



Registration for the ISC Annual Meeting is now open!



Join Us for our ISC Annual Meeting!

Our Annual Meeting of the Illinois South United Church of Christ will be held on **Saturday, October 17, 2026** at Salem UCC, 1117 W. North Street, Alhambra, IL 62001.

This Annual Meeting presents a wonderful opportunity for our Conference to unite, cultivate community, and engage in discussions about issues that impact our collective experience

within the Church. We will gather and joyfully discern under the theme of "Counting the Cost in all seasons" (-Luke 14: 27-28) to engage clergy, delegates, and visitors in discussing the important issues facing our Conference while participating in uplifting worship.

Our meeting will again be anchored by the dedicated gathering space of the Covenantal Commons (formerly the MarketPlace) connecting us with our ministry partners as we co-create a just world through shared resources, ministries, and investments.

Follow the link to secure your spot >> [Register online](#)

Download the [Registration Form](#) to register my mail

AGENDA

8:30 am Doors Open

9:00 – 9:15 am Opening Session

9:15 – 9:30 am Break/Visit the **Covenantal Commons**

9:30 – 10:30 am Opening Worship

10:30 – 10:45 am State of the Conference Address

10:45 – 11:00 am Introduction to our Covenantal Conversations

11:00 – 11:45 am Break/Visit the **Covenantal Commons**

11:15 – 11:45 am Covenantal Conversations

11:45 am – 1:00 pm Lunch/Visit the **Covenantal Commons**

1:00 – 2:00 pm Gathering in the sanctuary

- Covenantal Conversation Feedback, DuBois Center Report, Financial Presentation

2:00 – 2:15 pm Break/Visit the **Covenantal Commons**

2:15 – 3:00 pm Covenantal Conversations

3:00 – 3:15 pm Gathering in the Sanctuary-Covenantal Conversation Feedback

3:15 – 4:00 pm Business Session - Presentation from Nominating Committee, Voting on the 2027 Proposed Slate of Nominees, Voting of the 2027 Proposed Budget

4:00 – 4:15 pm Break/Visit the **Covenantal Commons**

4:15 pm Closing Blessing & Commission

More information to follow on our [website](#). Stay tuned!

Please Remember in Your Prayers this Week...



Zion Evangelical UCC, Hoyleton-

Rev. Sharon Patton



Friedens UCC, Irvington-

Rev. Stacy (Mark) Tate

Pastor Nick (Jennifer) Luer

Retired Pastor- Rev. Fred (Shirley) Wehrenberg

[Submit prayer requests here](#)

UCC Global, National, + Regional News



Flood-affected Devighat in Nuwakot district, Nepal, on August 30, 2026. Photos and stories from ACT member FCA's work in Nepal after climate change caused a glacier to split, and the resulting flash flood killed over 1000 people in Nepal and China.

An Appeal for Help for Nepal after Flooding

by [Renee DeLuca](#) | published on Sep 8, 2026

On August 26, 2026, [the ground supporting a glacier in the Himalayan mountains gave way](#), causing a major avalanche of ice and rock to fall into the Bhote Koshi River. The debris caused a dam to form in the river, which suddenly and violently gave way, releasing a torrent of water and debris that flooded the Bhote Koshi and Trishuli river valleys, severely affecting communities in Rasuwa, Nuwakot, Gorkha and Dhading. The result was devastating.

As of September 8, over 1,357 people have died and nearly 5,000 persons remain missing. In addition, schooling has been disrupted for 9,732 children. Community health facilities, health posts, and hospitals in the impacted area have all experienced significant structural damage.

The United Church of Christ, through the [Global HOPE](#) team and [Global Ministries](#), is [actively supporting the relief and response activities](#) of ACT Alliance and our local Global Ministries partners who are providing shelter, food and nutrition, WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene), education, and mental and psychosocial support for affected communities. The UCC has launched an urgent appeal to deliver critical life-saving aid to help meet immediate humanitarian needs while supporting long-term recovery efforts. [Read full article](#)

(Please send support to the link above and not to the Illinois South Conference office to ensure resources are available most expeditiously.)

Here are a few moments from Rev. Christy Smith's Farewell Service held at Trenton UCC on Sunday, September 6.

God's blessings upon Rev. Christy and Trenton UCC!



Join us to Celebrate



Pastor Bob

On September 13, 2026 Pastor Bob will lead his last worship service at St John UCC. After 37 years of faithful service to our congregation and the village of New Athens, we would like to invite family, friends, and the community to join us in an open house to help us celebrate his retirement.

September 13, 2026 Worship 10:00am St John UCC
Open house to follow till 4pm The Bullpen Bar and Grill

Music from The St Louis Stompers

Appetizers, tea, coffee, & cake provided
Questions, please call Susan in the Church office 618-475-2947

St John UCC 301 S Market St New Athens IL 62264	The Bullpen Bar And Grill 101 N Van Buren New Athens IL 62264
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**St. John UCC
New Athens
invites you
to join in
celebrating the
retirement of
Rev. Dr. Robert
Koch**



Please join us as we celebrate the

INSTALLATION SERVICE OF

Pastor David Edwards



SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20TH @ 3^{PM}

Fellow clergy are invited to arrive at 2:45pm to robe & wear their favorite stole. Light reception immediately following.



GOOD SHEPHERD OF FAITH UCC | 1514 KANSAS AVE | EAST ST. LOUIS, ILLINOIS 62201

Clergy Workshop Next Monday, September 14 4:00 - 5:30 pm
Register by September 10

Dear ISC Clergy,

The Justice and Mission Team has created a unique opportunity for us to gather as colleagues for a timely and important workshop exploring how the principles of Christian Nationalism often stand in direct contradiction to the core teachings and witness of Jesus Christ.

Our presenter, Rev. Hannah Kardon, a United Methodist pastor with roots in the United Church of Christ, will offer valuable insights into how churches can clearly distinguish themselves from messages of hate and exclusion that are driving many people away from the church. Together, we will explore how we can instead embody the welcoming love and transformative message of Jesus found in the Gospels.

Clergy Workshop on Christian Nationalism

featuring Rev. Hannah Kardon

Monday, September 14th
4 pm to 5:30 pm
via ZOOM

hosted by the ISC
Justice & Mission Team

Register by September 10th
email dkesner@iscucc.org

ISC
JUSTICE
& MISSION
helping to be the good



This free workshop, originally scheduled for Monday, August 10, has been rescheduled for **Monday, September 14, from 4:00–5:30 p.m. via Zoom.**

Because this workshop will be interactive, with opportunities for participants to ask questions and reflect on their own experiences in ministry settings, we will not record our time together. This will help us create a braver space for honest conversation and sharing.

I encourage you to join us for what promises to be an engaging time of learning, conversation, and reflection—one that I hope will strengthen and enrich your ministry.

Because we will not be publicly sharing the Zoom link, and our presenter would like to know how many people will be attending, please **email Debbie Kesner at dkesner@iscucc.org by noon on Thursday, September 10**, to let her know that you plan to attend. Debbie will then send the Zoom link to everyone who has registered.

If you have questions or would like additional information, please feel free to contact me directly at sjohnson@iscucc.org. I hope you will join us, and I look forward to seeing you online on Monday, September 14.

Rev. Shana Johnson

September - National Suicide Prevention Month

Blessed Hope

by [Sarah Lund](#) | published on Sep 3, 2026

Where does your hope come from? The psalmist says, “For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from God” (Psalm 62:5). But what if there’s no time to wait? And what if waiting in silence is unbearably lonely?

For people living with disabilities and mental health experiences such as depression and anxiety, hope can feel far away. If hope is gone, does that mean God is gone, too?

Here’s what we need to know: depression is like a great big pink school eraser of hope. Imagine a piece of lined paper where all of your hopes and dreams are written down in pencil. Depression comes in with its big eraser and says it’s all wrong. Depression says you are not good enough.

Depression says you don’t deserve any of the good stuff. Then, depression gets to work erasing everything you hoped and dreamed about. All you have left is a messy piece of paper with smudged eraser marks and maybe a small tear in the page where the eraser went a little too hard.

Where does hope come from when it has been erased by depression? When my hope is gone, I need the support of others. I need someone else to remind me that depression erased my hope, but hope can and will return. Hope has been returned to me with the help of family, friends, therapists, spiritual directors, and mentors. I believe God works through the people in my life to help renew my hope.

September is National Suicide Prevention Month and September 8th is known as “988 Day,” a time to share hope through this life-saving 24/7 text and call lifeline. 988 is a free and confidential resource to help you when your hope is lost. 988 Day is also the same day my new book releases, (co-written with UCC Indiana-Kentucky Conference Minister, the Rev. Dr. Chad Abbott), *Blessed Hope: 90 Daily Devotionals for Mental Health and Faith*. We wrote this book together as a reminder of our need for one another, as people of faith, in our search for God and a more hopeful tomorrow.

I suggest a friendly amendment to the Psalmist resolution to seek God alone and in silence. Instead, let’s seek God together and break the silence about the ways our lives are touched by depression. We are not alone. Hope will come again. It’s a text to 988 and just a conversation away.

988 Day resource: [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline | SAMHSA](#)
[Blessed Hope: 90 Daily Devotionals for Mental Health and Faith](#)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

[The Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund serves as the Minister for Disabilities and Mental Health Justice for the United Church of Christ.](#)

[View this and other columns on the UCC’s Witness for Justice page.](#)

[Donate](#) to support Witness for Justice.

[Click here](#) to download the bulletin insert.



Neighbors in Need Special Mission Offering

Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a Special Mission Offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion in the United States. The Neighbors in Need offering supports ministries of justice and compassion, with one-third of the offering given to the Council for American Indian Ministries and the remaining two-thirds supporting UCC justice ministries. In 2025 the Neighbors in Need Offering supported 26 grant recipients across the UCC who were engaged in projects of direct service and advocacy. In 2026, the suggested offering date is **October 4**, but churches collect the offering for a month or any other season throughout the year. Thank you for your support and generosity!



New Children's Ministry

Friedens Irvington is starting "Bible Stories with Judy", a new YouTube series bringing short, gentle retellings of Bible stories to children and families. Each video is 2-5 minutes long.

Hosted by retired teacher and longtime church member Judy, each episode walks through a familiar Bible story in a way that is warm, age-appropriate, and rooted in the values of God's wide, unconditional love for all people. Episodes so far include the Creation story, Adam naming the animals, Noah and the flood, and the story of Abraham and Sarah, with new stories added regularly. We are happy to share this resource with our fellow UCC congregations because we believe it can be useful well beyond our own church. Bible Stories with Judy is free to use and share however is helpful to you and your community. New videos are released every Friday. To be notified as new episodes go live, subscribe on YouTube

at youtube.com/@irvingtonucc.

The full, growing library of Bible Stories with Judy episodes can also be found anytime at irvingtonucc.com/biblestories.

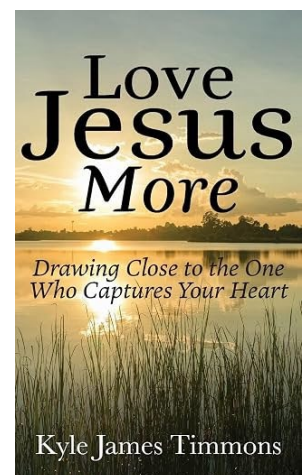
ISC Pastor Releases First Book

Pastor Kyle Timmons at St. Paul UCC in Waterloo, IL released his first book earlier in August.

You believe in Jesus. You serve Him. But do you truly love Him most?

You attend church, serve faithfully, and believe the right things. But something feels quietly off. There is a gap between what you profess and what your heart actually treasures. You love comfort. You love approval. You love the life you have built. None of these things are sinful, but somewhere along the way, they slipped into the place only Jesus was meant to fill. You are not rebellious. You are not walking away. You are just slowly drifting, and you can feel it.

In [Love Jesus More: Drawing Closer to the One Who Captures Your Heart](#), minister Kyle Timmons offers a disarmingly honest confession: he preached Jesus, served Jesus, and believed in Jesus, but secretly loved other things more. Rooted in the Apostle Paul's stunning declaration in Philippians 3:8, this book traces a path from divided affection to wholehearted devotion. Timmons does not pile on guilt or demand more discipline. Instead, he invites you to see Jesus so clearly that every competing love loses its grip. This is not about trying harder. It is about treasuring deeper.



Inside this book, you will discover:

- Why good things quietly become ultimate things, and how to recognize the subtle drift before it defines you
- How beholding the supremacy and beauty of Christ reawakens genuine, lasting affection
- A path from dutiful faith to a living, joyful surrender that transforms every part of your life

For the weary believer, the wandering heart, and anyone hungry for a faith that is alive rather than merely routine, this book is a window back to the surpassing worth of knowing Jesus.

If you are interested in purchasing a copy, you may [click here](#). Books are also available on Barnes and Noble, Walmart, and other online book retailers.

GriefShare Support Group

Are you or someone you know grieving the loss of a loved one? You/they don't have to walk that journey alone. GriefShare is a 13-week program and caring support group that offers hope, understanding, and companionship for those navigating loss. The fall session will be hosted on Mondays, starting on September 14, at Evangelical United Church of Christ in Highland. GriefShare provides practical tools, encouraging discussion, and support from people who understand what you're going through.

To learn more or register, call 618-654-7459. Registration is also available online: [Evangelical United Church of Christ GriefShare - GriefShare](#)



Consider joining us or passing along the information to someone you know who is grieving a loss.

Mondays - Sept. 14 - Dec. 14
6:00 - 8:00 pm
Evangelical United Church of Christ
2520 Poplar Street, Highland
For more information call 618-654-7459

September 20th: Just Peace Sunday

Each year, the United Church of Christ recognizes the Sunday before International Day of Prayer for Peace as Just Peace Sunday. We take this Sunday to renew our commitment to our Just Peace vision. This year, we gather around the theme "God's Economy: People Over Profit". Stay tuned for more worship resources [here](#).



JUST PEACE
SUNDAY 9.20.2026

God's Economy: People Over Profit
"I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you... The last will be first, and the first will be last." Matthew 20:14-16

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Fall 2026 Eden Seminary Ministry Cohorts!

Ministry cohorts allow you to sample many theological themes, offering peer learning with your ministry context in mind. Scholars have chosen a specific lens on a particular topic and share their expertise through digital content you watch on your own time. Four monthly online meetings are interspersed, where you and your cohort members gather for facilitated discussion with an experienced church leader.

Cohorts support lifelong learning and are for anyone—authorized clergy, chaplains, Christian educators, lay leaders and anyone interested in the topic. UCC members will recognize the Marks for Ministry woven throughout the cohorts, though anyone from any denomination, or no denomination, is welcome to attend.

Fall 2026 Themes

- Spiritual Care Basics for Lay People
- Race, Class and Gender in the Forgotten Creed
- United Church of Christ History and Polity
- Spiritual Care for the Unhoused
- Gender and Sexuality in the Bible



MINISTRY COHORTS

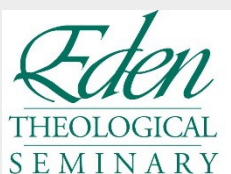
FALL 2026
Expand Your Range

6+ makes a cohort, so bring a friend!

Theological Themes • Peer Learning • Ministry Context

Fall 2026 Eden Ministry Cohorts

Upcoming Boundary Trainings approved by Illinois South Conference Committee on Ministry



Beyond Don't Sleep with the Sheep: Boundary Training for Clergy
Friday, September 11 9:00AM - 3:00PM CT via Online Together, we'll look at power and positional authority, historical impact, and our roles as leaders within congregations and the communities we are called to serve. [Register](#)



A boundary awareness training for members in discernment and authorized ministers of the UCC. **Thursday, November 19, 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM CST** via Zoom and the Damascus Project Learning Network. [Register](#) by November 17.



Led by the UCC's Ministerial Excellence, Support & Authorization Team (MESA) This training is recommended for retired clergy and for pastors who are preparing for retirement. **Thursday, October 15, 1:00 – 4:00pm CT**, Boundary Training for Retired Clergy; register [here](#), with the Revs. Tara Barber and Melanie Oommen.



Boundary Training for Authorized Ministers Registration closes when limits are reached. All trainings are spread out over two days and take place from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. CT each day. **November 5 & 12, November 17 & 18** Links for more [information](#) and to [register](#).

CMP will host Converging 2026: Sing It in Louisville, Kentucky

October 7–10 This gathering offers continuing education opportunities for pastors and ministry leaders, professional development for worship leaders, and personal inspiration for songwriters and others passionate about music and ministry.

[Converging 2026: Sing It](#) (click this link for more information)

Second, CMP is currently offering a free one-month trial membership for individuals and churches. This is a wonderful opportunity to explore the music, videos, and other resources available through their platform.

[Free Trial Membership](#) (click this for more information)

CMP's Converging conference- It's a gathering for progressive Christian musicians, songwriters, worship directors, and for anyone interested in finding, sharing, and creating the songs our communities need right now.

Register today at cmpconverging.com

**CMP
CONVERG-
ING 2026**

SING THROUGH IT!

A gathering for anyone who wants to find, share, and create the songs our communities need to help us **sing through** challenging times.



LOUISVILLE, KY | OCTOBER 7-10, 2026
REGISTER AT [CMPCONVERGING.COM](https://cmpconverging.com)

Run with Purpose. Join Team CWS!

Church World Service

2026 Indianapolis Monumental Marathon

Saturday, November 7, 2026

CWS is proud to be an official charity partner of the 2026 Indianapolis Monumental Marathon on **November 7, 2026**. Through Team CWS, participants can run a Full Marathon while raising funds to support CWS programs around the world and the local work of CWS Indianapolis.

Team CWS runners receive a racing singlet or t-shirt, coaching support from Olympic Trials qualifier Evan Gaynor, access to a private race-day tent, a pre-race team meal, and fundraising support from CWS staff.

[Full Marathon](#) , [Download flyer here.](#)



Pension Boards

Because of Ministry... Together for Tomorrow

Tuesday, September 22 2:00 pm CT

Join the Pension Boards and National Ministries for an engaging conversation about the Together for Tomorrow shared legacy initiative and the power of planned giving to sustain ministry for generations to come. Learn how planned giving creates a lasting legacy of faith and service. Gain insights into national trends and hear from planned giving donors and professionals on ways you can secure your legacy and sustain ministry through FreeWill. Register Now! <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/6WtJhjbMS3qi7ATbSw4NLg...>





July 2026 CWS Disaster Bucket project at Evangelical UCC of Highland, IL

A Message from Priscilla Self, Conference Disaster Response Coordinator—

Church World Service now offers a “Host a Party with a Purpose” option to assemble Kits and Cleanup Buckets.

Whether it's a youth group, Rally Day, mission project, school club, or birthday with meaning—Party Packs are a joyful way to serve together - turn compassion into action; pack some love.

Go to <https://cwskits.org/party-packs/> for all the information about this including an order form. Complete the order form and CWS will ship to you all the supplies needed for these Kits and Buckets: (allow three weeks for delivery after your order is received) Hygiene Kits – Case of 24 \$168.00, Period Packs – Case of 10 \$162.50, Kids Kits (School supplies) – Case of 12 \$162.00

These Kits include packing boxes and prepaid return shipping labels —just drop completed boxes off at your local FedEx facility. Clean-up Buckets – supplies for 36 buckets \$2,160.00

The buckets need to be delivered to a CWS depot and there is still time to order, organize and assemble buckets for the Oct. 10, 2026 drop off at the St. Louis location listed below. Or click the button for additional depot info.

St. Louis, Missouri LifeWise STL

1321 South 11th Street, St. Louis, MO, 63104

Dropoff Dates and Times: First Saturday in October - 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM Contact: Krescene Beck, krescenebeck@gmail.com

Church World Service Drop Off Locations and Dates



Global Ministries

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



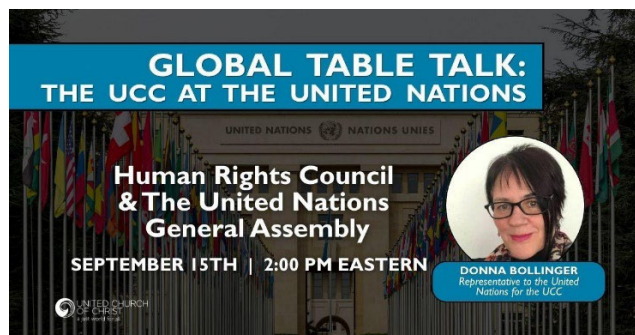
Global Table Talk: The UCC @ The United Nations - Human Rights Council & the UN General Assembly

Sep 15, 2026 01:00 PM Central Time

Join the United Church of Christ UN Team for the first webinar in our new monthly series, Global Table Talk: The UCC @ The United Nations.

In this September conversation, we'll explore current developments at the United Nations, with a focus on the UN Human Rights Council and the United Nations General Assembly. Learn more about how the UCC is engaging in these global spaces, the issues and conversations shaping this work, and why they matter to our shared commitment to building a just world for all.

[Read More and Register](#)



30th Anniversary Gala

Saturday, November 7, 2026 | 6:00 PM – 10:00 PM

Get ready for a spectacular evening as we celebrate 30 years of impact and giving! Join us at our **30th Anniversary Gala on November 7, 2026, in Indianapolis**. This milestone event will bring together friends, partners, and supporters for a night of celebration! More details on the event will be forthcoming — mark your calendars now!

Reservations will open soon! We look forward to celebrating our past, embracing the present, and embracing a future of continued growth and impact.



The Hunger Action Team would like to recognize REGION 2 CHURCHES for sharing “BLESSING BOX” LOCATIONS in their community.

The Hunger Action Team would like to recognize REGION 2 CHURCHES for sharing “BLESSING BOX” LOCATIONS in their community. These mini pantries provide 24 hour access to nonperishable food and toiletries. The “Blessing Box” at Friedens UCC in Hecker has been used frequently. Fortunately, many local people/organizations continue to replenish the food and toiletries as needed. Friedens UCC is under the leadership of pastor and teacher, Rev. Carol Shanks. Heartfelt thanks to Tina Diener for sharing a list of “Blessing Boxes” in the ISC Region 2.



Pictured (L-R): Sandy Ruhmann and Tina Diener with their “Blessing Box”.

ALL ISC CHURCHES ARE INVITED TO SHARE BLESSING BOX LOCATIONS IN THEIR AREA. Please help spread the word - you never know who may need to know these resources are available 24/7.

United Church of Christ

Region 2 Blessing Boxes

Unless noted, all blessing boxes are open 24 hours, 7 days a week.

Town	Location
Columbia	St. Paul UCC
	Columbia Middle School
Dupo	MOMS on a Mission, 440 McBride Ave.
Hecker	Friedens UCC, 240 E Monroe St, *behind the fellowship hall
Red Bud	St. Peter UCC, 415 Madison St.
	Community Closet, 425 W. Market
Waterloo	St. Paul UCC, near the parking lot entrance on Main St.
	Morrison-Talbott Library, inside, available during library hours
	Monroe County Annex, 901 Illinois Ave, front of building

Please email Tina at tdiener5678@gmail.com with questions, additions or updates.

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...

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



The graphic for the Mother-Daughter Retreat 2026 features a central title in a decorative frame. Above the title are three icons: a box of assorted chocolates, a brown square with a white cross and the text 'DuBois Center', and a stack of chocolate bars. Below the title are three small photos showing people enjoying the retreat. The text below the photos states the 2026 theme is 'How Sweet are God's Promises' and encourages bringing a sweet tooth. A dark banner provides the dates (Fri Oct. 9 - Sun Oct. 11, 6:00PM - 11:00AM) and location (DUBOIS CENTER, 2651 Quarry Rd, DuBois, IL). At the bottom, there is a registration button, a phone number (618-357-1809), and a website link (duboiscenter.org/retreats/dbc-retreats/).

Mother - Daughter
RETREAT 2026

Our 2026 theme is "How Sweet are God's Promises".
So, bring your sweet tooth and be ready to bite into
scriptural promises!

Fri Oct. 9 - Sun Oct. 11
6:00PM 11:00AM

DUBOIS CENTER
2651 Quarry Rd, DuBois, IL

REGISTRATION 618-357-1809 duboiscenter.org/retreats/dbc-retreats/

Mother-Son is November One!!!

Enjoy camp activities, time to relax in nature, and
quality time together!

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



The graphic for Mother Son Day at DuBois Center has a blue and white header. It includes the event name, the date (November 1, 2026), and contact information (website, email, and registration closing date). Below the header is a photo of a woman and two boys smiling outdoors.

Mother Son Day
at DuBois Center

duboiscenter.org/retreats/dbc-retreats
November 1, 2026
Registration closes 10/18/2026
register@duboiscenter.org

Hello,

We hope this email finds you well! Fall Festival at DuBois Center is fast approaching, and we can't do it without LOTS of wonderful volunteers like YOU. Consider joining us on Sunday, October 4 to help with Horses, Soda Stand, Sweet Treats, Kids' Corner, Hayrides, and more. We also need help with set up on Saturday, October 3.

Sign up to volunteer by Friday, September 25:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C084DA4AD28A2FCC34-65007262-2026>

Thanks for your consideration - Hope to see you there!

Breanne Beisiegel, Fall Festival Volunteer Coordinator

DuBois Center

2651 Quarry Road, DuBois, Illinois 62831 Office Phone: (618) 787-2202

DuBois Center is the Camp and Retreat Center of the Illinois South Conference of the United Church of Christ

**FALL
FESTIVAL**
DuBois Center

FALL FESTIVAL Sunday, Oct 4 from 11-5
DuBois Center

Family-friendly event!
Admission & parking are free, and there's something for everyone to enjoy. Gather your friends and family!

Food Trucks, Live Music, Rope Making, Kids Korner, Pony & Hay Rides, Silent Auction, and **OVER 40 CRAFTERS & ARTISANS!**

2651 Quarry Rd. DuBois, IL
www.DuBoisCenter.org

DuBois Center
The Camp and Retreat Center of the Illinois South Conference of the United Church of Christ



Fall Festival Auction Baskets Drop Off! Come Out & Bid!

Folks, we hope your congregations and church boards will be putting together an auction basket this year! Donations of baskets for the Silent Auction at DuBois's Fall Festival **October 4** which, combined with your imaginative spirits, yield good returns Fall Fest participants cannot resist. Again, we appreciate your support of DuBois in this way and look forward to seeing soon! Thank you!!!!

Council for Health & Human
Services Ministries News



CHHSM Invites Workshop Proposals for 2027 Annual Gathering in Houston

Dear Friends,

The 2027 CHHSM 89th Annual Gathering takes place March 16-18, 2027, in Houston at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, Houston-Greenway Plaza and, as in years past, among the highlights will be workshops!

CHHSM currently is accepting proposals for workshops for the Annual Gathering, and we invite you to submit a workshop proposal related to our theme. The deadline for proposals is **September 15**, and we will communicate selections in October.



Annual Gathering workshops will help attendees explore the theme, To the Stars through Difficulties, and build professional skills. Your agency's courage, inspiration, and community collaboration can help other CHHSM organizations jumpstart their own innovations, so we encourage you to submit a workshop proposal.

Moving forward with courage and hope is the emphasis of the Annual Gathering, and aligns with the theme. "To the Stars through Difficulties" recalls not only Houston's nickname—Space City— but the work of our CHHSM agencies. It evokes the hope and courage our CHHSM agencies embody, while acknowledging the challenges they face. In spite of increasingly difficult circumstances, CHHSM members serve with passion, compassion, and resilience.

The Annual Gathering will be anchored by its focus scripture, Isaiah 58. Workshop presenters, keynoters, and preachers are able to choose from the whole of Isaiah in drawing inspiration.

Join us at the 2027 CHHSM Annual Gathering and experience inspiring worship, captivating keynotes, engaging workshops, and valuable networking opportunities. Combined, these elements will ignite fresh ideas and new partnerships.

The Annual Gathering Task Force is working hard to make the Annual Gathering the best meeting ever! We anticipate that registration will open during the fall.

Look for emails with additional details as they become available. We also will post them on [our website](#).

We look forward to your workshop proposal submissions!

Together,

The CHHSM Team

Council for Health and Human Service Ministries, UCC

PO Box 91456

Cleveland, OH 44101

216.736.2250

Back Bay Mission Musicians with a Mission is back, and this year, it's better than ever!

September 24, 2026

6:00 PM

Ground Zero Blues Club Biloxi

It's going to be one BIG dance party with incredible live music, delicious food, great people, and plenty of exciting ways to support the transformative programs at Back Bay Mission.

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

One of the easiest ways to help us reach our \$25,000 goal is by becoming a Friend of the Music! (formerly our Friends of the Mission sponsorship)

This sponsorship includes:

- A 2026 Musicians with a Mission event T-shirt
- A virtual link to watch the event live from anywhere!
- Your name recognized during the event
- A special thank-you in the following edition of our newsletter, Changing Tides, and Annual Report.



[Become a Friends of the Music Sponsor](#)

[Get tickets](#)



St. John's Community Care is in Highland IL - New Signage

We are thrilled to offer a much needed service to the Highland community and now we are even easier to find with our new beautiful sign! Please stop by or give us a call if you'd like to learn more about what we do! 618-344-5008 or 618-975-6565
2420 Poplar St. Highland, IL 62249



Supporting Growth at Every Age, is happening on September 13th 2026 at 10:45am, and we'd love for you to be part of it.

This fun and inclusive .1K event is designed so that everyone can participate, whether you walk, run, roll, cheer from the sidelines, or simply come out to support the community.

We're also thrilled to partner with The Learning Tree for this special event, bringing together two organizations committed to supporting individuals and families across the Metro-East community.

Proceeds from the event will help strengthen programs and services that support students, older adults, individuals with disabilities, caregivers, and families throughout our region.

Whether you've participated in one of our events before or are simply looking for a meaningful and lighthearted way to support the community, we hope you'll mark your calendar now.

Registration details can be found [here](https://charity.pledgeit.org/SupportingGrowth) and on our website coming soon!

Thank you for helping us continue building a more supportive, connected community for all ages and abilities.

Are you interested in making a difference in your community and boosting your business? Don't miss out on this fantastic sponsorship opportunity! <https://charity.pledgeit.org/SupportingGrowth>



Our ISC Churches News + Events



O'Fallon UCC invites one and all to attend:

Kevin Chunko, from St. Louis, is an organist, accompanist, and former organ tuner/voicer. He regularly presents organ programs, sharing a love for organ works which demonstrate excellence in the craft of composition. He formerly served as University Organist and Vocal Accompanist at Illinois Wesleyan University where he collaborated with choral conductor J. Scott Ferguson regularly. In his organ building experience from the past, he trained in voicing under Leonard G. Berghaus. Having served multiple organ builders, he was involved in voicing and tonal finishing of several new pipe organs. Kevin holds a Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degree in organ performance. Additionally, he completed course studies in the doctoral organ program at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign with organist Dana Robinson.

Kevin Chunko will present an organ recital on Sunday, Sept 27 at 3pm in the O'Fallon UCC sanctuary (206 W. Adams St). Music will showcase our Berghaus organ--including organ works by Johann Sebastian Bach, Aguilera, Frescobaldi, Felix Mendelssohn, and Charles-Marie Widor.



Evangelical UCC - Highland

ANNUAL SAUSAGE SUPPER DRIVE-THRU ONLY

Saturday, October 3

Noon-7pm

2520 Poplar St. Highland, IL

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

\$15/Dinner

Cash, Check or Credit
Cards accepted

**For questions call
618-654-7459**



RISE: Break of Day Retreat

ISC Winter Youth Event

Save the Date!

January 15 - 17th, 2027

All youth in 6th - 12th grades are invited to attend this ISC youth event at our camp, DuBois Center (2651 Quarry Rd., DuBois, IL)

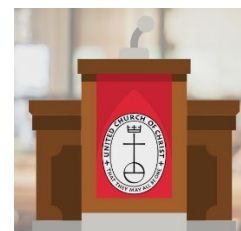
The night is over. The horizon is waiting. There is a universal magic in the sunrise—that specific moment when the darkness finally pulls back, the air clears, and suddenly, everything feels possible again. In January, we'll be heading into the woods to experience that reset for ourselves.

RISE: Break of Day is about stripping away the noise of everyday life to find some much-needed clarity. Whether you're a middle schooler navigating who you are or a high schooler looking at what's next, the sunrise meets you exactly where you are.

If inclement weather causes us to postpone this event, it will be held on February 13th -15th

Are you interested in serving as Pulpit Supply?

Reach out via email to the
ISC Committee
on Ministry Co-chairs:
Rev. Lisa Hart- lisa@revhart.net
Mark Walz- mewalz5925@hotmail.com



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](#)

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

[Contemporary Band Leader - St. Paul UCC Waterloo](#)

[Contemporary Keyboard Musician - St. Paul UCC Waterloo](#)

[Part-Time Administrative Assistant - St. John's UCC Smithton](#)

[Part-Time Behavioral Health Nurse - Hoyleton Youth & Family Services](#)

[Part-Time Faith Community Nurse - Deaconess Nurse Ministry](#)

[Director of Nursing - Hitz Memorial Home](#)

If you are reading a print version of the *ISC Weekly Connection*, consider scanning the QR code 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, videos 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 *Weekly Connection*.



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-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

