

Brief descriptions of the Sept 2026 – August 2027 Faith-To-Action recipients. Descriptions are taken from the applications, and are not intended to be exhaustive.

Caring Hearts and Hands of Columbia

Caring Hearts and Hands (CHHC) is a charitable organization that provides an alternative in Columbia and central Missouri for end of life care for those who choose not to or are unable to remain in their own home or a care facility until they die. CHHC provides a comfortable home where the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the dying person and their family are met with compassion, love and respect 24/7. These services are provided at no cost and thus the organization relies on fundraising and volunteer help.

Through this work CHHC aligns with UUCC's mission and values. While providing compassionate care at the end of life, the staff and volunteers at CHHC respect and nurture the unique personal, cultural and religious values of the residents and their families. They promote honesty, acceptance and discovery as they help guide the end-of-life journey. This work is consistent with UUCC's vision of being a community of radical welcome and deep connection that moves us together to heal the world. In caring for those who are dying, CHHC could easily repeat our UU principles: inherent worth and dignity of every person; justice, equity and compassion in human relations; acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth, free and responsible search for truth and meaning.

Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture

Teaches gardening skills, contributes huge amounts of home grown vegetables to the Food Pantry, supports the Veterans' Farm. Welcoming, inclusive, and nurtures independence.

Heart of Missouri CASA

The mission at CASA is to train and support volunteers to be exceptional voices for every abused and neglected child in the Boone and Callaway County family courts. We believe that all children have the right to safe, healthy, stable homes, free from abuse and neglect. Volunteers complete an intensive screening process, including an interview, 3 reference checks, and a comprehensive background screening. Following completion of the 30-hour pre-service training, volunteers are sworn-in as officers of the court and are appointed to a case with one or multiple children. CASA volunteers stay with that case until it closes (average of 2 years), visiting the child(ren) two times per month, attending all the professional team meetings and court hearings, and speaking up for the children's needs with the Team and Family Court Judge. Through the volunteers' fact-gathering efforts, training, and relationship-building, they can adequately assess the child's needs and advocate for unmet needs to be addressed. CASA volunteers are uniquely poised to make recommendations regarding the placement of the child and the permanency plan due to their objectivity and extensive knowledge of the case/child. Professional staff members provide ongoing supervision and assistance to ensure volunteers have needed information, skills, and resources.

IN*TACT

Hosts the Trans days of Remembrance and Visibility Yearly. Their mission, vision, and values are in line with viewing all people as having dignity and inherent worth.

Our Vision

Intersex, Nonbinary, and Trans Advocate Collective Triangle is a 501c4 non-profit social welfare

and advocacy group. We believe in intersectional progress and community service that works for the protection of all people in our day to day lives, our home towns, and our country.

Our Values

IN•TACT values equity, protection, solidarity, and the intersectionality of all people but specifically serves the Intersex, Nonbinary, and Trans members of our community.

Our Mission

To advocate for our communities and encourage them to advocate for each other and themselves, to provide a platform for free expression, to build strong intersectional communities, highlighting the voices of Trans, Nonbinary and Intersex people.

The nature of our work is community intersectional advocacy especially for the Intersex, Nonbinary, and Trans Community. We testify against harmful legislation and provide testimony in support of legislation that protects our community. We create supportive environments with our CommuniTEAs, provide education on Trans, Nonbinary, and Intersex issues through TEAch Ins and The Queer Elder Oral History Library Project. We are working on making Columbia more accessible through the Pink Book project.

This connects with our church's mission of radical inclusion, social justice for marginalized groups, and our openness to diversity and helping all humans thrive. This group has hosted at least one event at the current (Trans Day of Visibility, 2026).

Local Motion

The mission of Local Motion is to provide walking, biking, and transit solutions to meet people's everyday transportation needs.

The vision of Local Motion is towns built for people, where it's easy to walk, bike, and ride transit, and everyone can get where they want to go.

Aligns w UUCC values of accessibility, equality, and sustainability for our town and our planet.

MADP (Missourians to Abolish the Death Penalty)

Missourians to Abolish the Death Penalty (MADP) is the only statewide organization dedicated solely to ending capital punishment in Missouri through advocacy, education, and community engagement.

Missourians for Justice in Palestine (MJP)

MJP has been working for over a decade to educate us and promote justice in Palestine. This aligns with UU values as follows:

Valuing the inherent worth and dignity of every person;

Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations;

World community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;

Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

New Day Columbia

At the end of June, New Day Columbia (formerly Turning Point Day Center) is joining the Voluntary Action Center's "HUB," which is the new building that will house the overnight shelter (Waypoint, formerly Room at the Inn), the soup kitchen (still Loaves and Fishes), and the day center (us). We are thrilled with this arrangement, as we believe that the combined services will provide the stability many people need to get back on their feet and out of homelessness; and for those who cannot, we will be able to provide a safe, healthy place to be. The VAC will be

offering numerous opportunities for services (a health clinic, a space for case workers to meet with clients, etc.), which we look forward to our clients taking advantage of. But what we know from our 12 years of operating Turning Point, is that it takes a lot of time and effort for people to stabilize and be ready to move forward with their lives. New Day provides that first step by "restoring dignity and providing hope." That is, by helping people get their basic needs met, we help them feel worthy and capable of taking control of their lives. We see ourselves as providing the essential foundation for the rebuilding of lives to begin.

Scholarship Program

Education is highly valued within UUCC (founded by University faculty), and there is concern that the costs of higher education are a barrier to families of modest means. Communities of color are disproportionately affected by this due to historic patterns of discrimination and exclusion. Accordingly, there is considerable congregational interest in supporting scholarship programs for local youth. The FTA program has long supported the Minority Men's Network scholarship program. The local NAACP chapter also has a scholarship program; there may be others. In addition, there is longstanding interest among SAT members in establishing a UUCC scholarship program. The SAT will discuss and decide which program to support for the 2026-27 church year.

UUCC Honduras Ministry

The UUCC Honduras ministry was born in 2008 and brought together a group of UU folks to organize the first service trip to Honduras in 2009. Since 2009, there have been 5 more service trips to the same area in Honduras, the most recent one having been in March 2025. The next service trip is scheduled for 2028.

To prepare for the trips, the group works closely with the partners on the ground to plan the service projects. So far, the projects have always involved building latrines. Latrines are hugely important for disease prevention and environmental protection. The Honduran partners have always come up with additional projects like painting schools and clinic, offering health related services, offering educational opportunities, etc.

The years the group doesn't travel to Honduras, they stay in close contact with the Honduran partners, and when needs arise, the group fundraises to help out. For instance, the group raised funds to finance a means to cross the river for an isolated village where kids weren't going to school and sick people couldn't get medical help when the river was too high for many months at a time every year. The group sends \$400 for basic supplies to the clinic in El Pital every month. Every year the Honduras Ministry puts on a trivia night to raise funds. During the years prior to trips, they hold many smaller fundraisers as well.

In addition to logistical preparation for the trips, the group meets monthly to learn about history and conditions in Honduras. More important than the material help is the strong bonds of friendship and respect that are formed between our two cultures. One could just send money, and then the Honduran partners could take care of the rest themselves. The people who go on the service trips have lent a helping hand, but more profoundly, they have been changed forever to have had such impactful experiences in a poor rural area of Honduras.

UUCC's mission and vision is put into action through the Honduras Ministry.

UUCC Rapid Response Fund

The Rapid Response Fund was created by the Sanctuary and Immigrant Justice Team to more quickly respond to requests UUCC receives for financial assistance from our immigrant neighbors. Rev. Molly Housch Gordon and Rev. Dottie Mathews use this fund to respond to such requests.

While UUCC as a church community is unable to fix a broken immigration system that jeopardizes the lives and welfare of millions of people, together we are able to provide at least some help to immigrant members of our community through the Rapid Response Fund. This fund aligns with values of UUCC in recognizing the dignity, worth, and humanity of all persons. Although not everyone at UUCC has been able to participate in the work of the Sanctuary and Immigrant Justice Team, having the Rapid Response Fund gives everyone an opportunity to be a financial participant in the work of responding to at least some of the urgent needs of our immigrant neighbors, especially during a time that is threatening for immigrants because of hateful rhetoric and cruel and deadly actions by an administration refusing to recognize their humanity.

Voluntary Action Center (FISH Fund)

The mission of VAC is to respond to the immediate basic needs of the individuals within our community - a community that takes radical responsibility for each other. The mission of Unitarian Universalism is to love each other well. I think these two missions blend beautifully together. Specifically, VAC provides aid to people living in Boone County who are at or below 200% of the federal poverty guideline. Services include, Vital ID's, medical/prescription/dental copays, gasoline vouchers, minor car repairs, diapers, period products, hygiene kits, cleaning kits, and more.

The Faith In Service to Humanity (FISH) fund was started by the interfaith community as a way to make it more equitable and efficient to administer funds and aid to those in need. Churches would contribute to the FISH fund and VAC would administer these funds, relieving churches of the need to vet all those who approach them in need. The centralized location and distribution of funds and services has worked remarkably well over the decades. The need, year over year, continues to rise. VAC served over 8,000 people in need in 2025, providing over 20,000 different services. Your help will allow VAC to continue this vital service to our community.

In July, VAC looks forward to opening their newest service, Waypoint Shelter (formerly Room at the Inn) in the new VAC Opportunity Campus. We look forward to serving our unhoused neighbors with the new facility.