

April 30, 2024



**Letter from the Conference Council
of the Illinois South Conference**



1312 Broadway,
Highland, IL 62249
618-654-2125

April 30, 2024

Much has happened in the last few months. In March, we said goodbye to Noah McCarn, our most recent Executive Director, and we continued to search for the right leadership fit for DuBois Center for the interim period. As we shared in a Conference-wide letter in February, we contracted Kaleidoscope Inc., a team of professional consultants and planners who know and are passionate about camps, retreat centers, and outdoor centers, to staff our search process to find the right transitional leadership for DuBois Center.

On our behalf, Kaleidoscope networked and screened candidates based on the materials we provided. After posting the position nationwide, they received resumes of applicants. They spoke to candidates on the telephone, conducted interviews, and checked references.

The Executive Committee of the Conference, entrusted with final interviewing, met with Kaleidoscope several times to review the applicants' materials and their notes and recommendations based on their experience of the changing landscape of the camping world. After doing their due diligence based on the candidates they identified as final candidates, and after much prayer, conversation, and discernment, the Executive Committee presented their surprising final recommendation to the Conference Council, which was unanimously affirmed.

We say surprising because where we ended up was different from where we had expected to go. However, we believe this is true discernment. Discernment is not going into a process with the answer already in mind but being open to how the Spirit might be at work. After a nationwide search, the Spirit-led process brought us back home and led us not to one, but two qualified candidates who could serve as Co-Interim Executive Directors.

A new model necessitated new thinking regarding staffing structure and compensation. If we took the compensation package for the Interim Executive Director and programming staff and combined the executive and programming responsibilities and what we had identified as essential interim tasks, we could create two full-time positions within the 2024 proposed budget. Yet more importantly, we could extend a two-year contract to two persons who deeply love and are committed to the mission and ministry of DuBois Center.

Therefore, we are excited to announce that we have hired Jason and Leah Petry as Co-Interim Executive Directors of DuBois Center. As former staff members who served in various capacities, including

counselors, barn coordinators, lifeguards, programming staff, and assistant directors, it has been their dream to return to DuBois Center in executive leadership positions. As you have the opportunity to interact with them in the coming months, we are confident that you will see the potential we saw and how their leadership could greatly benefit DuBois Center.

Jason will start his ministry as Co-Interim Executive Director with us on May 10 to ensure a smooth and successful summer season. On August 5, when our current program director, Sarah Harding, starts a full-time graduate program, Leah will begin her ministry with us as the other part of the “co” leadership.

Together, they will seek to build up the current programs of DuBois Center and identify the staffing, partnerships, and financial opportunities that could help DuBois Center thrive as a ministry of the Illinois South Conference. While it will not be an easy task, they are up to the challenge and hope to be considered as settled executive leaders, a possibility built into the position and contract at the beginning of our search.

We covet your prayers and support for them and our beloved DuBois Center.

With love and hope,

The Conference Council (Rev. Christy Smith, Moderator; Rev. Lori Schafer, Vice Moderator; Darryl Collins, Treasurer; Rev. Steve Boorsma, Secretary; Rev. Shana Johnson, ex-officio member and ISC Conference Minister; Mark Beckmeyer, Diane Degener, Rev. Dr. Mary Beth Hartenstein, Chilang Lawless, and Rev. Patrick Poole)

Below is a picture and message Leah and Jason have provided for you to get to know a little about them:

DuBois Center is near and dear to our hearts. It inspired Leah to minor in Recreation, Park, and Tourism Administration while in college and provided a supportive community on her journey into yoga teacher certifications. It also provided Jason with opportunities to expand and share his love for and knowledge of the outdoors and exposed him to a varied skill set he never imagined thriving with.

Between the two of us, we have logged countless hours volunteering and as staff. During our previous tenure at DuBois Center - including our time working together as Outdoor Ministry Interns - we gained and developed skills and experience in hospitality and guest relations, event planning, program implementation, equestrian program management, problem-solving, facility management, and maintenance, supervision, and administration.

In recent years, Leah became a small business owner while also working in the insurance industry and Jason has gained experience in industrial maintenance. These various opportunities provided us with time and experience to refine the skills we initially formed at DuBois Center.

We felt a calling to return to DuBois Center and are excited to give back to a place that has given us so much.



Remember in Your Prayers this Week...



-Darmstadt Holy Ghost UCC
Rev. Tarrah (Jasen) Vaupel



-DuBois St. Mark's UCC

-Retired Pastor Rev. Chris (Cathy) Hill,
O'Fallon, 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. 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 can send follow-up thank you letters.

-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 United Church of Christ Dupu (1909-2024)

On Sunday, April 28, First Congregational UCC Dupu held worship for the last time. The closing service memorialized First Congregational's 115 years of ministry and service to God under the leadership of 33 different pastors, most recently Rev. Julie Kies, and celebrated mission as well as inclusion through its Community Backpack Angels and Open & Affirming history. A line formed for all wishing to ring the bell one final time.

Excitement is Building!

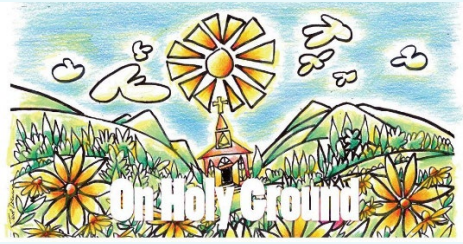
Just on the other side of summer, we will gather as a conference of delegates, pastors, members and visiting guests. Please mark your calendars with great anticipation of the

60th Illinois South Conference Annual Meeting

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



UCC International, National, and Regional News



Strengthen the Church May 19th

God calls us into community. God desires for us a big, inclusive, expansive, welcoming community. One where "no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you're welcome." Our **General Minister & President Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson** calls this a "big tent" community. God wants our congregations and our whole Christian movement to be a "big tent" where all can be genuinely welcomed.

The Strengthen the Church Offering supports congregations and initiatives that help us live into the United Church of Christ's "big tent" vision. Funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and renewal initiatives in existing congregations. Your conference and the national ministries work together to use these funds for projects that matter now and for the future of our movement.

Through this offering, we further our commitment to being a multi-racial/multi-cultural church that is accessible to all.

Please join with people across the UCC in promoting the Strengthen the Church Offering on **Sunday, May 19, 2024**. [Download promotional materials resources here.](#)

General Synod Nominating Committee Calls for Applicants to UCC Board and Synod Leadership

Applications to serve the church as a member of the UCC Board are now open, and the Nominating Committee of the United Church of Christ General Synod is encouraging people across the denomination to apply. The committee is seeking candidates for three types of positions: [General Synod moderator and assistant moderator](#), as well as [12 UCC Board members](#). Any UCC member is eligible for these positions, and

candidates can be recommended by pastors, Conference leaders, historically underrepresented groups, or by self-nomination. "To be in a position like Board leadership and leadership at General Synod gives one a completely different view of the work of the church in its wider settings," said the Rev. June Boutwell, chair of the Nominating Committee. "And the relationships that are developed out of doing work in that setting can really inform one's ministry no matter what kind of ministry they do. Serving in wider church capacities, in my experience, has always transformed people's lives." Applications are open now through Nov. 30.



ISC Hunger Action Team



The ISC Hunger Action Team would like to recognize: The ISC Hunger Action Team would like to recognize the "Women of St. Paul UCC", Waterloo. They collected non perishable food items for local students in need. St. Paul partnered with the Monroe County House of Neighborly Service to provide free summer lunches for youth, 18 and under. Recipients are students in Waterloo, Columbia, Valmeyer, Hecker, and Prairie Du Rocher. Children, who qualify for free school breakfast/lunch won't have access to their free meals during summer

break. Thanks, St. Paul. 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



DuBois Center 'Wishlist Wednesday'

DuBois is asking for donations of personal hygiene products, as these are items that are sometimes forgotten at home when arriving for camp. Shipments continue to pour in but we are still in need of many items.

THIS WEEK'S WISHLIST FOCUS:

- LOTIONS
- BUG SPRAY
- SUNSCREEN
- SPF LIP BALM

Here's the link to view and order items-->[Amazon wishlist](#)

If you'd rather purchase similar items on your own, we will also gladly take physical donations -- 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.

We will also accept mailed check donations with 'Wishlist Wednesday' in the memo--or online donations through our PayPal or Campwise platforms. Our online giving links are here*:

-PAYPAL

https://www.paypal.com/donate?hosted_button_id=CG7CX3MFDTTDN

-CAMPWISE

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

THANK YOU for all the donations, prayers, and support!

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



Eden Theological Commencement Ceremony Friday, May 17th 5:30pm - 8:00pm in the Schroer Commons on Eden's campus. Doors will open at 5:00pm. [RSVP HERE](#) for watching a live stream of the Commencement Ceremony. You are invited to join us for a reception after the ceremony.

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 (618)874-6505. Please note-- the address to mail checks: **564 Veronica Ave, East St. Louis, IL 62205** attn: Trivia Night.



Our ISC Churches News & Events

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 Glo-Bingo.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.

Administrative/Financial Secretary Christ United Church of Christ in Dupo, IL is seeking a part-time Administrative/Financial Secretary for approximately 24 hours/week during office hours. The church Administrative/Financial Secretary is responsible for Day to day financial and administrative duties;

Receive, deposit, record and report all General Fund Giving amounts; Perform Weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual financial reports for the congregation and for the conference office; and maintain and filing for the church records and documents. Please email resume to Melissa Reichert, Vice President, to reichrt@htc.net or mail resume to Christ United Church of Christ, 200 South 3rd Street, Dupon III 62239, Att: Melissa Reichert by May 31st. To view more go to:

[Christ United Church of Christ's Facebook page](#)

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](#)

