Recharging Drained Batteries

I have a bad habit of working on several projects at the same time. This inevitably means not only do I have quite a few documents open, but also, I have quite a few programs and windows open on my computer. This often results in two things happening. First, as I am switching from one thing to another, I can easily forget where I stopped and where I need to pick back up on a project. Secondly, I discover my computer needs to be charged more often.

The other day my computer locked up for quite a while. After about fifteen minutes of waiting for the rainbow circle to stop spinning (my computer's way of saying, "Hey, give me a minute to catch up!"), I decided to turn the computer completely off and back on again. The computer did reboot, but then after about five minutes, it completely shut down.

Even though I had charged the computer over night, the charge did not last long. The reason-I had too many programs open at the same time which was quickly draining the stored energy from the battery. Frustrated by this interruption and minor setback in what I had hoped to accomplish, I took a deep breath and readjusted my attitude and my expectations. In a way, I had been pushing the limits of my computer's capabilities.

In a similar way, I have noticed this in so many pastors. The adrenaline has worn off, and now they are just worn out. Decision fatigue has set in. An overwhelming sense of responsibility is weighing heavier than it ever has. The concern for the people they have been called to serve is heightened as is their concern about what people are saying and thinking about their leadership.

Much like my computer, they have had too many windows open in their minds and spirits which drained their energy. The pressure is immense. As they continue to offer worship services, conduct meetings; teach bible studies and online devotions, and continue with pastoral care, there are thoughts and emotions in the background which we cannot see. All of which are draining their energy quickly. In addition, there seems to be fewer opportunities to recharge their own batteries, as it is more difficult to take time off and get away.

As a result, many pastors are tired, worn down, and burnt out.

How can you help?

Continue to contribute financially to your church.
Consider the creative ways your church can support your pastors taking a week off from preparing and leading worship.
Reach out to your pastor and ask how they are doing.
Encourage your pastor through your words and actions.
Offer more grace and less criticism.
Stop comparing what your pastor or church is doing to what others are doing.
Instead of complaining and pointing out problems, be a person who offers solutions.
Don't shrink back from your own call to Christian service.
Ask how you might be able to help share the load of the work.
Consistently pray for your pastor.

More than ever our pastors need our help, our prayers, and support. May we share with them the love, compassion, and support they have so generously shared with us.

Blessing, Rev. Shana Johnson, ISC 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 Sr. Community
Uplands Village
UCC Campus Ministry
Uni-Pres Kindercottage

Pray for...
Prayer list for June 28 - July 4, 2020
Churches & Pastors
- Carlinville St. Paul UCC, Rev. Katrina Palan
- Carlyle Immanuel UCC, Pastor Ken (Barbara) Schafer
Illinois South Conference shares the inspiring stories that show the faith-filled lives within our Conference. We hope this gives you comfort during this time of sheltering in place. 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.

Uni-Pres Kindercottage is now open, but with a changed environment. Children must wear masks and shoes cannot be worn in the building. Because of this, members of Illinois South Conference churches have been helping to maintain the new normal. Rev. Carol Shanks (Shanks is in the yellow shirt, and Kindercottage staff joins her.), Pastor of Bethel UCC in Cahokia, delivered masks made by Kathy Asselmeier, member of St. John UCC in Maeston, and Kathy Harres, member of St. Paul UCC in Columbia, for the staff and children.

Rev. Ivan and Viv Horn surprised the staff with more masks and bags made by Vivian Horn and Diane Mertz, members of Friedens UCC in Hecker. Since staff and children can't wear shoes indoors, they will place shoes in the bags outside each of their lockers. Thank you, ladies, for your wonderful donation. (Vivian is on the far left, and Brenda Crisp is in the middle next to a staff member.)

Retired Pastor
- Rev. Gary and Joyce Kniepkamp, St. Jacob, IL

People with Life Concerns
- Keep all pastors in your prayers as they continue to provide spiritual support and creative services during this unprecedented time.
- Pray for the people of the United States as we work towards equality and civility for us all.
- Pray for the healthcare workers and first responders who have put their lives on the line to protect us.
- Special prayers for the families who are dealing with loved ones who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and are not able to visit them in person for support. Give strength to the sick and to those who are struggling with separation.
- Pray for Rev. Bob Coffey as he deals with some health issues. Rev. Coffey is serving as Pastor for St. Peter's UCC in Lenzburg. Cards may be sent to 6213 Jo Ann Dr, Belleville, IL 62223.

Inclusivity Statement for DuBois Center and Illinois South Conference of the UCC
Because we affirm the value of all God's people, the Illinois South Conference of the United Church of Christ does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, ability, national origin, religious background, sexual orientation, or gender identity. To the extent possible, we endeavor to accommodate those with a variety of physical, mental, emotional, medical, or dietary needs.

ISC Summer 2020 Worship
Here is a bulletin and a worship service video developed by Illinois South Conference for your use. The hope is to provide your pastor with a week of respite from planning worship. You may use it this Sunday, June 28 or any other Sunday of your choosing. Each church may choose the date and time to share with your congregation. Click here for bulletin to accompany the service.
The Insurance Board has released its most recent Loss Control Resources focusing on the phases to reopening church buildings and hold services during phase 2.

Other Resources:
COVID-19 Liability FAQ: How to re-open church offices
COVID-19 Resource Guide: How to prepare your building before returning
Protecting the pastor during civil unrest resource

THIS IS YOUR OCWM MONIES AT WORK
During the shelter in place order, all Conference staff will be working remotely, but they are available to help you. Keep these contacts handy.
For the work of Conference teams and committees or search and call inquiries, contact Christy Pursell at cpursell@iscucc.org.
For financial matters (in terms of your church's giving to the Conference or OCWM), contact Debbie Kesner at dkesner@iscucc.org.
For communicating within the Conference, the Conference website, Facebook page or Weekly Connection, contact Lynnette Schuepbach at lschuepbach@iscucc.org.
For registration for upcoming events or for information about cancelled camp sessions, contact Julie Riechmann at 618-357-1809 or jriebmann@iscucc.org.
For DuBois Center, contact Shirley Asmussen at 618-787-2202 or dcinfo@duboiscenter.org.
To speak with the Conference Minister, contact Rev. Shana Johnson at sjohnson@iscucc.org or 618-882-8247.

Happy Independence Day!
According to history.com, "When the initial battles in the Revolutionary War broke out in April 1775, few colonists desired complete independence from Great Britain, and those who did were considered radical." Read more.
I'm grateful that our ancestors found the courage to think radically at a time when it was not fashionable. Happy 4th of July!

A SALUTE TO WEEK #2 in 2019
This week on Facebook, Instagram and during our virtual campfire, we are celebrating DuBois Center 2019 campers and leaders from Week #2. Many were registered and excited about returning this summer... before the health crisis struck.
We MISS YOU and have a bunk with your name on it for next summer! A big thumbs up to our Splash! - Trail Mix - Wrangle - Xplore campers! We are also celebrating five graduating high school seniors this week. Congrats to Isaiah, Meredith, Paige, Sam and Wendy! All are long-time DuBois Center campers, and this would have been their last summer as DBC youth campers. If you haven't already done so, like us on Facebook and follow us on Instagram to see more photos and stay connected.
We are highlighting week #2 in 2019 for this third week in 2020 because the sessions in weeks 2 & 3 swapped places between 2019 and 2020.
**SIXTY SECONDS of SOLITUDE**

Today's Sixty Seconds of Solitude features the sky and treetops above DuBois Center. One effective way to take time to breathe deeply and relax is to gaze up toward the heavens, especially when there are clouds moving in the sky or the stars are bright. Relax your shoulders and back, perhaps while reaching toward the sky, and remember that God is always with us. Martin Luther wrote "God writes the Gospel not in the Bible alone, but also on trees, and in the flowers and clouds and stars." Watch for our weekly solitude postings on our website and Facebook page. We hope you enjoy this and future mini relaxation reminders.

**VIRTUAL CAMPFIRE**

Thursday, June 25

Join Pastor Skippy (Rev. John Holst), DuBois Center staff, volunteers and camp families for our THIRD virtual campfire this Thursday at 7 pm. This week's campfire will be packed with songs, skits, stories and family fun. If you would like to be a part of the cast, create a goofy skit with your family or share your favorite silly jokes and riddles and send to us. Remember to SPEAK LOUDLY! Send videos or written jokes and riddles to dbcprogramoffice@gmail.com, our YouTube email address. Be sure to keep submissions clean and positive! No put-downs allowed! All items will be reviewed for appropriateness and some may be saved for upcoming editions. Your submission implies consent for DuBois Center to use the submission in items produced and shared by DuBois Center. If all goes as planned, we hope to join together around the campfire on these Thursday nights - June 25, July 9 and 16. Each of these, except the last one, would have been the nights of our closing campfires this summer. We hope you'll join us. Watch for details on Facebook and Instagram. The link will be available each Thursday morning, if not before. Timing an issue? Videos are available to view after its initial release, however the chat feature won't be available.

**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!

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**St. John’s Community Care** is pleased to announce that they resumed their Medical Equipment Loan Program Monday, June 8 with changes necessitated by the pandemic. They will be open to loan and accept equipment returns and donations on Monday and Thursday mornings from 9 am to noon. Please call 618-344-5008 before coming to determine if they have the equipment needed and available. They will hold the equipment in your name until the next scheduled day. When coming to pick up equipment, you MUST wear a mask to enter the building. Please be sure it covers your nose and mouth. Ring the bell to the right of the locked glass doors. Click here for more details and what equipment is available. Contact St. John’s Community Care at 618-344-5008 or email info@stjohnscc.org for more information or to reserve equipment. Your voicemail message will be returned within one business day.

**Kindercottage is open but has new needs as well as continuing needs which give you an opportunity to help.** Here is a current wish list or you can make a financial donation to cover these items.

1. Masks must be worn by everyone, ages 2 and above. They will accept homemade masks as well as purchased masks.
2. Latex vinyl gloves sizes - small, large and extra large.
3. Shoe coverings, socks, and footie for children ages 1 to adults. Shoes cannot be worn inside the building. Also, when looking for footie or socks, please be sure and get the ones with texture on the bottom to give them some grip on the floor.
4. Nonperishable food items for breakfast, lunch and snacks.
5. Hand sanitizer, bleach, and disinfectant, hand soap.
6. Paper products, Lysol or Clorox (or some other brand) wipes.
7. Baby wipes, Vaseline or diaper rash creme, Infant formula (Similac Pro Advance. Many

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doctors are placing babies on this formula. Since WIC doesn't pay for it, it's an out of pocket expense which isn't cheap).
8. Construction-minded people to remove and replace a wall. This must be done on a Saturday, so watch for the announcement in their e-newsletters. Read the entire letter here.

What's Happening at Illinois South Conference...

Save the Date - ISC Confirmation Retreat
Dates: Fri-Sat, Sept 25-26 // Fri-Sat Oct 9-10
- Like all ISC events, these will only happen if we think we can offer them safely and meet state guidelines.
- We are going with two events instead of one to more easily allow for COVID safe interactions and stay under the 50 person limit. (We will hopefully be in that phase by then.)
- A team will plan the events together, so the events will be similar.
- Capacity will be 40 youth and the appropriate number of chaperones.

Region 5

Job Opportunity: Staunton St. Paul UCC is searching for a new director for Exhale, their youth ministry for grades 6-12. Approximately 15-20 hours weekly. Must be familiar with the UCC and theologically progressive. Responsibilities include weekly Exhale meetings, planning and implementing annual mission trip and fundraisers; devotions; service projects; assist with Vacation Bible School and attend worship at least twice monthly. Send resume or contact Pastor Debbie at revdjkamins@gmail.com or 618-635-2386.

Region 5

This summer, Highland Area Christian Ministries' focus is on collecting school supplies for their clients' children. Although schools may operate on a non-traditional schedule when August rolls around, they want to be prepared! Here is their wish list:
- Wide rule spiral notebooks
- Composition notebooks
- Wide rule notebook paper (loose leaf)
- Sharpies
- Plastic folders
- Black dry erase markers
- 10-pack washable markers
- Colored pencils
- 3-pack highlighters
- Pencil top erasers
- Quart and gallon bags
- Kleenex
- Elmer’s glue bottle (no school glue)
- Clorox wipes
- K-2 boys and girls backpacks
- Crayola water paint sets

Region 9

ZOOM VBS
The director of Christian Ed at St. Paul UCC, in Belleville, Craig Bielke, is putting together a Vacation Bible School program using the materials "Wilderness Escape Program". The sessions will be held on June 29, June 30, and July 1. The program will be presented using Zoom. It is for children Pre-K through the 6th grade. There will be NO registration fee. The craft package will be available for pickup at St. Paul UCC in Belleville on dates to be determined. If you have children who would like to participate, please contact Craig Bielke 210-383-0385 or email cbielke@stpaulucc.org.