



Illinois South Conference COVID-19 Response UPDATE #11, May 27, 2020

Moving to Phase 3 of Restore Illinois Plan

All of our Conference is about to move to Phase 3 of the Restore Illinois plan, which brings us to the junction of our polity and public health. There isn't one magical date that will work for every congregation to return to in-person worship.

Every building has different considerations for social distancing.

Every congregation has different average worship attendance.

Every church has congregants that won't feel safe for a long time.

Every congregation has different concerns for people in high-risk categories.

And, our congregational autonomy insures each setting determines what is best for their members, regardless of their contextual decision. As sibling congregations, we are called to practice grace as we all go through this process.

Our churches never closed, they just started doing ministry in a different way. The shelter in place order feels like it's been around so long, and yet it feels like it's ending abruptly, like we forgot to step quickly at the end of the airport walkway. Remember, you have the latitude to take your time. Some of our churches have suspended worship for the rest of the summer. Others are making decisions one month at a time. Some denominations have recommended suspending in-person worship until May, 2021. Yes, that's a year from now. Last week, the [national staff of the UCC](#) strongly encouraged congregations to take their time in determining when to restart in-person worship.

Bring clergy and lay leadership to the Zoom table, and discern your path with deliberate intention.

- Read **Faithfully Phasing Forward**, the ISC guidebook, on the [Conference website](#).
- The United Church of Christ has many [COVID-19 resources](#)
- An article in the [Chicago Tribune](#) explains what's open or closed in each phase
- This is the entire [Restore Illinois](#) plan

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.

DuBois Center and Hoyleton Youth & Family Services

have a long-standing relationship. One aspect involves food. At the end of each summer and in mid-December, the cooks at DuBois Center traditionally check for any food that is good but will likely go bad or be past the “use by” date before the next flurry of groups. Most of this food is taken to the Hoyleton Youth & Family Services. Door to door, it’s only about 24 minutes. This year, due to the camp closure, a mid-May delivery was added. Rather than go to waste, cases and sealed bags of everything from muffin and pancake mix to hot dogs and hamburgers were delivered to the main kitchen at Hoyleton. From there, the cooks from the various cottages divided it up and integrated the food into their menu plans.

Submitted by Shirley Asmussen



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

Addieville – Zion UCC

Darmstadt– Holy Ghost UCC

East St. Louis– Good Shepherd of Faith

Granite City– St. John UCC

Valmeyer – St. John UCC

Wood River – St. John UCC

And anonymous gifts from individuals

Helpful Information

- The **Conference Local Church Ministries Team** is producing a worship service that will be shared before Sunday, June 28. Pastors in the Conference can plan now to use this video as a Sunday off from preparing worship and to get some mental space to rest. More information coming in June.
- The **Council of Conference Ministers** is preparing webinars that will be available to pastors and churches across the UCC. They will be on a variety of topics, and the first one will be released soon. More information coming in June.

Worship Resources

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

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