

Weekly Connection

For the Week of April 16, 2017 - April 22, 2017
Diverse Minds, Covenant Hearts, Made One in the Body of Christ

National Child Abuse Prevention Month

Every April individuals, organizations, and communities are invited to intentionally focus their resources, strengths, influence, and passion towards a critical issue that impacts us all - National Child Abuse Prevention Month. Nearly 700,000 children are abused in the United States annually, with sexual abuse affecting an estimated one in four girls and one in six boys by the time they reach the age of 18.

Schools, churches, youth serving programs, camps and all programs serving vulnerable populations - can prevent sexual abuse from happening. But we also know that abuse prevention is no small feat. To truly prevent sexual abuse from occurring within an organization, we must believe that everyone is responsible for protecting our youth, elderly, and adults with disabilities. We must generate ongoing awareness to the issue and prioritize safety at every level of the organization.

Managing the risk of sexual abuse takes a sustained, ongoing commitment to protecting those in your care. Engage with your leadership. Collaborate with your community partners. Educate your parents/guardians and those you serve. Ignite a culture of safety by becoming a champion of sexual abuse prevention. Read [more](#).



Recently, I had an AH HA moment about Jesus. When I have thought of Jesus being fully human and fully divine, it has always made sense to me that Jesus would have experienced the breadth of the human feelings. In the Gospel stories, I could identify and imagine Jesus experiencing feelings such as joy and grief, happiness and sadness, contentment, and even anger. As I read and reflected on the passion narratives, I also could imagine Jesus experiencing alienation, disappointment, hurt, and deep

emotional pain.

Yet, for some reason I never thought of Jesus as experiencing FEAR. It is not that I rejected the idea, but I never equated the Prince of Peace with FEAR. That is until I was reading *When Things Fall Apart: Heart Advice for Difficult Times* by Pema Chodron.

Chodron defines fear as a natural reaction to moving closer to the truth. She says that fear can be the great teacher, but most of us do not take the situations that cause us great fear and anxiety as teachings, rather as she writes, "We run like crazy. We use all kinds of ways to escape-all addictions stem from this moment when we meet our edge and we just can't stand it. We feel like we have to soften it, pad it with something, and we become addicted to whatever it is that seems to ease the pain."

As I read that section in the book, I put down the book for the moment, and I thought about all the ways that we as humans run when we are faced with our fears. I was also thinking about the rhythm, the movement, and the stories of Jesus that we reflect upon during Holy Week. Suddenly I thought, "Jesus never ran from fear, he was willing to stand in the midst of it, instead of fighting, he calmly moved through it to the other side."

The thought took me by surprise. I began to think about Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. What if Jesus wanted the disciples to stay awake with him, because he was anxious? When Jesus prays, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will," what if he is acknowledging his fear and asking God to help him face it?

In *When Things Fall Apart*, Pema Chodron also tells the story about one her mentors, Master Rinpoche. He often told the story about going to a monastery when he was still quite young.

When they arrived, no one was there to meet them, which was unusual, and there was this enormous dog chained up outside. It was a Mastiff with a big collar around its neck and it was very, very vicious, and Rinpoche and his attendants had to walk around this angry dog to get to the entrance to the monastery. The dog was frothing

Important Links

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Pray for...

**Prayer list for
April 16 - April 22, 2017
Churches & Pastors**

- Red Bud St. Peter UCC, Rev. Lisa (Walt) Hart, Interim Pastor
- St. Jacob UCC, Rev. Gary (Joyce) Kniepkamp

at the mouth, it was straining to get to them, and as they carefully made their way around the dog, the chain broke and it ran at them. Rinpoche said, "All my attendant monks ran away ... and I ran right at the dog." The children were all just shocked ... their mouths were all open ... Rinpoche paused for dramatic effect, and then he said, "And the dog was so shocked that it put its tail between its legs and ran away." When thinking about entering the city of Jerusalem for Passover, Jesus knew there would be those standing on the edges, at the back of the crowd, whispering, plotting, and scheming-devising plans to quiet him to stop the momentum and movement that this moment would surely create. He knew there were leaders who were intimidated by him, irritated by him, threatened by him--that were frothing at the mouth to get rid of him.

Jesus knew he could run the other direction to preserve his own life.

Jesus knew he could quietly sneak into the city calling no attention to himself in efforts to keep death itself at bay.

Instead, Jesus made a grand entrance.

He came riding into the city like a King declaring that he was still the Prince of Peace. He faced the terrifying dog of death itself and ran at it full force, when it broke past the chains and came after him as they nailed him to the cross.

Why? So that the people of God of every time, generation, and place would know there is nothing that we have to fear--not even death itself.

Jesus our King, our Savior, did not run away, but rather he faced it all head on.

He listens to the cries of all people--Hosanna...Save Us.

Jesus response is...I am here.

I have faced it all.

Nothing can overwhelm me or those who believe in me.

For Blessed Are the Ones Who Come in the Name of the Lord!

Blessed is the coming Kingdom.

Hosanna in the Highest. AMEN!

SHARING IN WORSHIP WITH YOU

A Note from Shana

My worship schedule for upcoming weeks:

April 15 - Saturday

Preaching at Region 8 Easter Vigil Service, St. Paul, Lebanon

April 23

Participating in Rosemary Captain's ordination at St. Paul UCC, Lebanon

April 30

Participating in the Farewell Service for Pastor David Krueger at Concordia UCC, Belleville

May 7

Preaching at St. Paul UCC, Columbia

I am currently planning my worship schedule for August 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 **Your OCWM monies at work.**



Thanks to Illinois South Conference

Because of the many generous gifts St. John's Community Care received at the ISC annual meeting last fall, we have not had to purchase paper towels, wipes, or candy we use for Bingo prizes for the past 6 months! And the craft supplies will last even longer. Having a quantity of markers was a blessing in early March, when we had 40 grade school children from Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church come for a short visit. They worked with our participants to decorate placemats for St. Patrick's Day.

The amazing people of Illinois South are making a difference in Collinsville and Edwardsville every day through our ministries. We are grateful you value our mission of making a positive difference in the lives of our neighbors challenged by aging and disability.

Nancy Berry, Executive Director

Retired Pastor

- Rev. Dr. Sheldon Culver, Highland, IL

People with Life Concerns

- Pray for Kay (Bill) Ahaus as she deals with health issues. Kay is a member of Highland Evangelical UCC and a member of the ISC Justice & Witness Team. She also served as General Synod Delegate in 2015. Cards may be sent to 200 Rinderer Road, Trenton, IL 62293.

- Please pray for Nancy (Rev. Robert) Tripp as she deals with serious health issues. Cards may be sent to her at 9008 E South Circle Dr, Effingham, IL 62401.

- 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.



Your Church Could Be Featured at General Synod

Is your church doing something to help build a just world for all? We want to know! Make a 30 - 60 second video of you or someone from your church telling us what you're doing. Your video can show us anything you're doing to make a difference in caring for all God's children and God's creation. Some examples include:

- Your food pantry or food drive
- After-school program
- Tutoring
- Participation in community projects
- Help for the homeless
- Working to protect the environment
- Housing rehab

Send your video to jannsoha@ucc.org and your church will be featured on screen at General Synod in Baltimore this summer!

3 things to remember:

- Video should be 30 - 60 seconds long.
 - Shoot your video horizontally (hold the phone sideways).
 - Email your video to jannsoha@ucc.org by **May 30**.
- Thanks! We can't wait to see and hear your story!

In Palm Sunday, St. John Evangelical UCC of Collinsville welcomed their new Intentional Interim Senior Pastor, the

Rev. Dr. Marvin Morgan. Pastor Morgan has been called to serve a two year interim term at St. John.

Your OCWM monies at work.



Left: Members of the Search Committee (L) teach the children how to properly welcome someone.

Middle: Rev. Katie Jo Bielke (R) introduces the congregation to the Rev. Dr. Marvin Morgan (L).

Top Right: Welcoming Pastor Morgan

An important note from Heather E. Kimmel, General Counsel for the United Church of Christ, on the poem "The Dash" by Lisa Ellis. The main thrust: Do NOT republish this poem in ANY FORM.

"If UCC churches have any portion of the poem "The Dash" by Linda Ellis included in their hard copy or online publications including websites, Facebook, Instagram, etc., they are at risk of being threatened with a copyright enforcement action by The Dash Management, the company that enforces the copyright. "This company essentially makes a living by finding copyright violations and threatening a lawsuit. Publishing any portion of any work without permission may result in a church's liability for statutory damages, which are generally not covered by insurance. Properly attributing the work is not a substitute for getting a license (permission) from the copyright owner, and copyright owners are entitled to enforce their copyrights. We have discussed this particular poem before as several of our churches have fallen victim to it, and more are continuing to do so."

125 YEARS IN MISSION



Building a Community Just for Kids

By Rev. Starsky D. Wilson

In April of 2014, more than 120 advocates, practitioners and academics gathered in St. Louis' Grand Center District to discuss research and their experiences helping children. They quickly realized there wasn't a common vision of the goal they all pursued. Problem solvers

that they were, the team set out to craft a clear definition of child well-being.

In the end, they agreed that child well-being is when a little one grows and develops as kids their age (and stage) should, has what he or she needs to be a successful adult and is able to enjoy being a kid. The group went further to assert that well-being is the right of every child and it's the community's responsibility to create conditions for children to flourish.

These St. Louisans' audacious claims of children's rights and civic responsibility reach well beyond the commitments of our country: the only member of the United Nations not to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child. They also helpfully bind together the image of a playful, inquisitive child with the healthy function of a community. At Deaconess, we believe a just society is essential to achieve individual and community health.

Of course, our society is not yet just. Read [more](#).



DuBois on Broadway May 12

Reminder--tickets to the DuBois on Broadway 2.0 are available for purchase. For more information or tickets, please contact your church office; Illinois South Conference office at 618-654-2125 or its [website](#); DuBois Center office at 618-787-2202 or its [website](#); or Norma Borgmann at 618-292-4617; or register [online](#).

Thank you to the generous donors of the silent and oral auction items, either notified or received. Below is a preview of donations that will be available for the highest bidders on Friday night, May 12 at the Four Points Conference Center in Fairview Heights. We will add to the list of auction items as they come in.

Oral Auction: Get-Away Vacation at Lake of the Ozarks Resort Condominium; Home-cooked steak meal for 8; Original Springs Hotel Overnight/Meals in Okawville, Timeshare for a week to a chosen destination from available list; Singing telegram by Christine Brewer; Hand-created Cardinal theme quilt; 2 Reserved baseball tickets for Cardinals vs Kansas City game on August 10; Child-sized picnic table; 2 Adirondack chairs; Wooden rocking horse; Unique garden items' package/certificate; Rolling garden cart of beverages; and Sheraton Hotel overnight package.

Silent Auction: 3 Blessings' baskets filled with specific items; King-sized quilt/3 pillows-horses design; Strawberry theme basket; Garden theme basket; Wine bottle/glasses' holder; Fun pail for children; Female tote of Christian gifts; Oak leaves' special selections; 4 Seasons' Baskets; Christmas hand-designed wall hanging; and Assorted Baskets of gift cards.

There is still time to contribute either kind of auction items. Just contact Norma at 618-292-4617 or nborgmann1658@charter.net before April 28 so the entry or entries and name of donor may be included in the Gala program book and to make arrangements for delivery or pick-up. Thank you in advance. Remember the proceeds from these auctions and chef-prepared meal on May 12 at Four Points will be applied toward the financial support of future major physical and programming improvements at DuBois Center.

DuBois Center News

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



SUNDAY FUNDAY - April 30

Join us for a Sunday afternoon filled with family-friendly fun! Visit the horses and ride one in the arena; cruise the lake in a pontoon boat; play a round of Ga-ga ball; roast marshmallows and tour the facilities all for FREE! A yummy, reasonably-priced meal is available - but optional. You are welcome to bring a picnic instead or pick up something on the way. Never been to DuBois Center? Sunday Fundays are a great introduction. There are even orientations for prospective summer campers and their parents. Click [here](#) for a flyer to share and post. What's cooking on

April 30? Pork steaks with "think summer" picnic trimmings and salad bar! Vegetarian alternative available. Meal reservations are due by noon on Monday, April 24.

Schedule

Meal: Noon - 2 pm

Activities: 12:30 pm - 3 pm

Summer Camp Orientation: 2:30 pm - 3:30 pm



Here's a Thought!

Looking for a great event for your church family? Consider car-pooling to a Sunday Funday and participating together. You can even reserve an outdoor worship space or the labyrinth for a morning or afternoon service. Your ministry... in the outdoors!

Your OCWM monies at work.



BUSY HANDS...Work Project Update

Youth and adults from across the ISC Conference have put their hands, hearts and backs into a variety of projects at DuBois Center this spring. Cords of wood have been split and stacked; the water is back on in many of the rustic areas of camp, and benches have

been moved out of winter storage. The patio on Oak swim area renovation is complete. The aging docks in the swim area have been removed and dismantled and the area prepped for Phase 2. In addition, work has begun on the bathrooms in Woodside; they're getting a facelift. A special thanks to the workers from our Father-Son Retreat; Grantfork UCC; St. John UCC - Trenton; St. Paul UCC - Columbia; St. Paul UCC - Nashville; Zoar UCC - New Hanover. Rev Bev Kahle stacked wood with the Nashville confirmands and Rev RJ Morgan coordinated both the dock and bathroom projects. **Your OCWM monies at work.**



MEET our SUMMER STAFF

Welcome Grace (Gracie) Allen to DuBois Center's 2017 summer staff team! She will be serving as Counselor/Activity Specialist. Gracie lives in Maeystown, IL where she is an active member of St. John UCC and a PK (Pastor's Kid). Gracie is new to our staff, but not to DuBois Center. She's attended Winter Weekends with her church and served as a summer camp volunteer. She has also participated in our Buddy to Buddy Mission Experience a number of times, working with young people from the residential program in Hoyleton. Gracie loves to sing and perform in community theater productions. These talents, as well as her unique ability to sound like Chewbacca, will be put to good use at camp. Gracie is currently working part-time and studying for her associate degree in

education at SWIC (Southwestern Illinois College). Her references all agree; she is kind, very responsible and has a great attitude. Gracie is very excited to be serving at DuBois Center this summer. When asked why she said, "When I had volunteered I had loved every aspect of camp... I am most excited about helping kids have a great time..." **Your OCWM monies at work.**



SERVICE SATURDAY - April 22

Put in a hard day's work, earn some sore muscles, and feel great about it! Service Saturdays are a great way to spend quality time with family and friends, and help DuBois Center ramp up for summer! If you need service hours, it's also a great way to log 6-8 in one day. There will be projects for a variety of ages and abilities - sanding, painting, cleaning, stacking, raking and more. If you have plumbing or carpentry skills, there are projects in these categories as well. Lunch is provided as are most general tools. Share this [flyer](#) or learn more [online](#). RSVPs requested, so we know how much food to cook, to dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org or 618-787-2202.

Your OCWM (Our Church's Wider Mission) monies at work.



Git Along Little Doggie!

Git along... or you might miss out! Horse Camps are filling quickly, but there are still great options available. Horse campers still enjoy popular camp activities like 9-square and archery, but they also spend significantly more time around the barn and out on the trails! Some mornings, it's up and at 'em long before chow time - the horses need to be fed and groomed before breakfast. Some evenings, it's untacking, feeding and barn chores before evening games. As long as the weather allows, horse campers have the option to ride each day! Depending on the skill level and interests of the group, horse times may include cantering, riding bareback, playing games on horseback in the arena or educational "horse sense" sessions. For more information, go to the camp [brochure](#) online or contact DuBois Center at dcinf@DuBoisCenter.org or 618-787-2202 to have one sent to you.

Your OCWM monies at work.



"SECRET LIFE of PETS" Another Amazing Quilt from Mascoutah

Max and Duke are looking for a home! Each spring, the Happy Quilters of St. John UCC in Mascoutah sponsor a Quilt Show. It is quite the event with over 200 quilts on display and an old-fashioned "bed turning" demonstration. Another

highlight is the drawing for a very special youth quilt (60x74). All proceeds from ticket sales for this quilt, plus a matching gift from the church go to support the ministry of DuBois Center. Tickets are now on sale - \$1 each or 6 for \$5. Print this [form](#) and follow the directions included, or catch up with the quilt at a local church. It will be traveling with dedicated volunteers to different UCC churches. Check the "Region" section of Weekly Connection for details on 38th Annual Quilt Show on Saturday, April 22.

Your OCWM (Our Church's Wider Mission) monies at work.



RECYCLE your GOLF CART

Planning to replace your golf cart this spring? Have one that is just taking up space?

DuBois Center is in need of a 4-seat golf cart - gas or electric. Currently our nurses use a gator with two seats to respond to situations and deliver medication. If a camper needs to be transported back to the health center for treatment, there is no room for a third person. Renting a golf cart for the summer is very expensive, so we are exploring other options. You can help with this critical need and, perhaps, save some on your taxes. Donations are tax-deductible. For more information contact Shirley at dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org or 618-787-2202.

Your OCWM (Our Church's Wider Mission) monies at work.

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



Hitz Memorial Home Blessings Benefit Concert is scheduled for April 23 at 3 pm at the Salem UCC in Alhambra. Listen to excellent performances from area churches and Hitz Home residents. A blessings offering will be taken to help fund the third phase of the kitchen remodel consisting of a mobile island to be used by the residents daily. Come listen to the music!

St. Paul's Senior Community, First Bank, and Select Rehabilitation present their 2nd Annual Uncorked Event on Thurs, April 27 from 5 pm - 7 pm at the St. Paul's Senior Community. This is a special event to raise funds for charitable assistance for the residents of St. Paul's Senior Community. It will be a Wine Tasting and hors d'oeuvres will be served. Suggested donation \$30. Contact Elisha Engelmann at 618-509-4630 or eengelmann@standrews1.com. If you cannot attend but would like to make a donation, checks can be made to St. Paul's Foundation.



The Alzheimer Association presents Cardinal Reminiscence League, a session for people with early stage memory loss. The Cardinals Reminiscence League is open to people with memory loss who would like to share memories about the Cardinals baseball team, learn about the team's history, and support the current team. New fans and those who would like to socialize and learn more are welcome. Sessions will be held on the 3rd Thursday of each month at St. John's Community Care in Edwardsville from 10:30 am - 12 pm and are free. Call 618-656-7090 to learn more and reserve your seat. Click [here](#) for a flyer.

St. John's Community Care presents Surviving Caregiving, an insightful conference designed for family caregivers who wish to gain valuable knowledge and resources that will help them navigate the maze of caregiving, on Sat, April 29 at St. John Evangelical UCC in Collinsville from 9:30 am - 2:30 pm. Lunch is included. The keynote presentations are:



Legal and Financial Issues by Heidi Dodd, Attorney for Harter, Larson and Dodd
Medications - Benefits and Cautions by Brad Rea, Pharmacist and Hospice of Southern Illinois, Pharmacy Fellow
Caregiver Tips to Make Your Life Easier by Amy Sobrino, MSW Memory Care Home Solutions
Benefits of Therapy for Your Loved One by Rehabilitation Professionals, Inc.
 Click [here](#) for flyer. Call 618-222-2561 to register.

Upcoming Events at Eden Theological Seminary
Spring Convocation: Christian Faith and our Religious Neighbors



April 18-19, 2017
Speakers include Dr. Dale Bishop, Dr. Damayanthi Niles, and Dr. Paul Knitter
 What does it mean to love our neighbors when our neighbors do not share our faith? How do Christians participate in a pluralistic religious world without denigrating the faith of others or denying our own? With "Christian Faith and Our Religious Neighbors" and in conjunction with the Armin and Shirley Limper Program in Christianity and World Religions, Eden Seminary brings together three leading scholars on Christianity and pluralism to consider these questions and re-imagine Christianity's relationship with other faiths. Visit www.eden.edu to learn more and to register.

Spring Commencement will be on May 19, 2017 at 7:30 pm at the Pilgrim United Church of Christ, 826 Union Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108

Deaconess Nurse Ministry has been selected as one of four St. Louis nonprofit health organizations to benefit from the proceeds raised at the very popular Signature Foundation Golf Tournament. The tournament will be held on April 24th, and we invite you to register for this fun and charitable outing.



When: Monday, April 24th, 2017
Where: Whitmoor Country Club - 1100 Whitmoor Drive St. Charles, MO
Cost: \$300 per golfer
Volunteer Request: Not playing? That's ok! We're in need of volunteers to help out at our booth and on the course. Please contact [Rev. Donna Smith - Pupillo](#), DNM Executive Director, to learn more. For more information and to register to play, click [here](#).



The UniPres Kindercottage Board of Directors expresses our deep thanks to the Illinois South Conference United Church of Christ, the Giddings-Lovejoy Presbytery, our many supporters in churches and in our communities, and especially the congregation of St. Paul UCC in Belleville for

their extravagant hospitality and the St. Paul UCC Culinares for the generous donation of their time and talent to make our first "Night at the Improv" fundraiser a terrific success.

Those attending were excited to compliment the entertainment and the food and refreshments. "A great night for all ages." "What a fun night-and the kids loved it. It's nice to have something like this the whole family can attend." "I hope you are going to do this again next year!" "Where did you find that group (The Paper Slips Theater)? They were fantastic!" "We usually have someone disappointed by the menu at these events but not this time! You all really hit the ball out of the park!"

The highlight of the evening was, of course, when the ISCUCC Designated Conference Minister Rev. Shana Johnson and ISCUCC Conference Council Member Rev. Robert Goddard announced the donation of \$100,000 to Kindercottage to pay off the mortgage. The gift comes from the Marion Mittendorf bequest left to the Conference with the instructions to use the funds to serve children and families in need after natural disasters and those who were struggling with financial hardship. The monies were to be directed to those missions and ministries with the greatest immediate need. The Conference Council, after researching the intentions of the Mittendorf family and prayerful discernment, directed a portion of the funds to the payoff of the UniPres Kindercottage mortgage.

The mortgage payoff will free the early childhood center from a \$2,900 monthly obligation. After losing an average of \$4,200 each month for the past 6 months, reducing the monthly bills by \$2,900 will greatly ease the financial stress Kindercottage is under. "It doesn't put us in the black, by any means. With the state budget, or lack of a budget, we are still, along with so many others in Illinois, under a cloud of uncertainty. We do have the certainty, however, that we are doing God's work, we are the image of Christ's Body and an island of hope in a sea of poverty," said the Rev. Nancy Spier-Lee, chair of the UPK Board of Directors. "And we have the certainty of support from our many church and individual donors that lifts our spirits and keeps our doors open. We are so thankful and so blessed."

The generosity that made the evening a success began with Ed Reggi and the Paper Slips Theater Players when in the earliest of planning stages learned about the work Kindercottage was doing and they cut their usual performance fee to help us make the evening even possible. Then St. Paul UCC in Belleville provided their Community Center free of charge and the Culinares caterers donated their time and talent for the evening, and provided the food at a fraction of the usual catering fee.

With our sponsors, donors to the silent auction, and donations specifically for the Hearing (Audiology) Screenings, Kindercottage was able to net \$8,018.36 for the evening. For those keeping track, those net proceeds will fund our hearing screenings and provide the revenue to cover 5 months of losses.

Put another way, we will keep about 25 young parents in school learning skills or earning degrees that will put them into a better position to care for their family and allow them to know their child is more than cared for, is nurtured and loved, while in daycare. We will help another 25 families juggle 2 or 3 part time jobs, at or slightly above minimum wage, to support their families. We will help a dozen young families ease the stress of having to work 3 jobs between them, finish school and care for their child, giving them a chance to build a stronger marriage and a foundation for their future together. We will mentor a dozen young women who never learned healthy parenting skills, good nutrition or emotionally and spiritually nurturing habits develop those skills with the encouragement of teachers and the quiet, steady inspiration of our "grandmas."

Keeping our doors open translates to keeping hope alive in a tangible, visible and supportive community.

We also want to thank the members of First Presbyterian Church in Edwardsville for providing table cloths and other support for the evening, Helen and Bill Whicher for their generous support for the event and all the work they do to support Kindercottage, and St. Paul UCC, Columbia, IL for their major sponsorship gift to make the event possible. The staff at Kindercottage also provided countless hours of volunteer help in the weeks leading up to the event and the day of it. And the "High Schoolers" class at Kindercottage made the microphone table decorations.

Thank you to everyone who helped, sponsored and attended the event. We are making plans for next year already!

What's Happening at Illinois South Conference...

Hunger Action Committee Workshop Series

At the ISC Annual Meeting in October 2015, the Hunger Action Committee shared the "good news" that 100% of churches in the Illinois South Conference of the United Church of Christ are involved with food ministries. Many of these are local interfaith alliances. We have discovered that the food ministry leaders often do not hear about available funds and resources. Here's your chance to help these dedicated people share ideas to "feed hungry people."



On October 14, 2014, the Community Interfaith Food Pantry dedicated its new home at 1218 W. Main in Belleville. In the old facility, patrons were crowded out the front door. Volunteers ran into each other trying to navigate carts through the small rooms and the limited storage space filled up fast. Generous donors, their hard-working board and volunteers and a generous grant from the Alan Shawn Feinstein Foundation made possible the current spacious facility in a visible and accessible location on West Main. The Pantry is open 4 days a week.

Who and what is the Feinstein Foundation and can you apply for a grant? Come to the workshop to learn more.

Community Interfaith Food Pantry is supported by Belleville-area churches: St. Matthew United Methodist; Our Lady Queen of Peace; St. Luke and St. Teresa Catholic Churches; Christ UCC, Trinity UCC and St. Paul UCC in Belleville; Westview Baptist; Peace and Signal Hill Lutheran Churches; and First United Presbyterian.

Food Ministry Leaders are invited to an information-sharing event sponsored by the ISC Hunger Action Committee on May 9 from 11:30 am - 2 pm at the Community Interfaith Food Pantry, 1218 West Main, Belleville. Lunch will be provided by Christ UCC in Belleville.

Please RSVP to Margie Lindhorst at mlind@htc.net or 618-281-4090 to provide them with a head count for lunch. Click [here](#) for a flyer.

Illinois South Conference Pastors Gathering

Calling folks interested in good conversation and a good meal as the Pastors/Spouses Fellowship Group gathers on Thursday, April 27 at 11:30 am at the Red Apple in Maryville. For being a group of mostly retired folks, we certainly have a good time together! Know that we welcome newcomers and familiar friends at any get-together. Please call 618-476-3925 or email (herbenne@wisperhome.com) Herb & Bennie Schafale no later than April 24 to make reservations.

Chaplain Needed

Emmaus Homes is searching for a Chaplain to serve in our western service provision area, including Warren and Franklin counties. This position reports directly to Rev. Cindy Bumb, Vice President of Spiritual Care. Responsibilities include worship, sacrament, Bible study leadership, spiritual care and case management, community outreach, and leadership development. Must hold UCC ordained minister standing, licensure, or UCC privilege of call. Experience working in a health or human service organization a plus. This is a full-time position with benefits. Emmaus Homes is related to the UCC through membership in the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries. We provide around the clock support services to almost 300 adults with developmental disabilities in four Missouri counties. We encourage candidates to apply [online](#) or you may send a profile or resume to Erin Zimmermann, Recruiting Manager, Emmaus Homes, 3731 Mueller Road, St. Charles, MO 63301. Deadline for applications is May 10, 2017.

The Center for Progressive Renewal is offering a summer semester online UCC History, Polity and Theology class beginning on May 31 and ending August 16. The class has met the polity requirements of most Committees on Ministry in the UCC, and has been accepted as a for credit course over nine seminaries, including Union (NYC), Vanderbilt, Candler, Columbia, Lexington, Eden, and Lancaster and a number of others. Both Lancaster and Union list this course in their catalogs.

It is a rigorous, engaging class that is convenient for those who are bi-vocational, have full schedules, or odd sleep habits! It is designed to meet the needs of students with different learning styles and varying levels of formal education. The facilitators for the class are fully engaged and available throughout the class to the students. The course has evolved and adapted over the years to the changes in the UCC and the changing needs of those seeking authorization for ministry.

Tim Downs, who will be the lead instructor, has been teaching this course for almost 20 years, and online for the last seven years. Heather Bardole will be the lead facilitator for the course. Heather has worked with Tim in facilitating this class for six years; is a MID with the Southeast Conference; and currently serves as the administrator of the Southeast Conference. Laura Robinson, a MID in the Pacific Northwest and a graduate of Candler School of Theology, will be the assistant facilitator for the class.

Students taking the class for credit need to contact Tim Downs. Certificates of Completion are issued for all students who successfully complete the requirements for the class. Letters with a grade and summary assessment of the student's performance in the class for Committees on Ministry are available upon request. Any questions can be directed to Tim Downs, the lead instructor, at timothy.c.downs@gmail.com and click [here](#) to register.

Job Opportunity:

A Coordinator of Christian Education is open at St. Paul UCC in Belleville. The job requires 25 hours/week and pays \$25,000 annually. Benefits are to be determined. The Coordinator of Christian Education helps plan, coordinate and implement Christian education and faith development programs for all ages according to the requirements of the Safe Church policy. Read [more](#). Contact Rev. Robert Koepcke at rkoepcke@stpaulucc.org.

Equality Illinois presents EqualityCon 2017 on May 6, 2017 in Springfield, IL at the State House Inn. It is a one-day conference in Springfield bringing together the state's LGBTQ community with allies, progressive advocates, civic leaders and community groups. Speakers and panel discussions will cover a wide range of topics including adoption by LGBTQ parents, updating legal documents for transgender Illinoisans, LGBTQ rights in the schools, and much more. To learn more and to register, click [here](#).

Region 2

St. Peter UCC in Red Bud will host an All you can eat BBQ on Sun, April 23 beginning at 11 am. Buffet dinner includes St. Louis style ribs, pork steaks, smoked pork roast,

Region 8

The Congregations and Pastors of Region 8 of the Illinois South Conference of the United Church of Christ invite everyone to attend the Region 8 Easter Vigil Service of

VBS - June

June 5 - 9; 9 am - 11:30 am; Fieldon UCC; June 5 - 9; 9 am - 12 pm; Columbia St. Paul UCC; Hero Central: Discover Your Strength in God!

chicken, German potato salad, American potato salad, baked beans, coleslaw, sweet and sour salad, corn on the cob, rolls, desserts and drinks. Carry outs available. Country Store.

Hecker Friedens UCC will hold its Good Friday Fish Fry on April 14 from 4 pm - 7 pm. Eat in or Carry Out. Menu includes fried Cod fish, chicken strips available by request; homemade sides: French fries, potato salad, cole slaw, stewed tomatoes, macaroni & cheese, pie, cake, drinks. Worship service at 7:30 pm.

Region 4

St. John UCC in Wood River is hosting a monthly "spiritual retreat" on one Saturday each month led by A Place of Grace creative director Julie Gvillo, a Reiki Master Practitioner and Teacher, Certified Zentangle Instructor and Presbyterian Church (USA) Christian Educator.

This month's theme is the Easter Vigil. Julie will have various prayer and meditation stations set up in the sanctuary and provide as much guidance or freedom as each participant would like as they go through the stations at their own pace. Prayer stations founded on scripture and built around multiple intelligences, incorporating ancient and contemporary practices, will be available for people of all ages.

The spirituality center is open this Sat, 12:30 pm to 4:30 pm, to all free of charge and is supported through free will offerings. The next center will be Sat, May 13, 12:30 pm to 4:30 pm. Come and rest in the arms of Jesus for a few minutes or a few hours.

Region 5

Marine UCC will host the 16th annual Trivia Night benefiting Hoyleton Youth & Family Services on Sat, April 29. Door prizes. Raffle. Cost \$12 per person, 8 players to a table, \$96 for a team/table. Prizes will be awarded to the 1st and 2nd place winning teams. Contact 618-887-4465 to reserve a table for trivia or purchase raffle tickets.

Word & Sacrament on Holy Sat, April 15 at 7:00 pm at St. Paul UCC in Lebanon. Rev. Shana Johnson, Designated Conference Minister of the ISC, will be the guest preacher for this wonderful service. Allow this Easter Vigil Service to transform the darkness of Good Friday into the Resurrection Joy of an Empty Tomb! Everyone is welcome here!

Sat, April 22, 2017 from 9 am - 2 pm, St John UCC in Mascoutah will hold its 38th Annual Quilt Show with 200+ quilts. Bed turning at 9:45 am; quilting demonstrations at 10:45 am, 11:30 am, 12:15 pm and 1 pm. Items for sale. Raffle prize drawing for the youth quilt, "Secret Life of Pets" with all proceeds donated to DuBois Center. Raffle tickets available at the quilt show. Attendance prizes awarded. Lunch available. \$3 admission. Contact Kay Ostrom at 618-566-8776 or ostromdk@charter.net.

New Athens St. John's UCC will hold its Chicken Dinner on May 7 from 11 am - 2 pm. Drive through open 11 am - 1 pm. All you care to eat includes fresh fried chicken, mashed potatoes, gravy, green beans, corn, slaw, dessert, and drink. Adults \$10; Children 5 - 10 years \$5; Children under 5 Free.

VBS - May

May 22 - 26; 9 am - 12 pm; Waterloo St. Paul UCC; *Cokesbury's Super Hero Central*

June 5 - 9; 8:30 am - 11:30 am; Okawville St. Peter's UCC; *Hero Central: Discover Your Strength in God!*

June 5 - 9; 9 am - 11 am; Highland Evangelical UCC; *Hero Central: Discover Your Strength in God!*

June 5 - 9; 8:30 am - 11:30 am; Valmeyer St. John UCC; *Maker Fun Factory: Created by God, Built for a Purpose.*

June 10; 9 am - 4 pm with Family Carnival from 4 pm - 6 pm; Belleville St. Paul UCC; Superhero theme.

June 12 - 16; 9 am - 12 pm; Maeystown St. John UCC; *Hero Central - Discover Your Strength in God!*

June 12 - 16; 9 am - 12 pm; Freeburg St. Paul's UCC in cooperation with the St. Joseph Catholic Church in Freeburg; *Hero Central - Discover Your Strength in God!*

June 19 - 23; 8:45 am - 12 pm; Mascoutah St. John UCC; *Maker Fun Factory: Created by God, Built for a Purpose.*

June 19 - 23; 6 pm; Dinner at 5 pm - 5:45 pm. Troy Friedens UCC; *Maker Fun Factory: Created by God, Built for a Purpose.*

VBS - July

July 10 - 14; 9 am - 12 pm; Collinsville St. John Evangelical UCC; *Rome: Paul and the Underground Church.*

July 17 - 21; 6 pm - 8:20 pm; Red Bud St. Peter UCC; *Hero Central: Discover Your Strength in God!*

July 17 - 21; 6 pm - 8:30 pm; O'Fallon UCC; *Maker Fun Factory: Created by God, Built for a Purpose.*

July 17 - 21; 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm; at Centralia St. Peter UCC including 1st Christian Church, 1st Presbyterian Church, 1st United Methodist Church, Redeemer Lutheran Church, Zion UCC, and St. Peter 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 30 - August 3; 6 pm - 8 pm; Carlinville St. Paul UCC; *Hero Central: Discover Your Strength in God!*

