Dear ISC Friends,

As we are mindful of the loss of lives, injuries, and property damages resulting from Friday night's tornadoes and severe weather that struck several Midwest states, including the Amazon Warehouse in Edwardsville, Illinois, our prayers, care, and concern go out to all those affected. Many of you have already reached out to the Conference with the question, “How can we help?” Please know our UCC Disaster Ministries staff and Conference Disaster Response Coordinators are in contact with FEMA, Emergency Management personnel, and faith-based organizations working in those areas. Immediate needs are housing, food and meals, personal care, and spiritual support.

The UCC Disaster Ministries stands ready to offer information and emergency financial assistance. “Recovery needs, both short- and long-term, will be massive, with damage estimates in the billions of dollars. What’s the best way to help now? Send money,” UCC Disaster Response and Recovery Minister Lesli Remaly said, “For a storm this size, money makes good sense as we know long-term recovery and rebuilding will be necessary.” Donations through your local church to the UCC Disasters Ministries can be made by sending checks to the Illinois South Conference. (Please make sure to note that these donations are for the UCC Disaster Ministries relief effort.) Individual financial donations can be made via PayPal through the Conference website or directly to the UCC Disaster Ministries.

Your financial donations will be used to provide housing, food and meals, and family needs for those who have been affected by the storms. FEMA is working with its federal, state, and local partners as well as governmental agencies to support the needs of areas affected by the tornado outbreak. In addition to a Kentucky FEMA Integration Team member, two FEMA Incident Management Assistance Teams are in Kentucky to assist with federal coordination efforts. An Incident Support Base is being established at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, to rapidly deploy personnel and supplies as needed.

This includes:

Prayer list for Dec 19 - 25, 2021

**Churches & Pastors**
- Brighton St. John's UCC
- Cahokia Bethel UCC, Pastor Karen Pepmeier

**Retired Pastors**
- Rev. Paul Thompson, Jr., Red Bud, IL

**People with Life Concerns**
- Please pray for the people who are dealing with tornado damage and the loss of family and friends.
- 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.
- Pray for those who are hungry.
- 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.
- Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) team Indiana Task Force-1 assists local response and a 10-person team deployed to the Kentucky Emergency Operations Center in Frankfort.
- Fifty-two generators, 30,000 meals, 45,000 liters of water, cots, blankets, infant toddler kits, and medical equipment and supplies.
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers temporary power and planning and response teams are on alert.
- A Mobile Emergency Response Support has deployed to Kentucky, which includes two Mobile Emergency Operations Vehicles with emergency communications capabilities for federal resources.
- Additional staging teams and damage assessment staff are being mobilized and prepared to deploy, if needed, to any of the affected areas.
- Eleven shelters are open in Kentucky. Three are open in Tennessee.
- FEMA is in contact with state emergency management officials as tornado damage reports come in from Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri, and Tennessee.

**American Red Cross** - With more volunteers and supplies moving into the affected areas in the coming days, the Red Cross is working around the clock with partners to make sure everyone has a safe place to stay, emotional support, and comfort in the face of one of the most devastating tornado outbreaks in years. Saturday night, there were at least eight emergency shelters open in Kentucky, where about 190 people sought safe refuge. Shelters are also open in Tennessee.

**American Red Cross** volunteers are helping to assess the damage in affected communities as areas become accessible to help determine how many families were affected and what types of help they may need in the coming days and weeks. **YOU CAN HELP** now by scheduling an appointment to give blood or platelets, visit the Red Cross [website](#), or call 1-800-RED CROSS.

I will continue to offer updates from the UCC Disaster Ministries as I receive them. If you would like to contact me, I can be reached via email at pjj48@hotmail.com or by phone at 618-318-0083.

Thank you for your continued prayers and offers of support.
Sincerely, Priscilla Self
Disaster Response Coordinator of the Illinois South Conference

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**The Amazing People of Illinois South Conference...**

On Sunday, December 12, Rev. Donna Smith-Pupillo and the congregation of Fieldon UCC celebrated 155 years of mission and service as **Fieldon United Church of Christ**. The program included a message from Rev. Shana Johnson, Illinois South Conference's Conference Minister, the children’s Christmas program and luncheon afterwards. Marilyn Rogers put together the slideshow of the saints of the church who have died in the last 155 years. Congrats to the entire congregation.

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**Year End Donations**

Donations for the end of the year must be sent to the Conference office to arrive by **Monday, January 10, 2022**, in order to get all ISC donations to the National UCC by the end of the month. The check needs to specify that the donation is for 2021 and the date on the check should also be dated for 2021. Thank you for helping us to clear our financial 2021 records in a timely fashion.
**Laypersons Needed**

Dear Members of Illinois South Conference,

We have had plenty of pastors apply to be a part of the WISE Exploratory Team, but no lay members yet. The WISE exploratory team is a vital part of the process in our Conference considering if we will become a WISE Conference. It will be the WISE Exploratory Team that will engage in a process of education, discernment, and planning with the help of the Mental Health Network of the United Church of Christ to create the proposed WISE covenant and action plan which will be shared at our 2022 Annual Meeting for a vote.

If you are a layperson and you are interested in helping our Conference, consider how to make a commitment to be welcoming, inclusive, supportive, and engaged with persons with mental health conditions/brain disorders, we need YOU.

Please fill out an application as soon as possible or reach out to me directly for more information at sjohnson@iscucc.org or 618-882-8247.

Blessings, Rev. Shana Johnson, ISC Conference Minister

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**Boundary Training 2022**

As part of our clergy's covenant and standing with the ISC, clergy are required to attend Boundary Training every three years. Boundary Training dates in 2022 are set for Tuesday, January 18; Tuesday, March 22; and Tuesday, August 30 from 8:30 a.m. – Noon each day by Zoom.

**Fee:**
ISC Clergy - $20 for retired pastors and $25 for active pastors.
Non-ISC Clergy - $25 for retired pastors and $30 for active pastors.

Christy sent an email to clergy who are listed as needing boundary training in 2022. To register or pay by credit card, contact Christy at cpursell@iscucc.org with the following information: Name, phone number, email, church name/city, active or retired, ISC or non-ISC.

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**DuBois 6.0 Campaign in Need of Freezer**

You may have noticed in the DuBois 6.0 capital campaign that there's a foraged dinner fundraiser planned for next fall. The goal is to have foraged foods from the grounds in the dishes that will be served that night, such as fish, hickory nuts, blackberries and persimmons. These foods will be collected over the course of the next few months, and several will need to be frozen when they're gathered. The regular camp freezer fills to capacity in the summer, so we need a freezer dedicated to storing food just for this meal. We're looking for a small chest or upright freezer, about 5-7 cu ft in capacity, with a working lock and key. If you have a freezer you'd like to donate that meets these requirements, please contact Jill Baker at jabaker5@aol.com.

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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.

**What we’ve done since 2020**
- Repaired the spillway
- Replaced the Rustic side septic
- Remediated mold in the office, Oak and Hickory Lodges
- Rebuilt and repaired the stage
- Solved plumbing leaks in Oak and Hickory Lodges
• Added commercial dehumidifiers to office basement and Hickory Lodge
• Fixed foundation leaks at office, Oak & Hickory Lodges
• Replaced camp office flooring
• Repaired/updated at Director’s House, and corrected drainage
• Brought the Deer Run Cabins back to life and added 3 ramps

Here’s what we’re doing next - Estimates as of Aug. 2021
• Oak Lodge Windows Replaced $17,650
• Camp Office Windows Replaced $4,500
• Oak Lodge Air Conditioning $15,740
• Oak Lodge Basement Sealed and Dehumidifier Purchased $6,000
• New Hillside Cottage Built $77,000
• Lumber Shed Roof $3,000
• Program Directors House Updates $7,000
• Temporary Infirmary: To be reaccredited by the American Camping Association, we need a multi-bed infirmary temporarily in half of Roadside Cottage $3,000
• Road Repairs $18,500
• New Fish Hill Cabin on Rustic Side of Camp $10,400
• New Archery Range and Bouldering Wall $10,000
• Deep Water Solar Lake Aerator $6,000
• Boat House Solar Power $1,200
• Deer Run Lodge Repairs and Updates $4,500
• Deer Run Shower House $10,300
• New Hay Barn $30,000
• Fence Painting $500

DuBois 6.0 Capital Campaign Goal $225,290

Note: Project order will be determined by availability of materials and funds.

Capital Campaign began October 2021 at the Annual Meeting and will end December 31, 2022

How You Can Contribute
• Sponsor a project.
• Share your mandatory IRA distributions
• Share Stock or Bonds
• Share Tax Refund
• Dinners- Plan to attend two special Taste of DuBois Dinners in 2022
• Sweat Equity
• Prayers

Contact the Highland office for an information sheet explaining how to donate IRA distributions or stock. Dates and more information on the Taste of DuBois dinners will be coming in early 2022.

Now Accepting Applications for Summer Staff 2022
Applications are open for Unit Coordinators, Barn Assistants, and Counselors. View our website in the weeks to come for updated employment information and job descriptions. Contact Rylee (program@duboiscenter.org) for an application. Please share the news far and wide! We are looking forward to summer 2022.

Now Accepting Volunteer Applications for 2022
We are also now accepting volunteer applications to help with our summer 2022 schedule. Can’t come all summer but want to donate a week of your time? Contact Hayley (director@duboiscenter.org) for an application or to talk about how you can make an impact. Starting in 2022, volunteers at DuBois Center will need to complete additional diversity and inclusion training, so plan now to help us in the spring and summer!
Here is a brief excerpt from one of the articles you’ll read in the Insurance Board Newsletter, The Steward:
It is common practice for churches to utilize the services of volunteers, church members, and parishioners for a wide variety of church needs. Churches often rely on volunteers for their contributions and work with construction, repair, maintenance, cleaning and janitorial, information technology, office, and chaperone tasks and services. Volunteer service is indeed an essential element of a church’s operations. Read more.

On Tues, Dec 21 at 7:30 am, Eden Seminary's Langenberg Leadership Breakfast features Desiree Coleman-Fry to help organizations redefine diversity, equity & inclusion practices. She was honored with Investment News’ 2019 Rising Star in D&I Award. She has been featured in Business Insider, Blavity, and The Brooking Institute among other publications. She holds a Master of Public Administration from the Maxwell School at Syracuse University and earned an executive certificate in nonprofit management from Georgetown University. She is a FOCUS St. Louis Impact Fellow alum as well as a trustee of Loyola Academy. She has been a workshop leader and presenter at countless community and industry events and also speaks, writes, and curates events to empower women. Click here to register.

United Church Funds (UCF) Announced Open Application for the Helen and Richard Brown Endowment for Pastoral Scholarships for the 2022-2023 academic year beginning on December 1, 2021. The Brown Endowment derives from a generous gift received in the 1990s, designated to support pastoral ministry in the United Church Christ (UCC). UCF serves as trustee of the endowment, helping to ensure funding for pastoral education and development. Since its inception, the initial gift of $5 million now provides over $300,000 annually to UCC Conferences, seminaries, and global partners, providing individual scholarships for seminarians, grants for continuing education for authorized ministers and support for seminarians in UCC/Disciples global partner churches. The endowment provides funding for students seeking a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree or equivalent. Potential Brown Scholars must demonstrate at least a year of active membership in a UCC church and maintain a GPA of at least 3.0. Eligible candidates can apply to become a Brown Scholar for the coming academic year by submitting an online application here. The submission deadline is March 1, 2022.

Damascus Project Open to ISC Lay People and Members in Discernment
During these challenging times, you are invited to a community of people like yourself who are growing in faith and developing as leaders in their local churches with the Damascus Project, a program to transform and equip people of faith for a changing church and a changing world. A collaborative ministry of the Minnesota and Wisconsin conferences is now open to participants from across the United Church of Christ. Two unique courses, Faith Foundations and Leadership Skills, are available for lay people and Members in Discernment. Both courses begin in January and have multiple registration options and price points. The deadline for ISC registration is December 27, 2021.
You might be interested in Faith Foundations if:
• You enjoy attending (or providing leadership for) adult educational forums, book studies and Bible studies and are seeking more.
• You are experiencing a life transition, e.g., retirement, children leaving home, job change) and are wondering what is next in life or in faith.
• You are a curious seeker in the faith.
• You want to gain confidence in speaking about your beliefs.
• You recently joined a UCC congregation from some other religious traditions.
• You are curious about pastoral ministry or sense God’s call in this direction.
  You might be interested in Leadership Skills if:
• You are a key lay leader, e.g., church council member, board or team chair or council/consistory president or moderator.
• You are a volunteer or paid staff member, e.g., Sunday school teacher, youth ministry leader, church and administrative personnel.
• You are a leader in your congregation’s community outreach ministries. You want to connect leadership in your day-to-day life with your faith walk.

Check out these invitations to community:
Invitation to Faith Foundations, Invitation to Leadership Skills
Visit their website for more information on pricing and registration options.

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.

Region 3 - It is with great sadness that I announce the upcoming closure of Cahokia Bethel UCC. Bethel began its ministry on September 13, 1959. We will have our final worship service January 2, 2022. We have set aside December 19 as a day that we will celebrate the ministries Bethel has been involved with in recent years. We welcome our Conference Minister, Rev. Shana Johnson, and others from the Illinois South Conference to join us on that day as we celebrate the work done and partnerships formed during the years of ministry at Cahokia Bethel UCC. The final worship service on January 2 is planned as a private service reserved for the current membership at Bethel as a time for us to share stories, laugh, and grieve together as we close our doors for the final time.

Region 8 - Lebanon St. Paul UCC will offer ‘A Blue Christmas Service’, on Sun, Dec 19 at 3 pm (masks are required). A Blue Christmas Service is designed to allow those who are in the midst of grief during Advent to find solace and expression on the way to Bethlehem. If you or someone you know is grieving, know that you are invited and welcome in this Service. This service is designed for all those who grieve, wherever they are on the spectrum of faith and understanding, to give voice to their pain, heartache, emptiness, loneliness, and anger before the God who comes as a Baby to Bethlehem. Come, as you are, with the burden you carry, and allow the Spirit to give you rest in the Hope and Love of the One who is born in Bethlehem. You are welcome here.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

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. This includes: 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.
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.

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. To apply, send resume with references to: St. Paul UCC, 205 E Jackson St., Pinckneyville, IL 62274 or email.

Part-Time Organist Position
Immanuel UCC in Ferguson, Missouri, is seeking a part-time organist for the music ministry on Sunday mornings and other opportunities. Organist for Wicks 76 rank pipe organ (with digital interface for recordings) will work with the Senior Pastor on music selection based on the sermon and liturgy. Previous church organist experience preferred. Hours established on an individual basis after reviewing experience. Hourly rates are competitive. The church office hours are Mon - Thurs 9:00-1:00. Website Submit a resume, compensation requirements, and references to email.

Youth Ministry Director - O’Fallon UCC is seeking a 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). Contact the church at oucc@sbcglobal.net or 618-632-3496.

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
- Assist in worship elements
Send resume and 3 references to email.

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