



Illinois South Conference COVID-19 Response UPDATE #8, May 4, 2020

To Illinois South Conference pastors, church leaders, and congregations:

Extend Suspension of In-Person Worship until May 30, 2020

The Executive Committee recommends suspending in-person worship through May 30, 2020, matching the current state guidelines. This date may be revised. The latest guidelines have now been amended to include small church gatherings of under 10 people, with social-distancing of participants.

How will your congregation approach returning to communal worship? What about planned church-sponsored activities? If the current guidelines expire May 30, your leadership might be considering:

- Returning May 31
- Returning on a Sunday later in June
- Not returning until after Labor Day or beyond
- Not returning until it feels safe for your congregation and your area.

Whenever you choose to return, your congregation will need to be prepared. You can begin planning now by gathering a small task force to discuss things like pew spacing, hymnal use, coffee time and other parts of your regular Sunday morning. Purchase gloves and hand sanitizer now, so you'll have them before you need them. Start asking folks in your churches to sew cloth masks for congregational use. We will share a list of ideas and best practices in coming weeks to help you with this process.

One thing we know is that COVID-19 will change how we worship going forward. Health and safety will take precedence over traditions, and your leadership should develop good practices and policies before attempting to open your sanctuary.

DuBois Center Summer Camp: A Fallow Year

Today at a prayerful and tearful meeting, the Council moved to suspend all traditional summer camp programming at DuBois Center through August 9, 2020. Motion carried unanimously.

We will be re-visioning our time and space at DuBois Center this summer. Watch for news by the end of May.

ISC Spirit

If you know of stories that show people being the church, please send it to ISCspirit@iscucc.org. **Share the stories** that are warming your heart. #ISCspirit.



Friedens UCC in Irvington has made over 800 face shields for local SSM hospitals. They have also been sending cards, emails, and snacks to healthcare workers. The congregation recently had a car parade on Holy Humor Sunday to visit their homebound folks, delivering a Gerber daisy to each family to say “Frieden’s Loves You.” They continue to deliver food to the Irvington Grade School Weekend Backpack program, too.

Submitted by Rev. Stacy Tate

Zion UCC in Marion recently made the news for all they’ve been doing in the community during the pandemic. The Marion Star and a local car dealership started airing videos of all the ways Marion has been supporting each other, and Zion was the first to be featured. Click [here](#) to see the video on The Marion Star’s Facebook page.

Submitted by Rev. John Holst

Zion UCC in New Baden joyfully attempted their first online worship on May 3. Zion is designated an essential service in their area because they house the only food pantry in the area. Their office manager Austin Newton keeps that vital ministry going.

Submitted by Rev. Janis Dashner, Interim Pastor



Thank you to these churches for their OCWM donations received last week. These donations continue to support all the work of the Conference.

Alhambra- Salem UCC
Belleville- Trinity UCC
Grantfork- Grantfork UCC

New Baden- Zion UCC
Red Bud- St Peter UCC

And anonymous gifts from individuals

Helpful Information

- Many churches move to live broadcasts and shared videos of their worship services. Now that you’ve worked out the process, you need to give some thought to what kinds of licensing you need to share these works. There was an initial window where licensing requirements were suspended, but that has passed.

Fortunately, Members of Faith INFO, The Pilgrim Press, and UCC Legal Counsel have your back. They have created a video to address your questions about copyright, legal implications, licensing, streaming, and more. Check it out on [YouTube](#).

- Did you know the Cornerstone Fund has deferred loan payments through June? [Go here](#) to get more details.

Worship Resources

- We now have a worship resources section on the Conference website, with a link on the [home page](#).

Rev. Shana Johnson will hold **a meeting for pastors** tomorrow, Tuesday, May 5 at 10 am.

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/7088890946>
Meeting ID: 708 889 0946

To dial in:

+1 312 626 6799 US
Meeting ID: 708 889 0946

Together in Christ's ministry with you,

Dr. Jill Baker, Conference Moderator
Rev. Christy Eckert, Conference Vice-Moderator
Mr. Dwight Asselmeier, Conference Treasurer
Rev. Ivan Horn, Conference Secretary
Rev. Shana Johnson, IL South Conference Minister

Rev. Rosemary Captain
Ms. Virginia Ilch
Rev. R.J. Morgan
Rev. Mike Southcombe
Ms. Barbara VanAusdall