



December 19 2023



Thanks for Support

As we approach the end of another year, I reflect on all **WE accomplished together** to carry out the ministry of Jesus Christ in our churches, communities, Conference, and the world.

WE supported pastors, chaplains, and specialized ministers.

WE were actively involved in the formation of pastoral leaders.

WE offered faith formation and outdoor ministry experiences for all ages.

WE companioned and equipped churches in transitions.

WE provided churches with much-needed spiritual, educational, and practical resources.

WE made a difference around the world in places where the destruction and devastation of war, violence, and natural disasters tore apart people's lives.

ALL of this is possible through the following churches that gave to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) in 2023:

Addieville, Zion UCC
 Alhambra, Salem UCC
 Belleville, Concordia UCC
 Belleville, Trinity UCC
 Belleville, St. Paul UCC
 Biddleborn, Trinity UCC
 Brighton, St. John's UCC
 Carbondale, Church of the Good Shepherd
 Carlinville, St. Paul UCC
 Carlyle, Immanuel UCC
 Central City, Zion UCC
 Centralia, St. Peter UCC
 Collinsville, St. John UCC
 Columbia, St. Paul UCC

Prayer list for Dec 24 - 30, 2023 Church & Pastors

-O'Fallon UCC, Rev. Dr. Martha Thierheimer (right)



-Ohlman St. Paul's UCC, Rev. Dr. Steve (Debbi)

Nance (left)

Retired Pastor

-Rev. Dr. Sheldon Culver, Columbia, IL

Prayer list for Dec 31-Jan 6, 2023 Church & Pastors

-Okawville St. Peter's UCC, Rev. Jeffrey Schwab (right)



-Okawville St. Paul UCC (left)

Retired Pastor

-Rev. Linda and Bob Coulson, Palm Coast, FL

Darmstadt, Holy Ghost UCC
 Dupo, Christ UCC
 DuQuoin, St. John's UCC
 East St. Louis, Good Shepherd of Faith UCC
 Edwardsville, St. Paul UCC
 Evansville, St. John UCC
 Fairview Heights, St. John UCC
 Freeburg, St. Paul's UCC
 Godfrey, Evangelical UCC
 Granite City, St. John UCC
 Grantfork, Grantfork UCC
 Hamel, Immanuel UCC
 Hecker, Friedens UCC
 Highland, Evangelical UCC
 Smithboro, St Peter UCC-Hookdale
 Hoyleton, Zion Evangelical UCC
 Irvington, Friedens UCC
 Lebanon, St. Paul UCC
 Lenzburg, St. Peter's UCC
 Maeystown, St. John UCC
 Marine, Marine UCC
 Marion, Zion UCC
 Marissa, Friedens UCC
 Mascoutah, St. John UCC
 Moro, St. John's UCC of Midway
 Nashville, St. Paul UCC
 New Baden, Zion UCC
 New Hanover, Zoar UCC
 O'Fallon, O'Fallon UCC
 Okawville, St. Paul UCC
 Okawville, St. Peter's UCC
 Pana, United in Faith Church
 Pinckneyville, St. Paul UCC
 Red Bud, St. Peter UCC
 St. Jacob, St. Jacob UCC
 Smithton, St. John's UCC
 Stone Church, St. Peter's UCC
 Trenton, St. John UCC
 Troy, Friedens UCC
 Valmeyer, St. John UCC
 Waterloo, St. Paul UCC

WE all benefited from the work and spirit of the Illinois South Conference, which was strengthened by these churches that gave to our OCWM. **Thank you for your generosity and support.**
 Rev. Shana Johnson, ISC Conference Minister

**Prayer list for
 Jan 7 – 13, 2023
 Church &
 Pastors**



-Pana United in Faith Church, Rev. Leon (Kay) Goff (right)



(left)

-Pinckneyville St. Paul UCC, Rev. Jason (Petrice) Eisele

Retired Pastor

-Rev. Jerry and Lori McCaskey, Alton, IL

**Prayer list for
 Jan 14 – 20, 2023
 Church &
 Pastors**



-Plum Hill St. John's UCC, Rev. Don Jones (right)



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

Retired Pastor

-Rev. Jean Carmean, Shiloh, IL

**Prayer list for
 Jan 21 – 27, 2023
 Church & Pastors**



-Smithton St. John UCC, Rev. Brian (Dawn) Damrow (right)



-St. Jacob UCC, Rev. Philip (Kate) Barbier (left)

Thanks and Farewell...until we meet again

I will be retiring at the end of December. I have enjoyed the ministry of Illinois South Conference and helping to bring a newsletter that can share the events and ministries of your churches. The friendships I have made are the icing on the cake. Thank you all for being a part of and making my job an interesting one for nearly 16 years.

This will be my final edition of the Weekly Connection. Please note that because of the holidays and the transition from my leaving and the new Communications Coordinator starting, the first Weekly Connection of 2024 will not be until Tuesday, January 16, 2024. For that reason, we are listing the prayer lists (at right) through February 3 so your church can continue to publish these lists and persons in your Sunday morning bulletins and church newsletters.

I'm considering this time as another advent of my life...waiting for the light to shine on what is next. God has a way of surprising me throughout my life, so I know wonderful things are waiting for me when the time is right. Although a part of me would like to have all the details right now...I wait.
Blessings, Lynnette Schuepbach

Butterfly, O Flutter By

Teach me the way of the butterfly,
Gliding on air as it flutters by.
Born as a caterpillar, fuzzy and strange,
Instinctively eating to build for the change.

Preparing now for things to come
Done without fear is the first rule of thumb.
Crawling around with no reason or rhyme.
Searching for strength to transform in time.

Trust in yourself is rule number two.
Know when it's time; then begin what is due.
Find the spot and spin from within.
Cover yourself from your legs to your chin.

All that you need is INSIDE right now.
The food that you ate prepared you, and how!
Wait for the miracle; the old part must die.
The new is more beautiful; spread wings and fly!
©Lynnette Schuepbach

Retired Pastor

-Rev. Elmer and Linda
Bowman, Trenton, IL

Prayer list for Jan 28 – Feb 3, 2023

Church & Pastors

-Stanton St. Paul UCC (right)



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

Retired Pastor

-Rev. Jerry Bennett, Highland,
IL

People with Life Concerns

-Please pray for **Rev. Allen (Lynn) Reiter** after a recent hospitalization and other health concerns. He will be recovering at home for an extended period of time. Rev. Reiter has been active on ISC Teams and Committees and served as pastor of Granite City St. John UCC and Hookdale St. Peter's UCC before retiring. Cards may be sent to him at PO Box 278, Hamel IL 62046.

-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.



Welcome, Missy Loyet, ISC Communication Coordinator

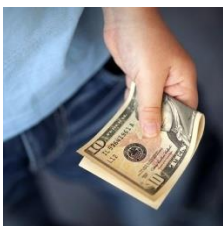
Growing in Faith: Missy Loyet is a member of the Evangelical UCC in Highland. Although she grew up in rural Minnesota, Highland has been her home since graduating from nursing school in 1989. She loves the faith family in Highland and its surrounding communities.

Serving in Love: Missy serves on the Mission/Stewardship Board at EvUCC and sings in the Chancel Choir. She previously served as the Volunteer Mission Coordinator arranging monthly mission work. Currently,

she and her husband, Matt, run an ecumenical summer lunch program within the Highland School District. The L.U.N.C.H. Bunch (Loving United Neighbors Crushing Hunger) is supported by 16 area churches, numerous civic groups, and individual donors and has served 10,374 lunches since 2017. Missy enjoys creating graphic designs, logos, and flyers for the Church and writing meditative devotions.

Living for Christ: Missy is excited to be led to combine her talents and faith by serving the Illinois South Conference as their Communications Coordinator.

Embracing His Goodness: Cycling and crocheting are among Missy's hobbies, but time with her three sons, daughter, two daughters-in-law, and grandson are closest to her heart.



Yearend Donations

As your church prepares for the end of the year, please mark January 8 as the deadline to send in your 2023 donations to the Conference office.

Below are some tips for sending in your end-of-the-year gifts. Please share this information with the staff members or officers of your church entrusted with this responsibility.

- Please mail all your end-of-the-year donations to OCWM, Friends of the Conference, and special missions so they will arrive at the Conference office by noon on Monday, January 8, 2024. This deadline will enable us to record your giving and complete the process necessary to meet the National setting's deadline of receiving and recording your gifts to the wider Church.
- When you send in your donations, include your Church contribution form so we can appropriately record and credit your church for your gifts.
- Please clarify on the Church contribution forms if the enclosed donations should be applied to 2023 or 2024.

If you have any questions, please call Debbie Kesner at the Conference office at 618-654-2125. We are grateful for all the ways you support the work and mutual ministry of our Conference and the United Church of Christ.

May we all experience the blessings of hope, joy, love, and peace of this Advent and Christmas season to carry us forward in faith into the New Year.

Rev. Debbie Jo Atkins Retires

After 17 years, Rev. Debbie Jo Atkins (photo right) will retire from Staunton St Paul UCC at the end of the year. Sunday, January 7, 2024, will be her final worship service at 10:15 am. Pastors are invited to participate in this service. Those who wish to participate in the procession should plan to arrive at 10:00 am and wear a robe and a red stole. The Retirement Celebration will be held after the service on Sunday, January 7, 2024, from 1 pm - 3 pm at the Staunton St. Paul UCC, 225 S. Laurel St., Staunton, Illinois. All are invited to help her celebrate.



Facing Hunger in Your Community

The Hunger Action Team asks churches to share the ways (and photos) of how you are helping families in need. To share your efforts to feed the hungry, contact Kathi Emery at kathi1emery@gmail.com. We invite churches to collect nonperishable food items for Christmas dinner as well as grocery gift cards and deliver to your local food pantry. Gift cards enable recipients to choose turkey/ham or other food items to complete their holiday meal.

The Amazing People of Illinois South Conference...

The Hunger Action Team would like to recognize Belleville St. Paul UCC for their holiday food drive. St. Paul members are invited to make monetary donations for local families in need. Thanks, Belleville St. Paul UCC under the leadership of pastor and teacher, Rev. Michelle Torigian. (See right)

St. Paul UCC Mission Board is accepting monetary donations for
FRANKLIN NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Money collected will be given to Franklin Neighborhood Association to purchase holiday food baskets for those in need.

Please consider donating and help others have a blessed holiday. Please send in your donations to St. Paul UCC by December 8th.



Frostbite Fun Youth Event presented by the ISC Local Church Ministries Team is scheduled for January 13 and 14, 2024, at DuBois Center.

All junior high (middle school) and high school youth are invited to attend. You may attend in one of two ways: Single Day (\$50) on Saturday from 10 am - 7 pm or Overnight(\$100) on Saturday from 10 am to Sunday at 11 am. Click [here](#) for a Frostbite Fun flyer to share with your church and its youth. Click [here](#) for the paperwork to register. **Register online at**

www.duboiscenter.org by **January 2, 2024**. Each church is responsible for providing the

necessary chaperones for the event. For answers to questions, contact Rev. Jenn Glover at 618-250-7983. *If inclement weather causes us to postpone this event, it will be held on February 17 and 18, 2024.*



Friends of the DuBois Center,

One of my favorite

stories is Moses and the Burning Bush: Moses, while out in the wilderness, comes across a burning bush. The burning bush calls out to Moses, "Moses, Moses" and Moses replies, "Here I am." The burning bush then tells Moses, "Take off your shoes for you

are on holy ground."

As I walk around DuBois Center, it is easy to see that DuBois Center is holy ground - a place where the sacred is revealed to and among us. Indeed, it has been a gift to see how each one of you responds to the call and answers "Here I am" by touching and blessing the sacred space we call DuBois Center.

It takes a community to care for holy ground and so thank you to everyone that makes DuBois Center divine. It takes many people with many gifts and talents whether it be financial gifts, volunteering, attending a retreat or summer camp, or serving as part of the decision-making process.

This year the DuBois Center community served 330 summer camp campers, held numerous retreats, taught Nature's Classrooms, and hosted several guest groups. We continue to complete DuBois 6.0 projects including most recently the Deer Run Shower House renovation as well as installing new flooring and painting Oak Dining Hall. We are now turning our focus to Deer Run Lodge and the new Hillside Cottage.

DuBois Center would not be possible if it were not for the community of support made possible by the love we share of DuBois Center. If you wish to support the community financially, please click on the link/button below. Monies raised help fund camp scholarships, the many maintenance projects, and generally help the DuBois Center community carry out its ministry. Perhaps you are feeling a call to volunteer your time and talents to DuBois Center. If so, please reach out to me at director@duboiscenter.org - all that is required is a call to serve.

I encourage everyone to come, take off your shoes, and stand on holy ground. Noah McCarn, DuBois Center Executive Director

† DuBois Center News



CHHSM News
Council for Health and Human Service Ministries

The Insurance Board Announces:

New Resource: Physical Security Performance Goals for Faith-Based Communities

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) is pleased to announce the release of a new resource titled, [Physical Security Performance Goals for Faith-Based Communities](#), which was developed as a set of physical security practices that houses of worship and related facilities can use to reduce security risks to their congregations. The physical security performance goals model examines threats and vulnerabilities to provide targeted mitigation strategies, all of which are organized by the following functional categories: Identify, Protect, Detect, Respond, and Recover. For questions regarding this resource, please email central@cisa.dhs.gov.

Deaconess Foundation Is Now Accepting Funding Proposals

Deaconess is accepting funding proposals for the 2024 Policy Campaign Grant. These are one-year general operating grants for up to \$100,000 to advance an organization's efforts to advance public policy change efforts. The deadline to submit a funding proposal is Thursday, February 1, 2024. Learn more [here](#).

Uni-Pres News - 'Tis the season of giving and Uni Pres Kindercottage thanks all those who have supported us so far with coats, socks and PJs.

We are also seeking donations of fabric to create warm and comfortable blankets for the children. Gift cards to Joann fabric would be a particularly welcomed contribution.

As we approach the holiday celebrations on December 20, we are also compiling a list of items needed to ensure a festive and memorable occasion for the children and families we serve. If you would like to contribute, consider donating any of the following items:

- Graham Crackers
- Icing
- Candy Sprinkles
- Small candy cane and gumdrops
- We welcome gift cards to Walmart, which will enable us to acquire additional supplies for the celebration.

Your generosity and support make a meaningful impact on the lives of those we serve, and we are truly grateful for your consideration. Together, we can make a difference in creating a warm, joyful holiday season for these children and families.

Thank you for your kindness and support.

Join St. John's Community Care's Mardi Gras Gala on Jan 26, 2024, at 7 pm for an unforgettable evening at the Wildey Theatre in Edwardsville. Get ready to immerse yourself in the vibrant spirit of Mardi Gras as they celebrate and raise funds for a great cause. The Mardi Gras Gala promises to be filled with music, dancing, and delicious food. A seafood buffet with vegan and gluten-free options and cash bar will be available. Dance to Jazz and Creole music from Miss Jubilee and The Yas Yas Boys while you hobnob with St John's Community Care community members. Purchase tickets or make donations [here](#).

CHHSM 86th Annual Gathering - CHHSM hopes you will join them at the Live by Loews Hotel in St. Louis for CHHSM's 86th [Annual Gathering](#) from March 12-14, 2024! [Early bird registration is now open!](#) The theme of the 86th Annual Gathering is "Collaboration as the Gateway to Innovation." The focus scripture is Ecclesiastes 4:9-10: "It's better to have a partner than go it alone. Share the work, share the wealth. And if one falls down, the other helps" (The Message). With collaboration taking center stage, we will explore how working together can spark innovation that changes lives.

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. Wednesdays at 12:30 pm - Meeting ID: 837 0733 6906. Link to join the Zoom meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83707336906>

Job Opportunities - Godfrey Evangelical UCC is in search for a Nursery Worker for Sundays from 9:45 am to 12:00 pm during the months of September thru May; In June, July and August from 9:45 am to 10:00 am. The children needing care are ages infant through 2 or 3 years. Pay rate is \$25 per hour, which will be paid every 2 weeks. Please contact Pam Kasten at pkasten59@gmail.com with questions or to express your interest.

Part Time Organist/Pianist - Friedens United Church of Christ in Marissa, IL is seeking a part-time organist and/or pianist. Duties include playing organ and/or piano on Sundays for our 10 am worship services as well as Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, mid-week Lenten services, and our Pre-Lenten breakfast. Position includes 4 paid Sundays off (except for Easter) for vacation time. Services normally consist of a prelude, 2-3 hymns, some short, sung responses, and a postlude. To apply or for more information, contact Rev. Brett Palmer at 618-295-2004 or marissafriedens@gmail.com.

Ministry Assistant for Congregational Care and Christian Education Belleville St. Paul is looking for a person to fulfill the position of Ministry Assistant for Congregational Care and Christian Education. The person will provide coordinated support for the Senior Pastor, St. Paul UCC caregiving and wellness ministries, and the congregation as well as to provide program development, implementation, coordination, and supervision of Christian Education, both for children and adults, which includes youth programming. Click [here](#) for the complete position description. Direct questions and resumes to pastormichelle@stpaulucc.org.

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.

Grantfork UCC Seeks Assistant Organist - Grantfork UCC is looking for an assistant organist or pianist to play for our 10:15 am worship service once or twice a month. Prelude, Postlude, and two or three hymns. Please contact Grantfork UCC at 618-675-2595 if interested.

New Baden Zion UCC -Organist/Pianist/Music Director - New Baden Zion UCC is seeking a part time musician to fill several different roles. The person who fills this position will play at weekly services, along with various special services such as Ash Wednesday, weekly Lent services, etc. Additional possible responsibilities include selecting weekly service music and hymns, directing an adult choir, coordinating special vocal and/or instrumental music, and serving on the worship team. Keyboard skills and church choral experience as a singer or director are preferred. To apply or for additional information, contact council president Rodney Washburn at rodneywashburn1@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 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](#)

[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](#)

