

## The Searchlight

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia, Missouri

2615 Shepard Blvd., Columbia, MO 65201 • 573-442-5764 • https://uucomo.org • Volume 64, Issue 10, April 2023

## **April Worship**

## 10:30 a.m. Sundays Services are both in-person and online

If you have trouble accessing the technology to join us online, please send an email to: techhelp@uucomo.org

## Sunday, April 2 "Risking Theological Openness" George Grimm-Howell, Intern Minister

Palm Sunday marks the beginning of the Christian holy week, a time to contemplate cycles of destruction and renewal, death and resurrection. Unitarian Universalists have seen the temple of our faith deconstructed and rebuilt time and again as we risk theological openness and trust in our shared future.

## Sunday, April 9 "Risking Life" Rev. Molly Housh Gordon

Join us this Easter Sunday for a Unitarian Universalist take on the symbolism of resurrection — in the face of loss, heartbreak, and death itself, where do we find the courage to risk life? In the face of empire and oppression, where do we find the courage to risk love? Perhaps the story of an ancient teacher can give us some ideas....

## Sunday, April 16 "Risking Trust" Rev. Molly Housh Gordon

We live in a time of unprecedented precarity – it can sometimes feel that there is no solid ground beneath us. And yet, we cannot live full human lives without trust in something. How do we risk trust in an age of precarity? Join us.

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#### Minister's Message

# Roots & Wings April's Worship Theme is "Risk/Trust"

"The practice of love offers no place of safety. We risk loss, hurt, pain. We risk being acted upon by forces outside our control."

- Bell Hooks

I remember a moment near the beginning of our Covid isolation, when everything felt like a risk and we weren't sure who or what to trust, when the children and I escaped the house to play on the porch, crazed with frustrated energy. I was just ahead of the children passing through the door when I noticed one side of the porch smeared with what was left of a whole nest of partially hatched baby birds. I shooed my own babies back inside, unwilling to answer their questions about what had transpired.

And it struck me with extra force that year, that wild creatures are caught up each and every spring in a great drama: balanced on the razor thin edge between new life and death. That life itself is risk, and we cannot choose otherwise. After a stomach turning moment of cleaning, I let the children onto the porch and guided them to the cleaner side. Their energy was unabated, and I sat on the swing as they played, gliding back and forth over stained concrete and soberly remembering the fragile reality of creaturely life.

We were reminded during those most frightening days that love and life itself are always a risk. I think we are reminded, as well, that we hold each other steady in the face of that risk – that a sense of safety comes, most powerfully, from connection, and that our ever-breaking hearts are healed only by risking themselves again and again in ever more love.

In Faith, Rev. Molly

Monthly potluck Sunday, April 2

Details on page 2

## **April Worship**

Continued from page 1

Sunday, April 23 "Our Earth Teachers" Earth Day Sunday

#### Rev. Molly Housh Gordon & Jamila Batchelder

Join us for an all ages Earth Day Service turning to the many teachers all around us on the earth. We'll learn the lessons of plants, stone, animals, waters and more, and identify which earth teachers might speak most clearly to each of us.

#### Sunday, April 30 Special Guest Preacher Rev. Lucinda Isaacs

Rev. Isaacs is a Presbyterian Church (USA) minister from Ohio now preaching in guest pulpits across the country. As a trans Christian, she offers witness of an inclusive and loving God.

## **Worship Zoom information**

Worship services are offered in-person and via Zoom at 10:30 a.m. Sunday.

The Zoom address for our 10:30 a.m. Sunday worship is: <a href="https://zoom.us/j/380411489">https://zoom.us/j/380411489</a>
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/

The Zoom address for our coffee hour is:

<a href="https://zoom.us/j/95152263717?">https://zoom.us/j/95152263717?</a>

pwd=SzJJeWdWV0d5QkU4MTdnK1U0b1ZDQT09

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

#### Mindfulness Meditation

Mindfulness Meditation takes place at 9 a.m. every Sunday except holidays in the Centering Room. Beginners and experienced meditators are welcome. For more information, contact Anna Lingo or Susan Pereira.

## **Online Poetry for Spiritual Growth**

First Thursday of the month on Zoom 7 to 8:30 p.m. April 6

Join us for a contemplative series with poetry at the center. We reflect on spiritual and theological questions using poetry as our source text. We share some of our favorite poems. We write, whether you prefer to journal or write your own poetry. And we share our reflections, and perhaps our writing, with one another. Please join us for any session even if you can't commit to the whole series.

## Ministry Reboot Breakfast

10 a.m. to noon Saturday, April 15 – Sanctuary RSVP here

Over the last three years we have endured a global pandemic and undertaken an important construction and access project. Now it is time to turn our attention back to our ministry team structures and institutional health.

What work feels most important to us now? What do we want to rebuild, and what should it look like in today's landscape?

These are the questions we'd like to begin to ponder together as we convene the first in a series of Ministry Reboot Breakfasts in anticipation of planning for the 2023-2024 program year. Please mark your calendar to join us from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, April 15 at the church. This invitation is 100% open to the congregation, so please do invite your fellow UU Churchers who are interested in leadership and the health of our congregation.

## **Communication and Connection Survey**

What is your spirit seeking? How do you want to be involved at UUCC? And, who is your emergency contact?

Let us know these things and more in our Communication and Connection Survey!

This survey should take 10-15 minutes to complete and will help us shape our 2023-2024 program year around the needs of the congregation! Take the survey at this link:

https://uucc65201.breezechms.com/form/e95864

## Sunday Potluck

Sunday, April 2 at noon

In the wake of the last two+ years of pandemic life, we see a pressing need to re-build a palpable sense of community... and what better way than to share potlucks together!

So, we are resuming a tradition that ended several years back due to logistical challenges – **First Sunday Potlucks**!

Please bring a side dish, main dish or dessert if you are able – and please stay even if you can't bring food because there's always plenty to go around. Also, please help set up tables and chairs in the Sanctuary, and stay after the potluck when you're able to help clean up and return the Sanctuary to normal order.

#### Choir rehearsals

Weekly choir rehearsals are at 7 p.m. on Wednesdays. All ages and ability levels are welcome and encouraged to join.

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## Worship Associates seek volunteers for lay-led summer services

What do you do to feed your spirit? Do you use prayer or meditation? Does music or art fill your soul? Do you find inspiration in writing or reading poetry?

Continuing our long-standing tradition, we will have a number of lay-led services over the summer. We want to make this the summer of spiritual practice and are looking for volunteers to assist us with presenting services exploring the many ways we keep ourselves grounded, inspired and at peace.

You may have an idea for a

## Forum Programs for April 2023

9 a.m. Sunday in the Forum Room/Library

April 2: "Spirituality of Aging, Part II." Intern Minister George Grimm-Howell will share additional poems from his "Found in Wilderness" project. The themes will center on how we process regret and other forms of unfinished business. Participants will be invited to think about the overall arc of meaning of their lives.

**April 9:** Easter – no meeting

April 16: Maria Oropallo will speak on "What Goes On in City Hall Affects Everything Outside City Hall." Maria served 10 years on the city Finance and Audit Commission and four years on the Tax Increment Financing Commission.

**April 23:** Discussion of Chapter 6, *Great Decisions*, "No End: A Century of Drug Wars," led by David Leuthold.

**April 30:** Susan Even will speak on gender-affirming healthcare for trans people.

whole service, or you may just have a practice you would like to share as part of a larger service. Maybe there is a song that you play, sing or listen to. Perhaps you have a favorite poem or prose piece that you turn to. Or maybe you can describe how working in your garden or walking in the woods connects you to our world. We welcome whatever you are willing to share to help us explore the full range of spiritual experience.

The Worship Associates and ministers will work with all vol-

unteers to assist in structuring a whole service, if that is your choice, or to help you integrate your contribution into a service involving multiple volunteers.

Every contribution is necessary if we are going to fairly reflect the diversity of practice we know lives at UUCC. Please contact any of the Worship Associates (Tim Dickerson, Todd Iveson, Iyesatu Kamara-Bush, Gretchen Maune, Jeff Ordway, or Sam Otten), Rev. Molly, or Intern Minister George Grimm-Howell if you are interested in participating.

## From the Intern Minister – Trust and Risk

Soon, Christendom will light the Easter fire to mark the passage into new life. As we contemplate our worship theme of trust and risk this April, the Easter fire is an opportunity to reflect on the pain and joy of change. As a community of faith, trust and risk go hand in hand as we kindle in our hearts the perpetual flame of destruction and renewal.

The Sufi mystic poet Rumi says, "You must set fire to have light. Trust means you're ready to risk what you currently have." When a

prophet invites you into their fire, he says, we must go quickly and not fret about being burned.

But perhaps our own Unitarian Universalist tradition says it best: In our hymn "As Tranquil Streams," the 1933 lyrics of Marion Franklin Hamm call us to revere our past traditions but "trust the dawning future more."

I look forward this month to gathering with all of you around the warming fires of change and renewal.

- George Grimm-Howell

## Life milestones conversations planned

Intern minister George Grimm-Howell is working on a project that would provide spiritual support and ritual to mark major life passages.

For example, if you are retiring from paid work, or if you're facing "an empty nest" or other large life transitions, please consider reaching out to George to share your thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Email your thoughts to <u>internminister@uucomo.org</u> or schedule a talk on Calendly at <u>https://calendly.com/grimm-howell</u>.

catendry.com/grimm-noweri.



Our website address is <a href="https://uucomo.org">https://uucomo.org</a>

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

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## Next UUCC membership classes set on April 13 and 16

All who plan to become church members are strongly encouraged to attend the two membership classes offered by our Membership Team. Classes are held four times a year, and each class lasts 60-90 minutes. For more information, go to <a href="https://uucomo.org/how-to-join/">https://uucomo.org/how-to-join/</a>.

## Spring Cycle 2023

- 7 p.m. April 13 on Zoom Membership 101 History of Unitarian-Universalism Register at <a href="https://uucc65201.breezechms.com/form/6b0d8d">https://uucc65201.breezechms.com/form/6b0d8d</a>
- Noon April 16 at church Membership 102 A tour of our building and grounds and information about getting connected within the church, financial stewardship, and privileges and responsibilities of membership. Register at <a href="https://uucc65201.breezechms.com/form/fd042d">https://uucc65201.breezechms.com/form/fd042d</a>
- •10:30 a.m. May 7 at church New Member Ingathering during worship

# All of us are welcome here; all of us are loved

The following words from Erika A. Hewitt, Unitarian Universalist Association Minister of Worship Arts, express the feeling we at UUCC hope to instill:

"Some of us are bringing our best selves to this space, and some of us are bringing our struggling selves, including pieces we might be ashamed of. All of us are welcome here, and all of us are loved.

"Some of us already have open hearts; and some of us aren't quite there yet, because our hearts have gotten a little beat up this week and might've forgotten how to trust and open. Your heart is welcome here, no matter how bruised. We welcome you among us.

"All of us are imperfect, but we're here to drop our defenses and trust that what happens in worship is powerful and life-giving. Together, we affirm that this day—and our being together—can make each of us braver, more compassionate, and wiser than when we woke up this morning.

"We welcome you here."

- From the Membership Team

## **UUCC Caring Ministry**

The Caring Ministry Team is based on the belief that we are all 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, transportation or other needs. 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

## Easter Brunch - 10 a.m. April 8

Our Easter Brunch fundraiser for our amazing high school youths will take place at 10 a.m. Saturday, April 8 at the church. Tickets are \$7/person or \$25/family and will be available at the door.

Enjoy a wonderful meal, an egg hunt, and the opportunity to vote on the all important question: who will wear (and dance in) the bunny costume this year?

Please let us know if you plan to attend so we know how much food to make. And we appreciate any food you would like to donate to the cause. You can sign up here and deliver food to the church by 10 a.m. April 7.

## Living Earth Meditation

Silent meditation outdoors
with opportunity to share insights and reflection
A collaborative program from
Columbia Friends Meeting, Show Me Dharma &
the Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia
Facilitated by Peter Holmes, Ph.D., and Tricia Straub

## 9 a.m. Saturdays starting April 1, 2023 1400 Gary Street, Columbia

"The Peace of Wild Things"

When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my
children's lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water,
and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.
—Wendell Berry

Being at home in nature while building a connection between spiritual practice and ecological awareness.

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## Sanctuary and Immigrant Justice Team sponsorship update

driving lessons from Dottie Mathews and Rosie or Allie! Geiser, Lilly is getting ready to take her driver's examination. She will be driving her car that was the Lilly sincerely expresses her gratitude every time they generous gift of Meredith Donaldson in honor and drive the family to or from their respective destinamemory of Joe Donaldson, who had coordinated the tions – 6-year-old Manuel at first grade at Parkade transportation for Lilly, Manuel, and Lakshmi. Until Elementary School, 2-year-old Lakshmi at Head Start, Lilly passes her exam and gets her license, which we and Lilly at work at the University of Missouri. It is a are hoping will be soon, Ruth Milledge is coordinat- reminder for us to say thank you to UUCC and everying the transportation for the family. If you are willing one who has contributed to the sponsorship of this to help with driving, please contact Ruth at ramilledge@gmail.com.

When we agreed to sponsor a single mom with two small children in May 2021, we knew transitioning to independence would be more challenging. Conseorder to provide assistance where needed. You may support or continue to support the work of the Sanctuary and Immigrant Justice Team, which currently includes our sponsorship of the family, by making a taxdeductible 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 will be paid directly. And if you would

Following a generous contribution toward the cost of like to get involved on the team, please contact Dave

Our loyal and faithful drivers share with us how Guatemalan family seeking asylum in this country. Contributions have been by donating financially; by donating furniture and household items; by driving the family; by translating; by taking Lilly to the store and on other errands; by taking the family to the doctor; quently, our sponsorship of the family is continuing in by taking Lilly to the hospital; by taking Lakshmi to the hospital twice; by helping to enroll the kids in school and Head Start; by helping in other ways we am forgetting; by donating a car (thank you again Meredith); by providing housing for over a year (thank you Christine Heath); and by UUCC two years ago saying "yes" to sponsoring this family!

With continuing gratitude,

Dave Gibbons: dgibbons@mchsi.com Allie Gassmann: alliegassmann@socket.net Co-Chairs, Sanctuary and Immigrant Justice Team

## Social Action Team announces Faith-to-Action collection recipients

Although we are moving towards a single Faith-to-Action (FTA) recipient for each month, in April we will have two – the Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture and the Missouri Rural Crisis Center. Your FTA donations will be split between these two organizations, with part (\$417 to be exact) going to support the work of our church. Although these are separate organizations with distinct missions, we hope that donors will feel comfortable contributing to both of

UUCC member and CCUA Volunteer Carole Simon will tell you about her experiences with CCUA, which she calls "a great organization." Also, you will hear more about these worthy organizations during Sunday worship service collections. Please donate as you are able in April, either online or the oldfashioned way... in the collection plate!

The following Faith-to-Action recipients are scheduled through August:

May: The Lajee Center and Tent of Nations (two Palestinian support organizations)

June: Missourians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty

July: Children's Grove Kindness Libraries

August: Stop Human Trafficking Coalition of Central Missouri

In September we will start a new "FTA Year." Nominations for recipients will open later in April. We'll let you know!

## Rev. Molly's office hours

**Community Office Hours** 

10:30 a.m. to noon Tuesdays at Uprise Bakery

**Appointments** 

Every day except Monday (day off) and Wednesday (sermon-writing day). You can meet with Rev. Molly online, by phone or in person at the indoor or outdoor location of your choice.

Make an appointment by using the scheduling app at calendly.com/revmollyhoushgordon. If you can't find a time there, send an email to minister@uucomo.org to see if she can work you in at a different time.

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## **Programs and events**

## Gentle Yoga with Karen Dwyer

10 to 11:30 a.m. Tuesdays and Fridays

6 to 7:15 p.m. Mondays and Thursdays

Additional information is available from Karen, or contact the church office.

## Who you gonna call? The Membership Team

What? You were thinking Ghostbusters?

Do you need a new or an updated nametag? Please email us at membership@uucomo.org. Please include pronouns if you would like them listed.

Questions? Ask a greeter or email the team.



Check us out on the UUCC Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/groups/uuchurch

## Sanctuary & Immigrant Justice Team

1 p.m. Sunday, April 9 - online For information contact Allie Gassmann at <u>alliegassmann@</u> socket.net.

## **Social Action T-Shirts**

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

# Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia, Missouri

## **UUCC Book Discussion**

3:30 p.m. Saturday, April 8 – online and by phone

The group will meet online and by phone to briefly discuss books each has read. Contact Pam Springsteel at <a href="mailto:pspring@socket.net">pspring@socket.net</a> for more information.

## Conversations, Etc.

3:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 12 - online and by phone

Conversations, Etc., the UUCC senior women's group, meets via Zoom and telephone at 3:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month.

We gather together to enjoy the company of women friends. If you would like to join us, contact Pam at pspring@socket.net.

## Men's Group

8:30 a.m. April 8 and 22 - online

The UUCC Men's Group previously met 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. Monday, April 3 & 17 - online

The Non-Toxic Masculinity Group, meets the first and third Monday of the month. For information email Kevin Fritsche at klfritsche 37@gmail.com.

## UUCC provides Loaves and Fishes meal on third Sundays

April 16 this month

The Social Action Team is looking for volunteers to prepare and serve various dishes for the Loaves and Fishes program.

We no longer need to box the dinners. Instead, we will revert to the original method of serving on plates. We need volunteers to prepare servings of various dishes and other volunteers to serve the meal and clean up afterward. Both the volunteers providing food and those who will serve and clean up are asked to be at Wilkes Boulevard United Methodist Church by 4:30 p.m. For information, contact Diane Suhler. 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.

#### **Social Action Team -**

1 p.m. Sunday, April 2

The team meets on the first Sunday of the month after the worship service and potluck in the Centering Room.

## 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-relieffund/

Food Bank for Central and Northeast Missouri

https://interland3.donorperfect.net/ weblink/weblink.aspx?

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# REflections

They tell you when you are expecting a child that to have a child is to let your heart wander in the world unprotected. So fragile and vulnerable. It is terrifying. To feel your child's pain as keenly as your own, but without the same level of control over risks. And each year they grow, that control feels less. It can feel so tempting to re-exert our authority, to deny our children the chance to take risks.



But of course, being a Unitarian Universalist is all about trusting each other with choices. Even knowing that some choices will be mistakes. Our Unitarian tradition centered our potential to "grow in likeness to god," to become more perfect. It is easy to focus to the impossible beauty of perfection. But of course, growing only really happens with trial and error, with mistakes.

I think often as I set up programs for our youth – to what degree do I create an environment in which there is no chance that a youth could make a bad choice, versus to what extent do I trust them to make good choices? And what is most challenging about this question is not that I have perfect trust that they will make that good choice. It is knowing that there will be times that they will make mistakes. And that this isn't a catastrophe, but an opportunity for us all to grow together.

## Easter Brunch & Egg Hunt 10 a.m. Saturday, April 8

The YRUU High School youth group will be hosting the annual Easter Brunch to raise money for their program. Tickets are \$7/person and \$25/family. The event will include:

- A delicious meal
- Easter Egg Hunt
- The traditional "Who Will Wear the Bunny Suit?" vote

If you would like to help our cause, by donating food for the brunch, please see the food signup on our website.



#### Jamila Batchelder

**Director of Religious Education** 

dre@uucomo.org 573-442-5764

Office Hours: Wed. 10 a.m.-noon

## Junior Youth 6:30-8:30 p.m. April 14

Junior Youth will meet to play a campaign of the role-playing game Dungeons and Dragons. No experience needed! RSVP if you plan to attend.



## RE Volunteers Needed!

As we come to the final months of our regular R.E. year, we are in need of a few more volunteers. If you would like to get involved, please contact Jamila at dre@uucomo.org.

## RE Schedule

- **Apr. 2:** Spring Cleaning Service Sunday
- **Apr. 9:** Easter Service Sunday Can Hunt
- Apr. 16: Regular R.E. Classes
- **Apr. 23:** All-Ages Earth Day Service
- Apr. 30: Regular R.E. Classes

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## 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 10:30 a.m.-noon at Uprise Bakery

Or by appointment at <u>calendly.com/revmollyhoushgordon</u>

Email: minister@uucomo.org

George Grimm-Howell, Intern Minister
Email: internminister@uucomo.org

**Church Administrator** 

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

Telephone: 573-442-5764 Email: <u>uuchurch@uucomo.org</u>

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

Phylshawn Johnson, Sound Technician

Email: music@uucomo.org

**April Rodeghero, Sunday Morning Assistant** 

Email: uuchurch@uucomo.org

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

Editor: Steve Scott

#### Submissions:

Email to <u>uuchurch@uucomo.org</u> or postal-mail to Church Administrator.

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