

March 7, 2023



What Are You Grateful For?

After reading "One Thousand Gifts" by Ann Voskamp, my book club decided to start a gratitude text thread, sharing things that had made us

grateful during that day. (The photo is one of the marvelous views from my back porch.) This gratitude thread has made me revisit some of my attitudes and given me a way to focus on the positive things in my life and reconnect with nature, which prompted this:

When?

When was the last time you thanked a tree..

- For removing carbon dioxide and giving us oxygen to breathe,
- For providing shelter for birds and animals,
- For the artistic, colorful shows they give us in fall.

When was the last time you thanked the wildflowers...

- For providing nectar for bees, butterflies, and other insects,
- For providing seeds for the birds,
- For providing biodiversity for a healthy environment,

When was the last time you thanked the sun...

- For the warmth it provides,
- For the vitamin D it gives to our skin,
- For the beauty with which it ends each day,

When was the last time you thanked the wind....

- For moving rain clouds to provide the earth with water,
- For clearing pollutants and airborne particles,
- For providing energy to move sailing ships,

When was the last time you thanked the earth...

- For providing us with vegetables to eat,
- For providing a firm platform to support us,
- For providing a home for all of nature,

Prayer list for March 12-18, 2023 Church & Pastors

-New Athens St. John UCC, Rev. Dr. Robert (Cathy) Koch (below)



ISC Conference Minister

-Rev. Shana (Rev. Todd Bean) Johnson, O'Fallon, IL

Retired Pastor

-Revs. Janis Dashner & Robert Goddard, O'Fallon, IL

People with Life Concerns

-Please pray for **Rev. Shana (Todd Bean) Johnson, ISC Conference Minister**, as she takes a week of medical leave for treatment from March 6-13. She will not be responding except for emergency situations during that time, but will be back in the office on March 14. Cards may be sent to her at 732 Bassett, O'Fallon, IL 62269.

-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.

When was the last time you thanked God for creating nature that functions so well in spite of us?

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March 1, 2023

A personal note from Shana

Dear friends, thank you for your prayers and well wishes; I can feel them. They have buoyed my spirit and have directly contributed to my healing. I tape each card I receive on my kitchen cabinets, so they are among the first things I see as I get ready for my day. Those cards, your prayers, and well wishes are powerful reminders that I am not alone. Thank you for continuing to surround me with your love and support.

In a conference-wide message through email, I shared my recent health challenges. After two surgeries in a short period (one in December and one in January) and continued treatments, I am

doing remarkably well. I have only had to take minimal days off. My vocal strength continues to improve, although I have quickly realized that after a day of too much speaking and laughing (so worth the pain), I will need to rest my voice and body a bit. Singing continues to be a challenge, but that will come in time. My treatment will require isolation and rest this week, but I am confident I will be back the following week in full swing.

Rev. Shana Johnson will be out of the office on medical leave from March 6 through March 13 for treatment and will only be responding to emergency emails or phone calls. She plans to be back in the office by March 14.

-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, 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.



All Delegates of Illinois South Conference are invited to an
ECCLESIASTICAL COUNCIL

To Examine for Ordination

Tim Powers-Reed

Sunday, March 26, 2023, 3:00 pm on Zoom

<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

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

An Ecclesiastical Council is an official meeting of the Illinois South Conference acting as an Association. Delegates from each congregation and all United Church of Christ ordained and licensed ministers with standing in the Conference are called to be present for this meeting. Local churches are entitled to the same number of voting delegates as for any meeting of the Conference.

WHY ARE WE MEETING?

To examine Tim Powers-Reed, a Member in Discernment of Illinois South Conference, for ordained ministry. Tim has completed the preparation steps for ordination, was examined by the Illinois South Conference Committee on Ministry, and was approved as a candidate for an Ecclesiastical Council. It is now the task of the Ecclesiastical Council (the gathered body of voting delegates of our Conference) to discern if Tim is worthy of ordination in the United Church of Christ.

HOW CAN WE PREPARE?

Please download Tim's ordination [paper](#) and the [document](#) entitled "The Church's Expectations of Its Candidates for Ordination," at the links above. Copies can also be accessed on our Conference website at iscucc.org. 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.



Day of Discipleship Highlights - What a joy-filled, inspirational day as members of the Illinois South Conference gathered at Salem UCC in Alhambra for our Day of Discipleship with our keynote speaker, the gifted Rev. Kelsey Beebe (UCC pastor and Executive Minister of Dancing Pastor Ministries and host of the Lady Preacher podcast) (top left) and inspiring workshops including a community for online worshippers (led remotely by Darren Calhoun, band member of The Many and digital pastor of Urban Village Church) (top right); companioning those with mental health challenges (led by Rev. Tim Darmour-Paul) (middle right); community dinner programs (led by Christine Brewer) (middle left); the spiritual practice of labyrinth and movement (led by Rev. Stacy Tate) (bottom left); transforming Christian Education for the inclusive



church (led by Pastor Tim Powers-Reed) (bottom middle); and incorporating movement in ministry (led by Rev. Kelsey Beebe) (bottom right).

Thank you to all our workshop leaders, and our host church for your extravagant hospitality and the scrumptious cookies.





Meet & Greet for Noah McCarn - St. Jacob hosted the Meet & Greet for Noah McCarn (left) on Sunday, March 5. As always, the church provided us with a spread of cookies and drinks. Noah enjoyed visiting with people from St. Jacob UCC, Summerfield St. John UCC, and Belleville Concordia UCC by saying "It was so good to put names with faces. I'm sure I will be meeting you all at future events at DuBois Center." If you missed seeing him at St. Jacob, See the article below photos.



Getting to Know You!

We are excited to provide a "Meet and Greet" opportunity so you all can meet Noah McCarn, the new Executive Director of DuBois Center (photo above left) and Rylee Bernhardt, Program Director, (photo above right) in person.

The second **"Meet and Greet" for Noah and Rylee will happen 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 for DuBois Center, enjoy the more spring-like weather, 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 DuBois.



Polystyrene foam is a public health hazard—it is bad for the environment and our health. Polystyrene foam is littered more than any other waste product—despite it being only 1 percent of all waste, it makes up 10 to 40 percent of litter found in streams. To learn why polystyrene foam is harmful to our health and why we should be embracing the trend to ban it in our communities, click [here](#).



The Amazing People of Illinois South Conference...

Hamel Immanuel UCC held a Souper Bowls of Kindness canned soup campaign to benefit their food pantry. Rev. Mary Beth Hartenstein challenged the members to meet their goal and volunteered to be sprayed by Silly String if they reached it. Of course, we did! We nearly tripled the goal of canned

soup. She kept her word and even supplied 50 cans of the spray. Photos of Rev. Mary Beth being sprayed are on the left.

And in December, Hamel Immanuel UCC held a Stuffed Animal Pet Blessing, where several dozen stuffed animals (shown right) were blessed and tagged with tiny luggage tags that read "God's Blessings, Immanuel UCC Hamel" for the food pantry to give away to its clients.



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.

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 inquires 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, please send a statement of interest and resume to director@duboiscenter.org.



Get Ready to Spring Forward
Time changes March 12.

Lake Institute on Faith & Giving - Art, Religion, and Philanthropy

By Sandy Eisenberg Sasso

The work of Lake Institute attests to the relationship between religion and philanthropy. It is well known that active members of religious communities are more likely to be philanthropic. And of course, much philanthropy goes to support religious institutions. On the other hand, the relationship between art and philanthropy appears, on the surface, to be unidirectional. But while much philanthropy is directed to support artistic endeavors, art is not just a beneficiary of philanthropic largesse, but a benefactor as well.

In a way, art, religion, and philanthropy arise from the same source. They come from keen attentiveness to the world, outside us and within us. In Hebrew we ask one another for our attention with the appeal, *sim lev*. It means “place your heart.” As the poet Mary Oliver reminds us, “attention is the beginning of devotion.” Attentiveness, with your whole heart, is the driving force behind creativity, spiritual devotion, and generosity. Read the entire [article](#).

DuBois Center News

Join the new monthly DuBois Center Newsletter to stay up to date on the latest DuBois Center news, events, and

Call of the Wild
Musings from the DuBois Herd

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!](#)

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 continue to follow us on [Facebook](#) , [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [TikTok](#), and www.DuBoisCenter.org for pictures, updates, videos, and stories!



EARLY CHILDHOOD
AFTER SCHOOL
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
ENRICHMENT CAMPS

Formerly
Neighborhood
Houses



CHHSM News
Council for Health and Human Service Ministries

SAVE THE DATE - Come support **Unleashing Potential** as we host our annual trivia night April 22 at the **Sunset Hills Community Center, 3915 S. Lindbergh in Sunset Hills, Mo.**

If you are interested in a table, register at <https://bit.ly/3lRoHu3>.

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.

The Insurance Board is offering a webinar, "Help Your Ministry Walk Safely In the Spirit" on Thursday, March 30 at 1 pm CST. The webinar features Patrick E. Marcotte MBA, CSP, Senior Technical Specialist-Workers' Compensation Loss Control, The Cincinnati Insurance Companies. A significant part of fellowship is spending time working together safely to help expand church ministries. Learn how to prevent common slip and fall accidents associated with walking surfaces to help keep your employees, volunteers, and congregants safe. To find out more or to register, click [here](#).



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

Rural Ministry Conference - The Rural Ministry Conference will be held this year on April 16 -18 in Dubuque, Iowa.

The theme for this ecumenical conference is "Flourishing: Land, People and Communities." The Bible tells us that God is a God of abundance, but it is hard to ignore society's message of scarcity. We will be joined by delegates from the International Rural Churches Association to look at what flourishing means in our own and global contexts. For more information, click [here](#). This year we are joined by international delegates from the International Rural Churches Association, bringing an international perspective to the discussion. I believe many of your pastors and lay leaders would find this conference helpful.

The International Rural Churches Association is holding their quadrennial meeting April 13-19 in Dubuque, Iowa, holding some joint sessions with Wartburg Theological Seminary's Rural Ministry Conference. The international pastors have indicated that they would like to experience and talk with rural congregations in the US. We are looking for some congregations within two or three hours of Dubuque who would be willing to host one or more of these delegates for a rural immersion experience April 15 & 16. Many of the delegates have indicated a willingness to either preach or share what rural ministry is like in their home country. If you are interested in more details, contact Barbara Fritschel at ircawts2023@gmail.com or [click here](#) to find out about being a host family.

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 congregation will host a Midweek Lenten service for the other churches on the following five Wednesdays. The hosting congregations are:

- **St. Paul UCC 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 any other churches who are not offering Midweek services is welcome to join us!

Region 2 - Red Bud St. Peter UCC will hold Fish Fries on Fri, March 10 and March 31, serving from 4 pm - 7 pm. Indoor dining and curbside pickup. Menu includes cod, catfish, shrimp, chicken strips, sides (homemade German potato salad, American potato salad, French fries, macaroni and cheese, slaw, stewed tomatoes and baked beans). Cash or checks only. Call 618-282-2417 for carry-outs.

Region 4 - Godfrey Evangelical UCC Lenten Fish Fries will be held on four Fridays from March 10 - 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.

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!

Troy Friedens UCC will host its Sausage & Kraut Dinner on Sun, March 19 from 11:30 am - 4:30 pm. Drive Thru only. Menu includes grilled pork sausage, sauerkraut, green beans, mashed potatoes & gravy, and dessert. Cost is \$13/plate. Questions? contact 618-667-6535 or friedens@friedensucc-troy.org.

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 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.

Job Opportunities - St. John United Church of Christ in Granite City, Illinois 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. Our Director of Music/Musician will provide live music throughout the year along with potentially offering leadership for our choir. Our new director must have proficiency in playing piano and/or organ. 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 include Sunday morning worship, occasional special services, and potentially rehearsals with our choir. This position's expected gross salary range is \$12,000-\$15,000. 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.

Rev. Shana Johnson, ISC Conference Minister, will be out of the office on medical leave for treatment from March 6-13 and will only respond to emergency emails or phone calls. She will be back in the office on March 14.

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](#)

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