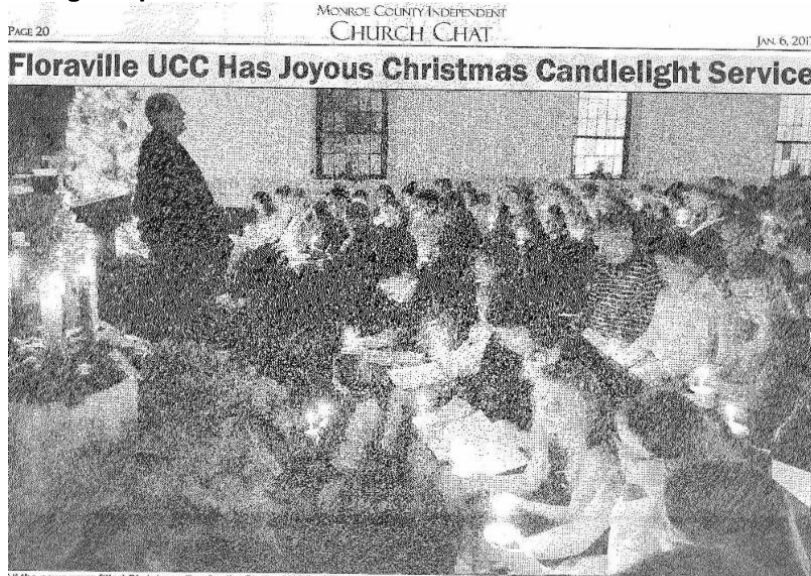


Weekly Connection

For the Week of January 22, 2017 - January 28, 2017
Diverse Minds, Covenant Hearts, Made One in the Body of Christ

The Amazing People of Illinois South Conference....



All the pews were filled Christmas Eve for the St. Paul UCC of Floraville's Candlelight Service. An evening ended with Pastor Matt Friz leading the congregation in a cappella version of *Silent Night*.

St. Paul UCC in Floraville made the Monroe County Independent on January 6, 2017. The caption reads, "All the pews were filled Christmas Eve for the St. Paul UCC Floraville's Candlelight Service. The evening ended with Pastor Matt Friz leading the congregation in an a cappella version of *Silent Night*." You may not be able to see from this photo, but many of the congregants were young in years and in heart.



Goodbyes are hard. We don't get a script of how to do them. We don't always know what to say or what to do. The truth is, for most of us, if given the choice, we would simply avoid goodbyes. I learned this about myself the first time I went to church camp. My first experience at church camp was typical.

When I arrived, I was a bit nervous and anxious not knowing what to expect. Like all new campers, I worried about things like: Would I be able to sleep at night? Would I like the food? Would I be homesick? Would I like my counselor? But...more importantly would I make friends? The first two days seemed so long as I tried to acclimate and navigate this new situation, but by day three at camp it felt like home.

The rest of the week went quickly in comparison to the first part of the week. It seemed as campers (perhaps for the counselors and staff as well) that we had just said hello and now we were saying our goodbyes.

I will never forget how I felt the Saturday morning my parents came back to camp to pick me up. There was such a sense of urgency on my part. As we were loading up my stuff, at one point my parents turned to me and said, "Is there anyone that you want to say goodbye to?" Quickly I responded, "No, I just want to go home." I wanted to avoid the awkwardness of not really knowing what to say or do. I wanted to avoid the risk of getting emotional in front of others. I wanted to avoid the goodbye.

When I got back home, I learned the importance of goodbye as I felt the pangs of regret. Eventually, I realized that I had missed an opportunity that I would never get back. As an adult, when I find myself leaning toward avoiding a goodbye, I recall this first learning about the importance of goodbyes. Over the years, I have learned what can linger when I do not participate in a goodbye.

Goodbyes are natural part of the continually changing life of a church. I have been

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](#)

[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
Jan 22 - Jan 28, 2017

Churches & Pastors

- Irvington Friedens UCC, Rev. Stacy (Mark) Tate

- Jamestown St. Paul UCC, Pastor Don (Lois) Propeck

Retired Pastor

- Rev. Paul and Marilyn Thompson, Jr., Red Bud, IL

People with Life Concerns

- Pray for Rev. Arnold (Luetta) Bizer as he deals with health issues. Rev. Bizer served as

mindful of this, as we have a good number of churches in our Conference that are experiencing pastoral transitions. I strongly believe a pastor's departure (regardless of the circumstances that lead to the departure) can be an opportunity for everyone in the faith community to learn and practice the value of a "good" goodbye.

The truth is goodbyes are hard. Yet, if we avoid them, we miss out on the opportunities for closure, healing and blessing. Our goodbyes are just important as our hellos. Perhaps even more important, as they can often be our last and final impression of one another. For those of you facing transitions, I encourage you, even if your first inclination is to want to avoid it, to practice "good" goodbyes. Remind one another that as you say goodbye you will be surrounded by the love you have shared, the promises of God, the presence of Jesus Christ, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Blessings, Shana

SHARING IN WORSHIP WITH YOU

A Note from Shana

My worship schedule for upcoming weeks:

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

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 continues treatment. He is dealing well with treatment, but prayers are always welcome. Cards may be sent to him at 2921 Moniteau, St. Louis, MO 63121.

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

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.



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! 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.

Blessing in Blocks! During February 4-13, 2017 a team of four people, representing two ISC congregations will be building in Catamayo - Ecuador which is in the province of Loja just north of Peru. This will be our tenth building project in Catamayo. While it might seem that this is a small team to build a house, there will be an Ecuadorian foreman and a couple of masons, some members of the family that will purchase the home from Habitat Ecuador, the Habitat coordinator and some volunteers from a local church, so there will be enough people to do the work. However, since there are so few ISC traveler's congregations represented in which we can raise money for building materials we are hoping that people in the other ISC churches will become involved in the Blessings in Blocks program. During past years people from about 1/3 of the ISC churches have been involved in this "Blessings in Blocks" materials funding process.

We have taken around two hundred 3x5 cards with blessings for the family written



on them to each of the building projects during the past 9 years. Some of the cards arrive at the Highland office with a check for building materials, however, most of them do not. While we are very pleased to have the cards and appreciate the thoughtfulness involved in sending them to the Highland office, this time we need a lot more of them to include checks for \$5, \$10 or \$20.

During recent trips we have asked the homebuyer family members to place the cards in the blocks as the blocks are handed to those who are building the wall. This seems to be very meaningful to our partner families.

Perhaps it is impractical for you to go on one of these building trips. However, this is a way that you can have a very specific role in the success of this ministry. We would much prefer to have 300 people who would send a card with a check for \$10 than to have 30 people send a card with \$100. It really touches the families in Ecuador that hundreds of people who they will never meet want to be involved in helping to build their new home.

Please write a blessing on a 3 x 5 card and send it to the Conference office **by January 31**: Blessings in Blocks, Illinois South Conference, 1312 Broadway, Highland, IL 62249. Click [here](#) for bulletin insert.

Celebrate Seminary Sunday on February 26th

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 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 CUE Seminaries [website](#).

Please join us on February 26 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 at chad.schwickerath@cts-chicago.edu or 773-896-2434

United Theological Seminary Brad Reiners at breiners@unitedseminary.edu or 651-255-6164

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

Each seminary will do its best to accommodate each request.

The new 2017 ISC Directory is here!!

You can download it [here](#) or anytime at the ISC [website](#) under the Resources tab. We will keep that link updated when/if we hear that something has changed. There is always a link in the Weekly Connection as above.

Chili Cook Off to Benefit Kindercottage

Date: Sunday, February 19th, 11 am to 2 pm. Setup for contestants is 10:30 a.m.

Place: Fellowship Hall, Evangelical United Church of Christ, 2520 Popular, Highland, IL.

Cost: Entry for chefs, \$10. Guests: \$2 tasting kit, \$3 bowl, \$10 VIP bowl.

Purpose: Kindercottage is an important landmark Preschool that has been in East St. Louis for over 50 years. Brenda Crisp and staff need our aid now to replace monies lost from the State and Illinois South Conference's balancing its budget. Illinois South Conference challenges the churches to continue to donate directly to Kindercottage. Please help us publicize this event every way you can. We promise great food, great fun, and great mission.

Contact: Lynn Beil, Missy Loyet, or Kay Ahaus at 618- 520-1790 or kayahaus@yahoo.com

Sponsor of the event is the Mission Board of Evangelical United Church of Christ.

Click [here](#) for a flyer.

Faith Formation for Clergy and Lay

You are invited to an experiential learning event sponsored by the Faith Formation team of the United Church of Christ on March 29. Discussions about **intergenerational ministry** abound in our churches today and studies show the importance of positive intergenerational relationships on the faith formation of our children and youth. Yet churches are finding that building these intergenerational relationships is easier said than done. This event, Logos, will introduce you to a program designed to create intergenerational relationships in your church as well as teach your kids Bible study

and worship skills.

LOGOS - is a weekly intergenerational experience for young people that creates an arena where all ages, together, can learn about, experience, and practice the art of Christian relationships, critical for developing life-long disciples.

At this Inspiring Model of Ministry you'll participate in an evening of Logos at St. John's United Church of Christ in Chesterfield, MO and then have a chance to reflect on what you experienced, have a chance to ask questions of the Logos' leaders, and ruminate on how you might bring this innovative practice back to your own ministry setting. This event is not primarily designed for clergy. Your church could send children's ministry/youth faith formation staff or volunteers to experience the retreat and report back on the experience.

Cost for the event is \$25 per person and dinner is included. A limited number of scholarships are available to help defray travel costs for the event. For more information and to register, click [here](#). If you have other questions please contact me at beckwithi@ucc.org or at 216-736-3875.

Hope to see you in Missouri on March 29.

Rev. Ivy Beckwith, UCC Faith Formation Minister and Team Leader



Shaking Up Worship

Day of Discipleship
February 25, 2017
St. Paul UCC
Nashville
9 am - 2 pm

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](#)



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

Summer Barn Staff

Every summer, we hire 2-3 staff with significant horse experience; 1 Barn Coordinator and 1-2 Barn Assistants/Activity Specialists. These staff members facilitate all activities at the barn including horse care, barn chores, arena lessons and trail rides. Check out this [flyer](#) for more information. If you or someone you know would be a good fit for this position, let us know by emailing program@DuBoisCenter.org or calling 618-787-2202.



Sneak Peek SUMMER CAMP 2017!

Here at DuBois Center we are busy planning yet another incredible summer! Registration opens February 15, so watch for the brochure earlier that month. Use this [schedule](#) to begin planning your summer now! Stay up to date by checking our [Facebook](#) page or email to dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org.

Looking for a Summer Job?

Being a part of the summer staff at DuBois Center can be the experience of a lifetime. Building relationships, making a difference in the lives of young people, developing skills to enhance your resume while having a blast swimming in the lake, riding horses and sharing your faith- these are the trademarks of a summer at camp. You'll work harder than you ever have before while having more fun than you thought possible. A





Counselors in Training (CIT) June 25-30

CIT is a great opportunity for young people who are interested in developing their leadership skills, working with younger children, and having a great time at DuBois Center! The program functions much like a "lab school" with discussion, training, practice and evaluation sessions. Skills gained will help participants grow as positive Christian leaders, manage problematic behavior, create a safe, fun environment, and teach basic camp skills. CIT is designed for youth who have completed grades 10-12. Previous camp experience is NOT required. NOTE: A special application is required - in addition to the Camp Registration Form. The CIT application packet is available [online](#) or by contacting the DuBois Center office at dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org. For more information, check out this [flyer](#).

summer of service has the potential to be the BEST summer of your life. For more information, check out this [flyer](#), our summer camp employment [page](#), or contact the DuBois Center office at program@DuBoisCenter.org or 618-787-2202.

BUNCO NIGHT - Feb. 4

Join Region 2 for an evening of fun and fellowship. This somewhat frenzied dice game is so easy to learn, anyone can play! Gather the family, some friends and your youth group. On Saturday - February 4, doors open at St. Paul UCC in Columbia at 6:30 pm, and the game begins at 7 pm. Just \$10 per person covers the cost to play... and there's more! A 50/50 drawing and silent auction with a variety of fun items will round out the evening. Snacks and soda will be available for purchase. Check out this [flyer](#) and share it with your church and your neighborhood. Advance tickets are available; details included on the flyer. Funds raised go to support the ministry of DuBois Center.



CHHSM News

Council for Health and Human Service Ministries

Neighborhood Houses is holding a job fair on Sat, Jan 21 from 10 am - 2 pm. The job fair will take place at Caroline Mission Early Childhood Education Center located at 2828 Caroline Street, St. Louis, MO 63104. Neighborhood Houses will be conducting interviews on-site for positions including full- and part-time Early Childhood Education Teachers, part-time Program Assistants (School year and Summer), accountant (CPA preferred), and an HR Generalist! Click [here](#) for more information.



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.

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



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](#).

CUPIDS, CONFECTIONS, CONVICTIONS

Love and murder are in the air at St. John's Community Care. With the anticipation of Valentine's Day we are preparing for our mystery production: "It's My Party and I'll Die If I Want To" Fundraiser. It will be held on Sunday, February 12, 2017 at Faith Hall - St. John Evangelical United Church of Christ. A fun afternoon filled with lots of surprises! Be prepared to laugh along while you enjoy the show, chocolate confections and decadent desserts. Doors open at 2:30 p.m. and the show starts at 3:00 p.m. Tickets will be available for purchase at St. John's Community Care, 222 Goethe Avenue. Tickets are \$25.00 each. Click [here](#) for a flyer. If you would like to make a donation of a restaurant gift card, bottle of wine (\$20 min.) or prize, please contact Missy at mathmer@stjohnscc.org.



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...



Thomaskirche, Leipzig

Tenors and basses are desired to complete a mixed-voice chamber choir which will tour Germany and the Czech Republic, departing from St. Louis on July 18 and returning on July 27, 2017. Cities visited in or performed in include Nuremberg, Bayreuth, Wittenberg, Leipzig, Dresden, and Prague.

The choir is under the direction of Daniel Fry, Music Director at St. Paul UCC in Belleville, with Tristan Frampton, Asst. Prof. of Music at St. Louis College of Pharmacy, as Assistant Director. Rehearsals will take place every other Sunday starting on February 12 from 1:30-3:30, and weekly starting on May 12 at the church, which is located at 115 West B Street, Belleville, IL. 62220. Some additional rehearsals toward the tour departure date are possible.

Repertoire includes works by Thompson, Mendelssohn, Billings, Persichetti,

Monteverdi, Bach, Ellington, Brubeck, and others. Approximate trip cost is \$4000.

Please contact Daniel Fry at dan-fry@stpaulucc.org or at 618-233-3303 for more information or with any questions.

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 2

BUNCO NIGHT - February 4
SAVE THE DATE - Join Region 2 for an evening of fun and fellowship. This fun dice game is so easy to learn, anyone can play! Doors open at St. Paul UCC in Columbia at 6:30 pm on Sat, Feb 4; the game will begin at 7

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

Region 6

Retirement Celebration for Rev. Pamela Smith will be held on Sun, Jan 29 at 2 pm at Zion UCC in Central City. They invite you to join them to say farewell to Rev. Pamela Smith as she embarks on this new journey after 27 years in ministry. If

pm. Cost is \$10 per person. 50/50 drawing and silent auction. Snacks and soda available for purchase. All proceeds go to support DuBois Center. Check out this [flyer](#). Advance tickets are available.

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 (services 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. Contact Christy at 618-420-2608 or wsp13@sbcglobal.net.

Region 4

Carlinsville St. Paul UCC will hold a Chili and Chicken Noodle Soup Supper on Sat, Jan 28 from 4 pm - 7 pm. All you can eat. Adults \$8; Children \$4. Proceeds go toward their kitchen fund. RSVP to the church at 217-854-4046.

health, vision, and dental insurance; paid vacation, sick time and holidays. Please contact Karin at 618-654-6647 for more information.

Evangelical UCC in Highland will hold a Chili Cookoff on Sun, Feb 19 from 11 am - 2 pm. Prize for the best entry. Proceeds go to Uni-Pres Kindercottage. Help them feed the children of East St. Louis.

Alhambra Salem UCC will hold its 69th Annual Whole Hog Sausage Supper on Sat, Jan 28 from 2:30 pm - 8 pm. All you can eat. Menu includes fresh homemade pork sausage, sauerkraut, mashed potatoes, gravy, green beans, bread, applesauce, dessert, coffee and milk. Adults \$10; Children 5 - 10 \$5; Children 4 and under Free. Carry-outs adult price only. Advanced sausage orders available for link or bulk sausage, backbones, and ribs. Place orders by calling 618-488-3733 or emailing ooey5@agtelco.com. Pick up orders on Thurs, Jan 26 or Sat, Jan 28.

you plan to attend, please RSVP to their church office by Wed, Jan 25 to 618-532-1751 or zionuccil@att.net. If you would like to contribute to a card tree for her, send cards to Amber Rhodes, Zion UCC, 101 N Broadway, Centralia IL 62801.

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.

Region 9

Christ UCC in Belleville will hold its 38th Annual Wurstmart on Sun, Jan 29 from 11 am - 4 pm. All you can eat! Menu includes pork sausage, sauerkraut, mashed potatoes, gravy, corn, green beans, applesauce, coffee or tea, and dessert. Adults \$11; Children ages 6 - 9 - \$5; Carry outs available! Contact 618-233-1962.