



April 11, 2023



### Unseen Force

As an adult, I have moved several times. Each time I moved, people have asked, "Why did you move?" Because I had no logical response, I

shrugged my shoulders and said, "The wind was pushing me from the back!" The response was usually followed by a bit of laughter because I gave no other explanation for the move. To me, it was as if I had no choice but to move, the unseen force behind me insisted.

Last weekend during a severe windstorm, I was driving to Manchester, Missouri, and struggling to keep my VW Beetle from going off the road. I was thinking that the wind, this unseen force, was difficult to deal with. It would have been much easier to turn off this well-traveled path and go in the same direction that the wind "wanted" me to go. It took all I could do to defy its will and continue in the direction that I "needed" to go.

What if this unseen force was like the Unseen Force of God...that helps us discern what is the path that is the best for us. Perhaps it is not the well-traveled path that is best. Perhaps people will not understand why we have chosen this non-traditional path that will take us down a road that most people do not travel. Perhaps we do not see the entire picture and, therefore, are resistant to the direction that this Unseen Force is pushing us toward. If we accept that God is guiding us, we can stop fighting against the wind and find that life is much easier when going with the Unseen Force instead of against it.

May we all move on the path that the Unseen Force of God is pushing us toward.

Blessing, Lynnette Schuepbach  
ISC Communications Coordinator

### Prayer list for April 16-22, 2023

#### Church & Pastors

-Plum Hill St.

John's UCC, Rev. Don Jones  
(right)



-Red Bud St. Peter  
UCC, Pastor Cory  
(Geraldine) Hartz  
(left)

#### Retired Pastors

-Rev. Elmer and Linda  
Bowman, Jr. Trenton, IL

#### People with Life Concerns

-We pray for the families who suffered loss from the tornado that went through Salem, IL last week.

-Please pray for **Rev. P. Jerry Bennett** as he recovers from surgery. Rev. Bennett is the Pastor and Teacher at Hookdale St. Peter's UCC. Cards may be sent to him at PO Box 39, Highland, IL 62249.

-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

**Young Adults, 2023 Leadership Immersion Opportunities** - UCC has new leadership immersion opportunities for young adults in 2023. Click [here](#) for a list.

**2023 Volunteer Work Trips** - UCC Ministry Opportunities has work trips available. Check it out [here](#).

### The People of Salem, IL, Need Your Help

A tornado damaged homes and businesses in the town of Salem, IL, last week and the United Way has organized a way that we can help them. They are asking for items to be collected and delivered to the United Way of South Central Illinois, 802 S 42nd St, Mt. Vernon, IL 62864 between April 5-14. Items needed are: non-perishable food items, gift cards, trash bags, paper towels, cleaning supplies and gloves. Cash donations are also accepted there, or you may donate online at [www.uwsci.org](http://www.uwsci.org). For more information, contact 618-242-8000 or [nat@uwsci.org](mailto:nat@uwsci.org).

**TORNADO  
DISASTER RELIEF**



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 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.



### Closing Service

**Centralia St. Peter United Church of Christ (1863-2023) will hold its closing service on May 7, 2023.** The closing service will celebrate St. Peter UCC's 160 years of service, missions, and dedication to God by sharing tears, laughter, memories, and the acknowledgement of new legacies going forward in the Centralia community and beyond. You are invited to join them at 2 pm on May 7, 2023, at 316 West Third St., Centralia, Illinois, for this closing service.

**Imagine being in the perfect place  
for an astronomical wonder.....again!**



**SAVE THE DATE  
April 8th, 2024  
GREAT NORTH AMERICAN ECLIPSE**

## Borrowing "Godly Play" Materials

Does anyone use "Godly Play" in their Christian Education program or know of another church that does? Bette Rotert from Belleville St. Paul UCC would like to borrow a story basket to demonstrate the concept to her Christian Education committee at St. Paul UCC in Belleville. Please contact her at Bette Rotert at 847-744-8371 or [kgbrot@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kgbrot@sbcglobal.net).

## DuBois Center News

Join us for our spring **Camp Cleanup Day on Saturday, April 29th!** There will be tasks for all ages and abilities AND lunch will be provided. Click [here](#) to fill out the volunteer form.

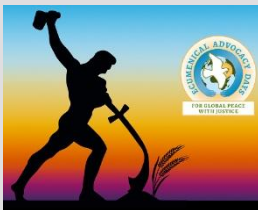


Join the new monthly DuBois Center Newsletter to stay up to date on the latest DuBois Center news, events, and musings. Different than the Weekly Connection, the DuBois Center Newsletter will include a message from the Director, upcoming schedule, news about DuBois 6.0 projects, and sneak peaks for the summer camp season. [Click here to subscribe now!](#)



## Region 2 Bunco Night for DuBois Center

On **Fri, April 14 at New Hanover Zoar UCC in Columbia, Region 2 will host a Bunco Night. Doors open at 6:30 pm and play begins at 7 pm.** All proceeds benefit DuBois Center. \$10 per person. Seating is limited. Snacks and beverages will be available. Silent auction. Attendance prizes. Contact Nancy Prather at 618-973-8559 or [prthr73@yahoo.com](mailto:prthr73@yahoo.com). [Here](#) is a flyer to share with your congregation.



## Swords into Plowshares

The Ecumenical

**Days 2023 will hold a virtual conference on Tuesday, April 25-27 beginning at 9 am CST** to worship, educate, and advocate for the

innovative and courageous policies needed to realize the prophet Micah's

vision: "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

All worship, plenaries, and workshops will be recorded for later viewing.



*CHHSM News*  
Council for Health and Human Service Ministries

## Nollau Leadership Institute is Open for the 2023-24 Class

The [Nollau Leadership Institute](#) is CHHSM's signature program with more than 250 attendees in its 20+ years. Enrollment is open and the short online application can be found [here](#). Registration closes on Friday April 28th.

Grounded in the health and human service organizations of the United Church of Christ, this program offers a unique space in which to experience leadership formation. Each year, Nollau brings together a community of leaders committed to creating a just, caring, and compassionate world. Such values deepen during the program, as participants grow in their leadership skills from a place of belonging. Cultivating this connection between others, the world, and within themselves is the heart of the Nollau experience.

Through retreats, online interactions, and peer mentoring, this program supports leadership formation through a variety of learning modalities and within a community of practice. The



use of rituals, art, poetry, embodiment, and time to simply be in nature are all part of the program—alongside the interactive didactic sessions. Guided by CHHSM's commitment to issues of Race, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice, leadership will be examined and practiced through the lenses of anti-oppression and social justice. You can learn more about the curriculum [here](#).

The program consists of two in-person retreats at [Bellwether Farm](#), online interactions in between the retreats, and an additional day of programming at the CHHSM 86th Annual Gathering, which concludes by commissioning the class as [Diakonal Ministers](#). Click [here](#) for more info and to register.

2023-24 Schedule: 1<sup>st</sup> Retreat: May 22-26, 2023

2<sup>nd</sup> Retreat: Oct. 2-6, 2023

Annual Gathering: March 11-14, 2024



EARLY CHILDHOOD  
AFTER SCHOOL  
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
ENRICHMENT CAMPS

Formerly  
Neighborhood  
Houses

### 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/3IRoHu3>.

### Hoyleton Youth & Family Services to Benefit

**Marine UCC will host a Trivia Night on April 29 beginning at 7 pm.** (Doors open at 6:30 pm.) Prizes will be given to the 1st and 2nd place teams. Door prizes. Proceeds go to **Hoyleton Youth & Family Services** to support their mission in our communities. Cost is \$12 per person with up to 8 people to a table. To register, call 618-887-4465. If calling after hours, leave your name and number of people attending.

**Hike, Bike & Run for Hoyleton Youth & Family Services** - You may choose between **5K & Half-Marathon OR 5 Mile Hike/Bike on May 13**. The 5K & Half-Marathon begins at 8:30 am and the 5 Mile Hike/Bike goes from 9 am - 11 am. Both courses begin and end at Maeystown St. John UCC. T-shirt & mile-marker sponsorships are available. For more information or to register, click [here](#). 5K \$35; 5 Mile Hike/Bike \$30; 1/2 Marathon \$60; T-shirt only \$20. Event is sponsored by Maeystown St. John UCC and Zion UCC, St. Joe. Proceeds benefit Hoyleton Youth & Family Services.

## What's Happening in Illinois South Conference

### 2023 Hunger and Health Illinois Regional Conference!

Registration is **NOW OPEN**

University of Illinois Extension and SNAP Education staff are excited to announce the second Hunger and Health Illinois conference held on May 5, at the Salvation Army in Springfield, IL from 10 am - 3 pm. Informational booths will provide opportunity for attendees to learn about SNAP-Ed resources, food pantry set-up, [Find Food IL](#) food locator map, and more. Participants will also select two breakout sessions to attend during the workshop. Topics include the Healthy Donation Initiatives, Find Food Funds, Supporting Wellness at Pantries (SWAP), and Trauma and Food. The conference will conclude with a keynote speaker and will have awards presentations for Illinois food pantry champions in these categories: Exceptional Food Pantry Manager, Healthy Pantry Innovations, Outstanding Health Equity Leader, and Volunteer of the Year. The cost for the event is \$10 per person and a noon meal will be provided. Fee waivers are available. For questions regarding the conference, contact Louise Hyneman at [lhyneman@illinois.edu](mailto:lhyneman@illinois.edu). Register [here](#).

## Vacation Bible School Schedule

**May 30 - June 2;** Waterloo St. Paul UCC; *Cokesbury Hero Hotline*.

**June 5-7 from 6 - 8 pm; June 8 from 6 pm - 7 pm;** Trenton St. John UCC with co-host First United Methodist Church; *Food Truck Party-On a Roll with God*.

**June 5-9;** Okawville St. Peter's UCC; *Hero Hotline*.

**June 5-9 from 9 am - 12 pm;** Highland Evangelical UCC; *Stellar: Shine Jesus' Light*.

**June 12-15;** Dupo Christ UCC; *Hero Hotline*.

**June 12-15;** Central City Zion UCC & Centralia St. Peter UCC (in covenant with Redeemer Lutheran Church, First Christian, Presbyterian Church, and First Methodist Church) at First Methodist Church in Centralia; *Hero Hotline*.

**June 13, 14, 15 from 5:30 pm - 8 pm;** Plum Hill St. John UCC with co-host Nashville St. Paul UCC; *Dinosaurs*.

**June 19-23 from 8:45 am - 12 pm;** Mascoutah St. John UCC; *Stellar: Shine Jesus' Light*.

**June 19-22 from 6 pm - 8 pm;** Belleville St. Paul UCC & Belleville Trinity UCC (held at St. Paul UCC); *Hero Hotline*.

**June 25-29;** Granite City St. John UCC; *Food Truck Party-On a Roll with God*.

**July 10-14 from 9 am - 12 pm;** Collinsville St. John UCC; Cost is \$15/person; *Hero Hotline*.

**July 10-14;** Red Bud St. Peter UCCC; *Hero Hotline*.

**July 24-28 from 9 am - 11 am;** New Baden Zion UCC; *Food Truck Party-On a Roll with God*.

**August 6, 13, 20, 27, and September 3 at 9:15 am;** Alhambra Salem UCC; *Food Truck Party-On a Roll with God*.

## JOURNEY THROUGH THE HOLY LAND

### SPONSORED BY: ST. JOHN'S MIDWAY & GLOBUS TRAVEL

From visiting the site of the first miracle in Cana to seeing the room of the Last Supper on Mount Zion, this faith-based journey will fuel your faith and feed your soul.

**Trip dates: February 26th through March 5th, 2024**

**Space is available, but don't delay!**

Contact the church at 618-377-9288 or [stjohnsmidway@yahoo.com](mailto:stjohnsmidway@yahoo.com) for more info.

**Boundary Awareness Training** - For those pastors who are due for **Boundary Training** this year, the next session for both active and retired will be **on Tuesday, May 16 from 8:30 am - Noon**. Contact Debbie at [dkesner@iscucc.org](mailto: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.

**Region 2 - Dupo Christ UCC will hold its Wurstmarkt on Sat, May 20 from 11 am to 3 pm while supplies last.** Menu is pork sausage, sauerkraut, mashed potatoes & gravy, green beans, corn, applesauce, and cake. Carry-out or dine-in. Outdoor seating available. Adults \$13 per plate; Children 5 - 11 years \$6 per plate.

**New Hanover Zoar UCC will hold its 12th Annual Car-diac Car Cruise & Health Fair on Sat, April 22 from 9 am - 2 pm at the church** to benefit the Zoar UCC's Paris Health Ministry. Free health screenings for blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar and oxygen saturation; Peoples' Choice Awards for the car show; Dash Plaques for the first 50 cars; BBQ and drinks available for purchase; Cake Walk; 50/50 Drawing; Kids' games; Attendance prizes. Rain date: Saturday, May 6. Donation of \$15 per entry.

**Region 3 - On April 29th, St. John UCC in Granite City will host a FREE concert of Contemporary Christian music featuring the band "Unbroken."** The concert will start at 6 pm and will be preceded by a casual dinner at 4:30 pm. The cost for the dinner is \$15.00; reservations are required and need to be made through our church office (618-877-6060) no later than Monday, April 24. Payment is required at the time the reservation is made. You do NOT need to attend the dinner in order to attend the concert. Both the dinner and concert will be held at Granite City St. John UCC. Contact 618-877-6060 or [stjohnucc2901gc@yahoo.com](mailto:stjohnucc2901gc@yahoo.com).

**Region 4 - "All You Can Eat!" Spaghetti Supper will be held at Wood River St. John UCC on Thurs, May 4 from 4 pm – 7 pm.** Menu includes spaghetti, salad, Italian bread, dessert, and drink. Adults \$12; Children 6 – 12 yrs \$6; Children under 5 yrs Free (dine in only). Carry-outs available. Handicap accessible. Cash, checks or credit cards.

**Region 5 - Troy Friedens UCC will host its Coffee & Dessert Speaker Series on the Third Thursday of the Month at 7:00 pm.** Speakers scheduled are:

**April 20 "Lessons from the Master Gardeners"**

Speakers: Bob and Judy Smejkal

**May 18 "The 60s Chicks Show Choir"**

**Region 8 - Mascoutah St. John UCC's Everfaithful Guild will hold its 42nd Annual Quilt Show on Saturday, April 15 at 9 am.** Bake sale. "Trash to Treasures" white elephant booth.

**Job Opportunities - Looking for a Part-time job? Retired? Looking for some way to use your skills 9-12 hours a week and get paid for it? Perhaps you're a college student needing a flexible job to help finance gas in your car or pizza in your tummy? St John UCC in Fairview Heights seeks a part time Church Secretary.** Preferably, someone who is familiar with the life of a church. Must be comfortable using a computer and familiar with Word and Excel. A full job description will be provided at the interview. 9 -12 hours weekly depending on the needs of the church. Contact the Church office 618-397-6323 (leave a message) or pastor at 618-660-8894 or email [stjohnuccfairview@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnuccfairview@gmail.com).

**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 were 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 potential 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](mailto:stjohnucc2901gc@yahoo.com).

**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. Their music skills include the ability to play a Wicks 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](mailto:dkesner@iscucc.org).

For communicating within the Conference, the Conference website, Facebook page or Weekly Connection, contact Lynnette Schuepbach at [lschuepbach@iscucc.org](mailto:lschuepbach@iscucc.org).

For DuBois Center Executive Director, contact Noah McCarn at [director@DuBoisCenter.org](mailto:director@DuBoisCenter.org).

For DuBois Center program information, contact Rylee Bernhardt at 618-787-2202 or [program@DuBoisCenter.org](mailto: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](mailto:jriechmann@iscucc.org).

For Rev. Shana Johnson, ISC Conference Minister, contact her at [sjohnson@iscucc.org](mailto: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.*

[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](#)

