

Weekly Connection

For the Week of June 25, 2017 - July 1, 2017
Diverse Minds, Covenant Hearts, Made One in the Body of Christ

The Amazing People of Illinois South Conference...



Rev. Will VerDuin, Associate Pastor at Evangelical UCC in Highland, fulfills his prize for raising dollars for Uni-Pres Kindercottage...make-up on and head shaved.

For the Highland Evangelical UCC VBS, the leadership decided to raise money for Kindercottage. Some kids interrupted worship in a great way on June 4th dressed in superhero outfits (their VBS theme) and said, "If we raise \$500 for Kindercottage, you, Pastor Will, have to do something fun for us." He said "Sure!" They continued, "If we raised \$1,000, then you, Pastor Will, have to do something REALLY fun for us." He joyfully agreed to think about it, but they already had the plan. "\$500 = make up on Pastor Will the next Sunday; \$1,000 = shave your head." The church loved it.

The church raised \$1,587.67, did the makeup and head shave at the end of worship on Sunday, and Pastor Will says, "I cut through the air like a knife now!"



VBS children apply make-up to Will's face.



Hair - going, going, GONE!!

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
June 25 - July 1, 2017
Churches & Pastors

- Brighton, Rev. Laurie Crelly
- Central City Zion UCC



What will we choose?

The other day on a hike, I happened upon several hummingbirds. As I was watching them flit from flower to flower, I thought of a quote I once read about the difference between hummingbirds and vultures.

"Both the hummingbird and the vulture fly over our nation's deserts. All vultures see is rotting meat, because that is what they look for. They thrive on that diet. But

hummingbirds ignore the smelly flesh of dead animals. Instead, they look for the colorful blossoms of desert plants. The vultures live on what was. They live on the past. They fill themselves with what is dead and gone. But hummingbirds live on what is. They seek new life. They fill themselves with freshness and life. Each bird finds what it is looking for. We all do." -Steve Goodier

In the church, there are hummingbirds and vultures. Although we may not talk openly about their presence, we instinctively know how to identify them and know how they affect others.

Consider the vultures. They are the persons we almost dread running into. Nothing is ever right. They seem to thrive on the negative. They feed on what was. They live in the past.

On the other hand, consider the hummingbirds. They are the persons we look forward to seeing and being in their presence. Their smile lights up a room. They seem to thrive on the positive. They feed on what can be. They live in the present, while seeking the possibility of new life ahead.

What is the difference between the vultures and hummingbirds? I think it comes down to one word--Attitude. Yet, too often we believe the difference solely has to do with someone's personality or upbringing. We justify their bad behavior through comments such as "Well, that's just June," "Well, they have had a lot to deal with in life" or "If you knew his father (or mother) you would understand."

In the church, this kind of justification can be disillusioning and downright harmful. I believe the apostle Paul knew this as he observed the personalities and attitudes of those in the early church communities.

While imprisoned in Rome, word had probably reached Paul from young Timothy or John Mark that new believers were becoming disillusioned and confused about what it meant to be a part of the faith community. Perhaps many believed that being a part of the faith community was supposed to automatically erase all the stress, strife, and frustrations of life and all doubts were to dissipate.

Yet, as Paul wisely points out in his letters to the church in Colossae, belief and trust in Christ does not magically change the world, but rather it can have the power, if you choose it, to change ourselves and our attitude. The real change happens from the inside out. In Colossians 3: 1-2, 7-10, he writes,

"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator."

I believe what Paul points to is an unchanging truth--our attitudes, our perspectives make a BIG difference. Paul reminds us we must choose to have the attitude of Christ, laying aside old, destructive patterns and behaviors. For these patterns and behaviors, do not only affect ourselves, but also those around us.

The hummingbird and the vulture have two very different approaches, yet each finds what it is looking for. The same is true for all us. The question is--What will we choose? Will we be the vulture or the hummingbird?

Blessings, Shana

Retired Pastor

- Rev. Allen and Jan Kolmer, New Baden, IL

Prayer list for

June 25 - July 1, 2017

Churches & Pastors

- Cahokia Bethel UCC, Rev. Carol (David) Shanks, Sr. Pastor

- Cahokia Bethel UCC, Rev. Libby Feagans-King, Associate Pastor

Retired Pastor

- Rev. Gus and Suzanne Kuether, Belleville, IL

People with Life Concerns

- Pray for Rev. Dr. Douglas Anders as he continues treatment for ongoing illness. Douglas is currently the Supply Pastor for Belleville Concordia UCC. Cards may be sent to him at 2921 Moniteau, St Louis MO 63121.

- 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.

SHARING IN WORSHIP WITH YOU

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

June 25

Preaching at St. Peter UCC, Centralia

July 2

Worshiping with our ISC delegation at General Synod in Baltimore

July 9

Participating in the Service of Farewell for Rev. David Riebeling at St. John UCC, Valmeyer

July 16

Preaching at St. John's UCC, Brighton

I am currently planning my worship schedule for October 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.**

Grief Support Group

St. John's United Church of Christ in Brighton will offer a grief support group every Wednesday evening at 7 pm beginning July 12 through August 30. Sessions will be approximately 90 minutes. This eight week grief support group offers a supportive environment for both insights to the stages of grief and time to share with others the grief you are working through. Grief over the loss of a loved one does not end after the graveside service and is often a lonely journey as you work through various stages of grieving. We are offering a safe space to learn about various aspects of grief in life and to offer support along the journey. Led by Rev. Laurie Crelly and study guide "Understanding Your Grief" by Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph. D., we will journey together and learn more about grief and how to find healing. Building is handicapped-accessible. For more information call 618-372-3737 or email ourpastor@stjohnsuccinbrightonil.com.

A Message from the UCC General Minister & President, Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer

Reprinted from the spring 2017 edition of *Cornerstone Notes*

Not all churches assume they need a specific mission: but it can often prove to be a vital resource for any congregation. Of the many opportunities that come from having a clear mission, let me talk here about only one: the building.

As I travel around the country visiting churches, I find myself drawn to the buildings. They tell me a story about the life and health of a congregation. Buildings that are well cared for and utilized to their full potential bespeak a congregation with life and vitality. Buildings that are run down and that sit empty a great deal of time say something quite different. Almost every church invests a large amount of its missional resources into their building. Most church leaders assume that the building is essential to a good and healthy congregational life. It may well be, but there is only one way to know that: know what your mission is and ask the question, "Does the building serve the mission?"

What I see quite often are churches so dedicated to their buildings that the building itself has become the de facto mission of the church. Its care and upkeep consume much of the time and attention of the Board; and the budget is consumed as well by the upkeep, mortgage, and maintenance. After paying a pastor and meeting the ongoing needs of the property, little is left for actual mission. Once this cycle begins, it can be difficult to come out of and can greatly inhibit the growth and vitality of a congregation.

If you have not done this for a while, at the next meeting of the governing Board simply ask the question: how is the building serving our mission? There are two kinds of responses to that question. The first is a response from the Board that sounds something like this: "do we have a mission?" If that is the general response, make a commitment to spend the next 6 months clarifying your church's mission. Then you can come back to the question about how the building can be utilized to serve it.

The second category of response comes from a leadership team that knows their mission. Knowing that, they can now assess how it is that the property as resource helps them live fully into their calling. If the building sits empty most of the week, what new purposes in fulfillment of your mission can be imagined - not just for your church but for your community?

Here are what some churches I have visited are doing to re-purpose their building as a mission resource:

- After school center for children waiting for parents to return home from work;
- Computer labs for neighborhood children;
- Tutoring or literacy classes for neighborhood children;
- Yoga classes;
- Concert venue for budding songwriters;
- Meeting space for various non-profit groups: boy and girl scout troops, AA groups, support groups, etc.
- Mother's day out, using volunteers to care for children;
- Office space for small business startups;
- Coffee shops and/or community book-stores;

- Food pantries;
- Family promise homeless shelter space;
- Multiple use worship space for other nesting congregations.

There is no limit to what a building can do. Be assured that your building, if seen as more than just a worship space that gets filled once a week, can become your greatest asset in committing to a mission that matters while serving the various needs of your surrounding community.

Orient yourself to see the space you have built not as belonging to your church and its members; and not even as belonging to your community (a little more outward looking): but belonging to your mission. Is the building living up to its full potential as a missional asset? If it is not, start dreaming. Where does your building's open space best meet the greatest need in your community? Once you discover that, let creative minds conspire to make ministry happen.

DuBois Center News

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



FALL FESTIVAL - Save the Date Sunday, October 1

It is never too early to start thinking about DuBois Center's annual Fall Festival! Each October, this event attracts approximately 2,500 church and community members. It is our biggest friend-raising event of the year. Mark your calendar and plan now to participate! It's a great way to show off YOUR DuBois Center, so please share the date in your newsletters and on your websites and Facebook pages. **NOTE:** This event is traditionally held on the **first Sunday in October**; it would be great if you could steer

other church events away from this date if at all possible.



WELCOME TEAM Join Us! June 25, and/or July 9, 16, 23

On these four Sundays, scores of UCC campers will arrive at DuBois Center eager and excited to begin their time at camp. A minimum of

WELCOME TEAM - THANKS!

Two Summer Camp Sundays down - three to go. A special thanks to the 16 volunteers who have already stepped up to greet and welcome campers and parents on the opening days of camp sessions - Bre Beisiegel, Norma Borgmann, Aaron Fuchs, Becky



12 volunteers each of these Sundays plus summer staff are needed to make the check-in process run smoothly! Volunteers assist with greeting, parking, the camp store, registration, health screenings, dock duty and people-moving. They arrive by 1:15 pm and are done by 4 pm. Please consider joining our Sunday Welcome Team on one or more check-in days. You are invited to wear a church t-shirt and show your spirit. Even consider bringing a team from your church! Let us know in advance when you can help; contact the DuBois Center office at dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org or 618-787-2202.

Harrison, Angie Hausman, Audrey Hicks, Leah Juenger, Wendy Juenger, Sandy & Scott Kuether, Arline Magee, Cara Magee Johnston, Todd Mushaney, Jason Petry and Joe & Kara Schmid. Many hail from local Illinois South Conference congregations; others are "friends" of DuBois Center. UCC churches represented include Christ - Dupo, St. Paul - Columbia, St. Paul's - Freeburg, St. Paul - Lebanon, St. Paul - Waterloo, St. Peter's - Centralia. We got through the first check-in of the season in record time and welcomed 95 campers. THANKS for your service; we couldn't have done it without you!



SUMMER ADVENTURES in JULY

July is a great month to experience a summer adventure at DuBois Center! While many sessions in June had waiting lists, there are lots of openings in July! Recruit a friend new to DuBois Center and SAVE! Check our great pics from the first week of camp at www.facebook.com/DuBoisCenter. Click [here](#) to register online or contact DuBois Center at dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org or 618-787-2202 to receive a brochure.



- July 9-14** Mad Science (completed grades 4-6)
Horsin' Around (completed grades 5-7)
Base Camp Unleashed (completed grades 5-8)
Outlander (completed grades 6-9)
Outpost Lab (completed grades 6-9)
- July 16-18** Discovery Camp (completed grades 1-3)
- July 16-21** Settler (completed grades 3-5)
Horsin' Around (completed grades 5-7)
Trekkin' It (completed grades 5-8)
Saddle 'Em Up (completed grades 7-9)
- July 19-21** Boy Meets Camp (completed grades 1-3)
- July 23-26** Girl Power (completed grades 1-3)
Pony Express (completed grades 4-5)
Rustic 101 (completed grades 4-6)
Splash! (completed grades 5-7)

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

Your Gift to Back Bay Mission Could Be Doubled!

A generous donor has offered to match up to \$10,000 for Back Bay Mission's client sustainability programs. That means your gift to the Mission could be worth twice as much! Back Bay Mission's client sustainability programs meet the immediate needs of the poor and marginalized of the Mississippi Gulf Coast and help people begin their journeys out of poverty. This year, we're raising \$150,000 for three of these vital programs: Bridges Out of Poverty, our community health partner, and our veterans support fund. Until August 31, 2017, up to \$10,000 in gifts to these programs will be matched! You can learn more about these programs, and make your gift, on the Mission's [website](#).



St. John's support groups provide opportunities for families and friends caring for an aging loved one to discuss their concerns and uncertainties, as well as find resources to help regain a sense of balance and hope. We also provide information about helpful coping techniques and resources to make your job as caregiver a little less stressful. The sessions allow you to listen and discuss

common issues with the group, leaving you with more understanding and a sense that you are not alone. There is no charge to attend.

Family Caregiver Support Group - Edwardsville - Wednesday, June 21, from 6:30 pm - 8 pm.

This support group is intended for family caregivers caring for loved ones with any type of disability. Join us at St. John's Community Care Adult Day Program in Edwardsville. Sessions will be held the 3rd Wednesday of each month. For more information call 618-656-7090.

Is your church located in Madison County? Are you preparing for a church picnic or ice cream social? Does your church have a coffee hour or fundraising dinner?

If so, please consider using St. John's Community Care napkins. It's one less item your group has to purchase and it will help us to promote our services to those attending the events. The napkins are free. Let us know a few weeks in advance of your event so we can try to accommodate your needs. Napkins are large dinner size. Requests can be for up to 500 napkins. We are happy to deliver the napkins to you or your church.

Call Missy at 618-344-5008 or email your request mathmer@stjohnscc.org.



Calling all former Neighborhood Houses' Board Members!

Please join us for Neighborhood Houses' Legacy Board Member Breakfast! Come to reconnect and see how things are looking up at Neighborhood Houses!

When: Wednesday, July 19, 2017 | 7:30 - 9 a.m.

Where: Eden Theological Seminary | Schroer Commons | 475 E. Lockwood Avenue | St. Louis, MO 63119

RSVP by July 14 to Kathy McCadden at 314-561-3337 or

kmccadden@neighborhoodhouses.org

Click [here](#) to see the electronic invitation!

What's Happening at Illinois South Conference...

Rainbow Camp Registration is now open. Rainbow Camp is Aug. 12, 2017 at DuBois Center, from 9 am - 7 pm. You can ride a horse, paddle a canoe, take a pontoon ride, make several crafts, shoot some arrows, catch a fish and a lot more, while making a bunch of new friends. The day will wrap up with a bbq dinner on the patio of Oak Lodge overlooking the lake. Rainbow Camp is for everyone in the LGBTQ community and straight allies. Register [online](#) now to get the early bird discount. See the camp [flyer](#) for more information.



Region 3

VBS - July

VBS - July

Eden Church in Edwardsville will host a Pastor Resource Day presented by Gift of Voice on Wed, July 19 from 8:30 am - 4:30

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

July 23 - 26; 5:15 pm - 8 pm; at Metropolis St. Rose Catholic Church joint VBS with Metropolis

pm. This forum focuses on personal wellness, community collaboration and making a lasting difference. In addition to the terrific keynote speakers, topics include healthy leadership, suicide prevention, integrated health care, trauma - informed ministry and Christ-centered advocacy. Speakers are Nanette Larson, DMH, and Carlton Speight, SAMHSAC. Cost is \$10. Click [here](#) for registration form.

VBS - June

June 26 - 30; Dupo Christ UCC; Hero Central -*Discover Your Strength in God!*

July 9 - 11; 6 pm - 9 pm; Midway St. John UCC; Camp Out VBS.

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!*

Zion UCC; Campout, *Getting S'more of Jesus.*

July 24 - 27; 6 pm - 8 pm; Wood River St. John UCC; Hero Central: *Discover Your Strength in God!*

July 24 - 28; 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm; New Athens, St. John 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!*