

Illinois  
South  
Conference



## Weekly Connection

Diverse Minds,  
Covenant Hearts,  
Made One in the Body of Christ

April 25, 2023

### Facing Hunger in Your Community

The Hunger Action Team of the ISC asks you to share the ways (and photos) of how you are helping to address hunger in your communities. Summer is coming soon; students who qualify for free school breakfast/ lunch will not have access to their free meals during summer break.

Please share how your church is helping combat hunger for local families in need. Reminder: Children need the proper nutrition for their learning, development, and growth. Contact Kathi at [kathi1emery@gmail.com](mailto:kathi1emery@gmail.com). below are two of the stories within ISC.



**“Women of St. Paul,”** Waterloo delivered much needed school supplies, cleaning supplies, and snack items to Uni-Pres Kindercottage, which is a joint mission of the

UCC and Presbyterian Church providing daycare and preschool for economically deprived families with infant through preschool aged children in East St. Louis.



UCC in Brighton for their “Pack-A-Sack” mission project. For the past several years, their Church family has come together to pack bags for area school children with food insecurity issues. St. John’s “Pack-A-Sack” project is more important than ever, while so many families face an increased risk of hunger. Thank you, St. John! Photos above.



The ISC “Hunger Action Team” would like to recognize **St. John’s**

### Prayer list for April 30-May 6, 2023

#### Church & Pastors

-Staunton St. Paul UCC, Rev. Debbie Jo Atkins (right)



-Stone Church St. Peter's UCC (left)

#### Retired Pastor

-Rev. P. Jerry Bennett, Highland, IL

#### People with Life Concerns

-Pray for the family of **Maggie Dean** as they mourn her death. **Maggie was the mother of Brenda Crisp**, the founder of Uni-Pres Kindercottage. A private service was held previously. Cards may be sent to Brenda Crisp, 800 Pacific Crossing Dr, O'Fallon, IL 62269.

-Please pray for **Marilyn Paul** who is dealing with health issues. Marilyn is the widow of the Rev. Dr. H. J. "Jack" Paul, who served at St. Paul UCC in Edwardsville, St. John UCC in Fairview Heights, and the Well UCC in Glen Carbon, and mother of Rev. Tim (Rev. Janet) Darmour-Paul, who serves as pastor at Grantfork UCC. Cards may be sent to Marilyn at 200 S. Station



### Rays of Hope

At staff meetings every week, Rev. Shana asks us a question or two that usually makes us think and/or tells something about us that may not come up in an

average conversation. One week she asked, "When was the most recent time that you have experienced a "God-moment?" Here is my answer to that question today.

Usually, I sit at my desk and the sun shines in (for about an hour) depending on the day and the rotation of the earth. Some days the sun is so bright that it is impossible to see the computer screen. Some days, the sun blinds me with the light shining directly into my eyes. To remedy the problem, there are days that I take a lid from a plastic tub and set it up on the windowsill so that the sun is completely blocked. The tub lid doesn't look very pretty; it blocks my view of the sky; but it allows me to work in comfort.

I have a great fondness for skies and the variations of beauty that God shows me in it every day. I've drawn skies with graphite pencils and painted them with watercolors, so it pains me a little when I put up the plastic lid to hide the sky completely. Today was different. I didn't put up the plastic lid. Periodically, it felt as if God was playing with me...the sun would make me squint and then not, as if someone/something was trying to get my attention. I glanced up and there was the sky as you see it in the above photo. I have always said that the rays that stream out and between clouds are my "rays of hope." Don't give up on the world. God is still there shining through the blockages and cloudy days. May it be so. Lynnette Schuepbach  
ISC Communications Coordinator



**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,

Rd #9330, Glen Carbon, IL 62034.

-Keep **Kevin (Rev. Nancy Spier-Lee) Lee** in your prayers as he deals with illness at Barnes Hospital. Rev. Spier-Lee served as pastor at Waterloo Zion UCC St. Joe until she retired in 2018. Cards may be sent to 309 Kroeger Ave, Dupu, IL 62239.

-Pray for **Rev. Karla (Rev. Charles Preston) Frost, Pastor & Teacher for Granite City St. John UCC**, as she recovers from surgery. Cards may be sent to her at 2901 A Nameoki Rd, Granite City, IL 62040.

-Keep **Rev. Bob (Doris) Utke** in your prayers as he deals with health issues which have caused a hospital stay. Rev. Utke was the pastor at Stone Church St. Peter's UCC prior to retiring. Cards may be sent to him at Rev. Robert Utke, 1840 University Ave W, Apt. 305, St. Paul MN 55104.

-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 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

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.

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**Mental Health First Aid Certification - On July 15 from 8 am to 4:30 pm, Belleville Trinity UCC** will host a Mental Health First Aid Certification class for the first fifteen people who register for the class. The cost of the program is \$75 per person which covers

the cost of the books, supplies, and certification. Please send an email to Pastor Tim Powers-Reed at [illinitchr@gmail.com](mailto:illinitchr@gmail.com) to register. By June 25, payment must be completed by a check payable to Trinity UCC Belleville. The certification class is offered as part of Trinity's WISE covenant, and they hope that members of the Conference will take advantage of this opportunity!

**From the ISC Justice and Mission Committee: General Synod Service Project: Feminine Hygiene Kits.** The UCC and Church World Service hope to collect and assemble 1,000 feminine hygiene kits at General Synod. Attendees are invited to bring assembled kits or hygiene items to donate to this project. Please support this service project at General Synod in Indianapolis on June 30-July 4. Providing hygiene kits is an easy way to help others. Be a blessing to individuals who lack access to necessary feminine care supplies. Shopping list and assembly instructions [here](#).

**Mental Health Sunday** - At the 2022 ISC Annual Meeting, the delegates made a covenant to become a **WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, Engaged) Conference**. May 21 is Mental Health Sunday. Each year, about one in four of us deal with a mental health challenge, sometimes chronic and sometimes acute. These conditions are not the result of a lack of faith but are matters of physical health and wellbeing. Spiritual resources can promote hope and strength for living with these conditions. Consider focusing on ISC's WISE covenant on May 21.

**General Synod Proposed Bylaws Change** - At General Synod 34 in Indianapolis, delegates will consider amendments to the UCC Bylaws that would change the **frequency of General Synod from two years to three years**. Learn more about the proposed UCC Bylaws amendment at one of the town hall meetings on April 26 at 5 pm CDT. Register for town hall meeting and find out more. Click [here](#).

**Stewardship Happens Every Sunday** - If you would like to be part of that Stewardship, you can set up monthly recurring donations through PayPal/Credit Card to support the efforts of Illinois South Conference and other deserving ministries. The Conference helps individual churches by providing help with various information, offering choices of interim pastors, training for search committees, and much, much more. It also provides opportunities for all churches, like Day of Discipleship or speakers and musicians at Annual Meeting.

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.



If you are interested in making a monthly donation for Our Church's Wider Mission, Friends of the Conference, DuBois Center General Fund, or one of the other areas that you want to support, here are the specific instructions.

Instructions:

- On our home page, <http://www.iscucc.org> on the right side, you can donate to one of the ISC ministries.
- Click on for example, Friends of the Conference, and you will go to the PayPal page to make your donation.
- Click the button to make it a monthly donation or if you prefer a one-time donation, leave the one-time donation button highlighted.
- Enter the amount for the monthly or one-time donation.
- Optional – if you want to add an amount to cover the CC fees, click the box which gives you the amount you will be charged.
- Click the “Donate by debit or credit card” button.
- Then follow the form for filling in your credit card number, expiration date, security code, and address.
- ISC does not keep your credit/debit card information. It is kept securely by PayPal.
- Your generosity is ALWAYS appreciated.

## DuBois Center News

### Open House - Sunday April 30

Join Noah and Rylee at the **DuBois Center Open House on Sunday, April**

**30 from noon to 4 pm.** Enjoy live music from our very own summer camp counselor, Luke Volmert, cook a hot dog or s'more over an open fire, or visit with the horses. There will also be tours of camp and crafts for all ages. We hope to see you there.



On Fri, April 14 at New Hanover Zoar UCC in Columbia, Region 2 hosted a **Bunco Night** with proceeds benefiting DuBois Center. Everyone had a fun experience as well as raising \$625 for DuBois Center. Photos of winners above.

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.

	<b>SIGN UP NOW</b>	
<b>SPRING CLEANUP DAY</b>		
SATURDAY, APRIL 29TH 9:30 AM - 5:00 PM		
<small>Lunch will be provided</small>		



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!](#)



**Hoyleton Youth & Family Services** has multiple employment opportunities available. To see the list, click [here](#).



**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 May 1- July 3, 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.

**CHHSM News - Medicaid, SNAP and other human needs programs are at risk.**

Congress is currently negotiating on the terms for a deal to increase the debt ceiling. As they face crucial fiscal decisions in the coming months, it is imperative that programs addressing the most fundamental tools needed to live with dignity and security are protected.

Currently, the discussions on the debt ceiling include significant cuts to programs like Medicaid, SNAP, as well as limiting eligibility and imposing strict work requirements. This would put millions of people's health care at risk, perpetuate racial health inequities, and shift costs to states, forcing them to scale back benefits and services.

The UCC Washington Office and CHHSM are coordinating with a broad variety of faith partners to share the importance of protecting human needs programs through advocacy visits with members of Congress. It's important to show that many organizations are working together on this effort; and nothing matches the stories and expertise that you as providers can bring to this work.

You can get involved through several avenues:

- Do a virtual DC advocacy visit or an in-district visit with your member of Congress
- Sign onto an organizational sign on letter in target states
- Write a letter to the editor
- Offer a site visit to a member of Congress

The UCC DC office is prepared with advocacy materials, coordinating visits virtually, assisting with meeting preparation and drafting of op eds.

The threat to Medicaid and other human needs program is clear and getting out front of it with these coordinated advocacy efforts are vital. The timeline on this is short and the visits would ideally take place in mid-May since there may be a bill in the House before Memorial Day.

If you're interested, sign up [here](#) and we can start organizing briefings and get started on planning.

**Caregiver Financial Aid - St. John's Community Care** has a bit of funding available to Caregivers or families with an individual struggling with the effects of dementia. These funds can be used towards home improvements or technology or medical equipment needed to help keep a loved one safe, or even to ensure they have a home. It can even assist with utilities or mileage. If you have a loved one with dementia and you have a financial need of any kind, please call them to see if this funding can help you. Call Christine at 618-344-5008.

**Hoyleton Youth & Family Services Fundraiser - 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.

**Caregiver Coffee Talk**, sponsored by **St. John's Community Care** is scheduled every Monday from 9 am - 10:30 pm at Verona Coffee Company in Collinsville. Caregiver specialist, Keanna Gibson, will help caregivers come together offering information, resources, and strategies specifically for caring for someone who may be disabled or have other health-related concerns. Share space and life experiences over a nice hot cup of coffee provided by St. John's Community Care.

## What's Happening in Illinois South Conference

**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](#).

**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 opportunities 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 pm - 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 UCC; *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*.

**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.

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

**Region 9 - Belleville Trinity UCC will host its All You Can Eat Spaghetti Dinner Social on Sat, June 3 at 6 pm.** Menu includes spaghetti with meat sauce (or vegetarian sauce), salad, garlic bread, and dessert. Tea, lemonade, and coffee provided or BYOB. Photo booth. Games. Attendance Prizes. Karaoke. Raffle baskets. Kid's activities. All Proceeds benefit Trinity's Annual Holiday Food Basket Program. Adults \$15; Children 5 - 12 \$5; Children 4 and under Free.

**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](#)  
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