

Weekly Connection

For the Week of July 23, 2017 - July 29, 2017
Diverse Minds, Covenant Hearts, Made One in the Body of Christ



When I was in seminary and Abby came along, we were lucky enough to find a wonderful woman who ran her home daycare of just a few children. Her house was only a couple of blocks from the seminary and she encouraged me to stop by in between classes if I was missing my little one. It seemed like a perfect situation.

The house had a fenced yard and an incredible space she had dedicated as a playroom for the children she watched. It was a big sunken living room filled with books, puzzles, toys, dress up clothes, art supplies, riding toys and even climbing equipment. The children loved this space because it was theirs.

Then the woman, in an effort to expand her business, decided to spruce up the space in

order to attract and impress future clients. She renovated the space with new carpeting, paint, decorative trim, wainscoting, new windows, and French doors. When it was done, it was beautiful.

However, the problem was when all renovations were complete; she became worried the kids might spill something on the carpet or ruin the walls. Her fears were reflected in how things changed in regards to the children and the room after the renovation.

She first instituted a no eating and drinking rule. Then she moved the riding toys, climbing equipment and art supplies out the room. Eventually she locked the French doors while the kids were at the house and did not allow them into the space that was once their playroom.

Each week she would spend a good deal of time cleaning the hand prints and face prints of the children who would press their faces against the glass in longing, as they gazed into a room in which they were not allowed to enter.

Her fear of losing the newness and freshness of the room changed the intention and use of the room.

It became hers not theirs.

She shut out those for whom it was originally designed.

Sometimes, I wonder if we do that in our churches...in our faith communities. I believe we have been blessed with wonderful spaces for the purpose of honoring and glorifying God. I believe God's design for our churches is that our sacred spaces are not meant to belong to us, but rather to belong to God and all of God's beloved children.

Yet, too often, we think of these sacred spaces as ours. As a result, we believe we should have the choice of who can and should enter into these spaces. We create rules and barriers to keep some people in and others out.

We renovate our spaces...our physical, mental and spiritual spaces...in ways that lock out those for whom these spaces, our churches, were designed for, which is ALL of God's children. We also spend a great deal of time trying to cover up and ignore the fact there are many of God's beloved children who stand on the outside looking in only waiting and hoping to be invited in.

Yet, imagine the joy of the Lord if we were to open the doors wide to all. Imagine the joy, the playfulness, the sacredness and the beauty that could exist in the spaces we would reclaim not as ours but God's. I challenge you to imagine it and embrace it, for I believe this is what it means to be the Church of Jesus Christ.

Blessings, Shana

Important Links

iscucc.org/

duboiscenter.org

ucc.org

[Back Bay Mission](#)

[CHHSM](#)

[Ecuador Partnership](#)

[Eden Theological Seminary](#)

[Deaconess Foundation](#)

[Deaconess Nurse Ministry](#)

[Emmaus Homes](#)

[Hitz Memorial Home](#)

[Hoyleton](#)

[Insurance Board](#)

[LIFE Program](#)

[Neighborhood Houses](#)

[New Athens Home](#)

[St. John's Community Care](#)

[St. Paul's Home](#)

[Uplands Village](#)

[UCC Campus Ministry](#)

[Uni-Pres Kindercottage](#)

[ISC Directory](#)

Pray for...

Prayer list for

July 23 - July 29, 2017

Churches & Pastors

- Collinsville St. John

Evangelical UCC, Rev. Dr.

Marvin (Mae) Morgan, Interim

Pastor

SHARING IN WORSHIP WITH YOU

A Note from Shana: My worship schedule for upcoming weeks:

July 30

Worshiping at Good Shepherd of Faith, East St. Louis

August 6

Preaching at St. Peter's, Murphysboro for their 125th anniversary celebration

August 13

Worshiping at Godfrey Congregational UCC

Shana's worship schedule is full through September 2017. If you would like to invite her to worship with you for October 2017 and beyond, reach out to her at 618-654-2125 (office) or 618-882-8247 (cell) or sjohnson@iscucc.org.

Your OCWM monies at work.

GLAUCE 2017 - More than Enough

A Workshop Extravaganza!

Great Lakes Association of United Church Educators

Pastors, Spiritual Formation Leaders, Children's Ministry Volunteers! Here's info about the Great Lakes Association of United Church Educators Annual Event to be held October 17-19 at Pokagon State Park in Indiana! Working with all of your input from last year, this event will feature MANY workshops, personal Sabbath time, and networking with colleagues. Looks to be awesome! Link to [online](#) registration is on the [flyer](#). Note that the price includes program/event, lodging and meals.

Sixteen Workshops Including:

- Personal Growth & Development
- Missions
- Worship
- Sabbath
- Faith Formation
- Stewardship
- Messy Church
- Creativity & Fun



Informing the Congregation about Embezzlement

Reprinted from the Insurance Board newsletter, *The Steward*

Adopting a solid screening and selection process is your first line of defense in creating a safe environment. A thorough, consistent process may discourage offenders from targeting your church. Failure to discover a known offender can affect those in your care and the church's reputation, financial stability, and trust within the community. Background screening is highly regulated and filled with legal complexities, so how can you mitigate these risks so your church can benefit from the added safety that screening provides? Read the entire [article](#).

The Insurance Board offers free Webinars

Here's what's happening soon

Know Your Score! Abuse Prevention Self Assessment

Wednesday, August 23, 2017

2 pm to 3 pm (Eastern Time)

For more information and to register, click [here](#).

Keeping Ministries Safe: 5 Things Churches Can Do

Wednesday, September 13, 2017

2 pm to 3 pm (Eastern Time)

For more information and to register, click [here](#).

How to Avoid Background Screening Litigation

Wednesday, October 11, 2017

2 pm to 3 pm (Eastern Time)

For more information and to register, click [here](#).

Beware of Ransomware

Adapted from a guide written by the St. Louis Backup and Recovery Service Guide Book

More and more, ransomware has emerged as a major threat to individuals and businesses alike. Ransomware, a type of malware that encrypts data on infected systems, has become a lucrative option for cyber extortionists. When the malware is run, it locks victim's files and allows criminals to demand payment to release them.

- Collinsville St. John Evangelical UCC, Rev. Katie Jo (Craig) Bielke
Retired Pastor
- Rev. W. Curtis and Martha Lee, Newburgh, IN

People with Life Concerns

- Prayerfully thank God for Rev. David (Kathy) Riebeling for his 29 years of ministering to the St. John UCC in Valmeyer. His final service was on July 9 where he had the bonus of baptizing his youngest grandchild. ISC thanks you for your service and wishes you a happy retirement. Click [here](#) for an article in the *Monroe County Independent*.
- Please pray for Priscilla (Rev. Howard) Self as she recuperates from surgery. Priscilla works part-time for DuBois Center. She is a member of St. Peter's UCC in Okawville and the ISC Church & Ministry Church Committee. Cards may be sent to her at 12922 County Hwy. 27, Nashville IL 62263.
- Pray for Jeanne (Arnold) Meyer as she recovers from serious surgery and complications. She is a member of Highland Evangelical UCC and the sister of Lynnette Schuepbach, ISC Communications Coordinator.
- Keep Lelynna (Rev. James) Langdoc in your prayers as she recovers from surgery. Rev. Langdoc is a former ISC Associate Conference Minister. Cards may be sent to Lelynna at 2032 Sifield Greens Way #28, Sun City Center, FL 33573.
- Pray for Rev. Dr. Douglas Anders as he continues treatment for ongoing illness. Douglas is currently the Supply Pastor for Belleville Concordia UCC. Cards may be sent to him at 2921 Moniteau, St Louis MO 63121.
- Keep Dorothy Edwards in your prayers as she deals with health issues. Dorothy is a member of the East St. Louis

Good Shepherd of Faith and the mother of Pastor Norma Patterson.

There are a few dominant types, or families, of ransomware in existence. Each type has its own variants. It is expected that new families will continue to surface as time goes on. Historically, Microsoft Office, Adobe PDF and image files have been targeted, but McAfee predicts that additional types of files will become targets as ransomware continues to evolve.

How does it attack?

Spam is the most common method for distributing ransomware. It is generally spread using some form of social engineering; victims are tricked into downloading an e-mail attachment or clicking a link. Fake email messages might appear to be a note from a friend or colleague asking a user to check out an attached file, for example. Or, email might come from a trusted institution (such as a bank) asking you to perform a routine task. Sometimes, ransomware uses scare tactics such as claiming that the computer has been used for illegal activities to coerce victims. Once the user takes action, the malware installs itself on the system and begins encrypting files. It can happen in the blink of an eye with a single click.

To protect yourself and your church files.

First and foremost, education is essential to protect yourself from ransomware. It is critical that you understand what ransomware is and the threats that it poses. Don't open attachments if it seems like spam or the email address is not the correct one from your associates. Second, update your virus protection often, but only if you know that it is actually your virus protection package. Third, back up often so that you can recover from an attack more easily. Read [more](#).

 *DuBois Center News*
A Ministry of Illinois South Conference
of the United Church of Christ



Beating the Heat at DuBois Center

When heat indexes reach into triple digits, you've got to adapt. Meteorologists suggest staying indoors and avoiding the sun, but we're at camp! So what do you do? First round up extra fans and water jugs, then make sure plenty of frozen treats and drinks with extra electrolytes are on hand. Next, rework the schedule and make the most of early mornings with horseback rides, team building activities and hikes - basically have a blast before breakfast and the intense mid-day heat. Reserve the hottest times of the day for quieter activities in the shade or under big fans or for wet and wacky water games. Add an hour-long "siesta" during the hottest time of the day and campers are ready for evenings packed with fun.

Swing and Splash! Cool Shades! Sunscreen Buddies! Canoeing IN the lake?! HYDRATE!



Rainbow Camp Registration Closes July 28. More details are available on the [flyer](#). Rainbow Camp is for LGBTQ singles, couples and families. Straight allies are always welcome, too. Sign up now [online](#) to join the fun and fellowship.



DuBois Center is your OCWM (Our Church's Wider Mission) monies at work. When you or your congregation gives to OCWM, you are directly supporting the work of DuBois, a Camp and Retreat Center of the Illinois South Conference of the United Church of Christ. Thank you for your ongoing support of OCWM!



**Is your church located in Madison County?
Are you preparing for a church picnic or ice cream social?
Does your church have a coffee hour or fundraising dinner?**

If so, please consider using St. John's Community Care napkins. It's one less item your group has to purchase and it will help us to promote our services to those attending the events. The napkins are free. Let us know a few weeks in advance of your event so we can try to accommodate your needs. Napkins are large dinner size. Requests can be for up to 500 napkins. We are happy to deliver the napkins to you or your church.

Call Missy at 618-344-5008 or email your request mathmer@stjohnscc.org.



What's Happening at Illinois South Conference...

Metro-East Food Pantry Network invites you to participate in a networking workshop on August 30, at 2 pm, at the University of Illinois Extension Office, #1 Regency Drive, Suite 200, Collinsville, IL. The agenda includes networking with area food pantry leaders and a program on volunteer management presented by Rich Skinner, VP United Way Volunteer Center. All are invited. Please RSVP Amy Funk at 618-344-4230 or amyfunk@illinois.edu. Click [here](#) for a flyer about the workshop. Click [here](#) for Metro-East Food Pantry Network's topics of interest.

Region 2

New Hanover Zoar UCC in Columbia will host its Annual BBQ on Sat, Aug 5 from 4 pm - 7 pm. Entertainment by George Portz and his Friends of Bluegrass and the "Lightning" Cloggers. Country store with homemade items. Silent auction. Pie auction. Pork steak plate \$10; Brat plate \$8.

Region 3

Eden Church in Edwardsville will host a Pastor Resource Day presented by Gift of Voice on Wed, July 19 from 8:30 am - 4:30 pm. This forum focuses on personal wellness, community collaboration and making a lasting difference. In addition to the terrific keynote speakers, topics include healthy leadership, suicide prevention, integrated health care, trauma - informed ministry and Christ-centered advocacy. Speakers are Nanette Larson, DMH, and Carlton Speight, SAMHSAC. Cost is \$10. Click [here](#) for registration form.

Region 7

Nashville St. Paul UCC invites you to their annual Noodles & Doodles Art Show and Spaghetti Dinner on July 28. The Art Show is from 4-7:30 pm; come and enjoy the wonderful creations by local artists. The Spaghetti Dinner is served from 4:30-7:30 pm, hosted by their Dorcas Circle ladies group. All you can eat spaghetti, garlic bread, salad, dessert and drink. Advance tickets: \$7 adults; \$4 kids 4-10 yrs., 3 and under free. Tickets at the door are \$8. All proceeds will help support a family in our community.

VBS - July

July 20 - 21; 6:30 pm - 9 pm; New Hanover Zoar UCC; *Campout, Getting S'more of Jesus.*

July 23 - 26; 5:15 pm - 8 pm; at Metropolis St. Rose Catholic Church joint VBS with Metropolis Zion UCC; *Campout, Getting S'more of Jesus.*

July 24 - 27; 6 pm - 8 pm; Wood River St. John UCC; *Hero Central: Discover Your Strength in God!*

July 24 - 28; 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm; New Athens, St. John UCC; *Hero Central: Discover Your Strength in God!*

July 24 - 28; 9 am - 11:30 am; New Baden Zion UCC; *Rome: Paul and the Underground Church.* Lunch at 11:30 am as part of the summer lunch program for kids through St. Louis Food Bank.

July 24 - 28; 6 pm - 8:30 pm; Jerseyville Peace UCC; *Hero Central: Discover Your Strength in God!*

July 30 - August 3; 6 pm - 8 pm; Carlinville St. Paul UCC; *Hero Central: Discover Your Strength in God!*