On behalf of Faiths4Vaccines, you are invited to join faith leaders from across the country for the Faiths4Vaccines National Summit on May 26, 2021 from 1 to 4 pm EDT. The National Summit is the largest multi-faith gathering to support equitable and far-reaching vaccine distribution in the United States. Faith leaders and faith-based organizations in attendance will receive training, resources, and empowerment to engage their communities to ensure equitable vaccine access, combat hesitancy and potentially use their houses of worship as vaccination sites. Faith leaders, faith communities, and medical professionals are leading efforts to respond, recover from the unprecedented health crises facing our nation and the world. Now, equipped with a life-saving vaccine, we have the chance to bring this devastating, and all the suffering it has caused, to an end. Open and honest dialogues between faith leaders and county, state and national health officials will help to identify opportunities for faith-based institutions to further engage and support local communities to increase vaccination rates. Click here to register.

The gift of ministry was shared with all of us as Rev. Tarrah Vaupel was ordained at the O'Fallon United Church of Christ in O'Fallon on Sunday, May 23. Currently, she is serving as Associate Pastor at Irvington Friedens UCC. Thank you, Rev. Vaupel for sharing your gifts with us and congratulations.

Prayer list for May 30 - June 5, 2021
Churches & Pastors
- Fieldon UCC, Rev. Donna Smith-Pupillo, Interim Pastor
- Floraville St. Paul UCC, Pastor Matt (Laura) Friz Retired Pastor
- Rev. Nancy Spier-Lee and Kevin Lee, Dupo, IL

People with Life Concerns
- An online Celebration of Life for Dorothea (Dottie) Engelsdorfer will be held on Saturday, May 29 at 11 am on the Belleville St. Paul UCC Facebook Live. Dottie was the widow of Rev. Marvin Engelsdorfer and the mother of Rev. Ted Engelsdorfer.
- Pray for our Dietitians and Nutritionists, our Hunger Action Partners.
- Pray for those who are hungry.
- Keep all pastors in your prayers.
- Pray for the United States as we work towards equality and civility for all.
- Pray for the healthcare workers and families dealing with COVID-19.
The Amazing People of Illinois South Conference...
On Friday, May 20th, a group of amazing Illinois South Conference people answered the call to install new ridge vents on 10 cabins on the rustic side of camp. These roof vents will improve the air circulation and air quality in the cabins for campers coming for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic. Thanks to Roger Harris, Belleville St. Paul UCC; David Shanks, Cahokia Bethel UCC; and Judy Doerr, Marvin Doerr, Cliff Goodfellow, Larry Godare, Rusty Portell, Dupo Christ UCC. DuBois Center appreciates your quick efforts prior to opening the camp to visitors.

Reciprocity
I’m reading a book recommended by Rev. Shana Johnson and a friend of mine titled, *Braiding Sweetgrass*. (When two people I respect make a suggestion, I tend to pay attention.) *Braiding Sweetgrass* is written by Robin Wall Kimmerer, a woman with Native American heritage who was raised in a world with equal influence from Indigenous wisdom, scientific knowledge and the teaching of plants. She shares her belief that we are all connected to God through the earth and other living inhabitants, but this connection has been lost to us by focusing on the needs of people over the needs of other living beings.

The word that she uses, which for me flashes off the pages as if in neon, is reciprocity, the sharing of gifts. In this world, when our focus is mainly on the needs of people, it may be difficult to recognize the gifts given by non-human life. But in order to live a life of reciprocity, we need to become more aware of our connection to nature and the generations of humans yet to come.

I recently purchased some acreage on the farm I grew up on. Being on that land, the peace it gives me, and the opportunity to put my hands in the dirt once more are the gifts that I see it is giving me. I, in reciprocity, plan to maintain the waterway for proper drainage, plant wildflowers to add to the diversity of the land, and create a labyrinth surrounded by flowers. It is a gift of diversity for this land that has served well as corn, beans, or pasture for the last 100 years. In turn, the waterway will keep my home dry. The flowers will bring me joy in their beauty. And the stones and plants of the labyrinth will deepen my relationship with God.

Trees, planted as my gift, will be home for the animals and birds. The tree roots give back by holding the soil in place and sharing nutrients and water with each other. This reciprocity, the gifts that are given from both sides, seems to me to be the manifestation of love shared between each other. Humans give gifts to those that they love. And when gifts are given by those humans we love, it is easy to give back freely and joyfully. Why can it not be the same reciprocity of love with other living creatures and future human generations.
I can only speak for myself, but the joy of sharing the land once more brings tears of joy to my eyes. In my mind, it is Spirit giving me a nod of approval for reciprocity with all of life and life to come. In reciprocity, Lynnette Schuepbach, ISC Communications Coordinator

Home sweet ... mobile home! (or tiny home!)
In Volusia County, Florida, it's mobile homes for hurricane survivors. In Northern California, it's tiny homes for wildfire survivors. In both places, disaster survivors are benefitting from "outside-the-box" thinking by partners of UCC Disaster Ministries.

The innovative Mobile Home Replacement model was developed by UCC long-time local partner VIND (Volusia Interfaiths/Agencies Networking in Disaster). This model seeks to provide "as much normalcy as possible while keeping the client safe in their familiar environment," VIND's Terry Foley recounted. For example, Hurricane Irma severely damaged the mobile home of sisters Nola (with keys) and Ethel B. (pictured right). VIND purchased them a newer, hurricane resistant mobile home, placed it the same trailer park and moved the sisters in before demolishing their damaged home.

On the other side of the United States, a collaboration is building "Tiny Homes" for wildfire survivors (pictured left) in Northern California. The initiative of First Congregational Church of Oroville, the collaboration includes churches of the Northern California Nevada Conference and the Tiny Pine Foundation.

General Synod Planners Invite Volunteers to Share Time & Talents
by Connie Larkman
Interested in getting involved in the UCC’s Special Edition General Synod? The planning team is now recruiting volunteers for a number of different assignments. Enrollment opens June 1 on the Synod website. “Volunteers are essential to the Synod experience,” said the Rev. Elena Larssen, the UCC minister for volunteer engagement. “Historically, volunteers are coordinated by the Local Arrangements Committee within a Conference, providing local hospitality and the ‘Synod spirit of welcome.’” But this year, since the event is virtual, she said “volunteers will come from the length and breadth of the church to support the integrity and warmth of our Synod experience.” The virtual volunteers will provide support in a number of areas. Read more.

The honor of your presence is requested for the Installation of Rev. Dana Schindler
Sunday, June 13 at 3:00 pm CDT
Immanuel United Church of Christ
Hamel, Illinois

With restrictions being lifted, any clergy that chooses to robe and attend the installation are welcome. Please wear red stoles and arrive by 2:30 pm. Please RSVP to pastoriucc@gomadison.com

The service will also be livestreamed on Facebook @ Immanuel UCC-Hamel
Light refreshments will be served following the service.
Share Your Stories
During the past four years, our denomination has shared stories of love through the lens of 3 Great Loves, stories that live out God’s love through our love of neighbor, love of children, and love of creation. The United Church of Christ has embodied God’s Love in meaningful, measurable, and missional ways. As the sun begins to set on this phase of our missional initiative, tell us what has been your favorite moment or part of 3 Great Loves. What impact has this initiative had on your church? What impact has this initiative had on you? How has it impacted your community? What will you carry forward from these stories as we continue our collective work to create a just world for all through the power of God’s love? Share your stories here.

It’s not too late to spend you summer at DuBois Center!
We still have a handful of openings for kitchen staff, housekeeping, and program staff, as well as accepting applications for volunteer counselors for all weeks. If you are interested in applying please see our website.

Summer begins
Our coordinators were on site last weekend to make preparations for our staff training, which begins May 26. Thanks to Ryan Goetter, Catie Goetter, and Olivia Cruthis for their incredible hard work that makes summer camp possible! We will welcome our summer staff on Wednesday to train to lead activities, cabin groups, and do the necessary ground work and set up to make this summer happen. If your church would like to sponsor a meal for our summer staff, please call Hayley at the office or her work cell – 815-627-0595. We will feed them approximately 28 meals before the camp kitchen opens.

We Need You - We're Not Done Yet!!
The DuBois Center office needs your help to replace the DuBois Center office flooring. An office update, started in late 2017, needs to be finished. Currently the four types of office flooring are uneven; some areas may be old asbestos tiles; and some areas are down to the sub-floor. The cost is just under $9,000. The new flooring materials and installation has been approved by the Conference Council Executive Committee. Donations of money, time or installation skills are welcomed from individuals, churches and/or their organizations. Checks should be made payable and sent to the ISC office at 1312 Broadway, Highland IL 62249 with a notation that it is for the flooring or click here to donate online. If your group plans to donate or raise money to donate to this, please contact Julie at 618-357-1809 or email jriechmann@iscucc.org. Thank you very much for your support.
May Is Older Americans Month

Older American’s Month is celebrated each year in May. It has been an opportunity to celebrate the gifts that our Older Americans bring to us in our families, communities, and churches. It is especially important, during this unusual year, to celebrate this population and the challenges they may have faced through isolation and anxiety as well as the joys they have experienced in learning new ways of communicating with loved ones.

We will provide you, the churches of ISC, with a downloadable worship service/sermon to use to celebrate Older Americans Month in May. Rev. Jennifer Sowell-Glover, Pastor of Collinsville St. John UCC, and St. John’s Community Care, an outreach of Collinsville St. John UCC, will produce the service. Plans are to have this ready for possible use in your May 30 worship service or anytime that you would have a need or opportunity throughout the Summer months. Read more about Older Americans Month 2021 – May. If you have any questions or would like to be notified when the service video is available, please contact Missy at mathmer@stjohnscc.org.

St. John’s Community Care offers Coffee Talk with Caregivers, an informational group created for caregivers. This group will cover a variety of topics to help support and educate those who care for people living with dementia. It will meet on the last Monday of each month from 1 pm – 2 pm on Zoom. It is their hope that participants of this group will see a decrease in the feelings associated with caregiver burden, improvement in family relationships and caregiver confidence, and an increase in caregiver knowledge and problem-solving abilities. The next session will be on Monday, May 31. If you are interested in participating, email Stacey Rhodes at srhodes@stjohnscc.org.

What's Happening in Illinois South Conference

Join in the Summer Hunger Action Challenge! Congregations, youth groups, book study groups, Bible study groups, choirs… ALL are invited to join in the challenge to help raise awareness regarding hunger!
There are 3 challenges --- You can choose one, two, or all three challenges. Challenge #1 – FOOD is NOT a Game. Challenge #2 - Set up a vegetable garden swap table at church. Challenge #3 – Take an offering for hunger.
To find out all the details, go to the Conference website; then go to the Resource tab; and then the Hunger/Food Action tab. There is a video from the youth at St. Paul UCC in Waterloo you can use for a mission moment in worship or VBS. Don’t forget to let us know how your church will be participating in the Summer Hunger Action Challenge. Send an email to Carol Shanks shanks@htc.net to report your action or with any questions you may have.

Boundary Awareness Training
For those pastors who are due for Boundary Training this year, ISC has scheduled one for Monday, July 19, 2021 via zoom from 8:30 a.m. – Noon. This training will be for both active and retired clergy. Contact Christy at cpursell@iscucc.org to register and get the zoom meeting info. Cost: $20 for retired pastors, $25 for active pastors, $25 for non-ISC retired pastors, and $30 for non-ISC active pastors.
Save the Date for the ISC Annual Meeting 2021
Weekend of October 15.
- Friday, October 15 – Celebration of anniversaries in the life of ISC
- Saturday, October 16 – Business meeting of the ISC

Depending on CDC guidelines, The Conference Gatherings Team plans to hold an in-person/livestreamed evening of celebration and a virtual business meeting. Watch your inbox and the Weekly Connection for more details this summer.

Vacation Bible School Schedules

**June 1 - 4:** In-Person; 9 am - 12 pm; St. John UCC; Maeystown; Theme: *Knights of the North Castle*

**June 1 - 4:** In-Person; 9:30 am - 12 pm; St. Paul UCC; Waterloo; Theme: *Knights of the North Castle*

**June 7 - 11:** In-Person; 9 am - 12 pm; St. Paul UCC, Columbia; Theme: *Knights of the North Castle*

**June 7 - 11:** In-Person; 8:30 am - 11:30 am; St. John UCC, Valmeyer; Theme: *Rocky Railway*

**June 7 - 11:** In-Person; 9 am – 12 pm; Evangelical UCC, Highland; Theme: *Roar*

**June 7 - 11:** In-Person; 8:30 am - 11 am; St. Peter UCC, Okawville; Theme: *Adventure Island*

**June 14 - 20:** In-Person; 8:30 am – noon; Dupo Christ UCC; Theme: *Knights of North Castle.*

**June 21 - 23:** In-Person; 6 - 8 pm; St. Paul UCC, Belleville; Theme: Discovery on *Adventure Island*

**June 21 - 25:** In-Person; 8:45 am - 12 pm; St. John UCC, Mascoutah; Theme: *Rocky Railway*

**July 19 - 21:** Virtual; 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm; Salem UCC, Alhambra; Theme: *Knights of North Castle*

**July 19 - 23:** In-Person, 6 pm - 8 pm; St. Peter UCC Red Bud; Theme: *Knights of North Castle*

**July 19 - 23:** St. John UCC Collinsville; Theme: *Wilderness Escape*

No Vacation Bible School for These Churches
Addieville Zion United Church of Christ
Pinckneyville St. Paul United Church of Christ

Job Opportunity: Part-Time Music Leader for Pinckneyville St Paul UCC

This position requires excellent people skills in working with the Council, Pastor, secretary, committees and Sunday school teachers. Music skills include the ability to play a piano and a Wick’s two-manual pipe organ with pedals. Good vocal skills are a plus but not required. The church does not have a choir but occasionally has special instrumentalists and vocalists. Sunday school children will often perform a song which may or may not require support from the Music Leader. Church services are currently 10 am – 11 am on Sundays with two services on Easter and special services for Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday. Advent and Lenten services are typically rotated with two or three other churches. To apply, send resume with references to: St. Paul UCC, 205 E Jackson St., Pinckneyville, IL 62274 or stpauluccpinckneyville@gmail.com.

Job Opportunity: Director of Faith Formation and Care

St. Paul United Church of Christ, Belleville, Illinois, seeks a Director of Faith Formation and Care (30 hours per week). Job responsibilities include:

- Planning and executing the church’s education program for all ages in collaboration with the Senior Pastor and Christian Education Team
- Sustain and expand the youth group
- Assist in worship elements
- Assist with and lead funerals as needed
- Visit congregants who are hospitalized, in long-term care facilities, and homebound

Please send a resume and three references to FaithFormationDirector@stpaulucc.org.
Job Opportunity: Church Organist/Musician
Grantfork UCC seeks a musician to support our inspiring music program. Best candidate should be willing to play the pipe organ and/or the piano and/or the electronic keyboard for traditional worship services once or twice a month (Virtual services will be pre-recorded during the week. In-person will be live on Sunday mornings.); an interest in directing one or more of our adult choirs - Men’s Choir (gospel/Gaither), Ladies’ Choir (traditional), Women’s Ensemble (contemporary), and Chancel Choir (holiday services, cantatas) would be a plus, but is not required. Musician will work in cooperation with the current music director, Connie Plocher, to determine schedule, and with the pastor. Pay will be determined according to the number of weeks willing to serve. To express interest, please contact Rev. Tim Darmour-Paul at 618-675-2595 or grantforkucc@agtelco.com.

Region 9
Belleville Concordia UCC will hold its Carry-Out Chicken Dinner on Sun, June 6 from 11am until they are sold out. Menu includes 1/2 fried chicken with all the "fixins," Carry-out only. Quilt raffle tickets sold for $5 each with a limit of 200 being sold.

CONTACT US - YOUR OCWM MONIES AT WORK
So we can better serve you, here is a list of your Conference staff and who you should contact, given your church’s needs:
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, contact Hayley Elliott at 618-787-2202 or director@DuBoisCenter.org.
For DuBois Center registration for upcoming events and 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.

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.

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 Kinderottage