



Congregational  
Church of Batavia

February 2026

630-879-1999

# THE TOWER

*Congregational Church of Batavia*

*United Church of Christ*

*21 South Batavia Avenue, Batavia, IL 60510*

[office@congregationalchurch.org](mailto:office@congregationalchurch.org) [congregationalchurch.org](http://congregationalchurch.org) [ucc.org](http://ucc.org)



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

The theme for Lent is  
"Tell Me Something Good"  
from Sanctified Art.

## What's Happening?

**February 1 — Annual  
congregational meeting and  
potluck\***

**February 17 — March Tower  
articles due**

**February 18 — Ash Wednesday  
soup supper and communion\***

**February 25 — Vesper service\***

**March 4, 11, 18, 25 — Vesper  
services\***

**April 2 — Maundy Thursday**

**April 3 — Good Friday**

**April 5 — Easter**

\*See related article

## Church Office Hours

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

## From our moderator

At the time of this writing, it is frigidly cold outside. It's one of those bitter cold days where even minimal exposure to the elements leaves you feeling as though you'll never warm up. Definitely **not** my favorite season. In fact, I've never loved the month of February. It may be the shortest month of the year but it has always felt to me like the longest, most drawn out month. Bitter and cold.

Over the years, I have sought out ways to find **joy** in February to help me through the long days of little light. Some joys have been easier to recognize: both of my boys have February birthdays. The past 17 years have held multiple celebrations with cakes and gifts and memories of joy. Other joys require extra focus and awareness: ignoring the zero degree temperature to step outside and witness the vividly colorful sunsets or snuggling under my fleece-lined weighted blanket with a hot cup of tea and a good book.

This year I will add "CCoB Moderator" to my list of joys for February. As of February 1, our annual meeting will be complete and our 2026 team of leaders will be in place. I'm filled with joy and excitement at the opportunity to serve as our church moderator. I know I will learn a great deal in this leadership position. Every one of our CCoB leaders, from ministry teams to Church Council and Finance to staff, are incredible people who willingly give their time and dedication to the growth and mission of our church. I am confident this year will be another year of growth, discovery and fellowship. Please continue to pray for each of us as we begin this new year of leading.

Stay warm out there! Spring (and the hope it brings) is right around the corner.

Peace and joy,

Jennifer Larson Angelini



***Love is more than a noun – it is  
a verb; it is more than a feeling  
– it is caring, sharing, helping,  
sacrificing.***

William Arthur Ward

## Annual Congregational Meeting and Potluck

**Sunday, February 1**

We will meet in the sanctuary immediately following worship to thank officers and team members who are stepping down and elect new officers and Finance Team members. We will also be voting on the 2026 budget.

After the meeting there will be a potluck lunch in Paxton Hall.

For those who will attend virtually, a Zoom link will be made available in the weekly emails closer to the meeting date.

On Ash Wednesday, February 18, there will be a soup supper at 6:00 p.m. followed by a service with communion at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary.

# Thank You!

We'd like to thank you all, our dear church family, for all the well-wishes, meals, gift cards, and especially prayers for Josh's successful surgery and recovery. He's doing great thanks to his amazing medical team.

Blessings and peace to each of you.  
The Koskys

# Thank you!

To each and every one of you, thank you for making our capital campaign a roaring success. Whether you volunteered, pledged, prayed, listened, or celebrated, we could never have done it without you!

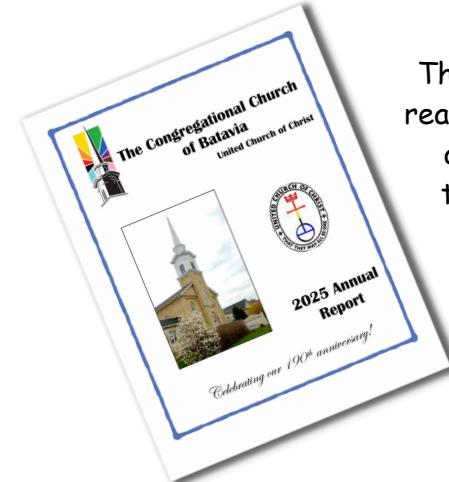
The Congregational Church of Batavia is set for another 191 years of faith and ministry because of this team effort. God is good, you are faithful, and we are blessed.

Thank you again,  
*Pastor Paige*

*For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*

**Jeremiah 29:11**

## Look at All We Did!



The 2025 [annual report](#) is ready for you to enjoy. There are also printed copies in the area outside of Paxton Hall. It's fun to read about and see pictures of all the amazing things we did in our 190<sup>th</sup> year. It's impressive!



*See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!*

**1 John 3:1**

## 2026 Nominations for Officers and the Finance Team

### COUNCIL:

**New/Incoming members; returning members** (these positions need to be approved by vote)

- Vice Moderator: Amy Allan
- Member-at-Large: Jeff Crane
- Clerk: Jean Deptolla (2<sup>nd</sup> Term)

**Continuing members** (vote not required)

- Moderator: Jen Larson Angelini (transitioning from Vice Moderator)
- Treasurer: Annie Barsch (Year 2)
- Member-at-Large: Judy Jablecki (Year 2)

*Notes: The two members-at-large serve staggered two-year terms. The treasurer and the clerk each serve a two-year term. Each of these positions may serve up to three terms.*

### FINANCE TEAM:

**New/Incoming members; returning members** (these positions need to be approved by vote)

- Financial Secretary: Matt Wicks
- Member: Lynne Potter
- Member: Lane Severson

**Continuing members** (vote not required)

- Treasurer: Annie Barsch
- Member: Larry Grant
- Member: Ellen Field
- Member: Sarah Greenhagen McCrea
- Member: Becky Hall

*Notes: The financial secretary serves a single three-year term. Finance Team members serve staggered three-year terms (two members for each cycle). The Finance Team lead is elected at their first meeting after the annual meeting; this member attends Council meetings along with the treasurer.*



### Flowers! Flowers! Flowers! Flowers!

Nothing seems to brighten our world more than flowers.

Whether it is a special occasion or just a 'feel good' moment, flowers enable us to share that feeling with others. The 2026 Altar Flower Sign-up Chart (bulletin board in Paxton Hallway) is available for you to choose a Sunday and share your 'feel good' moment with everyone!



### Worship Ministry Team

Can Ash Wednesday and the Lenten season be just a few weeks away? Each year we check out what Sanctified Art, the online worship planning website, has created for Lent. In 2025, we also thought the Advent theme, 'What Do You Fear?', would be meaningful considering the turmoil we are experiencing in the world today. At the time we had no idea what their Lenten theme would be, but when they announced, "Tell Me Something Good," well, of course, that is something we want to hear more about. As we explore this in depth, we hope you will join us for as many services and events as you are able.

**Ash Wednesday, February 18: 6:00 p.m. soup supper** will be followed by a **service with communion at 7:00 p.m.** in the sanctuary. Join us for a simple meal in Paxton, bring a pot of your favorite soup to share and visit with old and new friends before heading to the sanctuary. There is a sign-up sheet on the Paxton Hall bulletin board if you can bring soup.

**Wednesday Vespers: 6:30 pm, February 25, March 4, 11, 18, and 25.** This is a weekly service of quiet reflection and a brief advance look at the scripture and message for the coming Sunday.

**Holy Week** begins on Palm/Passion Sunday, March 29, with services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. (Look for more information about plans in the *March Tower*.)

During this season, we will once again offer a devotional booklet with readings, scripture, poetry, and art, all related to the theme of "Tell Me Something Good."

After Easter, April 5, Sunday services will be traveling through the "Easter Season" that leads to Pentecost. More to come next month as well.



***Love is a choice you make, a choice you make to care for someone else's needs.***

Gary D. Chapman



*God of creation,  
thank you for the  
beauty of winter  
—for snow, icy  
window panes,  
evergreen trees,  
warm coats,  
sledding, and hot  
cocoa. Let us  
enjoy Your  
creation in all its  
glory, this winter  
and always.*

Author Unknown  
from [Jesuitresources.org](http://Jesuitresources.org)

Send your March Tower  
articles to  
[bzillgitt685@gmail.com](mailto:bzillgitt685@gmail.com)  
by Tuesday, February 17.



## 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.



**Troop 43**



Greetings from Troop 43! We hope everyone is enjoying health and happiness in the New Year, while keeping warm. While quiet, there were some great highlights for the troop already.

January is always odd as we don't have meetings when school isn't in session. This means we only had meetings on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>.

We had two non-Monday troop meetings. First at our online Committee Meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> we confirmed our commitment to contribute to the Congregational Church's capital campaign and attendance at a Scout Service on February 15. Second was a very special Eagle Court of Honor for Nate Grohe, who has achieved this at 16 years old! Mayor Schielke was in attendance to share the proclamation that January 17, 2026 will be known as Nate Grohe day, a tradition we hope his successor continues for Batavia Scouts.

Despite the cold, our annual ski trip remains a favorite. Required "apres ski" includes dinner at Pizza Ranch and splashing around the indoor pool with a warming stop in the poolside sauna.

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 click [here](#) for more information.

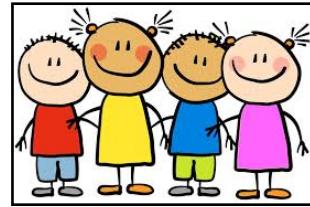


*Love is an action, not a feeling.  
It's the ability to choose to act  
with compassion, care, respect,  
and understanding.*

Bell Hooks



Our children and youth have created these beautiful valentines for nursing home residents. They will be distributed by the Batavia United Way and are sure to bring lots of smiles!



## Children & Youth Ministries

### Being Salt and Light Food Drive



From February 1–15, the Children and Youth Ministry will collect items to “spice up” the Batavia Food Pantry. We are seeking donations of various food seasonings such as salt, cinnamon, garlic, taco seasoning packets, and marinades as well as bagged snacks like popcorn, chips, and pretzels. Please place your donations in the box located by Laura and Suzy's offices.

### Upcoming Midweek Elementary and Middle School Meet-Ups:

February 25; March 11, 28; April 8, 22; May 6

We meet from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. and offer a dinner snack. There will be fun, fellowship, activities, and learning about God, Jesus, faith, and living our lives in a way that we can share God's love for us with everyone.

### Burning of the Palms

On Wednesday, February 11, at 6:00 p.m., Pastor Paige will join our elementary and middle school students to burn last year's palm branches. These ashes will be used for the Ash Wednesday service on February 18. All elementary and middle school students are invited to participate. During the event, Pastor Paige will explain the Ash Wednesday ritual and answer questions about faith.

Please dress for the weather as this activity will take place outdoors.



*The best love is the one that makes you a better person.*

Richard Bach

# Celebrate!



## February Birthdays

Lisa Schrader	3
Peter Angelini	5
Carol Patterson	8
Michael Angelini	11
June Chase	11
Alonzo Wicks	12
Ken McFee	14
Dave Mammenga	15
Haley Grant	16
Juanita Rea-Dorn	18
Vivienne Barsch	19
Emily Miller	19
Camila Phillips	24
Karon VanGelder	26
Jim Sayers	28

## February Anniversaries

Mike Fortner & Becky Hall	8
Lisa & Greg Youngdahl	18

We'd love to celebrate your birthdays and anniversaries with you and your family. If your information is missing or incorrect, please contact the church office: [office@congregationalchurch.org](mailto:office@congregationalchurch.org) or 630 879 1999.

Have you changed your address, email address, or phone number? Don't forget to update your information with the church:

[office@congregationalchurch.org](mailto:office@congregationalchurch.org)  
or 630 879 1999.



## Batavia Nursery School



We lasted through most of January with no heat on the north side of the building, but the church was beyond accommodating letting us use heated rooms on the south end. Thank you so much for that and for all the work Dave Hummel did for us to keep our students warm enough!

February finds our halls filled with love and laughter! Our older classes will be going on one of our very favorite field trips to bowl at Funway and eat lunch. Open registration began Saturday, January 31, for the 2026-2027 school year. If you know of anyone looking for a great preschool, please send them our way!

Extended play programing remains popular this year, and we are in the middle of the enrichment class called FLOUR POWER which involves cooking each week. Super Science will be the next enrichment class that will be running with the students doing experiments each week. These are wonderful additions to our morning curriculum!

In addition to exercise days mid-February, we will be having a local dental hygienist in to teach the kids about healthy teeth and provide "tooth tips" to go along with Dental Health Month.

Valentines Day is always a popular holiday filled with cute crafts, valentines, special treats, classroom parties, and over-the-top adorable valentine boxes. A lot of love is happening throughout BNS: "Love goes around like a circle and comes back knocking at your front door!" Until next time, keep smiling and always keep a song in your heart!

Pam Foelske, Director



*To love and be loved is to feel the sun from both sides.*

David Viscott

## 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](mailto: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 Hougen

**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

Sunday, February 15, 2026

6:00 p.m.

Church library



Linda Lanthrum will lead a discussion of *Spitfires: The American Women Who Flew in the Face of Danger During World War II* by Becky Aikman.

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.*

I have just returned from the vigil for Renee Nicole Good, beloved witness who came out to protect her neighbors today during an ICE raid in South Minneapolis near the corner of 34<sup>th</sup> and Portland. I stood on icy ground, slippery and wet, with thousands who came to mourn with broken hearts and determined holy rage. There, near where she was shot, on this winter's night in Minneapolis, the people of the Twin Cities showed up to end this unholy occupation of terror and turmoil. As we mourn this loss of a 37-year-old woman, who could have been you or me or any one of our clergy who respond to the call for witnesses when ICE is in the area, we also confront how empire still oppresses God's people by wielding violence and death.

\*\*\*\*\*

What are we to do? We must do our part large and small to stand for decency and to follow in the ways of Christ.

We will hold fast to love in places where hate invades.

We will hold fast to compassion when cruelty reigns.

We will hold fast to justice when power flaunts violence.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Rev. Dr. Tanya Sadagopan, Conference Minister*

January 7, 2026

*Taken from the UCC website. Read the entire article [here](#).*



*A purpose of human life, no matter who is controlling it, is to love whoever is around to be loved.*

Kurt Vonnegut

