

# Weekly Connection

For the Week of December 2, 2018 - December 8, 2018  
Diverse Minds, Covenant Hearts, Made One in the Body of Christ



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

Members of Zion UCC in New Baden went to Uni-Pres Kindercottage loaded with food for Kindercottage's Thanksgiving meals. Pictured are Kindercottage's cook, Yolanda Wooten (right), and Linda and Rev. Elmer Bowman (from left), who delivered the food from Zion UCC in New Baden to Kindercottage. Notice the wealth of groceries in their hands and stacked all around. Congrats to

New Baden Zion UCC for your generosity.

Rev. Dr. Steve Nance of St. Paul UCC in Tower Hill (Dollville) and St. Paul's UCC in Ohlman gave the message at Pana's annual Community Thanksgiving Service held on Sun, Nov 18 at First Nazarene Church of Pana. He spoke on giving 'thanks' for what we have in our lives, especially within the community of Pana. United in Faith Church in Pana also participated in the community service.



## Memorial Table Dedication at Staunton St. Paul UCC

A picnic table, made from recycled plastic caps, in memory of Hailey & Maddie Bertels and Tori Carroll was dedicated on Wed, Nov 21 at St. Paul UCC in Staunton at 7 pm. This memorial was presented by Exhale, the ecumenical youth fellowship sponsored by Staunton St. Paul UCC in loving memory of their three former

members who were tragically killed a year ago in a traffic accident. The dedication was held by the church's outdoor fire pit with s'mores and hot chocolate being served. Exhale would like to thank everyone who saved and donated plastic caps for this project.



For the past seven years Jazz Noel has held 15 concerts in six different churches throughout St. Louis, Kansas City and Southern Illinois. They have performed for more than 3,000 people, and raised nearly \$4,000 for local community service organizations. Jazz Noel returns this year with two performances on Sat, Dec 15 at 3 pm at Parkway UCC, 2841

N. Ballas Road, St Louis, MO and on Sun, Dec 16 at 3 pm at First Congregational UCC, 10 W. Lockwood Ave., Webster Groves, MO. Oikos Ensemble features some of St. Louis' most talented jazz musicians-Clifford Aerie (sax), Kim Fuller (vocalist), Carolbeth True (piano), Glen Smith (bass), David True (drums), and Tim Osiek (trumpet). This year's special guests will be St. Louis' premier jazz vocal ensemble, Java Jived. A mixed vocal octet, Java Jived specializes in a cappella arrangements of jazz standards, pop classics, and music from the great American Songbook. Java Jived has performed at numerous venues throughout the area and now brings their unique vocalese style to Jazz Noel. Jazz Noel is a free gift to the community. At each performance a free will offering is received to support a local community service organization. Click [here](#) for a flyer to share with your congregations.

## 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](#)

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[Insurance Board](#)

[LIFE Program](#)

[Neighborhood Houses](#)

[New Athens Home](#)

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

[St. Paul's Sr. Community](#)

[Uplands Village](#)

[UCC Campus Ministry](#)

[Uni-Pres Kindercottage](#)

[ISC Directory](#)

## Pray for...

### Prayer list for Dec 2 - Dec 8, 2018 Churches & Pastors

- Belleville Christ UCC, Pastor Jon (Lisa) Tinge
- Belleville Concordia UCC, Rev. Allen (Nora) Fluent, Interim Pastor



There is an ancient legend about two angels who flew to earth to gather people's prayers. Wherever people bowed in prayer - by their bedside at night, in a chapel, or on the side of a mountain, the angels stopped and gathered the prayers into their baskets. Before long the basket carried by one of the angels grew heavy with the weight of what he had collected, but that of the other remained almost empty. Into the first were put prayers of petition.

"Please give me this "

"Please I want that..."

His basket was overflowing.

Into the other went the "Thank you" prayers. The "thank you" basket was quite empty.

"Your basket seems very light," said one angel to the other.

"Yes," replied the one who carried the 'Thank you's'." People are usually ready enough to pray for what they want, but very few remember to thank God when God grants their requests."

It seems to be human nature to forget to say, "Thank you."

I am reminded of reading a story about the Dead Letter Box department in Washington, D.C. that reported that in one year, they received hundreds of thousands of letters addressed to "Santa Claus." The hundreds of thousands of letters consisted of children asking Santa to bring many things for them on Christmas. However, only one letter came after Christmas from a child thanking Santa Claus for the toys she received.

There seems to be something within the human spirit that resists the simple act of saying, "Thank you."

Yet, these two simple words are what all people long to hear.

To know they are appreciated.

To know they are seen.

To know they are valued.

To know they have worth.

To know they are making a difference.

During this holiday season, perhaps one of the most powerful gifts you could give someone is the gift of telling them how grateful you are for them. One powerful way to say thank you is by writing a letter. Perhaps you could write them an "I've been meaning to tell you letter."

An "I've been meaning to tell you letter" might look like this:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_  
I've been meaning to tell you...  
I admire you for...  
I remember when...  
You have shown me...  
You told me...  
I'm grateful for...  
I am thankful for...

Sincerely,

I challenge you to write at least one "I've been meaning to tell you letter" this season. Your words of thanks might be the best gift of all.

Blessings, Rev. Shana Johnson, Conference Minister

## **SHANA'S UPCOMING WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

### **December 2**

Worship at Marine UCC, Marine

Participating in Rev. Andy Wilson's installation service at St. John's UCC, Smithton

## **Retired Pastor**

- Rev. John and Shirley Trnka, Newburgh, IN

## **People with Life Concerns**

- Keep Pastor Don (Lois) Propeck in your prayers as he deals with some health issues. Don is the pastor of St. Paul UCC in Jamestown and is currently serving on the ISC Committee on Ministry. Cards may be sent to him at 2163 E 1150th Ave, Loogootee IL 62838.

- Pray for Rev. Nancy (Kevin Lee) Spier-Lee as she recovers from surgery. Rev. Spier-Lee recently retired as Pastor of Waterloo Zion UCC St. Joe and served on several ISC Teams. Cards may be sent to Rev. Nancy Spier-Lee 309 Kroeger Avenue Dupu IL 62239.

- Keep Kyle Nuetzel (24) in your prayers as he continues rehabilitation at home. Kyle is the son of Kathy & Rev. Patrick Poole.

- Keep Rev. Paul and Marilyn Thompson in your prayers as each of them deals 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.

- Pray for Pastor Tom (Marcia) Ellison who is recovering from surgery. Pastor Ellison is the pastor at St. Mark's UCC in DuBois and serves as ISC's Region 7 Convener. He has also served on several other teams as well as Conference Council. Cards may be sent to 11426 State Highway 37, Benton, IL 62812.

## December 9

Leading worship at the UCC Authorized Ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century event

## December 16

Leading worship at the UCC Authorized Ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century event

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](mailto:sjohnson@iscucc.org). **This is your OCWM monies at work.**



## The Illinois South Conference

United Church of Christ  
in covenant with

### St. John's UCC in Smithton

Invites you to Celebrate a

### Service of Installation

for

### Rev. Andrew T. Wilson

Sunday, December 2, 2018

3 pm

St. John's UCC, 303 South Smith Street, Smithton, Illinois

A reception and light snacks will be served following the service. Pastors are asked to robe with red stoles and arrive one-half hour early in order to join in the procession.

**Winter Weekend 2019** will take place on **January 19-21, 2019** at DuBois Center. The theme for this year is "Speak Your Truth!". The speaker will be Rev. Trayce Potter, Minister for Youth & Young Adult Engagement for the UCC. 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 this in hard-copy format, please email Christy at [cpursell@iscucc.org](mailto:cpursell@iscucc.org).



## Holiday Related Ignition Source Control and Safety

Christmas is one of the most cherished times of the year. However, there is an increased risk of fire and injury if proper precautions are not taken for outdoor lighting displays, candles, extension cords and space heaters.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), from 2010 through 2014, an estimated 16,070 non-home electrical fires (structure fires that involved some type of electrical failure or malfunction) were reported each year. These fires resulted in an estimated annual average of 10 deaths, 200 injuries, and \$610 million in direct property damage.

### Outdoor Light Displays

Outdoor lighting and other electrical decorations add to the splendor of the season, but if not used safely, can also increase the risks of fire, electrical shock hazards and employee injuries. Follow these steps from the American Public Power Association to protect your facility, employees and volunteers from electrical and fire hazards related to outdoor holiday decorations.

Click [here](#) to read all of the do's and don'ts.

## Northern California Churches Offer Solace, Support to Wildfire Victims

Amidst the worst wildfires in California history, the people of several United Church of Christ faith communities are reaching out with love to neighbors and to strangers, offering solace and support.



As of Wednesday, Nov. 14, the Camp fire, one of three major blazes raging across the state, has taken 48 lives in Northern California, torched 135,000 acres, and destroyed more than 8,800 structures, including 7,600 homes. The UCC Northern California Nevada Conference reports that currently "at this heartbreaking time, Churches in the areas are safe and intact."

But many are still feeling the impact. A UCC congregation in Redding, close to the town of Paradise, Calif., consumed last week by the Camp fire, is still reeling from the Carr fire, a late July blaze that devastated their hometown. Though Pilgrim Congregational Church United Church of Christ was left standing, four of their families lost everything in that fire just months ago.

As they recover from the tragedy, one of those families is now using their traumatic experience to extend comfort and care to others. Read [more](#).



## SUMMER JOBS

### Make a Difference this Summer!

Summer is just around the corner and staff recruitment kicks off this month. Energetic, child-focused and fun-loving - sound like you or someone you know? Check out the Summer of Service [flyer](#) and consider whether an amazing summer at DuBois Center might be just the opportunity you have been looking for. Gain practical experience and build your resume. Positions include cabin counselors/activity leaders, barn assistant/counselors and coordinators. FAITH. FUN. HARD WORK. GREAT FRIENDS. LONG HOURS. AMAZING MEMORIES. Applications are now available online at [www.DuBoisCenter.org](http://www.DuBoisCenter.org) or by contacting DuBois Center at 618-787-2202 or [dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org](mailto:dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org).



Here's a Thought!

### Here's a Thought:

Know someone who might make a great camp leader? Please forward this article to them or use this [form](#) to recommend them.



### "THANK YOU" CHRISTMAS PARTY Rescheduled for March

This annual event is traditionally our opportunity to say **THANK YOU!** Thank you for your prayers and support; your gifts of time, talent and treasure; and your partnership in our shared mission and ministry at DuBois Center. This year we are certainly no less grateful, but we did take some extra time for reflection before sending out the invitations. Our lives are packed with holiday commitments... with family, church, friends, the crew from work, our social groups... We often have to choose between two, even three holiday gatherings on the same night. On top of that, it's DARK outside, the weather is often questionable and the roads to DuBois Center are not the best - even in the daylight. This year the Outdoor Ministries Team would like to give you a different kind of gift - the gift of time, the gift of one less place to be, one less present to wrap, a free moment to... breathe. We do hope you will join us in March when we celebrate spring, new life and YOU! Thank you for a great year, and watch this space for details in January.



### GREEN DUBOIS - Stewardship Opportunity Saturday, Dec 1

Join the team and make a difference! Removing invasive species, such as Japanese honeysuckle, is the priority for the day. They are insidious - "choking" out native plants and affecting tree reproduction essential for healthy woodlands. This is a great opportunity to move those muscles, meet and work with others who care about the environment, enhance beautiful native plants, rescue wildlife habitat, and help ensure the future of DuBois Center's wonderful woodlands. No special skills are needed. Dress for the weather and bring lopping shears - if you have them. Minimum Age: 16, unless accompanied by a parent. Lunch will be provided. Please **RSVP** no later than **WED, NOV 28**. For more information or to sign up, contact DuBois Center at 618-787-2202 or [dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org](mailto:dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org).

### GIFT CERTIFICATES

Looking for a unique gift for someone special in your life? Hate crowded malls and overwhelming online sites? **Gift Certificates** for DuBois Center camps,



## BUNCO NIGHT

**Saturday, February 9**

SAVE THE DATE - All are invited to join Region 2 for an evening of fun and fellowship. Gather the family, some friends, or your youth group. This entertaining, somewhat frenzied dice game is so easy to learn, anyone can play! The doors at St. Paul UCC in Columbia will open at 6:30 pm, and the game will begin at 7 pm. The cost to play is just \$10 per person, but WAIT - there's more. There will be a 50/50 drawing and a number of other fun extras. Funds raised go to support ministry at DuBois Center. Save the date NOW and watch for details.



events and items in the camp store might be just the answer to your shopping conundrum. Consider giving your child or grandchild the gift of a week at camp or your son and grandson a weekend together just for Fathers & Sons. Love your old camp t-shirts and sweatshirts? Share that love with all the grandkids, nieces and nephews. Certificates are available for any amount of \$10 or more. For more information contact DuBois Center at [dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org](mailto:dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org) or 618-787-2202.

## UPCOMING EVENTS at DuBois Center

Though the weather may be chilly, there is still a lot of action at DuBois Center. Mark your calendars and make plans now to attend. Please spread the word to family, friends and your entire church congregation. Questions? Contact DuBois Center at [dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org](mailto:dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org) or 618-787-2202.

**Dec 1** Green DuBois Invasive Species Work Day

**Jan 19-21** ISC Winter Weekend (high school)

**Feb 9** Bunco Fundraiser in Columbia

**Feb 16-17** ISC Festival of Faith (middle school)

## WINTER PROJECTS:

### Looking for One?

If you like to work with your hands and have some spare time over the winter, DuBois Center has some indoor winter projects that might be of interest. Enjoy refinishing furniture? We have a coffee table in need of some TLC. Upholstery interest you more? We have two chairs that need attention - backs and seats only. Here's an interesting one... refinishing arrows. Removing and replacing damaged feathers takes time, patience and the right tools. We have a couple dozen that need attention. All three of these projects can be done in the comfort of your home or here at camp. For more information, contact DuBois Center at [dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org](mailto:dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org) or 618-787-2202.

**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*



The Illinois Conference of Churches is embracing fund raising to underpin its income and continue its valuable ecumenical work and remain a communications conduit between Christian denominations. They have chosen the phenomenal talent of Chicago Bronze, a premier handbell choir featuring seven octaves of bells and five octaves of chimes, for a Christmas concert on Sat, Dec 8 at 7:30 pm. The St. Julie Billiard Catholic Church of Tinley Park has donated their facility including their very unique and beautiful sanctuary. Please consider attending and/or making this your office Christmas party. Most of all they ask you to share this information with your congregations and clergy. Please pass the information on to friends and colleagues who may have the

advantage of living closer to Tinley Park. Click [here](#) for a flyer.



The Alzheimer's Association is offering free one-hour consultations to discuss dementia and Alzheimer's-related issues on Dec 7 from 9 am - 3 pm at St. John's Community Care in Collinsville. Consultations are offered

by a social worker to answer your questions and address concerns. This can include things like caregiver stress, diagnosis questions, resources and services, coping with behaviors, and learning how to communicate with someone who has dementia. Appointments are required by Dec 5. Call 314-801-0414. Walk-ins will be accepted if time allows.

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

**The Christmas gathering of the Pastors/Spouses Fellowship is set for Thurs, Dec 6 at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows in Belleville at 11:30 am.** You can order off the menu or the buffet. All may tour the Christmas tree room and see the holiday wreaths in the hallway in the Visitors Center. RSVP to Herb & Bennie Schafale at [herbenne@wisperhome.com](mailto:herbenne@wisperhome.com) or 618-476-3925 no later than Monday, December 3 so we can turn in an accurate count to the restaurant. Here's to a great Christmas get-together of this group on December 6.



**Job Opportunities -** UCC Disaster Ministry has two full-time positions to fill.  
\* Disaster Recovery [Specialist](#) - Send Resume and Cover letter to Rev. Dr. Edward Davis at [edavis@soc-ucc.org](mailto:edavis@soc-ucc.org).  
\* [Construction](#) Manager - Send Resume and Cover letter to Matt Hopson [mhopson@setcdc.org](mailto:mhopson@setcdc.org). Note that both of these positions will be working directly with

UCC Disaster Ministries and our partners.

### SAVE THE DATE

**St. John Evangelical UCC in Collinsville will host a VBS Showcase on Friday, January 4, 2019 from Noon-2 pm.** A free lunch will be served at Noon! Come take a look at the VBS starter kits for 2019, coordinate sharing VBS decorations, and share ideas. A Group Publishing representative will be present to introduce Group's VBS curriculum. Cokesbury is sending four curriculum kits to review. RSVP to Dana at 618-344-2526.

### Region 2

**On Sun, Dec 16 at 7 pm, Waterloo St. Paul UCC will present St. Paul's "Pops" Orchestra Christmas Concert.** Under the direction of Bob Rockford, it will feature selections from Mannheim Steamroller. There will be special music by Harps of St. Paul and Piano Quartet. No charge to attend, but a free-will offering will be accepted. Contact 618-939-7123.

### Region 5

**Exhale Youth Group at Staunton St. Paul UCC will hold a Craft Fair & Vendor Sale on Sat, Dec 1 from 9 am - 3 pm.** Twenty-five booths will feature Pampered Chef, Lularoe, Tupperware, Avon, Ash & Ro Creations, Scentsy, American Girl type doll clothes, the Apostle's Attic and much more! Check out the bake sale and do your Christmas shopping. All proceeds go to fund Exhale's summer mission trip. The community is invited and this event is a trolley stop. Contact 618-520-0185 or [email](mailto:).

### Region 5

**There will be a Community Christmas Concert at St. Paul UCC in Staunton on Sun, Dec 2 at 3 pm in the church sanctuary.** The concert will feature a 35 voice community choir, the St. Paul Handbell Choir, a harp soloist, as well as flute, cello and violin soloists. Everyone is invited. The concert is free and a love-offering will be taken to defray expenses.

### Region 4

**Brighton St. John's UCC, an Open & Affirming Church, will host a new group, The Riverbend Rainbow Community Connection on Thurs, Nov 29 at 7 pm.** It will focus on the Riverbend area of Illinois (Granite City to Grafton) to make connections, build support and share resources for the Rainbow Community. It is open to all ages, organizations, and identities. The building is handicap accessible. Contact 618-556-0801 or [lcrelly@yahoo.com](mailto:lcrelly@yahoo.com). This event is not religiously focused, but LGBTQIA affirming faith leaders and congregational reps are invited. For info about Open and Affirming Coalition, click [here](#).

### Region 9

**Belleville Christ UCC will hold its Christmas in Belleville Concert on Sat, Dec 8 at 5:30 pm - 8 pm.** It will feature Jonathan Wilburn, Berdella McGrew, John Nimmo and The Rainey's. All are invited. Contact 618-233-1962.