



Reflections from Our Conference Minister

Clergy Appreciation Month, observed every October, is an opportunity to recognize and uplift the pastors, chaplains, and spiritual leaders who accompany us through life's most sacred moments. They show up in hospital rooms and at wedding altars, in baptisms and funerals, in Sunday sermons and weekday prayers. They pour out love, wisdom, and courage—often in quiet, unseen ways.

If the ministry of a clergy person has blessed you, I encourage you to take the time this month to share your gratitude with them for the ways their ministry has impacted you. Here are some ideas of what you can offer to show your appreciation:

-A Personal Thank You Note

Sometimes, the most heartfelt expressions are the simplest. Consider a handwritten card in which you share a personal story of how their ministry has made a difference in your life, and let them know their efforts are noticed and appreciated.

-Surprise Clergy on A Sunday Morning

Surprise the pastors, chaplains, and spiritual leaders in your congregation on a Sunday morning during the worship service, with special gestures from the whole congregation, such as thank-you messages from adults, a skit by the youth, or artwork from the children.

-Host a Celebration Meal

A breakfast, lunch, or potluck in honor of the pastors, chaplains, and spiritual leaders in your congregation can be a great way for the congregation to come together in celebration. You can include a few speeches or a slideshow highlighting your ministry with them.

-Give Thoughtful Gifts

Gifts don't need to be extravagant to be meaningful. Consider:

- Gift cards to their favorite restaurant or coffee shop
- A book or journal
- A care package with their favorite snacks or self-care items

-Public Acknowledgment

Share your appreciation for clergy persons on social media or in your church's newsletter. Tag them (if appropriate) and highlight the unique ways they serve the community. Public words of affirmation can inspire others to express their gratitude as well.

-Pray for Them Intentionally

Commit to praying for clergy throughout the month. Add them to your prayer chain and prayer list, asking for prayers for their health, strength, wisdom, rest, and continued joy in ministry.

Clergy Appreciation Month isn't about grand gestures—it's about meaningful ones. Whether it's a simple thank-you or a church-wide celebration, what matters most is showing them that their work is seen, valued, and cherished. By celebrating them in October, you're encouraging and uplifting the people who dedicate so much to the spiritual life of your community throughout the year.

-Rev. Shana Johnson
ISC Conference Minister

Please Remember in Your Prayers this Week...



St. John's UCC, Du Quoin-
Rev. Robert Morwell



Christ UCC, Dupont-
Rev. Todd (Suzanne) Mushaney

Retired Pastor-
Rev. Thomas Nadelin

[Submit prayer requests here](#)

Please keep Rev. Kenneth Knobloch, his wife Jean, and their children in your prayers as Rev. Ken has been moved to Randolph County nursing home and is now under hospice care.

Please continue to pray for Rev. Tarrah Vaupel, an authorized minister of our Conference, and her family as they recover from a devastating fire at their home.

UCC International, National, + Regional News

"When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, 'Put out into deep water, and let down your nets for a catch.'"

-Luke 5:4



**61st ISC
Annual Meeting**

**Saturday,
October 18, 2025**

**St. Paul UCC
Belleville, IL**

Set your nets for the 2025 ISC Annual Meeting! We set sail on a fishing trip together with ISC friends and colleagues into new depths of discipleship to create unceasing waves that will ripple throughout our Church and beyond!

While registration has ended for this year's Annual Meeting, plan on attending the Friday Meet & Greet with Rev. Shari Prestemon from 6pm-8pm. Email dkesner@iscucc.org to RSVP.

~**Download Delegate Packet** [HERE](#). Please note, printed copies will not be provided at the Annual Meeting.

~**Find Your Route** [St. Paul UCC, 115 W B St, Belleville, IL 62220](#) and prepare to make some waves as we go **INTO THE DEEP!** Hope to see you there!

*Please note new time of Friday Meet & Greet Event >**RSVP today!**

2025 ISC Annual Meeting Event
Meet and Greet
 Rev. Shari Prestemon, UCC Associate General Minister



Friday, October 17th
 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
 St. Paul UCC Belleville, IL
It's not too late to RSVP!
 r.s.v.p. to dkesner@iscucc.org





Rev. Tarrah Vaupel
 (pastor at Holy Ghost
 UCC Darmstadt and
 Trinity UCC
 Biddleborn) and her
 family of 7 recently
 lost their home to a
 devastating fire. Her
 congregation is
 hosting a chili cook-off
 among local churches
 to benefit the family as
 they navigate this
 difficult journey.

Chili COOK-OFF

**BENEFIT FOR
REV. TARRAH VAUPEL FAMILY**

Location: Trinity United Church of Christ
 5698 Biddleborn Rd., Biddleborn, IL

Date: Sunday, Oct. 19
Time: 11 - 3
Cost: Donations
 All proceeds go to the Vaupel family

chili, desserts, bounce house, and more!



Access Sunday, October 12th

Each year, one Sunday is designated on the UCC church calendar as Access Sunday. This year, October 12, 2025, will be Access Sunday. The United Church of Christ (UCC) will join together and celebrate the gifts of persons with disabilities (PWD's) and the strides that the church has made in being more inclusive and becoming more accessible to all. It is also a day that we, the church, acknowledge the journey yet to be taken with our

siblings with disabilities.

Pastors and lay leaders, invite your congregation to join your UCC friends around the country in celebrating Access Sunday on this day, and or on a Sunday more fitting to your church calendar.

Access Sunday October 12, 2025 Resources!

- [Access Sunday 2025 \(Year C\) Word](#)
- [Access Sunday 2025 \(Year C\) Word \(large print\)](#)
- [Access Sunday 2025 \(Year C\) PDF](#)
- [Video Discussion on Luke 17:11-19](#)
- [Video Discussion on Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7](#)

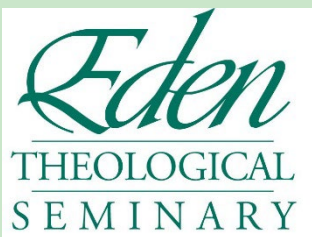
Original Song for Access Sunday 2025 by Maggie Guekguezian and Jacob Nault (with support from Rob Stemple and Richard Bruxvoort Colligan): "God Needs Us to Live"!

["God Needs Us to Live" Lyric Video MP4](#) (for use in worship A/V)

["God Needs Us to Live" Lyric Video on YouTube](#)

["God Needs Us to Live" Lead Sheet](#)

["God Needs Us to Live" MP3](#)



"Eden Theological Seminary dedicates community garden to late St. Louis tornado victim"

The Eden Theological Seminary's community garden in Webster Groves was dedicated to Patricia Penelton on Tuesday, marking the continuation of the late tornado victim's legacy of service and feeding the north side of St. Louis. Penelton — known as "Ms. Pat" and described by family and friends as a "spunky" character — spent nearly 40 years serving at Centennial Christian Church in Fountain Park as church moderator, a deacon, an usher and a worship leader. She also sang as a charter member of the St. Louis Symphony IN UNISON Chorus for 27 seasons...."

Read the full story on [SLTPR.org: https://www.stlpr.org/.../eden-theological-seminary...](https://www.stlpr.org/.../eden-theological-seminary...)



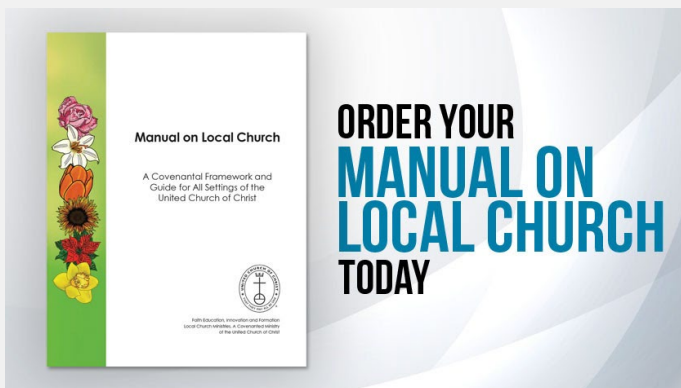
The Convergence Music Project

Saturday, October 15-18, 2025

Convergence Music Project is about new music for a just and generous expression of Christianity.

It's getting close. Do you have your tickets yet? Join us in Columbus Oct. 15-18 or get a virtual ticket and join us online.

For more info on Speakers and Artists visit <https://www.cmpconverging.com>



The Manual on Local Church

The Manual on Local Church is for all settings of the UCC to use, to fully live into their covenantal responsibilities and privileges under the Constitution of the United Church of Christ. It includes a three-part covenantal framework centering Local Churches; *Marks for Faithful and Vital Local Churches*, designed to affirm and expand your ministry; *Local Church Governance*, practical tools for building and sustaining healthy leadership; *Standing Support and Accountability*, processes for Associations and Conferences in covenant with Local Churches, resources for new and affiliating Local Churches and resources for recognizing Local Church standing. [Order HERE](#)



Disability Justice in Congregational contexts You're invited for a 3-part series to go deeper into the All Church Read, "Building Up a New World: Congregational Organizing for Transformative Impact," focusing on Chapter 5, "Disability Justice in Congregational Contexts" with current and former members of the UCC Disability Ministries Board. [Register](#)

- Oct 9, 2025 02:30 pm Part II
- Oct 16, 2025 02:30 pm Part III

What's Next Series: How Art Deepens and Enriches Worship in Divided Times Oct 13, 2025 02:30 pm We'll be joined by Rev. Marshela Salgado-Solorio for an engaging online conversation exploring how art can deepen and enrich worship. [Register](#)

ISC Hunger Action Team - Facing Hunger in Your Community



The Hunger Action Team would like to recognize **ST. PAUL, FLORAVILLE** for their nonperishable food donations to the **Monroe County House of Neighborly Service Food Pantry**. Recipients are families in need in Waterloo, Columbia, Valmeyer, Hecker, and Prairie Du Rocher. Heartfelt thanks to St. Paul for this ministry of love and compassion. Under the leadership of Pastor and teacher, Matt Friz. Neighbors helping neighbors!

By sharing your stories of being in service to others, you shine God's Light to all of us in the ISC and beyond! Click below...

...to share stories of fighting hunger in YOUR community.

News from DuBois Center

Thank You for an Amazing Fall Festival!

A huge THANK YOU to everyone who came out to celebrate with us at our Fall Festival! We loved seeing familiar faces and meeting new ones. Your energy, smiles, and support made the event truly special.

More pics and videos>> [HERE](#)

-Photos courtesy of Breanne Beisiegel





2026 SUMMER CAMP SCHEDULE

Registration Opens November 24th
Early Bird Registration ends February 14th

	MAIN CAMP	RUSTIC
June 14-19	*Discovery (1 st - 3 rd) Settler (3 rd - 5 th) **Quest (1 st - 3 rd) Leadership in Training (11 th - 12 th)	Horse Play (5 th - 7 th) Outback (7 th - 9 th)
June 21-26	Settler (3 rd - 5 th) Art Explosion (5 th - 8 th) Base Camp (6 th - 8 th)	**Rustic Sampler (4 th - 6 th) Splash (5 th - 7 th) Saddle Em Up (7 th - 9 th)
June 28-30	Just You & Me (Ages 5-8 & adult) Main Camp Cabins & Hickory Lodge	
July 5-10	High School Week Drenched (9 th - 12 th) - Wrangler (9 th - 12 th) - X-Plore (9 th - 12 th) All camps are on Rustic	
July 12-17	*Discovery (1 st - 3 rd) Settler (3 rd - 5 th) **Quest (1 st - 3 rd)	Trekkin It (5 th - 7 th) Giddy Up (6 th - 8 th) Dunk'd (7 th - 9 th)
July 20-22	Just You & Me (Ages 5-8 & Adult) Main Camp Cabins & Hickory Lodge	
August 7-8	Rainbow Camp ALL Ages Welcome! Main Camp Cabins & Hickory Lodge	

The grade listed next to each camp is the grade campers have completed.

* Partial-week camp: Sunday-Tuesday / ** Partial-week camp: Wednesday-Friday

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT DUBOISCENTER.ORG

OUR 2026 SUMMER CAMP SNEAK PEEK SCHEDULE WAS
RELEASED AT FALL FESTIVAL!

HERE IT IS IN CASE YOU MISSED IT.

REGISTRATION OPENS NOVEMBER 24TH.



Messy Church Family Retreat is November 21-22nd! Join us for interactive worship designed for every age and all types of families - plus some DuBois activities!

Check out the details and register at <https://duboiscenter.org/retreats/dbc-retreats/>

Council for Health and Human
Services Ministry News



Uni Pres Kindercottage Presents
CHICKEN DINNER
Fundraiser Party



NOVEMBER 2, 2025
11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

TICKET COST
ADULTS: \$12.00
CHILDREN 12 & UNDER: \$6.00

EDWARDSVILLE MOOSE LODGE
7371 MARINE ROAD EDWARDSVILLE, IL 62025

Kindercottage Chicken Dinner

Please join us in fellowship and giving! Come together with us as we raise funds to support the mission and ministry of Uni Pres Kindercottage, serving children and families in East St. Louis. Your presence and generosity help us continue this vital work of love, learning, & community care. For more information, contact Ms. Aimee via email at aimee@unipreskindercottage.org or call (618)874-6505

Are you a senior-serving community organization in one of the following counties?



Apply today for the
Seniors Community Fund!



The Seniors Community Fund (in partnership with [Deaconess Foundation](#)) is now accepting applications!

Organizations serving seniors in Eastern Missouri and Southern Illinois can apply for up to \$30,000 to support projects focused on:

Safety

Transportation

Health navigation support

Applications are due **Friday, October 17 at 11:59 PM.**

Apply today at bit.ly/SeniorsFund2025 or read more at <http://chcmisouri.org/seniors-community-fund-now.../>.



Join us for a hauntingly fun night of **GloBingo** to raise critical funds for Behavioral Health services in our community! Dress in your most ghoulish glow gear, grab your neon daubers, and get ready to support Hoyleton Youth and Family Services.

Every game helps us bring light, hope and healing to those battling challenges. Costumes are encouraged, compassion required. Click [HERE](#) to purchase tickets.



PACK THE BUS FUNDRAISER!

HOLIDAY SHOPPING TRIP



DECEMBER 6, 2025, 9AM-5:30PM

Each \$100 ticket includes:

- morning snacks, coffee, mimosas, etc.
- stop at West County Mall 10am-1pm
- stop at the St Charles historic area 1:30pm - 4:30pm
- wine and snacks on the way home/an appeal for SJCC!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL 618-344-5008!

REGISTER CLOSES NOV 3rd!

Illinois South Conference
presents

CONFIRMATION RETREAT

NOVEMBER 14TH-15TH

AT DUBOIS CENTER
OVERNIGHT & DAY ONLY
OPTIONS!

Saturday Only Retreat (incl. lunch)	\$30 (per participant/adult)
Saturday Only Retreat (Incl. 2 meals breakfast & lunch)	\$45 (per participant/adult)
Overnight (Friday - Saturday Afternoon)	\$85* (per participant/adult)

Horseback Riding available as add-on option. \$25 for trail ride.

*Contact the Illinois South Conference Office if scholarship assistance is needed.

TEAM-BUILDING . LUNCH . OPTIONAL OVER NIGHT

DISCOVER WHAT IT MEANS TO BE FEARFULLY AND
WONDERFULLY MADE!

Confirmation Retreat 2025 Registration will open
August 1, 2025.

Questions?
Contact Jill Meyer
(jill@stpaulonline.org or
618.978.7123)

TRINITY UCC BELLEVILLE

15TH ANNUAL HALLOWEEN SPOOKTACULAR TRIVIA NIGHT

OCTOBER 11
AT 6:00 PM
(DOORS OPEN @ 5:15 PM)

COSTUME
CONTEST
FOR ADULTS &
KIDS
(NO FULL MASKS)

Proceeds benefit the
Belleville Interfaith
Food Pantry
and Trinity UCC
Wider Missions

BASKET
RAFFLE!
BRING A SPOOKY
SNACK!

50/50
DRAWING!

WITH ADVANCE RESERVATIONS:
\$10 + 2 FOOD ITEMS / ADULT
\$5 + 2 FOOD ITEMS / CHILD

AT THE DOOR TICKETS:
\$15 + 2 FOOD ITEMS / ADULT
\$10 + 2 FOOD ITEMS / CHILD

47 NORTH DOUGLAS
BELLEVILLE, ILLINOIS

FOR QUESTIONS OR ADVANCE RESERVATIONS,
CONTACT DEBJOVAAG@AOL.COM

FALL FESTIVAL

SATURDAY - OCTOBER 11, 2025

9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

CHRIST UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
200 SOUTH 3RD STREET, DUPO IL

SOUPS, SANDWICHES
HOMEMADE PIES



PRICE BOARD
AND
BASKET RAFFLE



YARD SALE



QUILT DRAWING
AT 2:00 PM

HOMEMADE
CAKES, COOKIES
CANDY AND JELLY

CRAFTS!!

Crafters & Vendors Wanted - Table space \$20
For more information, please call 618-286-4211

Evangelical UCC - Highland

ANNUAL SAUSAGE SUPPER

DRIVE-THRU ONLY

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2025

Noon-7pm

2520 Poplar St. Highland, IL

Meal Includes: Sausage(1lb), sauerkraut, mashed
potatoes, gravy, green beans, and a dessert

\$14/Dinner

Cash, Check or
Credit Cards Accepted

For questions call
618-654-7459



Friedens UCC - Troy, IL

ANNUAL FALL SAUSAGE DINNER

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2025

11:30A-4:30P

-DRIVE THRU ONLY-

Dinners are \$15/plate

Menu Includes: Grilled Pork Sausage, Mashed Potatoes & Gravy, Sauerkraut, Green Beans, and a Dessert

Questions: 618-667-6535 friedens@friedensucc-troy.org

Friedens United Church of Christ
207 E. Center St., Troy, IL 62294

Wurstmarkt

Dine-In Carry-Out Drive-Thru

Thursday, October 16, 2025

3:30-7 pm

Crafts 12-7:30

Adult Ticket \$15
Child Ticket \$8

O'Fallon United Church of Christ

206 West Adams St., O'Fallon, IL 62269
(618) 632-3496 www.ofallonucc.org



BBQ Zion United Church of Christ - St. Joe Waterloo- Rural King Parking Lot, 740 N Market St, Waterloo, IL 62298

Featuring Pork Steaks, Brats, Hamburgers and Hot Dogs

Saturday 10/18/2025 10:00 AM - 3 PM OR sold out

33RD ANNUAL WURSTMARKT

Dine-In is Back! Come in or swing through the Drive-Thru!

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19TH 11A.M.-3P.M.

Pork Sausage, sauerkraut, real mashed potatoes, apple sauce, green beans, & choice of dessert (gluten-free and sugar-free options)

ALL MEALS \$15

ST. PAUL UCC,
123 E DEE ST, LEBANON, IL 62254
(618) 537-4991

ST. PAUL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Columbia, IL

Shrimp Boil Fundraiser

SUNDAY OCTOBER 19

DOORS OPEN AT 5:00PM

JOIN US FOR A SHRIMP BOIL! PROCEEDS SUPPORT OUR BACK BAY MISSION TRIP.

Shrimp Boil to support St. Paul UCC Columbia's Back Bay Mission trip.

Sunday, October 19th. \$25/Adult \$18/Child Cash or Check. Email us office@stpaulcolumbia.org to RSVP so we can plan accordingly. Thank you for supporting our mission trip! Click [HERE](#) for flyer.

Click to submit your EVENTS + NEWS to the Weekly Connection

Opportunities + Resources

[Part Time Organist/Pianist - Friedens UCC Marissa](#)

[Part-time Music Leader - St. Paul UCC Pinckneyville](#)

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 Directors, contact **Jason Petry** or **Leah Petry** at director@DuBoisCenter.org or (618) 787-2202 ext. 2 for Jason or ext. 3 for Leah.

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](#)

