

June 18, 2024



Our Conference Minister Reflects on God's Unending Love



"Do you not care that we are perishing?" --Mark 4:38

The sky had darkened, the winds had shifted, and the rain was incredibly intense. For Andrew, Peter, James, and John, as trained fishermen, perhaps collective experience had taught them these were the signs of a dangerous voyage. Yet, nothing in the Gospel of Mark's retelling of this event indicates that the situation warranted the outcome they feared was inevitable.

The inevitable outcome they were fearing was the worst-case scenario. In our mind's eye, we can almost see their panic and maybe even frustration as they approach a sleeping Jesus at the back of the vessel, awakening him with the question, *"Do you not care that we are perishing?"*

I wonder if Jesus' response stung a bit. Instead of taking stock of the weather conditions or matching their frantic energy, Jesus speaks calm into being. By the power of His word and presence, the waters are stilled. Yet, instead of turning to the disciples to join in a sense of relief, Jesus seized the opportunity to create a teachable moment by asking them two pointed questions: *"What are you afraid of? Have you still no faith?"*

In interpreting this text, many hear Jesus' words as a rebuke. Yet, I believe his questioning might not also be seen as a loving de-escalation redirect. I need such a redirect when I am spiraling down a neuronal pathway, convinced of the peril that awaits me. It takes a pattern interrupter to redirect my swirling thoughts and the pit in my stomach feelings.

When I am freaking out, I might want someone to affirm that *"Yes, indeed, we are perishing,"* but that is not what I need. What I need is a pattern interrupter. I need someone to say, *"Really? What are you afraid of? Is this situation going to kill? Or is it just temporarily painful, hurtful, or uncomfortable?"*

I need someone to say, *"Where is your faith? God has led you this far, so what makes you think God will abandon you now?"* I need someone to remind me that the One who can direct the sea and the wind to obey is the One who can and will direct my life if I follow and trust in the promises of hope instead of falling victim to the falsehoods of fear.

When the weather conditions of your life rapidly change, and you cannot see past the darkness that has crept in, you may wonder, "Jesus, do you not care that I am perishing?" Take a moment and listen. Listen, and you may hear the tender voice of Jesus saying, "Dear One, what are you so afraid of? Be still, have faith, and know peace will come."

-Reverend Shana Johnson, ISC Conference Minister

Remember in Your Prayers this Week...



-Godfrey Evangelical UCC Rev. Tim (Rev. Janet Darmour-Paul) Darmour-Paul



-Granite City St. John UCC Rev. Karla (Rev. Charles Preston) Frost

-Retired Pastor Rev. Michael (Elizabeth) Marx, Owensboro, KY

[Submit prayer requests here](#)

UCC International, National, + Regional News

CALLING ALL DELEGATES TO THE 2024 ANNUAL MEETING AND 60th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF THE ILLINOIS SOUTH CONFERENCE

Please share this request with your church's pastor and governing board as soon as possible to meet the Monday, July 29 deadline.

Each local church in the Illinois South Conference (*according to our Bylaws, Article II: Section 1: Lay Delegates*) is entitled to equal lay representation at the Annual Meeting. Your church can appoint and send up to three voting delegates.

In addition, the authorized clergy of the United Church of Christ (including active, retired, privilege of call, or dual standing) in your congregation who are in good standing in the Illinois South Conference also have voting privileges.

As we prepare for our 2024 Annual Meeting of the Illinois South Conference on Saturday, October 19, at Evangelical UCC, [2520 Poplar Street, Highland, Illinois](#)



Celebrating 60 Years

ISC Annual Meeting
Saturday, October 19, 2024
Evangelical UCC - Highland, IL

62249, we want to make sure your church is fully included. We need the contact information for all your voting delegates (3 lay and all UCC clergy) by noon on Monday, July 29.

Please send Julie Riechmann:

The full name, email address, and phone number of all your voting delegates to jriechmann@iscucc.org

Your church will begin to receive registration forms for your delegates and other Annual Meeting materials in mid-July. So, stay tuned. We look forward to hearing from you about how your church will participate in this special day.



Attention ISC Clergy and Churches! Photos needed for 60th ISC Annual Meeting

Please send up to 3 photos of your church being *Church*... whether in fellowship, celebration, or being the hands and feet of God. Photos to be presented at the ISC Annual Meeting so please make sure they are good resolution. If you would like to also send in an updated photo of your church building we will update our files. Please send to Missy Loyet at mloyet@iscucc.org by July 31st. Thank you!

Healing as Freedom Freedom as Healing UCC Racial Justice Ministries and Join the Movement toward Racial Justice invite you to honor and celebrate Juneteenth this year by remembering and discovering the healing practices that sustained freedom in the bones of our ancestors, before and after emancipation. Through music and prayer, poetry and art, reflection and ritual, may we find a medicine bundle, a poultice, a libation, a Brush Harbor and a clearing, that teach us the sound of freedom, echoing from legacies of healing and singing futures of wholeness. **Join us for a webinar gathering and celebration to: Explore the rich historical legacy of Juneteenth; Deepen practices of restorative healing; Listen and learn from educators, organizers, activists, and next generation leaders. [Click here to register](#)**



Church World Service Needs More Kits!

From **CWS**: The month of May set a record, marking the highest incidence of severe storms reported in the US in more than a decade. In the past month alone, we've distributed more than 2,000 kits and blankets to our neighbors in need. I also learned that our kit inventory is severely low. Our supply of Period Packs and Welcome Backpacks are depleted and our supply of Emergency Cleanup Buckets is very low. This is why your support of CWS Kits is so crucial. If you haven't started planning your fall kit collection, I encourage you to begin. Your support truly does make a difference in the lives of others when they're facing difficult times. Do a click here to learn more button with this



link <https://cwskits.org/>.

ISC Hunger Action Team



The Hunger Action Team would like to recognize St. Paul UCC, Columbia for their “Veterans Food Drive” Mission Project. They’re partnering with the Jefferson Barracks food pantry to help feed veterans and active duty soldiers and their families. “Forces For Food” is a pantry available to anyone who is a veteran or active duty military. They do not ask about finances or needs. This is not a “hand-out”, it’s a “Thank you” for protecting our freedom. Thanks, St. Paul for this Mission Project benefitting veterans. 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 June, 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!**

PLAN NOW FOR SILENT AUCTION AT DUBOIS FALL FESTIVAL

Yes, Fall Festival is Sunday, October 6!

No, it is not too soon to begin thinking of your donation to the Silent Auction.

Yes, get that creative person in your church, organization or family to put together a themed basket.

No, size does not matter--any size that attracts bidders will work.

Yes, get thinking, take advantage of summer sales and put together your donation for DuBois. Contact Audrey Hicks, St. Paul UCC Waterloo, 618-939-8673, audhicks@hotmail.com with questions.

Council for Health and Human Services Ministry News



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

Kindercottage Volunteers Plant Seeds of Positivity

Are you passionate about working with children and making a positive impact on their lives? UPK is eagerly seeking volunteers for the summer to help enrich the lives of children aged 6 weeks to 12 years. If you have some free time and a desire to inspire young minds, we invite you to join our dedicated team.

Bring joy and excitement to our kids who are eager to explore and learn. Your time and efforts will contribute significantly to the holistic growth of children who need it most.

Thank you in advance for your continuous support and dedication to our community.

Interested? Join us and make a difference! Contact us today at 618-874-6505 or aimee@unipreskindercottage.org.



Our ISC Churches News + Events



Are you looking for VBS materials or to share your VBS resources?

The exchange of VBS materials can help elevate your program or another church's program. Click [HERE](#) and send in the following info:

(Church name) will be hosting the **(insert name of the VBS curriculum)** on **(insert dates)** and is looking for churches to partner in sharing resources.

If you are interested, please contact **(insert name)** at **(insert contact information)**

Evangelical UCC Highland hosted Outback Rock VBS June 3rd-7th. If you are interested in materials, please contact Elaine at evuccvbs@gmail.com.

St. Paul UCC, Belleville, will be hosting the Camp Firelight VBS on June 24th - 27th 6-8 PM . We are looking for churches to partner in sharing resources. If you are interested, please contact Synthia Kalinowski at sktk1987@yahoo.com or Pastor Tim Powers-Reed at 636-248-6468. Thank you!

Jo Clifford
The Gospel According to
Jesus, Queen of Heaven

What would happen if Jesus did come back to earth, in the present day, as a trans woman? Join Queen Jesus for a stunning one-woman play of compassion & love, as well as meet+greet events.

Meet the Author
Friday, June 28 | 12-2pm
Carbondale Public Library

Charcuterie Board Banquet
Saturday, June 29 | 5-6:30pm
Church of the Good Shepherd
Suggested donation \$15

Performances
Sunday, June 30 | 6-7:30pm
Tuesday, July 2 | 7-8:30pm
Church of the Good Shepherd
Suggested donation \$10
Scan for Tickets or get at door
Seats are limited
tinyurl.com/queenjesus

Logos for sponsors: Carbondale Public Library, Church of the Good Shepherd UCC Carbondale, and others.



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.

St. John Cemetery Granite City seeking part-time Cemetery Secretary to work 15-16 hours/wk at \$15.00-\$16.00/hour. Must be a HS graduate or equivalent; have knowledge of Windows, MS Office & Excel and excellent keyboard skills; be able to send text, email, attach files and answer voicemail using

a smart phone; have knowledge of basic accounting/financial experience and general office experience with excellent attention to detail; be able to walk grave sites, mark excavation sites and show customers cemetery sites to purchase. To apply submit your resume with "Cemetery Secretary" in the subject line at StJohnUCC2901gc@yahoo.com Deadline: received by 11 :59 pm on June 26, 2024

St. Paul Columbia IL seeking part-time Office Coordinator to work in the church office and assist the pastors with scheduling and maintaining the ongoing work of the church. Assist in communicating with the congregation and wider community about St. Paul's programs, activities, events, worship, and mission in ways that reach a broad range of people and encourage them to connect and engage. All resumes can be sent to office@stpaulcolumbia.org.

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.

[Illinois South Conference](#) [Back Bay Mission](#) [CHSM](#)

[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](#)

