



Congregational
Church of Batavia

THE TOWER

Congregational Church of Batavia

United Church of Christ

21 South Batavia Avenue, Batavia, IL 60510

October 2025

630-879-1999

office@congregationalchurch.org

congregationalchurch.org

ucc.org



Join us for worship
every Sunday at 10:00 a.m.
in-person or online.

What's Happening?

October 12 — Connection
surveys due*

October 19 — Capital Campaign
Kickoff*

October 20 — Recipes due*

October 21 — November *Tower*
articles due

October 25 — Batfest Trunk-or-
Treat*

November 2 — All Saints Day

November 9 — Christmas Gift
Festival*

November 18 — Dec/Jan *Tower*
articles due

November 23 — Hanging of the
Greens

November 30 — Beginning of
Advent

December 7 — Commitment
Sunday*

*See related article

Church Office Hours

Monday through Friday
9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.



Christmas Wreath and Centerpiece Fundraiser

Thank you for supporting our annual wreath fundraiser which raises funds for youth mission projects including the annual work tour. Recent work tours have included time at the Back Bay Mission and the Appalachian South Folklife Center.

You are invited to order any of these items:

12" centerpiece for \$20

22" mixed evergreen wreaths for \$30.

28" mixed evergreen wreaths for \$40

All orders must be received by

8:00 p.m. on November 2.

Placing an order: You may do so conveniently [online](#) or in person on Sundays after the worship service. Our order table will be by Suzy's office.

Payment: You may pay for your items with cash, a check, or even a credit or debit card. If you prefer to pay with a card, once we receive your order, we will send you a payment link via email.

Pickup: Wreaths and centerpieces will arrive before Thanksgiving. We will keep you informed of the delivery date. Once they are sorted and ready for pick up, we will notify you. We are here to help with any questions you may have.

Thank you!

Suzy and Laura

*God has given each of us one or more
special talents....It is up to each of us
to search for and build upon the gifts
which God has given.*

Marvin J. Ashton



From Pastor Paige

A Quick & Easy Guide to the Stewardship & Capital Campaigns:

“We Are Not the Same Thing”

As we near the *end* of our annual stewardship campaign, “Peculiar People, Precious Gifts,” and the *beginning* of our capital campaign, “From Heritage to Horizon,” I thought it might be wise to take a moment to differentiate them, as they are not the same thing. Both are very important. Both have me excited about our future here at CCoB. I would strongly encourage you to give generously to both. But they are not the same thing.

So here is a quick and easy guide. I hope this is helpful. If you have any questions, you can always ask me, our Moderator Lucinda Page, our Vice Moderator Jen Larson Angelini, or our Capital Campaign co-Chairs Mark Weiss and Ann Alexander.



Annual Stewardship Campaign:

- Runs from September 7 through October 5 (although you can pledge anytime)
- This is the effort we make every year to build and fund a budget for the year to come, 2026 in this case.
- The money we collect goes toward things like:
 - Staff Salaries
 - Regular utilities, like electricity, water, and internet connection
 - Children's & Youth ministry events
 - Music for the choir, as well as musical guests
 - Worship & Arts
 - Annual donations to local and world charities through our Outreach Team
 - Regularly scheduled maintenance to the building, inspections, and unexpected repairs

It may not sound exciting, but this is the heartbeat of our daily ministry at CCoB.

The 2025 Capital Campaign:

- Runs from October 19 through December 7 (although you can pledge any time)
- Is a once a decade effort to fund major building repairs and upgrades that are necessary for CCoB to continue doing effective ministry into the future
- Collects money that will go towards things like:
 - Paying off the loan we drew to replace our 80 year old boiler, fix the leaking roof, and extend our stewardship calling by installing solar panels on the roof
 - Paying for tuck pointing to restore and protect our historic church building
 - Upgrading the outdated audio and visual technology in the sanctuary
 - Refurbishing parts of Paxton Hall for our events, but also as a place to extend hospitality to our neighbors.
 - Making our church more accessible and friendly by upgrading the person lift, improving entrances, and adding signage to make it easier to navigate the church

A capital campaign is for the larger projects that allow us to honor the work and the vision of those faithful who came before us, as we step into God's future.



Church Life

Beckham James Slone, son of Gina and Brian Sloan was baptized on September 14.

Julie Lawrence and James Kurczek were married in our sanctuary on September 20.

Thank You!

Thank you for your visits, cards, prayers, and good wishes.

Art Zillgitt



Our children and youth had a great kickoff event at Windy Acres Farm. Thank you to the Srail family for a delightful evening on the farm!



Capital Campaign Projects Status

Solar panel installation: It has been quite a while since we voted to purchase and install solar panels as an act of civic and ecological responsibility: our attempt to lessen our footprint on the environment. So where does that project stand all these months later? Good news! The permitting process for installing the solar panels included getting approval

from the Batavia Historic Preservation Commission as well as a building permit from the city. We got an enthusiastic OK from the Batavia Historic Preservation Commission, and then the city council actually needed to pass a new ordinance to allow *all* electric customers in the city, including the CCOB, to install renewable energy. The existing rules allowed only residential and small business customers to do so. With that done, the city could finally issue the building permit for our solar project. **What's next?** We're waiting for the solar panels to be delivered, so that installation can be scheduled. We hope to have a fully functioning system by the end of the year!

And the current Capital Campaign activity? So glad you asked! Our consultant, Aaron, is helping us build teams and prepare the team members to kick off the pledge campaign in mid-October.

Your two campaign chairs, Ann Alexander and Mark Weiss, have recruited Dave Hummel and Matt Wicks to be the Gift Gathering Team Captains. They will recruit their Gift Gathering Teams in the next couple of weeks. Why is this important before we kick off the actual fundraising? The more folks we have lined up to contact members during the campaign, the lighter the load will be on everyone. This is not about strong-arming folks to give, but rather about answering questions (and gathering feedback) to remind folks or help newer folks understand why we have set the admittedly ambitious goal for capital gifts during the next three years, over and above what our congregation pledges for the annual budget, which is covered by the stewardship campaign that was moved up to September this year.

We have filled the chairperson slots for most of the support teams: Prayer — Jean Deptolla, Youth — Suzy Daly, Communications — Lisa Youngdahl, and Creative Giving — Lynne Potter. We will give you more information about joining one of these teams in the coming weeks, but please feel free to reach out to the team at capitalcampaign@congregationalchurch.org, or talk to Paige, Ann, or Mark at any time if any of these roles sound interesting to you.

The campaign kicks off officially on Sunday, October 19, with a post-service celebration event from 11 to noon or so. This marks when the Gift Gathering Teams kick into gear. We will hold several forums and seminars in October and November, giving folks plenty of opportunities to consider the needs we're intending to cover, ask any questions they might have, and provide information about creative ways to give to the campaign. Commitment Sunday on December 7 will celebrate the pledges received by that date.

Remember, these pledges constitute intentions to give to the capital campaign fund. As Paige has mentioned in her announcements, this is separate from the annual stewardship pledges we are all being asked to make for operating funds to cover running the church in 2026. If you are moved to give during 2025 you are welcome to do so, but we are taking capital campaign pledges that can be completed anytime over the next 3 years, including a lump sum payment in 2028 if that is what works best for you.

We ask that you prayerfully consider not only your budget, but what the Congregational Church of Batavia means to you and how you can help guarantee that it continues to serve its congregation and the local community. Stay tuned!

Batavia Apartments

The Batavia Apartments are in need of supplies for their store to help residents who have limited income. Please consider donating the following items:

- Kleenex
- Toilet paper
- Paper towels
- Cleaning supplies

Thank you for helping our Batavia neighbors!



Trunk-or-Treat Saturday, October 25.

Trunk or Treat is back on Saturday, October 25, as part of Batavia's Batfest. Our Trunk-or-Treat will begin at 9:45, so we ask that you arrive by 9:30 a.m. for set up. We will end at 11:45.

If you are unable to be present but wish to be involved, we welcome candy and treat donations. There is a sign-up sheet on the church bulletin board. Pastor Paige and Laura can help with information and details.

Send your November Tower articles to
bzillgitt685@gmail.com
by Tuesday, October 21.



Outreach Ministry Team

Christmas Gift Festival



The Outreach Ministry Team will be holding its annual Christmas Gift Festival in November. This year we will be supporting **HESED Homeless Shelter, Batavia Interfaith Food Pantry, and Batavia Apartments**. Each of these organizations will make a presentation during worship on Sunday, November 9; that will be followed with displays by agency representatives and treats in Paxton Hall. Our Outreach Team members will be on hand to accept donations and distribute special cards for you to inform friends and relatives of donations made in their honor.

You will also be able to make donations on November 16 and 23 in Paxton Hall. Thank you so much for your continued support of mission giving at our church.



Invitation to Support Kay Angel Children's Home

I am inviting you to continue our fifteen years of support to Kay Angel Children's Home in Jacmel, Haiti. On Saturday September 20, members of our congregation and of Men's Bible Study heard from Gala Calisto, Kay Angel's director. She reported they continue to face daily hardships including access to food, gasoline and reliable electric power.

Kay Angel was founded to provide a family home for 13 abandoned infants and toddlers. The goal has been to raise these children to responsible adulthood, with major emphasis on providing them with a quality education. The work continues today, with six children being supported as they grow, study, and learn. This invitation is to help provide for their education.

Please join our Men's Bible Study in a special offering in support of Kay Angel. Donate through the Men's Bible Study fund from now until October 31. All funds collected will be sent to Kay Angel.

Here's how to give:

1. **Text "CCOB MBS" to 73256** and follow the prompts.
2. **Give a gift online:**
<https://onrealm.org/CCBatavia/give/MBS>
3. By check, noting "Men's Bible Study" in the memo line.

Thank you.
Bob Huxtable



*Everyone has a gift for
something, even if it is the gift
of being a good friend.*

Marian Anderson

Celebrate!

October Birthdays

Kristen Beth Offenbecher	1
Eric Nelson	4
Lynn Smith	4
Abby Weiss	4
Hallie Crane	5
Jim Kurczek	7
Kristin Srail	7
Lisa VandenHuevel	7
Alexandra Warta-Collins	7
Jake DeKoyer	8
Mark Luedtke	8
Greg Youngdahl	9
Brian McDonnell	10
Morgan Chesney	11
Kim Hoffer	11
Stan Oke	11
Rebecca Palmquist	11
Shannon Hemmes	19
Zak Nelson	19
Susan Brauhn	20
Craig Neader	21
Marjie Grischow	22
Warner Jocson	23
Don Smith	23
Lynnea Van Dame	25
Matthew Scavo	26
Amanda Srail Thomas	26
Sarah Greenhagen	27
Ed Plamondon	29

October Anniversaries

Adam & Lucinda Page	1
Diane & Art Blodgett	12
Dick & Ellie MacFeely	20
Irene & Jeff Crane	25
Nico & Kristin Lasta	25

If your birthday or anniversary is missing or incorrect, please contact the church office: 630 879 1999 or office@congregationalchurch.org



Planning an event? a meeting? a special mission?

Let **Lisa Youngdahl**, our Communications Manager, know! She is our go-to person for promoting all church programs and activities, but she can't help you unless you let her know what's being planned.

We don't want anyone to miss out on any of the wonderful things that are happening at CCoB.



Connecting with each other: Reminders from the Connections Team!

As we wind up our season of stewardship this year, the Connections Team reminds everyone that all who are part of our church family are invited to connect with the life of the church and with each other in two ways: recipes and responses.

First, please send in a recipe that means something to your family, along with a sentence or two explaining what that significance is. I'm beginning to compile what I have so far, but we have room for LOTS more! Please let me know what you're submitting ASAP, and get me your recipes by October 20. You can drop printed recipes in the church office or email them to susanncprice@gmail.com.

Second, we recently sent a link ([BUILDING CONNECTIONS](#)) to a survey we are conducting to find out how people are already using their gifts in our church and how we can create more options. We would like to get a sense of what people are interested in, what their capacity for serving is, and what we as a church can do better. Additionally, we want to improve how we get the word out when things are happening, so everyone has a chance to join in the fun!

Our goals are to:

- Provide opportunities for those who would like to be more active and may not know where their unique talents would fit
- Understand what keeps some folks from taking part in service and/or fellowship activities
- Increase our understanding of the capacity for people to participate

If you haven't already responded to this survey, please do so now. This shouldn't take more than a few minutes to complete! Answer only to the extent that you are comfortable sharing. This form does NOT collect names or email addresses, but you have an option to provide that info at the end of the survey. THANK YOU! And please try to get your surveys back to us by October 12.

Autumn Prayer

God of all seasons, we
thank you for Autumn.
We thank you
for the touch of coolness
in the air that gives us a
new burst of energy,
for the coloring of trees
that shows the creativity
of the Divine Artist,
for the falling leaves that
reveal the strength of the
branches,
for the hues of fields that
bring peace to our souls,
for the smiles on
pumpkins that bring joy
to children,
for the fall harvest which
brings us gratitude for
the bounty of our land,
for this change of seasons
that reveals the circle of
life.
God of all seasons, as
you transform the earth,
transform us by your
Spirit.
Amen

— Rev. Doug Leonhardt, S.J.



Our Facilities Team is in need of an organizer.
Our critical need is for a member to volunteer to help with creating a calendar of routine maintenance and alerting facility team members which tasks are due in the coming month. Please contact [Steve Collins](#) for further information.

Justice and Witness



The CCOB Justice and Witness Team and the Islamic Center of Batavia hosted an Interfaith Luncheon on Sunday, September 21. At least forty people were able to enjoy the delicious Indian dishes, (salads and desserts provided by our members).

This was a celebration of Mazher Ahmed, as she continues her recovery from a serious stroke last December. We wanted to have this event in 2025 since we were unable to have our annual Iftar event last spring. We should be able to once again host a big Iftar dinner next March, the month of Ramadan.

Special thanks go to the volunteers who helped set things up very early Sunday and did a fine job cleaning up: Jean Deptola, Jim Otepka, Jean Stone, Sue Price, Karon Van Gelder, and Larry Grant. Also thanks to everyone who brought salads and desserts.

Ann Alexander, J&W chair



Do you know about the **Batavia Art League**? Did you know they meet every Wednesday morning at our church? The Batavia Art League welcomes anyone with an interest in creating art, and respects working in all types of mediums. Regardless of your skill level, whether you are a novice or a seasoned master, BAL is a space where artists of all backgrounds can come together and learn, teach, and create in the same room.

Past activities have included working in watercolor, colored pencils, and clay. We often bring our own projects and supplies to work on during the meeting time. You do not need to be a member of our church. The Batavia Art League meets Wednesday mornings from 9:30 to noon in Paxton Hall. For more information, contact juliakimflowers@yahoo.com.



***Your purpose in life is to use your
gifts and talents to help other
people. Your journey in life
teaches you how to do that.***



Tom Krause



Troop 43



Greetings from Troop 43! September has seen quiet and continuous activity.

The first full weekend Scouts continued to sell our own hot sauce in front of Batavia Creamery! Scouts developed their own systems of one Scout drawing in new possible clients, while another would focus on closing the sales, to great success.

Starved Rock was our scheduled campout. Low sign-ups saw us cancelling the campout, although we are proud of our members activities in the community, including adult Woodbadge training and five scouts in the Batavia High School Marching Band (Go Bulldogs!) who took 1st place in their first competition the same weekend.

Meanwhile, we've continued to find new adult volunteers to share the work of supporting our scouts in leading what we do, going from a growing list of positions, to cutting it nearly in half at our committee meeting.

We held our quarterly Court of Honor on the 22nd, and we're very proud of the many scouts advancing: eleven total over four ranks, three of which were first time advancements. Seeing all the new parents right behind the kids was beautiful to see.

Please help get the word out about our troop. We meet from 7-8:15 in Paxton Hall on most Monday evenings. We welcome boys ages 10-16 to visit a meeting and consider joining! Please see <https://www.troopwebhost.org/Troop43Batavia/Index.htm> for more information



Children's Ministries

This year our Backpack Tags say "Be Kind." We are practicing ways to do so. For one of our Be Kind Mission Projects, the week of October 5 our Sunday School and Midweek students will be prepping sandwiches and bagged lunches to support clients of Lazarus House.



Batavia Nursery School



Fall brings with it many changes, and our little ones are spending their days discovering the beauty of this new season. All of our classes have gone on a nature walk around the neighborhood looking for signs of fall. October is Fire Safety Month, so along with that unit, our older classes will be visiting the Eastside Fire Station. Our kids are always thrilled to sit in one of the engines and see a firefighter slide down the fire pole (from the original fire station on Shumway Ave.). This trip is a great introduction to the monthly fire drill that we have here at school.

Our first enrichment class of the year, Fun with Food, has begun with many others to follow. We will again be having our fall fundraiser with puffins, pizzas, and cookie dough during the month of October, so please look for flyers on the table outside of Paxton Hall. If you place an order, the products will be put into the church freezer for pick up. Thank you in advance for supporting BNS!

If you are around the building at the end of the month, be on the lookout for little ghosts, fairies, princesses, and firefighters as we will be doing two Halloween parades through Paxton Hall on both October 30 and 31.

Pam Foelske, Director



*As each has received a gift, use it to
serve one another, as good
stewards of God's varied grace.*



1 Peter 4:10

Wednesday Morning Women's Bible Study

Wednesday, 9:30 to 11:00 a.m.

We come together on Zoom to catch up, pray, and study a book. If you are interested, please be in touch with the office, or just follow this [link](#) on Wednesday morning.

We would love to have you join us!

Men's Bible Study

Saturday, 8:00 a.m., on Google Meet

We welcome all men to join us for discussion and prayer as we come together in unity and grow in our journey with Christ. Our study includes books of the Bible and Christian books recommended by members. Men who desire to learn more about the Bible and our faith are welcome. Please email Bob Huxtable at rocketjs59@gmail.com for more information and the meeting link.

Pastor: Paige Wolfanger

Director of Children's Ministries:

Laura Bernabei

Director of Youth Ministries: Suzy Daly

Director of Music: Vicki Linich

Office Manager: Bernadine Matthews

Communications Manager: Lisa Youngdahl

Organist: Lily Li

AV Manager: Basil Bevard

Batavia Nursery School Director:

Pam Foelske

Janitorial Service: John Halters

Nursery Attendants:

Megan Behary & Christy Roberts

Council:

Moderator— Lucinda Page

Vice Moderator — Jennifer Larson

Treasurer — Annie Barsch

Clerk — Jean Deptolla

Members-at-Large —

Kristin Lasta & Judy Jablecki

Connections: Susan Price

Decorating: Ann Alexander

Facilities: Dave Hummel

Finance: Jim Otepka — Team leader

Treasurer — Annie Barsch

Finance Secretary — Phil Woolley •

Sarah Greenhagen • Becky Hall •

Carlene Houghton

Justice & Witness: Ann Alexander

Outreach: Judy Lutz & Don Smith

Worship: Judy Jablecki

Archivist: Volunteer needed

Systems Administrator: Phil Woolley

Tower Editor: Barb Zillgitt

Women's Connection

6:00 p.m.

Church library

Sunday, October 19, 2025

Margo Cooper will lead a discussion of

Did Ye Hear Mammy Died? A Memoir by Seamas O'Reilly.

If you have any questions about this book discussion group, call Rosemary Henders, 630-308-9269.



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

a just world for all

*United in Spirit and inspired by God's grace,
we welcome all, love all, and seek justice for all.
We are the United Church of Christ.*

Action Alerts: Help Us Make Meaningful Changes

No to War, Yes to God's Creation

As our congregations recommit to peace, our government appears to be recommitting to warfare. Join us to urge Congress to have compassion for God's planet by not increasing the defense budget and instead fund for programs that would benefit all God's people.

This World Suicide Prevention Day, Protect LGBTQ+ Youth

Suicide hotlines save lives. Each life is sacred, and we must do everything in our power to ensure LGBTQ+ kids feel like they have a future worth living for. That is why we are calling on Congress to restore funding for the LGBTQ+ youth suicide prevention hotline.

Stand With the People of Washington D.C.

Washington D.C. is home to over 700,000 engaged, tax-paying citizens who deserve representation and a voice in their government. Join us in urging your members of Congress to uphold democracy and grant DC residents representation in Congress through statehood.

For more information and links to action sites, go to ucc.org.



*Hide not your talents, they for
use were made, What's a
sundial in the shade?*

Benjamin Franklin