



May 30, 2023



Language of Spirit

In preparing for the Pentecost season, I found Acts 2 was striking a different chord in me this year. Usually, when I have imagined the descriptors of the “blowing of the violent wind” and “tongues of fire,” which allows the disciples to “speak” so that all could hear and understand in their “own language,” I have connected to the excitement of this event. But this year...surprisingly..., I noticed the connection I was making was one of exhaustion.

Leaning into curiosity, I examined **why** exhaustion was the feeling and word rising in me when considering the Pentecost event. I realized my reaction was due to how I interpreted the actions of “speaking” and “hearing” in the scripture text.

Dear friends, I am sure it will not be news to you to hear there is great anxiety in the Church.

The anxiety present and experienced in the local church, and all levels of the church, are a microcosm of the anxiety in the world—the general themes of anxiety center around **not having enough** and **not being enough**.

And the result is so much speaking. So many words. Words. Words.

Everywhere we go, we encounter people filling spaces with so many words. And I realize the irony of saying this as I am typing more words for you to read and consider, but please stay with me in my train of thought here.

Words on every topic, thought, feeling, and opinion. People clamoring to make sure their words are seen and heard. Sometimes the urgency of words, the thoughtlessness, and the harmfulness of words feel like a “violent wind” and a “fire” that cannot be contained, which often leaves us exhausted trying to hear it all, process it all, and respond to it all.

Prayer list for June 4-10, 2023 Church & Pastors

-Addieville Zion
UCC, Rev. William Groennert
(right)



-Alhambra
Salem UCC,
Rev. Jeremy
Wood
-Pastor John

Mindrup (left)

People with Life Concerns

-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.

-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.

-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

So, when I imagined the cacophony of the Pentecost experience of so many people speaking and hearing, I imagined the chaos I feel daily in the oversaturation of language. Yet, the mistake is imagining what people heard in their language was a discourse of well-constructed, systematic theology. When honestly, I doubt what the disciples were sharing on that day were orderly and rational reasons why people should accept the doctrines of the Christian faith that were emerging at that moment.

Instead, I suspect that the disciples were sharing their own experiences of feeling a sense of peace, a sense of enough, about the world and who they were in the presence of Christ. While many languages were spoken that day, the common language was the Spirit language of belonging, inclusion, and love.

Spirit language is more than words; it is about how people feel in our presence. Consider how you communicate belonging, inclusion and love with a baby that has yet to develop verbal skills. With a baby, you would probably communicate more with smiles, tiny waves, and funny faces than words. In

seeing a baby, you would be instantly open to expressing belonging, inclusion, and love to that little one. We often have an openness with little ones that we don't have with others.

Spirit language is about such openness, and it is about being open rather than being closed off. It is an energy we carry and a conscious choice of how we will move in and through the world. The language of the Spirit starts with intentionally having an openness, curiosity, wonder, and appreciation for all of God's beloved creations and created ones.

This language, the language of the Spirit, desperately needs to be heard, felt, and experienced in a world filled with such strife, bitterness, and pain. And this is why the church's work, presence, and power are needed more than ever. In this season of Pentecost, may we speak the language of the Spirit with a message so all may hear and experience that **they are loved, they are enough, and they belong** to the One who gave us the gift of the Spirit itself.

Blessings,
Rev. Shana Johnson, ISC Conference Minister

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.



Save the Date Confirmation Retreat Sept 16, 2023

The 2023 Confirmation Retreat - Walk in Faith is scheduled for September 16, 2023, at Camp Wartburg at 5705 Lrc Rd in Waterloo, Illinois, from 9 am - 4 pm. There will be Low Ropes Course with Team Building and lunch for \$30 per person. If you would like to add on High Ropes Course, the cost is \$30 more per person. If scholarship assistance is needed, contact the ISC office at 618-654-2125. Click [here](#) for more information or [here](#) to register. If you would like a flyer to share with the confirmands, click [here](#).

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.

General Synod 34 will be held in Indianapolis on June 30 – July 4. The

Indiana/Kentucky Conference (IKC) of the United Church of Christ will be the host of the GS. As their neighboring Conference, IKC is asking for volunteers from Illinois South Conference to allow many hands to make light work.

The process to volunteer happens in three steps:

1. Apply to volunteer by clicking [here](#).
2. You'll receive a discount code after you apply to volunteer you can use to **Register for General Synod [here](#) which will allow you to register for the entire event for only \$65 (be sure to enter the code!)**
3. Attend your shift and help us make this the best General Synod yet!

Shifts are approximately 4 hours and there are many volunteer [opportunities](#) including the following (click on the links below to view the role's duties). If you're not sure what you'd like to do, contact our Synod Volunteer Coordinator, [Kim Armstrong](#), to discuss the best fit for you. **Click [here](#) to volunteer** and stay tuned. Email the Local Arrangements Team if you have any questions at generalsynod2023@ikcucc.org. We are looking forward to loving and serving like Jesus alongside you!

The Amazing People of Illinois South Conference...

The WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive and Engaged) Congregation for Mental Health Resolution was adopted at the 2015 United Church of Christ General Synod to encourage congregations to become more welcoming to individuals and families living with mental health challenges, brain disorders, and substance use disorders. Here are the most recent churches who have voted to become a WISE congregation. Click [here](#) for a list of all ISC WISE congregations.

Holy Ghost Darmstadt

2806 Weilmuenster Road
Lenzburg, IL 62255 (*voted Sunday, May 28*)
Rev. Tarrah Vaupel, pastor

Trinity UCC Biddleborn

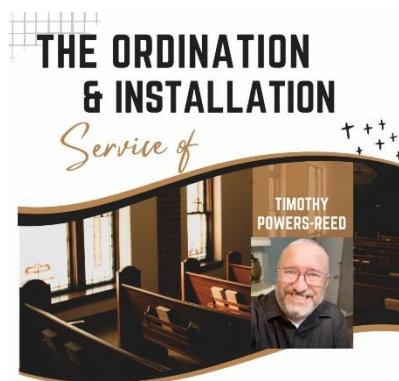
5698 Biddleborn
Marissa, IL 62257 (*voted Sunday, May 28*)
Rev. Tarrah Vaupel, pastor

The UCC Mental Health Network's Becoming a WISE Congregation for Mental Health provides a step-by-step guide any congregation or organization can follow to become WISE for Mental Health through education, advocacy, and covenant.

Prayers for UCC Mental Health Month

Though we are past Mental Health Sunday, May remains Mental Health Awareness Month and we invite you to join with us in these prayers from our Sunday Worship Guide. The first is our chair,

Bishop Allyson Abrams reading a prayer by the Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund and the second is written and read by Bishop Allyson Abrams.



Trinity UCC Belleville and
Illinois South Conference of UCC
Invite You to the Ordination and Installation of
Tim Powers-Reed
July 23, 2023, at 3 pm
Trinity UCC Belleville
47 N Douglas, Belleville, Illinois

Ministers attending are asked to robe and wear red or rainbow stoles and arrive by 2:30 pm to participate in the service. A meal and reception will immediately follow the service.

Volunteers needed for Welcome Team

We are looking for friendly faces to help with camp check-in on Sunday afternoons from 1:30-3:30 pm. Join our welcome team for one Sunday or as many Sundays as you want! Volunteers are needed to help with registration, t-shirt distribution, and help with lice checks. We ask that volunteers must be at least 16 years old.

 DuBois Center News

Chaplains Needed

DuBois Center needs chaplains for this summer, especially for the weeks of June 4 and July 9. Reach out to Noah at director@duboiscenter.org if you're interested.

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!](#)

**Institute for Black Liberation
Deaconess Foundation**
announced the launch of its
Institute for Black Liberation (the Institute), a novel approach to developing liberatory



CHSM News
Council for Health and Human Service Ministries

consciousness through healing the hurts of internalized racism. With an emphasis on developing liberatory consciousness, the Institute gives Black leaders in the Eastern Missouri and Southern Illinois region the opportunity to name, reckon with and heal from racial trauma and the pervasive effects of internalized and structural racism. The vision is bold. The applied learnings and transformational experience of the interdisciplinary, intergenerational institute will prime participants to accelerate the creation of conditions that promote a just, whole society and future with impact felt most profoundly within the Deaconess footprint.

“The well-being of the Black community and its people is determined not just by external progress but internal liberation from the profound impacts of white supremacy,” said Bethany Johnson-Javois, President and CEO of Deaconess Foundation. “With the Institute, we cultivate a much-needed environment of self-discovery, reflection, listening, and learning for leaders that will enable them to drive and sustain the societal change we want to see within the next seven generations.”

For more information and to apply to the institute, click [here](#).



Kindercottage News

We welcome Spring by learning so many new things from mixing colors with paint as well as food coloring, to growing plants in our outdoor garden. We are so grateful for all the donations and participation we have received from many of the churches and community organizations.

We are still in need of summer garden supplies, art supplies, as well as outdoor recreational materials. Please see our [website](#) for more information. Please save the date of August 26 for their “Let Us Laugh” Christian Comedy night, more details will be coming soon!

Hoyleton Youth & Family

Services has multiple employment opportunities available. To see the list, click [here](#).



Caregiver Coffee Talk, sponsored by **St. John's Community Care** is scheduled every Monday from 9 am - 10:30 am 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.

Hitz Memorial Home has an immediate opening for a Director of Nursing. Apply in-person at 201 Belle Street, Alhambra, IL 62001. Call for details. 618-488-2355.

Hitz Memorial Home has multiple open CNA positions available for evening/midnight shifts. Call 618-488-2355 for more information. Or you may apply in person at 202 Belle Street, Alhambra, IL 62001.

What's Happening in Illinois South Conference

Prayer and Lectionary Lunch Hour- Illinois South Conference pastors gather by Zoom each Wednesday at about 12:30 by Zoom. Their time together normally lasts about an hour.

All pastors are invited to share and solidify relationships with their pastoral peers in our Conference. Here is the Zoom link: Date and time: Wednesdays at 12:30 pm
Meeting ID: 837 0733 6906. Link to join the Zoom meeting:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83707336906>

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 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!

Vacation Bible School Schedule

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 6, 7, 8, from 6 pm - 8:30 pm; New Hanover Zoar UCC; *Hero Hotline.*

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.*

July 17-21, 9 am-11 am; Marissa Friedens UCC; *Hero Hotline.*

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.*

July 20, 27, August 3 from 6 pm - 8 pm; Troy Friedens UCC & St. Jacob UCC; Locations are St. Jacob Park; Tri-Township Library; Tri-Township Park; *Intergenerational Vacation Bible School for those between the ages of 1-100+; Exploring the theme of the Greatest Commandment: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your **heart**, and with all your **soul**, and with all your **mind**." and "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."*

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.*

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.

Concordia UCC, Belleville will host a Spaghetti Dinner on Thurs, June 8, beginning at 5 pm. The Imani Milele Ugandan Children's Choir will perform after dinner. Please join us to celebrate this organization and the good work they do for the orphaned children of Uganda. There is no cost for the meal, however a free-will donation will be collected to be given to the Imani Milele organization. Please R.S.V.P. by June 6. Concordia UCC, 7600 State Rte. 163, Belleville. For questions and reservations, contact Rev. Joan Mier, 618-476-3377.

Job Opportunities

Columbia St. Paul UCC is looking for a part-time custodian to work 16-hours per week. Please send resume by e-mail at office@stpaulcolumbia.org or bring resume to the church office at 127 N. St. Paul St. in Columbia.

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.

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.

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 Office , contact **Shelby Liggett** at dcinfo@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 **Rev. Shana Johnson**, ISC Conference Minister, contact her at 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

