Fall Programming - The Decision

Once again, with a heavy heart, we announce more postponements. On Monday August 17, the ISC Conference Council, with full support of the Outdoor Ministries Team, voted unanimously to postpone all in-person retreats and events sponsored by DuBois Center and/or the Illinois South Conference through the end of 2020. This includes the ISC Confirmation Retreats, Nature's Classroom, Mother-Daughter Retreat and Wrangle & Ride. Our first priority is the health and safety of our campers, guests and staff. As COVID-19 cases rise steadily throughout our region and a number of schools are reacting and adapting to cases among students and teachers, it is clear that to proceed would not be the cautious or sensible approach. We will continue to welcome small groups and families to camp for overnights, select activities and work projects, as long as participants are willing to follow strict safety protocols related to the COVID virus. For more information contact us at 618-787-2202 or dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org, Above Photo by Anne Petry

The Conference Gatherings Team and staff have been working and preparing for Annual Meeting 2020. Since this year's meeting will be very different from past annual meetings, we have needed to figure out a new schedule, research which technologies would be best to use for our meeting and develop a new schedule. Here's what we have determined will work well for Illinois South Conference's Annual Meeting 2020.

Friday, October 23 afternoon will consist of a panel of educational speakers. Friday night will feature a pre-recorded celebration event which will include highlights from churches and pastors who are celebrating milestone anniversaries. Saturday morning, October 24, will be a combination of pre-recorded videos and five interactive webinars with voting capabilities for the business portion of our meeting. We plan to have our guest speaker, Rev. Dave Sigmund, the UCC's 3 Great Loves Campaign ambassador, talk to us about the ways in which the Church has been the Church by caring for our neighbors, children, and the environment. Sunday morning, October 25, will feature a worship service that will be available for everyone in the Illinois South Conference to view. More details on all that will be taking place during the weekend will be sent to churches and delegates and be made available in upcoming Weekly Connections.

Illinois South Conference COVID-19

Response UPDATE #15, Aug 18, 2020

New State Mitigation Guidelines for Region 4

The Restore Illinois plan divided the state into several regions when the shelter-in-place order was lifted, with criteria for reinstating stricter guidelines if any region had a rise in specific Covid-19 metrics. Region 4 has exceeded these metrics for an extended period of time, and the Illinois Department of Public Health has placed this region under new mitigation guidelines. The counties in IL Region 4 are: Bond, Clinton, Madison, Monroe, Randolph, St. Clair and Washington counties. Many Illinois South Congregations are in this region. The mitigation guidelines will stay in effect for 14 days, until
September 1, and may be extended, or end, based on infection rates during that time.

The principal part of the guidelines impacting churches is the newly-lowered limit of no more than 25 people gathered for a social event. There has already been considerable debate as to whether this applies to worship, if it only applies to worship inside, or if it applies to any gathering regardless of location. Some officials have said it includes all gatherings, including worship, both inside or outdoors. Other officials have said they will not enforce these new restrictions. We live in a peculiar time when some believe politics carry more weight than science and logic. It is doubtful that Covid-19 cares about who gets infected.

We strongly encourage each of our congregations to practice the safest worship they can. Clearly, these guidelines were instituted because the number of people infected in this specific area has ramped up and stayed up for an extended period. These rules are not intended to limit anyone's ability to worship; they are an attempt to save lives.

If your congregation was meeting virtually in the spring, we encourage you to return to that. If you have started gathering in person outside or in your sanctuary and don't plan on going virtual again, limit your gathering to 25 people or 25% of your capacity, whichever is less.

As has become the norm in this Covid time:
- Continue wearing masks
- Keep social distance in all settings from anyone you don't live with
- Wash your hands vigorously and frequently, and don't touch your face
- Keep multi-touch surfaces as clean and sanitized as possible

**Helpful Information**
- Conference Council decided on August 17 to continue suspending all Conference and DuBois Center sponsored events at camp through the rest of 2020.
- The Illinois Department of Public Health has excellent maps illustrating COVID-19 hotspots in the state. One map gives general information, and another map shows the specific COVID-19 metrics that are being monitored for each county.
- If you need a refresher on best practices, refer to: Faithfully Phasing Forward, the ISC guidebook, on the Conference website; the UCC's many COVID-19 resources; and the Restore Illinois Plan.

**Together in Christ's ministry with you,**
- Dr. Jill Baker, Conference Moderator
- Rev. Christy Eckert, Conference Vice-Moderator
- Rev. Ivan Horn, Conference Secretary
- Rev. Rosemary Captain
- Ms. Virginia Ilch
- Rev. R.J. Morgan
- Rev. Mike Southcombe
- Ms. Barbara VanAusdall

---

**Get Ready to Vote: Early, By Mail, or In Person!**
**Justice and Mission Team Tells You How**
You must be registered to vote. You can check to see if you are registered to vote [here](#), and if not, register to vote online [here](#).
To learn more about registering, check out this [document](#).

There are several ways to vote in the election:
**Vote Early**
- **By Mail**
  - Due to concerns over COVID 19, many people may elect to vote by mail. You must apply to get a mail-in ballot. For those who apply to vote by mail, ballots will begin being mailed on September 24. There are three ways to apply:
UCC SUPPORT FOR DERECHO RESPONSE IN IOWA

Background

The derecho that hit central Iowa unexpectedly on August 10 was similar to a Category 2 hurricane. A derecho is a line of intense, widespread, fast-moving windstorms and sometimes thunderstorms, characterized by damaging winds. Winds clocked at as high as 140 mph cut a 50- to 100-mile swath from Des Moines to the state's east. More than 90 percent of buildings in Cedar Rapids were damaged. Four people were killed. At the peak 600,000 in Iowa were without power, and more than one million in the greater Midwest. More than 100 people are still in shelters. Some 25,000 meals have been distributed, with many feeding programs still operating in Cedar Rapids, where the current disaster recovery focus is tree limb and brush removal, and tarping damaged roofs.

Hope UCC in Hiawatha, Iowa received some building damage and tree loss. Rev. Mary Beth Hartenstein is their Pastor. Rev. Mark and Jane Buck and their son Andrew and his family are also members of Hope UCC.

How Can We Help?

At this time, our prayers and financial donations are most needed. Please make a donation by check or online.

Check Donations:

You may send through your local UCC church or send directly to the Illinois South Conference office at 1312 Broadway, Highland Ill. 62249. The Conference office will then forward donations received to the UCC Disaster Ministry for direct dispersal. Write "Iowa Derecho Response" on your check or in an attached note.

Thank you for helping to make the UCC response a reality.

The UCC's Response

At least three UCC congregations are in the high impact area: Hope UCC in Hiawatha, First Congregational UCC in Cedar Rapids, and First Congregational UCC in Belle Plaine. The Cedar Rapids building sustained damage. After the derecho passed, Belle Plaine UCC and its pastor, the Rev. Kate West, took the lead feeding people in the town of Belle Plaine, population 2,500, providing 500-750 lunches per day for a week (pictured right), reported Iowa Conference Disaster Coordinator Brice Hughes. The Iowa Conference is working with the pastor to provide a solidarity grant to assist with their extra expenses.

West's church also fielded offers of donations and volunteer help and offered hospitality for a group of college students who came to Belle Plaine for the day to help with tree and brush removal.

"Due to the pandemic, work groups from outside Iowa are not being accepted at present," Hughes cautioned, "as COVID-19 cases in Iowa have been skyrocketing during the past three weeks." He said it is unsafe to enter from outside the state at present.

Hughes also reported that:

- Don Miller, UCC Conference Disaster Coordinator from Kansas, delivered Clean-up Buckets to Belle Plaine on August 17. No additional need for Cleanup Buckets has been expressed at present.
UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) is currently active in Cedar Rapids. They are coordinating volunteers who are mostly doing outdoor brush removal and putting tarps on damaged roofs.

Hughes has started conversations with Disciples of Christ Week of Compassion representative Caroline Hamilton-Arnold about cooperative efforts in the future. At this time, there are no plans for a Mission Station.

As Long-Term Recovery Groups (LTRGs) form, there may be a need for seed money to help them get established and begin work.

As LTRGs form and the effort shifts from emergency response to rebuilding, there may be a need for case managers. Community Action is currently coordinating case management.

UCC Disaster Ministries is working closely with the Iowa Conference on the response. UCC’s support will be most needed in the long-term recovery phase, which will begin soon.

Good Samaritan Fund through Deaconess Nurse Ministry

The Good Samaritan Fund through Deaconess Nurse Ministry provides financial support, subject to available funds, for UCC active and retired clergy and their partners/spouses who reside in the Missouri Mid-South or the Illinois South Conference.

Eligible Applicant Criteria:
1. Active or retired UCC clergy with good standing and residing in the Missouri Mid-South or Illinois South Conference of the UCC.
2. Surviving domestic partners or spouses of active or retired UCC Clergy residing in the Missouri Mid-South or Illinois South Conference of the UCC. If a surviving spouse of clergy remarries, they are no longer eligible.

Type of Assistance:
1. One time, Emergency Assistance Grants are for unforeseen circumstances that create financial demands. Emergency Grants do not subsidize churches or agencies or relieve them of meeting normal compensation responsibilities. Emergency grants are generally considered once per person in a twelve-month period with a maximum of $3,000 for the year. Credit counseling or other no cost financial counseling programs may be recommended for those who have avoidable financial circumstances.
2. Gap Assistant Grants are for a specific financial need for a short-term period which will eventually be resolved by other funding sources. Gap funding is available for up to 12 months rolling for a total amount of $15,000 to an individual.

Talk to your conference minister if you need assistance.

CONTACT US - 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 jriechmann@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.

WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS!

The last two weeks have been busy ones at DuBois Center with six different teams in motion - in addition to Christ UCC in Dupo (see separate article). A crew from Grantfork UCC brought their skidsteer and worked on the fence on the dam. They straightened a long section and removed a stump in preparation for replacing the fencing that was removed for the spillway renovation. The Equestrian Team cleared trails and rode the fence lines checking for damage from downed trees; the Bee Team checked on the hives and provided the bees with some TLC. Janet, from Church...
of the Good Shepherd in Carbondale, made giant piles of fallen branches and filled trash cans with tree litter. She painted new posts for the fence on the dam and even fit in a ride to the bottoms to help check the fences. Jim and Charlene from St. Paul's UCC in Freeburg checked the Deer Run area for storm damage and took measurements for upgrades. And last, but definitely not least, Gene from St. Paul UCC in Nashville cut and removed dead and/or dangerous trees. **THANKS to everyone for your hard work!** It truly does make a difference. There is always lots to be done to maintain our outdoor ministry facilities and grounds. For more information, contact us at 618-787-2202 or dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org.

---

**SAFE ROLLING**

Thanks to a volunteer team from Christ UCC in Dupo, the big doors on the west end of the barn are sliding smoothly and safely once again. An interior support beam for the door track was compromised by carpenter ants and water damage. It needed to be removed and replaced, along with a couple other boards. This was an oddly complex task and required removing and then replacing the doors. After a full day of work and a visit from the exterminator, the task is done. **THANKS to the crew from Christ UCC in Dupo for quickly responding to this special need!**

---

**VIRTUAL CAMPFIRE - RERUNS**

If you missed any of our DuBois Center virtual campfires - **FEAR NOT!** They are still available to view, just without the chat feature. Need some fresh, fun, family-friendly activities? Watch from the comfort of your sofa, around a campfire in the backyard or maybe even using a big screen in the driveway. Make popcorn or roast hot dogs. Tune in and sing along, laugh, search for familiar faces, and listen to words of inspiration and challenge. Click below for the different editions.

- **June 11** featuring chaplains Curly & Peanut and our 2019 campers from week #1
- **June 18** featuring chaplains Lonestar & Sunkist and our 2019 campers from week #3
- **June 25** featuring Pastor Skippy, our graduating seniors and our 2019 campers from week #2
- **July 9** featuring Chaplain Windsong and our 2019 campers from week #4
- **July 16** featuring Pastor Sunny and our 2019 campers from week #5
- **July 23** featuring Kayak, our 2019 campers from week #6 and our 2019 summer staff and volunteers

---

**SIXTY SECONDS of SOLITUDE**

Today's edition of 60 Seconds of Solitude features a campfire at Picnic Point. Personally, I love campfires... the flicker of the flames, the glow of the embers, the cracking of the wood and the sparks reaching skyward. This fire was built to cook an amazing foil stew dinner - a favorite of campers and staff alike. Please take 60 seconds to sit back, relax, stretch your shoulders, neck and back, and remember that God is always with us. Right now, we are missing our friends around the campfire, and meals cooked and eaten together. Sometime this week, consider lighting a fire or a candle for the friends and family you are missing. Find a way to communicate with them... Facebook or text, a long letter or late-night phone call. And remember this quote from Robert Alden, "There is not enough darkness in all the world to put out the light of even one small candle." That goes for campfires too.

---

**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!
Deaconess Nurse Ministry invites you to become a member of the Healthy Impact Society. The Healthy Impact Society is a monthly giving program for people that are committed to improving population health for all in St. Louis. For as little as $10.50 per month, Society Members can provide our faith community nurses with the tools they need to administer important health screenings, tests, education and other supportive services to low-income adults, seniors and families. Find out more. Review the Deaconess Nurse Ministry 2019 Annual Report.

The Cornerstone Fund Presents a Free Webinar
"A Capital Campaign in COVID-19?!"
Is this even possible?! Join them on Monday, August 31 at 1 pm for a FREE, one-hour webinar to discuss this question. Rev. Dr. Otis Moss III, Senior Pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ (Chicago) and Rev. Michael W. Caine of Old First UCC (Philadelphia) will be featured as well as Rev. Kent Siladi, the National Setting's new Director of Philanthropy, and Jill White, a Regional Mission Interpreter with the UCC Church Building & Loan Fund. Maria C. Coyne, the Cornerstone Fund's President & CEO, will serve as moderator. Both local church leaders and thought leaders in faith-based giving will sit down to discuss how to, even in the face of a pandemic, continue to focus on the capital needs of a congregation and how the definition of capital is expanding, from technology infrastructure to HVAC systems and air filtration, to building modifications and more. The webinar is FREE, but registration is REQUIRED.

Hoyleton Golf Classic
Hoyleton Youth and Family continues moving forward and adapting to the changes they face. Mark your calendars for Friday, October 2, 2020 for the Hoyleton Golf Classic at Tamarack. Info will be coming soon, and you can find out more at www.Hoyleton.org. There are sponsorship opportunities, foursomes and, of course, single golfers! The event is always a good time, and they will follow the state of Illinois and CDC guidelines to stay safe and be well.

Deaconess Foundation has many ways to engage with the community, advocate for change and invest in the lives of children. Deaconess is pleased to have supported the Close the Workhouse Campaign with funding through their Responsive Grants program, space as a Center-Based Initiative and our voice as an institutional advocate. We continue to learn from the campaign's leaders (Action St. Louis, ArchCity Defenders and The Bail Project) and its lessons for our community. The most significant lesson this campaign has illuminated is that sustained public education, followed by mobilization and democratic action can generate, allocate and reallocate public resources for the benefit of children and families. With this success in mind, we are affirmed in our commitment to invest in the power of people in communities to advocate, organize and mobilize for change. Their newsletter highlights many ways to engage, advocate and invest in the lives of children. If you would like to see the entire monthly e-newsletter to find out more of the ways you can get involved, click here.

Men and women who serve as family caregivers to loved ones struggling with dementia or Alzheimer's can be challenged by stress which can cause depression or anxiety. A caregiver who is suffering from the added stress may not be at their best to care for themselves or their loved one. With your help, we can spread the word that St. John's Community Care can support them on their journey that no one should take alone. Here are a few programs you can suggest to friends or neighbors who serve as caregivers.

- On Line - Stress Busting Program
- On Line Support Groups Offered monthly - Family Caregivers Support Group or Alzheimer's Support Group
- On Line - Memory Cafe Group Offered monthly
- In Person - BRAIN WAVE Early Memory Loss Program
- In Person - Savvy Caregiving
St. John's Community Care is currently offering in-person and on-line support and programs for family caregivers at no charge using Zoom. For more information, call Gail Shaw at 618-344-5008.

What's Happening at Illinois South Conference...

**Ferguson Buying Blitzes**

Dear Friends in Ministry,

As we did a few years ago, Marine UCC invites you to a series of three "Ferguson Buying Blitzes" to help the businesses of that community recover from recent rioting. We will meet at 10:00 am on three alternating Saturdays, August 29, Sept. 12 and Sept. 26. Our meeting place will be at New Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church. Their Pastor Emeritus, Alonzo Adams, has agreed to allow us to meet there. The address is 1 N. Dade Street in Ferguson. The idea is to spread out and spend money in the businesses of the area. Hope to see you! Thanks. Rev. Phil Kershner

**Global Ministries has received over $4,000 from Goodsearch and Goodshop**

GoodSearch is a search engine that donates a portion of its income from advertisements to charities. When you sign up for GoodSearch it will show that you are supporting "Global Ministries - Disciples of Christ and United Church of Christ." Additionally, you can support "Global Ministries - Disciples of Christ and United Church of Christ" as you shop online through GoodShop, which donates up to 20% of your online purchases to the work of Global Ministries. Global Ministries is grateful for the more than $4,000 received by taking these simple steps! To learn how to use GoodSearch and GoodShop [click here](#).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Regions</th>
<th>Region 8</th>
<th>Region 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3 Great Loves</strong> is the UCC-wide mission initiative, telling the story of how we live out God's love through the lens of 3 Great Loves: Love of Neighbor, Love of Children, and Love of Creation. For sharing the stories of how we, as a united church, live out God's love in missional, measurable and meaningful ways and to see ideas from other churches, please visit <a href="http://3greatloves.org">3greatloves.org</a>. If you decide to share your story, be sure to include pictures and videos, too!</td>
<td><strong>Job Opportunity:</strong> St. Peter UCC in Lenzburg is looking for an organist/pianist starting at the 10 am worship service on the first Sunday in September. Contact the office at 618-475-2557 or <a href="mailto:stpeterlenzburg@htc.net">stpeterlenzburg@htc.net</a>.</td>
<td><strong>New Baden Zion UCC will hold a Drive Thru Spaghetti Dinner in the church’s front parking lot on Fri, Aug 28 from 4 pm - 7 pm. Meal includes Spaghetti with a choice of Marinara, Meatball, or Alfredo sauce; dressed salad; breadsticks, and dessert. All meals $9.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>