

Weekly Connection

For the Week of January 28, 2018 - February 3, 2018
Diverse Minds, Covenant Hearts, Made One in the Body of Christ

Following God's Lead in Uncharted Territory

We in the Church of Jesus Christ are living in a time when there is much anxiety about the changes in our society and how it relates to our local churches.

We all know well the laments.

"We don't have children in our Sunday School like we used to."

"We used to have large confirmation classes and the youth began getting involved in our church. Now, after confirmation, we barely see them or their families."

"We don't have as many people in the pews on Sunday mornings."

"Our giving is not what it used to be."

We all know the challenges.

Church programs competing with the schedules of sports teams and a multitude of extracurricular activities.

Aging facilities with costly upkeep and repairs.

Tight budgets and hard decisions, which create anger and resentment towards church leaders.

Sporadic attendance at worship services and programs of those who would categorize themselves as active member.

Fewer people willing to volunteer and commit to attending worship services and support the work of the church on a regular basis.

We know something is broken, but really don't know what to do. And so we lament, and we try to recycle strategies and tools that worked for us in the past. Yet, such things are no longer effective.

In the midst of it all, we still hear Jesus calling. Jesus calling, summoning, and inviting us to follow him.

Jesus continues to call the people of every time, place, and generation to the adventure of discipleship.

Jesus is calling us. Calling us to trust that if we follow his ways of extending unconditional love and grace to all people, we will be able to "fish for people," connecting with people who are in need of and seeking a relationship with God and the faith community.

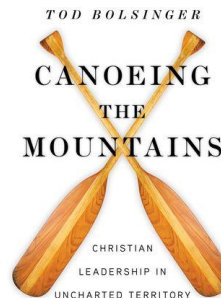
Author, Rev. Dr. Tod Bolsinger, in his book, *Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territories*, correlates the current state of Christianity to the expedition of Lewis and Clark who were commissioned by President Thomas Jefferson to find a trade route via the Pacific Ocean.

In the early 1800s, no one had dared to go west of the Mississippi, so Lewis and Clark set out with their canoes and expedition party, known as the Corp of Discovery, to paddle their way to the Pacific Ocean.

Lewis and Clark were exceptional scientists and explorers. They carried with them the best supplies and knowledge Americans had to offer. Their President (the author of the Declaration of Independence, no less) had placed his faith in them. What did they have to lose?

Well, as it turned out, quite a bit.

The commonly held assumption at that time was that the rivers were tributaries that eventually led to the Pacific Ocean. Believing this assumption, Lewis and Clark and



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[CHHSM](#)

[Ecuador Partnership](#)

[Eden Theological Seminary](#)

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[St. Paul's Home](#)

[Uplands Village](#)

[UCC Campus Ministry](#)

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Pray for...

Prayer list for

Jan 28 - Feb 3, 2018

Churches & Pastors

- Summerfield St. John UCC,

Rev. Gary (Joyce) Kniepkamp

- Tower Hill St. Paul UCC,

the others on the expedition had canoes and equipment for what they thought would be the most logical mode of transportation.

What they did not know and would soon discover was, it was the Rocky Mountains on the other side of the river bend, not the Pacific Ocean. At one point, they had to make a decision to keep going with all the equipment that was weighing them down or to drop the canoes.

Throughout the book *Canoeing the Mountains*, Bolsinger uses this historic journey as the backdrop for the current reality of Christianity and the church as he claims, **"We must recognize that we're staring at mountains and all we have are the canoes that brought us this far."**

However, Bolsinger offers the **five vital lessons the Church must learn and embrace in order to continue the journey of discipleship in uncharted territory.**

- 1) The world in front of us is nothing like the world behind us.
- 2) Trust is essential if people are to follow you into unfamiliar territory.
- 3) We must learn to be adaptable.
- 4) Not everyone will want to go with us into this uncharted season of ministry, and that's not all bad.
- 5) Transformation is the end game.

Yes, at this moment, we in the Church are navigating a journey into uncharted territory. But we do not have to do it alone, and we are not without hope and the resources to learn together, not only to survive, but also to thrive.

In this new year, we will be reflecting on this together. We will begin the journey at our Day of Discipleship (Saturday, March 3 at Evangelical UCC in Highland, Illinois) as we will hear from Rev. Dr. Kristina Lizardy-Hajbi, director of the Center for Analytics, Research and Data, about the trends and shifting landscape we in the Church must be aware of and attend to. At Day of Discipleship, we will also have the opportunity to hear and learn from one another about the effective missional programs of our ISC churches.

In the upcoming months we will also create educational programs, listening sessions and opportunities for us to bear witness to the new and exciting ways we are answering the call of discipleship.

Our reflection on Christian leadership in uncharted territory will culminate with a remarkable opportunity to hear from and spend time with the author of *Canoeing The Mountains: Christian Leadership In Uncharted Territories*, Rev. Dr. Tod Bolsinger, at our Conference Annual Meeting. Tod will be conducting a workshop for clergy and laity on Friday, October 26 and will be our keynote speaker at the Annual Meeting on Saturday, October 27. I hope you will mark your calendars and share the details with your congregations.

Yes, Jesus is calling. Let us join the adventure.

Blessings, Rev. Shana Johnson, Conference Minister

SHANA'S JANUARY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

January 28

Preaching at Concordia UCC, Belleville

February 11

Worship at Zion UCC, Hoyleton

February 18

Preaching at St. Peter UCC, Red Bud

As we move into 2018, I am planning my worship schedule to join as many of the ISC churches as possible. I would love an invitation to your church! Please reach out to me at the office at (618) 654-2125 or on my cell phone at (618) 882-8247 with some possible dates. You can also send me an email at sjohnson@iscucc.org. **This is your OCWM monies at work.**

Rev. Dr. Steve (Debbi) Nance
Retired Pastor

- Rev. Loren and Grace
Windhorst, Vernon Hills, IL

People with Life Concerns

- Pray for Nancy (Rev. Bob) Tripp as she deals with health issues. Rev. Tripp is a retired pastor and they are members of Pana United in Faith Church. Cards may be sent to 9008 E South Cir Dr, Effingham IL 62401.

- Pray for Pastor Cherie (Michael) Stolzie as she deals with some health issues. Cherie is the pastor at Stone Church St. Peter's UCC and Okawville St. Paul UCC. Cards may be sent to her at 12023 Lake Meade Dr, St. Louis, MO 63146.



Festival of Faith is full!!

God's Calling You.

We have 82 youth and chaperones who will be attending from our churches in Belleville Concordia UCC, Collinsville St. John Evangelical UCC, Columbia St. Paul UCC, Freeburg St. Paul's UCC, Nashville St. Paul UCC, O'Fallon UCC, Trenton St. John UCC, Waterloo Zion UCC and Waterloo St Paul UCC. Please call Christy in the ISC office to ensure spaces are still available before you register any more than were on your space request.

July 5-8, 2018

GREAT LAKES REGIONAL YOUTH EVENT

Elmhurst College
Elmhurst, Illinois

Save the Date: Regional Youth Event (RYE) is scheduled for July 5-8 at Elmhurst College (west of Chicago). ISC is working on an event organizing team for this event for youth who have completed 6th-12th grades. To keep up with the event, go to their Facebook [page](#).



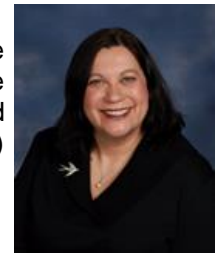
Online Registration is Open NOW!! Click [here](#). You can also download the paperwork [here](#).

We will be combining 2 events on **March 3, 2018: The Installation of Rev. Shana Johnson as Conference Minister and Day of Discipleship**. Between the two events, ISC Pride will host a reception for all those attending.

The day begins with registration at 9:00 am and program at 9:30 am to be held at the Highland Evangelical UCC for Day of Discipleship, featuring the keynote speaker, Rev. Dr. Kristina Lizardy-Hajbi, Director of the United Church of Christ CARD (Center for Analytics, Research and Data) ministries.

Then, choose two of these workshops.

Be the Church: A Mission Planning Guide for Congregations



Presented by Rev. Dr. Kristina Lizardy-Hajbi, Director of UCC CARD (Center for Analytics, Research and Data).

Mission Trips within the United States

Presented by Roger Harris, Belleville St. Paul UCC.

Ecuador Partnership - Mission in Action

Presented by Lee-Alison Wilson, Belleville St. Paul UCC and Rev. John Holst, Marion Zion UCC.

Finding Mission in Your Own Community

Presented by Rev. Katie-Jo Bielke, Collinsville St. John Evangelical UCC.

Guess Who's Coming to Dinner

Presented by a panel of Dana Callahan, Collinsville St. John Evangelical UCC; Sandy Ritter, Belleville St. Paul UCC; Carol Meeks, Edwardsville St. Paul UCC.

Carry Out or Delivery?

Presented by a panel of Rev. Laurie Crelly, Brighton St. John UCC; Missy Loyet, Highland Evangelical UCC; and Rev. Carol Shanks, Cahokia Bethel UCC.

How Does Your Garden Grow?

Presented by Margie Lindhorst, Columbia St. Paul UCC; Pastor Norma Patterson and Milton Jones, East St. Louis Good Shepherd of Faith UCC.

Shelter in Times of Trouble

Presented by Pastor Cory Hartz and members of Belleville Trinity UCC.

Setting a Healthy Table for All

Presented by Rev. Donna Pupillo, Deaconess Nurse Ministries.

The Story - Making Disciples

Presented by Rev. Earl Crecelius, Freeburg St. Paul's UCC.

Growing Church Membership With Older Adult Ministries

Presented by Jan Aerie, MS, gerontologist, family counselor, former UCC national staff member.

The Mission of Being an Open & Affirming Congregation

Presented by Dr. Jill Baker, ISC Vice-Moderator

From 2 pm - 3 pm, the ISC Pride will host a reception. The installation service for Rev. Shana Johnson begins at 3 pm.

Plan now to celebrate the gift ISC has been given by calling Rev. Shana Johnson.



VACATION REQUEST DUE?

Consider a week (or even a few days) at DuBois Center and join our Summer Camp 2018 team! Wanted: fun, engaging and caring volunteers to serve as nurses, chaplains, cabin counselors, activity specialists and barn helpers. Minimum age is 18 for most positions; young adults and older adults are welcome. Give of your time and talent, make a difference and gain a wonderful sense of satisfaction... and even perhaps a bit of joy! For more information, check out the volunteer [page](#) of our web site or contact DuBois Center at dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org or 618-787-2202.



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DIGITAL CAMERAS Used Compact Models Needed

Great photos and smart phones go hand in hand nowadays. So what happened to all those small, point and shoot cameras - the Coolpix, PowerShot and FinePix? DuBois Center is in search of 8-10 used (or new) cameras. They are great for photo booths, scavenger hunts, photography classes and so much more. **Requirements:** good working condition and SD card compatible. For more information contact DuBois Center at 618-787-2202 or dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org.

SUMMER JOBS DuBois Center Equestrian Program

Looking for a rewarding summer job working with children and horses? How about hands-on experience managing a trail ride program? DuBois Center has openings for a dedicated summer barn coordinator and two barn assistants/cabin counselors. Spending time with the horses is a highlight for many of our campers. In addition to caring for our 20-horse herd, our summer barn staff utilize basic riding instruction and time "getting to know the ponies" to help campers build self-confidence and learn to respect and appreciate God's amazing creation. For those who have never experienced a horse up close, the first moments can be overwhelming. However, with nurturing guidance, campers quickly learn that they can overcome their fears and experience something wonderful. Tears often transform into giant smiles. The joy campers show is definitely reward enough, but serving on the summer barn staff also provides hands-on work experience for individuals considering a career in the equine field. For more information, check out the attached [flyer](#) or contact Shirley at 618-787-2202 or shirley.director@DuBoisCenter.org.



FLUFFY, FLUFFY PONIES!

With the deep chill we recently experienced, the horses at DuBois Center have certainly been enjoying their luxurious winter coats! This extra fur is super soft and GREAT for petting, but it also serves a crucial and practical function - it traps in heat to help protect against harsh winter weather. Horses are very social animals, and in order to maintain a healthy herd dynamic, our horses live outside year-round. We do bring them into the barn

CALLING ALL NURSES!! Spend Time at DuBois Center

Enjoy the tall oaks, silly songs, spirited laughter and other joys that make a week at DuBois such a memorable experience! Camp Nurses, most of whom are RNs, play a key role in providing safe and fun experiences for campers during DuBois Center summer camps. Many find it to be a very rewarding opportunity for ministry; one that is quite different than their regular jobs. Responsibilities



occasionally to groom them for rides and feed them. When the temperatures drop and the winds pick up, we also open the barn as a wind break. While living outdoors does help keep our horses mentally healthy, they do require some extra care when the cold and snow prevent them from grazing on grass. Staff and volunteers provide a steady stream of hay, and supplemental grain when the weather gets exceptionally bad. Some of our horses have even been known to gain weight over the winter!

include reviewing camper medical forms, conducting health screenings, receiving & administering medications, providing first aid, basic medical treatment and some extra TLC for a homesick camper. The nurse's living quarters are air-conditioned, and there is often time to sit back and read a good book, take a hike or dip your toes in the lake. For more information about this ministry opportunity, contact Shirley at 618-787-2202 or shirley.director@DuBoisCenter.org.

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!



CHHSM News

Council for Health and Human Service Ministries



The Council for Health and Human Service Ministries of the United Church of Christ will hold its Annual Meeting on March 1-3, 2018 at the Marriott St. Louis Grand, 800 Washington Ave, St. Louis, MO 63101 in St. Louis, Missouri.

The theme is *Advocacy and Ministry: A Voice of Faith in an Evolving Society*. "May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant that you live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may

with ONE VOICE bring glory to God." Romans 15:5-6

Highlights include:

- Opening Worship at Deaconess - Our opening worship service will also include the consecration of the Deaconess Foundation's new Center for Child Well-Being. Buses will depart from the hotel at 2pm on Thursday March 1 for that special event. Worship is free and open to the public.
- St. Louis Celebration - Friday evening, March 2nd, we will celebrate our host city, St. Louis, and all its member organizations! This fun night will include a St. Louis themed buffet dinner and music from the Baglunch Blues Band. Admission to this dinner is included in the full registration cost and is only \$25 for guests.
- German Diakonie Visitors - We will be joined by guests from our German partner, Diakonie Rhineland, Westphalia, Lippe.
- Diakonal Minister Consecration - As always, a highlight of our Annual Gathering will be to consecrate those who are completing this year of the Nollau Leadership Institute. Worship is free and open to the public.

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



2nd Annual Night at the Improv - Sat, April 14

Order your tickets for the whole family, and maybe a few friends, for the 2nd Annual Night at the Improv benefitting Uni-Pres Kindercottage on Saturday, April 14, 2018 at St Paul UCC 115 West "B" Street Belleville, IL. Doors open for the silent auction at 5 pm. Tickets include dinner and the show and are just \$40 each or 8 for \$300. Send your name and address with your ticket order and check to Kindercottage, 564 Veronica, East St. Louis, IL, 62205.



Mental Health First Aid Workshops will be presented by Hoyleton Youth & Family Services and is funded in part by Illinois Department of Human Services.

Mental Health First Aid USA is a training designed to give people the skills to help someone who is developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. The course uses techniques to demonstrate how to recognize and respond to the warning signs of specific illnesses.

Here are the dates, times and locations:

- January 26 & 27 from 11 am-3:15 pm at YMCA in Granite City
- February 9 & 10 from 8 am-12:15 pm at YMCA in Maryville
- February 16 from 8 am-5:30 pm at YMCA in Belleville
- February 24 from 8 am-5:30 pm at SIUE in Edwardsville
- March 5 from 8 am-5:30 pm at Regency Conference Center in O'Fallon
- March 23 & 24 from 11 am-3:15 pm at YMCA in Granite City

Registration [Link](#).

For more information contact Allison at 618-688-4776.

Continuing Education Units for LSW, LCSW, LPC, & LCPC available upon request.

Hoyleton Youth & Family Services invites you to help in Funding the Need for our organization by attending this year's ROCK THE NEED GALA on Fri, Feb 9, 2018 at The Fountains Conference Center, 319 Fountains Parkway, Fairview Heights. Cocktail Hour begins at 5:30 pm. Dinner at 6:30 pm. You will have many opportunities to **FUND THE NEED** for many critical, life-changing measures; including emergency support for Foster Care Children and Families and immediate support for victims of human trafficking. Entertainment by: Butch Wax and the Hollywood's from 8-10 pm. Dinner is \$50 per person or \$375 per table of 8. Reservations must be made to agarrison@hoyleton.org or 618-688-4742 by 1/30/2018. **Sponsorship Opportunities Available.**



Caring compassionately for aging and disabled people since 1985

▲ The Alzheimer's Association will offer free consultations to discuss dementia and Alzheimer's related issues on Thurs, Feb 1 from 9 am - 3:30 pm at St. John's Community Care Adult Day Program in Edwardsville. Appointments are required. Register by Tues, Jan 30 at 314-801-0399. Walk-ins accepted only if time allows.

▲ Trivia Night to benefit St. John's Community Care will be held on Jan 27 at Edwardsville American Legion. Doors open at 6:30 pm and trivia begins at 7:00 pm. \$20 per person with tables of 8. 50/50. Heads or tails. Soft drinks and beer included. Cash bar available. Snacks welcome. Sponsored by ECHO (Enriching Communities by Helping Others).

▲ St. John's Community Care will offer Savvy Caregiver Training sessions several times through 2018 using a curriculum developed by the University of Minnesota. This training provides tools to family members who are caring for an individual with dementia/memory loss who is living at home, either alone or with family. Each session will be comprised of six two-hour sessions. The series of 6 classes will be held on Thursday mornings from 10 - noon on Feb. 15 & 22 - March 1, 8, 15, 22 at Ruth's House, 7325 Marine Rd, Edwardsville, IL 62025. Each series is limited to a maximum of 12 families. There is no cost to those attending. Registration is required. Ruth's House is offering complimentary care for people with dementia with reservations. Call 618-344-5008.

Celebrate Seminary Sunday on February 25

Why Celebrate Seminary Sunday?

Our UCC seminaries are filled with faithful, committed students seeking the skills and wisdom necessary to lead the church in the 21st century. Our congregations need these students. In our region, we are blessed to have three fine UCC seminaries - Chicago, United, and Eden. Each of these seminaries provides quality education for pastors and lay leaders, and they provide research and resources that serve the entire UCC.

How to Celebrate Seminary Sunday

- Lift up our UCC seminaries and seminarians in prayer, in mission moments, and in your bulletins.
- Post materials about Chicago, Eden, and United Seminaries on bulletin boards.
- Include a special prayer or litany in your service.
- Show a five-minute CUE Seminaries DVD.
- Include a gift to CUE Seminaries in your church budget or to take a special offering.
- DVDs, bulletin inserts, posters, and offering envelopes are available at CUE Seminaries [website](#).

Please join us on Feb 25 in supporting the current and future leadership of the UCC by celebrating Chicago, United, and Eden Seminaries.

If you would like someone from a CUE Seminary to visit your congregation to help with worship leadership for Seminary Sunday, please contact:

Chicago Theological Seminary Chad Schwickerath, 773-896-2434 or chad.schwickerath@ctschicago.edu

United Theological Seminary Carla Marchio, 651-255-6138 or cmarchio@unitedseminary.edu

Eden Theological Seminary Lorin Cope, lcope@eden.edu or 314-918-2549

Each seminary will do its best to accommodate each request.

What's Happening at Illinois South Conference...

Yearbook Time Is Here! It is open for input and Closes on March 7, 2018

Although this yearly task may seem daunting, it will help your church in many ways...

- The 11-year report provided by the data can be used when reviewing budgets, calling a pastor, and planning for future missions.
- The statistical information for ministerial support (which is not tied to individuals or churches) helps National UCC to provide statistics for compensation guidelines.
- Trends about church-going and the needs to be met by our churches is part of the statistical information we can pull from the database.

So, though it may seem daunting and/or like busy-work, there is a method to the madness.

Instructions have been sent to the churches.

The database closes on March 7, 2018 at midnight. The ISC office can input the information if you do not want to do it online. Send information to Lynnette at lschuepbach@iscucc.org. Here is a [form](#) to help you gather the information you need.

The 37th Annual Rural Ministry Conference will be held on March 4 - 6, 2018 in Dubuque, Iowa. This ecumenical conference, sponsored by Wartburg Theological Seminary, is designed for pastors and lay leaders in rural and small town congregations. The topic for this year is "Co-operating Congregations in Mission." The keynote speaker, Pastor Marcia Kifer, is a dynamic speaker with many years of experience in a variety of ministry models and will explore a variety of newer ministry models for smaller congregations. Breakouts include worship for smaller congregations, and evangelism in rural areas. Click [here](#) for a more information or [email](#) Rev. Dr. Ann Fritschel.

Region 5

Salem UCC Churchmen's Fellowship will host their 70th Annual Whole Hog Sausage Supper on Sat, Jan 27 from 2:30 pm - 8 pm. Sausage Sales: Thursday, Jan 25 12 - 6pm & Saturday, Jan 27 9am - ? To place sausage orders prior to Thurs, Jan 25: Call 618-488-3733. Adults \$10; Children 5 - 10 \$5. Menu includes fresh homemade pork sausage, sauerkraut, potatoes, gravy, green beans, applesauce, dessert, coffee, milk and desserts. Carry-Outs at Adult price only: Call 618-488-3215. You may also email your advance order to ooey5@agtelco.com.

Highland Evangelical UCC will hold its We Love Kindercottage Chili Cookoff on Sun, Feb 18 from 11 am - 2 pm. You can find entry forms at EvUCC.org or email Kay Ahaus at kayahaus@yahoo.com or call 618-520-1790 by Feb 11. Cost is \$15 per entry. If you don't want to cook, come and eat. \$5 for a Tasting Kit; \$4 for a bowl. Cash only. There will be prizes for favorite chili, most spicy, best table decor, and people's choice. Proceeds benefit Uni-Pres Kindercottage.

Region 7

Okawville St. Peter's UCC will hold its Wurst Markt on Sun, Feb 11 from 3 pm - 7 pm in their educational building. All you can eat menu of pork sausage, sauerkraut, mashed potatoes, green beans, applesauce, pie or dessert, and drink. Adults \$11; Children 6 - 12 \$5; Children under 5 Free. Carry outs \$11. Place meat/sausage orders by Feb 5 to Melinda Albers 618-243-5354.

Region 8

Mascoutah St. John UCC will hold its Pancake, Sausage and Fruit Brunch - All You Can Eat on Sun, Jan 28 from 8:30 pm - 12:30 pm. Adults \$6; Children (4-10) \$3.50; Children 3 and under are free. All proceeds benefit local charities. Sponsored by the St. John Saturday Nighters.

Region 9

Christ UCC in Belleville will hold its 39th Annual Wurstmarkt on Sun, Jan 28 from 11 am - 4 pm. All you can eat! Pork sausage, sauerkraut, mashed potatoes, gravy, corn, green beans, applesauce, coffee or tea, and dessert. Adults \$11; Children ages 6 - 9 \$5; Children under 5 free! Carry outs available!

Belleville Trinity UCC will host its 29th Annual Chicken & Dumplings Dinner on Sun, Feb 25 from 11 am - 3 pm. Menu includes home-made chicken & dumplings, green beans, corn, home-made cole slaw, applesauce, rolls, tea or coffee and dessert. Adults \$10; Children 5-12 \$4; Childen 4 and under Free. Bakery. Boutique. Baskets. Carry outs available.