



Congregational
Church of Batavia

THE TOWER

Congregational Church of Batavia

United Church of Christ

21 South Batavia Avenue, Batavia, IL 60510



November 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?

November 2 — All Saints Day

November 9 — Christmas Gift
Festival*

November 13 — BNS fundraiser
delivery*

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.

From our moderator

How is it November already?! Another year is flying by, and the holiday season is almost here. With the new year comes the start of another fiscal year for our church, which means a new budget to approve and several new leaders stepping up to serve.

I know leadership might feel like something for “other people” — those with experience or long-time membership or extra time in their schedule. But as our former Moderator, Steve Collins, has often said, the leaders in our church are just *us* — the people sitting in the pews or joining us online. We’re young and old, new and longtime members, busy and available, with all levels of experience. We’re... us!

I stepped into the Vice Moderator & Moderator roles without any church governance background, and it was truly a leap of faith to try something so new to me. I was worried about taking on too much and being out of my depth, but it's been a *truly* rewarding experience. I’ve grown personally and in my faith, and I’ve really deepened connections within our church family. It’s provided me, also, with a great overview of everything going on in our church community. I highly encourage you to consider how you might serve in the upcoming year!

We have roles for all kinds of personalities and commitment levels:

- **Love connecting with people?** Consider Vice Moderator, Member at Large, or Justice & Witness Team Leader.
- **Good with numbers, contracts, or financial planning?** You could serve as Financial Secretary or on the Finance Team.
- **Enjoy home improvement or organizing projects?** Join our Facilities Team!

In the coming weeks, we’ll feature insights from current leaders in the bulletin and eNews, sharing what they love about their roles. Keep an eye out for these — one might just inspire you to step forward! You can also visit <https://bit.ly/CCOB> to see all the features in one place.

If you’d like to talk about how you might fold into the leadership needs in our church family, you can talk with Jen Larson, Pastor Paige, Susan Price, or me. We’re happy to help!

Lucinda Page

*One part at a time, one day at a
time, we can accomplish any goal
we set for ourselves.*



Karen Casey



Worship Ministry Team

Autumn is a remarkably busy time in the church year. Each Sunday service leading up to Advent has its own theme. On the last Sunday of October, we celebrate the Reformation marking the anniversary of Martin Luther posting his 95 Theses in 1517, which protested perceived abuses in the Catholic Church and is considered a pivotal event in the split of Western Christianity.

All Saints Sunday is the first Sunday in November, honoring all saints, both known and unknown, and is a day that we at CCoB remember and celebrate those who have died. We will ring a bell and light a candle as each name is read. If there is a name of someone you would like to have included call or email the church office by Wednesday, October 29.

On November 9 during morning worship, representatives from the three charities selected by the Outreach team for the 2025 Gift Festival will give brief presentations about their organization.

Because we celebrate Thanksgiving on the Sunday before the actual day, November 23, and this year it is also the last Sunday of the church's liturgical calendar year, November 16 will be Reign of Christ Sunday, also known as Christ the King Sunday, celebrating authority of Christ as king over all creation and the Church.

That's a lot!

From Pastor Paige

What Do You Fear?

A Good Question for Advent and Today

Every time Advent rolls around again, it always feels a little bit dissonant to me. At exactly the time that everyone is preparing for the joy of the Christmas season...decorating their homes with colorful lights, wrapping bright packages, singing cheery carols, and planning meals and parties with friends and family...our tradition calls to us to remember the reality of the darkness in which we live, the grief, the pain, the fear that are often parts of human life. The very first Sunday of Advent is always an apocryphal reading, where the earth rumbles, and the heavens tear open, and everything we thought we could trust is upended. The season of hope, ironically but appropriately, begins by naming those things that scare us the most.

This year we will once again be using *A Sanctified Art's* program for Advent called this year "**What Do You Fear?**" It's a timely question for the season of Advent and also for the season we find ourselves in right now. There's a lot that is frightening out there. And the message of Advent is the message the angels deliver, again, and again, and again in our scriptures, "Do not be afraid!" The Good News of Advent and Christmas is that the God who has journeyed with Their people for generations shows up again, in the person of Jesus Christ, to journey the dark, difficult roads by our side.

Join us this Advent season, beginning on Sunday, November 30. And do not be afraid.

A Benediction for Advent

*In a fearful world,
may you look for God's spirit.*



Hanging of the Greens Sunday, November 23

- Immediately after the morning service we will begin with a potluck
- lunch in Paxton. When we are finished eating.....time to decorate
- the church! Music will abound along with the scent of pine and
- activities for everyone to assist in decorating the sanctuary and
- Paxton Hall. Join is as we prepare for the Advent season!



*Commit your activities to the
Lord, and your plans will be
established.*

Proverbs 16:3

Justice and Witness



Bob Huxtable alerted us to a possible \$10,000 grant available to 60 churches. The following is a rough draft of the J&W proposal:

Our mission: we hope to help those in our area who are struggling or lonely.

We would like to host a monthly “**Community Dinner**”. This would provide not only good food and fellowship, but a chance to ask “how can we help?”. We could be a resource for various services (simple home repair, rides to appointments, etc.), as well as providing financial help through gift cards (like gas, groceries, school supplies), and perhaps limited emergency rental assistance. Our expenses would also include the cost of the dinner. If we receive this generous \$10,000 grant, it could be administered by a small committee under the umbrella of the Pastor’s Discretionary Fund.

We already have our monthly **Administer Justice Legal Clinic**, which might be another gateway to the needs of those people. On Oct. 17, Heather Hamilton, Jean Stone and Ann Alexander were among 500 who attended the annual Administer Justice Fundraising Dinner celebrating 50 years of providing legal aid across the country to many people who otherwise couldn’t afford it. This was a very powerful presentation that made us proud that the CCOB is one of the churches committed to this cause.

Another good cause was the food drive to help many immigrant families living in fear. We were one of three churches in the Tri-cities accepting specially requested foods/supplies on Saturday, October 11. Karon Van Gelder, Sue Price and I, plus several volunteers from elsewhere, were able to fill one SUV and half a pickup truck, thanks to many generous drivers who dropped off donations. Everything was delivered to a secret location in Elgin, and from there delivered directly to families in need. We hope to be the designated drop off for Batavia once each month. Our “**Blessing Boxes**” project for Hanover Park will resume after the holidays.

Fox River Valley Initiative is hosting an event on Saturday, November 8, from 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. highlighting The Need for More Affordable Housing. Now!

**Christ the Lord Lutheran Church
12N462 Tina Trail, Elgin**

The action begins at the church. We will then travel from the church to the beautiful **1212 Larkin project** to show that success is possible! You can find the poster and sign up outside Pastor Paige’s office.

And one final item. I hope the immigration program on Friday, Oct. 24, at 7, sponsored by our church, St. Charles Episcopal Church, and Unitarian Universalist Society of Geneva (held there) was well-attended. This event was a chance to hear American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) special attorney, Rebecca Glenberg, explain what immigrants are up against concerning federal vs. local laws and the Illinois TRUST Act.

Ann Alexander, J&W chair

More Affordable Housing, Now!

FOR WORKING FAMILIES & PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Join us as we build on the success of 1212 Larkin and:

- Learn how to build power to transform your community—from FRVI leaders who won 1212 Larkin
- Fight for working families and individuals with mental, physical disabilities— address the housing crisis with affordable, supportive housing

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH 2025 | 11AM-12:15PM

**Christ the Lord Lutheran Church
12N462 Tina Trail, Elgin, IL 60124**

****The action begins at the church. We will then travel from the church to 1212 Larkin.**



Scan to RSVP







*People with goals succeed because
they know where they’re going.*

Earl Nightingale

Connections Team



Advent is closer than you think!

Connections Team chair, Susan Price, will once again be putting together a book of Advent meditations: essays, poems, art, photos, memories, recipes ... whatever you'd like to share. This year's Advent theme is about not being afraid, but really anything related to the wonder that is the coming of Christmas will be welcomed. Please email submissions to susannprice@gmail.com or take them in the church office. Susan wants to know to expect something from you ASAP and needs to have everything in hand by Sunday, November 16, as Advent starts the Sunday after Thanksgiving.

Celebrate!



November Birthdays

Katie Kabbe	4
Cherie Poulos	6
Joey Knanishu	7
Gabby Osterby	8
Elliott Abeln	9
Julie Crane	12
Doug Hoffer	13
Heather Hamilton	15
Megan Miller	15
Barb Mabbs	16
Ben Field	17
Emma Luedtke	21
Katie Bernabei	25
Ryan Mecum	25
Tim Aguilar	26



Outreach Ministry Team



Christmas Gift Festival



Don't miss the annual Christmas Gift Festival on Sunday, November 9, as we invite representatives from three local agencies to share the important work that they do in our community. This is an opportunity to learn about these organizations and donate to support their missions.

- **Batavia Apartments:** Create stable, vibrant and healthy communities by developing, financing and operating affordable program-enriched housing for families, seniors and people with special needs who lack economic resources to access quality housing opportunities.
- **Batavia Interfaith Food Pantry and Clothes Closet:** Provide food, non-food household and personal items and clothing for those individuals and families residing in Batavia and Batavia Township who are in need.
- **Hesed House:** Help individuals who are facing homelessness or are currently homeless. Our mission is to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, and give people the chance to hope again.

The Outreach Team will be available to accept donations in Paxton Hall on November 9, 16, 23, and 30. We will have special gift cards for you to inform friends and relatives of a donation made in their honor. It is a great gift for those "impossible to buy for" folks on your Christmas list!

Here are ways to make donations:

- Write a check to the church with "Christmas Gift Festival" in the memo line.
- Give online: <https://onrealm.org/CCBatavia/give/CGF>
Use the MEMO drop down to select the agency you wish to support, or simply give to the Christmas Gift Festival and your donation will be applied to each agency.
- Text "CCOB CGF" to 73256 to give using your mobile device.

Thank you for your support of our Christmas Gift Festival!



If you want to be happy, set a goal that commands your thoughts, liberates your energy and inspires your hopes.



Andrew Carnegie



Troop 43



Greetings from Troop 43! Here are some highlights of the fun we've been having in October!

A couple of our meetings have continued a series of mini-MBU (Merit-Badge-University) sessions. Jonathan, our current Senior Patrol Leader, has a few Merit Badge Counselors come to the meeting and work with Scouts on specific badges several Scouts need. This is decidedly helping Scouts advance further faster, and keep them motivated between Council-run MBUs and summer camp, when many Scouts earn enough to rank up.

Troop 43 returned to Feast of the Hunter's Moon for this month's campout. This re-enactment event in Lafayette, IN, brings to life an annual meeting of French fur traders and indigenous people of the 1700s. Scouts see cannons in use, walk among people in a variety of period garb, fill up on fry bread, stews, and homemade root beer, and come home raving about this being a favorite event. This year was no different with many first-timers (Scouts AND parents) having a blast!

Scouts continue to sell our exclusive hot sauce to raise funds for meals for the needy. They warmed up at a Walgreens storefront and Bat Fest this month. Bat Fest continues to be a favorite way to engage with the community and inspire many regional youth to check out Scouts, either in a local Cub Pack or for older kids, a troop, maybe even 43. If they are interested in Scouts, we just want to connect them to the best fit.

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.

Thanksgiving Prayer



Lord, we thank you
for the goodness of our people
and for the spirit of justice
that fills this nation.

We thank you for the beauty and fullness of the
land and the challenge of the cities.

We thank you for our work and our rest,
for one another, and for our homes.

We thank you, Lord:
accept our thanksgiving on this day.

We pray and give thanks through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.



Batavia Nursery School



We are settling into our school routines and are excited to still be getting outside some days. Our fire station field trip was outstanding, as usual, as was our monthly trip to the library. Our families loved seeing their little ones in costume during our Halloween Parade and singing in Paxton Hall. Two of our Friday classes were back trick-or-treating at

Elderday along with singing some Halloween songs for the clients.

Mid-November will find us visiting Red Oak Nature Center as the forest is getting ready for the winter months. We always have a great time exploring inside their facility and end with a hike down to Devil's Cave.

Thank you to those who participated in our fall fundraiser. The delivery will be Thursday, November 13, and your products will be in the kitchen freezer clearly marked with your name. At this time of year, we want to extend our thanks for your continued support of BNS!

Pam Foelske, director



*Without goals, and plans to reach
them, you are like a ship that has
set sail with no destination.*



Fitzhugh Dodson

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 Hougén

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, November 16, 2025

Cari Simpson will lead a discussion of
The Comfort of Crows: a Backyard Year by Margaret Renkl.

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.*

The rise of civil unrest, and extreme violence, coupled with disruptions from climate change around the world mean that increasingly people are forced to leave their homelands to seek safety and a secure future for their children elsewhere. The reasons for leaving are diverse and complex: extreme poverty, threats from gang violence, war and religious or social persecution, or devastation from droughts and extreme weather. As the United Church of Christ, we have a moral responsibility to walk alongside immigrants and welcome them to be part of our church, no matter what their immigration status, and no matter where they are on life's journey.

As Christians, we are called to love our neighbors. The Bible is unambiguous in calling us to welcome aliens and strangers in our land, and to love them as we love ourselves. In these times, let us listen to the voice of the still-speaking God. We will learn how to respond to these new sisters and brothers residing among us.

The United Church of Christ has a long history of solidarity in the struggle for dignity and human rights for immigrants, asylum seekers, and refugees regardless of their immigration status. We do this through a network of grassroots leaders in the UCC National Collaborative on Immigration ([sign up here](#)) working to share a prophetic stance and lift up the voices of impacted leaders. General Synod Resolutions over the last decades show the continued support from our denominations. We also work at the federal level to advocate for just and equitable immigration policies.

Click [here](#) for more information.



*One way to keep momentum going
is to have constantly greater goals.*

Michael Korda