

April 23, 2024



Our Conference Minister Reflects God's Unending Love

Strengthen our faith from your well of living water for we are thirsty, oh Lord!

Once, a hiker had lost their way on the mountainous terrain. For days, they wandered, hoping to find the trail that would lead back home. Exhausted and running dangerously low on food and water, the hiker had gone to the worst-case scenario about their fate.

Finally, the hiker came upon a well. Where there was a well, there was sure to be water. Water would give the hiker the hydration needed to go on. The hiker approached the well and discovered a can tied to the pump handle. However, a note was attached to the can that said,



“As of June 1932, this pump is in good working order. I put a new sucker washer into it, which should last five years. But if the washer dries out, the pump must be primed. Under the white rock, I buried a bottle of water out of the sun. There's enough water to prime the pump, but not if you drink some first.

Pour about one-fourth and let it soak to wet the leather. Then pour the rest in fast and pump like crazy. You'll get water. The well has never run dry. Have faith. When you have had enough to drink, fill the bottle and put it back as you found it for the next person—signed: Desert Pete.

P.S. Don't drink the water first. Prime the pump with it, and you'll have all you need.”

Now, imagine if you were that hiker. What do you do? Would you follow the instructions? Would you panic? Would you drink the water for fear that none would be left if you used it to prime the pump?

If only there were a way to know that if you used the water to prime the pump you would get all the water you need and enough for the next person, you would probably not hesitate.

Dear friends, how often do we feel like we are walking in the desert, unsure of where we are going and fearing we do not have the reserves or resources to go on? When we cannot see how things are going to turn out...Do we panic? Or do we pray? Do we freak out? Or do we trust? Do we insist on taking matters into our own hands? Or do we wait patiently for signs from God about how to proceed?

In the book of Hebrews, chapter eleven, verse one, we are reminded,

“Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”

Faith is not about getting it right or being perfect. Faith is getting back up even when you have fallen or failed. Faith trusts that no matter what, God will love you, forgive you, and have patience with you even when others might not.

So, whatever you are facing right now, face it with faith. By faith, trust God's promises. By faith, follow in the footsteps of Christ. By faith, seek the discernment of the Holy Spirit of how to take the next best step. Live by faith at all times and in all ways, remembering that "faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."

-Blessings, Rev. Shana Johnson, ISC Conference Minister

Remember in Your Prayers this Week...



-New Baden Zion UCC
Rev. Stephen (Molly) Stark



-Columbia St. Paul UCC
Rev. Jonathan (Sharon) Bangera

Pastor of Visitation & Youth, Julie Kies

-Retired Pastor Rev. Dr. Don (Nancy)
Wagner Marissa, IL

-Please continue to pray for **Peace UCC in Jerseyville** in the wake of the fire that destroyed the offices and the front of the church. In addition to prayers, monetary donations can be sent to Peace UCC, PO Box 33, Jerseyville, IL 62052. The members have asked that you include your contact information so they might send follow-up thank you letters.

-Please keep **Rev. Pamela Smith**, who served in the Illinois South Conference prior to her retirement, in your prayers. Rev. Smith has recently been hospitalized, is undergoing tests, and is awaiting a diagnosis.

-Please pray for an outpouring of God's healing mercies upon **Rev. John Pawloski**.

-Please 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.

Illinois South Conference News & Events

First Congregational UCC Dupo's Last Service to Memorialize 115 Years of Worship, Community, and Service

After 115 years of service to God and the community, First Congregational UCC Dupo is closing its doors. Please come and share in a final worship and remembrance with our community this **Sunday, April 28, 2024, 10:45 a.m.** Lunch will be served in the Fellowship Hall following worship. Please RSVP if you will be joining us for lunch. Contact Sherie Cooper at 618-286-5076





Autism Speaks Celebrates World Autism Month This year marks the 17th annual World Autism Awareness Day. Christ UCC in Belleville is celebrating Autism Awareness on Sunday, April 28th at 10 AM with an Ollis Family concert and a sausage dinner to follow. All donations will go to benefit Autism Awareness.

Excitement is Building!

Just on the other side of summer, we will gather as a conference of delegates, pastors, members and visiting guests. Please mark your calendars with great anticipation!

60th Illinois South Conference

**Annual Meeting Saturday,
October 19, 2024**

Details about this year's theme, schedule of events, registration, and more coming soon!



UCC International, National, and Regional News



Rethink Children & Youth Ministry Summit May 20-24, 2024

In collaboration with leading practitioners and experts in the field, this summit is a unique opportunity for congregational leaders, educators, parents and caregivers, and anyone passionate about nurturing the spiritual growth and faith formation of children, youth, and their families.

The Rev. Trayce Potter, UCC minister for children and youth engagement, is excited about the gathering where she will serve as a conversation partner. She sees it as an opportunity for growth.

"The landscape of children's and youth ministry has been quickly changing over the last decade, and these changes were accelerated with the pandemic and other social justice issues. As a result, many of us are wondering how to effectively provide services to and ministry with young people. This conference is an opportunity to learn some new tools, gain valuable insights, and even hear directly from youth themselves," she said.

Our virtual gathering will delve into various aspects of these vital ministries, providing insights, practical tools, and strategies to foster a strong foundation of faith.

Click the button below to register. It's virtual and it's free.

To register go to <https://convergencecolab.org/p/rethink-children-and-youth-ministry>

MAY 19, 2024

MENTAL HEALTH SUNDAY



Dear friends of the UCC Mental Health Network,

May is Mental Health Awareness Month and the [UCC MHN](#) wants to make sure you have resources to best equip you for a Mental Health Sunday! We are sending our [PDF for Worship Resources for your Mental Health Sunday](#) created by the UCC, UCC MHN, and United Church of Canada, as well as two videos to use during this time.

[One video by our chair, Bishop Allyson Abrams](#) can be used to make an appeal to support the MHN and to become WISE congregations or organizations. [The other video by Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund can be used to show the importance of caring for our youth and understanding their mental health needs.](#) Please consider using both of these powerful videos during your worship services this month as we raise awareness about mental health challenges and mental wellness.

Thank you,

Bishop Allyson D. Nelson Abrams, PhD
Chair, UCC Mental Health Network



[Click Here to Download the Mental Health Survey Worship Guide](#)

ISC Hunger Action Team

Progressive Dinner
A Mission Team Fundraiser

The ISC Hunger Action Team would like to recognize: Zion UCC, Marion for their "Progressive Dinner" Mission Project held on April 20th. Proceeds from this event have been designated for their free "Community Sunday Morning Breakfast" and for the "SHINE" free summer lunch project. Thanks, Zion, for your continued support of local families in need - under the leadership of pastor and teacher, Rev. John Holst. Such a blessing!

[Click here & share your food insecurity outreach stories with the ISC HUNGER ACTION TEAM.](#) Your stories are the tools that stir interest in people by exemplifying and celebrating Christ's Love.

News from DuBois Center

Summer Camp Open House

Sunday April 28th 2-4 pm @ DuBois Center
2651 Quarry Rd.
DuBois, IL 62831

SUMMER CAMP OPEN HOUSE

SUNDAY, APRIL 28 FROM 2-4 PM



Join us for an afternoon of fun at our Summer Camp Open House!

Summer Camp Counselors will be leading tours of the camp and answering all your questions about camp. Along with tours, we will have smores, live music, and a meet and greet with some of your favorite horses. We hope to see you there!

For more information or questions, email our Program Director Sarah at Program@DuBoisCenter.org



DuBois Center 'Wishlist Wednesday' Continues!

DuBois is asking for donations of personal hygiene products, as these are items that are sometimes forgotten at home when arriving for camp. They are so excited with the response so far but there are many items still needed and hope to have a full stock of basic needs to give to those who would rather not go without! THANK YOU!

THIS WEEK'S WISHLIST FOCUS:

- Toothbrushes/toothpaste
- Deodorants
- Feminie hygiene

Here's the link --> [Amazon wishlist](#) to purchase from and deliver directly to camp. We will also accept mailed check donations with 'Wishlist Wednesday' in the memo—or online donations through our PayPal or Campwise platforms.

If you'd rather purchase similar items on your own, we will also gladly take physical donations of new personal hygiene products (similar to what are found on our existing wishlist, please)! If you are in the Highland area, you can drop off at Highland Evangelical UCC—please call their office (618-654-7459) prior to delivering to arrange a proper time.

If your church or office will be willing to be a dropoff location for any of these donations, please email DCInfo@duboiscenter.org. We will be sure all donations are transported to camp!

As time goes on, we may start adding other non-hygiene items to our list, so be sure to keep up with our social accounts on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) to hear more!

View the wishlist here: <https://a.co/7ZWgnu6>

Our online giving links are here*: https://www.paypal.com/donate?hosted_button_id=CG7CX3MFDTTDN

Through your existing Campwise account at www.duboiscenter.org.

*Note: If choosing to donate electronically, please add a note to the Campwise donation, or email DCInfo@duboiscenter.org to alert our staff of the PayPal delegation, as everything is flagged only for 'general fund.' Additionally, with the cost of online processing, we would appreciate any covering of the processing fees added to your donation, up to an additional 10%.

DuBois Center's physical address for check donations and/or deliveries:

Wishlist Wednesday
DuBois Center
2651 Quarry Road
DuBois, IL 62831



Volunteer Photographers Wanted

Do you have an eye for photography? We are looking for volunteers to help us capture images and memories of our campers and staff. Use the link below to sign up as a Volunteer Photographer. Volunteers are required to complete a Volunteer Application AND an Illinois DCFS Background Check. Signup Link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/.../10C084DA4AD28A2FCC34...>

DuBois Center is looking to fill the following 2024 Summer Staff positions: male-identifying cabin counselors ages 18+, a Waterfront Coordinator age 20+ with lifeguard experience, and a Summer Camp Co-Coordinator age 20+ with camp experience. If you are interested, please reach out to our Program Director, Sarah Harding, at program@duboiscenter.org.



Council for Health and Human Services Ministry News



The Council for Health &
Human Service Ministries
United Church of Christ



Open Grants!

Seeding the Future Grants
\$20,000 of general operating funds supporting the advancement of efforts impacting systems transformation. Quarterly opportunities to apply.

Cycle 2 Deadline:
Friday, May 31

LEARN MORE & APPLY
deaconess.org/funding

Deaconess Foundation Seeding the Future Grants provide general operating funds to support organizational and civic infrastructure expansion, advancement of public policies, and/or efforts impacting systems transformation through an intergenerational approach for the improved health and wellness of people in Eastern Missouri and Southern Illinois. The second cycle's deadline is Friday, May 31st. Learn more, view FAQs, and apply for funding at deaconess.org/funding

Kindercottage Holds Trivia Night Fundraiser May 18th 6:00pm - 10:00pm at St. Paul UCC 115 W. B St, Belleville, IL 62220. \$20 per ticket or table of 8 for \$160 and includes water and soda. Mulligans available, 50/50, Silent Auction, Table Decorating Contest, too! Bring your own snacks. For more information, call Aimee Hart or Antron Rose at (618) 874-6505. Please note-- the address to mail checks is: [564 Veronica Ave, East St. Louis, IL 62205](#) attn: Trivia Night.



Our ISC Churches News & Events

YOU ARE INVITED Friedens UCC Reunion

Join us to gather as friends and family of Friedens United Church of Christ as we reunite to celebrate this year of our 150th anniversary at the **Sunday, April 28, 2024 – 10:00am** worship with reception to follow. You are encouraged to share this invitation with all who are extended family and friends of Friedens. If you are unable to attend and would still like to share your thoughts with us, please send them to- Email: friedens@friedensucc-troy.org or Friedens UCC; Attn: 150 Anniversary, 207 E Center St., Troy, IL 62294 For more information: (618) 667-6535



St John United Church of Christ Valmeyer to Host GloBingo Saturday, May 11th at St Mary Parish Hall. Doors open at 6pm, Bingo at 7pm. Over \$1000 in cash prizes! Go to GloBingo.com/events. \$25 in advance - \$30 at the Door -includes 6 bingo cards for 10 games, glow hat & dauber. Additional cards \$5 for 6 cards. Cash Bar, BYO Snacks, 50/50 & Raffles. Must be 18 or older to attend. Tickets available: Melissa 618-334-7699 or STJOHNUCCVALMEYER@GMAIL.COM.

Annual St. John UCC Golf Tournament Saturday, May 18th at the Acorns Golf Links. Four person scramble with 8:00am Shotgun Start. \$100/golfer- skins, mulligans, and lunch included. Contact Brad Ripplemeyer (618)580-4166 or Dan McCarthy (618)593-6971 for more information. Click [HERE](#) for registration form.



[CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT YOUR CHURCH'S EVENTS + NEWS](#)

Opportunities and Resources

Godfrey Evangelical UCC Seeking 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.

Pinckneyville St. Paul UCC in Search of 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 or Pianist to play for their 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 -Part-time Organist/Pianist/Music Director

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 Rodney Washburn at rodneywashburn1@gmail.com.

St. Paul UCC, Lebanon, IL- Part-time Organist

St. Paul UCC Lebanon, IL, is praying that God will bless the search for a part-time organist willing to share their love of music through worship services (two per Sunday morning) including special services, accompanying the choir, & collaborating with Music Ministries. Specific details regarding pay & benefits can be discussed by calling Patty Cornell (618)920-3661. A video can be sent to office@stpaullebanonil.org.

St. John's UCC of Smithton, IL is Seeking a Part-Time Music Director for 10-15 hours per week. The Music Director will select, play and lead music for worship services. They will collaborate with the worship committee and pastor, and also establish opportunities for other music-related activities within the church. St. John's has a new Boston upright piano and new Rogers Imagine 235 Digital Organ, as well as 3 octaves of Suzuki hand chimes and an established chancel choir. Organ and piano experience are required, & vocal experience is preferred. To apply or for additional information, contact the church at sjohnsucc@att.net.

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 **Missy Loyet** at mloyet@iscucc.org.

For DuBois Center registration for upcoming events and camp sessions or ISC program registrations, contact **Julie Riechmann** at jriechmann@iscucc.org or (618)357-1809.

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](#) [Unleashing Potential](#)

[Pension Board-UCC](#) [St. John's Community Care](#) [UCC Insurance Board](#)

[Uplands Village](#) [UCC Campus Ministry](#) [Uni-Pres Kindercottage](#)
[UCC Newsletter](#)

