



February 21, 2023



Mardi Gras Shrove Tuesday Fat Tuesday

In Chicago, today is fondly known by many as **Pączki** today.

Pączki is a Polish pastry that is always eaten on the day before

Ash Wednesday. The first time I learned about them was in my first year at a church when the gentleman who always brought donuts into the church office asked me on the Monday before Ash Wednesday what kind he could buy me. I thought he asked me what kind of “push key” I wanted. Confused, I told him I would certainly like whatever he picked out for me. Imagine my surprise when I discovered the yummy deliciousness on my desk. Something I looked forward to each year afterward.

Pączkis are part of a Shrove Tuesday tradition. Shrove comes from the word shrive, which means absolve. Shrove Tuesday marks the last day before Lent, traditionally a period of absolution and abstinence. In some cultures, this was and is still associated with clearing your cupboards of goods such as sugar, fats, and eggs to use up before the 40-day fasting season of Lent begins. And what better way to use sugar, fats, and eggs than making **pączkis**?

Fat Tuesday, which sounds much more elegant in French—Mardi Gras—is based on the same concept. However, eating, drinking, and indulging before giving up gluttonous ways is far from elegant.

I find it interesting that rituals and pre-Lenten celebrations reveal our tendencies to live in the extremes. Either you are abstaining from temptations or giving in without abandon. Either you are playing the game with rules, or the rules are thrown out the window.

Prayer list for Feb 26-Mar 4, 2023

Church & Pastors

**-Moro St. John
UCC at Midway,
Rev. Lori (Wayne)
Schafer (right)**



**-DuBois Center, Noah McCarn,
Executive Director of DuBois
Center**

Retired Pastor

**-Rev. Dr. Richard and Johann
Ellerbrake, Lebanon, IL**

People with Life Concerns

**-Pray for the people of Turkey
and Syria** as they recover from the recent devastating earthquake. The UCC asks for your help to aid them in the recovery. Click [here](#) to help.

**-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.

**-Please pray for Rev. Ken (Jean)
Knobloch** as he recovers from surgery. Rev. Knobloch served Irvington Friedens UCC and Red

Think about when someone is preparing to go on a diet. What is the first thing they do? Go on a binge.

Someone is about to get married. What do the friends do for them? Throw a party, a last hurrah.

Before we move into a season of what we see as being “good,” we want to get out all of our “bad” first. This also reveals the ways we bristle against the rules. Tell someone you can’t do something, and immediately they want to do it. Create a law, rule, or policy; immediately, someone will question it and be tempted to break it.

But instead of seeing the season of Lent in extremes, it is helpful to consider what this season can be for us.

Lent does not have to be...

A season of killing your joy.

A last chance to get it right, finally.

Or a time of feeling bad about how much we mess up and miss the mark.

Lent can be...

An opportunity to think about the things we can do better.

An occasion to reflect on why we have gotten into unhealthy and unhelpful habits, patterns, or behaviors.

A time to admit we are not perfect (and we don’t have to be), but we are forgiven.

So, as you prepare for Lent, consider what this season could mean for you, not simply by living in the extremes or giving up certain food groups, but by how you can fully experience the renewal of God’s grace.

Blessings, Rev. Shana Johnson, ISC Conference Minister

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, Maestown, 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.

Illinois South Conference One-Day Youth Event

MARCH 11, 2023

10 am to 7 pm at DuBois Center

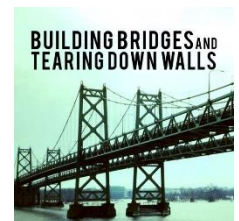
Cost: \$50 per participant

ATTENTION PASTORS AND YOUTH LEADERS

Get ready to build bridges and tear down walls!

Let’s hear from the wise young ones in our congregations about tearing down the walls of division among us and building bridges of understanding and connection! This retreat is for ALL Illinois South Conference Youth and will be a great opportunity for confirmation kids, any youth interested in learning more about DuBois Center, and all who want to deepen their relationship with God. All 7th to 12th-grade youth are invited to participate in a one-day retreat at the DuBois Center! We will start at 10 am and end with worship and campfire smores. The day ends at 7 pm. Lunch, dinner, and evening campfire smores are provided. Email or call Denise Johnson, the co-chair of the Illinois South Conference Local Church Ministries, at christianed@stpaulcolumbia.org or 618-340-2952 **by March 1**, with how many participants (youth and adult) are planning to attend from your church and if they have allergies or food restrictions of which the kitchen staff at DuBois Center should be aware in planning the lunch and dinner time meals.

To access the registration forms, please click this [link](#).



Getting to Know You!

We are excited to provide two "Meet and Greet" opportunities so you all can meet Noah McCarn, the new Executive Director of DuBois Center (photo right) in person. The first opportunity will be **Sunday, March 5 from 3 pm to 5 pm at St. Jacob United Church of Christ** in St. Jacob. It is always good to have a face with a name. Here's your chance to do that with Noah.



The second **"Meet and Greet" for Noah McCarn happens on Sunday, April 23 from 3 pm to 5 pm at DuBois Center**. It will be more spring-like weather for this opportunity. You may meet Noah and Rylee Bernhardt, Program Director, (photo left) for DuBois Center AND tour the facility. There have been so many improvements to the space through your generosity in donations to DuBois 6.0. This is your chance to see the space and its caretakers. We hope to see you at one of the events.

Day of Discipleship - March 4, 2023 - [Register Now!](#)

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.

WORKSHOP Choices—*You do not need to choose your workshops at this time! You will choose your workshops during the event.*

Please Note: *Childcare and youth programming will be provided that day.*

WORKSHOP #1 – “A Taste of Companionship”

Speaker: Rev. Tim Darmour-Paul, Grantfork UCC

WORKSHOP #2 - “Creating Community for Online Worshippers”

Speaker: Darren Calhoun, Urban Village Church, Chicago

WORKSHOP #3 – “Lebanon Listens Ministry”

Speaker: Christine Brewer – St. Paul UCC, Lebanon

WORKSHOP #4 - “Labyrinths – A Spiritual Practice”

Speaker: Rev. Stacy Tate, Irvington Friedens UCC

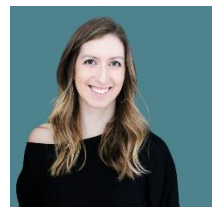
WORKSHOP #5 – “Transforming Christian Education for the Inclusive Church”

Panelist: Pastor Tim Reed, Pastor of Belleville Trinity UCC and Carla Kay Robertson

WORKSHOP #6 – Movement in Ministry

Speaker: Rev. Kelsey Peterson Beebe

Click [here](#) to register. Click [here](#) for a flyer to post in your church.



Delegates & Pastors: You Are Invited To An Illinois South Council Ecclesiastical Council To Examine for Ordination

Amy Brooks

Sunday, February 26, 2023, 3:00 pm on Zoom (Link below)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7088890946>

Schedule: 2:45 – The Zoom session will open

3:00 – Ecclesiastical Council begins
Introduction by a member of the Committee on Ministry
Presentation of the Candidate
Summary of the Ordination [Paper](#)
Examination and Discernment
Deliberation and Decision by the Ecclesiastical Council
Announcement of the Vote

How Can We Prepare? - Please download the ordination [paper](#) and the [document](#) entitled "The Church's Expectations of Its Candidates for Ordination," which will be attached to email invitations sent to your churches. Copies can also be accessed on our Conference [website](#). Please make copies for other delegates or share the papers so they can read these materials before the meeting. During the Zoom event, delegates can ask the candidate questions about the ordination paper and call to ministry.

Boundary Awareness Training - For those pastors who are due for **Boundary Training** this year, ISC has scheduled one for Tuesday, March 21, via zoom from **8:30 a.m. – Noon and one on Tuesday, May 16 from 8:30 am - Noon**. These trainings will be for **both active and retired clergy**. Contact Debbie at dkesner@iscucc.org to register and get the zoom meeting info. Cost: \$20 for retired pastors, \$25 for active pastors, \$25 for non-ISC retired pastors, and \$30 for non-ISC active pastors.



The Amazing People of Illinois South Conference... Rev. Dr. Don Wagner has generously shared another Lenten Devotional for 2023 entitled, **"Beginnings – Living Into The Spirit's Vision of The Beloved Community."** He co-created this devotional with Fr. Jerry Schweitzer, who provided all the photographs. Those who so choose to make a

donation for the devotional are encouraged to direct the donation to Hoyleton Youth and Family Services. Click [here](#) to download the devotional from Rev. Dr. Don Wagner's website or [here](#) from the Illinois South Conference website. Thanks, Rev. Wagner, for your generosity.

Celebrating Black History Month - The children of Good Shepherd of Faith UCC in East St. Louis is presenting **"REMEMBERING THE PAST BUT LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE"** for Black History month. They will perform Sunday, **Feb 26 at 11: am**. Lunch will be served at 1 pm. Everyone is invited to attend; however, if you want to stay for lunch, you must RSVP by email to gsofesl3@gmail.com.



On Feb 7, the *Weekly Connection* highlighted Belleville Concordia UCC's Chili Challenge winners. Here's the mission. The Men's Fellowship, that produced the Chili Challenge, always donates half of their proceeds to one of the local organizations that help the local community. This year it donated \$675 to the Millstadt Food Pantry. Millstadt Township has a population of only about 6,500, but the food pantry helps over 80 families each and every week. This donation will be a great help to the many local families during these challenging times! Thanks to Concordia's Men's Fellowship, the attendees of the Chili Challenge ate well and helped needy families eat well also.

DuBois Center to hire a part-time office administrator - The office administrator at DuBois Center is the welcoming face and voice of DuBois Center for all who use the camp and retreat center. Duties include answering general inquiries via phone and email, providing administrative support for DuBois programming and events, work with the Illinois South Conference Registrar to manage summer camp and guest group registration, as well as general office maintenance. Given the nature of the position, the office administrator will need to be on site during work hours though there is flexibility on days and hours. Ideal candidates will embody a deep love and respect for all people. For more information, click [here](#). If interested, send a statement of interest and resume to director@duboiscenter.org.

DuBois Center News

Call of the Wild Musings from the DuBois Herd

Join the new monthly DuBois Center Newsletter to stay up to date on the latest DuBois Center news, events, and musings. Different than the Weekly Connection, the DuBois Center Newsletter will include a message from the Director, upcoming schedule, news about DuBois 6.0 projects, and

sneak peaks for the summer camp season. [Click here to subscribe now!](#)

ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT SPRING?

Spring and summer are on our minds at DuBois Center, and we are ready to welcome you!!

Father & Son Retreat – March 17-19 - We are excited to be offering this popular retreat where DuBois Center is your playground to enjoy time with your dad, son, nephew, uncle, grandson, grandpa, or even someone who you think of as one!



Horse Retreat - April 15-16-Another crowd favorite returns! This weekend is just like our summer horse camp, but with more time with and on the horses! Also, who said you could only **ride** horses? We'll have activities like horse apple bobbing, campfire cookouts with your horse, confecting horse treats, a barn party, and many more horse games. Designed for participants ages 12 and over who love horses, this could very well be the highlight of your spring!

Women's Retreat - April 21-23-Back again for 2023, this retreat was created just for women ages 20 and over at DuBois Center. Relax and unwind with activities like yoga, nature walks, and spiritual time. This retreat is all about relaxing, getting away from everyday life, and meeting new friends. With an adults-only theme, this is the perfect time to get away and enjoy a stress-free weekend! **BONUS:** This weekend will also feature yoga from one of our talented former staff members and massages from two of our most dedicated volunteers! Just two more reasons to get away for the weekend! For full details, pricing, and registration for all events, please visit us online! As always, be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#) , [Instagram](#) , [YouTube](#) , [TikTok](#) , and www.DuBoisCenter.org for pictures, updates, videos, and stories!





CHHSM News

Council for Health and Human Service Ministries



The new Executive Director of the Open & Affirming Coalition is Rev. Dr. Katrina Roseboro-Marsh. After a long search process with many excellent applicants, the Search Committee saw that Dr. Marsh was uniquely situated, with her skillset and experience, to lead the Coalition forward. Dr. Marsh accepted the position and officially started February 16. To learn more about her, click [here](#).

The Insurance Board presents a webinar "Internal Controls For Financial Operations" on Tues, Feb 28 at 1 pm CST featuring Andrea Gauding, Sr. V/P and CFO of Insurance Board. Ministries in the hybrid environment



continue to be financially devastated by internal and external criminal activity. Join them to learn about financial controls and best practices to protect your ministry. Click [here](#) to register.

Planning Transition to Retirement - The Pension Boards invites you to attend a two-day **Planning for the Transition to Retirement seminar on March 29-30, 2023, from 2 pm to 4 pm each day.** Whether you are planning to retire soon or are in the middle of your career, clergy or lay, this seminar is designed to help you transition to retirement. If you are an actively contributing Pension Boards member, 45 years of age or older, we invite you to participate. [Register here by March 28, 2023.](#) The Zoom credentials you receive upon registration are the credentials you will use to participate in both Day One and Day Two of the **Planning for the Transition to Retirement** seminar.

General Synod Resolutions - Delegates to the **United Church of Christ General Synod** this summer will be wrestling with some big issues that have arisen in the country since the last Synod — through proposed resolutions. Acting as the General Synod Business Committee, the Board will vote whether to affirm the suggested action of each resolution. After this, full texts of each resolution will be [publicly available for review](#) prior to Synod, taking place June 30-July 4 in Indianapolis. Here are the titles of the submitted resolutions, proposed by delegates, local churches, Associations and Conferences:



Thank you for your support of the **One Great Hour of Sharing** (OGHS) offering! The UCC's Wider Church Ministries ability to provide Disaster Ministries, Refugee Ministries, and Sustainable Development initiatives are a result of your generosity. In 2022, through your gifts to OGHS, the UCC was present with our neighbors in tangible ways, standing in solidarity and mutuality to respond to ongoing and emerging needs, and work for the benefit of all. Working collaboratively with Conferences, local, national, and global partners, we helped to provide clean water, food, education, health care, resettlement for refugees and displaced persons, emergency relief, and disaster preparedness and response.

This year, you are encouraged to receive the OGHS on **Sunday, March 19** using the theme **"It's Time to Share,"** based on Galatians 6: 9-10. While thousands of congregations will

receive the OGHS offering on this day, we are grateful for your generous gifts whenever they are received throughout the year.

Ways to Give

- Donate through your local congregation and Illinois South Conference, 1312 Broadway, Highland, IL 62249
- Mail a check (payable to OGHS) to UCC, P.O. Box 71957, Cleveland, OH 44194

What's Happening in Illinois South Conference

Shared Lenten Services - "Making All Things New" is the theme for this year's Midweek Lenten series, shared by five congregations in the Illinois South Conference. Each church will conduct its own Ash Wednesday service on February 22. Each congregation will then host a Midweek Lenten service for the other churches on one of the following five Wednesdays. The hosting congregations are:

- **Marine UCC in Marine on March 1**
- **St. Paul UCC (Bluff Church) in Edwardsville on March 8**
- **Grantfork UCC in Grantfork on March 15**
- **Immanuel UCC in Hamel on March 22**
- **St. John UCC in Wood River on March 29**

Each week's service begins at 7 pm and is followed by a fellowship period with snacks. Anyone from other churches who are not offering Midweek services is welcome to join us!

Region 2-Valmeyer St John UCC will hold its Fish Fries (carryout only from the shed) on Wed, Feb 22, from 4 pm – 7 pm and Fri, March 3 from 4 pm - 7:30 pm. Enjoy cod plates, cod sandwiches and cod by the pound. Sides will be American potato salad, slaw and fries.

Zoar UCC will host A Night at the Races on Sat, Feb 25 in Zoar Fellowship Hall. Doors open at 6 pm and the first race at 7 pm. Bring your own food and drinks. All proceeds go to Zoar UCC. Cost is \$10 per person. Must be 18 to place bets. Contact Cheri Angel at 618-420-9687.

Region 4-Godfrey Evangelical UCC Lenten Fish Fries will be held on six Fridays from February 24 - March 31 from 4 pm to 7 pm each week in Heggemeier Hall. Menu includes fish (buffalo, whitefish, or catfish fritters), sides (baked beans, potato salad, coleslaw, chips), dessert, and drink. All you can eat \$13; Fish sandwich, one side, dessert and drink \$10; Hot dog, one side, dessert and drink \$5. All proceeds benefit our summer youth mission trip to Erie, PA on July 6-16.

Wood River St. John UCC will hold its All You can Eat Pancake and Sausage Supper on Tues, Feb 21 from 4 pm - 7 pm. Dine in or carry out. Dine In or Carry Out. Cash and credit cards accepted.

Proceeds going to the SJUCC Scholarship funds. \$10 adults; \$5 children 6-10; Free children 5 and under.

Region 5 - Troy Friedens UCC will host Classic Friedens Friends on the fourth Wednesday of each month at 10 am. The day is designed specifically for adults who are retired, semi-retired, etc. The day will include some stretching/ chair yoga, a devotional time

to set goals for the year, lunch, and a movie. Feel free to come for part or all of this day. No prior knowledge or experience needed to participate. All are welcome!

Hamel Immanuel UCC will hold its Chicken Dinner on Sunday March 19 from 11:30 am - 4:30 pm. DRIVE THRU ONLY. Menu includes fried chicken, mashed potatoes & gravy, green beans, slaw, and applesauce. Quilt and TV raffle. Contact 618-633-2277. All meals \$12.00.

Troy Friedens UCC will host its Coffee & Dessert Speaker Series on the Third Thursday of the Month at 7:00 pm. Speakers scheduled are:

March 16 "A Trip to the Holy Land"

Speakers: Pastor Tim & Danielle Harrison & fellow travelers

April 20 "Lessons from the Master Gardeners"

Speakers: Bob and Judy Smejkal

May 18 "The 60s Chicks Show Choir"

Region 8 - Zion UCC in New Baden will host their first Chicken Dinner of 2023 on March 4 from 4 pm - 7 pm. Each dinner will cost \$15 and will come with half a chicken, sides, and dessert. This will be a drive-thru only dinner. For questions or if you have a large order, please call the office at 618-588-4135.

Zion UCC of New Baden will host a fish fry dinner on Fri, March 10 and Fri, March 24. Dinners will be \$15 with your choice of cod tail, catfish, or fried shrimp and a variety of sides. If you have any questions about the event, please call the Zion office at 618-588-4135.

Region 9 - Concordia UCC will hold its All-You-Can-Eat Pancake & Sausage Breakfast from 7 am - 10 am on Sat, Feb 25. Menu includes three kinds of pancakes - Buttermilk, Oatmeal & Gluten Free. Adults \$9; Children ages 5 - 12 \$6; Free for children under 5. Proceeds go to Concordia UCC's youth programs.

Belleville Trinity UCC will hold a Chicken & Dumplings dinner on Feb 26 from 11 am to 3 pm (or until we run out). Drive thru/Carry out only. \$10 per person. Dinner includes fresh homemade chicken and dumplings, green beans, homemade cole slaw, applesauce, roll, and dessert.

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.

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.

St John UCC in Fairview Heights seeks a part time Church Secretary. Duties include answering the phone, processing email and regular email Preparing the Sunday bulletin and newsletter. Keep Member contribution files updated in Church Windows and provide support to the Pastor. Familiar with Word and Excel. A full job description will be provided at the interview. 9 hours weekly. Contact the Church office 618-397-6323 at pastor at 618-660-8894 or email stjohnuccfairview@gmail.com.

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 Executive Director, contact Noah McCarn at director@DuBoisCenter.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.

For the ISC Conference Minister, Rev. Shana Johnson, get in touch with her via email sjohnson@iscucc.org or 618-882-8247.

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.

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

