

May 21, 2024

Illinois South Conference
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



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

ALMIGHTY GOD,
ON THIS DAY OF PENTECOST,
WE PRAY FOR A FRESH OUTPOURING
OF YOUR HOLY SPIRIT. WE LONG
TO EXPERIENCE POWER AND PRESENCE
OF THE SPIRIT IN OUR LIVES AND
IN OUR CHURCH. FILL US ANEW WITH
YOUR FIRE, THAT WE MAY BE
EMPOWERED TO BOLDLY PROCLAIM
THE GOSPEL AND SEE LIVES
TRANSFORMED BY YOUR SAVING GRACE.
AMEN

HAPPY
PENTECOST!
MOVE US BY
YOUR HOLY SPIRIT,
OH LORD!



Our Conference Minister Reflects on God's Unending Love



When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "What shall we do?" Acts 2:37

On the day of Pentecost, when those gathered questioned the meaning of the Divine outpouring, Peter stood up to testify. With passion and urgency, Peter explained this powerful moment was not meant to be a rare occurrence. Rather, it would be just the beginning of God's plan for people to profoundly experience the transforming power and presence of the Risen Lord.

The Divine fires of Pentecost were not intended to be fleeting flames. They were designed to be explosive sparks that could ignite generations to experience the truth and light of the One whom death could not defeat. Yet, as Peter explained to the crowd, the Holy Spirit could only continue to burn if there were those who were committed to tending the flame.

In response, the hearers of Peter's message asked the most crucial question, "What shall we do?" Not, "Well, what are you going to do?" Or "What is that to us?" With a sense of ownership, they asked, **"What shall we do?"**

Equipping those first believers to be a part of building what would become the Church of Jesus Christ, Peter imparted this clear directive, *"Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."*

This is still the directive and call for all those who want to ensure the power and presence of the Holy Spirit is alive and burning in our churches and the world. Yet, we often wait for others to fan the flames and do the Spirit work.

When we experience the smoldering embers of faith, let us ask ourselves the question those first believers asked: "What shall **WE** do?" And then, may we remember that we are the ones who are called to tend to our faith lives first so that the passion and fires of our faith can ignite others.

-Blessings, Rev. Shana Johnson, ISC Conference Minister

Remember in Your Prayers this Week...



-Edwardsville St. Paul UCC
Rev. Dana (David) Schindler

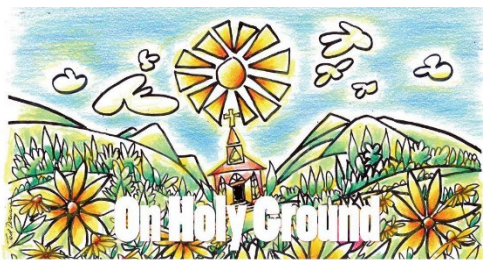


-Evansville St. John UCC
Pastor Kevin Hirsch

-Retired Pastor Rev. Charles (Rev. Karla Frost) Preston

[Submit prayer requests here](#)

UCC International, National, + Regional News



If not us, then who will Strengthen the Church?

“If not us, then who? If not now, then when?” The questions of John Lewis – activist, legislator, and justice advocate – echoed in the art of Dr. Deborah Rundlett.

She knew the heartfelt hopes and challenges of youth in her community. Youth wonder about what their world will look like. Despite these challenges, teens and young adults demonstrated a commitment to social change, contributing energy and passion. Rev. Rundlett sought ways to help "unleash the potential and intrinsic

power of area high school students to fulfill their capacity as current and future leaders and world citizens."

With funding from the Strengthen the Church Offering and the State of Connecticut, Dr. Rundlett and The Meetinghouse are gathering high school students to “meet with leading social entrepreneurs, environmental designers, and social justice advocates to learn how to draw from respected leadership models and learn how to move intentional change in their contexts.” Students decide on a pivotal social issue and then create initiatives to address change.

Donate today to support innovative projects like The Meetinghouse.

Together, through the Strengthen the Church Offering, we support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations as we work to become a multicultural/multi-racial, accessible to all Christians movement.

Need additional information, email giving@ucc.org.



Nurture the Soul: UCC and the Mental Health Journey: It's the WISE Thing to Do

MAY 23, 2024 | 3:30PM - 4:30PM

The World Health Organization definition of mental health is “state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well, work well, and contribute to their community... it is a basic human right.” The Mental Health Network W.I.S.E. program, (welcoming, inclusive, supportive and engaged) provides a path for congregations,

associations, conferences, and nonprofit organizations to join to reduce stigma and promote mental well-being. Come learn how to become W.I.S.E. and hear the stories of those who have taken this journey. [Register HERE](#)

Nurture the Soul: Love of Children

MAY 30, 2024 | 3:30PM - 4:30PM

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 webinar series is an opportunity to learn more about today's youth culture, how we can support them in their faith formation as well as gain some practical skills to equip our leaders to walk alongside of them.



Episode I – Thick Trust: Taking Young People's Longings and Belonging Seriously The inner and outer lives of Gen Z and Alpha are complex and layered. The way young people form bonds and make meaning is changing as the world grows more complicated daily. As leaders, allies, and co-conspirators, we must take seriously the need to build layered positive relationships with young people that help them grow and flourish. This **webinar** will provide practical ways to build “trust capital” with young people and have brave conversations. **Register HERE**

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

Saturday, October 19, 2024

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



ISC Hunger Action Team

The ISC Hunger Action Team would like to recognize: St. Paul, Columbia for their SOS - “SPIRIT OF SHARING SOUP KITCHEN” mission project. They are partnering with St. John UCC, Collinsville and First United Methodist Church, Collinsville to feed not only those who are hungry, but those in need of fellowship. Close to 200 meals are served each Tuesday and Thursday night. St. Paul members are invited to prepare and serve a meal, showing love to their neighbors in need. To volunteer, please call St. Paul, Columbia at 618-281-5102. Thanks, St. Paul; for hosting this ministry of love and compassion. Under the leadership of pastor and teacher, Rev. Jonathan Bangera. Such a blessing!



[Click here & share your food insecurity outreach stories with the ISC HUNGER ACTION TEAM.](#)

News from DuBois Center



Sunday Check-in Volunteers

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 all parts of the check-in process. Volunteers must be at least 16 years old. Sign up online - <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C...>

Dubois Fall Festival Crafters & Makers Needed

We know it's only May, but our Fall Festival Committee is already hard at work planning for the 2024 Fall Festival. This year our annual Fall Festival is scheduled for **Sunday, October 6, from 11 am-5 pm**. Fall Festival is only possible because of the efforts of countless volunteers. They bake, promote, stitch, recruit, decorate, set up/take down, drive boats, lead tours, greet, direct traffic, clean, serve, and dedicate hours and hours to make it all happen. [Click HERE to check out the details!](#)



Council for Health and Human Services Ministry News



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

Tropical Trivia for Hoyleton's Puentes de Esperanza

Friday, June 28th

Caseyville Community Center

Calling all beach bums!

Join our beach party and enjoy ten rounds of trivia, games, a raffle, and a silent auction! Don't forget your shades and sunscreen. Bring your favorite snacks and drinks. Soda will be provided. **Doors open at 6:00pm, Trivia starts at 7:00pm** \$200 per table with up to 10 participants, \$10 mulligans (one for each round). Prize for best decorated table! If you are interested in supporting this event with a sponsorship or silent auction donation please contact Christy in the Philanthropy Dept at 618-688-7092 or cschult@hoyleton.org.

[Click here to register, be a sponsor or donate](#). Learn more about [Puentes De Esperanza here](#).



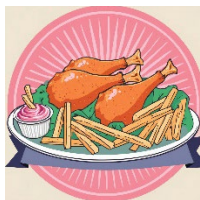
Our ISC Churches News + Events



Trinity UCC Belleville All you can eat Spaghetti Social Saturday, June 1st

6:00pm Spaghetti (vegetarian and gluten free options available), salad, garlic bread and dessert all for \$15/adult, \$5 ages 5-12, under 4 free. Each meal ticket includes two raffle basket tickets. There will be attendance prizes, games, music and a photo booth! All proceeds will benefit Trinity's Annual Holiday Food Basket Program. Trinity UCC, [47 N. Douglas Ave](#), Belleville 618-233-2941

Zion UCC of New Baden, IL will be hosting their next BBQ Lunch on Saturday, June 1st. Pork steaks, chicken, hot dogs, and a variety of sides will be served. If you have any questions or would like to place a large order, please contact the Zion Church Office at 618-588-4135.



Concordia UCC Chicken Dinner Sunday, Jun 2 11:00am - 3:00pm Dine-In or Carry-Out fried chicken dinner with sides and dessert \$15 per adult, \$8 ages 5-10, under 5 free. Quilt Raffle tickets on sale \$5 each. [7600 State Rt 163](#) (3miles north of Millstadt) (618) 476-3377

Friedens United Church of Christ-Irvington will host their 66th annual Ice Cream Social and Pie Auction on Friday, July 19, 2024, from 5-8 PM. Sloppy Joes, Nachos, Brats, hotdogs, chips and drinks are also available for an evening of fun and fellowship. The clergy band, Rivers of Life, will be playing in the sanctuary. All proceeds support youth mission work. 307 S. Third Street, Irvington, IL



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

Opportunities + 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 The music skills needed 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 10am - 11am 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

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, Dupo Ill 62239, Attn: Melissa Reichert by May 31st. To view more go to:

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

Seeking a Protestant Spiritual Guide for the Federal Correctional Institution in Greenville, IL. This key role involves mentoring inmates and leading transformative programs aimed at personal growth and reducing recidivism. Monday thru Friday, no weekends. Interested? Click [here](#) to view the job details and apply! Application deadline is May 31st.

Seeking Spiritual Leadership and Values Guide (Inter-faith) for the Federal Correctional Institution in Greenville, IL. This key role involves mentoring inmates and leading transformative programs aimed at personal growth and reducing recidivism. We encourage lay leaders to apply! Monday thru Friday, no weekends. Interested? Click [here](#) to view the job details and apply! Application deadline is May 31st.

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 Co-Interim Executive Director, contact **Jason Petry** at director@DuBoisCenter.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.

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[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](#)
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