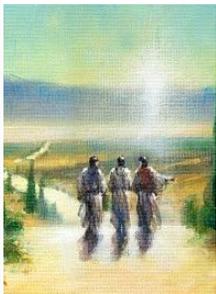


Weekly Connection

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



Several years ago, as a parish pastor, I went to the hospital to visit with a family as they were waiting for their loved one to come out of surgery. We talked for a while and then one of the sons, who is not a member of the church I was serving but someone I had met several times before, came up and starting talking about the church. He then said to another sibling that he was always so impressed by how the minister of the church was so good at visiting her members, and so he was surprised that she was not there, but she would probably be coming soon.

The rest of the family looked uncomfortable and I said, "Oh who are you talking about?" The son's response was, "The minister at my mom's church." To which I said, "Oh, that's me. Good to see you again." He did a bit of a double take and then recognized me. It was a good thing he was saying nice things about me and the church, or it could have been a very uncomfortable situation. But the truth was that he was so distracted by his own worry and fear, he really did not see me even though he was looking right at me when he talked about the minister of his mom's church.

The same was true for two believers as they were traveling on the way to Emmaus. They did not recognize that the stranger in their midst was the one they had been talking about. And so when Jesus says, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" I would imagine that he might have found it a bit amusing. Yet, there is much more to this story than them not recognizing Jesus.

For me the incredible message for us is that

Jesus is there, ALWAYS

even when we least expect it,

even when we are not looking for him,

or even when we take it for granted that he promises to ALWAYS be there for us in EVERY situation

That is the incredible message of the day of Resurrection...

Jesus returns from the dead and meets his disciples in different places:

the garden,

the Emmaus Road,

the seashore,

the Upper Room.

He witnesses to them that he is alive,

He will be present with them,

Present with us-ALWAYS...

He isn't content to send them a postcard from heaven:

"HAVING A GREAT TIME. WISH YOU WERE HERE."

No!! He shows up.



As Charles Hoffacker in the book *A Guy With Body* writes:

"He shows up among them as his own witness. And he recruits as witnesses those other people with bodies. He wants them to move out and tell everyone who will listen, and everyone who won't, that bodies count; that he's back from the dead with a body, threatening them with life. Those who recognize his witness become witnesses themselves. They put their bodies on the line. They become contagious with the forgiveness they've caught, carriers of resurrection."

Hoffacker continues... "That's what this back-to-life Jesus wants of us:

not names on a list, or what someone has called 'pew potatoes.' Jesus wants us as witnesses. Not airy spirits or pious ghosts, but bodies like his own with wounds to show, bodies that witness to resurrection, threatening the world with life."

Important Links

iscucc.org/

duboiscenter.org

ucc.org

[Back Bay Mission](#)

[CHHSM](#)

[Ecuador Partnership](#)

[Eden Theological Seminary](#)

[Deaconess Foundation](#)

[Deaconess Nurse Ministry](#)

[Emmaus Homes](#)

[Hitz Memorial Home](#)

[Hoyleton](#)

[Insurance Board](#)

[LIFE Program](#)

[Neighborhood Houses](#)

[New Athens Home](#)

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

[St. Paul's Home](#)

[Uplands Village](#)

[UCC Campus Ministry](#)

[Uni-Pres Kindercottage](#)

[ISC Directory](#)

Pray for...

Prayer list for April 23 - 29 Churches & Pastors

- Staunton St. Paul UCC, Rev. Debbie Jo Atkins
- Stone Church St. Peter's UCC, Pastor Cherie (Michael) Stolze

When our eyes are opened, when we experience the presence of the living Lord in our lives, we are called to share. This is how the work and ministry of Jesus Christ continues-through us! The truth is people are looking. People are searching. People need Jesus.

As Barbara Brown Taylor in her book *An Altar in the World* puts it, "In an age of information overload...the last thing any of us needs is more information about God. We need incarnation, by which God saved the lives of those whose intellectual assent has turned them dry as dust, who have run frighteningly low on the bread of life, who are dying to know more God in their bodies. Not more about God. More God."

Friends, people do not need to hear more about Jesus. They need more Jesus. In Illinois South Conference, in our churches and in our communities, let us be willing to share. Let us be witnesses, carriers of the resurrection in the world.
Blessings, Shana

SHARING IN WORSHIP WITH YOU

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

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

May 14

Preaching at Salem UCC, Alhambra

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.**

Retired Pastor

- Rev. Ruth Baechle, Columbia, MO

People with Life Concerns

- Pray for Kay (Bill) Ahaus as she recuperates from surgery. 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.



Thank You and A Few Reminders about the DuBois on Broadway 2.0

- Thanks to those generous persons who have already purchased their tickets for the 2nd version of "DuBois on Broadway" on May 12th at the Four Points Conference Center in Fairview Heights.
- Thanks to the generous donors of silent and oral auction items already donated.
- Thanks to the musicians who have agreed to share their vocal talents on stage

that night.

- Thank you to the various volunteers who will be assisting in different ways on May 12th with a reminder that all of them have been invited to a "Walk-Through", instructions, and social hour with appetizers on Thursday evening, April 20th (from 4:30 pm - 7 pm.).



Additional Reminders:

- The deadline for ticket purchase is April 28th in order for an accurate food count to be given to the conference center culinary staff.
- The deadline for donated items and sponsorships is also April 28th in order that donors' names and kinds of donations may be listed in the program booklet.
- Sponsorships are still available as follows:
 - 1) Gold Level-- \$2,500.00 (includes your name(s) on the sponsorship board & program book; Special recognition during the entertainment; and a table of 8
 - 2) Silver Level--\$1,000.00 (includes your name(s) on the sponsorship board & program book plus a table of 8
 - 3) Honorary Level--\$500.00 to \$750.00 (includes your name(s) on the sponsorship board & program book plus 2 reservations
 - 4) Friend Level--\$100.00 to \$250.00 (includes your name(s) on the sponsorship board & program book
- It is imperative that names of attendees be included on the forms and those sponsoring a table in order that the tickets/paperwork may be personalized in advance (for receipt purposes).

PLEASE PROMOTE THIS SPECIAL EVENT

- If an auction item or basket needs to be picked up, please contact Norma at 618-292-4617.
- For more information, please contact any of the co-chairpersons:
Norma Borgmann (618-292-4617)
Rick Porter (618-674-3985)
Rev. Jerry Amiri (618-488-3215)

SACRED CONVERSATIONS ON RACE + ACTION

Sponsored by United Congregations of Metro-East

BOOK STUDY #1 will discuss *SMALL GREAT THINGS: A NOVEL* 2016 by Jodi Picoult.

An excerpt from the back cover: "Ruth Jefferson, a labor and delivery nurse begins a routine checkup on a newborn, only to be told a few minutes later that she's been reassigned to another patient. The parents are white supremacists and don't want Ruth, who is African American, to touch their child. The hospital complies, but the next day, the baby goes into cardiac distress while Ruth is alone in the nursery. Does she obey orders or does she intervene?" Read [more](#).



Is Posting a Prayer List an Invasion of Privacy?

An article from the Insurance Board newsletter *The Steward*.

Q: Some churches post "prayer lists" on their website that describe the prayer needs of members. Needs may include medical diagnoses, relational or financial problems. Does posting this information on a church website constitute invasion of privacy?

A: Possibly. A church can reduce if not eliminate this risk by obtaining consent from people before putting their names on a list. This can be done either by contacting persons directly and obtaining their written consent to having their name (and need) posted on the website prayer list or by instructing members to include this written consent at the time the prayer request is submitted if they desire for it to be shared publicly online.

Some churches seek to avoid the inconvenience of obtaining the consent of every person on a prayer list by creating a "no prayer list" and notifying the congregation periodically (i.e., in church bulletins or newsletters) that persons who do not want the congregation to pray for them should contact the church office and have their names placed on the "no prayer list." This "implied" consent is not as effective as the express consent obtained by contacting each person directly, and it is far from clear whether it would be deemed effective by a court.

Read more [articles](#).

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**.

Here are the delegates to General Synod from Illinois South Conference:

Kristian Avise-Rouse	Karen Gaines	Pastor Norma Patterson
Breanne Beisiegel	Brad Grotefendt	John Pawloski
Rev. Katie Jo Bielke	Carl Kasten	Rev. Patrick Poole
Rev. Tim Darmour Paul	Brett Palmer	David Shanks
Rev. Christy Eckert	Carolyn Palmer	Verna Steinkamp

These delegates will be available after General Synod (June 30 - July 5) to share their experiences with churches throughout Illinois South Conference. Contact them to set a date to report to your congregation.



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



THIS WEEKEND - 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, racking 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](#). Please RSVP by Wednesday at the latest, so we can be prepared for you! RSVP to dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org or 618-787-2202.

Your OCWM monies at work.

MEET our SUMMER STAFF!

Welcome Catie Goetter to our 2017 summer staff team! Catie will be serving as a Barn Assistant / Counselor. She grew up in Maryville, IL as an active member of St. John Evangelical UCC and is no stranger to DuBois Center. She attended summer camp for years. During the school year, weekend horse retreats and volunteering at the barn kept her busy. In 2015, she successfully completed our CIT (Counselor in Training) program, and in 2016 she volunteered for four weeks of summer camp. When asked about a goofy camp memory Catie wrote, "My parents sent me to camp when I was 7 for a half week session thinking they would pick me up never wanting to go back. When they got to camp to pick me up, I was hiding in the bathroom of Lakeside because I didn't want to leave." Catie attends Missouri State University where she is majoring in special education. She is actively involved in student ministry and marching band. Marching season is her favorite season! She also volunteers with a therapeutic riding program. Catie is very excited to be a member of our 2017 Summer Staff, she says she "can't imagine [her] life without spending the summer at DuBois." Catie's favorite thing about summer camp is "getting to see the campers grow from the beginning of the week to the end whether it was just coming out of their shell or trying something new or something they were scared of, like canoeing or horseback riding!" She is also very excited to be on staff with old camp friends, to make new camp friends and work alongside her older brother, Ryan.



Your OCWM monies at work.



CIT - Counselors in Training

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, respond to challenging behavior, create a safe, fun environment, and teach basic camp skills. Scheduled for June 25-30, 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 or 618-787-2202. For more information, check out this [flyer](#).



Here's a Thought!

Pastors and Christian Educators - Who in your congregation might benefit from this type of Christian leadership developmental experience?

Your OCWM (Our Church's Wider

Mission) monies at work.



CAMPS for Older Children Completed Grades 3-6

Classic or specialty camp, 3 days or 5 days - there is a wide variety of sessions from which to choose for this age group. Whether a first-timer or experienced camper, new adventures await. The cozy cottages on the main camp side of the lake are "home" for many campers in this age group, but those attending the Horsin' Around, Rustic Sampler, and Splash! sessions venture out and live in the Rustic Village. The week of July 23-26 there are shorter sessions for those who would like "a taste" of horse or rustic camping. Additional camps for those completing grades 5-6, with older youth, can be found in the camp brochure. For more details, pick up a brochure in your church office, click [here](#) for the online version or contact DuBois Center at 618-787-2202 or dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org. Ready to register? Go to www.DuBoisCenter.org or click [here](#).

Session &

Grades Completed	Dates
Settler (3-5)	6/11-16, 6/25-30, 7/16-21
Pony Express (4-5)	7/23-26
Mad Science (4-6)	7/9-14
Rustic Sampler (4-6)	7/23-26
Horsin' Around (5-7)	6/11-16, 7/9-14, 7/16-21
Splash! (5-7)	7/23-26

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 this Saturday - April 22.

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

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 perspective 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 Mon, April 24.



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 Mon, April 24.

Schedule

Meal: Noon - 2pm

Activities: 12:30-3:00pm

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

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.

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!



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 eenengelmann@standrews1.com. If you cannot attend but would like to make a donation, checks can be made to St. Paul's Foundation.



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.

Eden Theological Seminary's 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](#).



Emmaus Home Update

By Cindy Clark, President & CEO

Emmaus

In May 2015, the Emmaus Board of Directors voted to begin transitioning clients from the Marthasville campus to the community, with a commitment to complete the move by July 2020. However, I'm thrilled to share that we are ahead of schedule and our newest projections indicate that all of our clients should be transitioned to the community by March 2019.

Currently, 49 clients remain on the Marthasville campus. Our client services team has met with them and their family members to identify where they would like to live and who they would like as their roommates. Our staff, working in conjunction with our 'angel investors,' are busy finding homes that meet the needs of our clients and families. In the next 6 months, we anticipate opening 5 new homes to serve 16 clients from the Marthasville campus.

This is a very exciting time of change and growth at Emmaus. In the past 7 months, we've opened 10 new homes, primarily in Warren County. Late last year we continued our investment in Warren County by opening our new administrative offices in Marthasville, providing fully-accessible work areas and meeting space for employees. What remains unchanged, however, is our focus on continuing the nearly 125-year tradition of providing high quality, faith-based services to people with developmental disabilities.

What's Happening at Illinois South Conference...

Congrats to ISC Congregations

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. Come, share ideas to "feed hungry people."

Hunger Action Committee Workshop Series

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.

The Community Interfaith Food Pantry will share some of its successes. It 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.



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.

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.



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.

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, 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.

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.

May's spiritual retreat 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. Free of charge and is supported through free will offerings.

St. John UCC in Wood River is having their annual Plant and Bake Sale on Sat, May 6 from 9 am to 2 pm. Hanging baskets, potted geraniums, and more will be available for purchase, as well as a variety of delicious homemade baked goods.

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.

Region 8

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.

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.

VBS - May

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

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!*

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.

VBS - June

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 9 - 13; 6 pm - 8 pm; Granite City St. John UCC; *Hero Central: Discover Your Strength in God!*

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

July 9 - 13; 6 pm - 8 pm; Granite City St. John UCC; *Hero Central: Discover Your Strength in God!*

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!*