

God Is Calling

While much has changed in the world and the church, much stays the same. There still is and will ever be a world that needs those willing to share their time, energy, skills, and

God-given talents to shine the light of God's love in the world. Jesus still is and will ever be calling humanity, asking them to follow him into a life's calling of love and service.

The particulars of how each person's call and ministry unfold will vary with time, place, talents, experience, personal situation, responsibilities, and, importantly, the world's needs. As Frederick Buechner, pastor and theologian, wrote in his book *Wishful Thinking: A Theological ABC*, "Your vocation in life is where your greatest joy meets the world's greatest need."

On Sunday, I had the opportunity to worship at St. John UCC in Mascoutah. Their interim pastor, Rev. Bob Goddard, in preaching on the calling of Jesus' disciples, said it this way,

"You and I were meant to become light to a dark world, whoever and wherever we were meant to be. The carpenter's invitation might read:
Follow me, and I will make you build up people.

The accountant's invitation might read:
Follow me, and I will make you help people see that they count.

The waitress might hear Jesus say:
Follow me, and I will have you serve the spiritual hunger of people.

To the lawyers:
Follow me, and I will have you fight for justice for those who have no voice.

Those in the medical field might hear:

Prayer list for Jan 29-Feb 4, 2023



Church & Pastors

-Johannisburg St. John's UCC, Rev. William Groennert (right)



-Lebanon St. Paul UCC, Rev. Todd (Rev. Shana Johnson)

Bean (left)

Retired Pastor

-Rev. Ken and Jean Knobloch, Maestown, IL

People with Life Concerns

-Pray for the family of **Craig (Missy) Athmer** as they mourn his death on Jan 11. Missy worked for many years with St. John's Community Care in Collinsville. Funeral services were earlier in January. Cards may be sent to Missy at 2478 Motel Rd, Highland, IL 62249. Click [here](#) for the full obituary.

-Keep the **mother of Pastor Norma Patterson** in your prayers as she struggles with health issues. Pastor Norma Patterson is the Pastor and Teacher for East St. Louis Good Shepherd of Faith and has served on several teams for ISC. Cards may be sent to Norma at 5310 DePaul Drive, PO Box 4235, Fairview Heights, IL 62008.

Follow me, and I will have you heal people's bodies and souls.

And to the beleaguered parent:
Follow me, and I will have you raise my children."

In the United Church of Christ, we believe the Church plays a significant role in equipping "*the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ*" (Ephesians 4:12). In the United Church of Christ, we believe there are some who will be set apart to be leaders who will be called to help the Church to be what God intends it to be. They will be called as pastors and teachers to serve and lead on behalf of the UCC and the Church Universal to continue the work and mission of Jesus Christ and build up the body of Christ so that people to whom they minister can, in turn, discover and affirm how they are called by God and sent out to use their gifts for love and service to transform the world.

-Please pray for **Rev. Ken (Jean) Knobloch** as he recovers from surgery. Rev. Knobloch served Irvington Friedens UCC and Red Bud St. Peter UCC before retiring, as well as serving on several ISC teams/committees. Cards can be sent to 1518 Mill St, PO Box 76, Maeystown, IL 62256.

-Please hold **Rev. Jim & Lelynna Langdoc** in your prayers as Lelynna improves with her battle with memory loss. Good news...Jim reported that he is still in remission. Cards can be sent to them at 16640 Cagan Orchard #122, Clermont, FL 34714.

When we see fewer people answer a call to be pastors to lead our churches and teach the people of God how to listen to the ways God is continuing to speak and act in the world, we may wonder where the next generations of pastors will come from. In response to the question, "*Where do ordained and licensed pastors come from?*" -- a question that is on the hearts and minds of many in the Church; Rev. Goddard reminds us,

"They come from our colleges, but they also come from church committees and Councils; they come from Sunday school teachers; they were farmers and social workers. Some of them are trained lay folk who don't go to seminary but are trained by the United Church of Christ to serve the local church. Usually, but not always, smaller membership churches.

They come from the pews of our churches. Why are there sometimes fewer pastors than we would like? Only you can answer that: When was the last time a member from this church went to seminary or entered the licensed ministry program? Maybe God is calling you.

Somewhere, someday, you will encounter that person that no one else in all of God's creation could reach with the light of God. Maybe as a Sunday school teacher or a mission person, or a DuBois Center counselor.

It's why you were created. It's what you were meant to do. Or maybe, the pastor of a local church. Listen, for God is calling you to a ministry just for you."

***from a sermon preached on January 22, 2023, used with permission from Rev. Bob Goddard**

Dear friends, if you or someone in your congregation is discerning a call to ministry in the United Church of Christ, we encourage you to reach out to our Conference Minister or Committee on Ministry, so we can begin to share with them the process of becoming an authorized minister in the UCC and companion them on their journey of discernment and preparation.

Blessings, Rev. Shana Johnson, ISC Conference Minister



DuBois 6.0 Campaign Finally Tally-We started the DuBois 6.0 campaign in October 2021 with a goal of raising \$225,290. We finished the campaign in December 2022 with a total of \$246, 405.78. Well done, Illinois South! DuBois Center has been in our care since 1962, and we give thanks for those 60 years. DuBois is the heart of the Conference, and many lives have been changed there across the decades.

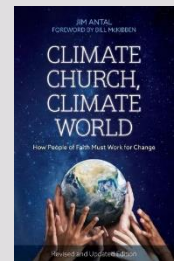
This campaign was built around 17 specific projects, with the vision that they would help us build faith, build capacity and build for the next 60 years. In building faith, we yearn to continue to protect this special place where friendships are forged, memories are made and traditions are rooted. In building capacity, we add space to accommodate new campers and guests, with improved facilities and new program offerings. In building for the future, we declare our intent to keep DuBois Center in our focus.

With the dedicated work of the Property Team, several projects have been completed. Some that can be easily seen are new windows in both Oak Lodge and the camp office, along with air conditioning in Oak. The remaining projects are slated for work throughout 2023.

We can be proud of reaching this significant goal to support our outdoor ministry center. With the addition of our new Executive Director Noah McCarn, we are ready to hit a new gear. May we all lean into the potential and possibilities that are coming next at DuBois Center. Grateful to all, Dr. Jill Baker, ISC Moderator

A Recommendation from Justice & Mission Team

The book, *Climate Church, Climate World: How People of Faith Must Work for Change*, written by Rev. Jim Antal (speaker at ISC Annual Meeting in 2015 at Rend Lake) will be printed and released in March 2023 as a new revised & updated edition. It's available for ordering now. The publisher is offering a 35% discount for orders of 10 copies or more. Use promo code 4S23CCCW35. Click [here](#) to order. Or for more information, click [here](#).



Marissa Friedens UCC and the Illinois South Conference of the United Church of Christ invite you to the Installation Service of Rev. Brett Palmer as their Pastor and Teacher on February 5 at 3 pm at Friedens UCC, 820 N Main St., Marissa, IL 62257. Clergy are invited to robe and wear red stoles. There will be a reception with refreshments following the installation service.

Warm January Greetings from the ISC Hunger Action Committee
"Growing Hope Globally" meeting will be on Sun, Feb 5 at St. John UCC in Maeystown from 1 pm to 3 pm. All are invited. This is an ecumenical organization that seeks to create sustainable solutions to end hunger throughout the world. The conversation will include training on best farming practices and provide access to clean water. It is an informal gathering to share ideas about the partnerships which Growing Hope Globally has with farmers around the world and how our Illinois South Conference churches can participate in these partnerships. Learn how you might become part of the solution to end world hunger.



UCC 2023 Yearbook Reporting - The online Data Hub for UCC Yearbook reporting opened on Jan 4. We have until March 1 to input the information for your church. An email was sent to the church, pastor, president, treasurer and office administrator for each church, and a hard copy was mailed to the churches.

It's important for your church to have its information recorded. If you have questions, contact Lynnette at lschuepbach@iscucc.org or 618-654-2125 all day on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday morning.



Day of Discipleship - March 4, 2023 - Save the Date

Connecting with God, Neighbor, and Self will be held on Sat, March 4 from 9 am - 12 pm at Alhambra Salem UCC. Keynote

speaker is Rev. Kelsey Beebe, who believes firmly in an all-loving God, embodied Christ, and ever-moving Holy Spirit that connects us all. She is a trained dancer, yoga instructor, and an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. She serves as a solo pastor at two churches just south of Milwaukee, WI, and is the Executive Minister of Dancing

Pastor Ministries and host of the Lady Preacher Podcast. She has performed, preached, key-noted, and led retreats all around the United States as well as in Costa Rica. In addition to her keynote presentation, you can choose two sessions with a choice of six workshop topics. The full list of workshops and registration information will be available soon.

'Love' the overall winner in Climate Hope Cards youth art contest by Maic D'Agostino | published on Jan 23, 2023
More than 300 churches. More than 40 states. And nearly 900 works of art by church youth, from preschoolers to high schoolers.

All to promote environmental justice and hope for the future of the Earth's climate.

To wrap up an art contest that began last fall, the United Church of Christ's Environmental Justice Ministries announced the winning Climate Hope Cards entries. The young people and their artwork were revealed during an award ceremony Jan. 14 on Zoom. Read [more](#).



DuBois Center News

DuBois Center needs Nature's Classroom Instructors!

More information can be found at <https://duboiscenter.org/natures-classroom/> or reach out to the Program Director, Rylee Bernhardt by calling the office 618-787-2202 or emailing her at program@duboiscenter.org.



ISC Property Team needs your help - Camp DuBois has no hay shed to keep their round hay bales dry. Wet hay bales are prone to mold and bacteria which pose a serious health risk to the camp's horses. An ISC family has generously offered to donate their 43x68 metal pole building to the camp. Our challenge is to find a company that will dismantle the building, move it to Camp DuBois, and reassemble it at the camp. If you know of such a company please contact one of the Property Team's co-chairs, Roger Harris (rharris2325@gmail.com or 618-631-4502) or Mark Beckmeyer (mbeckmey@icloud.com or 618-335-9945).



Preparing for Lent

- Life these days.
It's a lot. We are



simultaneously running from empty while running on empty.

Jesus might ask us: "Beloved, is empty the worst thing that can happen to you? Is stillness and doing nothing so awful? Perhaps the thing you are running from is the very thing you most need."

Enter Lent, which is all about surrender, emptying, and letting go of everything that leads away from the cross. [Running from Empty](#) is a daily invitation to embrace the empty places we might prefer to avoid; to breathe deeply, love fully, act justly; and to find Jesus in the stillness and the storm. [Pre-order](#) for daily reading in Lent!



The Coalition for UCC Rural Ministries presents "Nourishing the Seeds of Faith" (Isaiah 55:10-11), a Virtual National Gathering of Rural/small town Churches & Ministries in the United Church of Christ on February 9-11, 2023, hosted by faith education, innovation & formation (faith info) of the Justice and Local Church Ministry of the UCC. For more information

contact, Rev. Roberto Ochoa at ochoar@ucc.org.

Health & Human Services Sunday - January 29, 2023 - Every year, the United Church of Christ designates a Sunday in January as the time to uplift the many gifts of the Health and Human Service Ministries across the church. This year, Health and Human Service Health and Human Service Sunday takes place on January 29, 2023.

Liturgical resources for observing Health and Human Service Sunday are now available on CHHSM's [website](#) or by clicking on the blue button below. This year's materials were composed by the Rev. Dr. Elyse Berry, and include unique elements such as a Meditation for Mental Health and Beatitudes for Essential Workers.



Stress-busting for Family Care-Givers - St. John's Community Care holds sessions every Monday from 10 am - 11:30 am for 9 weeks. The next session will be from Feb 6 - April 10, 2023. The program provides education and support, teaches stress management techniques, and helps care-givers develop coping strategies. Call 618-344-5008 for more information.

Medical Equipment Loan Program - St. John's Community Care is open to loan equipment and accept equipment returns and donations on Monday - Friday from 9 am - 4:30 pm. Call 618-344-5008 to determine if they have the equipment you need. Email info@stjohnscc.org for more information or to reserve equipment.

The Savvy Caregiver Series - Are you noticing memory loss, confusion or unexpected behavior in your family? St. John's Community Care provides a class for care-givers beginning Jan 19 - Feb 23, 2023, from 10 am - 12 pm every Thursday. Class size is limited so registration is required. Call 618-344-5008.

Mark Your Calendars! - Unleashing Potential in St. Louis, Missouri, will hold a Trivia Night on Sat, April 22. Watch for more information coming soon. Let's join together for fun that helps to empower the children we serve.

Hoyleton Youth & Family Services Presents Foster Parent Info Sessions - If you have ever considered becoming a foster parent, this event on Thurs, Feb 9 from 10 am - 12 pm and 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm at 8 Executive Dr, Ste 200, Fairview Heights is for you. Both sessions will feature a presentation from our foster care staff with information about becoming a foster parent including licensing requirements, background checks, necessary training and the timeline associated with completing requirements. Find out about therapeutic treatment homes and opportunities for respite time shifts. Current Hoyleton foster parents will be there to answer questions. Light refreshments will be served. Bring a friend to be entered in a drawing for a \$100 Amazon gift card. RSVP [here](#).

What's Happening in Illinois South Conference



St. Jacob UCC has a 14-foot-tall artificial Christmas tree available for free to any church or organization who would like it. Anyone interested should contact the St. Jacob church office at stjucc@hometel.com or 618-644-2142.

Region 2 - The Region 2 Mission UCC will gather for a very good "Catch Up" meeting at 7 pm on Mon, Jan 30 at Waterloo St. Paul UCC. Please ask someone from your church to represent your church so that all can stay in the loop with Region 2.

Region 5 - Alhambra Salem UCC will hold its 75th Annual Sausage Supper on Sat, Jan 28 from 1 pm - 7 pm as a drive-thru only event. Menu includes fresh homemade pork sausage, sauerkraut, potatoes, gravy, green beans, and applesauce. Cost is \$13 per meal. Meat sales - pre-orders only by Jan 24 with pick up on Thurs, Jan 26 from 10 am - 6 pm of Sat, Jan 28 from 9 am - 11 am. If you have questions, call 618-830-4587 or 314-575-1466.

Region 8 - New Baden Zion UCC will host its Frostbite BBQ on Jan 28 starting at 11am – 2 pm or until it is gone. Menu includes pork steak, chicken, and plenty of sides with each meal. For any questions, contact the office at 618-588-4135.

Job Opportunities - Granite City St. John UCC is seeking a passionate, part-time Director of Music able to consistently provide a holy experience for our congregation and to reach new people through live music at worship services. The Director of Music will develop and lead the music ministries of our church year-round, providing live music throughout the year along with direction for our choir. The new director must have high proficiency in playing organ and piano. To support you, both our state-of-the-art Allen Bravura digital organ and our grand piano are recently installed in the sanctuary, along with a new top-of-the-line sound system. Our worship services are made more vibrant and motivational through music, and we rely on our Director of Music to lead the way. This part-time position will entail an average of 10-12 hours per week, with the inclusion of Sunday morning worship, Wednesday evening rehearsals, and occasional special services, funerals and weddings.

The position's salary will be commensurate with the individual's past work experience. In Christ we live, celebrate and serve. Our church's mission statement embodies who we are: Empowered by the Holy Spirit, living our faith in Jesus Christ, and celebrating the promises of God, we welcome all to unite in loving and serving God. We hope you are called to be part of our historic church. Candidates may apply by submitting a resume and references to stjohnucc2901gc@yahoo.com.

Troy Friedens UCC is looking for a Nursery Attendant. If interested, call 618-667-6535 or email friedens@friedensucc-troy.org.

St John UCC in Fairview Heights seeks a part time Church Secretary. Duties include answering the phone, process and distribute email and regular mail and ordering supplies as needed. Preparing the Sunday bulletin, the annual meeting reports, newsletter, coordinate the church calendar, keep Member contribution files updated in Church Windows and providing support to the Pastor and other ministries of the Church. A full job description will be provided at the interview. 9-12 hours weekly and should be familiar with Word and Excel. Contact the Church office at 618-660-8894 or email stjohnuccfairview@gmail.com.

Office Business Manager - Evangelical UCC in Highland has an opportunity for a full-time Office Business Manager. This position will be responsible for overall administrative operation & management of the church office, day care, preschool & building & grounds. 2+ years of work experience required. Candidates can send their resume to bbray@evucc.org. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

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.

CONTACT US - YOUR OCWM MONIES AT WORK

Please call (618-654-2125) 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 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 program information, contact Rylee Bernhardt at 618-787-2202 or program@DuBoisCenter.org.

For DuBois Center registration for upcoming events and camp sessions or ISC program registrations, contact Julie Riechmann at 618-357-1809 or jriechmann@iscucc.org.

The ISC Conference Minister, Rev. Shana Johnson, will be on a short limited medical leave after surgery on December 9 to the end of the year. Please get in touch with her via email sjohnson@iscucc.org or text 618-882-8247 if you have a question or an emergency.

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.

[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](#)

[Pension Board-UCC](#) [St. John's Community Care](#) [UCC Insurance Board](#)

[Uplands Village](#) [UCC Campus Ministry](#) [Uni-Pres Kindercottage](#)
[UCC Newsletter](#)

