



Marty Kemper

Something to Ponder on the Lenten Journey, A Gift of DuBois Center & Green DuBois

A Lenten Devotional written for and dedicated to
DuBois Center,
the camp and retreat center of the Illinois South Conference
of the United Church of Christ
and to introduce a new initiative
Green DuBois,
which celebrates, honors and shares the wonder of
the biodiversity of God found in this sacred setting

*Written by Donald C. Wagner
Photographs by Angela Hausmann, Marty Kemper, Scott Kuether,
Jason Petry and other DuBois Center Photographers
Edited by Jill Baker*

Foreword

*'Never make a suggestion in a Committee meeting
that you are not willing to take on and complete.'*

That is the lesson I have learned here . . . and it is a lesson I have delighted in undertaking. In a small group meeting of those interested in the Green DuBois initiative several months ago, our Chairperson, Dr. Jill Baker, asked for suggestions which might assist in getting the word out about Green DuBois into the churches and the wider world. First suggestions had to do with developing a website, creating a Facebook page, having Green DuBois ambassadors reach out into the churches and communities of our Conference, contacting the Missouri Botanical Garden, the University of Illinois Extension Service and a wide variety of other Master Gardener, bird watcher and botanist groups. In each case, the desire is to promote DuBois Center as a hotbed of year-round biodiversity which, until now, has largely gone unnoticed, undiscovered and undeveloped as a sacred trust.

With the perseverance and dedication of Mr. Marty Kemper, whose research, photographs and direction have opened up the biologically diverse treasure chest of DuBois Center to the world, not only has the Green DuBois Committee and the DuBois Staff become keenly aware of the gifts around us in this place, but there is a heartfelt desire to share these wonders with the wider community. DuBois Center is a one-of-a-kind setting where 'Church' happens all the time and now the congregation has the potential to be expanded in a very intentional, stewardship-focused and environmentally-friendly manner. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to Mr. Marty Kemper for his untiring work and kind guidance to this difficult task. We also owe a similar debt of gratitude to Dr. Jill Baker for recognizing in Marty's work the potential which is just down the trails, across the lake, next to the cabins and near the horse barn of DuBois Center. When either of them speaks of this adventure, they smile from ear-to-ear, inviting those with whom they speak into another world of wonder. Thank you both!!

The Lenten Devotional, Something to Ponder on the Lenten Journey, A Gift of DuBois Center & Green DuBois, is the result of making a suggestion at the end of meeting and having the Chairperson simply and powerfully look at you and say, "Good idea. Will you take care of that?" How does anyone ever tell Dr. Jill Baker 'No'? I certainly couldn't. Neither could the photographers whose work is on showcase throughout this work.

Many, many thanks to Mr. Martin Kemper, Mr. Jason Petry and Ms. Angela Hausmann and other DuBois Center photographers for sharing their visions and understandings of DuBois Center as seen through the unblinking lens of a camera. Hundreds of photographs have been distilled to arrive at these few for this devotional – and this is just a sampling of what DuBois Center is year-round, patiently awaiting your personal visit.

So this serves, too, as your invitation to experience God, in the Presence of Jesus Christ and in the Power of the Holy Spirit as only DuBois Center and Green DuBois might offer their insights and understandings on this holy ground. Come, everyone is welcome here!

The scriptural basis for each of the daily devotionals is a verse from the Psalm of the day, as prescribed by the Revised Common Lectionary. They seemed to me a common thread, a rooting of our Christian Lenten journey in the hymnody of our Jewish sisters and brothers. I

hope you find this helpful to you, as well. All passages are from the Common English Bible translation, abbreviated CEB.

You are free to share this devotional with whomever you choose, but please remember to credit all photos as they are credited throughout, either to Angela Hausmann , Martin Kemper, Scott Kuether, Jason Petry, Don Wagner, or other photographers. I would ask that you would do the same with all of the printed materials which I have written and offer to you. They are copyrighted to ©Donald C. Wagner, 2019.

A word of thanks needs to be extended to the St. Paul United Church of Christ, Lebanon, faith family which allowed me the time and space necessary to create this piece – and to our Office Manager, Ms. Becky Harrison, who rode herd on the office visitors, edited copies and prodded me on to conclude it when time seemed limited. Thank you.

Special thanks, too, to my lovely, patient and forbearing wife, partner and helpmate, Nancy. She put up with my odd moments of inspiration, the challenges along the way and kept me focused on our mutual love for and admiration of DuBois Center. I love you.

Lastly, I need to take a moment to thank God. You have called me to a ministry I never expected, sustain me when I am weary, share the joy in my heart when your people ‘get it’ and You never let me go. The Christ of my faith is beside me always. The Spirit of my heart is in me always. All because of You. May this work and all that I am be a glory to You, now and forever. Thank You. Amen.

Don Wagner



DuBois Center

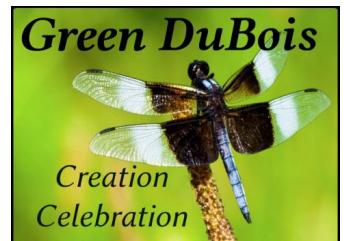
2651 Quarry Road, DuBois Illinois 62831

DuboisCenter.org

dcinfo@DuBoisCenter.org, 618-787-2202

Green DuBois

GreenDuBois@aol.com



Illinois South Conference, United Church of Christ

1312 Broadway, Highland, IL 62249

Iscucc.org, 618-654-2125