



ISC Justice & Mission Team Resources



During this season of compassion and generosity, the ripples initiated at the ISC 2025 Annual Meeting persist as do the challenges related to clothing, food, access to water, isolation, welcome and belonging—yet, our quest for resources has become more manageable. Within this wave of goodwill, we can envision a world where everyone has the opportunity to thrive, thanks to our ISC Justice and Mission Team's inspiration from Matthew 25. Delve into the findings of their five marks of mission research.



ISC Clothing Resource

To equip churches and pastors with accessible information on clothing resources—both regional and local—throughout IL South Conference. This directory reflects the Mission Committee's shared commitment to respond to the priorities identified in our survey of all the churches earlier this year.

iscucc.org/justice-and-mission-team-clothing-resources/



ISC Hunger Resource

The ISC Justice and Mission Team reached out to churches and most responded that educational information such as Bible studies and resources would be a good way to work within their congregations regarding issues. Many of these resources are free of charge.

iscucc.org/justice-and-mission-team-bible-studies-and-resources/



ISC Prison Resource Directory

As we reflect on the words from the Gospel of Matthew we hear the call to care for those who are in prison. Individuals in these extraordinary circumstances may experience a profound sense of isolation and a crisis in their faith. To address the needs of the incarcerated does not condone past behavior.

iscucc.org/justice-and-mission-team-prison-resource/



ISC Drinking Water Resources

Free Drinking Water Sources:

Southern and Central Illinois

While there are few public outlets dedicated specifically to free drinking water, there are some accessible options you can explore.

iscucc.org/justice-and-mission-water-resource/



ISC Welcoming the Stranger Resources

Jesus teaches that welcoming the stranger is equivalent to welcoming Him directly, as He identifies with the most vulnerable ("the least of these"), forming a core biblical call to radical hospitality and compassion for foreigners, refugees, and the marginalized, equating acts of mercy towards them with serving Christ.

iscucc.org/justice-and-mission-team-welcoming-strangers-resource/

Please Remember in Your Prayers this Week...



Zion Evangelical UCC, Hoyleton-

Rev. Sharon Patton



Friedens UCC, Irvington-

Rev. Stacy (Mark) Tate

Retired Pastor-

Rev. Chris (Cathy) Hill

John Mier, spouse of retired ISC Minister Joan Mier, had his 2nd knee replacement surgery. Requesting healing prayers for a speedy recovery.

[Submit prayer requests here](#)

UCC Global, National, + Regional News



"When they saw the star, they were filled with joy." —Matthew 2:10

The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas "Thank You" gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees. United Church of Christ congregations and members have blessed the Christmas Fund with their generosity for many years. This year, your care and compassion will be especially appreciated by those servants of the church who are facing a time of need. Thank you!

[Christmas Fund Resources](#)



The ISC Conference Gatherings Team members came 'together' to 'shake up' excitement for the upcoming Day of Discipleship. During this event, we will unite in worship and fellowship, and participate in workshops inspired by Acts 2, stirring churches into a vibrant, Spirit-filled body of Christ. You're going to want to SAVE THIS DATE! - **Saturday, March 21, 2026 - St. John UCC, Mascoutah-**

All who believed were together and had all things in common
-Acts 2:44



Frostbite Fun Youth Event registration is open!

Don't get bitten by a missed registration deadline!

Register TODAY

Click [Here](#)



December 9, 2025 – [Eden Theological Seminary has received a \\$10 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc.](#) to help the seminary create large-scale collaborations that will push the envelope of innovation in preparing tomorrow's ministers, pastors, and leaders in the progressive Christian movement. The grant is being funded through Lilly Endowment's [Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative](#). This initiative is designed to help theological schools across the United States and Canada as they prioritize and respond to the most pressing challenges they face as they prepare pastoral leaders for Christian congregations both now and into the future. The grant to Eden is one of 45 that Lilly Endowment made in the competitive round of the Pathways initiative. [Full Story](#)

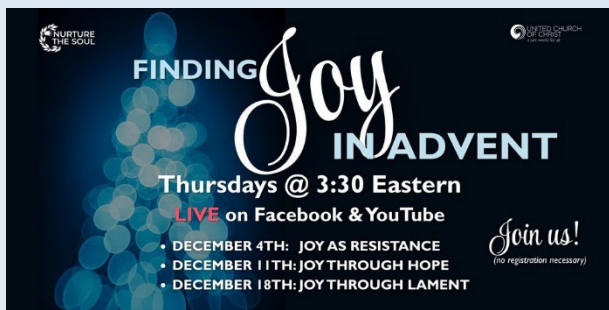


Spring 2026 Ministry Cohorts Are Open!

We're excited to announce the Spring 2026 Ministry Cohort Themes:

- [How's My Preaching? Check-In and Level Up](#)
- [Intergenerational Faith Formation](#)
- [Creative Conflict Resolution](#)
- [The Body of Christ and the Body Snatchers](#)
- [Making Strangers Neighbors](#)

>>Learn more and sign up for the Cohort that intrigues you most!



Nurture the Soul

Finding Joy in Advent Series NO registration necessary, this program will run LIVE on our Facebook and YouTube channels and a recording will be available after the event date.

Part I: Joy through Resistance The season of Advent invites us to embody joy. Yet, the times in which we live may challenge joyful experiences, practices, and encounters. Worship helps bridge recognition of the current reality with hope for the future...making space for JOY. We hope you'll join us for some joy this Advent season! [Watch the Dec 4 Recording](#)

Part II: Joy Through Hope Dec 11, 2:30pm - 3:30pm CT Hope forms as a response to need, struggle, and dreams of a better future. Hope serves as an antidote to fear, motivation to continue forward, and fuel for joy. Rejoice with us as conference ministers and national staff share stories and reflect on sparks of hope in the life of the church. [YouTube Video Link](#)

Part III: Joy Through Lament: A Blue Christmas Worship Service

Dec 18, 2:30pm - 3:30pm CT Joy honors sorrow and sadness, pain and despair, regret and grief. We invite you into a space that recognizes that "good cheer" may not be attainable for all. Lament allows us to acknowledge our authentic emotional condition while commemorating the Incarnation/Birth of Christ and being comforted by Emmanuel/God With Us. [YouTube Video Link](#)



Spirit of Generosity 2025 Highlights

The United Church of Christ has much to celebrate as we bring 2025 to a close. Through your continuous support, across the church this year, we:

- Gathered virtually for the [3rd Annual UCC Earth Summit](#)
- Worshiped together at [General Synod 35](#)
- Learned through [40+ educational webinars](#)
- Raised our collective voice in more than 100,000 actions through the [UCC Office of Public Policy and Advocacy](#)
- Shared more than [270 People's Prayers for Peace](#)
- ...and so much more

Each of these initiatives, alongside many others, brought together people from across the United Church of Christ, equipping local ministries through national connections. Our shared ministries remind us that anything we accomplish in the United Church of Christ is done collaboratively across our congregations and conferences, ecumenically and with partners.

We are not alone. We are one body in Christ, each with different roles yet with shared purpose.

Through your generosity, we continue to grow ministries of imagination and possibility. While congregational giving supports ongoing ministries, individual support – like yours – further strengthens these ministries and enables us to be responsive to the emerging needs in the church with vision and boldness.

Thank you for being a part of this big tent we call the United Church of Christ.

In gratitude,

Michelle A. Carver, MBA
Director of Philanthropy

ST. JOHN'S

COMMUNITY CARE

Caring compassionately for aging and disabled people since 1985



Evangelical United Church of Christ in Highland is excited to announce a new partnership with [St. John's Community Care](#), an outreach ministry of St. John UCC in Collinsville. Their mission is simple yet powerful: *to make a positive difference in the lives of people facing the challenges of aging or disabilities.*

We are preparing to transform the EvUCC parsonage into a welcoming space for this vital ministry—a place of care, hope, and support for families in need. This is a beautiful example of stewardship: using what we have to serve others in Christ's name.

Currently, St. John's Community Care operates adult day centers in Collinsville and Edwardsville—and soon, in Highland! To learn more about their work, visit stjohnscc.org.

Other churches may wish to consider this vision of ministry partnership or explore ways to support this effort, such as providing supplies or volunteer help. For more details, contact **Kayla Abbott** or reach out to **St. John's Community Care** at 618-344-5008 or email info@stjohnscc.org.



Global Ministries

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
and the United Church of Christ

VOICES OF THE JOURNEY

No Justice, No Peace

"Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." — Matthew 3:2-3 Across the country, the call continues to rise: No justice, no peace. Justice and peace are inseparable—and yet both feel distant as communities face raids, violence, and deep uncertainty. We are in a Kairos moment, a wilderness that calls us to repentance,

vigilance, and courageous witness. Like the prophets before us, we press on toward the world God intends—where justice is real and peace is possible. Read the full reflection by the Rev. Shari Prestemon: <https://ow.ly/88xV50XFK3F>

Job Opening: Global Engagement and Logistics Manager Global Ministries is seeking a dynamic and detail-oriented Global Engagement and Logistics Manager to oversee the administration of the People-to-People Pilgrimage program, coordinate interpretation for staff, mission co-workers, and international partners throughout the life of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United Church of Christ and provide logistical support for organizational events. [Download job description](#)



This Month at the UN | Jan 6, 2026 1:00 PM

Join us to learn more about what the UCC does at the United Nations! Hear updates from the UCC Main Representative to the UN, Donna Bollinger, on program updates, our interfaith and ecumenical partners, and upcoming events. [Register](#)



Faith-Rooted Anti-Authoritarianism

Dec 10, 2025 12:00 PM CT

Many of you may likely saw the news story about the Rev. Jorge Bautista who was shot in the face with a pepper ball by an immigration officer while attending a prayer vigil. Bautista will be on our webinar panel discussion focused on Faith-Rooted Anti-Authoritarianism. Bautista will

be joined by Maria Stephan, who co-authored "Why Civil Resistance Works," and Brother Rodrigo Peret who resisted the Bolsonaro regime in Brazil and was arrested for anti-mining protests in Zimbabwe. Even if you cannot make the live event, still register, and we will send you a recording. [Register](#)

CLIMATE HOPE AFFILIATES NATIONAL WEBINAR

AN ADVENT MESSAGE OF JUSTICE AND HOPE

SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER
REV. DR. BENJAMIN CHAVIS, JR.

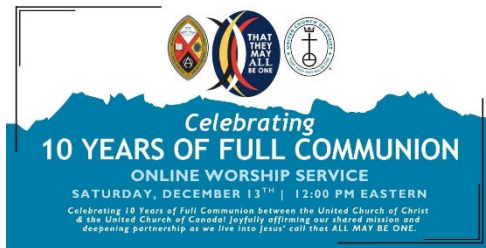
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE PIONEER



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2025 | 10 AM PT / 1 PM ET

Climate Hope Affiliates National Webinar

Get a sense of what Climate Hope Affiliates is all about while hearing from the Rev. Benjamin Chavis, Jr. Chavis is often credited with coining the phrase "environmental racism." Join Climate Hope Affiliates for its monthly national webinar on **Saturday, December 13th at 12 pm CT**. Chavis will deliver an Advent message. [Register](#)

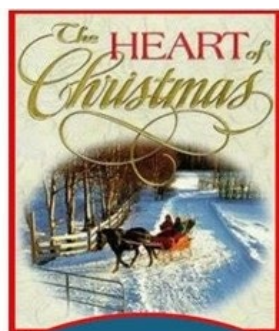


United Church of Christ & United Church of Canada 10th Year Anniversary Online Worship

Dec 13, 2025 11:00 AM in Central Time

The United Church of Christ (UCC) and the United Church of Canada (UCC Canada) entered into a formal full-communion agreement in 2015, following unanimous votes by both denominations. This full communion was affirmed by the UCC General Synod in June 2015 and by the UCC Canada General Council in August 2015, and was further celebrated through a joint worship service on October 17, 2015. [Register](#)

ISC Hunger Action Team - Facing Hunger in Your Community



Valmeyer Community Chorus
presents
THE HEART OF CHRISTMAS
Guest Choir - Valmeyer High
School Chorus
Sunday, December 14 - 5:00 p.m.
St. John UCC - Valmeyer
No admission fee - Goodwill offering
Donations of non-perishable food items will
also be accepted to benefit the Bi-County
Backpack Program

The Hunger Action Team would like to recognize St. John UCC, Valmeyer for its continued support of families in need.

St. John is hosting a Christmas Concert on December 14th at 5pm. There is no admission fee, but there will be a "Goodwill Offering" benefitting the Bi-County Backpack Program. Those attending this event are invited to bring nonperishable food items to share with St. John UCC, Maestown's Bi-County Backpack Program. Recipients are students in need from Valmeyer, Waterloo, Red Bud and Prairie Du Rocher. Students who qualify for free school breakfast and lunch don't have access to these free meals on weekends and holiday break. Children need the proper nutrition for their learning, development and growth. Heartfelt thanks to St. John, for serving others as stewards of God's Grace. Under the leadership of pastor and teacher, Rev. Steven Boorsma. Such a blessing!

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.

Gifting experiences over material things makes a longer lasting impact! Give a camper the gift of summer camp!

SUMMER CAMP EXPERIENCE

DBC MERCH

You can't go wrong with gifting DBC merch to someone who LOVES DuBois Center! Check out our online merchandise!

DuBois Center

GIFT GUIDE

In case you needed a few ideas.. DuBois Center put together a gift guide for you!

Summer experiences only require a \$50 non-refundable deposit down to secure your camper's spot and these impactful adventures can be found here: <https://duboiscenter.org/summer-camps/>

DuBois Center Merch benefits our Ministry and items can be found here: <https://www.bonfire.com/store/dubois-center-merch/>

We've already gotten our first 113 registrations for Summer Camp 2026! That's a month and 9 days ahead of last year's sign up!! DON'T WAIT to register!

We're *aiming* to have MORE next summer - more friendships, more experiences, more faith formation, and way more fun. If you're not already registered, head on over to <https://duboiscenter.org/summer-camps/> to find the right session for you.



2026
SUMMER CAMP
SCHEDULE

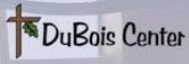
Registration Opens November 24th
Early Bird Registration ends February 14th

	MAIN CAMP	RUSTIC
June 14-19	*Discovery (1 st - 3 rd) Settler (3 rd - 5 th) **Quest (1 st - 3 rd) <i>Leadership in Training (11th - 12th)</i>	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) <i>Main Camp Cabins & Hickory Lodge</i>	
July 5-10	High School Week Drenched (9 th - 12 th) - Wrangler (9 th - 12 th) - X-Plore (9 th - 12 th) <i>All camps are on Rustic</i>	
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) <i>Main Camp Cabins & Hickory Lodge</i>	
August 7-8	Rainbow Camp ALL Ages Welcome! <i>Main Camp Cabins & Hickory Lodge</i>	

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



WE ARE HIRING

Join Our Team

Housekeeper
Flexible Hours
Scenic Work Environment

MORE INFO & APPLICATION AT:
<https://duboiscenter.org/support-staff/>

APPLY NOW



We are looking for a housekeeper to join us in our Ministry of Hospitality!
This part-time position is a critical piece of the experience we provide for our guests.
Flexible Hours! Gorgeous workplace views! For more information or to apply: <https://duboiscenter.org/support-staff/>



Spring Events

Join us at one of our spring events or retreats!
Registration opens January 1st, 2026

MARCH 7	Service Saturday Everyone is invited to lend a helping hand as we prepare our facilities for the spring season. We'll provide lunch; RSVP at duboiscenter.org/support-dubois/work-days/
MARCH 13-15	Women's Retreat Get the girls together or come on your own and make new friends! This retreat is all about relaxation and self-reflection! Choose a short getaway (Fri-Sat) or a longer stay (Fri-Sun).
APRIL 11	Father-Daughter Day Dads and Daughters - spend the day at DuBois Center! Enjoy camp fun - one on one: brunch, horses, crafts, canoeing and worship!
APRIL 24-26	Father-Son Retreat Join us for our annual Father-Son Retreat. Boating, horses, archery, fishing, games and plenty of guy time! Fathers, sons, grandfathers, uncles, nephews are welcome!
MAY 9	Ride Day Sign up for a ride time that fits your schedule best! 10:30 am: Arena Ride for ages 3-7 with parent walking alongside. \$18 per child. 100, 2:30, 4:00. Trail Ride for ages 8+. \$30 per rider.
MAY 9	Service Saturday Everyone is invited to lend a helping hand as we prepare our facilities for the summer season. We'll provide lunch; please RSVP at duboiscenter.org/support-dubois/work-days/

For information or to register, visit duboiscenter.org/retreats/dbc-retreats.

NOTE: RETREATS MAY BE CANCELLED IF FEWER THAN 15 PEOPLE REGISTER.

2026 DuBois Center Spring Event

[More Info Here](#)

Council for Health and Human Services Ministry News



Hoyleton's Hope for the Holidays

Interested in giving a child in need a brighter holiday season? You can drop off gifts at any of our donation bin locations!

Find the one closest to you here: <https://hoyleton.org/events/2025-hope-for-the-holidays/>

Shop the [Hope for the Holidays Wishlist](#)

Dear Friends of Uni Pres Kindercottage,

We are excited to invite you to our annual holiday program, **"Dear Santa."** Please join us as we celebrate this heartfelt season with a special performance presented by our little ones.

We are also delighted to welcome **special guests from Channel Nine PBS**, who will engage our children and families in festive seasonal activities that will make the evening even more memorable.

We look forward to sharing this joyful celebration with you and thanking you for your continued love and support.



...and

Thank you to everyone who has reached out to give to our children this holiday season. Your kindness is already making a heartfelt difference. For those who still wish to give, there is *still time*! We have several children on our list who have not yet been chosen, and your generosity could bring joy and warmth to their holidays.

If you are able to support a child this season, please contact Ms. Aimee

at aimee@unipreskindercottage.org for details.

Let's continue to light up our children's faces with joy as they celebrate this season of hope, love, and wonder.

With gratitude,

Aimee Hart, Executive Director

618-874-6505(work)

618-799-1417 (cell)



Hitz Home-Engraved Bricks and Tiles to Create Beautiful Permanent Stone Garden

Hitz Memorial Home is a faith-based non-profit 59-bed skilled nursing facility located in Alhambra, IL. The Board of Directors and its marketing committee is excited to offer you an opportunity to purchase personalized engraved bricks or tiles for a forthcoming stone garden. Individual, families, groups, organizations, and businesses are invited to take part in this project. Bricks and tiles can be purchased in honor or memory of loved ones, in recognition of special events, or to publicize

an organization or business. Donations given through December 31, 2025 will be matched up to a total of \$50,000 thanks to a generous donor. Learn more and find the order form [HERE](#).



The 2026 Mission Trip Calendar is officially open!

Wondering which dates are open?

[Click to view calendar](#)

Look for "Schedule your mission trip today!"

To reserve a date, please contact our volunteer coordinator using the button below!

Reserve Your Trip

Here!>>volunteercoordinator@thebackbaymission.org



Excitement for The Gathering: Many Gifts, One Spirit is building as a plethora of workshops are formulated for attendees. Thirty-five workshops will take place across the three days, including eight presenters CHHSM participants will find familiar. In addition, some of the 35 workshops will be led by staff from all five health and human service organizations. [ABOUT THE GATHERING](#)



Our ISC Churches News + Events

Longest Night Service

Sunday, December 21, 2025

4:00-5:00 p.m.

St. John United Church of Christ
307 West Clay Street
Collinsville, IL 62234
www.stjohnucc-collinsville.org

This quiet, contemplative time of reflection and perspective offers a safe haven, a holy space for those who participate to find support, care, and compassion in the embrace of Christ.

*Leading this service are Rev. Dr. Don Wagner,
Rev. Jennifer Sowell, Carolyn Catalano,
and musicians Christine Brewer (soprano) and Jennifer King (piano/organ).*

Please plan on joining us in this Longest Night Service.
You are welcome here.



If you are reading a print version of the ISC *Weekly Connection*, consider scanning the QR code or click [HERE](#) and subscribe to receive upcoming issues straight to your email inbox. Not only does this ensure you won't miss an issue but it gives opportunity to click on the links to full articles, webinar registration sites, and more. It only takes a minute to sign up. Reach out to Missy at 618-654-2125 or mloyet@iscucc.org with any questions or with news for the upcoming 12/16/25 holiday issue which will combine the 12/16/25 and 12/23/25 *Weekly Connections*.

Opportunities + Resources

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

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

[Part-time Bookkeeper - St. John UCC Fairview Heights](#)

[Part-time Facilities Manager - St. Paul UCC Belleville](#)

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](#)

