A Proposed Process for the Illinois South Conference to Become a WISE Conference

Rationale: For our pastors, our churches, our communities, and our Conference, the COVID 19 pandemic has reminded us that mental illness is a reality of which the Church is not yet comfortable talking about or addressing openly. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) defines mental illness as a “condition that affects a person’s thinking, feeling, behavior or mood. The conditions of which deeply impact day-to-day living and may also affect the ability to relate to others.”

The current data NAMI reports is:
- **1 in 5** U.S. adults experience mental illness each year
- **1 in 20** U.S. adults experience serious mental illness each year
- **1 in 6** U.S. youth aged 6-17 experience a mental health disorder each year

Noting 50% of all lifetime mental illness begins by age 14, and 75% by age 24. [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)

We believe the Church can play a significant role in helping to reduce the stigma of mental health and connect people who are living with mental health conditions to support and resources they need.

In the United Church of Christ, the Mental Health Network is committed to working “to reduce stigma and promote the inclusion of people with mental illnesses/brain disorders and their families in the life, leadership, and work of congregations.” (This is the stated mission of the UCC Mental Health Network.)

**Prayer list for Nov 21 - Nov 27, 2021**
- **Churches & Pastors**
  - Addieville Zion UCC, Rev. William Groennert
  - Alhambra Salem UCC, Rev. Jeremy Wood, Sr. Pastor
  - Alhambra Salem UCC, Pastor John (Marilee) Mindrup, Associate Pastor
- **Retired Pastors**
  - Rev. Fred and Shirley Wehrenberg, Columbia, IL

**People with Life Concerns**
- Pray for **Rev. Bill Causer**, as he deals with some health issues. Cards may be sent to him at 1315 N Presley Ln, Mt. Vernon, IL 62864.
- Keep **Rev. Gus (Sue) Kuether** in your prayers as he recovers from surgery. Rev. Kuether is a retired ISC pastor and has served on many ISC teams and committees. Cards may be sent to him at 536 Pebble Brook Ln, Belleville IL 62221.
- Please hold in prayer the **people and families of the US service members and civilians who have been killed or injured during the withdrawal of troops in Afghanistan**. Also pray for the many more wounded and their families. May peace come to the hearts of everyone.
- Pray for all **Hunger Action Partners**.
- Pray for all **pastors** in your prayers.
- Pray for the **United States** as we work towards equality and civility.
- Pray for the **healthcare workers and families dealing with COVID-19**.
- Keep the **people of Afghanistan** in your prayers for peaceful living.
What It Means to Be a WISE Conference:

*WISE* stands for Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged. To engage in the process of becoming a *WISE* Conference would first mean entering a period of education, discernment, and decisions about how the Illinois South Conference might live out a commitment to be welcoming, inclusive, supportive, and engaged with persons (who are our pastors, church leaders, church members, and veterans in our member churches) with mental health conditions/brain disorders in the life and leadership of our Conference.

A Conference-wide *WISE* team consisting of five to seven members of the Illinois South Conference would be selected to help name the commitments and resourcing we could engage in and develop a *WISE* Covenant for the Conference. The *WISE* team would work together with the Mental Health Network of the United Church of Christ in this process to create a covenant and action plan. The covenant and action plan would be presented at the 2022 Annual Meeting for the delegates to adopt and vote on to officially become a *WISE* Conference.

How the WISE Task Force Will Be Chosen:

Applications of interested persons will be sent to and reviewed by the Executive Committee of the Illinois South Conference. It is a shared belief that the *WISE* team should consist of a wide demographic of the Conference whose participants have the passion, experience, and availability to carry out the necessary steps of the process.

Timeline of the WISE Process:

**2021 Annual Meeting** - Rollout of the idea

**November 2021** - Applications for the *WISE* exploratory team are made available.

**December 2021** - The *WISE* exploratory team is selected, participants are notified and the team is announced.

**January 2022** - The *WISE* exploratory team begins an intensive process of education, discernment, and planning with the help of the Mental Health Network of the United Church of Christ

**Summer 2022** - The proposed *WISE* Covenant and action plan are finalized.

**September 2022** - The proposed *WISE* Covenant and action plan are shared widely in the Conference.

**2022 Annual Meeting** - Delegates to the 2022 Annual Meeting vote on becoming a *WISE* Conference.

**Beyond Annual Meeting** - If the resolution passes at Annual Meeting for Illinois South Conference to become a *WISE* Conference, the real work begins.

Applications for the WISE exploratory team will be available on the Conference website ([www.iscucc.org](http://www.iscucc.org)) Friday, November 19, 2021, and will be due into the Conference office no later than Friday, December 3, 2021.

Blessings, Rev. Shana Johnson, ISC Conference Minister

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The Amazing People of Illinois South Conference....

Okawville St. Peter's UCC Dedicates Choir Robes

Sunday, November 7th was a special day for members of St. Peter's UCC, Okawville, when new choir robes were dedicated. A new choir robe fund was established two years ago when Dolores Heberer, a member of St.
Peter’s and a long-time lover of the choir music, indicated in her final wishes that she wanted her memorials to be designated to a new choir robe fund. Once the fund was started, others also began to choose this as the designation for their memorials. A committee of choir directors and organists accepted the challenge of choosing the color, style and stole emblem. The results were beautifully presented to the members of St. Peter’s when both the Jr. Choir (grades 3-8) and Sr. Choir (9th grade and older) performed a joint choir anthem.

The Work Toward Ending Modern Slavery/Human Trafficking
On Sun, Dec 5, from 3 pm - 5 pm, Eden's Glory, an organization working to undo the horrors of sexual trafficking locally as well as nationwide, will be at Marine United Church of Christ to share the essence of their program. A successful survivor and graduate of Eden’s Glory will tell her story and light refreshments will be served.

The following is from their website:
"Eden’s Glory is a home fortifying survivors, educating communities, and working to end human trafficking all for the glory of God."
"We believe ending modern slavery is possible."
Please consider joining them on Dec 5 to learn more about this critical issue.

Fieldon UCC will celebrate its 155th Anniversary on Sunday, December 12 during the church service at 9 am. All are welcome to join them in the celebration. For questions, call 618-376-4641.

The members and friends of Zion UCC in Addieville honored the Lorna nee Oltmann and Leslie Ostendorf family, Mary Lou Kitowski, Darlene Ostendorf, and Judy and Kenneth Ostendorf for the sixty (60) years of service to Our Lord. They said, “God has richly blessed us with your presence in our lives. November 1, 1961 to November 1, 2021.” Congratulations and thanks to all! Photo front: Darlene Ostendorf, Mary Lou Kitowski, Kenneth Ostendorf, Judy Ostendorf. Photo back: Rev. William Groennert, Pastor and Teacher for Addieville Zion UCC and Johannisburg St. John’s UCC.

history by reading the scripture in German, the original language of the church. Rev. Shana Johnson, ISC Conference Minister gave the message. It was a wonderful way to honor history and move into the future.

On Sunday, November 14 at 3 pm, **Rev. Philip Barbier was installed as Pastor and Teacher for St. Jacob UCC and Summerfield St. John's UCC.** Rev. Hugh Fitz, Chair of Committee on Ministry, represented that team, and Rev. Shana Johnson, ISC Conference Minister, gave the message. Gifts were presented to Rev. Barbier, and lunch was served after the service. Welcome to Illinois South Conference.

**Clergy Compensation Guidelines** - The 2021-2022 Clergy Compensation Guidelines are attached for your review. A letter from Rev. Shana Johnson, ISC Conference Minister, and the Committee on Ministry is included in the document which outlines the use of these guidelines. Please share the letter and guidelines with others in your church who could benefit from it, i.e., Search Committee, Budget Committee, Pastoral Relations Team, Personnel Committee. If you have questions, contact Christy at cpursell@iscucc.org.

**DuBois 6.0 - Building Faith, Building Capacity, Building For The Next 60 Years**

Oct. 2021-Dec. 2022

DuBois Center will turn 60 in 2022, marking the year we took ownership of the land. While the first 60 years have been great, she needs some maintenance and expansion to get her ready for the next 60.

This treasure is the heart of the Illinois South Conference, where thousands of campers have experienced God and creation over the past six decades. Some found their calling to ministry there. Others found summer after summer of fun and friendship. Think of the retreats, the worship, the secrets shared and the children’s laughter. So much life has occurred under the rustling leaves at DuBois Center. Now it’s time for us to prepare for the next 60 years, by improving what we have and getting ready for the future.

As of this edition, we have received $6,835 toward the total goal of $225,290. Keep checking this website to see how the thermometer fills up and send your donation to make the improvements possible. It’s our space to bring faith and appreciation of nature to ourselves and the next generations. Here is the information on all areas we will be updating so that you may share with your congregations and friends.

**Hitz Memorial Home Tasting Bee**

This year, the Hitz Home Auxiliary’s Tasting “B,” The Music of Christmas, will be on Fri, Dec 3, at 1 pm in the activity/dining room area of the Hitz Memorial Home. There will be tasty foods, a special program, quilt raffle, silent auction, and attendance prizes to
be given away. Auxiliary members will provide the meats and some sides. Foods that are brought for tasting by various church groups and individuals are very much appreciated. Items for the silent auction would also be welcomed. The quilt raffle also includes several gift cards. The tickets for the drawing are $1 each or 6/$5 and can be purchased at the door or from members of the Auxiliary in your local churches. Get a group together or come alone to enjoy laughter, good food, and fellowship for a good cause. Proceeds will benefit the activity fund for the residents.

Elmhurst University turns 150!
On Monday, December 6, 2021, alums and friends of Elmhurst University in the Metro Area will gather for a celebratory reception. This “watch party” will begin at 5 pm in the Schroer Commons of Eden Theological Seminary, 475 East Lockwood Ave., St. Louis, MO. 63119. At 5:30 pm, we will live stream into the campus of Elmhurst University to hear the speech from President Troy VanAken and toast the Sesquicentennial. Please join in this historic moment as we recognize Elmhurst University and its relationship with the United Church of Christ. All are invited to this blessed event! For more information or to RSVP, please contact the Chaplain of Elmhurst University, H. Scott Matheney, at hscottm@elmhurst.edu or 636-617-3025.

Reaching out for help is not selfish. We’ll say it again because sometimes all the amazing caregivers out there need to be reminded. Reaching out for help is not selfish. If you don’t take care of yourself, you can’t take care of anyone else. Being a caregiver is hard. The role comes with a lot of work and a lot of tough decisions. (And then there’s the added stress of doing all of this during the midst of a pandemic.) You lovingly cook meals, sort medication, give baths, clean houses, attend doctors’ appointments, and so much more…which is why an entire month has been designated to recognize this incredibly difficult job that you’ve taken on.
First established in 1997 by President Clinton to raise awareness about the toll that caregiving can take on family members, 2021 marks the 24th year of National Family Caregivers Month. According to the National Alliance for Caregiving, an estimated 65.7 million Americans serve as family caregivers for an ill or disabled relative.
St. John’s Community Care joins the entire country in honoring you and all that you do to care for your loved ones. They’re here to support you on this journey, a journey that you shouldn’t have to take alone. Read more for an overview of the caregiver resources St. John's Community Care offers.

Creation Care the Focus of Nov. 30 Giving Tuesday campaign by Connie Larkman
Honor the earth. It’s a sacred commitment in which many United Christ of Christ congregations are immersed. Honor the Earth is also a Native-led nonprofit organization founded to raise awareness and financial support for Indigenous environmental justice. Both will benefit from this year’s Giving Tuesday campaign.
The Native-led nonprofit is headed by Indigenous leader Winona LaDuke. Care for God’s creation is the UCC’s 2021 focus for this giving opportunity, which this year falls on Nov. 30. The UCC plans to devote 70 percent of the funds raised to Honor the Earth, led by Winona LaDuke.
The remaining 30 percent of Giving Tuesday gifts will be utilized by the UCC Council for Climate Justice, a grassroots effort focused on climate education and environmental justice. The funds will be used to foster youth and young adult climate justice leadership. Read more.
United Church Funds’ Town Hall
If you missed the United Church Funds’ Third Quarter Town Hall Meeting, here is a recording of the meeting. Just click on the link to the right.

What’s Happening in Illinois South Conference

FREE TO A GOOD HOME: St. John’s - Midway has 2 brass candelabras to donate. They have been replaced and are no longer being used. Each holds 7 taper candles. Contact their Church Office at 618-377-9288 if you are interested.

FREE TO A GOOD HOME: Kimball spinet piano. Contact Salem UCC at 618-488-3215.

FREE TO A GOOD HOME: Two (2) Peavey Impulse 500 Speakers. Contact Salem UCC at 618-488-3215.

Region 5 - Staunton St. Paul UCC Vendor/Craft Fair & Bake Sale
Vendors are wanted for the annual St. Paul UCC Vendor Fair and Bake Sale on Sat, Dec 4 from 9 am - 2 pm. Eight-foot tables are available for $15 each. A Bake Sale and Chili/Hot dog lunch will be served during the day. Please call Pastor Debbie at 618-635-2386 to reserve a spot. This event is part of the Staunton Christmas Walk and local vendors will be having special sales, carriage rides will transport shoppers around town and activities for children will be at each stop.

Troy Friedens UCC will hold its Santa Fest 2021 on Dec 4 from 11 am - 2 pm in the church parking lot. Free admissions but donations accepted. Social distancing applies.

Region 8
Zion United Church of Christ in New Baden is hosting a Festival of Trees from November 18 - 20. Here is a flyer of all the events that are happening. Check out the link above for more information on other specific events happening during that time.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Music Coordinator - New Baden Zion UCC
has an opening for a part-time Music Coordinator. Job duties include directing the adult choir, coordinating with organists and children’s choirs, selecting and leading music for services, assisting with copyright reporting, and other related responsibilities. A degree in worship arts, music, or equivalent training is required, along with experience as a choral singer and/or director and keyboard skills. For a full job description and salary info, contact Rodney Washburn at email.

Choir Director - Highland Evangelical UCC
is searching for a Choir 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.
Media and Technology Director - St. Paul UCC, Belleville is hiring a Media and Technology Director. This position is responsible for the church audio/visual program, video production of worship, and website and social media.
- Coordinating the audio/visual/lighting elements of our worship service broadcasts
- Developing media and technology program at St. Paul UCC
- Overseeing hardware & software needs

Go to our website stpaulucc.org for a full job description. For those interested, please send a full resume to email.

Communications and Technology Coordinator - Columbia St. Paul UCC seeks to effectively communicate its work and ministry through inspired and creative leadership. They actively seek to fill this newly created role in this exciting period of growth and change. The coordinator will create, organize, plan, and implement effective communication strategies, messaging, and virtual events on behalf of the congregation in collaboration with clergy, staff, and volunteers. Pay range is $18 - $22 per hour depending on experience level. Email a cover letter with salary requirements, resume and portfolio.

Part-Time Music Leader - Pinckneyville St Paul UCC is in search of a Part-Time Music Leader who works well with people. 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. Send resume with references to: St. Paul UCC, 205 E Jackson St., Pinckneyville, IL 62274 or email.

Director of Chancel Choir & Director of Handbell Choir - St. John UCC in Mascoutah is seeking a Director of Chancel Choir and a Director of Handbell Choir (perhaps as one position). These are part-time positions and job descriptions are on the church website. Send resume to pastor.hugh@saintjohnucc.org. The Chancel Choir is accompanied by Dr. Catherine Burge (piano/organ/keyboard). Weekly rehearsals for Chancel Choir are Wednesday evenings (September thru May). Handbells play 6 times per year and meet for two rehearsals prior to each performance. Each position requires music experience and ability, together with organizational, relationship, leadership, and communication skills. The chosen candidate will work as part of a team in providing enrichment of the parish music program.

Youth Ministry Director - O'Fallon UCC is seeking a qualified candidate, age 21 or older, for a part-time Youth Ministry Director position to lead Sunday morning youth Bible Study and fellowship/mission activities (2 Sundays per month). If interested, please contact the church office at 618-632-3496 or oucc@sbcglobal.net.

Nurse - Deaconess Nurse Ministry is looking for a nurse to work part time (9 hours per week) at Uni-Pres Kindercottage and a food pantry in Belleville. Contact Donna Pupillo at dpupillo@faithnurses.org if you are interested.

Minister of Visitation - Belleville St. Paul United Church of Christ seeks a Minister of Visitation (10 hours per week). Job responsibilities include:
- Visit congregants who are hospitalized, in long-term care facilities, and homebound
- Assist with and lead funerals as needed

Director of Faith Formation - Belleville St. Paul UCC seeks a Director of Faith Formation (18 hrs. per week). Job responsibilities:
- Plan and execute the church's education program for all ages in collaboration with the Sr. Pastor and Christian Ed. Team
- Sustain and expand the youth group
Facilities Coordinator and Tech Coordinator Positions

Waterloo St. Paul UCC is taking resumes for its Facilities Coordinator and Tech Coordinator positions. Please send inquiries about the Facilities Coordinator, Tech Coordinator, or both to stpauluccwaterloo@gmail.com.

Assistant Church Organist/Musician

Grantfork UCC is looking for a musician to play the pipe organ and/or piano for their Sunday morning traditional worship service once or twice a month. The schedule will be coordinated with the church’s music director, Connie Plocher. To express an interest, please contact Rev. Tim Darmour-Paul at 618-675-2595, or at grantforkucc@agtelco.com.

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 program information, contact Rylee Hodges-Stone at 618-787-2202 or program@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