

Weekly Connection

For the Week of January 8, 2017 - January 14, 2017
Diverse Minds, Covenant Hearts, Made One in the Body of Christ

The Amazing People of Illinois South Conference....



Woman, pastor talk about 'Christmas miracle' on state Route 163 3:18

There was more to the story of Concordia UCC's generosity during the ice storm recently. *Belleville News Democrat* shared it first and UCC put it in their newsletter, KYP (Keeping You Posted). See the video and the article from *BND* [here](#).

*"Behold, I will do a new thing,
Now it shall spring forth;
Shall you not know it?*

*I will even make a road in the wilderness
And rivers in the desert."-Isaiah 43: 19*

There is something about new beginnings. As a kid I loved the beginning of a new school year. The new box of Crayola crayons, the new spiral bound notebooks and the newly sharpened #2 pencils with their unblemished pink eraser tips were beautiful symbols of what could be. As an adult, I love the beginning of a new calendar year. Although by the time a new year rolls around, my work calendar is already filled with appointments and commitments, I still buy a new personal calendar and a new journal to symbolize what can be.

Yes, there is something about new beginnings that sets my imagination on fire, frees my mind to envision new possibilities, and opens up my spirit to hearing and seeing the power and movement of God's spirit in a new way. I find it offers me a time for reflection, assessment and visioning. I have often thought in the life of the church, January would be a perfect opportunity for the community of faith to do some New Year evaluation and assessment. Too many times in the church, the only time we talk about evaluation is when it comes to our paid staff. Usually, it is also tied to conversations about the budget and financial compensation increases or bonuses. Although this is important work, I believe a separate time of evaluation for the whole family community could be greatly beneficial.

For example, what if we used the New Year as an opportunity to reflect on the past year of our life together? What if we took time to assess our shared mission and ministry? And better yet, what if we prayerfully discerned how God might do a new thing among us? Imagine the possibilities.

To prime the pump, consider if we asked ourselves some of the following questions:

REFLECTION OF THE PAST YEAR

What did we do really well in the past year? What were our great accomplishments and joys? What were some of our disappointments, frustrations, and sorrows? How did we faithfully serve God in our church? In our community? In our world? Where did we see God working in our midst this year?

ASSESSMENT

What were the ways that we were challenged or stretched? What were the ways

Important Links

iscucc.org/

duboiscenter.org

ucc.org

[Back Bay Mission](#)

[Ecuador Partnership](#)

[Eden Theological Seminary](#)

[Deaconess Foundation](#)

[Deaconess Nurse Ministry](#)

[Emmaus Homes](#)

[Hitz Memorial Home](#)

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[Insurance Board](#)

[LIFE Program](#)

[Neighborhood Houses](#)

[New Athens Home](#)

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

[St. Paul's Home](#)

[Uplands Village](#)

[UCC Campus Ministry](#)

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Pray for...

Prayer list for

Jan 8 - Jan 14, 2017

Churches & Pastors

- Hecker Friedens UCC, Rev. Ivan (Vivian) Horn
- Highland Evangelical UCC, Rev. Chris (Cathy) Hill, Sr. Pastor

we grew spiritually? What took us by surprise this year? What did we learn from the good times together and the not so good or difficult times together? In the moments in which God's presence was fully evident to us, what was happening in the life of our congregation?

VISIONING

If money or resources of any kind were not an issue, what are some ministries or missions we would start? If God is calling us to be the best we can be...what is our best? What would it look like if this year we placed our emphasis first on carrying out the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ? What would we do if we were not afraid of how it might be critiqued or criticized by a few? If we could do only one thing really well this year, what would it be?

I am sure you would have many more questions and ponderings to add. Questions such as these could help facilitate deeper conversations about the ministry to which we have been entrusted. If we are open to it, I am confident we will be able to see and identify the ways God has and will do a new thing among us.

Blessings to each of you as we begin the New Year!

May you embrace opportunities for new beginnings and discover the promises of God are true and can be trusted. - "Behold, I will do a new thing."
Shana

SHARING IN WORSHIP WITH YOU

A Note from Shana

My worship schedule for upcoming weeks:

January 8

Worshiping at St. John Evangelical Collinsville (Service of Farewell for Rev. Tony Minear)

January 15

Preaching at Winter Weekend, DuBois Center

January 22

Worshiping at St. Paul UCC, Floraville

January 29

Worshiping at Zion UCC Central City (*Service of Farewell for Rev. Pamela Smith)
**Please note Sunday, January 29 also marks the retirement of Rev. Gail Geisel from Friedens UCC in Marissa, Illinois and the end of Rev. Ted Engelsdorfer's ministry at Peace UCC in Jerseyville. Please keep these pastors and congregations in your prayers during this time of transition and discernment.*

I am currently planning my worship schedule for April 2017 and beyond. If I have not been at your church yet, I would love an invitation! 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. I am looking forward to meeting you and sharing in worship with you.

Blessings, Shana



The Center for Progressive Renewal is offering a spring semester online UCC History, Polity and Theology class beginning on January 11, 2017 and ending April 12, 2017. The class has met the polity requirements of most Committees on Ministry in the UCC, and has been accepted

as a three credit course over nine seminaries, including Union (NYC), Vanderbilt, Candler, Columbia, Lexington, Eden, and Lancaster and a number of others. Read more about the class and find registration information [here](#).

ONLY 7 MORE DAYS - Time to Close the Books!

Illinois South Conference Financial Books will close on January 10, 2017 at 4 pm. If you want OCWM or any of the special offerings to be credited to 2016, these things must apply:

1. The date of the check must be dated 2016,
2. The contribution form must be dated 2016.

If these two requirements are not there, the contribution will be posted to your 2017 financials. This could affect your 5 for 5 standing for 2016. If you have questions, contact Shirley Bergmann at sbergmann@iscucc.org or 618-654-2125.

- Highland Evangelical UCC, Rev. Will (Alicia) VerDuin, Associate Pastor

Retired Pastor

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

People with Life Concerns

- **CORRECTION:** Rev. Max Pepmeier's widow, Norma Sabbert Pepmeier, is the sister of Rev. Don Sabbert, not his wife Anne, and also the sister of Luetta Sabbert Bizer, wife of Rev. Arnold Bizer, former Pastor of Salem UCC, Alhambra.

- Pray for the family of Rev. Dr. Harold George "Hal" (Phyllis) Landwehr, Jr. who died on Dec 27. Rev. Landwehr served churches in Massachusetts, Colorado and Ohio. While semi-retired, he also served as interim pastor at various churches in ISC and MMS Conference as well as Chaplain at the VA Hospital in Marion. On Sat, Jan 7 at the Zion UCC in Marion, a time of visitation will be from 10 am - 11 am and a memorial service will be held at 11 am. Clergy are invited to participate in a clergy processional. Those participating are asked to robe and wear red stoles. Clergy will gather at 10:45 am, prior to the memorial service to line up for the procession.

- Pray for Rev. Arnold (Luetta) Bizer as he deals with health issues. Rev. Bizer served as pastor of Alhambra Salem UCC prior to retiring. Cards may be sent to 602 Woodchuck Ln, Lake St. Louis MO 63367.

- Keep Rev. Dr. Douglas Anders in your prayers as he deals with health issues. Cards may be sent to him at 2921 Moniteau, St. Louis, MO 63121.

- Pray for Grace (Rev. Loren) Windhorst as she recuperates after returning home from the hospital and a rehabilitation facility. Cards may be sent to her at 10 E Hawthorne Pkwy, Apt 235, Vernon Hills, IL 60061.

- Pray for Pastor Dennis Gilbert as he deals with health issues. Cards may be sent to 3305 Joyce Dr. Belleville, IL 62226.



Festival of Faith for Middle Schoolers 6th to 8th grades

The Festival of Faith 2017 is an event for 6th-8th graders and their chaperones. It will take place on February 18-19 (Saturday & Sunday) at DuBois Center. We welcome **Jay Tyson** from St Paul UCC Waterloo as the event's new leader and thank him for taking on this exciting, but challenging, responsibility! (He is taking Pam Kellerman's place since she was overbooked with responsibilities this year, but we appreciate all of her hard work in years past!) Please note the important dates - **January 24 for space requests** and **February 6 for paperwork /payment to the ISC office**. The [packet](#) has been emailed to all of the churches and youth leaders in an effort to be green and to save on mailing costs. However, we would be happy to mail hard copies to churches if requested.

The 26th Annual Winter Weekend January 14 - 16, 2017 at DuBois Center *Seeing Clearly:*

No conflict between faith & science
Deadline is TOMORROW, Jan 4, 2017

Winter Weekend is the Illinois South Conference UCC Senior High Youth Event. Young people in grades 9 - 12 are invited to come immerse themselves in a uniquely UCC environment. We learn, pray, play, worship, share, celebrate, and eat together in a safe and sacred environment. This year youth will discuss the possible conflict between religion and science with Paul Wallace, guest speaker and author. Add the uplifting, faith filled music of Andra Moran, and it promises to be one amazing weekend at DuBois Center!!

Click [here](#) for the complete packet or go to www.iscucc.org to print individual registration materials.

There is space for 25 more, so get your space requests in soon!



Churches in Transition

- Seeking a part-time Pastor St. John UCC, Evansville. St. John is a traditional church with a charm which one can find in a small town. The congregation is small and friendly and is looking for a pastor who will challenge the congregation, with sensitivity to their context. If interested, contact Tom Zweigart, St. John's church council president, at home, 618-853-4075, or on his cell at 618-792-5491.

- Seeking Part-Time Interim Pastor Zion UCC. Zion is located in Metropolis, the official hometown of Superman. It is a conservative congregation which enjoys a close relationship with God and each other. They want the interim pastor to help them focus on the future and help them grow spiritually. Contact Rev. Shana Johnson, Designated Conference Minister of the Illinois South Conference at sjohnson@iscucc.org or 618-654-2125.



Plan Now For Day of Discipleship WORKSHOPS FOR CHURCH MEMBERS

PURPOSE: To take home an abundance of information to experience wonderful worship.

SPEAKER: Rev. Dr. Christopher Grundy

WHO: Interested Church Members
Youth and Youth Leaders
Council/Consistory/Committee Members
Church Officers, Delegates
Christian Educators

WHEN: Saturday, February 25, 2017
9:30 am - 2:00 pm (Registration begins at 9:00 am.)

WHERE: St. Paul UCC,
330 N Buhrman St, Nashville, IL 62263
Cost: \$35 (\$30 for Early-bird payment by February 7, 2017)

[Flyer](#) [Cover Letter](#) [List](#) of Workshops [Registration Form](#) & [Map](#) to Nashville
DOD Bulletin [Insert](#) Complete [Packet](#) Register [Online](#)



LIFE at Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis is a program that invites women and men to embrace lifelong learning and faith exploration. It challenges participants to become disciples, faithful witnesses to the gospel, and faithful members and leaders of the church. Each program consists of two courses, and participants may register for either course. There are no prerequisites. Other highlights include:

- Five regular session offerings each academic year
- Course topics range from Old Testament, New Testament, Evangelism, Ethics, and more
- Courses are taught by world-renowned Eden faculty instructors
- Six hours of theological engagement per session
- Worship, meals, and instruction included in registration (\$130 per person, \$140 with lodging)

Click [here](#) for more information and to register. Or contact Jill Schantz at jschantz@eden.edu or by calling 314-918-2554.

2017 LIFE Schedule

Recommended Reading: White Rage by Carol Anderson, Ph.D.

Jan. 13-14, 2017

Certificate: God Revealed in Scripture: Biblical Theology, Rev. Dr. J. Clint McCann

Elective: In our Midst: Ministry to those Struggling with Addiction, Rev. Peter Maffly-Kipp

Feb. 17-18, 2017

Certificate: Shaping Faithful Worship: Worship and Sacrament, Rev. Dr. Christopher Grundy

Elective: Scripture studies, book of Matthew, Rev. Dr. Jeff Moore

April 7-8, 2017

Certificate: The Church is a Learning Community: Christian Education, Dr. Mai-Ahn Tran

Elective: The Sacrament of Baptism in our Spiritual Lives Today, Rev. Dr. Ginny Brown Daniel, Conference Minister, Missouri Mid-South Conference



A Ministry of Illinois South Conference
of the United Church of Christ



Thank you so much to all the individuals and churches that donated to make the Sweet Treats Shop a success at the 2016 Fall Festival. We raised \$1,200 in camp scholarship funds to help send kids to camp in 2017!

Individuals we'd like to thank: Becky Harrison, Charlene Stine, Janet Klie, Audrey Yann, Jane Noeltner, Patti Woods, Jeanie Stumpf, Dorothy Ruenberg, Carol Schmitt, Judy Jones, Bonnie Hoffman, Arline Magee, June Benedick, Delrose Juelfs, Joy Kessler, Myrna Anderson, Germaine Suter, Carol Shubert, Diane Frey, Elsie Brandmeyer, Kristen Belcher, Carolyn Valentine, Mary Williams, Rick Porter, Melissa Nehrt, Sarah Aebischer, Joyce Kniepkamp, Verna Steinkamp, Virginia Ilch, Loretta

Meyer, Dawn Zobrist, Judy Bolton, Nancy Autry, Norma Borgmann, and several anonymous donations!

Churches we'd like to thank: St. Paul UCC - Lebanon, St. Peter's UCC - Okawville, Zion UCC - St. Joe - Waterloo, St. Paul's UCC - Freeburg, St. Paul UCC - Nashville, St. John UCC - Evansville, St. Peter's UCC - Stone Church, St. John UCC - Summerfield, Salem UCC - Alhambra, Zion UCC - Hoyleton, St. Peter UCC - Centralia, St. Jacob UCC and Evangelical UCC - Godfrey.



BUNCO NIGHT - February 4

SAVE THE DATE - Join Region 2 for an evening of fun and fellowship. Gather the family, some friends, your youth group,

come in out of the cold and get energized! This fun, somewhat frenzied dice game is so easy to learn, anyone can play! St. Paul UCC in Columbia will open its doors at 6:30 pm on Saturday, February 4; the game will begin at 7 pm. The cost to play is \$10 per person, but WAIT - there's more. Also featured is a 50/50 drawing and a silent auction with a variety of fun items. Snacks and soda will also be available for purchase. All funds raised go to support the ministry of DuBois Center. Check out this [flyer](#) and share it with your church and your friends. Advance tickets are available; details included on the flyer.

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 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 it's not all work and no play. 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 dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org.



SUMMER JOBS Make a Difference this Summer!

Summer 2017 might seem like a long way off, but at DuBois Center we are already hard at work planning the summer camp schedule, the program and facility

improvements. We are also kicking off the staff

Dressing Up!

As you clean up after the holiday festivities, keep camp in mind! We are currently collecting dress up clothes (boas, hats, jewelry, glasses, vests, etc.) to build up our selection for Summer Camp



recruitment season! Energetic, child-focused, fun-loving - sound like you or someone you know? Check out the Summer of Service [flyer](#) and consider whether an amazing summer at camp might be just the opportunity to make a difference you have been looking for. Open positions include cabin counselors, barn staff and coordinators. FAITH. FUN. HARD WORK. GREAT FRIENDS. LONG HOURS. RESUME-BUILDING. PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE. AMAZING MEMORIES. Questions? Contact the DuBois Center office at program@DuBoisCenter.org or 618-787-2202. Application packets are available [online](#).

and Nature's Classroom skit nights. If you have some gently used, fun items you would like to donate, contact DuBois Center at 618-787-2202 or program@DuBoisCenter.org.



Follow Us on Instagram

Winter is a beautiful time here at DuBois Center. Be sure to follow us on Instagram, so you don't miss out on any of the great scenery! Also, be on the lookout for pictures of events, guest groups, horses and the occasional barn cat.



VACATION REQUESTS DUE? - Consider a Week at DuBois Center.

Adventure, Service Learning and Eco-Friendly vacations are growing in popularity. It makes sense; many of us are looking for a bit more than a traditional vacation might offer. If that's the case for you, consider a week or even a partial week at DuBois Center this summer. Share your skills as a nurse, cabin counselor, chaplain, photographer, barn helper or activity specialist. There are lots of opportunities to get involved, have fun and make a difference in the lives of young people. For more information, contact the DuBois Center office at dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org or 618-787-2202.



CHHSM News
Council for Health and Human Service Ministries

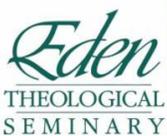


Back Bay Mission Opens 2018 Mission Trip Calendar

Back Bay Mission's 2018 mission trip calendar opened at midnight central time on January 1, 2017. You can reserve your mission trip week by emailing the Mission's volunteer coordinator at volunteercoordinator@thebackbaymission.org. The Mission accepts reservation requests only through email. The 2018 calendar is available on the Mission's [website](#).

Back Bay Mission is now accepting applications for the 2017 Shari Prestemon Social Justice Internship!

The Shari Prestemon Social Justice Internship provides people between the ages of 19 and 35 with a unique opportunity to participate in a 10-week summer program tailored to their interests. Drawing on the Mission's long experience in community engagement and advocacy for justice, the internship will nurture participants' passion for social justice and develop their appreciation for the church's role in seeking social justice. Applications must be submitted by March 1. Notifications will be made by March 31. You can learn more about the internship and download an application on the Mission's [website](#).



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Bracke Lecture: Embracing Hope's Challenges Feb 10, 2017 Wehrli Chapel at Eden Seminary. Speaker Reverend Dr. Luther E. Smith Jr. Hope's challenges for living into beloved community both guide and intimidate use. We come to realize how hope makes transformational

demands upon our faith and love. Still, the spiritual practices for becoming people and congregations of hope are readily available to us. The lecture focuses on embracing hope's challenges and the spiritual practices that are essential to any future worth anticipating. Visit www.eden.edu to learn more and to register.

Seminary Sunday: Feb 26, 2017 On Seminary Sunday your congregation joins with other UCC congregations across the country to celebrate, explore, and recognize the value of theological education. We hope you'll join us as we celebrate Eden Theological Seminary's long and rich history as well as its bright future as we strengthen the life of the church by educating women and men for ministry, enlivening critical reflection on faith, and supporting bold Christian discipleship. At Eden, we are proud that more than 80 percent of Eden alumni serve alongside your congregations in parish ministry and church leadership positions. Visit www.cueseminaries.org to learn more.

Spring Convocation: Christian Faith and our Religious Neighbor, April 18-19, 2017 Speakers include Dr. Dale Bishop, Dr. Damayanthi Niles, and Dr. Paul Knitter.

Kindercottage continues to make plans for our April 1 "Night at the Improv" dinner theater featuring the Paper Slips Theater group. This lively and unique show appeals to people of all ages. You can save by buying 8 tickets, fill a table and have a wonderful multi-generational outing. Tickets are \$40 each, or save by purchasing 8 for \$300! Sponsorships are also available. Call 618-874-6505 for ordering information.



What's Happening at Illinois South Conference...

The next gathering of the Pastors/Spouses Fellowship will be on Thurs, Jan. 26 at the Red Apple in Maryville at 11:30 am. We cordially invite those who have come regularly and any others who would like to share in the warm fellowship this "without-any-responsibilities" get-together provides for a meal. To make reservations, please contact Herb & Bennie Schafale at 618-476-3925 or herbenne@wisperhome.com no later than Jan. 22.

Region 3

Job Opportunity: St. John Evangelical United Church of Christ in Collinsville, IL is looking for a person to lead the music program for our Sunday school children (sessions at 9 am and 10:30 am) and teach a short Sunday school lesson to children in the 10:30 session. Hours are 8 am to 11:30 am on Sunday mornings throughout the school year. Pay rate is \$10/hour. If interested, or to find out more information, please contact Christy at 618-420-2608 or.

Region 5

Job Opportunities: Evangelical UCC in Highland is looking for 2 full time teachers for their Wee Care Day Care. Interested candidates must have 60 hours from an accredited college including 6 hours of child care courses. Benefits available include health, vision, and dental insurance; paid vacation, sick time and holidays. Please contact Karin at 618-654-6647 for more information.

Region 7

Region 7's Irvington Food Pantry is getting very low, especially on the home items, such as toilet paper, shampoo, cleaning items, baby items, plus meat and canned meat. We need everyone's help.