and in-person

RSVP to [membership@uucomo.org](mailto:membership@uucomo.org).

## Seeking volunteers!

Are you a current, former, or future theater person? A techie? A builder? A gamer? We could use your help creating our dual platform reality!

We need an ongoing livestream team to use our videogame-style controlled camera, streaming software, and soundboard for livestreaming.

We need a short-term set design and building team to help us create a stage and beautiful background for outdoor worship.

We need anyone who is willing to join us for a workday on **Saturday, Sept. 18** to get tech sorted. No experience necessary.

Please email Rev. Molly at [minister@uucomo.org](mailto:minister@uucomo.org) if any of these activities interest you, or if there are other ways you can help!

## Update from the UUCC Covid Advisory Task Force

Mid-Missouri, like much of the state, is facing challenges – the extremely contagious Covid delta variant and an insufficient number of vaccinated persons. This has led to rising numbers of Covid infections, hospitalizations and deaths. While there is still much to learn, we have better knowledge of how to reduce the risk of getting and spreading Covid infections. We will be using all available strategies so we can hold in-person gatherings at UUCC this fall. We are counting on all those 12 and older to obtain Covid vaccinations and urging those who have not been vaccinated to do so as soon as possible. Also, it is important for adults and children with any symptoms to remain at home.

When weather allows, Sunday services and Youth RE will be held outdoors, observing social distancing and masks optional. We will wear masks for indoor

services and activities and maintain social distancing and good hand washing. Our sanctuary and greeting areas have high flow air exchange rates that meet Covid safety standards. Children will not participate in services in the sanctuary this fall.

The task force advises no indoor congregational singing at this time, and instead quiet humming behind masks. In the sanctuary, vocal soloists and musicians will perform from the raised stage and will use appropriate protection and distancing.

The situation in Columbia/Boone County is constantly changing and new scientific information becoming available. The Covid Task Force will continue to meet monthly and review all of this as it relates to our gathering practices and make recommendations to the Board to maintain a safe and welcoming environment for all members and visitors.

## 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/>

## Consider donating to others

### 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.

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

<https://cfcfoundation.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>

# ***We are busy!***

**By Timothy Dickerson, 2021-22 President**

Hello, beloved UUCoMo community,

I'd like to congratulate our recently elected Secretary Connie Ordway. Connie joins previously elected President-Elect Melissa Ensign-Bedford, Treasurer Ginny Winter, and myself on our church's Executive Committee.

The board will hold its annual retreat on Saturday, Sept. 18. During this time we will discuss the book *The Nested Bowls* by Laura Park and how it can help us prepare for our roles as trusted representatives of our radically welcoming community.

We are so excited to have Rev. Molly Housh Gordon back from her sabbatical, and we are so thankful for the wisdom Rev. Dr. C.W. Dawson shared with us while serving as Sabbatical Minister.

Our Covid Advisory Task Force continues to do the important work of advising our church with recommendations for the safest ways for groups to use the

church and now is also working with Rev. Molly and her teams to plan how and when we might be able to worship safely in person, all the while continuing our online presence for those who participate in our beloved community from their homes.

The Accessibility Task Force has been hard at work preparing the necessary paperwork required to start the bidding process for our elevator, new carpeting, and other projects that will help us come closer to meeting ADA requirements and thus keep us heading in the direction of being even more radically welcoming to all bodies that come into our church. They have already raised \$118,000 for the cause!

I know I am excited to see all the awesome ways we as a church community can live our mission.

In LOVE,  
*Tim Dickerson*

## **Social Action Team co-sponsors protest against death penalty**

On Aug. 20 the Social Action Team joined with Missourians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty (MADP) and others to protest the impending execution of Ernest Lee Johnson. Wiley Miller, Margaret Tyler and Vic Myers attended the protest. Wiley writes:

“No one claims that society should spare Johnson's life because he is innocent. He is not. Without a doubt, some 25-26 years ago here in Columbia, Johnson entered a Casey's convenience store and used a hammer to kill three clerks and rob the store of money with which to purchase drugs. It was a horrific crime – among the very worst.

“MADP's opposition is based upon two principles. First, no person should ever be killed because of something that person did. Executions devalue all human life and make future killings more likely. The second principle is that even if there is a death penalty, individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities should never be executed. Johnson has a below-70 level of intelligence.”

## **Faith-to-Action deadline is Oct. 1**

The Social Action Team will accept nominations of your favorite charitable organization until Oct. 1. Please go to [uucomo.org](https://uucomo.org) and click on the “2021-22 Faith-to-Action Nominations” button to make your nomination. Following is the current list of nominees (as of Aug. 24) in the order received:

- Heart of Missouri CASA
- Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
- Stop Human Trafficking Coalition of Central MO
- First Chance for Children
- Children's Grove Kindness Libraries
- Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace & Justice
- Honduras Education Fund
- Festival of Sharing (Sept. 5)
- UUC Sponsorship of Guatemalan family
- Centro Latino de Salud
- UUC Honduras Ministry
- Missourians for Alternative to the Death Penalty
- Minority Men's Network
- Loaves & Fishes
- Room at the Inn
- C.W. Dawson Ministries
- Haiti Earthquake Relief (collected Aug. 22)

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

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



## Sanctuary/Immigrant Justice Team sponsorship update

The Guatemalan family UUCC is sponsoring in their quest to seek asylum is doing well. Christine Heath is a phenomenal host. Many people in our congregation are pitching in, and the support is truly making Lilly, Manuel and Lakshmi feel loved and welcome in Columbia.

As a reminder, if you would like to support the efforts of the Sanctuary/Immigrant Justice Team in general, you can make a tax-deductible donation to the church with SIJT in the memo line. If you would like to make a non-tax-deductible donation to the family directly, you can send a check made out to Allie Gassmann at 1700 Princeton Dr., Columbia, MO 65203. This money will go to a joint account from which the family's expenses will be paid directly.

If you would like to get involved on the team, please contact Dave or Allie. We hope very much that it will soon be possible to introduce Lilly and her children to the congregation as a whole!

– Dave Gibbons – [dgibbons@mchsi.com](mailto:dgibbons@mchsi.com)  
– Allie Gassmann – [alliegassmann@socket.net](mailto:alliegassmann@socket.net)  
Co-chairs, Sanctuary/Immigrant Justice Team

### Social Action T-Shirts

*Your \$20 purchase helps UUCC continue our social action projects.  
Contact Allie Gassmann or Sarah Wolcott-Twaddle for information.*

## 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

## Crop Hunger Walk 2021 Walking for a Healthier World

1:30 p.m. Sept. 19, 2021

at the Farmers' Market Pavilion by the ARC

For over 25 years there have been interfaith community CROP Hunger Walks across the country to raise funds for hunger relief around the world, in the U.S. and in each community. Church World Service works with partners around the world to fight hunger and create practical, sustainable solutions to poverty, customized to each community.

Please join members of our Social Action Team on Sept. 19 to walk around the Ag Park to raise money for the partners in our community who provide food and meals to persons in need. The partners are:

- Loaves and Fishes Soup Kitchen
- Russell Chapel Community Food Pantry
- Destiny Worship Center Food Pantry
- Fifth Street Christian Church *Feed the Community* program
- Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture – as a supporting partner. (CCUA will not receive funds raised from the CROP Walk.)

Join the UUCC team. You may donate in person at the park on Sept. 19, or at <https://www.crophungerwalk.org/columbiamo/> at any time before Sept. 18. If you have questions, email Allie Gassmann of the Social Action Team at [alliegassmann@socket.net](mailto:alliegassmann@socket.net).

## Festival of Sharing – September

For the month of September, Festival of Sharing will focus on the Missouri Backpacks of Love project. These are targeted for children from ages 4 to 11. Each pack will consist of the following items:

- 1 small backpack (no wheels)
- 1 child's soft toothbrush
- 1 4-6 oz. tube of children's flavored toothpaste
- 1 T-shirt, child medium/large or adult small
- 1 small stuffed animal
- 1 child's narrow-tooth comb
- 1 package of 3 pairs underpants

In 2020, there were requests for 500 backpacks but only 268 were provided. Through your generosity, UUCC provided 12 backpacks in 2018. Many of the children who receive the backpacks would otherwise not have the items they provide.

You may leave your donated items in the volunteer work room at church.

## Programs and events

### Kaleidoscope Pagan gathering

4 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 11

M'bon, the Second Harvest, and the Equinox. Once again the Earth stands for just a moment in perfect balance, then, as always, falls to the side, this time into darkness. Gather with us at 4 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 11 at the church. All are welcome, no matter what their personal paths.

As of this date, we request you wear a mask, and please bring snacks and drinks for yourself as desired. Currently, we are not planning to share food due to continued concerns about Covid-19.

If you have questions, contact [kaleidoscope@uucomo.org](mailto:kaleidoscope@uucomo.org).

### Conversations, Etc.

1:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 1

Conversations, Etc., the UUCC women's group, will meet at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 1 in the Greeting Area of the church and via Zoom for those who cannot attend in person. Pam has contacted all of the local members of this group, and all have been vaccinated.

We get together to enjoy the company of good friends. If you have questions or would like to join us, contact Pam Springsteel at [pspring@socket.net](mailto:pspring@socket.net) or 573-445-0642.

### Sanctuary/Immigrant Justice Team

1 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 12 - online

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

Unitarian Universalist Church of



### UU Life Writers

10:30 a.m. Sept. 4 and 18

UU Life Writers will continue our writing gatherings at the UU Church where it is cool! Please use the downstairs door and bring your own drinks so we won't need to use the kitchen and do super cleanup! We may change to online meetings if the Covid surge continues.

Everyone is welcome – just bring pencil/pen and paper and be ready to write! For more information, contact Fran Reynolds at [freynolds@centurytel.net](mailto:freynolds@centurytel.net).

### UUCC Book Discussion

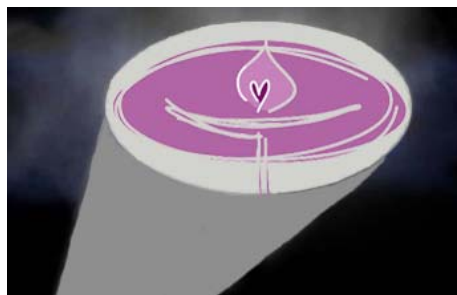
4 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 11 - online

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).

### Green Team

7 p.m. Thursday Sept. 2 - online

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



### UUCC provides Loaves and Fishes meal on third Sundays

Sept. 19 this month

The Social Action Team is looking for volunteers to prepare 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@gmail.com](mailto:diane.suhler@gmail.com) for more information.

### Men's Group

8:15 a.m. Sept. 11 & 25 - 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, Sept. 6 & 20

For more information, contact Kevin Fritsche at 573-289-4536 or [klfritsche37@gmail.com](mailto:klfritsche37@gmail.com).

# Reflections



We are going to begin in-person religious education classes starting Sept. 19 at 10:30 a.m. I am so excited to finally be together. But a few things will be a little different! First and foremost:

## ***WE WILL BE OUTSIDE...***

...at least for the first quarter of the year, as our community gets a handle on its Covid infection rates.

- Potter Class will meet just outside their regular classroom, beside the lower parking lot.
- K-7th graders will meet at Shepard Park under the shelter.
- Coming of Age class will meet on the church grounds at a yet to be determined location.

**Other changes:** As we reintegrate to church life, K-7th graders will do a group curriculum focused on reconnection, relationship building and the joy of play. We will begin with a story to center us on our core values and then have a combination of structured and less structured activities for children to choose from as we rebuild our R.E. community. We will also build in service projects that allow us to put our faith into action.

Teachers and children will continue wearing masks when we are together, even outside. We will continue to re-evaluate our plans as conditions change here in Columbia and Missouri.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact me. It is an amazing opportunity to be a part of creating a community of love, care, and growth for the young people of UUC.



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

## **Junior Youth Meeting 6:30-8 p.m. Friday, Sept. 17**

All 6th-8th graders are invited to join us for our first Junior Youth Group meeting of the year. We will meet in the backyard of the church, eat pizza, play some “get to know you” games, and brainstorm our plans for the year. If you plan to attend, RSVP to [dre@uucomo.org](mailto:dre@uucomo.org).



## **Register for RE!**

It has been a long time since we have all been together, and a lot of our information is out of date! Please go to our website and register your child for our RE program. We need registration for each child in our program, even if you have registered before.

**Nursery-8th graders:** Register at the following link:

<https://uucomo.org/first-registration-or-changed-information/>

**High School Youth Group:** You have several forms to fill out and return. You can find them at the following link:

<https://uucomo.org/yruu-high-school-group/#Overview>

## ***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**

Office Hours: Tuesdays via Zoom – 10-11:30 a.m.

<https://zoom.us/j/2115663859>

Thursdays in person – 2:30-4 p.m.

Or by appointment at [calendly.com/revmollyhoushgordon](https://calendly.com/revmollyhoushgordon)

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

#### **Suzanne Clark, Administrator**

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 10:30 a.m.-4 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)

#### **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)

### **2021-2022 Board of Trustees**

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Unitarian Universalist Church of



Columbia, Missouri

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#### **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.