Hunger Action Update- It's harvest time in many of our gardens.
Part of being hunger aware is making the best use of our food. Sometimes garden produce ripens quickly (think extra tomatoes and zucchini). Share your extras with neighbors, especially busy families that don't have time to garden or elderly friends who can no longer move through a garden easily.
The Hunger Action Team needs your help as we encourage one another – PLEASE DON'T WASTE FOOD!
We need your recipes! Sometimes a new recipe is all it takes to make good use of that produce. Please send us your recipes that use garden produce. Send recipes to shanks@htc.net. Include your name and your church along with the recipe.
We want to thank Kathi Emery from St. Paul UCC – Waterloo for this tasty recipe.

**TACO STUFFED TOMATOES**

Preheat oven to 375 degrees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4-6 large tomatoes</th>
<th>1 lb. ground beef</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 pkg. taco seasoning</td>
<td>1 small onion</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 can corn, drained</td>
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Add the ground beef/onions in a skillet over medium heat. Sauté until the onions have softened and the meat is brown. Drain any remaining grease. Mix in the taco seasoning & corn. Slice the top of the tomatoes off, spoon out the inside. Fill the tomatoes with the taco meat mixture, top with shredded cheese. Bake for 25 minutes.

Pastors' Prayer and Lectionary Lunch Hour
All ISC pastors are invited to join the Prayer and Lectionary Lunch Hour for a time of camaraderie, prayer, and sermon help. The Local Church Ministries team has continued to host this time on Wednesdays from 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm, which began during COVID and continues to provide a time for support. ALL ISC pastors are welcome on any Wednesday they are available. The group is meeting via Zoom by using meeting ID 837 0733 6906. (This same number will be used every week.) Link to the meeting at the specified time: [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83707336906](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83707336906)

The Amazing People of Illinois South Conference...
Hamel Immanuel UCC and its Vision Team's mission of community outreach prioritizes children

Prayer list for
July 18-24, 2021
Churches & Pastors
-Jerseyville Peace UCC, Rev. Debbie Lawson
-Johannisburg St. John's UCC, Rev. William Groennert
Retired Pastor
- Rev. Ken and Jean Knobloch, Maestystown, IL

People with Life Concerns
-Prayers of joy go out for **Christy & Scott Pursell** as they celebrate their first grandchild's birth. **Atticus Marshawn** was born to **Caleb and Karlin Pursell** of Palmyra, Pennsylvania on June 12, 2021. Christy
and literacy. Their whole church is involved. Outreach includes creating and sharing summer ‘Books and Lunch in the Park’ for any area child. This is the fifth year for the program, and it provides a free book (usually brand new purchased with grant funds) as well as a small lunch of sandwich, chips, snack cake, fruit, and drink. This well-attended, fun activity is held next to the playground in the open pavilion and includes one of the team reading a story aloud with kids choosing their own book and lunch.

The team also built, painted, and sponsored The Steeple Branch Little Free Library in the Park and have adopted the local elementary school, offering anonymous assistance to students and families 365 days of the year. These community mission projects bring the church great joy because these missions focus on children and literacy. Photos below.

and Scott are members of Collinsville St. John UCC, and Christy is the ISC Administrative Executive. Cards may be sent to them at 20 Doug Dr, St. Jacob, IL 62281. Check out Christy's FB page for photos.

-Pray for Rev. Bob Coffey as he deals with health issues. Rev. Coffey is the Pastor at Lenzburg St. Peter UCC. Cards may be sent to 6213 Jo Ann Dr, Belleville, IL 62223.

-Pray for Gardeners, 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 honor of your presence is requested for the Installation of Rev. Jeremy R. Wood Sunday, July 18, 2021, at 4:00 pm CDT Salem United Church of Christ, Alhambra, Illinois Any clergy who chooses to robe and attend the installation are welcome. Please robe and wear a red stole and arrive by 3:30 pm. Park behind the church in the office area parking. (When looking at the front of the sanctuary, to the right is a driveway that takes you to the back of the church, where you will see the office sidewalk entrance.) As you enter the building at the office entrance, our conference room will be on your left, where you may gather with the other pastors.

Please RSVP to salemuccalh@gmail.com.

The service will also be streamed over the internet at https://livestream.com/accounts/10389497 and click on the image of Salem Church under Live & Upcoming Events.

The service will be available for viewing any time after it has begun. A reception with light refreshments will follow the service.

God Is Still Speaking
It fascinates me to think of the many ways that “God is still speaking.” I have had questions answered by mudflaps on trucks that I have passed, and from a small child that I passed while walking, and from songs rolling around in my head for no good reason. This morning was one of
those mornings. I awakened realizing that, inside my head, I was singing *Hava Nagila*. I do not know Yiddish, but realized I was singing the entire song, not really knowing what the words meant. In my mind, God does not always make it easy for me to find an answer. I must do the legwork to really find it. God, like a parent, gives me hints, suggestions, clues that guide me to the answers I seek. Just like teaching a child, I will remember it, be proud of it, and grow in my own abilities if I do the work rather than have it given to me in its entirety.

The hint was singing the song. Now, I needed to find out what it meant. After some digging, I found that the words of *Hava Nagila* translate as:

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Let us rejoice.
Let us rejoice.
Let us rejoice and be happy
Let us sing.
Let us sing.
Let us sing and be happy.
Awake, Awake, my brothers
Awake, my brothers, with a happy heart.
Awake, my brothers, awake, my brothers,
With a happy heart.
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It made me smile. For several years, I have participated in a text thread with ten women who have committed to sharing what we feel are blessings each day. We are not 100% at doing it daily, but at least frequently. Even if I do not write my blessings for the day, reading the blessing from another person’s perspective brings me joy for them and reminds me of my own unwritten blessings. I delight in this group’s ability to share things with authenticity and vulnerability. The blessings are not always huge or life-shaking. Sometimes, it is simply a beautiful sunset, watching the birds, safe travels or chatting with the neighbor. But they are blessings none the less. To me, God’s message this morning was a confirmation of this process of gratitude and to remind me that I DO have MANY THINGS to be grateful for. May you all realize your blessings and rejoice. Hava Nagila!

Lynnette Schuepbach, ISC Communications Coordinator

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**Experience General Synod Worship**

Everyone can experience the General Synod Special Edition Worship, which was shared on Sunday, July 11 through YouTube. See one of the wonderful parts of General Synod by clicking [here](#). Photos from General Synod experience this year are below. Left is altar cloth, candle and prayer beads provided in goody bag to ISC delegates. Right is screen of participants.

**Youth & Young Adult General Synod Update**

In the summer of 2020, teams began dreaming of all the possibilities for what a virtual synod could be while simultaneously living through the uncertainties that the pandemic forced us to wrestle with. An incredible and dedicated group that consisted of youth, young adults, local church pastors, camp directors, conference staff and UCC board members to specifically envision the youth and young adult programs for General Synod 33. Over the course of months, we were able to create two programs that highlighted the passions and interests of young people, tapped into the creative expressions of the arts, implemented strategies for personal and group engagement while providing sabbath time for renewal. On the best days, this is what the Church offers to the world.

We want to extend the opportunity to all our youth and young adult delegates to participate in these programs, where time permits, to learn alongside of your peers.
If you would like more information about either program, please visit the General Synod website and be in touch with the registrar to add any programs to your schedule. Please note that all programs will only be accessible through the meet.ucc platform.

If you have any questions about the programming, please reach out to our Minister for Youth & Young Adult Engagement at pottert@ucc.org. Find out more. Karen Georgia A. Thompson, General Synod Administrator

UCC, Pension Boards launch $3 million campaign to support financially struggling ministers. The Ministers Financial Vitality Initiative was launched by the Pension Boards in 2017 with the help of a $1 million grant from the Lilly Endowment. Its goal was to promote greater financial wellness among UCC ministers by encouraging “debt reduction, financial education and personal empowerment around short- and long-term issues of financial management,” Brian R. Bodager, the Pension Boards’ president and CEO, told the Synod. Read more.

Thanks to our volunteers!
In a summer like no other, many folks stepped up to help us pull off the incredible camp programming we have accomplished this summer. Over 350 youth were able to come to camp this summer, many of whom did not get to go to a camp in 2020. So many folks have given one, two, three, and even four weeks of their time to support the mission of DuBois Center and support us in this unprecedented summer. It has truly been an honor to watch those who love this camp come through for our programs this year and choose to be here. From the bottom of my heart, thank you! Thank you for answering our calls.
If you or someone you know loves youth, nature, crafts, swimming, or horses, consider joining us as a volunteer or staff member in 2022!

Rainbow Camp 2021 registration is open!
Camp will be Sat, Aug 7 at DuBois Center, from 9 am-7 pm. It’s a full day, and you can be as active or as relaxed as you like. We’ve got everything from horseback riding and archery to pontoon rides and crafts in the craft grotto overlooking the lake.
Rainbow Camp was started for LGBTQ+ folks and straight allies. This year, we extend a special invitation to neurodivergent folks to join us, too. Everyone is welcomed as a whole child of God at DuBois Center.
Register by going to www.DuBoisCenter.org, click register, and search under Day Camps.
Secure the early bird rate by registering before July 18.
Rainbow Camp is a whole lot of fun in the sun - come join the party. Click here for a flyer.

Hoyleton Youth & Family Services Back to School Supply Drive
Hoyleton Youth & Family Services needs supplies to help their clients for the upcoming school year. Here’s how you can help...
Visit their Amazon wish list here.
From that list, shop on your own and drop off at one of these locations:
• Auffenberg Kia - 106 Auto Ct., O’Fallon, IL
Let the Sunshine In
by Missy Athmer, Director of Marketing for St. John's Community Care
I want to share that I know, as a family caregiver, fear often travels on my shoulder. I don’t want to be as flip as to say that you will never experience fear, but to remind you that fear is just an emotion. One that can be calmed if we learn how to cope and find balance with situations that evoke our fears.
There are certain things likely to happen to you as a family caregiver that you will not be able to control. What we can help you with is to identify and encourage what you CAN control. Let that be your response to the fear that may inevitably creep into your life. Read more.

St. John’s Community Care Partners with Madison County Sheriff’s Department to alert police and fire fighters that a person with a communication challenge may be present in a car or a house. Whether the difficulty is for hearing loss, dementia or another disability, a simple color-coded sticker has the possibility to make the encounter a bit more safe for all concerned.
Recently, the program was explained on Channel 2. View it here and consider being a part of the program for the safety of your family.

Welcome to the Summer issue of The Steward by the Insurance Board
“Behold, Children are a heritage from the Lord” Psalm 127:3
The topics covered in this issue include:
- Importance of an Abuse Prevention Policy
- Third Party Youth Groups: How to Protect Your Ministry
- 2021 Summer Youth Ministries
- Safe Electronic Communications with Youth
- Vaccine Considerations
Here is a brief excerpt from one of the articles you’ll read in this issue:
Setting a policy that your organization has zero tolerance for abuse establishes a cornerstone for abuse prevention practices. By their nature, policies are defined standards that establish the foundational framework of what your organization believes in. By developing clear, comprehensive policies that define what is and is not appropriate, your organization can enable employees and volunteers to look for red flag behaviors and be more empowered to prevent a suspicious or inappropriate situation from escalating to abuse... Read the entire newsletter.

What's Happening in Illinois South Conference

Vacation Bible School Schedules
July 19 - 23; In-Person; 9 am - 11:30 am; Fieldon UCC, Fieldon; Theme: Go Big
July 19 - 23; In-Person, 6 pm - 8 pm; St. Peter UCC, Red Bud; Theme: Knights of North Castle
July 19 - 23; In-Person; 9 am - 11:30 am; St. John UCC Collinsville; Theme: Wilderness Escape
July 25 - 30; In-Person; 5:30 pm - 8 pm; St. Paul UCC, Carlinville; Theme: Mega Sports Camp
July 25 - 29: In-Person; 6:15 pm - 8 pm; St. John's UCC, Smithton
August: In-Person and Zoom; every Sunday during the month of August following Children’s Time during worship (around 9:15 am); Salem UCC, Alhambra; Theme: *Quest for the King’s Armor at Knights of North Castle*; ages 3 years old through 5th grade. Please send your child’s name(s) and ages to Emily Uhe at either emily.uhe90@gmail.com or 618-972-5686.

**Job Opportunity: Worship Arts Director**
Highland Evangelical UCC is searching for a Worship Arts Director, who will be responsible for overseeing the directing, planning and program development of the music program of the Church. The Director serves as a resource to support, foster, and coordinate the worship life of the congregation through congregational, choral, and special music and other visual worship experiences and reports to the Senior Pastor. For more information, click here. Send resume to EvUCC at BBray@evucc.org.

**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.
Job Opportunity: Director of Music - Ferguson, MO

Immanuel UCC, Ferguson, MO, is seeking a Director of Music. The position oversees and provides leadership for the total music ministry of a pre-COVID-19, 300-member church. Responsibilities include playing the Wicks pipe organ and grand piano for up to two services each Sunday. Previously, the Director of Music duties included a volunteer adult choir and adult handbell choir, overseeing a children’s choir, preparing music for seasonal services, etc. with activities on Wednesday evening, Thursday evening and Sunday morning for nine months, then reduced summer hours while choirs break for the summer. Previous church music experience and a degree in music is preferred. Previous experiences will be reviewed on an individual basis. Salary is competitive. Submit a resume, salary requirements and references to info@immanuelucc.org or call 314-521-7324 between 8 am – 1 pm on Tuesday through Friday for more information.

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 Kindercottage