

Weekly Connection

For the Week of July 29 - August 4, 2018
Diverse Minds, Covenant Hearts, Made One in the Body of Christ



A 30 Day No Complaining Challenge

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in

Christ Jesus.

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable-if anything is excellent or praiseworthy-think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me-put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. --Philippians 4: 4-9

In the last few months in my devotion and prayer time, I have been actively studying, thinking, and seeking God's guidance about how I can become a more peaceful and non-anxious presence in my work life, in my home life, and in my thought life. I tend to be more of a worrier than I care to admit. I also tend to be more negative and anxious than I would like to be.

Recently, I read a book about how our thoughts create our feelings, in turn our feelings often create our actions, and our actions produce the results we see and experience in our lives. This particular author named a fact that I had read before, but this time it stopped me in my tracks. She said, on an average, we have about 60,000 thoughts per day.

"Wow." I thought to myself, "that means I have 60,000 times a day to choose what I think or to redirect my thinking from something negative to positive or something anxious to more peaceful!" Then, I immediately thought of the fourth chapter of Philippians.

The Book of Philippians is a collection of letters believed to be written from prison by the apostle Paul to the believers whom Paul and Timothy met when they first visited Philippi in Greece during Paul's second missionary journey. The sentiment is one of gratitude for the support and encouragement Paul has received from them. Yet, as most preachers do, I wonder if he is not also preaching to himself.

Isolated in prison, Paul had every reason, it would seem, to be worried, afraid and despondent about his situation. Yet, in the fourth chapter, verses 4-9, we encounter his powerful words of how to guard one's heart and mind from negativity. It is a simple, yet difficult challenge--to choose to focus and THINK upon the good, the truth, the beauty, and the blessings of life.

THIS is the challenge I am going to embark on for the next 30 days. I am going to challenge myself to 30 days of No Complaining. Simple enough, but I know it will not be without a great deal of effort, redirection and help from accountability partners. (Feel free to redirect me or be an accountability partner for me if you overhear me complaining or being negative or overly critical.)

My theory is: If I choose to focus on what is right, pure, lovely, or anything excellent or praiseworthy, not only my thought life, my feelings and my actions may change, but also the results could very well be that I discover a newer depth of God's peace in my life.

I invite you to consider joining me in this 30-day challenge. Maybe we could compare our results. Either way, I will share with you how the challenge went for me and what I discovered. Day one starts today. Wish me luck.

Blessings, Rev. Shana Johnson, Conference Minister

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
July 29 - Aug 4, 2018
Churches & Pastors**

- Jerseyville Peace UCC

- Johannesburg St. John's UCC,
Rev. William Groennert

SHANA'S UPCOMING WORSHIP SCHEDULE

July 29

Preaching at St. John UCC, Valmeyer

August 5

Participating in worship at St. John UCC Granite City to celebrate the 25th ordination anniversary of Rev. Charles Preston

Participating in an afternoon worship service at Zion UCC, New Baden on the anniversary of Rev. Gretchen Sterrett's death

August 12

Participating in worship at St. Paul UCC, Columbia in the farewell service for Rev. Kris Avise-Rouse

Participating in the ordination service of Andrew Wilson in the Missouri Mid-South Conference

August 19

In Colorado, officiating at the wedding of Meghan Moore, daughter of Rev. Sue Artt, Conference Minister of the Rocky Mountain Conference (formerly of Illinois South Conference)

August 26

Preaching at the Installation Service of Rev. Chad Abbott, Conference Minister of the Indiana-Kentucky Conference

If you would like our Conference Minister to participate in a worship service or special event at your church, please invite her. Please reach out to Rev. Johnson at the office at 618-654-2125 or her cell phone at 618-882-8247 with some possible dates. You can also send her an email at sjohnson@iscucc.org.

This is your OCWM monies at work.

The Amazing People of Illinois South Conference....

St. Paul Waterloo's former member Erik Elsea is canoeing the Mississippi in support of ShelterBoxUSA, a well-known, 4-star-rated NGO, supported by the International Rotary Foundation and others. ShelterBox provides emergency shelter to people in areas devastated by natural disasters and wars. They work in cooperation with many other NGO aid organizations including Church World Service, ACT and others with whom our Global Ministries and One Great Hour of Sharing staff regularly coordinate efforts. In addition to Erik's canoeing the Mississippi over the next 3 months, he is attempting to win a grant for ShelterBoxUSA with his Mississippi Expedition. Before Erik presents the Mission Moment to St. Paul on August 26, however, ISC can help in non-monetary ways: pray for Erik's safe canoe voyage down the Mississippi, follow his progress at mississippiexpedition.com and vote for his winning the Eagle Rare Life Award with its \$50,000 prize to ShelterBoxUSA. Go to VoteForErik.com and vote once every 24 hours. No personal information is required; just click.



A member of Friedens UCC in Irvington, Lindsay Helpingstine, posted on Instagram about her participation at the Irvington Friedens Ice Cream Social. She hashtagged #UCC and #unitechchurchofchrist. National UCC reposted it on their Instagram account.

Retired Pastor

- Rev. Gail and Ronald Geisel, Afton, MO

People with Life Concerns

- Keep Rev. Paul and Marilyn Thompson in your prayers as each of them deal with health issues. Rev. Thompson is retired, but serves on the ISC Recruitment Committee. Cards may be sent to them at 910 Circle Drive, Red Bud, IL 62278.

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

- Pray for Pastor Cherie (Michael) Stolze as she deals with pain from an accident. Pastor Stolze is the pastor for St. Peter's UCC Stone Church in Addieville and St. Paul UCC in Okawville. Cards may be sent to her at 12023 Lake Meade Dr, St. Louis, MO 63146.

- Pray for Rich (Joyce) Gusewelle as he deals with some health issues. Rich and Joyce are members of St. Paul UCC in Edwardsville and Joyce is a member of the ISC Conference Gatherings Team. Cards may be sent to 5238 N State Rt 157, Edwardsville, IL 62025.

- Keep Bill (Helen) Whicher in your prayers as he deals with some health issues. Bill and Helen are members of Belleville St. Paul UCC and he has been very active with Illinois South Conference throughout the years. Cards may be sent to 1015 E Monroe St, Belleville, IL 62220.

UCC Youth 'Clean-Up' at Great Lakes Regional Youth Event

What does it look like when 250 young people from across the Midwest converge in one space to complete a project?

"Absolutely marvelous!" said the Rev. Roger Dart, the disaster response coordinator for the Illinois Conference UCC.

The young people Dart described were participants in the United Church of Christ's Great Lakes Regional Youth Event at Elmhurst College, in Elmhurst Ill., July 5-8. He got to watch them in action, as they put their faith in action, assembling more than 70 Clean-Up Bucket Kits for Church World Service.

"In the lobby of the Elmhurst gym, we had tables set up as a production line, and 250 kids came in en masse. I saw no cliques, no clusters of separateness by state," said Dart, who served as the coordinator for the clean-up kits service project. "I sensed a great amount of camaraderie from all 250 of them. They understood the need for this project, and as they went through this assembly process I could hear how important they thought it was and how they enjoyed doing something that can make a difference." Read the entire [article](#).

The two adults standing by the buckets is Rev. Roger Dart, Disaster Coordinator for the Illinois Conference, and Rev. John Holtz, Pastor of Zion UCC in Marion.



On Sunday, July 8, St. Paul UCC in Belleville welcomed Rev. Michelle Torigian for her first service! The day began with a combined service at 9am with our B Street Band and solo by Oseola Mueller. Craig Bielke was here to be a part of our day too! After the service, the St. Paul's Culinares group created a delicious breakfast for everyone to enjoy and fellowship together. It was a wonderful day filled with old and new friends, and many blessings.

First Congregational UCC in Dupo has two sets of hymnals to give away: approximately 75 of "Hymns of the Christian Life," manufactured by Christian Publications in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania (1978) and approximately 75 of "The Hymnal of the United Church of Christ," manufactured by the United Church Press in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (1974). Contact Gary Edwards at 618-806-1337 or garyedwards3477@gmail.com.



Join St. John UCC in Trenton for the
Installation

of

Rev. Christy Eckert

September 9, 2018

3 pm

St. John United Church of Christ

21 N Walnut St., Trenton, Illinois.

Offering will go to Our Church's Wider Mission.

Reception with light refreshments to follow.

No gifts, please.

Pastors who wish to participate are asked to robe with a red stole and arrive at 2:30 pm.

New this Fall, Eden Theological Seminary is offering a UCC History & Polity class as a distance education course. The professor will use a "virtual" classroom and allow for students to ZOOM in for class sessions. Below are more details. Contact Eden Admissions for more information at 877-627-5652 or [email](#).

M308 Title: UCC History & Polity

Professor: Dr. Jill Baker

Fall Term Dates: August 27 - December 10

Class Meeting: Thursdays; 2:00pm - 5:00pm

Course description: The course will explore the history and polity of the United Church of Christ, seeking to provide an understanding of the organization, ministries and mission commitments of the UCC in the past, and looking for clues on how the denomination's theological trajectories may continue to develop in the future. **Note:** This is a synchronous course. Students must be present virtually during class times.

The 3-credit hour class costs \$585/credit hour for a total of \$1,755 or it can be audited for \$877.50.



United Church of Christ

Whom Shall I Send?

In Volusia County, Florida, Marlene no longer has to go next door every time she needs to use the kitchen or bathroom. UCC volunteers put on her new roof, repaired and installed a new toilet and sink, and brought her kitchen plumbing back online. Find out [more](#).

DuBois Center News

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

FALL FESTIVAL

Sunday Oct 7
from 11-5

DuBois Center

Calling All Handicrafters

Are you gifted with gourds, clever with color or cloth, handy with hardware, talented with tools or skilled in stitchery? If yes, DuBois Center is now accepting applications for Craft Vendors at our annual Fall Festival on Sunday, October 7. Each year over 2000 people turn out for this family friendly event. To learn more about displaying your wares, click [here](#). To register, click [here](#). At this event, the focus is on hand-crafted pieces; no items may be sold that are primarily commercially produced. We are also continuing to encourage the addition of truly vintage and re-purposed merchandise. A limited number of vendor spaces

are available, so don't delay. For more information, contact Susan Fuchs at SusanKFuchs@gmail.com or 618-978-3182.

Help is needed in Oak Lodge Cafe for DuBois' Fall Festival on October 7. St. Paul UCC in Waterloo covers the 9:00 am to 1:00 pm shift, but we need another church to cover 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm with 5-6 members to serve and clean up. Please contact Audrey Hicks at 618-939-8673 or audhicks@hotmail.com if you can take on this most important mission.



THANKS for Making Memories Possible!

As DuBois Center's summer camp season draws to a close, we would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your support. Without the multitude of prayers, volunteer hours and financial support, the life-changing experience of a week at camp simply would not be possible for the hundreds of DuBois Center campers. Friendships built and renewed, faith nurtured, self-confidence bolstered, nature discovered - these experiences shape lives and develop healthier happier children. THANK YOU for being part of the ministry of DuBois Center!



LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON

"We always hear preachers preaching about love..." Last summer Kalaba Kapundu, an international student at Eden Theological Seminary, served on the summer staff at DuBois Center. This year his son Ian was able to attend camp - thanks to our wider faith community. Ian's fee was paid by St. Mark's UCC in DuBois. The church also provided money for a stop at the camp store for Ian and his younger brothers. Rev. Carol Shanks provided transportation to and from camp for the family, playing tour guide along the way. The kids were amazed by the cornfields and grain silos, and even stopped for photos with the stalks. Jill Schantz from the seminary helped with paper work, gathering supplies and moral support. It was definitely a community effort! Last week, we received an email from Kalaba. An excerpt is included below:

"Greetings in the name of Jesus.

Shirley, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for helping Ian to experience Camp DuBois. Ian is in love with DuBois and I think he did connect with DuBois the same way I did and DuBois Center will always have a special place in my family. My life had changed a lot from my experience at DuBois Center. We always hear preachers preaching about love, at DuBois Center love is not preaching but experienced. For me, DuBois Center is the expression of the love of God for humanity... I lack word to express my gratitude, may God continue to strengthen you in your ministry of making disciples for the transformation of the world. Thank you, Boss. ☺

Peace and Grace,
Kalaba Kapundu"



JOB OPPORTUNITY:

Nature's Classroom Instructor

Are you a substitute teacher, active retiree or someone with a flexible schedule? Do you enjoy the outdoors and have experience working with youth or as a teacher? Nature's Classroom Instructors are needed from September 17 through October to work with school groups (grades 5-8) that stay overnight at DuBois Center and to provide a fun and supportive environment while teaching about predator-prey interactions, night life in the woods, cultural differences, erosion, teamwork and other engaging topics. Our instructors teach classes, and lead campfires and other evening activities. Parent chaperones supervise free time, dining tables and cabin times. Training is provided, as are meals and overnight accommodations during Nature's Classroom sessions. Click [here](#) for a program brochure or position [description](#). Contact DuBois Center at [email](#) or 618-787-2202.





Here is the boat dock that was installed in May, now finished and very cool. Watermat to the left, canoeing on the right. SO MUCH BETTER than all the old icky unsafe rusty poles. Some of these poles still exist because we can't budge them to take them out. But many are gone. YEA!!

LOOK WHO'S COMING TO CAMP!

Throughout the year, DuBois Center hosts a variety of church and community groups in addition to camp and retreats. September, October and November are busy, but there are still openings for more groups. Contact DuBois Center at [email](mailto:dubois@duboiscenter.org) or 618-787-2202.

Aug 8 St. John UCC, Maestown
Sept 14-15 ISC Confirmation Retreat
Sept 18 St. Paul UCC, Nashville - Dorcas Circle
Sept 21-23 Regional Gathering of Quakers
Sept 28-29 Friedens UCC, Troy
Sept-Oct 8 Schools for Nature's Classroom
Dozens of Horseback Rides
Oct 19-21 Southern Illinois Art Workshop
Oct 25-28 Pentecostal Singles

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

Courage for Caregivers

On July 28, Courage for Caregivers will be offered from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm at Mercy Conference and Retreat Center, 2039 N Geyer Rd, St. Louis, Missouri, taught by Marjorie Thompson. If you are a professional or at-home caregiver, you know how challenging and exhausting it can be to support those with intensive or chronic care needs. Caregivers need care too. That's why the Henri Nouwen Society is pleased to present a one-day retreat designed for active caregivers in need of spiritual encouragement and community support. Courage for Caregivers addresses the needs of people in caregiving roles, professionals as well as those who find themselves caring for high needs family members or friends. Cost is \$75 and includes lunch and workbook. Register [here](http://www.henrinouwen.org) or contact Colette or Will at the Henri Nouwen Society at 866-226-2158 or admin@henrinouwen.org.



On Tuesday, August 21 from 7:30 am - 9:00 am at Eden Theological Seminary, the Langenberg Leadership Forum: Leadership for the Common Good will present *What's Love Got to Do with It?* featuring Joe Reagan, the former CEO of the St. Louis Regional Chamber of Commerce. He will discuss how faith and business leaders can unite to grow the region. Reagan will share insights from his front-line experience leading business communities in three metropolitan areas. While community problems are exceedingly complex, community solutions begin by individual leaders shifting their mindset from fear to love, from scarcity to abundance, from fragmentation to unity. No cost to attend. A complementary light breakfast is provided. [Registration](http://www.langenbergforum.org) is required. Call 314-918-2546 with questions. Click [here](http://www.langenbergforum.org) for a flyer.

St. John's Community Care Upcoming Events

Savvy Caregiver Training sessions provide tools to family members who are caring for an individual with dementia/memory loss who is living at home, either alone or with family. Each session will be comprised of six two-hour sessions. The 4 remaining classes will be held on Mondays from 2 pm - 4 pm on July 30 & August 6, 13, 20 at the Gateway Regional Medical Center - Pascal Hall (on main floor) in Granite City. For more information or to register, call 618-344-5008. Download [poster](#).

The Cardinals Reminiscence League sponsored by St. John's Community Care and the Alzheimer's Association is open to people with memory loss who would like to share memories about the Cardinals baseball team. New fans and those who would like to socialize and learn more are welcome. Session dates: Aug 16, Sept 20, Oct 18 from 10:30 am - 12 pm each day. All sessions are free. Download [poster](#).

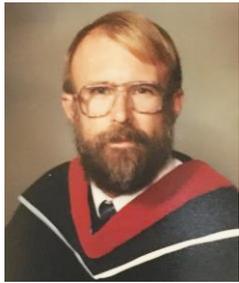
ST. JOHN'S
COMMUNITY CARE
Caring compassionately for aging and disabled people since 1985

The Dementia Friendly Madison County Program is a one-time informal session that lasts an hour. Is your organization or business prepared to serve their neighbors and community as the number of people impacted or diagnosed with dementia increases? For more information about bringing this program to your office or organization, contact Gail Shaw at St. John's Community Care at 618-344-5008. Download [poster](#).

PATHWAYS Theological Education, Inc., announces a new certificate program of Foundational Theology. This eight-course certificate will provide participants with an overview of progressive Christian theology, including courses in spirituality, faith-diversity, cultural pluralism and religion, and Christian history. All courses are conducted asynchronously online so that participants sign into the course room and participate in discussions based on their own schedule.

The certificate program is designed for members of local churches who are interested in learning more than is available in their church, those who serve in leadership roles, or anyone interested in more focused study in contemporary theology. Because courses are online, participants can sign in from anywhere in the world with high-speed internet access. Tuition is \$295 for each six-week course. For more information, click [here](#). Contact Rev. Valerie Coe Lowder at 770-569-3384 or info@pathwaystheological.org

What's Happening at Illinois South Conference...



Celebration of 25 Years of Service

Rev. Charles Preston was ordained on January 10, 1993 in Fulton, New York. Soon after he began serving Zoar United Church of Christ here in Illinois South Conference, followed by calls to churches in the Maine and Ohio Conferences before retiring. A celebration of his 25 years of ordination will be held on Sunday, August 5, at St. John United Church of Christ in Granite City, where his wife, Rev. Karla Frost, now serves. Everyone is invited for worship at 9:30 a.m. followed by a potluck barbecue picnic with meat provided. Rev. Shana Johnson will be participating, and communion will be celebrated.

COME CELEBRATE WITH US!

St Louis Association & Parkway UCC proudly announce the
Service of Ordination for
Andrew Wilson
Sunday, August 12, 2018
3:00 pm

Parkway UCC, 2841 N Ballas Rd, St. Louis, MO 63131

Clergy who wish to participate in the opening processional are invited to wear their robes/vestments.

Reception to follow the Service of Ordination.

Andrew has been serving St. Peter's Evangelical UCC in Granite City as their student pastor since February 2017. He has accepted a call at St. John's UCC in Smithton, Illinois beginning in September.



FREE-Study guides and books

Friedens UCC in Troy generously donated some of the Bible and book studies in which they have participated in the past few years. They wanted some of our ISC churches to be able to use them. So, if you are interested in any of the studies, please contact Christy at cpursell@isucc.org to confirm your request and arrange pick up. These resources are free, but we ask that your church considers a donation to OCWM to strengthen our work within the Conference and the UCC.

Chasing Daylight: DVD of a 10 week study along with 1 leader's book, 1 book and 10 workbooks

Genesis: 9 study books

Exodus: 10 study books

It Starts with One: Igniting the Passion for the Mission of the Church: 1 DVD & 25 participant guides

Fearless Conversation: Why Is Jesus So Radical?: One leader's guide and 15 participant guides

Fearless Conversation: How Can We Be Fully Faithful?: One leader's guide and 15 participant guides

Fearless Conversation: Is God in Control of My Life?: One leader's guide and 15 participant guides

Healthy Eating and Abundant Living: 6 participant books

A Mom's Book of Encouragement. 1 leader's guide, 1 directors guide, 6 books and 6 memory booklets



Piano for Sale: This piano is a Kohler and Campbell. It is in very good condition, but will need to be tuned after being moved. Roberta is asking \$200 for it, but she is happy to negotiate and take church situations into consideration.

Roberta's Phone number 618-580-0928. The piano is in Godfrey, Illinois.

VBS - July

July 29 - August 2; 6 pm - 9 pm; Carlinville St. Paul UCC; *Rolling River Rampage*.

July 30 - August 3; 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm; New Athens St. John UCC, *Rolling River Rampage*.

Job Opportunities

Region 9

Region 9

Part-time administrative assistant (16 to 24 hours, TBD), for Deaconess Nurse Ministry to help the Executive Director in the office with agency work. Experience in an office with computer skills and desire to serve in a ministry a plus. [Email](#) with resume.

Belleville St. Paul UCC presents its Summer Youth Musical, ANNIE, Jr. on Aug 10 at 7 pm; Aug 11 at 7 pm; and Aug 12 at 2 pm. Admission is free, but a goodwill donation will be taken. Everyone is welcome... come to one, two or all three shows. The kids are amazing. For more information, see stpaulucc.org.

The churches of Region 9 will gather together for an Ice Cream Social on Sun, July 29 from 3 pm - 4:30 pm at St. John UCC in Fairview Heights. The B Street Band will be performing at 3 pm followed by the ice cream social at 3:30 in the fellowship hall of the church. A free-will offering will be taken.