



February 15, 2022

BASIC INFORMATION:

The Illinois South Conference Confirmation Retreats are tools for enhancing youth ministry in local congregations and a time for personal spiritual renewal. They are designed as a supplement to the confirmation program of local churches and offer a unique opportunity for confirmation classes from across the Conference to bond within and between their groups.

THEME: "Gifted, Called, and Blessed"

As confirmands are readying themselves for the rite of confirmation, we will be exploring the ways God has uniquely gifted them, how they can live out their baptismal callings, and bless not only the local churches they will join but all places their faith journey will continue to take them.

DATES: Saturday, March 26 - Sunday, March 27, 2022

COVID PROTOCOLS: In accordance with the current Illinois South Conference protocols all chaperones and youth will be required to wear masks for all indoor gatherings and activities. Social distancing and good cleaning practices will be in place for this event.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE: The retreat begins with check-in at noon on Saturday. The program will begin promptly at 1 pm, so plan to arrive in time to get settled. Please note participants should have lunch BEFORE arriving at DuBois Center as only a light snack, dinner, and an evening snack will be served on Saturday. Sunday meals will include breakfast and lunch before departure.

The retreat concludes on Sunday, following closing worship, wrap up and lunch with departure at noon.

PARTICIPANTS: The Confirmation is for all youth enrolled in confirmation classes for the 2021-2022 program year and their adult advisors. Churches are



Prayer list for Feb 20-26, 2022 Churches & Pastors

-Fieldon UCC, Rev. Donna Smith-Pupillo, Interim Pastor



-Floraville St. Paul UCC, Pastor Matt (Laura) Friz

Retired Pastors

- Revs. Earl Menchhofer and Pamela Smith, Conyers, GA

People with Life Concerns

-Pray for **Rev. Michelle (Aaron Brent Coleman) Torigian** as she prepares for surgery this week. Rev. Torigian is the pastor and teacher for Belleville St. Paul UCC. Cards may be sent to her at 2716 Autumn Harvest Ln, Belleville, IL 62221.

-Please pray for the **people of Quito, Ecuador** as they manage the clean up and search for people within the damage of the flood and landslide. Ecuador Partnership has been a mission partner with ISC for over 20 years. We pray for strength and comfort for them all.

-Pray for **Rev. Bill Causer**, as he deals with some health issues. Cards may be sent to him at 11315 N Presley Ln, Mt. Vernon, IL 62864.

-Keep **Rev. Gus (Sue) Kuether** in your prayers as he recovers from

asked to provide a minimum ratio of 1 adult (age 21 or above) per 7 youth in proportion to the male/female breakdown of their group.

COST: The cost is \$65 for confirmands and chaperones.

RETREAT CAPACITY: Registration will be limited to the first 100 confirmands and chaperones that send in completed registration forms and fees.

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 recovering from natural disasters.

-Pray for peace among nations.

February Is Black History Month

The ISC Justice & Mission Team recommends these resources for Black History Month. From a 10-minute video to a young adult book to a history of the US, we hope you will find something to educate, inform, and inspire you!

- *The 1619 Project* by Nikole Hannah-Jones
- *Clotilda: The Last American Slave Ship* on National Geographic
- *A People's History of the United States* by Howard Zinn
- *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson
- PBS' [Above the Noise: Understanding Anti-Racism](#)
- *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas (Church of the Good Shepherd UCC in Carbondale is studying this book)
- *Read Until You Understand* by Farah Jasmine Griffin
- Worship at Good Shepherd of Faith on February 27 at 10 am where the children will present their story of Black History Month. 1514 Kansas Ave, East St Louis, IL 62201.

Mark your calendars for March 19, 2022, to attend **Day of Discipleship**. The 2022 theme is Leaders and Followers: Guiding the Church Forward.

The ISC Conference Gatherings Team and staff have decided, based on the health and safety of our attendees and volunteers of the host church, to go virtual on Zoom for Day of Discipleship 2022.

The information is valuable for the church, "leaders," and "followers", i.e., for everyone in the church to learn about conference-wide initiatives in 2022, roles and responsibilities of officers/leaders, good decision-making skills, honest/healthy communications, and a new ministry opportunity, Companionship Movement. Here is the plan for the day.

Town Hall Meeting on Conference Wide Initiatives:

1. An opportunity to hear how the WISE committee is doing
2. How the DuBois 6.0 program is coming along
3. How some of our other ministries are doing.

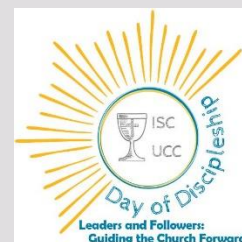
Workshops:

1. "Roles and Responsibilities of Officers" – Mimi Llamas
2. "Good financial practices" – TBA
3. "Healthy communication" – Rev. Lisa Hart
4. "Discernment & Decision-Making" - Rev. Shana Johnson
5. "Companionship Movement" – Rev. Tim Darmour-Paul

Cost: \$25/person; scholarships available for anyone – contact Christy at cpursell@iscucc.org for more information.

Schedule:

- 8:45 – 9:00 Gather on Zoom
- 9:00 – 9:30 – Opening & Update on ISC initiatives (WISE Conference update, DuBois 6.0, and Hunger Action Team updates)
- 9:40 – 10:25 – Workshop A (Your choice of the 5 offered)



- 10:35 – 11:20 – Workshop B (Your choice of the 5 offered)

We will gather for DOD on Zoom. The workshops will follow the opening time and will be through Zoom's breakout rooms format. This is the same platform we used for last year's DOD. People can choose the workshop they want to go to or Christy will help move them to the correct workshop.

****NEW** Insurance Board announces the launch of a Legal Helpline** through our partnership with the **Association of Conference Attorneys (ACA) of the United Church of Christ**. All Insurance Board participants can now access legal counsel that will provide a free legal consultation and referral service. Ministries will benefit from connecting with attorneys who have an intimate understanding of polity and how issues are processed in observance of free church traditions. Ministries can contact the **Legal Helpline** at **800-437-8830** (*prompt #7*) or email their inquiry to legalhelpline@insuranceboard.org. *Please note the free consultation does not include contract reviews.* Feel free to share the attached flyer with your Insurance Board policyholders. ****Coming Soon**** Insurance Board will be launching the **Legal Corner** site accessible from Insurance Board's website. Legal Corner will be the new home for the **Legal Helpline** in addition to sample forms and extensive HR tools. More information to follow!

One Great Hour of Sharing - March 27

The theme for the 2022 One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering is **"Love Remains,"** based on 1 Corinthians 13:13 *And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.* These words were written to a church in turmoil to remind them what love looks like in community.

What does love look like in our UCC Community? Through your collective generosity, the United Church of Christ has worked with both domestic and international partners to provide food, water, medicines, education, disaster recovery resources and opportunities for sustainable development, bringing hope to places of despair. Your gifts to OGHS allow UCC to put love into action to make a difference in the lives of individuals and communities in crisis around the world.

Sunday, March 27, 2022, the fourth Sunday of Lent, is the recommended date for the offering. Resources to help you promote the offering will be mailed to your churches beginning the week of February 21. And for your newsletters and worship planning purposes, resources are already available for download on the UCC [website](#). You may also order additional copies of these materials from [UCC Resources](#).

"His radiance is like sunlight; beams of light shine from his hand"

Habakkuk 3:4

Solar energy in our homes and churches is on the Justice & Mission Team's agenda, because we want to do two things:

- Help preserve God's creation; and
 - Help you save money
- To that end, the team has resources that may interest you, but we need your help to identify:
- People who are currently using solar in their homes;
 - Churches who are using or considering solar;
 - Those who want to learn more about solar

Contact Christy by March 8 at cpursell@iscucc.org to give us information about your use or interest in solar energy.

Lenten Devotional to Benefit DuBois Center & The Sojourner Truth House in Gary, IN

Rev. Dr. Don Wagner has graciously offered his Lenten Devotional for use in your churches. Beautiful photos by Fr. Jerry Schweitzer are included in the devotional. The devotional is free, but the Preface provides some information about making a donation for the devotional, which will be

split between DuBois Center's 6.0 Campaign and The Sojourner Truth House in Gary, IN. Click [here](#) to download and view the Journey to Easter by Rev. Dr. Don Wagner, pastor and teacher for Lebanon St. Paul UCC. You can also find it on the ISC website [here](#).



Does your congregation desire to be more prepared for disasters, both to protect yourselves and to extend love to your neighbors in time of crisis? Then [Willing to Respond](#) is for you!

Willing to Respond is a United Church of Christ collaboration with Disciples of Christ's Week of Compassion. It's simple to access and has an easy three-step process to register.

"Willing to Respond is not a one-size-fits-all program," emphasized Lesli Remaly, United Church of Christ Minister for Disaster Response and Recovery. "The way you serve is up to your congregation, as God is leading you.

"In fact," Remaly said, "Your congregation may already be serving disaster survivors by assembling CWS Kits and Emergency Clean-Up Buckets, contributing to UCC appeals, deploying work teams to disaster rebuilding sites or helping people in your community clean up after a flood or storm.

"Willing to Respond will help your congregation review its experience, available resources, and community context; discern your growing edges; and get ready to respond when disaster strikes," she said. "The Willing to Respond network helps your congregation get connected to collaborate."



Equip your congregation to love your neighbor in time of disaster. This free, new, and rapidly growing network is providing congregations with practical tools, training, and relationships, including online resources and connection to your Conference Disaster Coordinator and to denominational, ecumenical, and other disaster response resources.

For more information and assistance with registering your congregation or church group, please contact our Illinois South Conference, UCC Disaster Coordinator, Priscilla Self at pji48@hotmail.com or 618-318-0083.

UCC Yearbook Submissions

We are about 1/3 of the way to getting 100% of our churches submitting their information to National UCC concerning their churches' lives. Here is the **MOST** important reason for submitting your information...

When your search committee needs to create a church profile, or your church begins a capital campaign, or your church needs a loan for an important project, you can pull an 11-year report of your church's information....attendance, finance and more. BUT only if you have submitted the information! You will thank us when that need becomes a reality.

For more information, contact Lynnette at lschuepbach@iscucc.org.

Important Deadline to Submit:

Submitting online - by midnight on March 2, 2022

Submitting to Lynnette to enter - by March 1, 2022.

DuBois Center News

The logo for "DuBois Center News" features a stylized white cross with a leaf-like shape on its right arm, set against a blue background. To the right of the icon is the text "DuBois Center News" in a white, serif font.

Volunteer for a Camp Sunday

Are you interested in being a camp-ambassador ("campbassador") to your local

church or to churches in your nearby area? We are looking for new camp representatives to go and speak at camp Sundays throughout the Illinois South Conference. Don't love talking in front of people? That's okay! We will send you with a script, a slideshow, and even some camp activities you can do with the kids of the church ages 4 – 99. This is a great way to earn volunteer hours, or

to spread your love for DuBois Center. Contact Hayley at director@duboiscenter.org if you would be willing to be a campbassador in your region!



Why you should, occasionally, smell dirt.

A few years ago when I was a confirmation mentor, I got wrapped up in a conversation with my confirmand about the sense of smell.

Specifically, I asked this brilliant student what smells she associated with God as we walked through how we experience God with our senses. I was gearing up for the answer I expected and had received from others in the past: that they associated God with the smell of our sanctuary that mixed a little bit of dust with the burning of a candle. Instead, I had to readjust when she simply said “I guess that smell in the mountains right after it rains.”

Immediately, my mind remembered the smell she was suggesting – it is earthy, fresh, dampness, dirt. In a way, it’s actually indescribable, but the people who have *experienced it* know exactly what you are talking about when you mention it. What a beautiful way to think of God – as something that is occasionally not able to be summarized but by which we are bonded to others with a shared experience.

When it comes to senses, there’s a lot of scientific evidence that points to our olfactory senses as the best stimulant of memory. I have recently been reading the book “Losing Eden” by Lucy Jones. In one of the chapters, the book talks about innate immunity in the children of farming communities as opposed to children in more urban areas. A study linked the abundance of healthy bacteria entering the bodies of those in the farming community through simply breathing fresher air, where microbiomes in the dirt were occasionally stirred into the air, to a higher basic level of immunity. The study suggested that smelling dirt, eating a homegrown vegetable, and recreating outside in a biodiverse area may all be actions that lead us toward greater individual health.

When I read this chapter, I thought of my confirmand. I thought of a Creator God who would make something through which we experience God and creation, also good for our physical and mental health, not just our spiritual health. I started, then, to occasionally pick up dirt, hold it a few inches from my face, and inhale a few deep breaths. Maybe it’s a silly practice, or a spiritual one, or a healthy one. Whatever it is, in that moment I am reminded of Lent (where we are from and where we are going), of my extra-smart confirmand, and of God’s creative love that connects us across generations and time zones.

Maybe picking up and smelling the dirt as a spiritual practice is not for you. However, if you are looking to breathe in the fresh air this spring as you root yourself in God’s love, DuBois Center is offering a variety of day and retreat events this spring.

Come breathe the fresh air at the Star Party, March 4, 2022, or any of the following events:

- March 26-27 - Confirmation Retreat at DuBois
- April 1-3 - Father & Son Retreat
- April 9 - DuBois Center Open House
- April 15 - Stations of the Cross @ DuBois Center
- April 22-24 - Wrangle & Ride
- April 23 - Volunteer Workday at DuBois Center
- April 29-May 1 - Women's Retreat - NEW
- May 13-14 - Photography Retreat - NEW
- May 15 - DuBois Center Open House
- May 21-22 - Volunteer Retreat

For more information, visit the [website](#).

Blessings, Hayley Elliott, Acting Director of Outdoor Ministries

DuBois 6.0 - On the Move - DuBois Center will get a facelift in 2022. The current donations are at **\$53,346** because of generous donors. Find out [more](#). **DuBois 6.0 Capital Campaign Goal - \$225,290**

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**
- **Cash Online** at www.iscucc.org and www.DuBoisCenter.org.
- **Prayers**



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

Contact United Church Funds at 212-729-2628 or matt.wagner@ucfunds.org to learn how to donate IRA distributions and stock to DuBois 6.0. Dates and more information on the Taste of DuBois dinners will be coming in early 2022.

Do You Receive an Automatic IRA Distribution?

If you receive an automatic IRA distribution that you don't need for living expenses, perhaps from an inherited IRA, please consider donating it to the DuBois 6.0 capital campaign this year. We have already received over \$53,000 of the \$225,290 needed to complete the 17 projects included in this campaign. The Oak Lodge air conditioning project is almost finished, and three other projects are just waiting on some materials and volunteers to finish them. The second round of projects needs to start soon, some of which includes work on the Deer Run shower house and lodge, moving the archery range, and building a new bouldering wall. These projects will add tent camping capacity and programming activities to the 2022 summer camp season. Your donations will make a big difference in getting these done in the first quarter of the year.

If you would like to donate an IRA distribution to DuBois 6.0, please contact Matt Wagner with United Church Funds at matt.wagner@ucfunds.org for more information.

Seminary Sunday 2022, February 27

As we enter a third year of this global challenge to our capacity for hope and faithfulness, there is a class of seminarians whose experience has been shaped in ways that have equipped them to serve through whatever lies ahead with vocational resilience and crisis-tested commitment.

Your gift to CUE—to Chicago, United and Eden Seminaries—in 2022—is a gift that calls forth a future filled with the grace, wisdom and fortitude forged during these extraordinary times—A testament to the ways we have been changed forever and have remained steadfast in the formation of the leaders God is calling into the world today.

In preparation for Seminary Sunday, we have provided the [video](#), which you might show in worship. The video highlights all six of our seminaries. Please know that by giving to CUE you are giving to Chicago, United, and Eden Seminaries which encompass the midwest of the United States.

We can also easily [connect](#) you with the seminaries who can provide a student, faculty or staff person to speak or preach (virtually, directly to your congregation).

[Tell](#) us how we can help you prepare for the day!

Thank you for supporting the seminaries associated with CUE through a donation to your Conference. Your Conference in turn gives to CUE so that we can distribute the gifts equally among Chicago, United and Eden.



CHHSM News
Council for Health and Human Service Ministries

The Insurance Board presents a Webinar on Feb 28 at 1 pm CST, Protecting Your Ministry from Cybersecurity Threats.

As reliance on technology continues to grow, cybersecurity threats are prevalent; ministries are especially susceptible to cybersecurity breaches in this enhanced virtual environment. This webcast will discuss the proper controls necessary to help mitigate cybersecurity threats, and identify methods and tools that can help minimize potential exposures for ministries. The speaker, Abdullah Alkhulaiwi, Partner & Senior Cybersecurity Consultant, holds a Master's Degree in Digital Science, and has multiple security certifications in ethical hacking, complex network design and information security assessments. Click [here](#) to register.



Vehicle Donations

If you have a vehicle that no longer meets your needs, consider turning it into a charitable donation that will support Global Ministries.

You can donate almost any type of vehicle as a tax-deductible gift to Global Ministries through CARS, Inc. They will even tow cars that no longer work. Your vehicle should be picked up within a few days of submitting your paperwork. To start the process, fill out the online form on our [webpage here](#) or call 855-500-7433. Call Global Ministries at (317) 713-2562 with any questions or email us at gifts@dom.disciples.org

Bridges to Care & Recovery - Open Forum for Pastors

Every Tuesday in February at 10 am, Bridges to Care & Recovery presents What's Brewing with Pastors, a virtual forum for pastors over coffee and pastries to discuss mental health. Click this link <https://bhnstl-orgzoom.us/j/4433124650> Meeting ID: 443 312 4650.

Kindercottage - Special Urgent Request

Uni-Pres Kindercottage needs help improving its electrical and phone systems. Is there anyone in your church who might help them, or might your church see this as a mission project? If you can help, please call Brenda Crisp at 618-874-6505. Your help will be greatly appreciated. THANK YOU!!

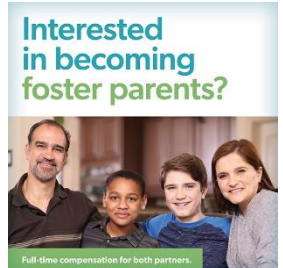
Hoyleton Youth and Family Services is expanding their Therapeutic Foster Care services. This expansion presents an opportunity for three identified foster youth, currently in residential care at Hoyleton, to live in community with qualified foster parents in a single-family home.

This program was created to address a service gap that exists in Illinois. The state has limited residential treatment opportunities and even fewer transition programs for youth in care who need additional support. Due to the limited options, youth are residing in Hoyleton's residential treatment program longer than what is needed.

This is an amazing family bonding opportunity for both foster parents and youth. Foster parents will live in the newly renovated home while providing full-time care for 3 children. Foster parents will receive compensation covering all living expenses and respite time for foster parents is also provided.

Hoyleton is actively searching for interested foster parents. A minimum 2 years of experience fostering youth is preferred. Interested foster parents must not have other children in their care at this time. If this rewarding, yet challenging, opportunity is of interest to you or someone you know, we would love to speak with you.

For more information, contact Mindy Miller at 618-688-4756 or mmiller@hoyleton.org. To learn more about Hoyleton Youth and Family Services click [here](#).





St. John's Community Care presents the Memory Cafe which meets every Wednesday (February 9, 16, 23) from 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm by Zoom. It benefits the person living with mild cognitive impairment, early-stage Alzheimer's or other dementia, and their care partner by providing a way to socialize with compassionate people in a safe, understanding, and relaxed atmosphere. This setting provides attendees a way to interact and connect with others who are sharing a similar journey. If you would like to join the Zoom Online Memory Cafe, email Gail at gshaw@stjohnscc.org. She will send you information and an invitation to join this fun group.

What's Happening in Illinois South Conference

2022 Hunger and Health Illinois Regional Conference

The University of Illinois Extension and SNAP Education staff are excited to announce the first Hunger and Health Illinois Conference. Two regional conferences will be held on March 9, 2022, at Illinois Valley Community College in Oglesby, IL, and March 17, 2022, at the Salvation Army in Springfield, IL from 10 am - 3:30 pm on both days. An optional pre-conference food handler's training will be from 8 am - 10 am. The cost for the event is \$10 per person and will provide a noon meal. Fee waivers are available.

Registration opens on February 1, 2022. Click [here](#) for a flyer. Contact: kaitlyns@illinois.edu.

Region 2 - Zoar UCC New Hanover will hold A Night at the Races on Sat, Feb 19. Doors open at 6 pm and races begin at 7 pm. Silent auction. Bring your own food and drinks. All proceeds go to Zoar UCC. Cost \$10 per person. Must be 18 to place bets. Contact Cheri Angel at 618-420-9687.

Region 5 - Hamel Immanuel UCC will hold its drive thru/carry out **Chicken Dinner on Sun, March 20 from 11:30 am - 4:30 pm** at the church (1-1/2 miles south of Hamel). Menu includes chicken, mashed potatoes, gravy, green beans, slaw and applesauce. \$11 per meal. Quilt and TV raffle.

Marine UCC will hold an All-You-Can-Eat Fried Chicken Dinner on Sun, March 6 from 11 am - 3 pm at the Moose Lodge, 7371 Marine Rd, Edwardsville, IL 62025. Carry-outs available. Menu includes fried chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, seasoned green beans, yellow corn, dinner salad, bread, tea and coffee. Dessert available for purchase. Adults \$10; Children 2 - 12 \$5.50; Children under 2 FREE.

Region 8 - New Baden Zion UCC will be having a drive thru **chili dinner on Wed, Feb 16 from 4 pm to 6:30 pm**. Price will be \$10 per dinner or for a quart sized container. This is to raise funds for DuBois Center and the renovations they plan to do for various projects at the camp. If you have any questions, call 618-588-4153 or email us at zionucc.sec@zionuccnb.com.

St. John UCC in Trenton will have its drive-thru-only for chili and beef vegetable soup on **Sat, Feb 26** from 12 pm to 3 pm (or until the chili and soup are gone). Price is \$10 per quart. Enter the drive thru on the west end of the alley by the Shell Station.

Region 9 - Belleville Concordia UCC will hold its Pancake/Sausage Breakfast on Feb 19 from 7 am - 10 am. Eat-in or Carry-out. Adults \$9; Children \$6; Children under 5 are free.

Belleville Concordia UCC will hold a Church Chili Challenge on Feb 26 from 11 am - 3 pm.
Eat-in or Carry-out. \$5 for Chili samples - eat-in only;
\$3 for Hot Dog/Chili Dog; \$8 - Combo - Hot Dog & 16 oz. Chili; Voting will be done by free-will offering. 50% of proceeds will go to the Millstadt Fire Department.

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 618-357-1801 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](#)

