

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 6, December 2021

December Worship

10:30 a.m. Sunday in-person and online

Sunday services are merging back into **one service** at 10:30 a.m., which will be held in-person and live-streamed online. If you have trouble accessing the technology to join us online, please send an email to techhelp@uucomo.org with your contact information.

Sunday, Dec. 5 “The Power of Small Joy”

Rev. Molly Housh Gordon

In her poem “Praying,” Mary Oliver writes: “It doesn’t have to be / the blue iris, it could be / weeds in a vacant lot, or a few / small stones; just / pay attention.” So often, joy is conceived of as an all-encompassing feeling, but more often it is simply noticing some small thing that will see us through. Join us in praise of small joys.

Sunday, Dec. 12 “Disability Justice: Inclusion as a Spiritual Practice”

Disability Justice and Inclusion Team

In honor of our Accessibility Campaign, the members of UUCC’s Disability Justice and Inclusion Team will present a service featuring work by disabled artists about how the practice of inclusion helps us live our UU values.

Sunday, Dec. 19 “Process Theology for This Moment”

Rev. Molly Housh Gordon

What if we understood Creativity to be the ultimate force in the universe? What if our faith took us to the edge of what is emerging and lived into the truth of never-ending change and total interdependence? What would be possible? What possibilities would we enact? Join us for the fourth in our series of “Theology for This Moment” to learn about Rev. Molly’s first love: Process Theology.

Continued on page 2

Christmas Holiday Worship Services

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Minister’s Message

We Are Rising to the Moment by...

Seeking Inspiration

What inspires you? In ever-changing times, when we are challenged to stay in between, this question matters more than we might think.

The word inspire comes from Latin roots that mean to breathe in. Perhaps you’ve found yourself holding your breath these days, wondering what will come next. What helps you breathe deep?

We need inspiration to sustain us, to keep us breathing through all that comes. I look for inspiration most in small joys and mundane places. Just a bit of frost on a lingering leaf will do the trick.

But it also behooves us to center ourselves in big dreams and lofty visions, so that we can stay inspired to do the untold work that lies between here and there.

Where are you finding tiny inspiration to sustain you? What big dreams keep you going?

Join us this month to be inspired.

See you in church,
Rev. Molly

‘Rising to the Moment’ Accessibility Campaign

We have almost reached our \$400,000 goal to install an elevator, automatic door openers and more!

Details on page 2

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‘Rising to the Moment’ Accessibility Campaign Nears \$400,000 Goal

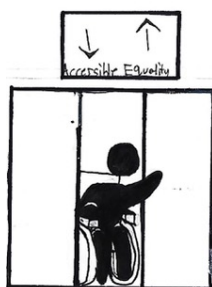
Join us in an exciting campaign to make important accessibility improvements to our beloved UUCC facility!

As of Nov. 24, we were just under \$10,000 from reaching our \$400,000 goal to install an elevator, replace old, uneven carpeting, 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!

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 be found on the website, or contact Campaign Chair Ginny Winter at rising@uucomo.org.



Art by UU Teen
Camille Fajen

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

**No fourth Wednesday Open Chalice Circle in December.
See you Jan. 26, 2022!**

December Worship – continued from page 1

**Sunday, Dec. 26
“Burning of the Grudges”
Rev. Molly Housh Gordon**

Join us for this final service before the new year to wish good riddance to 2021, let go of what we must, and set our intentions for the year to come. There will be fire, there will be water, there will be stones. See you in church.

Worship Zoom information

Worship services will be offered in-person and via Zoom at 10:30 a.m. Sunday. Options for coffee hour after worship are pending.

The Zoom address for our 10:30 a.m. Sunday worship is: <https://zoom.us/j/380411489>
You can also join by phone: 312-626 6799
Webinar ID: 380 411 489

Services are also streamed live to Facebook at:
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/UnitarianUniversalistChurchOfColumbiaMO/videos/>

If offered, the Zoom address for our coffee hour will be: <https://zoom.us/j/95152263717?pwd=SzJJeWdWV0d5QkU4MTdnK1U0b1ZDQT09>

You can also join by phone: 312-626 6799
Webinar ID: 652 315 354

Holiday pastry auction

Love to bake? Love to eat holiday treats? This fundraiser for the work of the church is for you!

Donate one or more baked goods to be auctioned off to the highest bidder and delivered to the winner the week of Dec. 20. Then, look for the link to our online auction in your inboxes and bid on something tasty!

If you would like to participate, contact Rev. Molly at minister@uucomo.org

Room at the Inn

For the 2021-2022 season, Columbia’s emergency winter shelter, Room at the Inn, has returned to its usual model of rotating among Columbia’s churches.

UUCC is proud to take two shifts, hosting Dec. 12-18 and Feb. 20-27. We encourage UU Churchers to sign up to help during those times particularly – sign up at roomattheinncomo.org/volunteer.



Holiday Worship at UCC

Holiday Blues Service – online 7 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 12

This celebratory time of year can be painful for we who suffer grief, loss, family conflict, depression and more. Join us on Zoom for a service that takes seriously the blues that exist amid the merriment.

Christmas Eve Services – 6:30 and 8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 24

See the service descriptions for differing Covid-19 singing precautions. Vaccinations are strongly encouraged for all those eligible. Masks will be required.

To ensure appropriate social distancing in the Sanctuary, those planning to attend on Christmas Eve need to **register in advance** for the service of their choice at

<https://uucomo.org/christmas-eve-worship-registration/>

We will reserve a small number of seats for visitors. Please register as early as possible. If registration exceeds available seats, we will attempt to add another service.

An outdoor cookie reception and carol sing will be offered between the two services. Your cookie contributions will be gratefully accepted.

Family Service – in person – 6:30 p.m.

This service will feature traditional carols, candlelight and an interactive telling of the Christmas story with an accessible message of hope.

This will be our soloist/ensemble-only service, with no congregational singing. At the end of the service, we will take our candles outside to sing “Silent Night” – masks will be required.

Candlelight Service – in person and online – 8 p.m.

This in-person and live-streamed service will include traditional carols, candlelight and a Christmas homily from Rev. Molly. Masked congregational singing of Christmas carols will be allowed.

A special opportunity to greet your UU community awaits

Greeting for service is fun, informative, community-building and appreciated.

Time commitment: 10 to 11:30 a.m. or noon Sunday

Responsibilities:

- Smile and greet.
- Encourage name tags. Masks will be required for all participants above age 2. Watch for new faces or people who are glancing around the room. Escort visitors with children to RE.
- Afterward, seek out the new visitors and touch base with them. Answer questions as best as you can. Refer the question to the right person, send the question to the membership team, and/or refer the person to the UCC website.

• Greeter signup can be found at: <https://uucomo.org/blog/sheet/sunday-greeters/>.

• Once you have signed up, a more detailed instruction sheet will be provided.

The Membership Team hopes to have a board welcomer and two greeters for each service.

Usher and teller volunteers needed

With in-person worship resuming, volunteers are needed to serve as ushers and collection tellers.

About four years ago we started scheduling ushers and tellers once a month, with substitutes when scheduled ushers and tellers are not available. The system has been on hiatus while we worshiped online, but it worked well for in-person worship, and we plan to continue it. Here is a brief description of what ushers and tellers do:

- **Ushers** distribute and collect hymnals, welcome folks to the worship service, hand out the Order of Service, circulate collection plates, count those in attendance, and assist in other worship tasks.

- **Tellers** are responsible for counting and securing the Sunday collections, which takes about 10-15 minutes after the end of the 10:30 a.m. worship service.

If you can help by being an usher or a teller once a month, or a substitute when needed, email Steve Scott at webmaster@uucomo.org.

President's Perspective

Holiday Cheer

from Timothy Dickerson, 2021-22 President

Hello, beloved UUCoMo community,

I would like to wish each and every one of you the Happiest of Holidays!

The board has been discussing and learning about Black Lives UU's proposed 8th principle. If you get a chance, I encourage you to go to 8thprincipleuu.org to learn more. Be on the lookout for more opportunities for discussion about this proposed new principle.

As of the time I write this, we are less than \$10,000 short of our \$400,000 Accessibility Campaign goal. If you are like me, you were lifting your fingers and celebrating with jazz hands as you read that number. Congrats to all! Now, let us continue to elevate ourselves to reach our goal of living up to being more radically welcoming.

If you have any questions or comments or just want to chat, feel free to reach out and let me know.

Lots of Love and Holiday Cheer!

Tim Dickerson

Disability Justice and Inclusion Team

Founded in 2017, DJIT (pronounced "digit") seeks to foster an inclusively designed environment, with a congregational commitment to combating ablism, where all individuals feel radically welcome and are able to participate in every aspect of our church and community.

When we aren't advocating for accessibility and inclusivity, we are participating in disability film festivals, holding book discussions, and examining the various ways our lives are affected by disability justice.

Our regular meetings are over Zoom on the third Sunday of each month from 12:30 to 2 p.m. Please contact Gretchen Maune with questions at 573-489-0986 or GMMaune@gmail.com.



'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.

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.

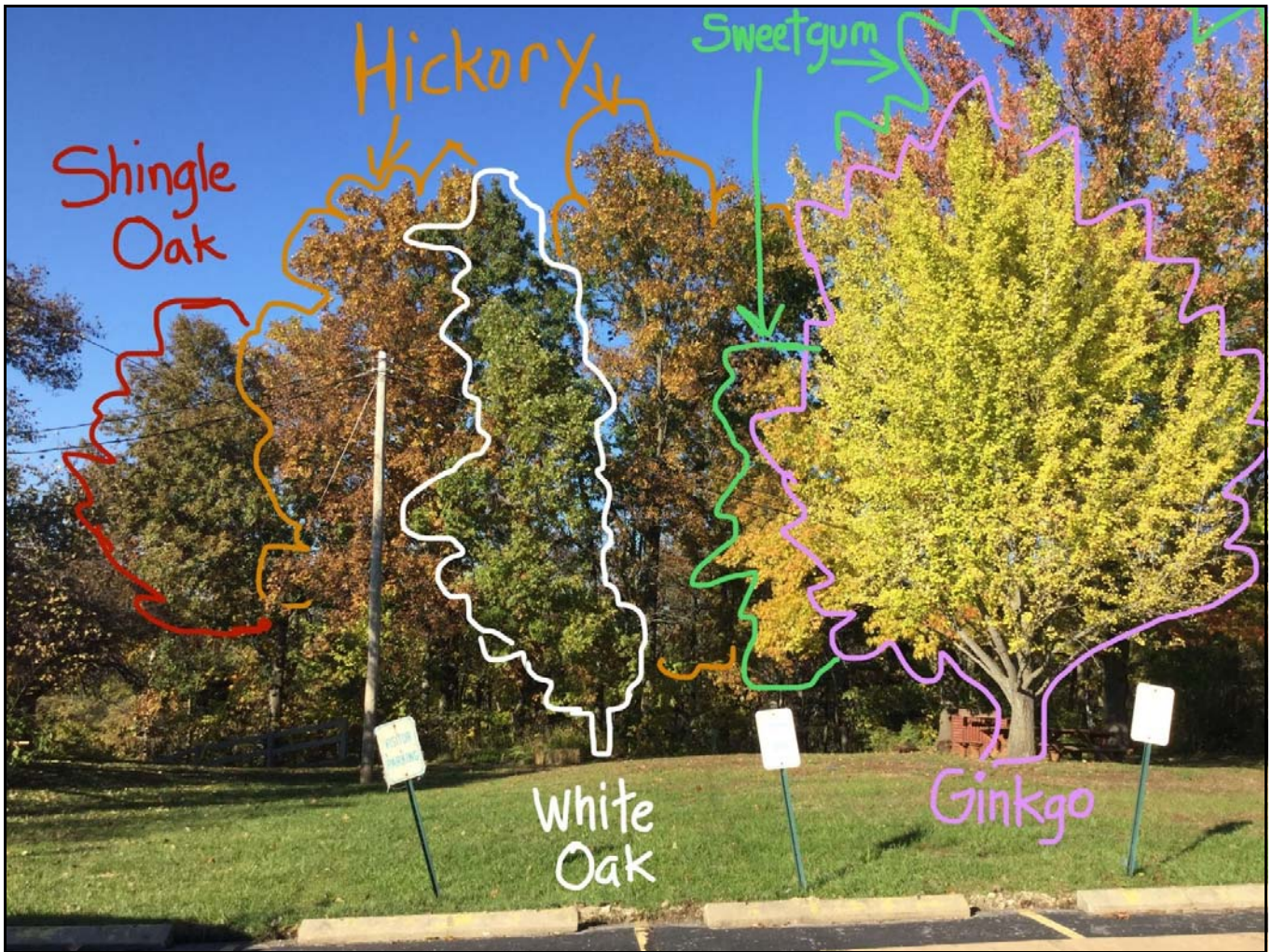
Email Meredith Donaldson at mjdonlsn@gmail.com or call the church office at 442-5764 if you need help or want to volunteer to help

UUCC Chalice Circles - Are you interested?

The intimacy of the UUCC Chalice Circle groups is one way to enrich our members' lives with greater depth of meaning. Each Chalice Circle has seven to 10 members and meets at least once a month.

Email any questions you may have to chalicecircle@uucomo.org for information or if you want to sign up but have not yet done so.





We love our trees at the UU Church of Columbia!

The Grounds Team would like to introduce you to some of our trees and invite you to share your love of our trees and woods on the UUC Facebook page.

Shingle Oak – Wood from this oak can be split into thin sheets, which used to be made into shingles.

White Oak – These oaks can live for more than 300 years and are found throughout Missouri.

Shagbark Hickory – Its wood makes excellent, slow-burning charcoal, its nuts are edible, and its wood is used for many implements. Wildlife from moths to squirrels to bats appreciate shagbarks, too!

Sweet Gum – The star-shaped leaves of sweet gum become even more striking in the autumn, when they turn various shades of gold, red, pink, and purple, often on the same tree – sometimes even on the same leaf!

Ginkgo – A non-native tree, the ginkgo's combination of resistance to disease, insect-resistant wood, and the ability to form aerial roots and sprouts makes it durable, with some specimens claimed to be more than 2,500 years old.

Explanations are courtesy of the Missouri Department of Conservation at <https://mdc.mo.gov> and also https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ginkgo_biloba.

Check out the Grounds Team at <https://uucomo.org/grounds-team/>. Submitted by [Patty Daus](#).

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 whom UUCC is sponsoring in their quest to seek asylum is doing well. They have gotten WIC and SNAP benefits by now, and Manuel is doing well in school. Both Lilly and Manuel are making a lot of progress with their English!

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, for shopping, Manuel's dental appointments, Lakshmi's healthy baby visits and WIC appointments, and various other trips around town.

As a reminder, if you would like to support the efforts of the Sanctuary and Immigrant Justice Team in general, you can make a tax-deductible donation to the church with Sanctuary Fund 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 a joint account from which the family's expenses are paid directly.

If you would like to get involved on the team, please contact Dave or Allie!

Dave Gibbons (dgibbons@mchsi.com)

Allie Gassmann (alliegassmann@socket.net)

Co-chairs, Sanctuary/Immigrant Justice Team

December Festival of Sharing

For the month of December, the focus is on the "Missouri Student Dental Pack." Place all items in a large ziplock bag (2- to 2.5-gallon).

- 1 fluoride toothpaste (6 oz. or more)
- 4 child-sized soft toothbrushes (in original package)
- 1 dental floss or 1 package of floss picks (any size)

In 2020, there were requests for 3,120 of these packs statewide, but only 1,120 were provided. Collection boxes are available at the church office.

Bonnie Johnson
Festival of Sharing Chair

Gentle Yoga class moving downstairs

Effective Dec. 2, 2021, the Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday Gentle Yoga class will move downstairs to the library at UUCC.

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**

Programs and events

Kaleidoscope Pagan gathering

4 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 4 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, Dec. 4 & 18

The UU Life Writers' Group will meet on Saturdays, Dec. 4 and 18 in the Centering Room. This fall the theme has been "Metaphors," and the stories have been very thought-provoking. November writings were on social movements that have influenced our lives.

All are welcome. Being a published or professional writer is *not* a requirement – just a love of writing personal memoirs. For further information, contact Fran Reynolds at 573-881-2838 or freynolds@centurytel.net.

Sanctuary/Immigrant Justice Team

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

Email alliegassmann@socket.net for details.

Green Team

7 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 9 - online

Email alliegassmann@socket.net for details.

Unitarian Universalist Church of



Columbia, Missouri

Conversations, Etc.

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

Conversations, Etc., the UCC women's group, will meet via Zoom and in person at the church, at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 1.

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, Dec. 11-
online

The group will meet online and by phone to briefly discuss books each have read. For questions, contact Pam Springsteel at 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/](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](https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/weblink.aspx?name=E164454&id=77)

UCC provides Loaves and Fishes meal on third Sundays

Dec. 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 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. Dec. 11 & 25 - 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, Dec. 13 & 27

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



I keep coming across articles and essays about how churches across the country are struggling with a lack of volunteerism since returning to in-person services. I got to thinking about it: While we certainly have days where we need to scramble to find a volunteer or two, overall we have had wonderful and enthusiastic volunteering in our religious education program. I actually went and counted – since we returned to in-person in late September, we have had 40 different people volunteer with our children and youth.

This semester, our R.E. lessons have been focusing on learning about the importance of community while at the same time doing the actual work of rebuilding and strengthening ours. And what I see so clearly is that beyond any lesson I put together, what our kids are learning most about community is seeing the way you show up for them. Years from now, somewhere deep in their memories and woven into the fabric their being, they will remember a loving adult who played with blocks with them, who read them a story, who chatted with them about their favorite book, who shared their love of Star Trek with them. Not because they had to, but because they loved being a part of a community.

We believe that these amazing young people have an essential role to play in helping to heal the world and create the beloved community we all dream of. You are teaching them through your work in our church what it means to love bigger than the walls of our individual family, to show up for each other and give of ourselves. What a beautiful and important shared ministry we have together in our religious education program! What amazing, loving, and uniquely gifted people am I blessed to share it with!

Simple Gifts Crafting Workshop

Sunday, Dec. 19
Noon - 2 p.m.



Our annual gift-making workshop, geared to kids 4-10 years old assisted by a parent, will be held after service. We will have light refreshments and an assortment of crafting stations that children can move through in the lower level of the church.

RSVP to dre@uucomo.org so that we can have enough crafting supplies.

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

Friday, Dec. 10
6:30-8:00 pm

All 6th-8th graders are invited to join us in the sanctuary where we will make forts and have a computer gaming tournament! RSVP to dre@uucomo.org.



RE Moves Back Indoors

With the weather getting colder, and so many of our children finally getting vaccinated, we are preparing to move our program back inside. Depending on the weather, we may do one more day outdoors at the start of December. We will continue our current class groups until January, when we will once again break up into Adams, Schweitzer, and Thoreau classes. We will continue to offer online story time for those who cannot be indoors in-person.



RE Schedule

Dec. 5: Regular Classes
Dec. 12: Regular Classes
Dec. 19: Regular Classes
Dec. 26: New Year's Inter-generational Service

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

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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

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Unitarian Universalist Church of



Columbia, Missouri

The Searchlight is published monthly by the
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Submissions:

Email to uuchurch@uucomo.org
or mail to Church Administrator.

The deadline for submissions is noon on the third Monday
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