

July 12, 2022



A Pastor's Viewpoint
“When God Winks at You”

Several years ago, a friend gave me the book, *“When God Winks at You: How God Speaks Directly to You Through the Power of Coincidence,”* written by Squire Rushnell. I appreciated the gift of this book and the varied stories within it,

because I could relate to the message that Squire Rushnell was trying to get across to his readers—you never know when you are going to be in a “God wink” moment.

I will never forget the “God wink” moment that my husband, John, had as he was researching information about his uncle, Roman, who died while serving as a military pilot at the very beginning of W.W. II. The “wink” was a communication from a stranger in Italy who could give him details about his uncle’s death. In John’s search for more information about an Italian priest who made sure that his uncle received a Roman Catholic burial, he placed a request for information on an Italian Military Air Museum website.

By chance, an Italian Military Aircraft researcher and historian by the name of Alessandro Ragatzu also went to the same website that day. Within a couple of days of John’s post, he received an email from Alessandro sharing that he could tell John everything about the day his Uncle Roman died. From the time Alessandro was a young boy, his father had told the story of the pilot who fell from an airplane and died on a street in Sardinia near a doorway. In telling the story, Alessandro’s father had shared with him Uncle Roman’s name, which was on his “dog tags,” many times throughout the years.

Alessandro’s father, Francesco, was 13 years old when he saw the air battle and went up to Uncle Roman’s body, but unfortunately, he was deceased.

Alessandro invited us to come to Sardinia so that the whole story could be shared with John and family. I must be honest; I was truly skeptical and uncertain that we should make such a trip just through the information on an email, but John totally believed what Alessandro was sharing with him was absolutely true. So, approximately

Prayer list for
July 17-July 23, 2022
Church & Pastors

-Smithton St. John's UCC, Rev. Andy (Kristin) Wilson (right)



-St. Jacob UCC, Rev. Philip (Kate) Barbier (left)

Retired Pastor

- Rev. Wesley and Doris Bornemann, Fenton, MO

People with Life Concerns

-Keep the family of **Rev. Ralph David Kuether** in your prayers as they mourn his death on July 6. Rev. Kuether is the brother of Rev. Gus (Suzanne) Kuether and was the pastor of Edwardsville St. Paul UCC from 1964-1966 until moving to churches outside ISC. Services will be held at a later date. Cards of condolence may be sent to Gus and Suzanne at 536 Pebble Brook Ln, Belleville, IL 62221.

-Pray for **Jo-Ann Steiner** as she deals with health issues and recovers from a procedure. Jo-Ann is a member of Grantfork UCC and worked for many years at the Illinois South Conference office in Highland. Cards may be sent to her at 4524 Fairview Rd, Pocahtontas, IL 62275.

-Keep **Rev. Shana Johnson, ISC Conference Minister**, in your prayers as she is on an abbreviated

twenty years ago, we traveled over 4,000 miles to meet strangers on the Island of Sardinia, strangers who were beyond gracious and who have become our most beloved friends.

Alessandro's father, Francesco, through an interpreter and pictures that he drew, shared the whole story with John and I of what happened on the day that Uncle Roman (Ray) had to jump out of his plane. Francesco's story brought great peace to the yearnings of my husband's heart to find out exactly what happened to Uncle Roman, John's dad's closest brother.

All of this evolved because of **the coincidence** of two men using the same air military website on the same day. I have to say that at times the whole story still feels a bit surreal, but that's how it is when "God winks" at you. It almost takes your breath away to experience the grace of our loving God so profoundly. I invite you to be aware and to share your "God wink" moments; they are essential for our journey of faith. Amen. Rev. Joan H. Mier, Concordia UCC, Belleville

Sabbatical. Please wait to send emails to her until her return on July 25. Instead, contact Christy Pursell at cpursell@iscucc.org

-Please hold **Rev. Jim & Lelynna Langdoc** in your prayers as Lelynna deals with some health issues. Cards can be sent to her at 16640 Cagan Orchard #122, Clermont, FL 34714.

-Pray for **Rev. Gus (Sue) Kuether** as he heals. Rev. Kuether is a retired ISC pastor who served on many ISC teams and committees. Cards may be sent to 536 Pebble Brook Ln, Belleville IL 62221.

-Keep **Rev. Bill (Patti) Causer** in your prayers. Rev. Causer has served several churches in ISC. Cards may be sent to 11315 N Presley Ln, Mt. Vernon, IL 62864.

-Pray for **Peace**.

Annual Meeting Offerings

DuBois 6.0

DuBois Center will turn 60 in 2022, marking the year we took ownership of the land. While the first 60 years have been great, DuBois needs some maintenance and expansion to get ready for the next 60. We are over 80% of our way to our goal of \$225,290 and need your help to get us the rest of the way to our goal. You can bring offerings collected at your worship services, bring your personal offering, and/or purchase one of the baskets in our silent auction (available at Annual Meeting).

Noisy Offering

Hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, typhoon. Victims of these natural disasters receive help from the UCC Disaster Ministries who work to provide initial responses and long-term follow-up by providing financial assistance & volunteer groups.

Here's the plan...

- **Each ISC church asks its members to donate** small or large amounts of change during Sunday School, Sunday worship services or meetings prior to the Annual Meeting.
- **Bring a representation of the change collected** to the Annual Meeting at St John UCC, Collinsville on October 15, 2022. (You can convert some of the change to dollars or one large check by taking the change to a bank. They will count it and exchange it for paper currency.)
- **Bring some of the offering as change in a container that can make some noise** at the presentation at Annual Meeting.
- **Designate a representative from your church to present the money** during specified times at Annual Meeting.

Deadline for Resolutions at Annual Meeting - July 17, 2022

A resolution is a motion that requires a decision and includes a recommended action. All resolutions presented to the Annual Meeting must be submitted to the Conference Council for review and classification (see attached [document](#)). The resolution must be sent to the Conference

Moderator, Dr. Jill Baker, by July 17, 2022. Emergency resolutions (issues that may arise after the deadline for submittal but prior to Annual Meeting) will need to be sent to Dr. Baker by noon on Friday, October 14. All resolutions can be emailed to Dr. Baker at jabaker5@aol.com. Resolutions can be submitted by a church council or consistory, a congregation of the ISC that has approved a resolution at a regular or special meeting, the ISC Conference Council, or a committee or team of the Conference.

Did you know? - The Justice and Mission Team Answers

Your church may receive \$250 cash rebate from Illinois for every kilowatt hour at which its solar system is rated?

Call Illinois South Conference at 618-654 2125 to be directed to a Justice and Mission representative or try one of these sites for Illinois-specific information. <https://illinoisshines.com> or <https://www.illinoissfa.com>

The Amazing People of UCC...

Through the donations of individuals, organizations, UCC local churches and conferences, the UCC has received over \$2.3 million to **support war relief efforts in Ukraine**. Because of this overwhelming generosity, the UCC continues to offer spiritual encouragement and financial assistance to our Ukrainian siblings impacted by the horrors of this ongoing crisis. Gifts from our donors help us to:

- Provide food, shelter, and medical assistance to refugees and internally displaced persons
- Aid persons with disabilities and their families with their daily needs, technological support, and transportation

Our longstanding alliance with our global partners enables the UCC to join with others. It leverages resources for greater impact in devastated regions in Ukraine and in countries receiving refugees, including Poland, Hungary, Romania, Moldova, and Greece.

Learn more about how you and the UCC are making a difference [here](#).

Fall Festival Is Coming!

It is not too early to begin planning for DuBois' Fall Festival on Sunday, October 2. A change this year: instead of the Upscale Resale Shoppe, there will be a silent auction of upscale baskets. Please organize your congregation or church group to prepare a themed basket worth a minimum of \$50. Be creative, be generous, list the contents and notify Audrey Hicks of your donation by Sunday, September 18 at audhicks@hotmail.com, 618-939-8673, or 618-604-9792.



SAVE THE DATE – Illinois South Conference 2022 Ministers' Retreat: "Creative Connections" November 2 and 3, 2022

Toddhall Retreat and Conference Center, Columbia, IL

The Local Church Ministries Team is offering a time away for Illinois South ministers (both active and retired) to be welcomed into community, spiritually nourished, and boosted in creative confidence. We will engage our theme of Creative Connections by providing activities, conversations, and creative projects that will remind us that we are created in God's image and help us find the joy and courage in that once again! Whether you consider yourself "creative" or not, there will be something for you at this retreat. Registration information will be available soon.

Stewardship Theme Materials

Download Stewardship Theme Materials for your congregation's stewardship efforts. Materials include practical tools such as logos, commitment cards, bulletin inserts, and letters, and provide resources for preaching and teaching about stewardship throughout the year. Campaign guidance

and calendars help leaders make the best use of these robust materials for their specific context and size.

Various download options available. *Printed packs also available but will be delayed due to the UCC Resources temporary closure.*



“Making All Things New” will be the theme of the 34th biennial General Synod of the United Church of Christ.

Here are details about GS Resolutions

- General Synod 34 will be held at the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis from June 30-July 4, 2023.
- Standing Rules have been revised. See it [here](#).
- Here is the [website](#) with GS resolution info and links.
- Resolutions can be submitted by: GS delegate or delegate-elect; local church (with concurrence of at least 5 other UCC churches), as Association, a Conference, an Affiliated Ministry, or the UCC Board.
- The Committee of Disposition will need time prior to the October 31 deadline to review resolutions.

† DuBois Center News

DuBois 6.0 Campaign Update

We have reached nearly **\$196,000** for a total donation as of this edition. There are several projects that have been completed. But since camp is in full swing, some projects have been funded but not completed so as not to interfere with the kids at camp.

If you are looking for one of the larger projects to add your funds to as a church or organization, you may want to choose from these. Or check out the original [list](#) for some smaller projects to fit your group.

- New hay barn (estimated at \$30,000)
- Road repair (estimated at \$18,500)
- Hillside Cottage Build (estimated at \$77,000)

We thank everyone for being a part of this fantastic venture to build faith, capacity, and opportunities for the next 60 years.



Our 7th Rainbow Camp will be Saturday, August 13 from 9 am to 7 pm. This year, we're bringing back Rainbow Camp Plus, the optional overnight stay in Hickory Lodge on Friday night, August 12, which will start at 5 pm. We'll have all your favorite camp activities, including horseback riding, water games, canoeing, archery, fishing, crafts, and a whole lot more. Rainbow Camp is for Queer singles, couples and families, and

our straight allies. Go to www.DuBoisCenter.org to register. Bring a friend and come join the fun! Click [here](#) for a flyer. **Register by July 29, 2022.**

Hoyleton Youth & Family Services Back to School Supply Drive

You can help each of the Hoyleton residents go to school prepared by donating items or cash for school supplies. Choose from items on their Amazon [wish list](#). You can drop off supplies at Hoyleton Youth & Family Services at 8 Executive Dr., Ste 200 in Fairview Heights between 8 am - 4 pm on Monday, Aug 1 or by appointment between July 25 - July 29.



CHHSM News
Council for Health and Human Service Ministries

Hoyleton Youth & Family Services Golf Classic '22

Have fun playing golf with your friends and support the Hoyleton Youth & Family Services on **Friday, September 16 at Tamarack Golf Course**, 800 Tamarack Lane in Shiloh. Many sponsorship opportunities if you can't take the day away from work. \$100 per person/\$400 per team. Register online; call 618-688-4742; or email lselden@hoyleton.org.

Attention Deaconess School of Nursing Alumni

On Sunday, August 14, from 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm at The Jewel Box in St. Louis' Forest Park, Deaconess Nurse Ministry invites the Deaconess School of Nursing Alumni to attend a Healthy Impact Dinner. There is no charge to attend, but an RSVP is required by August 1. Donations are welcome to enhance the ministry of Deaconess Nurse Ministry as they celebrate the alumni and the legacy of Rev. Dr. Douglas Anders. The Deaconess Hospital heritage carries a strong connection to the Evangelical roots of the United Church of Christ. To register, click [here](#), call 314-395-4655, or email dpupillo@faithnurses.org or adm@faithnurses.org.

2022 National ONA Gathering

The Open & Affirming Coalition invites you to attend their 2022 National ONA Gathering (Shaping Generations: Queer Justice and Love in the UCC on Aug 5-7. The virtual event will celebrate the 50th anniversaries of the ONA Coalition and Bill Johnson's ordination as the first openly gay man authorized to serve an historic Christian church as a minister of word and sacrament. Leaders include the Rev. Rhina Ramos (worship leader), Bishop Yvette Flunder (closing address and charge), the Rev. Bill Johnson and the Rev. Anne Holmes, and the Rev. Andy Lang (State of the ONA Movement). Get more information and register [here](#). Registration is open until Aug 4.

What's Happening in Illinois South Conference

Boundary Training

As part of clergy's covenant and standing with the ISC, they are required to attend Boundary Training every three years. Church leaders may also register if they choose to. The final ISC Boundary Training of the year will take place on Tuesday, August 30, 2022, via Zoom from 8:30 am - Noon. This training will be for active and retired clergy as well as interested church leaders. If interested in attending, contact Christy at cpursell@iscucc.org. She will then provide the meeting link and ID. Fees for the training are \$20 for retired ISC pastors and \$25 for active ISC pastors and/or church leaders. Fees for non-ISC pastors (those with standing outside of ISC) are \$25 for retired pastors and \$30 for active pastors. To register/pay, send a check payable to Illinois South Conference and noted for Boundary Training to 1312 Broadway, Highland, IL 62249 or call Christy at 618-420-2608 to make a payment by credit card.

Job Opportunities - Pinckneyville St. Paul UCC is in search for a Part-time Music

Leader. 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 Wick's two-manual pipe organ with pedals and piano. Good vocal skills are a plus but not required. The church does not have a choir but occasionally has special instrumentalists and vocalists. Church services are currently 10 am - 11 am on Sundays. Special services include Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, and two Easter services. Contact the church secretary at 618-357-8075.

Open Positions at Troy Friedens UCC

- Cemetery Sexton
- Nursery Attendant
- Director of Faith Formation

If interested, call 618-667-6535 or email friedens@friedensucc-troy.org

Music Director at Evangelical UCC in Highland who will be responsible for overseeing the directing, planning, and program development of the music 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. The successful candidate will plan and lead relevant, meaningful, and engaging weekly worship music experiences. Contact 618-654-7459 or office@evucc.org for additional information.

Belleville St. Paul UCC Vacancy-Organ and Piano Position

Areas of responsibilities include excellent organ and piano offerings for all services and accompaniment for weekly choir rehearsals and other musical ensembles as needed. In consultation with the senior pastor, serve as a resource for family weddings and funerals. Compensation will be appropriate to the weekly job responsibilities, background/experience, and professional preparation of the applicant. Please send resume with three references to musicsearch@stpaulucc.org.

Region 5

Marine UCC runs a free lunch program Monday to Friday from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm. Attendees do not need to be from the Marine area. No need to register and no pre-qualification is necessary. Anyone and everyone are invited. Thanks for helping to feed the people.

Vacation Bible Schools

July 18-21; 6:30 pm - 8 pm; New Athens St. John UCC; *Food Truck Party: On a Roll with God*

July 18-22; 9 am - noon; Fieldon UCC

July 24-28; 6 pm - 8:30 pm; Carlinville St. Paul UCC

July 25-29; 9 am - 11:30 am; New Baden Zion UCC; *Rocky Railway*

Aug 7, 14, 21, 28, Sept 4, 11; 9:15 am - 10:00 am; Alhambra Salem UCC, *SonHarvest County Fair*

CONTACT US - YOUR OCWM MONIES AT WORK

Please call before coming to the Conference Office or make an appointment with a staff member using the emails below.

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. Rev. Shana Johnson is on an abbreviated sabbatical until July 25. Please send emails after that date.

*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](#)

