

THE COMMUNICATOR

December 2024

From the Pastor's Keyboard...

"Peace on Earth, Goodwill to All"

*"I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old familiar carols play,
And mild and sweet, the words repeat,
Of peace on earth, goodwill to (all)!"*

This poem was written in 1863 by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. The occasion of his writing was certainly not a time of peace, however; he was writing in a time of loss, sorrow, and civil war. He was not at peace, not at all. His second wife, to whom he was completely devoted, had just died in a tragic accident. The country was at war with itself, North vs. South in a battle for the soul of the nation. His son enlisted in the Union army, much to his dismay; and Longfellow had just received word that his son had been wounded. His son would recover, but would be forever scarred by the war. On Christmas Day, 1863, Longfellow penned the words of his famous poem calling for peace in a time of terrible tragedy and loss.

The poem is seven stanzas long and makes quite a story arc. Stanzas two through six dive into a state of despair, wondering if the hope for peace is realistic at all.

*And in despair I bowed my head;
"There is no peace on earth," I said;
"For hate is strong,
And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good-will to (all)!"*

But by the seventh stanza, the author realizes that *"God is not dead, nor doth (They) sleep."* He is encouraged by God's presence on Christmas Day, Christ's birth once more in his midst, that the unjust shall fail, the just shall prevail, and that peace shall be achieved on earth, and goodwill realized for all.

In our world and in our lives, it often seems like all is lost. There are those who, faced with trying times and war torn situations, bow their head, feeling there is no hope for peace. Truly, in our world, hate is strong and mocks the song of peace on earth, good will to all. For those who are hurting, like Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, the Advent and Christmas Seasons can be a very painful time. But God's word of hope is precisely for times such as this; times when worlds are torn asunder. God's word of hope is precisely for times such as those suffered by Longfellow; times of Civil War, times of death, times when all seems lost. God's word of hope prevails.

And even when peace seems so far away, when world leaders use weaponry that is very un-peaceful to demean the disenfranchised and oppress the powerless, when death and illness walk with us on the path of life, the possibility for peace still belongs to each one of us; both communal and personal peace. This possibility for peace is a gift from God and is one of the richest blessings of Christmas.



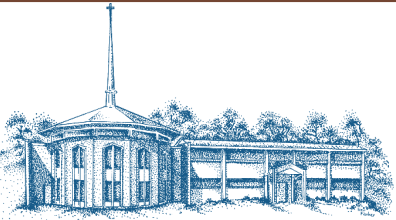
During the Advent Season this year, we will be exploring the theme of peace. The topics are:

- December 1: "Peace on Earth, Goodwill to All: The Hope for Peace"
- December 8: "Accepting the Challenge of Peace: The Path to Peace"
- December 15: "Being a Peaceful Presence: The Joy of Modeling Peace"
- December 22: "Acting Peacefully, Living Justly: Loving Actively, Working for Peace"

I hope you will join us the four Sundays of Advent as we prepare ourselves for Christ's birth in our midst once more; and we hope to see you on Christmas Eve at 7:00 p.m. or 10:00 p.m.

-Pastor Rick

News & Updates



Columbia United Church of Christ

3201 I-70 Drive NW
Columbia, MO 65202

[Rev. Rick Oberle](#)
Pastor

[Rev. Fred Brandenburg](#)
Pastor Emeritus

[Shelly Adams](#)
Student Pastor

[Casey Wood](#)
Music Coordinator

[Steven Jannetti](#)
Organist/Accompanist

[Alexandra Roper](#)
Office Administrator

[Erika Maltsbarger](#)
Director, Little One's Day Out

[Caleb Berry](#)
Custodian

Sunday Schedule:

9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
10:00 a.m. Fellowship Time
10:30 a.m. Worship

Office Hours:

Monday through Friday
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Phone:
(573) 445-7931

Email:
office@columbiaucc.com

Website:
www.columbiaucc.com



SUNDAY MORNING SAFETY

For the safety and security of our church, and the people present, a Church Council member is available in the Gathering Area each Sunday during worship. The Council Steward is available to greet visitors who arrive after worship has begun, assist those who may not feel well, answer questions and give directions to people who need to step out of worship, and monitor the Gathering Area as needed.

The Nurture & Education Ministry Team has been talking to our children and youth about being safe at church, including walking - not running - inside our church building, and staying only in the Gathering Area or the sanctuary during Worship. We ask that parents and guardians help reinforce these safety standards and ensure that our children and youth follow these guidelines.

ADVENT CANTATA/BANQUET

Our annual Advent Cantata/Banquet will be held on Sunday, December 8. The choirs have begun rehearsing the cantata and it sounds amazing! The Chapel Ringers and the Celebration Singers will be featured, along with several soloists. The Advent Banquet is being catered, and the menu sounds very good. Since it is catered, we do need a participant count. Please [CLICK HERE](#) to RSVP for the banquet, or register on the sign up sheet in the rear of the Sanctuary. Please RSVP by December 2 so we can give a final count to the caterer. Talk to [Mary Lorber](#) if you have any questions, or if you have any dietary restrictions we should be aware of. Happy Advent!

VAC CHRISTMAS DRIVE

Thanks to all those sponsoring families for this year's Voluntary Action Center Christmas Drive! CUCC adopted 45 individuals! There is still a need for monetary donations. The deadline for gifts and donations for food is December 8. Please make sure all gifts are returned to church by then! Gifts may be left in the coat room (please leave a path to the nametags and coat racks). Please leave cash or checks made out to VAC in the offering plate or [give through the dropdown menu on our website](#). Your generosity is sincerely appreciated!

REQUEST FOR USED BICYCLES

Got any bikes that you're not using anymore? Even if they need fixing, please considering donating them to "Bikes to the Future." It is a grant supported program with the purpose of fixing up and recycling bikes for those in need (homeless, those out of prison, refugees, etc.) If you have bicycles to donate, drop them off at the Community United Methodist Church garage (behind the church in the back corner of the parking lot) on Monday or Tuesday mornings, between 9 a.m. and 12 p.m. (except holidays.) If you can't drop them off, we can make arrangements to pick them up. Thanks again for spreading the word and helping us repurpose bikes and get them to those in need! If you have any questions, contact [Anne Heine](#).



Sunday Volunteer Schedule for December

Date	Greeter	Usher	Worship Leader	Tech Booth
12/01	Jolene Kirchhoff	Phillip Neale Christine Staelens	Llona Weiss	Brent Marcks Ted Dachroeden
12/08	Jessica Lucas	Jim Loveless John Muench	Kennedy Lucas	Josh Muench Lorry Dreier
12/15	John Muench	Keith Birkes	Jim Loveless	Doug Privitt Judi Privitt
12/22	Donna Marsh	Llona Weiss Pat Forward	Tricia Soncasie	Carissa Graves John Graves
12/24 7:00 p.m.		Muench Family	Judi Privitt	Doug Privitt
12/24 10:00 p.m.				Brent Marcks
12/29		Audrey Lasley Mary Lorber	Mahree Skala	

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP AT COLUMBIA UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

CUCC will feature two Christmas Eve worship services this year; one at 7:00 p.m. and another at 10:00 p.m. Both services will feature special music, lessons and carols, communion, and “Silent Night” sung by candlelight. We hope to see the whole CUCC family on Christmas Eve! Our offering for Christmas Eve will be donated to the [Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture](#), one of our Mission Partners here in Columbia, in recognition of our “Team Earth” initiative this year. On December 29, Christmas Sunday, we will have our traditional Christmas Carol Hymn Sing. We hope you will join us for these special Holy Days in December!

COLUMBIA UCC CHURCH COUNCIL

Moderator:	Kurt Heine	heinekurt@gmail.com
Vice Moderator:	Jerry Kiesling	rollzierp50@gmail.com
Secretary:	Alethea Tennill	atennill108@gmail.com
Treasurer:	Deborah Long Birkes	dlong@elon.edu
Recording Treasurer:	Christine Staelens	tigersfour@gmail.com
Building & Grounds:	Ted Dachroeden	gpadoc4gd@gmail.com
Fellowship & Hospitality:	Mary Lorber-Solt	eldercow@gmail.com
Finance & Stewardship:	Shelly Adams	shellyraeadams@gmail.com
Inclusion & Affirmation:	Tricia Price	tricialprice@gmail.com
Little One’s Day Out:	Kristin Veteto	kristinnoelveteto@gmail.com
Membership & Care:	Judi Privitt	judiprivitt811@gmail.com
Nurture & Education:	Lena Muench	cfg323@yahoo.com
Outreach & Advocacy:	Mark Duncan	markduncan2@mchsi.com
Worship & Music:	Jedd Schneider	elusive4thtenor@icloud.com
Pastor:	Rev. Rick Oberle	rick@columbiaucc.com



December Birthdays

Kelly Smith - 12/02	Josie Arms - 12/03	Diane Oerly - 12/03
Helen Schultz - 12/04	Elaine Trout - 12/04	Brad Marcks - 12/07
Molly Baker - 12/09	Deb Bernhardt - 12/09	Mick Crowley - 12/09
Ben Crenshaw - 12/10	Grace Devenney - 12/10	Alethea Tennill - 12/10
Josh Muench - 12/11	Kristin Veteto - 12/11	Ramona Dachroeden - 12/12
Scott Webster - 12/12	Scott Rapp - 12/14	Lynne Tsapelas - 12/14
Ira Williams - 12/15	Axel Devenney - 12/16	Lindsey Oberle - 12/16
Kelly Lavelly - 12/16	Paula Wilson - 12/16	August Williams - 12/23
Tiffany Green - 12/26	Darren Lasley - 12/26	Joan Bentlage - 12/28
Chloe Eveler - 12/28	Tom Solt - 12/30	Jean Walker - 12/30

Moderator's Moment

I hope that everyone has an opportunity to pop some corn, grab some holiday snacks and sit back with some Holiday classics with special friends and family. These are my top recommendations for December movie night! Merry Christmas everyone.

Moderator's top ten Christmas movies:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| ✝ It's A Wonderful Life (1946) | ✝ A Christmas Story (1983) |
| ✝ Elf (2003) | ✝ Family Stone (2005) |
| ✝ Home Alone (1990) | ✝ Fred Klaus (2007) |
| ✝ Rudolph, The Red-nosed Reindeer (1964) | ✝ Miracle on 34th Street (1947) |
| ✝ The Santa Clause (1994) | ✝ Christmas Chronicles (2018) |

Honorable mention: Holiday in Handcuffs (2007) because the women in my life love Hallmark movies!

Honorable mention 2: Die Hard (1988) Yes it is a Christmas movie!

Respectfully Submitted,
Kurt Heine, Moderator



CUCC Church Council

The October meeting was called to order at 6:42 p.m. Pastor Rick opened with a prayer. Present: Kurt Heine, Jerry Kiesling, Christine Staelens, Ted Dachroeden, Tricia Price, Judi Privitt, Lena Muench via zoom, Mark Duncan, Rick Oberle, and Alethea Tennill. Mark Duncan made a motion to approve the agenda with a second from Tricia Price. The motion passed. Lena Muench made a motion to approve the minutes with a second from Judi Privitt. The motion passed.

Lena Muench discussed the book *A Real Good Church* by Rev. Molly Phinney. Honesty is so important for our kids. We love that our church is open and affirming. There were new ideas discussed around Sunday School teachers, all church retreats, and how different groups in the church can interact most effectively. Mark Duncan will discuss Chapters 5 and 6 next month.

Unfinished Business:

- ✦ Finance and Stewardship Ministry Team Chair: We are still in need of a chair for this Team. Kurt Heine will work on a presentation for the chair position.
- ✦ New light for the sign at the front of church: Ted will talk to Fred Malicoat about cost and getting the work done.
- ✦ Vision Team Plans: We have a list of items that have been done this year and we need 3 goals for each team by Oct 21 so it can be printed for Congregational Meeting on October 27.
- ✦ Forensic Financial Review: Christine, Sue Ann, Deborah, and Alexandra will meet to work on this issue.

New Business:

- ✦ Receipt Deadline: The Fellowship Committee introduced a motion that reimbursements receipts and requests must be turned in within 45 days from date of purchase. This will be amended in the Financial Policies and Procedure Policy of September 2023. Motion passed.
- ✦ 2023 financial review is done and report is attached.
- ✦ Raising Solutions bid is signed and the concrete work will be done October 29.
- ✦ Safe Church response Team and Safe Church Policy: a committee will be appointed to be responsible for any abusive claims to include one female and one male committee members. There was some discussion on who to ask to be on the committee. Jerry Kiesling made the motion, Judi Privitt seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Pastor's Report was presented.

Financial Report was presented.

Ministry Reports:

- ✦ Building & Grounds: Ted repaired LODO fencing, it needed a new gate and locks. Honeysuckle is all cleared. Needs to work on low hanging branches.
- ✦ Fellowship & Hospitality: December 8 will be the Advent Banquet. Need willing hands of people not involved in Bells or Choir.
- ✦ Finance & Stewardship: Still Vacant. Will work on planned giving for the Endowment Fund.
- ✦ Inclusion & Affirmation: Painted the outdoor Nativity scene. We may need a new set in the next few years.
- ✦ LODO: See attached report.
- ✦ Membership & Care: See attached report.
- ✦ Nurture & Education: Contacting people from VBS that do not belong to CUCC.
- ✦ Outreach & Advocacy: The committee has picked Opportunity Campus for their special mission project.
- ✦ Worship & Music: See attached report.

Pastor Rick closed us in prayer. Motion to adjourn by Tricia Price, second by Judi Privitt. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Alethea Tennill, Secretary



Finance & Stewardship Ministry Team

As the Advent season approaches, it's a good time to reflect on our personal blessings and the church blessings that we share with others locally and globally.

So many in our church give of their time and talents and financial support. The musical talent that is shared in our church services, the delicious meals we get to share with each other, Sunday School for our youth and the youth programs where they learn the meaning of giving their time to worthy causes, and members volunteering at the Food Bank, just to name a few. CUCC shines when it comes to sharing blessings. Do you have blessings you want to share?

There are different ways to share a financial blessing with the church. If you haven't taken your required IRA distribution (RMD), disbursing the distribution directly to church could positively affect your tax position, but be sure to check with your financial advisor. You can give towards something that is important to you such as the building fund, the music program, scholarships and the transportation fund. You can help the church meet the Joyful Giving goal.

It's exciting to announce that for the first time, COMO Gives is available for online donations to LODO. The website is: <https://www.comogives.com> and will be available from December 1 to December 31, 2024. Check it out. What a great way to share our financial blessings!

Blessings to all during the Advent season and all year round.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sue Ann Schaefer



Financial Update

	Actual	Budget	Over/ (Under)
October Income	\$22,863.34	32,575.00	(-\$9,711.66)
October Expenses	\$31,977.46	\$32,576.35	(-\$598.89)
YTD Income	\$291,266.62	\$298,550.00	(-\$7,283.38)
YTD Expenses	\$342,546.58	\$323,937.55	\$18,609.03
Surplus/(Deficit)	(-\$51,279.96)	(-\$25,387.55)	(-\$25,892.41)
October Joyful Giving	\$21,738.34	\$31,500.00	(-\$9,761.66)
YTD Joyful Giving	\$278,746.50	\$287,000.00	(-\$8,253.50)

Worship Attendance

Date	Attendance
10/06	93
10/13	90
10/20	77
10/27	99

CUCC ONLINE GIVING

You can now give online to Columbia United Church of Christ through our online giving partner, Kindrid!

There are several ways to make a one time or recurring gift through Kindrid:

1. Click on this link (or type into your web browser): <https://www.kindridgiving.com/app/giving/cucc>
2. Access the Kindrid giving site through our CUCC website: www.columbiaucc.com and click on the "Donate to CUCC" button.
3. Text "GIVE" to 573-240-4041 and follow the prompts to set up your one time or recurring gift.

Inclusion and Affirmation Ministry Team

“The Little Drummer Boy” song has been a favorite Christmas piece for decades. It beautifully outlines that Jesus isn’t interested in our material gifts. He delights when we give of ourselves in praise, thanksgiving and care of one another.

In the song, the little drummer tells baby Jesus, “I’m a poor boy, too.” Yet, that boy gave what he had, his time and talents, to the Christ child, by playing his drum. What a glorious example for Christians to follow! Instead of spending incredible amounts of money on shiny trinkets for one another this season, let’s share of ourselves instead.

What are some of your talents that could be a gift to another? Let’s investigate: Perhaps you like to bake.

- 1) Make a casserole for an elderly neighbor.
- 2) Surprise your Sunday School class with homemade treats.
- 3) Invite someone to your home for dinner that hasn’t been there before.

Perhaps you enjoy outdoor activities.

- 1) Offer to shovel a neighbor’s sideway/driveway.
- 2) Ask if you can help repair someone’s fence that looks in need of support or
- 3) Offer to help with a neighbor’s outside holiday decorations.

Perhaps you are a gifted writer.

- 1) Share an uplifting poem to your friends/family on Facebook or via e-mail.
- 2) Send a note of encouragement and comfort to someone who has lost a loved one this past year.
- 3) Write a little Christmas story for a niece or nephew and include them in the story.

Perhaps you are a crafty individual.

- 1) Make a winter bird house for a bird lover’s home.
- 2) Sew or knit a winter scarf for someone.
- 3) Draw or paint a gift that will put a smile on a friend’s face.

Create and share a dance routine with your children; join the choir when they sing at a nursing home; volunteer literally anywhere! The opportunities to share of ourselves are endless both during the holiday season and ALL year through!

“You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.”
Kahlil Gibran

CUCC OPEN AND AFFIRMING/INCLUSION COVENANT

Columbia United Church of Christ celebrates God’s boundless and unconditional love by intentionally welcoming and affirming all God’s children.

- * No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey;
- * No matter where you are on your faith journey;
- * No matter your sexual orientation, gender expression or identity;
- * No matter your race, culture, ethnicity, nationality or politics;
- * No matter your age, ability, health, relationship status or family structure;
- * No matter your social, economic, educational, legal or life circumstances;
- * You are welcome here!



Called by Jesus to be an Open and Affirming, inclusive faith community, Columbia United Church of Christ commits to welcoming everyone into the full life of our congregation. Our paths and voices may differ, but we journey in faith together.

LODO Ministry Team

November was a time of thankfulness at LODO. Our annual Thanksgiving Feast was held on November 14. Our dinner included 120 adults and children. We enjoyed an amazing meal and fellowship amongst families and staff. Many thanks to our staff and volunteers for providing their time for clean-up during this event.

Student Conferences were held between November 18 and 26 providing important updates to families on student growth and development.

LODO will celebrate the joy of Jesus' birth throughout the month of December and at our annual Christmas Program on Thursday December 19. If you are in the LODO hallway during December you are likely to hear our students singing of the joys of Christmas.

LODO families and staff also sponsored two VAC Holiday Program families (six individuals) in conjunction with Columbia United Church of Christ.

In Love and Laughter,
Erika Maltsbarger



IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

Thursday, December 19 (6:30 p.m.)

LODO Christmas Program in the Sanctuary (Cookie Reception in the Fellowship Hall)

Friday, December 20

LODO Pajama Day

Monday, December 23 - Friday, January 3

LODO Closed for Christmas Break (School Resumes on Monday, January 6)

LODO PRESCHOOL FEATURED IN COMO GIVES CAMPAIGN!

For the first time ever, CUCC is participating in the popular "COMO Gives" local Holiday Campaign! Our Little One's Day Out Preschool Ministry will be a featured recipient of **COMO Gives** this year. Tell your friends to visit www.comogives.com and search "preschools" - we are the first one to pop up! We are raising money for new flooring, classroom items, and playground equipment; and we are giving away 10% of funds received. Check us out on **COMO Gives** starting December 1!



Women's Fellowship

Thanks to everyone who has purchased jams, jellies, honey and sweet breads from Women's Fellowship. It's never too late to shop for last minute Christmas goodies!

We have two beautiful Christmas craft items that we are selling raffle tickets for - \$1 per ticket or 6 for \$5. The winners will be drawn at the Christmas Banquet on December 8. So if you win, you will be able to enjoy your item this Christmas Season (and you need not be present to win).

Our next monthly meeting will be held Thursday, December 12, 9:30 a.m. in the gathering area. All ladies are invited to join us for good food, good fellowship and a good time. This month's topic is Water Justice; our program will be led by Shelly Adams. And for fun, we will be having a white elephant Christmas gift exchange. Please bring a wrapped item (\$5 or less in value) for this event, and be prepared to go home with something you didn't know that you needed.

Nurture & Education Ministry Team

We sent **Blessing Boxes** to approximately 26 college and trade school students in our church family, and have received numerous messages of appreciation. Please be sure to keep all of our students in your prayers as they get ready for finals this semester!

Christmas Program Practices have already started, and will continue on **December 1, December 8, and December 15** from 9:30 a.m.-10:00 a.m. Don't worry if you missed the first practice, or can't make it to all of them (but we'd love if you could come as much as possible!) Still be sure to come to Sunday School at 9:00 a.m.! The program will be presented by all of our Sunday School kiddos and youth (ages 3-12th grade). **Our kiddos and youth will present their Christmas Program on Sunday, December 15 during worship.**

Our Youth Group (grades 6-12) will be making treats for Cookies by the Pound on Saturday, December 7 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Josh & Lena Muench's house. We have affectionately dubbed this "Sugarpalooza!" **Please RSVP by December 5** - we want to be sure to have plenty of donuts! [CLICK HERE](#) to RSVP!

Cookies by the Pound, our festive fundraiser, will be on Sunday, **December 8**. We need both bakers and buyers! Please bring your homemade treats (cookies, candies, etc.) to The Gathering Area by 8:30 a.m. We will sell all treats "by the pound," and funds raised will benefit Nurture/Education Ministry Team projects. Any form of payment- cash, check, Kindrid, or Venmo is welcome!



SUNDAY MORNING

Adult Bible Study: Sundays, 9:00-10:00 a.m. (upstairs in Education Wing, last room on the left.)

Sunday School: Sundays, 9:00-10:00 a.m., ages 3-12th grade. PreK-2nd Grade and 3rd -5th Grade classes are upstairs in the Education Wing, 6th -12th Grade are downstairs in Youth Lounge. We'll have breakfast every Sunday morning- one less thing to get ready in the morning before heading to church!

We REALLY need your help. We need help filling openings for Sunday morning class leaders and greeters/floaters. We've made things easy-peasy - please consider helping! [CLICK HERE](#) to sign up!

I am always happy to field ANY questions or ideas that you may have! My cell is 573-881-2571.

May we all find joy in the busyness of this time of year, celebrating the birth of Jesus!

With Love,
Lena Muench
Nurture & Education
Ministry Team Chair



POINSETTIAS IN MEMORY/HONOR OF LOVED ONES

If you wish to designate one of our Christmas poinsettias in honor or memory of a loved one, use the envelopes enclosed in the Sunday bulletins or [contact Alexandra](#) in the church office. Poinsettias are \$10 each. Please designate who you are recognizing and if it is "in honor" or "in memory" of your loved ones. Please turn in your designations by December 8; poinsettias will be in the Sanctuary for the Cantata. They may be picked up after the 10:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service, or after worship on December 29.

Membership & Care Ministry Team

Highlights from our November Membership and Care Ministry Team meeting

- ✦ A Young Adults gathering was held at Privitt's on Oct. 13, with six young adults attending. Several others expressed an interest. There was a gathering on Nov 17 at Oberle's house. The next Young Adult gathering will be on December 7 at Lena Muench's house.
- ✦ The 'Inactive Member' (people who we haven't seen in the last year) List was discussed. We will continue to work on updating it.
- ✦ Membership and Care Ministry Team recommended to Council for Image 360 to remove the church bus old 'wrap' and apply the new one. Image 360 will submit a design to Ministry and Care Ministry Team for approval. **Many thanks to the anonymous church member who generously donated the money for this project!**
- ✦ CARE Ministry Teams continue to thrive. Many thanks to CUCC members who have generously provided meals for church members during times of need. This is the church in action!

Our next meeting will be January 13 at 5 p.m. Come and join us!

Respectfully Submitted,
Judi Privitt
Membership & Care
Ministry Team Chair



Outreach & Advocacy Ministry Team



Thank you to Melba Shaffer and Mahree Skala who continue to volunteer in the library at Alpha Hart Lewis Elementary School (AHL) on Tuesdays and Fridays. Volunteers are so appreciated by staff and students. Llona participated in AHL's AVID Academy on October 18 and spent time in the Kindergarten classrooms observing the student work and hearing about what they wanted to be when they grow up (fire fighter, police, mom, ninja, dad, nurse, and several who wanted to be a princess!)

Pastor Rick, Helen Schultz, and Llona Weiss participated in handing out candy and goodies at AHL's Trunk or Treat on October 30. Thank you to Fellowship and Hospitality for packing the goodie bags. The students appeared to have so much fun, and Pastor Rick posted some photos on Facebook.

The date for AHL 5th graders' trip to BizTown in Chesterfield (St. Louis) was changed to Wednesday January 15, 2025. [CLICK HERE](#) if you want to volunteer to be a chaperone for this trip; several folks from CUCC are signed up already. BizTown is scheduled from 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

December 17-19 at 2:15 p.m., are party days for the different grades at AHL and CUCC folks are welcome to volunteer to help with activities. Thank you CUCC for your continuous support!

Respectfully Submitted,
Llona Weiss
Liaison for CUCC to AHL



The food bank shift for December has been cancelled due to scheduling conflicts with the holiday week. The next CUCC Food Bank shift will be at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 28. Please mark your calendars and plan to come! A sign up link will be in the January issue of The Communicator. We hope to see you all there. If you have any questions, please contact [Mahree Skala](#).

Outreach & Advocacy Ministry Team



The November 18 meal at Loaves and Fishes consisted of spaghetti (prepared by Mary Lorber & Judi Privitt), lettuce salad (provided by Patty Beeson), bread, and a variety of cookies. Jessica Jenks made and provided the PB&J's. Servers for the evening were Mary Lorber, Debby (Mary's sister), Judi Privitt, Patty Beeson, and Jo Ellen Grace. Tom Solt took care of the dishwasher duties. We served approximately 105 servings. Thank you to everyone! Our next date to serve will be December 16. Please let [Audrey Lasley](#) know if you have an interest in helping.

THANK YOU!



Thank you for your recent generous gift of \$995. Your kindness is already at work to lift mobility impaired people up out of the dirt and on their way to a better life. Your generosity provides Mobility Cart recipients the means to experience a renewed sense of dignity, purpose, and hope. Thank you!

Alan Wessler, Board Chairman of Mobility Worldwide

We at Ronald McDonald House Charities of Mid-Missouri are so grateful to you this very special year as we have opened both a new Ronald McDonald House and Ronald McDonald Family Room! As families face unimaginable medical circumstances with their children, your support makes it possible for them to be by each other's side at the most critical of times. Thank you for providing families - who have journeyed miles for their children's medical care - a beacon of hope at the mid-Missouri Ronald McDonald House.



Your recent gift of \$500.00 directly supports the daily needs of our Ronald McDonald House guest families and visitors at the Ronald McDonald Family Room. As a calm and comfortable respite, we provide parents and families with a place to rest, receive nourishment and the compassionate care they need to face the next day's challenges - all at no cost to them.

Our focus is always on our families. Your support directly contributes to the success and strength of our collective efforts to serve as many families as possible with ill children in mid-Missouri.

With appreciation,

Terri Gray, Executive Director of Ronald McDonald House Charities of Mid-Missouri

Thank you for your recent gift of \$400.00 to go toward distributing food to individuals who need it most in our 32-county service area. As the holidays are well upon us, we remember families who are facing particularly difficult circumstances this time of year. However, it is because of generous supporters like you that we are able to help neighbors who are struggling to fill their tables this season and beyond.

Thank you for entrusting The Food Bank with your charitable donation. We will use your gift efficiently and effectively to provide vital nutrition to 100,000 neighbors per month.



Gratefully,

Lindsay Young Lopez, President and CEO of The Food Bank Market

Worship & Music Ministry Team

Busy times and excitement abound as the Worship & Music team at CUCC move headlong into Advent! The joyous Hanging of the Greens occurs Saturday, November 30. Children will be invited to do their own decorating by placing ornaments on the chancel tree during worship on December 1. Our Taizé worship experience led by Steven Jannetti continues Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m. on December 4, 11, and 18. Don't miss the Advent Cantata, presented by the Celebration Singers and Chapel Ringers on December 8.

As befits CUCC tradition, we will bring joy to our local shut-in folks with Christmas caroling on December 15 beginning at 4:00 p.m. Look for the gathering location to be announced in the worship bulletin in the coming weeks. We will indulge in some Christmas cheer afterward at Doug & Judi Privitt's house.

Remember the Worship & Music congregational needs survey from this past summer? Well, the results are in and your voice has been heard loud and clear! Amongst the variety of things you'd like to see incorporated at CUCC:

- ✦ Contemporary worship music
- ✦ Dance
- ✦ Diverse instrumental music – styles & ensembles
- ✦ Drama
- ✦ Increased congregational participation
- ✦ Percussion
- ✦ Visual & plastic arts

Love them? Great! Look for some of these suggestions to find their way into worship in the coming months. Missing something? This is your worship experience, and I am always eager to know what moves you. Let's keep the conversation going on how to elevate and enhance CUCC worship for everyone.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jedd Schneider



As members of the CUCC music community, we are excitedly preparing musical offerings for the month of December. On December 8, we will be preparing our Advent Cantata. This is an opportunity to explore themes of preparing in anticipation for the coming of Christ. We have an exciting and varied repertoire that allows both singers and audience members to meditate on these themes. Please join us at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 4, for a final rehearsal. All members are welcome, and no long-term commitment is required. Choral Cantatas are a long-held tradition in religious music. Frequently it is one major work, prepared by the same composer. Famously, Johann Sebastian Bach, as music director of his church, would compose a brand new cantata weekly, ranging from 15 minutes to an hour. These pieces would feature a mixture of choral movements, instrumental movements, and soloists.

Our cantata is not one composition from a single composer, but a collection of shorter pieces united by theme. Furthermore, we will be presenting music throughout the month of December, as well as services on the evening of Christmas Eve.

Respectfully Submitted,
Casey Wood



WELCOME TO QUORUS!

Columbia United Church of Christ is pleased to be in partnership with **Quorus, the LGBTQIAA Choral ensemble of Columbia!**

Quorus will be using our facility for rehearsals in the coming months, and we will have an opportunity to work with them for upcoming performances. We hope to have a Quorus fundraiser here next spring, as well.

Quorus would love to have CUCC members join their choir! To learn more about Quorus, [CLICK HERE](#).

If you are interested in joining them or talking to Audra Sergal, their director and coordinator, [CLICK HERE](#).



Creation Justice

Greetings from Team Earth!

Thank you all for your support and participation in our Team Earth Creation Justice Lunch & Learns. In October, we learned about recycling. In November, we talked about energy efficiency and conservation. Each forum had more than 30 people in attendance! Our next forum will be held together with the chili cook-off, so plan to come and sample great chili and learn something, too! This month we are sharing with you what a group of Team Earthers learned on tours of the Columbia landfill and recycling center. And we are also sharing some tips on how to reduce waste during the holidays.

What a Waste!

Have you ever wondered just what happens to the trash and recycling containers that get whisked off at the curb every week? Well, 12 CUCC members traveled to the City of Columbia landfill and recycling center on November 13 as part of Team Earth's learning and discernment process - and learned all about what happens to what we discard. Adam White, the Columbia Landfill Superintendent, gave us a short presentation and led us on tours of the landfill and recycling center.

The Columbia Sanitary Landfill opened in 1986 with the actual landfill footprint being approximately 107 acres (with cows as neighbors!). The landfill serves 5 to 7 counties, and presently has 3 years of life storage area remaining, with room for future expansion into 120 acres. The City keeps records for landfill activities, to address issues like asbestos and to have the ability to pinpoint locations of trash within the landfill (for example, for evidence in criminal cases). The landfill receives around 1,000 tons of trash per day. Lithium ion batteries are becoming one of their concerns, because they have the ability to cause fires. The Landfill has a leachate (landfill "juice") collection system with a clay liner in the bottom, then a plastic HDPE liner, and a drainage river rock layer, which all slope through a central drainage system, where liquid is pumped out and sent to two treatment ponds where it is aerated and clarified, and then discharged to the sewer system. Methane gas generated by the landfill is pulled to the Energy Center on the property and used as a renewable energy with an output of 4 megawatts/hour. There is also a composting location on site for the public. We toured the Material Recovery Facility (MRF) recycling facility with Tom as our guide. Columbia has two recycling streams: paper and cardboard, and tin cans/aluminum/plastic/glass. Items are separated on conveyor belts with some items being separated by hand. Items are compressed into bales, stored on site, and sold to the highest bidder. Most of their employees work four 10-hour days, with equipment maintenance being performed on Fridays. We noticed the MRF has had over 1,500 days with no accidents, and a starting employee makes around \$16.40/hour.

How Wasteful are the Holidays?

Did you know that Americans generate an additional 2.9 billion pounds of garbage every week during the holiday season compared to the rest of the year? Wow! 2.3 million pounds of wrapping paper goes to landfills. In the US, we mail 1.3 billion holiday cards each year, which is the equivalent amount of carbon emissions as charging 22 billion smartphones or 22,000 homes' energy use for a year. And collectively, our holiday lights consume enough energy to power 400,000 homes for a year (Figures in this paragraph are courtesy of Brightly.)

So what can we do? We can reuse gift wrap - or use newspapers, maps and other "upcycled" paper. Or how about reusable cloth wrapping paper, or reusable tote bags? To curb food waste, why not have a stack of reusable containers at the ready so your holiday guests can take some of their favorite holiday leftovers home with them? As for greeting cards, there are many options for e-cards that can minimize the physical waste - and the climate impacts from transportation and delivery - that go along with mailed cards. For holiday lighting, consider LED holiday lights that use 80% less energy than traditional lights. (You know, the ones you've been using since before LED lights were even a thing.)

This Christmas season, as we celebrate the gift of family and friends, may we also celebrate the God-given gifts of creation that support and sustain us. And may your holidays be filled with love, joy, and light. LED light, of course.

Respectfully Submitted,
Shelly Adams



Scouting America

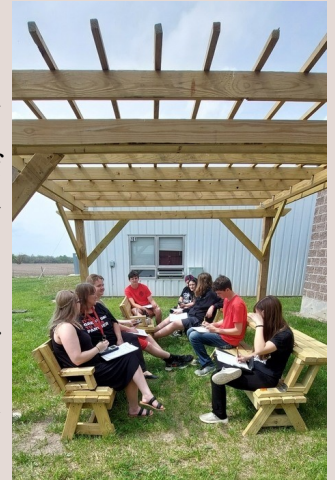


On October 26, Troop 4475 celebrated their second Eagle Scout – Samantha Simkins, during a special Eagle Court of Honor. For her Eagle project, Sammie built convertible benches and a gazebo for Prairie Home RV School’s outdoor classroom.

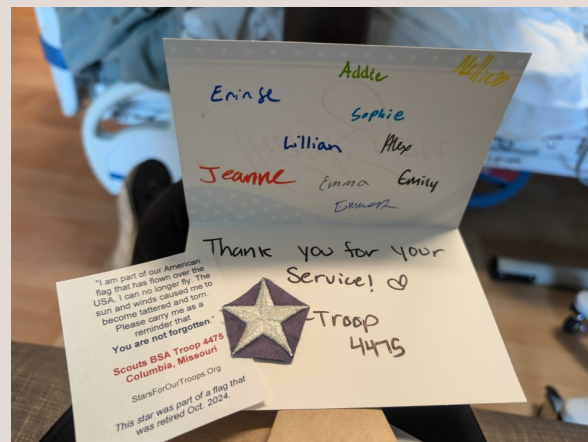
Samantha advanced to Eagle Scout rank at her Board of Review on May 28, 2024. Congratulations, Sammie!

November has been a busy month for Scouts with campouts, service projects, and working on merit badges. Troops 4475 and 708 camped November 10-12 at Lake of the Ozark Scout Reservation for a pioneering merit badge and Iron Chef campout. The Scouts practiced five different knots and several lashings to build a camp project.

For Saturday’s dinner, all the patrols from both troops competed against each other in a cooking competition where baby spinach was the secret ingredient. Congratulations to the Sea Turtle patrol from 4475 on winning with their chicken alfredo dish. The judges felt it was as tasty as any restaurant meal.



Scouts spent part of several meetings signing cards, preparing stars from flags the troops retired at their October campout, and stuffing envelopes to create special Thank You cards. On November 15, Scouts and leaders handed out an estimated 582 cards to veterans at the Harry S. Truman VA Hospital.



International Missions

CUCC IS WORKING IN ZIMBABWE

The Zimbabwe School of the United Congregational Church in Southern Africa (UCCSA) plays a pivotal role in the country's educational landscape. With a commitment to holistic development, the schools of the UCCSA Zimbabwe Synod provide quality education rooted in Christian values. These schools often serve underprivileged communities, striving to bridge educational disparities. The Zimbabwe Synod's schools are known for their emphasis on inclusivity, striving to create an environment where diversity is celebrated and differences are respected. Through a blend of academic excellence and spiritual guidance, these institutions contribute to the intellectual and moral growth of Zimbabwe's youth.

Through **Global Ministries**, CUCC is a partner in mission with The United Congregational Church In Southern Africa (UCCSA) and, through them, we are actively working with many families in Zimbabwe. This month, please keep Global Ministries, UCCSA, and the people of Zimbabwe in your prayers!



CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS FROM GLOBAL MINISTRIES

Want to give something different this year, to support our brothers and sisters in the international community? Global Ministries has several gift options available. To purchase any of these items, please call 317-713-2555 or email gifts@dom.disciples.org.

Tote Baskets from the Democratic Republic of Congo

The Mama Jeanne Center is a place of consolation, solidarity, support, and training, for women seeking to become self-sufficient. These woven baskets were bought from the Mama Jeanne Center. Formed out of recycled plastic packaging strips, the baskets are environmentally friendly and create something beautiful from materials that might otherwise be placed in the trash. Attached to each basket, a card reads, *By touching this basket, you are symbolically touching the hand of a sister who has proven to not be a victim but a resilient survivor!* These totes are available in many colors in large, medium, and small sizes. They cost \$20.00 plus shipping.



Handmade Bags from the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Receive a beautiful, handmade Congolese tote, while supporting microcredit programs that empower women and families around the world. Each tote is uniquely created and sewn by a woman in the Congo using vibrant Congolese fabric, most of which includes the authentic Community of Disciples of Christ in Congo fabric and logo. Bags are available in two sizes for \$30.00 or \$40.00 plus shipping.

Beaded dresses and printed dresses

These beautiful dresses feature intricate beadwork and vibrant material. Each dress costs \$50.00 plus \$15.00 for shipping.



Hand Quilted Placemats

These beautiful, "Placemats for Mission" are made by Mrs. Sue Johnson, a former Global Ministries Mission Co-Worker. Sue and Dr. Gene Johnson served as Global Ministries mission personnel in the Democratic Republic of Congo 1957-1971, and continue to stay close to Global Ministries and the life-giving work of Congolese partners. Each set comes in a pack of four and sells for \$28.00 plus shipping.



Taizé Prayer

WEDNESDAYS AT 5:30 P.M.
NOVEMBER 13 - DECEMBER 18
COLUMBIA UCC | 3201 I-70 DR NW
COLUMBIAUCC.COM

JOIN US FOR HALF AN HOUR EACH WEDNESDAY EVENING THIS ADVENT SEASON, TO GATHER IN A RELAXING SERVICE OF PRAYER, SONG, AND CONTEMPLATION BY CANDLELIGHT.

TAIZÉ IS A HISTORIC FRENCH STYLE OF MEDITATIVE PRAYER THAT CALLS US TO DWELL DEEPLY ON CHRIST'S PRESENCE AROUND AND WITHIN US.



On the Church Calendar in December

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1 9:00 a.m. - Sunday School 10:00 a.m. - Fellowship 10:30 a.m. - Worship 12:00 p.m. - Team Earth</p>	<p>2 7:00 p.m. - Scouts</p>	<p>3 10:00 a.m. - Quilters 10:30 a.m. - Staff Meeting</p>	<p>4 5:30 p.m. - Taizé Service 6:00 p.m. - Chapel Ringers 7:00 p.m. - Celebration Singers</p>	<p>5 5:30 p.m. - LODDO Ministry Team 6:30 p.m. - Troop 4475</p>	<p>6 9:30 a.m. - Church Women United</p>	<p>7 Fellowship Hall booked</p>
<p>8- Cantata/Banquet 9:00 a.m. - Cookies by the Pound 9:00 a.m. - Sunday School 10:00 a.m. - Fellowship 10:30 a.m. - Worship 12:00 p.m. - Advent Banquet</p>	<p>9 1:30 p.m. - Outreach & Advocacy Ministry Team 7:00 p.m. - Scouts</p>	<p>10 10:00 a.m. - Quilters 10:30 a.m. - Staff Meeting 6:30 p.m. - Troop 708</p>	<p>11 5:30 p.m. - Taizé Service 6:00 p.m. - Chapel Ringers 7:00 p.m. - Celebration Singers</p>	<p>12 9:30 a.m. - Women's Fellowship</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14 4:00 p.m. - Pastor Rick's Open House</p>
<p>15- 7:30 a.m. - Men's Fellowship 9:00 a.m. - Sunday School 10:00 a.m. - Fellowship 10:30 a.m. - Worship 4:00 p.m. - Carolling</p>	<p>16 7:00 p.m. - Scouts</p>	<p>17 10:00 a.m. - Quilters 10:30 a.m. - Staff Meeting 6:30 p.m. - Council Meeting</p>	<p>18 5:30 p.m. - Taizé Service 6:00 p.m. - Chapel Ringers 7:00 p.m. - Celebration Singers</p>	<p>19 6:30 p.m. - LODDO Christmas Program</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>22 9:00 a.m. - Sunday School 10:00 a.m. - Fellowship 10:30 a.m. - Worship</p>	<p>23 LODO goes on Winter Break- returns January 6</p>	<p>24 Christmas Eve 10:00 a.m. - Quilters 7:00 p.m. - Worship 10:00 p.m. - Worship</p>	<p>25 CHRISTMAS DAY OFFICE CLOSED</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29 9:00 a.m. - Sunday School 10:00 a.m. - Fellowship 10:30 a.m. - Worship</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31 New Year's Eve</p>				

The Communicator

Columbia United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation - ONA #1575
3201 I-70 Dr. NW
Columbia, MO 65202-3296
573-445-7931



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ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

The Communicator is a publication of Columbia United Church of Christ. The stated purpose is to communicate with the congregation and our friends concerning the organizations and events of the church. It is published once each month. The deadline for articles is the 20th of each month.



Columbia United Church of Christ is home to four Scouting America Units, chartered through our congregation:

Cub Scout Pack 5183
(Kindergarten through fifth grade)
Scouting America Troop 4475
(Girls Troop)
Scouting America Troop 708
(Boys Troop)
Venture Crew 5334 (older youth)



Interested in Church Membership?

If you are interested in joining, please contact **Rev. Rick Oberle**.
rick@columbiaucc.com

**Become
Part of
Our
Church
Family**

**Columbia
United Church
of Christ is a proud
sponsor and
supporter of Quorus!**



Columbia United Church of Christ Open and Affirming/Inclusion Covenant

Columbia United Church of Christ celebrates God's boundless and unconditional love by intentionally welcoming and affirming all God's children.

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey;
No matter where you are on your faith journey;
No matter your sexual orientation, gender expression or identity;
No matter your race, culture, ethnicity, nationality or politics;
No matter your age, ability, health, relationship status or family structure;
No matter your social, economic, educational, legal or life circumstances;
You are welcome here!

Called by Jesus to be an Open and Affirming, inclusive faith community, Columbia United Church of Christ commits to welcoming everyone into the full life of our congregation. Our paths and voices may differ, but we journey in faith together.

LODO PLAYGROUND RESPECT

Please help us keep our playground safe for all children by following these guidelines:

- ◆ The CUCC playground is designed for, and should be used by, **only children ages 8 and younger**.
- ◆ Adult supervision is required while children are on the playground.
- ◆ Mulch must stay on the ground. When children dig up mulch it creates holes that are tripping hazards. Children should only dig in the sandbox.
- ◆ Sand should stay in the sandbox. Please do not allow sand to be carried and dumped in the playhouse or on play structures.
- ◆ Use playground equipment in the manner it is intended.