

# Weekly Connection

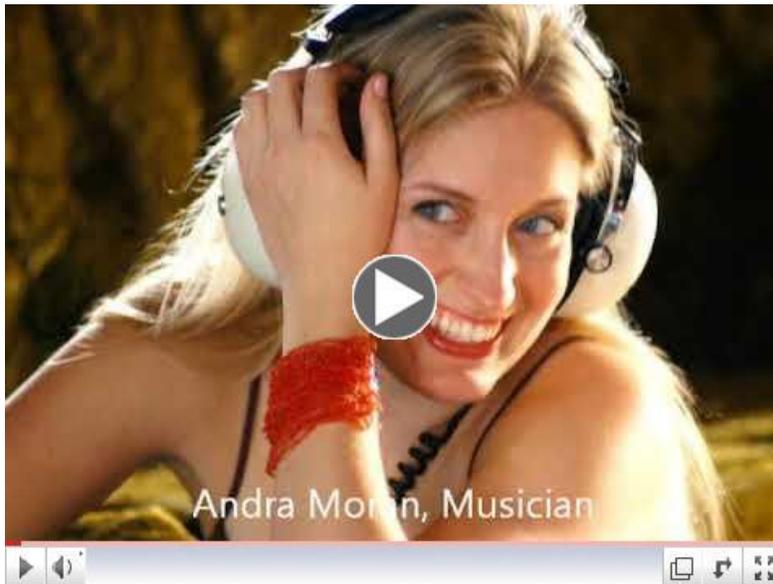
For the Week of October 8, 2017 - October 13, 2017  
Diverse Minds, Covenant Hearts, Made One in the Body of Christ

## The Amazing People of Illinois South Conference...

### A Message from Rev. Ivan Horn, Friedens UCC in Hecker THE "SACRAMENT OF PRESENCE"

In the light of such tragedies as the hurricane ravaged areas and the Las Vegas mass shooting, there are no words that can be uttered to define or resolve in the lives of those affected any measure of answers or explanations as to why such events come our way. As people of faith and human compassion we, from a distance, offer our prayers for strength and peace. We can be assured that the "Sacrament of Presence" will be that which will help everyone of us, victims, families and every person sorting through the challenges in the days ahead. There will be the "Sacrament of Presence" of God, for everyone, however defined and from the many faith traditions throughout the world. At times, not uttering a word, there will be friends, loved ones, families sharing their "Sacrament of Presence" with hugs, tears, empathy and unfolding compassionate hearts of expressions. The final "Sacrament of Presence" will be every person, who has been made aware of these tragedies, as we pray, meditate, and help ourselves not to fall into the traps of hatred, bitterness, condemnations, which often leads us to become judge, jury and executioners. It will only be with the help of our own "Sacrament of Presence" that will help us overcome these tragedies. Draw upon, call, pray, welcome that "Sacrament of Presence" each moment and breath throughout the unfolding times ahead. The words from the *Psalms Now* translation of Psalm 23 will help guide us:

*"The Lord is my constant companion. There is no need that God cannot fulfill. - -  
My security is in God's promise to be near to me always, and in the knowledge  
that God will never let me go."*



Andra Moran, Musician

**Winter Weekend 2018 will take place on January 13-15, 2018 at DuBois Center.** The theme is "Seeing Clearly: No Conflict Between Faith and Science" (it's a re-do of WW17 that was cancelled due to weather). We hope you will share this packet with your senior high youth and encourage them to attend this faith-filled and relationship-building event! If you would like the packet in hard-copy format, let us know at [cpursell@iscucc.org](mailto:cpursell@iscucc.org) or 618-654-2125. Click [here](#) for the full packet. [Here](#) if you need the DCFS fillable form.

## Important Links

[iscucc.org/](http://iscucc.org/)

[duboiscenter.org](http://duboiscenter.org)

[ucc.org](http://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](#)

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## Pray for...

**Prayer list for  
Oct 8 - Oct 13, 2017  
Churches & Pastors**

- Hecker Friedens UCC, Rev.  
Ivan (Vivian) Horn



### Getting to Know You

There is a joke I heard years ago about an elementary school teacher who was teaching a unit on religions. For show and tell day, she asked her students to bring in a religious artifact that symbolized their family's faith.

The appointed day for the presentations came and the students were excited to share. One of the girls volunteered to go first. She came to the front of the class and

proudly announced, "I'm a Roman Catholic and this is a Rosary. We use these to help us when we say our prayers."

"Very good," said the teacher. Then she asked who would like to go next. A little boy was next and he had a small candelabra with him. "My family is Jewish," he said, "and this is a Menorah. We light one candle each night during Hanukkah to remind us that God gives us what we need."

"That is very nice," said the teacher. Then she asked who would like to go next. A little girl came to the front of the class and enthusiastically announced, "My family is Methodist and this is a casserole dish!"

Now I could relate to this. When growing up, my home church had so many potlucks that our family actually had a set of dishes and plates that were just for potlucks.

As I have had the opportunity to visit and worship with many of our churches in the Illinois South Conference of the United Church of Christ, a commonality that all our churches share is that we know how to eat.

When we come together, often there is a meal, and we should not be ashamed of this. Eating together is an important part of shared life together and it always has been. It may be one of the most important things we can do together.

In Jesus' day, eating was not as simple and certainly not as unifying as it is today. In Jesus' day, eating together was filled with certain rules, social roles, and expectations, which revealed the inequality, the injustice, and the imbalance of power, authority, and wealth in the world. In Jesus' day, at public meals persons with the greatest power were seated at the front, served first and would only sit with those they believed to be of equal worth and status.

One way Jesus sought to address and rise up against such disparity, discrimination, and dominion was through a practice Biblical scholars call "table sharing." Jesus chose to sit and eat with people from all walks of life as a way to reveal the equal worth of all people. As Gordon Smith suggests in his book *A Holy Meal: The Lord's Supper and the Life of the Church*,

"Eating was for Jesus a key means by which he proclaimed the coming of God's reign and acted, or enacted, its arrival."

Jesus' "table sharing" modeled how meals can be experiences of connection, and blessing. Sharing a meal can be a way to break down barriers, to get to know someone behind mere appearances and labels, and discover the presence of the Holy in one another. This was and still IS a radical idea.

I believe there is a transformative power in sharing a meal with someone. It is easy to misunderstand, judge or even hate someone from afar; it is much more difficult to do this close up. Eating together provides an opportunity to be up close and personal with others. It can be a vulnerable act in which we will be challenged to move beyond mere small talk to true sharing and connection. When we are willing to sit across the table from someone that is different than us and share in a meal and meaningful conversation, more often than not we will discover we have more in common than we first thought.

So here is a thought and a challenge:

The next time you are at coffee hour, a church dinner or a banquet at which you can choose where you sit, choose to sit next to someone you don't know, someone with whom you think you have very little in common, someone with whom you disagree, or someone whom you are convinced you would not like.

As you sit across from that person remind yourself that you are sitting across from one of God's own beloved, one of God's own beautiful creations.

- Highland Evangelical UCC,  
Rev. Chris (Cathy) Hill, Sr.  
Pastor

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

### Retired Pastor

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

### People with Life Concerns

- Pray for the family of Jeanne (Arnold) Meyer as they mourn her death. Jeanne is a member of Highland Evangelical UCC and the sister of Lynnette Schuepbach, ISC

Communications Coordinator. Visitation will be Thursday, Oct 5 from 4 pm - 8 pm at Spengel-Boulanger Funeral Home in Highland and on Friday, Oct 6 from 9 am - 10 am at Evangelical UCC. The funeral will be Friday, Oct 6 at 10 am at Evangelical UCC in Highland. Click [here](#) for the full obituary. Cards may be sent to Arnold Meyer at 1330 Old Trenton Rd, Highland, IL 62249 or Lynnette at 1312 Broadway, Highland, IL 62249.

- Keep the family of Gene (Mary) Bergmann in your prayers as Gene deals with serious health issues from a fall. He is the brother of Shirley Bergmann, ISC Treasurer and Finance Coordinator.

- Pray for Nancy (Rev. Bob) Tripp as she deals with health issues. Rev. Tripp is a member of the ISC Church & Ministry Church Committee. They are members of Pana United in Faith Church. Cards may be sent to 9008 E South Cir Dr, Effingham IL 62401.

Share the meal with them and share a sense of welcome, openness, curiosity, and acceptance. Get to know them. Ask questions. Listen to their story and be willing to share your own.

In this practice of "table sharing," I imagine you and the person across the table will be surprised by the connections you will make and the blessings you will receive.

### SHARING IN WORSHIP WITH YOU

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

**October 2**

Preaching at St. John UCC, Valmeyer

**October 8**

Preaching at Friedens UCC, Irvington

**October 22**

Worship at Fieldon UCC

**October 29**

Worship with the Global Ministries Cuban delegation

I am currently planning my worship schedule for December 2017 into 2018. 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 date. You can also send me an email at [sjohnson@iscucc.org](mailto:sjohnson@iscucc.org). I look forward to meeting you and sharing in worship with you.

Your OCWM monies at work.



### EARLY-BIRD REGISTRATION DEADLINE – TODAY, OCTOBER 3

#### Annual Meeting - October 21, 2017

The annual meeting has been changed to a one-day format and will be held at the Gateway Convention Center in Collinsville from 8:30 am - 4:30 pm.

**Keynote Speaker: Rev. Jim Bear Jacobs**

Click [here](#) for all delegate materials.

Click [here](#) to register online.

### Register NOW!! Early-bird Deadline is October 3!!

#### No registrations after October 14 - Annual Meeting Warm Up Event

#### *Chronicles of the UCC: History, Boundaries, Personalities, and Stories*



On October 20, 2017, there will be an opportunity for you to learn more about Illinois South Conference and the United Church of Christ from 9:30 am - 4 pm at St. John Evangelical UCC in Collinsville. Traditionally, this day of education was for the clergy, but this year it is open to everyone. There is much to learn.

The fee is \$35 for each of the four sessions. After Oct 3, the fee is \$40. If you are interested in attending Rev. Jacob's half-day workshop, you can choose to sit in on one of the other sessions in the morning. Click [here](#) to download registration form.

Register [online](#). Lunch at noon. **Deadline is October 3.**

### DEADLINE - OCTOBER 12

#### Show the world that ISC is the home of Superman AND SUPER PEOPLE!!

The group identity shirts that ISC delegates wore at General Synod drew so much attention that the Conference Gatherings Team thought others within the Conference may enjoy "shouting" the same story.

Two ISC Delegates, Pastor Norma Patterson (left) and Verna Steinkamp (right) are modeling the shirts. Karen Gaines (another ISC Delegate) designed the shirts. See how she cleverly added the I and C to the Superman logo? And on the back it reads, "Illinois South Conference Home of Superman and Super People. We thank David Henerfauth, a member of the Conference Gatherings Team for getting it onto the shirts for us. If you are interested in having one of the shirts, click [here](#) for the order form or place the order form in your church bulletin!! Cost



is \$20 per shirt.

## DuBois Center News

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



### FALL WORK DAY Saturday, November 4

Stretch your muscles! Breathe fresh fall air! Hang out with friends and lend a helping hand! Youth and adult fellowship groups, families, individuals - everyone is invited to our annual Fall Work Day. Projects vary, depending on the skills of those involved and the weather. Stacking wood, raking leaves and painting are on the list, as are a variety of skilled labor projects. The work may not be glamorous, but it really does make a BIG DIFFERENCE! Click [here](#) for a typical Work Day schedule and watch for additional details in the coming weeks.



Please let us know in advance if you plan to attend, so we can be better prepared for your participation and have a hot lunch ready for you. Contact DuBois Center at 618-787-2202

or [dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org](mailto:dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org).



### THANK YOU!!

Fall Festival #41 is now one for the history books! THANKS to everyone who organized, baked, recruited, promoted, volunteered, donated, participated or held this event in prayer. Watch for details and photos in next

week's Weekly Connection. If you have any GREAT photos, please send them to [shirley.director@DuBoisCenter.org](mailto:shirley.director@DuBoisCenter.org).



### WRANGLE & RIDE Saturday, Nov. 11

Let's hit the trails! Join our equestrian team on Saturday, November 11 from 9am - 5pm for a day with the DuBois Center herd! Wrangle & Ride is designed for adults and youth age 12 and up. Spend a horse intensive day - grooming, tacking, riding and enjoying other horse-related activities, all while experiencing God and creation in the great outdoors. The cost is \$60 with lunch included. Register by October 21 and save \$5. Final deadline is October 29, but don't delay - space is limited. For more time in the saddle, this event is limited to the first 12 who register! [Online](#) registration is now open. For more information or to register by mail, check out this [flyer](#) or contact DuBois Center at 618-787-2202 or [dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org](mailto:dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org).

### Fall Activities Brochure

Make time to enjoy the beauty of the season at DuBois Center. From work days to retreats, there are a variety of options from which to choose. Check out the Fall Activities [brochure](#); use this Reservation [form](#) or register [online](#) for the Mother-Daughter Retreat or Wrangle and Ride.

**OCTOBER** [Nature's Classroom](#)

**Oct 13-15** Mother-Daughter [Retreat](#)

**Nov 4** Service [Saturday](#)

**Nov 11** [Wrangle & Ride](#)

**Dec 2** Annual "Thank You" Christmas Party

**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



Executive Director of St. John's Community Care to sit on panel for Alzheimer's educational program, Understanding Alzheimer's Program, presented by the Alzheimer's Association on Thursday, October 12 at Immanuel United Methodist Church in Edwardsville.

The program will consist of an overview of dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Participants will view clips from the PBS documentary special "Alzheimer's: Every Minute Counts" and engage in a panel discussion.

Visit the education page at [alz.org/greatermissouri](http://alz.org/greatermissouri) to learn more about the education program and other educational opportunities in the area or click [here](#) for a flyer.

### A Note from Rev. Donna Smith-Pupillo

Executive Director, Deaconess Nurse Ministry

Recently, I spent a day visiting a community lunch program at Pilgrim United Church of Christ in North St. Louis. One of our faith community nurses works at the church as part of our Community Outreach program.

I arrived early to the church because I wanted meet with some of the people gathering for lunch. I began to visit with several men and women as they waited anxiously for the kitchen to open. I asked questions about their access to health care; and as I listened to them, I was struck by their stories of resilience. Many of them struggle every day to survive because they have limited resources, and quality health care is scarce for people in their position - with no insurance or money.

However, many explained that they were not hopeless because they received care from our nurse at the lunch program. One man told me he walks as much as he can during the day because he knows that helps him control his blood sugar. This was advice given by the nurse. Another man described how the nurse instructed him to drink more water, which was feasible for him because water is free and something he has access to regularly. A woman I spoke with shared that the faith community nurse recognized her patterned baldness as a symptom that her hormones were off-balance. She went on to say that the nurse worked with her to get into a free clinic to see a physician. The nurse even went with the woman because she was nervous about the visit. At the visit, the doctor diagnosed the woman with cancer and provided her the necessary education and treatment plan to fight it. Because our nurse was able to connect her with the right medical resource, the woman is alive today and fighting her cancer. It was incredible to hear how our nurse was positively transforming health outcomes for these individuals.

In our Nation's current political climate, many government leaders are unsure what should be done to make healthcare affordable for all. But, we are sure our work in the community is making a difference, and the hope we provide to people every day is palpable.. Now more than ever, nurses are needed to care for those that lack resources for adequate care, and we're blessed that God has called us to help the people that need it most.

Thank you for your ongoing prayers and support.



## What's Happening at Illinois South Conference...



Ken Medema



Bryan Johnson



Bryan Sirchio



Richard Bruxvoort-Colligan



Andra Moran



Christopher Grundy

The Center for Progressive Renewl presents *A Progressive Christian Songcrafting Retreat* on November 16-18 at Woodmont Christian Church, 3601 Hillsboro Pike in Nashville, Tennessee. It is sponsored by Interlude Retreats and the Convergence Music Project. Presenters are Ken Medema, Bryan Johnson, Bryan Sirchio, Richard Bruxvoort-Colligan, Andra Moran, and Christopher Grundy. Cost is \$249. This conference is for all songwriters who feel called to create new music for worship and community singing that reflects a more just and generous expression of the Christian faith. If you long to write new songs that will help congregations embrace biblically based themes such as social justice, extravagant welcome, radical inclusion, a commitment to honoring the earth and it's ecosystems, and the unconditional Love at the heart of the Gospel, this conference is for you! Click [here](#) for more information.

**A Boundary Training has been scheduled for Wednesday, November 8 at Zion UCC, New Baden.** Notices have been sent to those pastors who are due for their renewal of this training in 2017, so check your emails. The training will be conducted by Rev. Shana Johnson. For any of you who are out of the area and/or plan on taking boundary training through another conference, please mail/email the certificate of completion to the office. Click [here](#) for the registration form.

### Region 1

**DuQuoin St. John's UCC will hold its Sausage Supper on Sat, Oct 14 from 4 pm - 7 pm.** You may also order sausage to be picked up on Thurs, Oct 12 or Sat, Oct 14. Call the church to order at 618-542-

### Region 3

**Granite City St. John UCC will hold its Sausage Supper on Sun, Oct 15 from 11:30 am - 6 pm.** Adults \$10; Children 6 - 12 years \$5 in the dining room; All carryouts \$10. Quilt & afghan raffle, crafts,

### Region 4

**Brighton St. John UCC will hold its Totenfest Sunday service on All Saints Sunday, Nov 5 at 10:15 am.** Members of the community are invited to attend and bring a picture of their loved one to share. Special

3431.

## Region 2

**Red Bud St. Peter's UCC will host its All You Can Eat Spaghetti Dinner on Sat, Oct 14 from 4 pm - 7 pm.** Menu includes spaghetti, bottomless bowl of Rich and Charlie's Salad, Bread, Cheesecake and drinks. Adults \$11; Children 5 - 12 years \$4; Children 4 and under Free. Country Store. Carryouts available.

**Dupo Christ UCC will hold its Fall Festival on Sat, Oct 14 from 9 am - 3 pm.** Yard sales. Crafts. Sandwiches, soup, home-made pies. Country store. Prize board and basket raffle. Quilt raffle. For more info, call 618-286-4211.

## Region 3

**St. John Evangelical UCC in Collinsville will hold its Wurst-Markt on Thurs, Oct 19 from 11 am - 7 pm.** Buffet-style menu includes pork sausage, sauerkraut, butter beans, mashed potatoes and gravy, peas, applesauce, bread, and pie. Adults \$10; Children 6 - 12 years \$5; Children under 6 Free. Christmas Bazaar, Crafts & Nut Sales. Carry outs available. Sponsored by St. John's Men's Fellowship. Sausage orders by Oct 9. Pick-up on Oct 18 from 11 am - 6 pm. Call 618-344-2526.

decorations, jewelry, baked goods and more.

## Region 4

**Godfrey Evangelical UCC will hold its Fall Festival Bazaar on Thurs, Oct 5 from 9 am - 2 pm.** There will be a themed basket raffle, bakery, books, bangles & more. **The Salad Luncheon the same day will be from 11 am - 1 pm.** Luncheon tickets sold in advance or at the door for \$10 donation. Carry-outs available.

**On Sat, Oct 14 at 1 pm, St. John's UCC in Brighton will offer a free children's movie showing *Hotel Transylvania2*.**

Snacks, crafts and souvenirs. Kids are welcome to come in costume.

**St. John's UCC in Brighton offers The Patchwork Youth Gathering on Sun, Oct 22 from 5-8 pm.** This is an open and affirming place for all youth ages 13-20 to drop in and hang out, play games and make friends in a safe, caring environment.

**Brighton St. John UCC will present their annual Trunk or Treat festival on Fri, Oct 27 from 5-8 pm in the church parking lot.** Sweet treats, roasted hot dogs and festive drinks. We are open till our treats are all gone.

recognition will be given to people who have died in the past year, and all who have died will be remembered.

**A monthly Grief Support Group is meeting at St. John's UCC in Brighton the second Thursday of each month at 7 pm.** The next meeting will be held on Oct 12. This is an ongoing support group open to anyone who is seeking a listening ear and support for a difficult time of mourning.

## Region 9

**Concordia UCC will hold its 16th Annual Dinner Auction, Sat, Oct 14 at The Quail Club in Belleville.** Doors open at 6 pm. Silent Auction from 6-8pm. Oral Auction at 8 pm. Cost is \$25 per person. For more information, click [here](#) to email the secretary or [here](#) for a flyer.

**The St. Paul UCC in Waterloo introduces its St. Paul Fine Arts Concerts.**

Here is the line-up:

**Sun Dec 17 - 2 pm - St. Paul Orchestra Christmas Concert** prepares you for the holidays.  
**Sun, Jan 21, 2018 - 2 pm - Mark Parker & Shannon O'Heron** offer songs from many genres.