

July 2, 2024



Our Conference Minister Reflects on God's Unending Love



It's a familiar storyline: The adult with plenty of wisdom and life experience behind them returns to their hometown only to be seen and received as no time passed since they left. Jesus had left Nazareth years ago and begun his public ministry. He had a committed following. He had disciples he was mentoring in hopes of passing on the mantle of leadership. His name was well known. His presence produced a sense of awe and wonder among those willing to experience His transforming power. And yet, in his hometown, many could not get beyond the boy they had known, the early identity they had bestowed upon him.

Consider verses two through three in the sixth chapter of the Gospel of Mark. *"When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed. 'Where did this man get these things?' they asked. 'What's this wisdom that has been given him? What are these remarkable miracles he is performing? Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas, and Simon? Aren't his sisters here with us?' And they took offense at him (Mark 6: 2-3)."*

If a novelist or screenwriter were arching out his hero's journey, this moment would be approached as a crisis-centered turning point. The crisis would be how he would handle the challenge of those calling into question his credentials, authority, and even his worth. How would he prove himself to the doubters? What great act would he undertake to break through the pre-prescribed labels they had given him?

You can almost see the scene that would be written. How dare they question his wisdom or whether the miracles were real? Who were they to suggest he was only a carpenter? You can feel the momentum building to an "Oh, he will show you" moment. Cue the suspense-building music. Cue the sound effects as we wait for Jesus to take center stage to enact a logic-defying phenomenon to put the doubters in their place.

Yet, the Gospel is not a fantasy novel or Marvel movie. The Gospel is the good news of how the power of God was and is revealed in Jesus Christ. Instead of using the moment to glorify himself, Jesus acknowledges that those who question do not have eyes of faith. In recognizing that some would not accept and receive his ministry, Jesus said, *"A prophet is not without honor except in his own town, among his relatives, and in his own home (Mark 6: 4)."*

Jesus did not take this rejection personally. He did not make it about himself as a person. He knew his earthly role was solely to point people to the power and glory of God manifested fully in him as the Christ. I believe Jesus knew the difference between being called to lead people to a relationship with God, but he could not create the relationship for them. They had to do it for themselves. He did not perform miracles and signs to provide proof, but rather, those miracles and signs were the outcoming of the outpouring of the Divine power and grace at work in and through him.

The same is true for the Church, as we are called to be vessels for the outpouring of God's power and grace. We can only do our best to offer, share, show, and help point people to God. For, dear friends, it is not about us. Yet, we can continue to show and offer love and grace, praying that in time, others (and even ourselves) will have ears to hear, eyes to see, and hearts to be opened.

-Rev. Shana Johnson
ISC Conference Minister

Remember in Your Prayers this Week...



-Hecker Friedens UCC
Rev. Ivan (Vivian) Horn

-Retired Pastor
Rev. James Langdoc Sun City Center, FL

[Submit prayer requests here](#)



-Highland Evangelical UCC Rev. Bill (Sally) Kapp

Please remember Rev. Bill Kapp and his family and loved ones in your thoughts and prayers as he mourns the loss of his father.

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 62249](#), we want to make sure your church is fully included. We need the contact information of all of 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 of 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!

Click to learn more about the event and presenters

Rev. Harold Wilke: Disability Rights and the "Breaking of Chains"

Date July 26, 2024 **Time** 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

Location Chapel, Eden Theological Seminary
475 E Lockwood Ave. St. Louis, MO 63119

ADA Celebration

Each year Paraquad celebrates the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on July 26, 1990, with a special celebration. Since the justice champions that secured the ADA are passing away, it is important that we preserve memories of their courageous actions. In 2024, we celebrate the life of Rev. Harold H. Wilke (1914-2003), a minister who gave an invocation at the White House signing of the ADA with Pres. George H.W. Bush. Wilke was born without arms on a farm in Washington, Missouri, and had to fight discrimination in school, in religious institutions, and in society throughout his life.



Without his efforts and that of our disability rights ancestors, there would be no ADA.

Co-sponsored by:



June Pride Month ending, yet the work to love and welcome all continues Scripture Reference: "Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; persevere in prayer." Romans 12:12 Join us for the 2024 National Gathering of the Open and Affirming Coalition of The United Church of Christ. From now till July 15, ONA is offering "early bird" registration which is \$300 with an optional payment plan of three \$100 installments available. To learn more and to register, click [here](#).

An Indigenous Translation of Scripture

The "First Nations Version" is an Indigenous translation of the Christian scriptures. It brings a fresh language to how these scriptures are conveyed and understood. Notably, a decolonized rendering of the sacred texts articulates a different understanding of how humans understand their relationship to both God and all of God's creation. Even if you cannot make the webinar at its scheduled time, **still sign-up**, and we will send you a link to a recording of it.

A CREATION JUSTICE WEBINAR

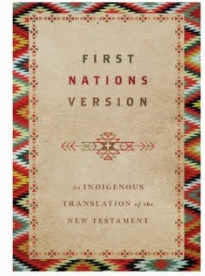
AN INDIGENOUS TRANSLATION OF SCRIPTURE

WITH TERRY M. WILDMAN
AMY ALLAN
KIMBERLEE MEDICINE HORN JACKSON

16 JULY 2024

3:00 PM ET - 4 PM ET

bit.ly/IndigenousScriptureTranslation

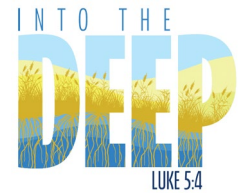


Narrative Budgets: Telling your Story by the Numbers July 16th 2:00pm

A narrative budget translates the line items of a traditional budget into a story of how your congregation makes a difference in the world. It can be a helpful tool for a stewardship campaign or annual meeting. By telling the story of our congregations' impact, we can inspire generosity in our donors. For more information and to register click [HERE](#).

INTO THE DEEP AT GENERAL SYNOD 35

Come **July 11-15, 2025**, the UCC will welcome thousands from across the country to the [Kansas City, Missouri Convention Center](#)— and the country's barbecue capitol. It is there UCC members will discern resolutions of witness, church structure and function, and celebrate faith. The theme of the gathering is "Into the Deep," based on Luke 5:4, which says, "When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, 'Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.'" More on GS35 [HERE](#)



ISC Hunger Action Team

The Hunger Action Team would like to recognize Zion, New Baden for hosting their monthly Community Dinner - "EVERYONE'S TABLE". All are invited for an evening of food and fellowship on **WEDNESDAY, JULY 10th**. The dinner is **FREE** and intended for **EVERYONE**. Those that have a family and those who do not, the young and the old, the rich and the poor. Bring your family, friends, neighbors, appetite, and smile. Thanks, Zion for this great mission project. Under the leadership of pastor and teacher, Rev, Stephan Stark. Such a blessing!



Click here & share your food insecurity outreach stories with the ISC HUNGER ACTION TEAM.

News from DuBois Center



A Thank You Note from DuBois Center

We want to give a big shout-out and THANK YOU to our volunteer chaplains and volunteer photographers for this week. Thank You to the awesome and wonderful Nancy Wagner, Carrie Clayton, Cathie Kruger, and Alan Rushing!



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



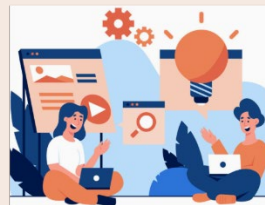
The Council for Health & Human Service Ministries
United Church of Christ

E-ADVOCATES #18

Emmaus Launching Advocacy Think Tank

by Christina Ingoglia | Jun 17, 2024 | Advocacy, E-Advocates

On June 18th, we launched the Emmaus [Advocacy Think Tank](#). This is a group of internal staff, clients, and more, as well as self-advocates and professionals from other organizations. The goal is to create a working group that serves as a brain trust to dream big for the future of advocacy at Emmaus. Another way to put it is this will be a group of people with a passion for advocacy and our clients who can help us make Missouri a more inclusive and accepting state. The group will focus on the next 2-3 years and ways we can grow our impact, and perhaps expand the scope of advocacy work we can accomplish. Stay tuned for reports and ways to get involved from this group as we meet over the next year.



For the foreseeable future we will continue our Missouri legislative advocacy efforts to improve Medicaid funding so that our clients receive the best care possible. This means DSP wages must continue to increase, too. However, there are many issues that impact adults with developmental disabilities, whether we serve them or not. Regional transportation often comes up as a major hurdle for these Missourians.

What other advocacy issues do you or those you support face? Whether or not you are directly involved in the Think Tank, you are always welcome to submit ideas, comments, and questions to Advocacy@EmmausHomes.org.

SILENT AUCTION + DINNER


Sunday, August 4th, 2024

5:00 - 7:30 PM

**Grant's Farm:
7385 Grant Road, St. Louis, MO
63123**

\$ \$75/person \$550/table of 8

Help us continue to provide free healthcare to low-income individuals in the St. Louis area!

Scan here for tickets! 

Deaconess Nurse Ministry
Called to Care for Every Life

Deaconess Nurse Ministry Healthy Impact Dinner

Sunday, August 4th

CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO AND TO REGISTER

As we prepare for our silent auction and dinner on August 4, we need your help! We're open to all kinds of donations, such as:

- event tickets
- time shares or hotel/condo stays
- professional services
- gift certificates

Give us a call at 314-395-4655 or email us at adm@faithnurses.org if you have anything you think would make a great auction item!

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)**

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!

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



Concordia UCC Belleville Hosting Ladies' Day out Event August 3, 2024, 10:00am - 3:00pm. Visit with numerous vendors and crafters, enjoy a scrumptious summer chicken salad and fruit lunch for just \$8, visit the book sale, and take home some wonderful baked goods. Proceeds go to Concordia UCC and DuBois Center scholarships. [7600 State Rt. 163, Belleville, IL 62223](#). Call 618-476-3377 or 219-805-6022 for more info.

Mark Your Calendars
AUGUST 9-10, 2024

RAINBOW CAMP

An LGBTQIA+ Friendly Family Camp Experience!

At the Dubois Center in Dubois, Illinois
 Sponsored by the Illinois South Conference of the United Church of Christ!

For more information
<https://duboiscenter.org/retreats/rainbow-camp/>

Illinois South Conference presents

CONFIRMATION RETREAT

SEPTEMBER 28TH
 9 AM TO 4 PM

AT CAMP WARTBURG
 5705 Lrc Rd, Waterloo, IL

Chose Your Own Adventure!
 Participants can choose to add-on the high ropes experience, if desired.

Low Ropes Course w/ Team Building (Incl. lunch)	\$30 (per participant*)
Optional High Ropes Course	\$30 (per participant)
	\$60** (per participant)

*Cost is for each youth participant. Chaperones do not need to pay unless they plan on participating in the high ropes activity.
 ** Contact the Illinois South Conference Office if scholarship assistance is needed.

TEAM-BUILDING . LUNCH . OPTIONAL HIGH ROPES

DISCOVER WHAT IT MEANS TO BE FEARFULLY AND WONDERFULLY MADE!

Confirmation Retreat 2024 Registration will open August 1, 2024. Questions? Contact Jill Mayer (jill@stpaulonline.org or 618.978.7123)

[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.

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](#)

