



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 5, November 2021

November Worship

Online and in-person outdoors at UUCC

We will continue worshipping with two services – **online at 9:30 a.m. and outside at the church at 10:30 a.m. through Nov. 21.** If you have trouble accessing the technology to join us online, please send an email to techhelp@uucomo.org with your contact information.

Sunday, Nov. 7

9:30 a.m. online and 10:30 a.m. outdoors

“Remembrance Sunday”

Rev. Molly Housh Gordon

Join us for our annual All Souls Day service of remembrance. This year we will also include a special memorial to all those lost to Covid-19 in Boone County. You are invited to bring photos or mementos of loved ones now gone for our remembrance altar, whether they are recently or long departed.

Sunday, Nov. 14

9:30 a.m. online and 10:30 a.m. outdoors

“Political Theology for This Moment”

Rev. Molly Housh Gordon

Which questions about our lives are political ones, and which are theological? How do they overlap? How does what we lift up as most sacred determine the material realities in which we live? Join us for the second month in our “theology for this moment” series!

Sunday, Nov. 21

9:30 a.m. online and 10:30 a.m. outdoors

“Yes to Life”

Rev. Molly Housh Gordon

Join us for our annual Thanksgiving Sunday service as we celebrate all the ways we plant and harvest, both literally and metaphorically, even in difficult circumstances. Please bring a beautiful piece of seasonal produce to contribute to our harvest altar.

Sunday, Nov. 28

10:30 a.m. only – Livestreamed Indoor Service!

Rev. Dr. C.W. Dawson, Jr. – Guest Preacher

Join us for a powerful word from UUCC’s favorite guest preacher, philosopher, and our former sabbatical minister the Rev. Dr. C.W. Dawson.

Minister’s Message

We Are Rising to the Moment by...

Grieving Together

Across more than a year and a half of global pandemic, we have lost so much. Loved ones, routines, sense of safety, connections, jobs, homes, understandings we had about the world and the people in it. Loss requires grief to integrate into whole spirits, but how do we grieve our lost sense of safety or understanding of the world? And are we allowed to grieve a lost routine when so many have lost so much?

In times of crises and global loss, grieving together in community is an essential way that we put ourselves back together. And yet, our culture hardly allows time or space for such integration. Grieving, after all, would mean acknowledging the deadliness of the systems that form our lives.

Here in our spiritual community, we believe in the power of grieving together – of naming our losses, large and small, of sitting and singing and weeping together in lament. We make the time and space, because we know it is essential to our wholeness.

Join us together in grief and gratitude this month.

See you in church,

Rev. Molly

‘Rising to the Moment’ Accessibility Campaign

We are raising \$400,000 for an elevator, automatic door openers and more!

Details on page 2

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Launching Our ‘Rising to the Moment’ Accessibility Campaign

Join us in an exciting campaign to make important accessibility improvements to our beloved UUCC facility!

We are raising \$400,000 to install an elevator, replace old, uneven carpeting throughout the building, add automatic openers to exterior doors, and place braille signage throughout the building. As we re-gather from our many months of online church, we understand more urgently than ever that we need a fully accessible building to meet our mission of radical welcome, deep connection, and helping to heal the world.

These improvements will serve our congregants of all ages, the many community organizations with whom we share our space, the unhoused neighbors who stay at Room at the Inn, and our future selves as our needs change over the years!

Please consider this gift separately from your annual giving that funds our year-round expenses like staff salaries, utilities, and more. Gifts of every size make a huge impact on this campaign – we hope you will give what feels GOOD!

**JOIN US TO
RISE TO THE MOMENT
WITH A GIFT!**

Visit uucomo.org/rising to pledge to the campaign, or turn in a paper pledge card at church! “Frequently Asked Questions” and their answers can also be found on the website, or contact Campaign Chair Ginny Winter at rising@uucomo.org with questions!

Art by UU Teen Camille Fajen



Worship Zoom information

Worship services are offered in person and via Zoom. Online services at 9:30 a.m. are followed by a weekly digital coffee hour at 11:30 a.m.

The Zoom address for our 9:30 a.m. 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 11:30 a.m. 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/UnitarianUniversalistChurchOfColumbiaMO/videos/>

Music Meet and Greet

11:30 a.m. Sunday, Nov. 7 at UUCC

Join us for a fun welcome of our new Director of Music Ministry Violet Vonder Haar! Brainstorm musical ideas, vote on your favorite hymn, play a note or two, and maybe even help write a song! All ages very welcome.

Open Chalice Circle on Zoom 6:30 p.m. fourth Wednesdays – Nov. 24

No signup needed – just show up.
Everybody is welcome!

Come and experience a chalice circle and make new connections. We will be using a different, possibly group-generated agenda so that people who are already members of a chalice circle can attend too.

Join the Zoom meeting at 6:30 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of each month at:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82007290535?pwd=OVAYMTIWRVhsSVA3Y0M2VGNiQlcrZz09>

Friday Crafters reframed as ‘Talk and Do’ group

1:30 p.m. on Fridays

Join your fellow UUs for some informal conversation from the comfort of your home! Come as you are, and feel free to work on a project as we chat – it’s okay if your attention is divided!

This is an informal and casual group where it is okay to not be totally focused. Just tune in and work on whatever it is you need or want to do while you chat. Email Robin Duple (ryduple@gmail.com) for more information.

Greetings from Violet Vonder Haar

Our new Director of Music Ministry

I am so excited to be joining the UU family! I look forward to seeing what kind of music magic we can all make together and can't wait to get to know you. I thought I'd tell you a little about myself and my musical journey and how it has led me here to you.

My first musical performance was at Earth Day of Columbia in Peace Park at the age of 9. From the very beginning, as a songwriter and performer, music was and still is a way for me to shed light on social issues, to heal and to open hearts and minds. I have played music across the country and Midwest touring with my band, Violet and the Undercurrents, and in 2018 I formed the Jane Doe Revue, an all-female rock orchestra that has helped to raise more than \$20,000 for women's healthcare in Missouri.

I graduated from Central Methodist University in 2010 with a bachelor's degree in Music Education with a vocal emphasis and began teaching private music lessons shortly after. I have taught general and elementary music at Lange Middle School, Stephens College Children's School, Columbia Montessori School and Windsor Street Montessori. I love to teach and believe it is one of the most meaningful and radical ways to make a direct impact on our future.

On Oct. 1, my wife Phylshawn Johnson, local music teacher Audra Sergel and our non-profit music organization Compass Inc. announced that we will be opening a community music center in the heart of Columbia on University Avenue. The center will be a hub for our mid-Missouri music scene and a place where anyone can come to learn music. Through a community outreach program, we will be offering music lessons on a sliding scale. The center will also be home to a substance-free listening room, recording studio and workshop rooms. We are in the middle of our first fundraising campaign with hopes to open the center in the spring of 2022. If you are interested in learning more, visit <https://compasscolumbia.org>.

Some of my music ministry goals at UUC are to reconvene the choir safely, begin a youth music program with an emphasis on singing and playing based upon interest and skill level, youth and/or adult songwriting groups, involving and inviting members of the Columbia music scene to play for our services and of course involving and making space for all the talented UUC musical members. I am grateful to have been welcomed into the UUC family and look forward to growing the music program with you!

Musically yours,
Violet Vonder Haar

UUC Covid Task Force report – November 2021

Finally some good news! The Covid risk level in Columbia has fallen, and the vaccination rate continues to increase (exceeding that of our state). Our church reached an important milestone in September, that of holding in-person services and RE for the youth, in addition to the livestreaming services.

To date, in-person services and RE activities have been outdoors, participants have worn masks and seating has adhered to social distancing guidelines. However, knowing that fall weather in Missouri is very unpredictable, we are prepared to move services indoors whenever needed. Our task force evaluated this carefully, reviewing CDC, UUA and local guidance, and we agree that **indoor services can be held safely** with these precautions:

- 1) The HVAC in our Sanctuary and Greeting Area have filtration and ventilation qualities that meet CDC safety standards.
- 2) Members will be advised to wear well-fitted face masks.
- 3) There will be no congregational singing.
- 4) Social distancing and appropriate seating will be accommodated based on the predicted attendance.
- 5) Attendance records will be kept to allow contact tracing if needed.

The task force, which has been meeting monthly, will remain in close contact with Rev. Molly and staff going forward and will meet on an as needed basis or if there are significant changes in the Covid landscape.

Susan Even
Chair, Covid Task Force

- 1) The HVAC in our Sanctuary and Greeting

Online and text donations!

We are excited to announce that we are rolling out the ability for you to give to the Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia by text message from your smartphone or online. We are doing this through an arrangement with the Breeze Church Management System, our new database. You can find complete details about the system at <https://uucomo.org/give>.

As fewer people are using checks or carrying cash, we wanted to offer a safe, secure and convenient way to easily support our church through giving by text message or online.

As some of our members, friends and visitors are continuing to stream our worship services online, we hope this new system will be more convenient than mailing a check or using our old Paypal portal.

Our new system will allow you to give using a credit/debit card or bank ACH transfer. The system will ask for your card or bank account information the first time you use it, and you can change that information later. You can use the system to give whenever you choose, and you can also set up automatic recurring gifts. Our church will pay a small transaction fee to process online payments, but we feel the fee is well worth the convenience. If you choose, you will be able to cover that fee for the church when you give online.

We believe these new tools will allow us to continue to serve you well. We want you to know we greatly appreciate you and your spirit of generosity as you continue to support UUCC and our mission of radical welcome and deep connection that moves us together to heal the world.

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
or call the church office at 442-5764
if you need help or want to volunteer to help

How to text a donation from your smartphone

Send your text to 573-405-1202

Hint: Save this number in your phone's contacts under "UUCC Giving" to make it easy to start a text to the correct number.

The first time you use the text donation system, you will need to enter your credit/debit card information or bank ACH transfer details. You can change your payment method later by texting update.

You will have these three choices for the purpose of your donation:

- Pledge Payment
- Sunday Collection
- Faith-to-Action Collection

Follow these guidelines for making your text donation:

- You can text the word **give**, and the system will then ask for the amount – *or* you can skip this step and enter the amount using the following guidelines.
- The amount goes first, with or without a dollar sign – **\$50** and **50** both will work.
- If you enter only an amount, your donation will go to the general Sunday collection.
- If you want, you can specify that result by entering a space after the amount followed by the word **sunday** (not capitalized). Example: **50 sunday**.
- If you want to make a pledge payment, enter a space after the dollar amount and then the word **pledge**. Example: **50 pledge**.
- If you want to make a Faith-to-Action donation, enter a space after the amount and the code **f2a**. Example: **50 f2a**.

Here are some additional text codes you can use:

- **update** will allow you to change your payment method
- **refund** will result in refunding the most recent donation made if done within 24 hours – if the donation started a recurring gift, the recurrence also will be canceled

If you want to set up an automatic recurring donation, use these codes:

- **weekly** – sets up a recurring gift each week – example: **50 pledge weekly**
- **biweekly** – sets up a biweekly recurring gift – example: **50 fta biweekly**
- **monthly** – sets up a monthly recurring gift – example: **50 sunday monthly**

We keep moving on!

by Timothy Dickerson, 2021-22 President

Hello, beloved UUCoMo community,

Greetings from all of us on the Board of Trustees! We are so excited to see all the amazing progress you as a church are making towards our beloved community. The board recently voted to include “disability justice” in our second Ends Statement. Thank you to the Disability Justice and Inclusion Team (DJIT) and Ruth Milledge for their encouragement and enlightenment to include disability justice and those whom it serves in our Ends Statements.

Our Accessibility Task Force has kicked off its official campaign. This team has made tremendous progress in securing the financial means as well as making sure the final plans meet our goals. I’m so proud of you all as a community for helping them reach these financial goals. If you have not pledged to this

campaign, I highly encourage you to give it a thought and donate what you can. All pledges, regardless of amount, help us work to better live our important mission.

Seeing many of your faces in our outdoor worship has been such an uplifting experience. In addition to being your President this year, I am assisting with the Coming of Age class, which is part of our religious education classes for middle-schoolers. What fun and insight-provoking it is to work with these members of our community as well as the other mentors and Jamila during these thought-provoking sessions. What a great community we have and are building!

In LOVE,
Tim Dickerson

November Festival of Sharing

For the month of November, the focus is on the “Missouri Family Food Boxes” project. These are targeted for families with low incomes. We are asking for donations for this project because of the coronavirus-driven 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 macaroni and cheese
- 1 jar of peanut butter

There is a great need for the food boxes – in 2020, there were requests for 4,918, but only 1,531 were provided. In 2020, your generosity allowed UUC to provide 12 boxes. Collection boxes will be available in the church Greeting Area.

Bonnie Johnson
Festival of Sharing Chair

Festival of Sharing Annual Report

On Sept. 25, the Festival of Sharing Team delivered your gifts to the regional ingathering held at Tipton, Missouri. This included the following:

- Church World Service Hygiene Kits – 10 (\$150 value)
- Church World Service School Kits – 7 (\$105)
- Eyeglasses – 4 (\$4)
- Shoes – 1 (\$1)
- Missouri Baby Bundles – 11 (\$385)
- Missouri Backpacks of Love – 21 (\$735)
- Missouri Backpack Blankets – 9 (\$45)
- Missouri Blankets – 10 (\$120)
- Missouri Family Food Packs – 12 (\$300)
- Missouri Paper Products Packs – 7 (\$112)
- Missouri Reading and Writing Packs – 18 (\$270)
- Missouri Student Dental Packs – 8 (\$88)
- Cash Gifts - \$682.00

Through your generosity we delivered a 2021 total of \$2,997.00. Thank you to all who contributed!

Bonnie Johnson
Festival of Sharing Chair

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

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

2021-22 Faith-to-Action recipients chosen

The Social Action Team has completed selection of Faith-to-Action recipients for 2021-22. The team determined that all 21 applicants meet the criteria for a collection, so all were accepted. Some are organizations with which our church has long-time relationships with, and a few are new to the Faith-to-Action program.

We believe that all are deserving of your consideration. You can find descriptions of the recipients at <https://uucomo.org/faith-to-action-collections/>. In alphabetical order, they are:

- Centro Latino
- Children's Grove Kindness Libraries
- Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture
- CW Dawson Ministries
- Festival of Sharing
- First Chance for Children
- Heart of Missouri CASA
- Honduras Education Fund

CROP Walkers...

...are part of the solution globally and locally

The Church World Service CROP Walk to raise funds for hunger relief in Columbia, across the US and around the world took place on Sept. 19 at the Agriculture Park. So far \$15,400 has been raised. It's not too late to donate. Find our UUCC team at:

<https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2021/event/columbiamo>

Because we walked last year, CWS could respond quickly to the 7.2 magnitude earthquake that Haiti suffered in August. With partners such as Catholic Charities and Lutheran World Relief, CWS was able to welcome Afghan families and help settle them in their new communities.

Because we walked last year, we helped support our local food agency partners in providing meals, food, and essential items during this time of the pandemic. Loaves & Fishes Soup Kitchen, Russell Chapel Community Food Pantry, Destiny Worship Center Food Pantry, and Fifth Street Christian Church's *Feed the Community* program all remained open during this time and continue to meet people's needs.

- Leonard Education Organization
- Loaves & Fishes
- Minority Men's Network
- Missouri Rural Crisis Center
- Missourians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty (MADP)
- Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace and Justice
- Room at the Inn
- Stop Human Trafficking Coalition of Central Missouri
- The Wardrobe
- Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC)
- UUCC Honduras Ministry
- UUCC Sponsorship of asylum seeking Guatemalan family
- Worley Street Roundtable

Rev. Molly will schedule Faith-to-Action collections to best fit Sunday service themes and timelines.

Sanctuary/Immigrant Justice Team sponsorship update

The Guatemalan family that UUCC is sponsoring in their quest to seek asylum is doing well. Lakshmi turned 1 year old in October! Manuel is doing well in Kindergarten. Lilly continues to do well with her English classes and generally keeps quite busy with her own and her children's appointments.

The team is looking for help from anyone who would be interested in giving of their time and/or treasure. For instance, Lilly needs rides to and from her church on Sundays and for shopping, Manuel's dental appointments, Lakshmi's healthy baby visits and WIC appointments, and various other trips around town. We could use some more drivers!

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 into on a joint account from which the family's expenses will be paid directly.

Dave Gibbons (dgibbons@mchsi.com)

Allie Gassmann (alliegassmann@socket.net)
Co-chairs, Sanctuary/Immigrant Justice Team

Programs and events

Kaleidoscope Pagan gathering

7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 18

Join us to celebrate the return of the Sun, the symbol of hope and the promise of returning warmth, at 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 18 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.

UU Life Writers

10:30 a.m. Saturday Nov. 6 & 20

UU Life Writers' Group is continuing their writing theme of "Metaphors" for this fall. In November we will be writing about the social movements in our lifetimes that have been influential or important to us in some way.

We will meet in the Centering Room at 10:30 a.m. on the Saturdays of Nov. 6 and 20. Everyone is welcome – just bring your favorite writing tools and paper or journal!

For further information, contact Fran Reynolds at freynolds@centurytel.net.

Sanctuary/Immigrant Justice Team

1 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 14 - online

Email alliegassmann@socket.net for details.

Green Team

7 p.m. Thursday Nov. 4 - online

Email alliegassmann@socket.net for details.

Unitarian Universalist Church of



Columbia, Missouri

Conversations, Etc.

1:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 3

Conversations. Etc., the UCC Women's Group, will meet at the church in the Greeting Area and via Zoom at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 3.

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

UCC Book Discussion

3:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 13

A Different time and date!

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.

Consider donating to others

Minister's Discretionary

Benevolence Fund

You can donate to this fund at <https://uucomo.org/give/>.

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>

UCC provides Loaves and Fishes meal on third Sundays

Nov. 21 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 uucomo.org.

You can also support this effort by making a donation to the church specifying "Loaves and Fishes Fund." For information, email diane.suhler@gmail.com.

Men's Group

8:15 a.m. Nov. 13 & 27 - online

The UCC 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. Mondays, Nov. 1, 15 & 29

For more information, contact Kevin Fritsche at 573-289-4536 or klfritsche37@gmail.com.

Social Action T-Shirts

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

Reflections

As we head into November, we have decided to continue having our Religious Education program take place outside. Our hope is that the vaccine will become available to children soon, and as our community becomes fully vaccinated, we will transition back into the building. Fingers crossed that we will continue to have good weather until then! Our plans are not set in stone, and we will be looking at case numbers here in Columbia and other factors in order to make our decisions. But for the month of November, it looks like we will stay outside.



The Sunday after Thanksgiving, we will have no R.E. as we begin preparation (hopefully!) for our move inside.

What we have been learning about community

In our Community Building at the Park Class, we have been learning what it means to be in community with each other. Each week, we focus on a different aspect of what a true community creates, including:

- A community encourages us to be our own unique selves and live authentically
- A community actively welcomes and includes all people (sometimes by building an elevator!)
- A community creates beauty together
- A community connects us with love even when we are far apart
- A community inspires us to make our world better
- A community creates a sense of place together that feels like home for everyone

In the month of November, we are thinking as a congregation about grief, and in our year apart, one of the truths that became most clear to me was how much we need community to hold our grief. We have experienced so much collective and individual grief this year, and I am grateful to at last be together to create a place that can help us hold it.



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, Nov. 12



All 6th-8th graders are invited to join us for an outdoor games night. We will play a selection of fun board games. If you would like to bring one of your own, contact Jamila. Dress for whatever the weather might be! And RSVP to dre@uucomo.org.

Coming of Age retreat

9 a.m. Nov. 6 - 9 a.m. Nov. 7

Coming of Age will have an overnight retreat where we will explore a variety of spiritual practices.



RE Schedule

Nov. 7: Regular Classes
Nov. 14: Regular Classes
Nov. 21: Regular Classes
Nov. 28: No R.E.

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

Email: 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

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

Violet Vonder Haar, Director of Music Ministry

Email: music@uucomo.org

Hans Bridger Heruth, Collaborative Accompanist

Email: music@uucomo.org

April Rodeghero, Sunday Morning Assistant

Email: uuchurch@uucomo.org

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Unitarian Universalist Church of



Columbia, Missouri

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