New Baden Zion
United Church of Christ
and
Illinois South
Conference
Invite You to Attend the
Virtual Installation of
Rev. Stephen Stark
Sunday, January 31, 2021
3:00 pm
New Baden Zion UCC
414 W Hanover Street
New Baden, Illinois 62265

Please note that this is a Zoom Webinar, which is slightly different from the more familiar Zoom Meeting. You may be asked to register with your name and email address before being admitted into the webinar. As an attendee, you will not see yourself on the screen nor will you be able to speak. Instead, you will see only those pastors and other church/Conference leaders who are participating in the service. The chat function will be enabled, although it likely won't be monitored during the service. Click this link to attend. https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81630191621

The Amazing People of Illinois South Conference...
Dupo Christ UCC joined the ranks of solar-powered churches in November 2020. We tip our hats to Russell Portell, a member of the church, who was the driving force for this project. Thank you for helping to care for God's creation.

Prayer list for
Jan 31 - Feb 6, 2021
Churches & Pastors
- Trenton St. John UCC, Rev. Christy (Donald) Eckert
- Troy Friedens UCC, Pastor Tim (Danielle) Harrison, Supply Pastor
Retired Pastor
- Rev. Robert and Doris Utke, Falcon Heights, MN

People with Life Concerns
- Please pray for Rev. P. Jerry Bennett as he deals with some health issues. Rev. Bennett serves as the pastor for Jamestown St. Paul UCC and Hookdale St. Peter UCC and previously was the ISC Associate Conference Minister. Cards may be sent to him at PO Box 39, Highland, IL 62249.
- Pray for Rev. Nancy (Kevin Lee) Spier-Lee as she deals with some health issues and rehabilitation. Rev. Spier-Lee was the Pastor for Zion UCC St. Joe in Waterloo and served on several ISC teams. Cards may be sent to her at 309 Kroeger Ave, Dupo, IL 62239.
- Pray for peace.
- Keep all pastors in your prayers as they continue to provide spiritual support during this difficult 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.
- Special prayers for the families who are dealing with loved ones diagnosed with COVID-19.
The ISC Ecclesiastical Council met on Zoom on Sunday, January 24 at 3 pm, listened to the work of the Spirit, and voted to ordain Tarrah Vaupel. Nearly 100 voting delegates and visitors participated in the Council and positive votes and comments were overwhelmingly in favor of Tarrah’s ordination. Through tearful eyes, Tarrah said after hearing she was affirmed in her calling and in her closing prayer, “Thank you for affirming what God has placed on my heart!”...“Now I have the opportunity to fully recognize this calling.” Many delegates congratulated her through Zoom’s chat function. Rev. Martha Thierheimer, pastor of O’Fallon UCC and Tarrah’s home church wrote, "So proud of you, Tarrah! OUCC church family rejoices with you!!!” Illinois South Conference welcomes Rev. Tarrah Vaupel to its ministry.

**Clergy Communities of Practice**

It is with great joy that we are able to offer facilitated clergy communities of practice for all active ISC pastors in 2021. This wonderful opportunity is made possible by a generous grant we were awarded through the Brown Endowment Fund of the United Church Funds.

**What is a Community of Practice?**

The term comes from the work of Etienne Wenger-Trayner who defines a community of practice as a group of peers who share a concern or a passion for something they do and who learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. Group members support one another, learn together, and share resources – experiences, stories, practices, ways of addressing recurring issues and problems. Building this community takes time and sustained interaction.

All pastors serving churches in Illinois South Conference have been sent a link to a survey that will register you for a Community of Practice. If you did not receive the survey, please reach out to Christy Pursell at cpursell@iscucc.org for assistance.

Although we’ve missed the date of the holiday, it is never too late to celebrate the wisdom from Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

**Humanity’s Destiny: The Journey of Liberation by Rev. Sarah Lund**

In honor of the legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., our congregation’s worship services included listening to a reading from Dr. King’s Letter From Birmingham Jail. One of the key teachings from this letter is Dr. King’s insistence that we are all interconnected. Dr. King wrote, “whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.” We continue Dr. King’s work of justice when we take seriously these words. Discrimination, stigma, and shame seek to separate us, isolate us, and mock Dr. King’s insights that we are “tied in a single garment of destiny.” Read [more](#)

**The Justice and Mission Team supports the Clean Energy Jobs Act** before the Illinois Legislature now. We urge you to call Gov. Pritzker and urge him to support the passage of this act. In doing so, you will support clean energy sources for Illinois as well as jobs in southern Illinois communities that need them most. Contact the Constituent Affairs Help Line: Gov. Pritzker’s Office at 217-782-0244.

**Save the Date for Virtual Day of Discipleship on Saturday, May 1, 2021.** The theme this year is “Strengthening the Ties That Bind Us Together”. A list of webinars will be coming soon.

**Deadline!!! - Jan 31, 2021**

The Cultivating Generous Congregations Seminar offered jointly by Illinois South, Heartland, and Indiana-Kentucky Conferences
is for pastors and lay leaders. It will explore faithful, practical, and tested ways to promote generosity in your congregation. The program features Rev. Andy DeBraber and Rev. Andrew Warner, Generosity Outreach Officers of the UCC. Participants will meet for six online sessions on Thursdays - Feb 11 and 25, Mar 11 and 25, Apr 15 and 29 from 5:30 pm to 7 pm CST.

**It's best to have at least a team of two attend the program.** The registration fee is $50 for all participants and due at the time of your online registration. Scholarships will be available on request by contacting Rev. Shana Johnson at sjohnson@iscucc.org. Click [here](#) to register.

Information on accessing the online course site and zoom connection information will be provided after you register.

Union Presbyterian Leadership Institute offers a **NEW Virtual Social Justice Conference, “Called to Justice: Seeking Change within the Classroom, Congregation, and Community”** on February 24 - 25, 2021. The Keynote Addresses will be led by: Dr. Marvin McMickle, Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School; Dr. Brian Blount, Union Presbyterian Seminary; and Dr. Rodney Sadler, Union Presbyterian Seminary. Find out [more](#).

**DuBois Center News**

**MEET THE SEARCH COMMITTEE FOR THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF OUTDOOR MINISTRIES**

Pictured left to right:
- **Rev. Shana Johnson,** ISC Conference Minister and chairperson of the Search Committee
- **Dr. Jill Baker,** Conference Moderator and ex-officio member
- **Craig Bielke,** Member at large
- **Hank Henderson,** Member representing the Conference Personnel Committee
- **Rachel Kinzinger,** Member representing the Conference OMT (Outdoor Ministry Team)
- **Nancy Wagner,** Member representing the Conference OMT (Outdoor Ministry Team) and current OMT chairperson

**DuBois Property Policy during this transition time…**

Please note: The Conference Council has closed the DuBois Center grounds to everyone except maintenance and animal care staff until such time as a new Acting Director is hired. While we have people on the grounds, they cannot supervise visitors or do the COVID-level of cleaning required to host guests of any kind right now. This reduces liability and safety issues for both people and property. We all know and enjoy the beautiful campgrounds, and we expect to open them again very soon.
Vander Court is Coming Soon!
Hoyleton Youth and Family Services will have a new therapeutic foster care program at Vander Court in Belleville, Illinois. This site will serve as a step-down placement program as part of our service continuum. Vander Court house will serve 3 youth at a time for an average length of stay of 6 – 9 months. We estimate that six or more youth will call Vander Court home. As we put the finishing touches on our house rehab, we’re beginning to recruit staff, and most importantly, foster parents. We’d appreciate your help and ask that you share the message below with the great people in your networks to help us find the right people to foster our young people.

Foster Parents Needed
Are you and your partner ready for the next chapter in your life? If you’re up for an adventure and are interested in working with Hoyleton Youth and Family Services, consider this: We’re looking for foster parents for our new therapeutic foster home. If you love teens, can care for three at a time and give your full-time attention toward their development and success, and are able to put Hoyleton’s CARE philosophy into practice, in return you’ll receive:
- Competitive, full-time compensation for both partners.
- Rent free living in a beautiful, spacious 5 bedroom, rehabbed home with new furnishings.
- Additional board payments that cover the costs of our youths’ care.
- Membership in a team of supportive professionals.

If you think you might be interested and want to learn more, or know folks you’d like to recommend, call Hoyleton’s Director of Child Welfare, Sharon Schultz at 618-688-4761. Thank you!

St. John’s Community Care offers the use of GrandPads to clients or family members who need a way to connect to information virtually. These pads are extremely simple to use, which allows for less frustration in its use. The GrandPads offer games, internet access, email capabilities and more!!

If you know of someone who would benefit from access to a GrandPad to stay connected to their loved ones, take a virtual caregiver workshop, or participate in a Memory Café, encourage them to contact St. John’s Community Care at 618-344-5008 or ask their permission for St. John’s staff to contact them. St. John’s Community Care provides the pad, internet services (WIFI), and in-person and written instructions for use.

A deposit is required and kept until the pad is returned. There is no additional charge for the internet or the pad. To find out more about the GrandPad, click here.

Stress-busting Program for Family Caregivers
St. John’s Community care presents a seminar to help caregivers reduce stress. It will provide education and support, teach stress management techniques and help caregivers develop coping strategies. The next ONLINE Session Starts Feb 1 and continues each Monday for 9 weeks. Sessions meet virtually from 10 am - 11:30 am. Call 618-344-5008 to register or for more information. Click here for a flyer.

Whether your church is just beginning its journey towards an Open and Affirming covenant, or you’ve been ONA for many years, you'll find a webinar that meets your needs! Open and Affirming Coalition presents a popular webinar series that has helped congregations plan
for an ONA journey that builds consensus and reduces the risk of conflict for congregations new to ONA. Existing ONA churches have learned how to breathe new life into their ONA commitment. These services are priced to fit almost any budget, and there are deep discounts when you buy a season pass. The first session begins on Thurs, Feb 4 at 5 pm CST. Find out more…

Health and Human Service (CHHSM) Sunday is scheduled for Jan 31, 2021. CHHSM, in partnership with the United Church of Christ, is pleased to provide worship resources to use for your congregation’s celebration of Health and Human Service Sunday. At this link, you will find suggested scriptures, a prepared liturgy, and a logo for your bulletin, including a Litany of Gratitude for Essential Workers and a Prayer of Remembrance for those lost in the coronavirus pandemic. Special thanks to the Rev. Dr. Elyse Berry, a member of the CHHSM staff, for writing the very moving elements of this service, designed to speak to our experiences with COVID-19 this year. Read more…

The UCC Insurance Board presents a webinar, COVID-19 Considerations for Church Employers on Jan 29 at 1 pm CST, featuring Dean Rocco, attorney with Wilson Elser. This webcast will address issues churches face as employers during COVID-19 and provide best practice policies and procedures for managing employees and volunteers. Many states may require that employers have specific COVID-19 policies and procedures in place to protect their employees; learn about best practice considerations for your church. Click here to register. Click here for a flyer.

What’s Happening in Illinois South Conference

Clergy & Vaccinations
Several pastors have reached out to the Conference wondering if clergy would be considered a high priority for vaccinations. After speaking to the CDC, the Governor’s office, and many local counties, it appears there is a "no" and "yes" answer to this question. "No," there is not a unified state agreement in Illinois that all clergy should be considered among the list of those eligible for vaccinations in the 1A or 1B groups UNLESS they are serving in a health field context. "Yes," there are some counties, which after a conversation with a clergyperson in which the individual makes a case that their work requires in-person interaction and social distancing is not possible, will give clergy a vaccination along with groups 1A or 1B. As a clergy person, if you want to be considered for early vaccination, our strongest suggestion to you is to advocate for yourself within the county in which you live. In other words, call your local health department.
Please know that to make your case, some counties are requiring verification of your vocational credentials. IF you have standing in the Illinois South Conference and would like the Conference to supply you with a certification card, please reach out to Christy Pursell at cpursell@iscucc.org.

Job Opportunity: O’Fallon United Church of Christ is seeking applicants for a part-time custodian. The normal workweek will be 15 -20 hours doing typical cleaning, maintenance and grounds duties along with preparing for scheduled activities and meetings. The work schedule is negotiable for daytime and evening hours. Applicants can contact the committee through the Church office 618-632-3496 or by contacting Allen Garner 618-910-2913 or Ted Lewis 618-977-8184.
Region 5
Alhambra Salem will hold its 73rd Annual Sausage Supper (Drive-thru only) on Sat, Jan 30 from 2:30 pm - 8 pm. Menu includes fresh homemade pork sausage, sauerkraut, potatoes, gravy, green beans, and applesauce. Donations are $10 per meal.

**Pre-Order Meat Sales** are due by January 26. Order forms are available [here](#). Email forms to ooey5@agtelco.com or call 618-488-3733 or 618-488-3215. Pickup on Thurs, Jan 28 from 10 am to 6 pm or Sat, Jan 30 from 9 am to noon.

Region 8
New Baden Zion UCC will hold a Drive-thru Soup and Salad Dinner on Thurs, Feb 4, from 4 pm - 6:30 pm. A meal includes your choice of homemade chicken noodle soup, vegetable beef soup, or chili, plus salad, rolls, and dessert. Cost $10. Soup by the quart available for $5/quart (no sides included with quart purchase.) Zion is located at 414 W. Hanover Street, New Baden.

**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 DuBois Center information, registration for upcoming events or for information about cancelled camp sessions, contact Julie Riechmann at 618-357-1809 or jriechmann@iscucc.org.

To speak with the Conference Minister, contact Rev. Shana Johnson 618-882-8247 or sjohnson@iscucc.org

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**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.

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**Important Links**

Illinois South Conference  Back Bay Mission  CHHSM  Deaconess Foundation

Deaconess Nurse Ministry  DuBois Center  Ecuador Partnership

Eden Theological Seminary  Emmaus Homes  Hitz Memorial Home

Hoyleton Youth & Family  LIFE Program  Unleashing Potential  New Athens Home

Pension Board-UCC  St. John's Community Care  St. Paul's Sr. Community

UCC Insurance Board  Uplands Village  UCC Campus Ministry  Uni-Pres Kindercottage

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