

The Tweet that launched a thousand stories...



There have been over 12,000,000 responses and growing....



www.colonialucc.org
913-362-7735

December 10, 2017
10:15 a.m.

**The Colonial Church in Prairie Village—United Church of Christ
 “#MeToo: The Tale of Susanna’s Justice” Sunday Worship Service
 in the series *Untold Tales Leading to Christmas***

Please silence your electronic devices in preparation for worship.

* Please rise in body or spirit

We Gather as God’s Beloved People

Gathering Music

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland

-Klotz

Welcome and Call to Worship

(Please sign and pass pew pads and fill out Prayer Request cards you may have. You can place the Prayer Request cards in the offering plates later in the service.)

Leader: It is good.

People: It is good to be.

Leader: It is good to be here.

People: It is good to be here together.

* **Opening Hymn #105** *Gentle Joseph, Joseph Dear*

* **Advent Lighting the Candle of Hope – Matthew 1:18-21**

Leader: This is how the birth of Jesus Christ took place.

People: When Mary his mother was engaged to Joseph, before they were married, she became pregnant by the Holy Spirit. Joseph her husband was a righteous man. Because he didn’t want to humiliate her, he decided to call off their engagement quietly...

Leader: The public assumption was that Mary had been unfaithful, and this was a capital crime. Yet, God chose her and this particular messy situation to enter the world.

People: As Joseph was was thinking about what to do, an angel from the LORD appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, don’t be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because the child she carries was conceived by the Holy Spirit. She will give

birth to a son, and you will call him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

Leader: God continues to work in the messes of the world to bring hope and justice. And, we light the candle of Hope today to remember and respond.

Lighting the Advent Candle of Hope

Lu Family

Special Advent Music

A Celtic Silent Night

-Mohr/Gruber

-Laurel Mundell, Kathy Huey, Aaron Hill, Phil Eatherton, Kathy Huey, mezzo-soprano

* **Sharing God’s Welcome** (Greet everyone in the hope of peace and friendship.)

Children’s Conversation

(Children of all ages are welcome to come forward to the chancel steps. Following the Conversation, children are welcome to remain to worship or to participate in our Sunday School.)

This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine, this little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine, this little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine, let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

We Hear a Word from God

A Word in Music

The Angel Gabriel

-Diemer

A Word Proclaimed

-Pastor Aaron Roberts

Pig Men

Susanna 1:1-21 A man named Joakim once lived in Babylon. His wife Susanna, Hilkih’s daughter, was very beautiful and honored the LORD. Her parents were good people, and they taught their daughter according to the Law from Moses. Joakim was very rich, and he had a large private garden next to his home. The Jews came to him because he was the most honored among them. Two elders among the people had been appointed as judges that year. It was about them that the LORD had spoken: “Lawless disorder has come out of Babylon, from elders, from judges who were supposed to guide the people.” These men spent a lot of time at Joakim’s house, and all the people with lawsuits came to them.

When the people went away in the middle of the day, Susanna would walk around her husband's private garden. Every day the two elders would see her coming in and walking around, and they desired her sexually. They ceased thinking clearly, neither looking to heaven nor caring about justice. Both of them thought about her and nothing else, but they didn't tell each other their craving, because they were ashamed to admit how they desired her and wanted to be with her. But they were on the lookout every day, eager to get a glimpse of her.

One said to the other, "It's time for lunch. Let's go home." They split up and left, but doubling back, they met again at the same place. They started asking each other for an explanation, and so each confessed his desire. Then they plotted together for a time when they would be able to find her alone.

When they were watching closely for the right moment, Susanna came by, just as she had the day before and the day before that, alone with her two female servants. She wanted to bathe in the privacy of the garden, since it was hot. No one was there except the two elders, who were hidden and spying on her. She said to her female servants, "Please bring me some olive oil and lotion and lock the gates so I can bathe." They did just what she said. They locked the gates to the garden and went through the side doors into the house to fetch the things she had wanted. They didn't see the elders, since they were hiding.

When the female servants went out, the two elders stood up and ran at her. They said, "Look, the gates are locked, and nobody can see us. We desire you, so do what we want and have sex with us. If you don't, we'll swear that you were meeting with a young man, and that's why you sent your female servants away."

The Power of Authority Abused

Susanna 1:22-41 Susanna groaned. "I'm trapped! If I do this, it's death; but if I don't, I still won't escape your plotting. But I'd rather not do this and fall into your hands, than sin in the Lord's sight." So Susanna screamed, and at the same time the two elders called out. One of them ran and opened the gates to the garden.

When people in the house heard the shouting in the garden, they ran out through the side doors to see what had happened to Susanna. When the two elders had their say, the servants were very ashamed because nothing like this had ever been said about Susanna.

The next day when the people came to her husband Joakim, the two elders came too, full of their immoral scheme to have Susanna killed. They said in front of the people, “Call Susanna, Hilkiah’s daughter, who is married to Joakim.” So they called her in. She came with her parents, her children, and all her relatives.

Now Susanna was elegant, beautiful in appearance. The criminals ordered the veil that she was wearing to be removed so they could soak in her beauty. But her household and all who saw her were crying. Upon taking the stand in front of everybody, the elders laid their hands on Susanna’s head to give testimony. But she looked up to heaven while crying because she trusted the LORD.

The elders said, “While we were walking around the large garden by ourselves, this woman came in with two female servants. She locked the gates of the garden and sent away the female servants. Then a young man, who had been hiding, came and lay with her. We were in a corner of the garden, and when we saw this lawless act, we went running to them. We saw them having sex, but we couldn’t hold on to the man because he was stronger than we were. He opened the gates and ran away. So we grabbed this woman and asked who the young man was, but she wouldn’t tell us. To this we swear.”

The assembly believed them because they were the people’s elders and judges. So they sentenced Susanna to death.

We All Have Roles to Play in the Name of Equity and Justice

Susanna 1:42-50 Susanna screamed out: “Eternal God, you know what is hidden; you see everything before it happens. You know they’ve lied in this court about me! Look, I’m going to die, although I didn’t do any of the things these men accuse in their malice!”

The LORD heard her cry. As she was being led away to die, God stirred up the holy spirit of a young man named Daniel. He shouted out loud, “I’m innocent of this woman’s blood!”

All the people turned to him and asked, “What are you saying?!”

He stood among them and said, “Are you so stupid, Israelites, that you’ve sentenced an Israelite woman to death without cross-examining or finding the facts? Go back to court: these men have given false testimony against her.” Everyone rushed back. The other elders said to Daniel, “Sit here with us and advise us, since God has given you the status of an elder.”

The Liars are Held to Account

Susanna 1:51-64 Daniel told them, “Separate them from each other, and I’ll cross-examine them.” When they had been separated from each other, he called in one of the judges and said to him, “The sins you did earlier are catching up to you now at the end of a long evil life. You judged unfairly, sentencing the innocent to death, and letting the guilty go, even though the LORD says, ‘You will not sentence innocent and good people to death.’ Now then, if you really saw this woman, tell me this. Under what tree did you see them having sex?” He said, “Under a clove tree.”

Daniel said, “Right! You lied! It’s on your own head! Already God’s angel has orders to cleave you down the middle!” Then setting that one aside, he ordered them to bring in the other judge. He said to him, “You’re a Canaanite and not from Judah. Beauty seduced you, and sexual desire twisted your mind. You treated women from Israel this way, and they had sex with you because they were afraid of you. But this woman from Judah wouldn’t tolerate your lawless immorality. So tell me now: Under what tree did you catch them having sex with each other?”

He said, “Under a yew.”

Daniel said to him, “Right! You lied too! It’s on your own head. God’s angel waits with his sword to hew you down the middle, to destroy both of you.”

Then the whole assembly started shouting out praises to the God who saves those who hope in him. They rose up against the two elders, because Daniel had shown from their own words that they were false witnesses. They treated them in the same way that they had plotted to treat their neighbor. By following the Law from Moses, they killed them. Innocent blood was saved that day. Hilkiyah and his wife gave thanks that their daughter Susanna had not been found guilty of a shameful crime. Her husband Joakim and all their relatives also gave thanks.

Express your thoughts via social media #ColonialUCC

We Respond with Gratitude and Prayer

* Hymn #119

My Soul Gives Glory to My God

A Time of Gifts and Offerings

Invitation to the Offering

Mission Moment for Christmas Fund Offering

(Our weekly offering includes food collected in the red wagon to help fill local pantries.)

* Doxology – *What Child Is This* (#148 verses 3 and 1)

***So bring him incense gold and myrrh; Come humbly to revere him;
The King of kings salvation brings; Let faithful hearts draw near him.
This, this is Christ the King, Whom shepherds seek and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring him praise, the babe, the son of Mary!***

* Blessing the Offering

-by Rev. Penny L. Lowes

Holy God, the love we receive from you is beyond our comprehension.

Accept these gifts of love returned to you from grateful hearts.

**As your love has no limits, may this offering be infinite in
compassionate outreach to others. Amen.**

A Time of Prayer

Prayers of the People

Believing that each joy and/or concern expressed is indeed a prayer, after each expression, the Pastor will say:

LORD, in your mercy.

And the people may respond:

Hear our prayer.

Praying in Silence

Our Lord's Prayer ("Our Father" is the traditional way this prayer begins. You are invited to use whatever name for God you find most meaningful (Father, Mother, Creator, God, etc.). These names for God create a beautiful chorus.)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on Earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us, not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

We Depart to Serve

* Hymn #145

Once in Royal David's City

* **Renew Our Covenant** (Turn towards the center aisle as we bless one another with the promise of our covenant.)

We covenant with the Lord and with one another and do bind ourselves in the presence of God to walk together in Christian Love. We seek to worship God in spirit and in truth and to love our neighbors as ourselves. With God's help we will honor Colonial Church in our conduct, support its program, and extend the influence of Christ throughout the world.

* **Congregational Song of Blessing — *God Be With You* #809**

God be with you, God be with you, God be with you till we meet again.

O God be with you, God be with you, God be with you till we meet again.

* **Benediction and Postlude** *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland* -Walcha

Liturgist:	Carrie Roberts
Advent Candlelighters	Lu Family
Videographer:	Geoff Robinson
Worship Graphics Operator:	Hayden Ferguson
Children's Conversation:	Bob Starcke
Hospitality Table:	Jayne Quimby
Head Usher:	Linda Moses
Ushers:	Linda Moses, Mary Pelton, Ed Rowe, Lee Rowe

United Church of Christ Mission Moment - Sunday, December 10, 2017
Isaiah 40:1-11- Human Rights Day

It has been a hard year for human rights.

There have been times in our history when it has felt that indeed the arc of the moral universe was bending toward something greater than we were. Human beings built democracies, shared wealth, created opportunities and it seemed that we were progressing toward a new world. Then, racism, long bubbling beneath public discourse, resurfaced with new outfits but wearing the familiar symbols of hate. We saw that bedrock evil of white supremacy reanimating itself and marching on Charlottesville chanting the old loathsome slogans of bigotry. We saw the rebranding of these groups, and the normalizing of hate speech. We saw politics become a tool for leaders to embarrass themselves and all human beings with a fear-filled and bigoted reminder of what too many of our neighbors think. We saw many terrible things and we did not back away. In this awful year for human rights the United Church of Christ stood where it has always stood—with the messengers of hope.

It's Advent, right now, in the church of Jesus Christ. It is a time to imagine what is possible for human beings. It is a time to anticipate wonder and imagine what justice looks like. It is a time to remember that we ourselves are powerful witnesses. We are not fearful, not withering, not timid but outspoken on behalf of a God who comes to us from the underside, from the marginalized, from a stable in a faraway place and declares that evil will not prevail. Our God is born in hope. A hope that is as real as a chain of human beings putting their bodies on the line for love itself.

We, as a denomination long in the service of human rights, have seen our leadership shine. Reverend Traci Blackmon, our UCC Executive Minister for Justice and Witness, was present in Charlottesville leading clergy in a peaceful and protesting line against hate. Our President and General Minister John Dorhauer said, "Charlottesville made it very clear that the United Church of Christ has not only something to say, but something transformative and critical for the movement We will not be silenced, discouraged, and certainly not diminished. And love will win." Of course, love will win.

Things People Can Do in Response to #MeToo

1. Shut Down Demeaning Talk - Usually you just have to say, “Hey, that’s not cool.” Silence can be interpreted as tacit approval.
2. Check the Use of Diminutive Language at Work - Things like “sweetie, hon, baby, darling, girl, young lady, or kiddo” are condescending in the workplace.
3. Never Use Gendered or Misogynist Insults. Just don’t.
4. Don’t Focus on Little Girls’ Looks - There are just so many things to talk about. When engaging kids, try questions like, “What subjects do you like in school? What's your favorite animal? Hey, what are you reading?”
5. Don’t Let “Old-fashioned” Cover Cruelty - An "old-fashioned" sexist or racist comment might seem harmless from a beloved elder relative at a family gathering, but such words are still demeaning. So, call out sexism, racism and homophobia - at all ages.
6. Speak Up for Women - If a woman’s contributions are being dismissed, speak up. Say, “I think that Debbie has a good point we need to hear.”

18 Ways Churches Can Fight Sexual Assault in 2018

by Ruth Everhart

1. Maintain and update safe church child protection policies.
2. Require all leaders to take boundary training, even non-ordained leaders.
3. Post domestic violence and sexual violence hotline numbers in church restrooms.
4. Teach the warning signs of domestic abuse and abuse of children in the church newsletter or bulletin.
5. Intentionally use the words *sexual violence* in the liturgy—for example, in a prayer of confession.
6. Use the hashtag #MeToo on the church's outdoor sign.
7. Take a special offering for a local domestic violence shelter.
8. Hang posters in April for Sexual Assault Awareness Month and in October for Domestic Violence Awareness Month.
9. Plan education classes on these issues during April and October.
10. Educate the congregation about the grooming behaviors of predators.
11. Invite a victims' advocate to lead an adult education class or series.
12. Focus education about sexual violence on justice, rather than healing.
13. Have various groups sponsor a #MeToo night.
14. Preach a sermon or series on biblical texts of terror, such as Tamar's story.
15. Put women in high-level positions in leadership.
16. Speak about sex from the pulpit in a frank and forthright manner without using code words or making inappropriate jokes.
17. Have the leaders create a no-tolerance statement and post it beside the church's mission statement: *If any abuse occurs within the fellowship of this church, we will prosecute to the fullest extent of the law no matter who the offender might be.*
18. Pull the skeletons out of the church closet and prosecute the offenders.



The Sunday Crier

December 10, 2017

Choir Christmas Concert and Soup Supper Today at 5:00 p.m.

Join us in the sanctuary for an early evening of joyful singing by the choir followed by a dinner of delicious soups, breads and cookies. Our concert begins at 5:00 p.m., lasting approximately one hour and followed immediately by dinner. During the concert, a freewill offering will be taken to help the choir continue to purchase needed items for the music program. The soup dinner is free.

December 17 Sunday Night Movie. December's Sunday Night Movie on December 17 will be critically acclaimed "Beasts of the Southern Wild." In a forgotten but defiant bayou community cut off from the rest of the world by a sprawling levee, a six-year-old girl exists on the brink of orphanhood, buoyed by her childish optimism and extraordinary imagination. (*Rotten Tomatoes* review). We will gather at 5:30 p.m. in the Heritage Room for popcorn and snacks. Please join us!

Advent at Colonial Church

- **Longest Night Communion Worship Service** – December 21, 7:00 p.m. Our Longest Night service honors the feeling that a number of us have about this season. It is the "long, dark night of the soul," "the winter of our discontent," in which memories of past experiences and the pain of present experiences can become painful. This is a special service to be with God in Spirit and in Truth.
- **Christmas Eve Morning** – One service at 10:15 a.m
- **Christmas Eve Worship.**
 - 6:00 p.m. Pageant presented by Colonial Youth
 - 8:00 p.m. Communion Worship

Household Supplies for Cross-Lines Christmas Store. Many thanks to all of you who have contributed to the fund to purchase household supplies for the Christmas Store. We still need about \$1,000 to reach our goal. Write a check to the church with "Christmas Store" in the memo line, or put cash in an envelope and mark it "Christmas Store."

*Altar
Flowers*

The beautiful flowers on the altar are given by CATHERINE BOWSER in loving memory of John V. Bowser.

Deadline for Poinsettias Is Today! If you would like to provide a poinsettia for the altar in memory of or in honor of a loved one, please pick up a form in the narthex and place it with your payment of \$15 in the offering plate today. While we do not purchase a plant for every memorial, plants will be available to be taken home on Sunday, December 31.

Roberts Family Love Gift. We are again this year offering every member the opportunity to contribute to a special Christmas Love Gift for the Senior Minister's family in recognition of their faithful ministry in this church and the community. The gift will be from the "Congregation," as no individual names will be listed. Participation is totally up to each individual family. If you choose to participate, please put your money in an envelope and mark it "Love Gift for the Roberts Family." Make checks payable to Colonial Church.

Colonial Friends Christmas Lunch. Colonial Friends will have their Christmas lunch at Lidia's Kansas City, 101 West 21st Street, in the Freight House district by Union Station at 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, December 20. To carpool, meet at the church parking lot at 10:45 a.m. to leave at 11:00 a.m. RSVP to Joe Cunningham at runningrev2@aol.com or call 913-341.6303. We need to have a count by Monday, December 18.

Colonial Women Activities

- **Blue Moose Tuesday – Not at the Blue Moose.** Tuesday, December 12, 6:00 p.m. Lin Vaughn's home (3108 W. 73rd St., Prairie Village). Bring an appetizer or beverage to share.
- **Book Group.** Friday, January 12, 7:00 p.m., Stephanie Graff's home. We will be discussing "Small Great Things" by Jodi Picoult.

Giving Statements. The Giving Statements for the period January 1, 2017 through November 30, 2017 have been mailed. If you gave during that period and did not receive a statement or if you have a question regarding the one you received, please call the church office.

Help Needed on Christmas Eve to Feed the Homeless. The next Artists Helping the Homeless meal in the park is Sunday, December 24. Please call the church office at 913-362-7735 or signup online at <http://tinyurl.com/AHH-Colonial> if you can help. Meal preparation usually starts around 2:00 p.m., so the meal can be available in Mill Creek Park by the Plaza about 4:00 p.m. By 5:00 p.m, all are usually on our way home. This meal is a way for AHH to stay in touch with homeless in the area and to build trust.

2018 Altar Flowers. Sign up to purchase flowers for our altar for your chosen Sunday in 2018. Cost is \$50 and you may take the flowers following the 10:15 a.m. service or designate them for the Care Committee to take to homebound or hospitalized members. Contact Hope Cotten at 816-273-8628 or hopelgarrett@gmail.com to reserve your date.

Feed the Hungry Donations. Thanks to all who make a habit of bringing a contribution of food for the red wagon in the narthex. Each Sunday the contents are delivered to the Village Church Food Pantry, who distribute items to patrons all over the Kansas City

area. You can also write a check for the collection plate marked "Food Pantry" on the memo line. You do make a difference. Be a part!

The Week Ahead

TODAY, December 10

8:30 am Worship
 9:00 Bell Choir, Bell Choir Room
 9:15 That Was the Week That Was, Library
 9:30 Choir Rehearsal, Founders Chapel
 9:30 Centering Prayer, Preschool Room
 10:15 Worship
 10:30 Sunday School
 11:15 Fair Trade Coffee, Narthex
 5:00 pm Choir Concert and Soup Supper

TUESDAY, December 12

8:30 am Book Group, Heritage Room
 6:00 pm Colonial Women Party, Lin Vaughn's home

WEDNESDAY, December 13

9:30 Visit with Pastor Aaron, Einstein Brothers, Prairie Village Shops
 9:30 Writers Group, Heritage Room
 7:00 pm Colonial Choir

THURSDAY, December 14

12:00 pm Bible Study
 3:30 pm Justice & Witness Committee, Library
 6:30 AA, Oberlin Room

SUNDAY, December 17

8:30 am Worship
 9:00 Bell Choir, Sanctuary
 9:15 That Was the Week That Was, Library
 9:30 Centering Prayer, Preschool Room
 9:30 Choir Rehearsal, Founders Chapel
 10:15 Worship
 10:30 Sunday School
 11:30 Council/Administrative Board, Social Hall
 5:30 pm Sunday Night Movie, Heritage Room

For the full church calendar, visit our website at colonialucc.org.

GUEST INFORMATION

Welcome to Colonial Church in Prairie Village! We are glad you have worshiped with us today. If you have questions or concerns, feel free to call our church office at 913-362-7735.

A fully staffed nursery is available each Sunday morning from 8:20 to 11:30 a.m. Ask any of the ushers for directions to the nursery.

Hearing Devices—Hearing-assisted devices and large-print bulletins are available in the narthex. The worship service this morning can also be heard in the library.

Giving Cards—Giving Cards are available in the pew racks for anyone who contributes financially through EFT or online. To participate in the offering, take a card and place it into the offering plate as they are passed.

Children's Sunday School—Children preschool through 6th grade may leave after the Children's Conversation at the 10:15 a.m. worship service to go to class.

Youth Group—The Colonial Church Youth Group welcomes 7th through 12th grade students. Bible study at 9:15 a.m. Sunday in the youth room (the Savoy Room) with Sunday school at 10:15 a.m. The room is open for youth to come, relax, and enjoy one another's company prior to the Sunday service. Service and fellowship activities are planned throughout the year.

Colonial Choir—Choir for all ages. The choir rehearses on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 p.m. in the Choir Room, September-May.

Watch our Weekly Services and Sermons—You can watch our worship services on YouTube at <http://tinyurl.com/colonialworship-online> and get the sermon and bulletin on our website. Our 10:15am worship service is live-streamed, so please contact the church office if you have a privacy concern.

www.colonialucc.org—Learn more about Colonial and its programs.

Social Media— Stay up to date with what's happening at Colonial through Facebook and Instagram. Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/colonialucc>; Instagram: colonial_ucc

COLONIAL STAFF

Senior Minister: Rev. Aaron Roberts (aaron.roberts@colonialucc.org)

Connecting Minister: Rev. Lisa Tierney (lisa.tierney@colonialucc.org)

Sunday School Superintendent: Camille Breckenridge (camille.breckenridge@colonialucc.org)

Youth Group Leader: Amy Congdon (amy.congdon@colonialucc.org)

Music Director: Kirk Carson (kirk.carson@yahoo.com)

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Organist: Dr. Joseph Kern

Church Administrator: Heather Winker (heather.winker@colonialucc.org)

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