

Weekly Connection

For the Week of April 15, 2018 - April 21, 2018
 Diverse Minds, Covenant Hearts, Made One in the Body of Christ

The Amazing People of Illinois South Conference and more...

On Easter Monday, Good Shepherd of Faith - East St. Louis joyously hosted eight volunteers from Americorps North Central Region. Volunteers built an arbor and planted shrubs for the new prayer garden, cleaned out and added new compost to the eleven raised beds for the community vegetable garden and trimmed up shrubs around the church.

The weather cooperated by not raining until 4:30 pm. The volunteers were from seven states: New Jersey, Maryland, North Carolina, South Dakota, Pennsylvania, Alabama and Oregon. Good Shepherd of Faith belongs to the East St. Louis Gardening Coalition which sponsored Americorps Volunteers for two weeks. The group was housed at the Jackie Joyner-Kersey Center in East St. Louis. Pastor Norma Patterson, pastor of GSOE, and GSOE member, Milton Jones, are in the center of the picture.



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 15-21 Churches & Pastors

- Collinsville St. John Evangelical UCC, Rev. Dr. Marvin (Mae) Morgan, Interim Pastor



Be Good Stewards of Your Church's Finances! Early Bird registration for the Great Lakes Regional Youth Event is \$300/per person through May 1.

Register NOW!!

The Great Lakes Regional Youth Event (GLRYE) on July 5 - 8, 2018 at Elmhurst College in Elmhurst (Chicago), Illinois for youth who have finished 6th grade through those who have just finished 12th grade.

Rev. R.J. Morgan, Pastor at Zoar UCC New Hanover, has agreed to be the group coordinator. There have been some discussions about riding the train to Chicago rather than drive or take a bus. Please let us know who your contact person will be. Then watch for further emails from the ISC office and/or Rev. R.J. Morgan for more details.

Click [here](#) to like the GLRYE Facebook page and keep updated on plans, and click [here](#) to register youth from your church. If your group cannot pay by credit card, contact Lisa Hart at glrye18reg@gmail.com.

Fear, Doubt, Uncertainty

This week a member of one of our churches reminded me that the Sunday after Easter could be perhaps one of the most important Sundays of the year. Traditionally, the second Sunday of Easter focuses on the disciple, Thomas.

In the Gospel of John, chapter 20, it recalls that when the Risen Christ appears to the disciples while they were together behind locked doors, Thomas was not with them. While many of us focus first on the "doubts" of Thomas, author Michael E. Williams suggests that perhaps we should consider that Thomas was "the only disciple courageous enough to leave that locked door." For when Thomas returns to the others, he wants to be reassured with the same experience they have had.

I personally don't think that this makes Thomas any more of a doubter than the



others were before Christ stood before them saying, "Peace be with you." The truth is they all had doubts, just as we all had, have and will have doubts. The most important thing is what we do with those doubts. Our doubts only become a problem if they paralyze us into inaction, complacency or relinquishing our power to do something or to believe in something.

In the business world, there is a term for this state of immobility. It is called FUD, an acronym for FEAR, UNCERTAINTY AND DOUBT. It is often used by businesses to throw their competitors off their game and render them ineffective.

For the disciples, the presence of violence, evil, and death among their circle brought about the FUD factor. Those threatened by Jesus' radical message had come after him; the crowds who had just cheered him on into Jerusalem had turned on him shouting, "Crucify him"; and even those who were considered to be Jesus' closest friends had betrayed him. The aftermath of Jesus' arrest, trial, and crucifixion was certainly fear, uncertainty, and doubt.

The FUD factor had set in and the disciples were locked away in fear, uncertain what was to come, doubtful that love, hope and the Prince of Peace could rise up again. They could have become stuck. They could have given up. They could have walked away. Yet, they stayed together; and when the Risen Christ appeared to them, they joyfully received him in their presence and they believed. When the Risen Christ appeared before Thomas and he saw and touched the marks and scars on Christ's body, he allowed himself to believe once again, proclaiming, "My God and my Lord."

However, I have a sense that even the presence of the Risen Christ among them did not make all fear, uncertainty, and doubt go away. There was still much to fear, especially as word would get out about Jesus' resurrection. There was still much uncertainty about how long the Risen Christ would stay with them and what would be next for them. There was still much doubt about if they would be able to live up to Christ's expectations and purposes for them going forward, as they had stumbled and fallen in their mission so far. Yet, the turning point, the tipping point is that they chose not to give in or be ruled by the FUD factor.

Before his ascension, the Risen Christ commissioned the disciples to go out and make disciples. His only plan and purpose for his followers going forward was to spread the good news that the power of God's love, forgiveness, and grace is stronger than hate and intolerance. In order to do this, they had to believe it for themselves.

The same is true for us today. The baton of Christ's plan and purpose has been passed down to us, the living, breathing Church of Jesus Christ. Our sole purpose as the Church, as collective followers of Jesus Christ, is to make disciples by sharing with them our stories, our experiences, our testimonies of how God's goodness and love is stronger than all evil and hate. I believe more than ever the world needs our message.

People need to hear and experience the truth of the good news. We have been called and compelled by our Lord to share the good news to a world that is often confounded, compressed, depressed, and overwhelmed by the bad news they experience too often. Too many people have locked themselves away in fear, uncertainty, and doubt, unable to move creatively, joyously and wondrously towards the certainty of hope in the goodness and love of the Risen Christ among them.

Let us be an Easter people. Let us be those who are able to joyfully receive the presence of the Risen Christ in our lives. Let us be those, who despite our own doubts, can still proclaim of Christ, He is "my Lord, my God." Let us not be consumed by the FUD factor, but instead choose to rise above fear, uncertainty and doubt, and then, teach others how to do the same.

Blessings, Rev. Shana Johnson, ISC Conference Minister

SHANA'S WORSHIP SCHEDULE

April 15

Preaching at St. John UCC, Wood River

Worshiping at St. John UCC, Fairview Heights for Rev. Rosemary Captain's Installation

April 22

Preaching at Godfrey Evangelical UCC

- Collinsville St. John
Evangelical UCC, Rev. Katie
Jo (Craig) Bielke
Retired Pastor
- Rev. Herbert & Bennie
Schafale, Belleville, IL

People with Life Concerns

- Keep Kyle Nuetzel (24) in your prayers as he recovers from a serious car accident. Kyle is the son of Kathy Nuetzel, the fiancée of Rev. Patrick Poole. Rev. Poole is the pastor at Maeystown St. John UCC. Kyle and his mom live in the St. Charles area.

- Pray for the family of Leroy J. Schoen as they mourn his recent death. Leroy's wife passed in December 2017. They were the parents of Rev. Ivan (Nancy) Schoen, Interim Pastor of Salem UCC in Alhambra. Services were last week. Cards may be sent to Rev. Schoen at 13225 Mill Rd, New Douglas, IL 62074.

- Pray for the family of Rev. Kenneth D. (Delores) Kuenning as they mourn his death. Rev. Kuenning served as Pastor of St. Paul UCC in Staunton from 1959-1965 and he was Pastor Emeritus of the Church of Peace UCC in Rock Island, IL, which he served from 1969-1995. Visitation will be Fri, April 13 from 4 - 7 pm at Wheelan-Pressly Funeral Home, 3030 7th Ave, Rock Island. The funeral will be Sat, April 14 at 10 am at the Church of Peace, 1114 12th St, Rock Island.

Preaching at Zion UCC, Central City for Rev. Nancy Pebbles' Installation

April 29

Worshiping at Zion UCC, Waterloo for Rev. Nancy Spier-Lee's Farewell Service

THIS IS YOUR OCWM MONIES AT WORK

To invite me to your church for a particular event, season in the life of the church, or a special occasion, please reach out to me via email at sjohnson@iscucc.org or by phone at 618-654-2125 (office phone) or 618-882-8247.



The United Church of Christ Mental Health Network presents
UCC W.I.S.E. Mental Health Conference on Friday, May 4 at St. Paul UCC in Downer's Grove (Chicago), Illinois from 8 am - 5 pm.

W.I.S.E. stands for Welcoming-Inclusive-Supportive-Engaged

At this conference, you will:

- * Hear stories by persons who have been affected by mental health issues;
- * Receive practical steps to engage in a mental health ministry in our congregations;
- * Be introduced to the WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, Engaged) Covenant for congregations for mental health; and
- * Worship together, share together, and meet new people.

Click [here](#) for more information or [here](#) to register.

The Ecuador Partnership will be building a masonry and block home in Jama on July 7-16 in the Manabi province of Ecuador. While we have built nine times in Tosagua, which is also in Manabi, this will be our third time building in Jama. No construction experience necessary. You will need \$2,200 and a passport valid through 1/16/2019.

Elevation: 200 feet **Humidity:** 75% **Daytime temperature:** 80-90 °F

Nighttime temperature: 70-80 °F

Come join the fun. Your life will be changed. Click [here](#) for the flyer or contact Kent Lytle at kent.cara@charter.net.



The Ecuador Partnership Committee and FEDICE invite you to an Evening with Blanca on Thurs, May 3 at 7 pm at Marine UCC. Blanca Puma Martinez, the executive director of FEDICE, will tell you about the program and its ongoing battle to stay afloat. She will be speaking and engaging in discussion starting at 7 pm. FEDICE's mission is to empower communities in Ecuador through holistic, sustainable, and dignified development. To find out more about FEDICE, click [here](#) or [here](#) for a flyer to share with your congregation and friends.

DuBois Center News

The Camp and Retreat Center of the Illinois South Conference of the United Church of Christ



MEET our SUMMER STAFF

Welcome back Kristian Avise-Rouse! This will be Kristian's third summer on staff, and he will be serving in two capacities - Worship Coordinator and Counselor/Activity Specialist. He will be working closely with our volunteer chaplains to ensure that we have good music, engaging spaces and lots of support for worship and other faith-focused times. Kristian is from Columbia and a member of St. Paul UCC. He attends Illinois Wesleyan University, where he studies Music Education and participates in a variety of music related

activities - from vocal jazz to opera. Kristian served as a delegate from the Illinois South Conference to the UCC General Synod. His selection is an honor and a significant responsibility. Kristian attended summer camp at DuBois Center while growing up. He attributes much of who he is as a person to his weeks as a camper and his first summers as a counselor. In addition to finding mentors at camp, another mentor at school has made a significant impact on this life. Kristian wrote, "Every day this semester I have been more and more inspired by my choral director... He overcame a great deal of adversity to pursue his passion. He struggles with anxiety every day and has been open about how this affects his life. He reminds us every day to feel lucky to be alive and able to make music. His humility and passion for inclusion have taught me many important lessons to help me when teaching in the future." Kristian's favorite foods are sushi and Raising Cane's chicken; his favorite smell is brownies baking! One of his favorite memories from camp was the first time he was able to climb the now retired iceberg. "Many kids had trouble climbing (it), myself included. I felt like the king of the world once I made it!" In closing, Kristian wrote, "I grew up looking forward to my time at DuBois Center every summer, and I still feel that way. It is always exciting to meet new people and grow in experience and faith!"





**SERVICE SATURDAY
April 21 - RSVP Today!**

The rain, wind and icy cold winter have taken their toll. Stretch your muscles, get a little dirty and make a difference! Help us get a jump start as we prepare for the busy months ahead. We can't do it without YOU! Projects vary, depending on the weather and the skills of the workers - carpentry,

cleaning, painting, raking and more. We may even dismantle a dock. Serve together with friends and family, and gain a sense of satisfaction. Lunch is provided. Check out this [flyer](#) for more information. **RSVP** to DuBois Center by **Monday, April 16** at dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org or 618-787-2202. If this date doesn't work for you, we have a mission work group in camp May 16-20 and extra helping hands are always welcome.



**BLOCK PARTY!
Sunday, May 6**

We're having a Block Party in the Rustic Village and your middle and high school youth groups are invited! Join DuBois Center staff and volunteers for an afternoon of fun, food, games, contests and music. One of the best parts - IT'S FREE. We'll



roast hot dogs and make s'mores, meet some of the horses, and explore the Rustic Village. Whether you are a DuBois Center camper or not, you're invited! Load up right after church, grab some lunch and head to camp. We'll be on the move from 1-4:30 pm, but arrive when you can. Youth must be accompanied by adult chaperones or parents. **RSVP** by Monday, April 30 - we need to stock the coolers and send you permission forms. For

more information or to **RSVP**, check out this [flyer](#) or contact DuBois Center at dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org or 618-787-2202.



**BUDDY to BUDDY
Hoyleton Mission Experience
June 30 - July 3, 2018**

Behind the 8 ball? Still looking for a meaningful summer mission trip for your youth? Look no further! This close-to-home mission experience offers teens the opportunity to "live kindness, do justice and walk humbly." Youth encounter God as they participate together with young people from Hoyleton's youth residential programs. They swim, create cool crafts, play games and more! Buddies walk hand in hand with their biblical "neighbors" and practice sincere acceptance and respect. Daily reflections and prayer times focus on diversity, justice and our role as Christians. After the Hoyleton campers head for home each day, the buddies and their chaperones take time to debrief the day's experience, plan for the next day and take-on a physical work project at DuBois Center. There is also time to relax, play and participate in some traditional camp activities. Faith-focused sessions are facilitated by the camp chaplain. Activity supervision is provided by staff from DuBois Center and Hoyleton Ministries. Registration is by church group, not individual, and adult chaperones must accompany youth participants. Housing is in the cottages in main camp. Space is limited. Click [here](#) to learn more or contact shirley.director@DuBoisCenter.org or 618-787-2202.



**CAMPS for YOUNGER YOUTH
Completing Grades 5-9**

Whether your camper prefers the Main Camp cottages or the Rustic Village cabins, there are great options on both sides of the lake. Hang out with the ponies, make a big splash, enjoy a "classic" camp or try roughin' it. For this age group, individual choice times are a popular addition to the line-up. For details, pick up a brochure in your church office, click [here](#) for the online version or contact DuBois Center at dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org or 618-787-2202. New to the Rustic Village? Check out the [Block Party](#) on May 6. Ready to register? Go to www.DuBoisCenter.org or click [here](#). Don't delay; some of these sessions are nearly full!

Session & Grades Completed	Dates
Horsin' Around (5-7)	6/10-15, 7/8-13, 7/15-20
Splash! (5-7)	7/22-25
Base Camp (5-8)	7/15-20
Trekkin' It (5-8)	6/10-15, 7/8-13
Outlander (6-9)	6/24-29, 7/15-20
Saddle 'Em Up (7-9)	6/24-29, 7/15-20



WHY CHURCH CAMP?

Because church camp is joyful fun! It is a sacred place. It is intensely relational, and positive role models abound! Though an integral part of many congregations' year-round faith formation efforts, church camp is different from Vacation Bible School or Sunday School. Campers and leaders live, work, play and worship together from early morning until late into the evening. They grow together through shared experiences in God's amazing creation and form an intentional community. They hear our faith stories in new places and new ways, and find opportunities to share their own. The activities are fun, challenging and filled with opportunities to grow as part of a Christian community. Click [here](#) to learn more.



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



Saturday
MAY 12
 9:00 - Noon

Summer is all about fun, help us raise money for the youth at Hoyleton so they can get out and enjoy the sun!

Saturday May 12th - 9:00 - Noon

This springtime event, rich in tradition, takes place in the beautiful countryside surrounding Mayestown, Illinois. Walkers or runners can choose between a 2 or 5 mile course. A Hike & Bike t-shirt and hearty lunch are included in your registration fee - the fun & fellowship are free! All proceeds benefit Hoyleton's Summer Program. Youth are able to attend museums, go fishing, swimming and attend Hoyleton Day Camp at DuBois Center thanks to generous supporters. Please join us in Mayestown as we continue Building Stronger Communities One Child at a Time. Pre-registration is suggested. Can't attend - sign up as a "Spirit Walker", receive a t-shirt and show your support! Register [online](#). Contact: Dave Henerfauth at spiritbydesignstl@gmail.com or 618-935-2354.

Surviving Caregiving, A MAP THROUGH THE MAZE, is an insightful conference designed for family caregivers who wish to gain valuable knowledge and resources that will help them navigate the maze of caregiving. The Conference is Sat, April 28 from 9:30 am 2:30 pm at St. John Evangelical UCC's Faith Hall, 307 West Clay Street (rear), Collinsville, IL 62234. To register call Age Smart Community Resources at 618-222-2561. This conference is free, but registration is required. Box lunch included. Complimentary care will be available at St. John's Adult Day Center during the conference hours. Pre-registration for adult day service is required. Contact Stacey Rhodes at 618-344-5008. Surviving Caregiving is co-presented by: St. John's Community Care, Age Smart Community Resources and Hospice of Southern Illinois.



St. John's Community Care will offer Savvy Caregiver Training sessions several times through 2018 using a curriculum developed by the University of Minnesota. This training provides tools to family members who are caring for an individual with dementia/memory loss who is living at home, either alone or with family. This series of 6 two-hour sessions will be held on Tuesday evenings on April 17 & 24 - May 1, 8, 15, 22 at Fairview Heights Community Room, 10025 Bunkum Road, Fairview Heights, IL 62208. To register or for more information, call 618-344-5008.

What's Happening at Illinois South Conference...

Attention, all retired pastors and spouses: The next luncheon gathering of the Pastors/Spouses Fellowship will be on Thursday, April 26 at 11:30 am at the Red Apple Restaurant in Maryville. Join us for warm sharing and a good meal. It's an excellent way to keep closely connected with each other in Illinois South Conference. Email herbenne@wisperhome.com or telephone (618-476-3925) your reservation in to us no later than Monday evening, April 23 - Herb & Bennie Schafale.

Region 2

New Hanover Zoar UCC in Columbia presents Car-diac, a Car Cruise & Heart Health Fair to benefit their Parish Health Ministry on Sat, April 21 from 9 am - 2 pm. Registration from 9 am - noon. \$10 donation per entry of cars, trucks and motorcycles. Activities include a cakewalk, 50/50 drawing, raffles, adult and kid games at 10 and 12. Food and drinks available. Free health screenings. People's choice awards and attendance prizes. Rain date May 5. For information, call Shelly at 618-719-3510 or R.J. at 618-823-8890.

Region 3

St. Peter Evangelical UCC in Granite City will hold a Rummage Sale on April 20 & 21 (Friday: 8 am to 2 pm and Saturday: 8 am to 1 pm). Household items, Adult and Children's clothes, Toys, TV's and more.

Region 4

St. John's UCC of Midway will be holding an All You Can Eat Chicken Dinner on Sun, April 22 from 11 am until 3 pm at the Moose Lodge, 7371 Marine Road, Edwardsville. Menu includes fried chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, seasoned green beans, corn, dinner salad, bread, tea and coffee. Adults \$9; children 2-12 years \$4. Tickets can be purchased at the door. Carry outs available. Dessert bake sale. Call the church at 618-377-9288.

Region 4

St. John's UCC Midway presents a Personal Safety & Self Awareness Presentation on Sun, April 15 from 1 pm - 3 pm. Learn more about awareness and protecting yourself against acts of aggression and violence! Leslie Sphar Reeves, owner of All You Studio and Party Place in Troy, will be presenting. She has extensive training and experience in self-defense, physical fitness and conceal carry. Learn about distractions, intuition, psychology of fighting and more! No registration required to attend. Contact 618-377-9288 for information.

Region 5

Marine UCC will host an evening of friendly competition with Hoyleton Youth & Family Services as the winner! The church is set to host the 17th annual Trivia Night benefiting Hoyleton Youth & Family Services on Sat, April 28. Join the hosts for challenging trivia, door prizes and more. The cost is \$12 per person, with up to 8 players to a table. The church is located at the intersection of Center Street and Hwy 143 in Marine. Prizes will be awarded to the first and second place winning teams. Contact the church at 618-887-4465 to reserve a table for trivia or click [here](#).

Region 5

Exhale youth group at Salem UCC in Alhambra will host a Trivia Night and Silent Auction on Sat, April 14. Doors open at 6 pm. There will be soda for sale. Free water. Bring snacks for your table. 50/50. Cost is \$10/person with up to 10 per table. Proceeds will help them raise funds for their summer mission trip to Houston. Contact 618-520-0185 or rjbraundmeier@gmail.com.

Region 6

Join the congregation of Zion UCC in Central City for the installation of Rev. Nancy C. L. Peebles on April 22 at 3 pm at Zion UCC in Central City. RSVP by April 15 to zionuccil@att.net or 618-532-1751. Following the service of worship, all are invited to a meal. Pastors who wish to participate are asked to robe with a red stole and arrive 1/2 hour prior to the service.

Region 8

Zion UCC in New Baden will hold a drive-through Spaghetti Dinner on April 13 from 4 pm - 7 pm. Menu includes a choice of spaghetti with marinara, meat or white sauce, bread sticks, salad and dessert. \$8/dinner.

Region 9

Join St. John UCC in Fairview Heights for the installation of Rev. Rosemary Captain on April 15 at 3 pm at St. John UCC in Fairview Heights. Pastors who wish to participate are asked to robe with a red stole and arrive 1/2 hour prior to the service.