



Congregational  
Church of Batavia

# THE TOWER

Congregational Church of Batavia

United Church of Christ

21 South Batavia Avenue, Batavia, IL 60510



March 2026

630-879-1999

[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.

## What's Happening?

**March 1 — One Great Hour of Sharing begins\***

**Diaper Drive begins\***

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

**March 22 — Acappellago Concert**

**March 24 — April Tower articles due**

**March 29 — Empathy Circles\***

**April 2 — Maundy Thursday\***

**April 3 — Good Friday**

**April 4 — Family Easter Event\***

**April 5 — Easter**

**April 26 — Empathy Circles\***

**May 31 — Empathy Circles\***

\*See related article



## Church Office Hours

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

## From our moderator

I love a good sunrise or sunset. In my opinion, these may be the only positive parts of our frigid Midwestern winters. This time of year, I'm always looking for something good, something positive to show me that spring is near. Some days are harder to find those signs than others. Tonight, the sunset continued to burst forth its vibrant and vivid shades of pink and red and purple hues. The mornings continue to hold crisp and frigid air that frosts our windows — prospects of something good and warm up ahead. The days are in fact getting longer as the brilliant sunsets appear closer to 6 o'clock than to 4. There is more grass than snow as the icy patches continue to melt away. And, as followers of Christ, we know that the living hope of Easter and the promises of spring's renewal are truly just around the corner.

Our theme for the Lenten Season is "Tell Me Something Good." I'm all about it. And I see it within our church family: something(s) good and many signs of hope and growth. We have full Sundays of worship with new and familiar faces. We are growing in membership, even as we discuss in Council the language and definition of "membership" and how we can make it more inclusive at CCoB. At Council meetings this year, we will be defining our church's vision and mission statement for the next five years. If you follow our webpage, you may have noticed that our currently listed vision statement was written in 2019 to lead us to 2025.

I've been taking some time to read and reflect on this current statement as we prepare to start a new 5-year quest. I encourage you to do the same. Take some time to review what was written and published in 2019. Then consider how we have lived up to that mission and vision, created as a church family.

As we embark on this adventure of creating a new vision for CCoB and mission for our future, we look to one another and to Christ's calling for us to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God.

If you aren't familiar with CCoB's Vision for 2025, you can find it [here](#).

Peace and joy,  
Jennifer Larson Angelini



*This time, like all times, is a very good one, if we but know what to do with it.*

Ralph Waldo Emerson



## Church Life

Please welcome the following people who became members of CCoB in January:

**Marie Aguilar**

**Lane Severson**

**Laura Severson**



## Empathy Circles

Join us for Empathy Circles in the Pine Room on Sunday March 29, April 26, and May 31 at 11:15.

Empathy Circles are a structured dialogue process that effectively supports meaningful and constructive dialogue. The basic process can be fairly easily learned in about fifteen minutes, and it is a lifelong practice to deepen. An Empathy Circle increases mutual understanding and strengthens connection by ensuring that each person feels fully heard to their satisfaction. The practice is the most effective gateway practice for learning, practicing, and deepening listening and empathy skills, as well as nurturing an empathic way of being.

If you are interested in learning more or would like to RSVP your attendance, please text Irene Crane @630-853-1927.

## From Pastor Paige

### The Good News is...All are Invited!

When the Worship Team met to do our planning for the time after Epiphany through the summer, we were all pretty sure we weren't going to use the resources from *A Sanctified Art* for Lent this year.

It's not that we were tired of the amazing work that they do, but we thought it might just be time to take a breath and stretch our liturgical wings a bit.

Then we saw their theme for the season, *Tell Me Something Good*, and we felt it was just exactly what we needed...40 days of the Good News that is at the heart of the Gospel...things like Invitation, Surprise, Celebration, Justice, the Invincibility of Life & Love. In a season in which it seems like everything we hear is bad news, we knew in our hearts we had to celebrate the Good that is the story of Jesus Christ. During this Lenten journey, we will explore some of the most joyous stories that our Gospels tell:

- Ash Wednesday – The Parable of the Wedding Banquet
- 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent – The Wedding at Cana
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent – A Woman Washes Jesus' Feet
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent – The Feeding of the 5,000
- 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent – Jesus Blesses the Children
- 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent – Jesus Refuses to Condemn a Woman Caught in Adultery
- Palm Sunday – The Triumphal Entry
- Maundy Thursday – Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet
- Good Friday – Nonviolence is the Way
- Easter Sunday – The Resurrection

It will be a journey of joy, of hope, of celebration, of enlightenment. And you are invited to come along. To render that invitation, here is a liturgical bit from our Ash Wednesday worship service, an Affirmation of Faith by Rev. Sarah Speed.

*We believe in a table-setting God*

*who always has a seat saved for you.*

*We believe in an inviting God*

*who leaves the porch light on and a hand extended.*

*We believe in a radically welcoming God*

*who eats with the overlooked and the outcast,  
the hungry and the downtrodden.*

*We believe in the good news of the gospel,*

*which reminds us that all are welcomed,*

*all are celebrated,*

*all are loved,*

*and all are claimed.*

*Pull up a seat at God's table.*

*There is good news to be shared here. Amen.*



On Sunday, March 22, at 3:00 p.m. in our sanctuary, Acappellago presents "Escape to...A Taste of Acappellago." The concert features songs about food and drink.

Tickets are \$20 at the door but can be purchased on or before March 15 for \$15 from any Acappellago member. Church members and church friends involved in the concert include Susan Price, Mike Fortner, Becky Hall, Gary and Lorinda Guenther-Wright, Juanita Rea-Dorn, Carol Collins, and Vicki Linich. We hope to see you there



National Proofreading Day is March 8. We are fortunate to have several wonderful proofreaders for *The Tower* and the annual report: Laura Bernabei, Anne Eustis, Judy Flury, Barb Mabbs, Lucinda Page, Susan Price, and Jean Stone. Please let them know you appreciate the work they do.

If you're one of those special people who notice errors in everything you read, you might want to join this group. It takes only about 30 minutes a month, can be done in the privacy of your own home, and vacations are allowed. Just let [Barb Zillgitt](#) know if this is something you'd like to do.



## 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



***Tell Me Something Good...*** Lenten devotional booklets are available on the table at the bottom of the stairs leading to the sanctuary. Feel free to take one for yourself AND take one for a friend. If you would like a copy but are not able to pick one up, please contact the church office, and we will see that you get one.

**WEDNESDAY VESPERS 6:30 p.m., 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 SERVICES:

**Palm/Passion Sunday, March 29, 10:00 a.m.** — sharing palms

**Maundy Thursday, April 2, 6:30 p.m.** — a service of Communion (gluten and dairy free) and the symbolic washing of hands which will be held in Paxton Hall. A light repast will be provided as we prepare for the service.

**Good Friday, April 3, 6:30 p.m.** — a reflective service held in the sanctuary

**Easter Sunday, April 5, 10:00 a.m.** — a joyful service with Communion and the creation of our annual Living Cross outside the front of the church.

The Decorating Committee will be decorating the sanctuary to augment this year's theme as well as filling the sanctuary with palms, lilies, and other spring flowers. If you would like to contribute to Easter flowers, please see a member of the committee: Ann Alexander, Marnie Mamminga, or Leslie LeResche.



*To every thing there is a season,  
and a time to every purpose  
under heaven.*





## Help the Outreach Team Wrap Children in Love!

From March 1 to 31, we will be having a diaper drive to **collect CHILDREN'S DIAPERS** in sizes **4, 5, 6, 7, and 8**.

These diaper sizes, which programs like SNAP won't pay for, will then be distributed to Mutual Ground Domestic Abuse Treatment Facility, serving our most special and vulnerable children.

**The Diaper Depot** will be set up outside Paxton Hall to drop off diapers during March, or you can write a check to Congregational Church of Batavia. Be sure to **write Outreach/Diaper Drive** on the memo line. **THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH!**

You may also donate online: <https://onrealm.org/CCBatavia/give/OTR>.

*Lane Severson and Don Smith*, Outreach Ministry Team, Diaper Drive Coordinators

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.



**Outreach Ministry Team**



Starting Sunday, March 1, 2026, and going through March 31, join us as we support **One Great Hour of Sharing** (OGHS).

Through this special UCC offering, we share the Light of Christ, by offering hope through worldwide aid projects including:

- Sharing sustainable, self-sufficient, ecological farming practices with farmers in diverse countries including Fiji and Honduras.
- Aiding people who have been forced from their homes. We help migrants whether they are displaced due to war, persecution, climate change, or lack of basics like water or food.

With our support, the UCC provides food, sources of clean water, education, health care, micro-credit loans, resettlement for refugees, emergency relief and rehabilitation as well as disaster preparedness and response around the world.

Please go to [www.ucc.org/oghs](http://www.ucc.org/oghs) for further information and to view video about this ministry..

Thank you so much for your consideration of this UCC Campaign that supports our world's most vulnerable people.

**Please give generously to One Great Hour of Sharing:**

- text CCOB OGHS to 73256,
- online: <https://onrealm.org/CCBatavia/give/OGHS>,
- or mail a check marked "OGHS" in the memo to 21 S. Batavia Ave., Batavia, IL 60510

The CCoB Outreach Ministry Team



*No matter how busy you are,  
you must take time to make the  
other person feel important.*

Mary Kay Ash

## Connections Team



This year is an even year, so it's time for another rummage sale. As usual, we will match the timing for the Batavia city-wide yard sales, which should be the first weekend in May.

We won't be wanting to start assembling piles of things at the church until after Easter (!), but it's never too early to start looking over your home with an eye out for things that you no longer want to keep. We take pretty much anything that's not broken or dirty: clothing, books, kitchenware, tools, garden supplies, small furnishings and small appliances, and craft material, for a starter list!

If you helped with the sale last time, you know a lot of what's involved. For those who haven't yet, know that we will be setting up a schedule for help the week before the sale through the sale days. We'll be looking for folks to help set up the tables for sale items, price the items, and suggest signage to help with pricing; e.g. "All adult clothing \$X per item."

We will also need folks to help the Friday and Saturday of the sale itself. Be thinking of how you might like to help; keep in mind that the helpers get to see the sale items first!

*Susan Price*, Connections lead

Send your April Tower articles to [bzillgit685@gmail.com](mailto:bzillgit685@gmail.com) by Tuesday, March 24.



*Don't spend time beating on a wall, hoping to transform it into a door.*

Coco Chanel

*In essentials unity,  
in nonessentials  
diversity,  
in all things charity.*

UCC

## Justice and Witness



In coordination with Outreach, we are continuing our support of **Dia Nuevo Comunidad** (New Day Community) Church in Hoffman Estates. Gayle Bridger asked the various CCOB teams to donate one of the items needed for **8 Blessing Boxes**. We also are providing clothing and some beds for newly arrived immigrant families. Thanks to all who contributed.

On **February 21** we again provided Batavia's drop off location for the **Unity in Community Food Drive**. Donations were driven to a church in Elgin, then delivered to immigrant families who can't safely leave home.

Ramadan has begun, but the annual **Iftar Dinner** we host with the **Batavia Islamic Center** is not yet scheduled as Mazher Amed is still not fully recovered from her illness. Stay tuned.

Early voting has been available since February 5, and the Primary Election is **March 17**. You can get information at: [clerk.kanecountyil.gov/ELECTIONS](http://clerk.kanecountyil.gov/ELECTIONS) or **630-232-5990**

We need our democracy to work again! **Please vote**, and reach out to friends who may need help getting to the polls. And please join local peaceful protests if you don't like ICE tactics.

Fox River Valley Initiative (**FRVI**) has been advocating for affordable housing in the area. We are pleased to see it looks like the **River Point Project** on Rt. 25 in Batavia (400 South River St.) is getting closer to development. Suggestions from the Planning Commission in January have resulted in a few improvements to the original plan. If approved the project will create 72 units. Ninety nine residents, of various ages, are expected to live here.

*Ann Alexander*, J&W chair





**Troop 43**



Greetings from Troop 43! February has been filled with LOTS of activities.

On the last day of January we had more than half a dozen Scouts attend the winter Merit Badge University at York High School in Elmhurst. In just one day Scouts earned between 2 and 4 badges, something that can take weeks to months.

February 13-14 had a few members of our troop camping outdoors in the cold, to practice the unique skills winter camping in the Midwest requires.

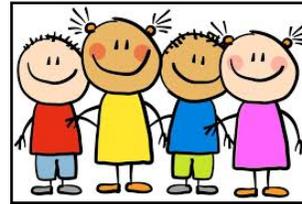
On February 15, we celebrated Scout Sunday at Congregational Church of Batavia. Scouts greeted before the service, read during the service, and served coffee and sweets after the service. Organizer Rep Matt Wicks introduced the troop and Scoutmaster Frank Downey presented the first of our contributions to the church's capital campaign. We continue to feel very welcome and at home in the church.

Our Scouts have so much fun together, that they frequently plan events on Mondays when we don't have meetings. For Presidents' Day, two dozen Scouts and adults enjoyed a few hours at TopGolf in Naperville, a semi-annual outing.

Lastly, our January ski trip was postponed at the last minute due to weather that was simply too cold. As it is such a favorite, this was postponed to February as a day trip to Cascade, Troop 43's home on the slopes.

The last Monday of February has some of our Scouts attending Pack 103's Blue and Gold meeting, celebrating the founding of Scouting and encouraging the youngest to continue their adventures.

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.



## Children & Youth Ministries

**Please join us for our Family Easter Event on Saturday, April 4.**

We will be hosting a "drop-in" morning of Easter fun in Paxton Hall between 9:30 and 11:00. Activities will include crafts, games, and a sharing of the Easter story. Please feel free to come and go as your schedule allows. We look forward to seeing you there!

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Over the past six weeks, our children and youth have been exploring what it means to be "Salt and Light" in our everyday lives as we strive to share God's love with those around us. One of our activities has been to collect salty snacks for the Batavia Food Pantry. **Thank you** to everyone who helped us make this project a success.



Burning last year's palm branches to use on Ash Wednesday

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

**March 11, 28; April 8, 22**

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.

*In life, when presented with any situation, breathe, take your time, focus and then decide what to do.*

Rickson Gracie

# Celebrate!

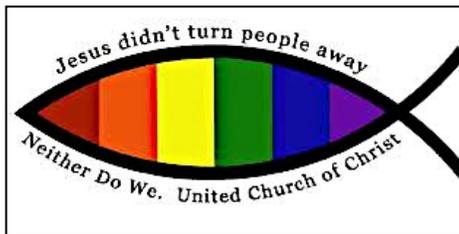


## March Birthdays

Jacob Mecum	1
Linda Straka	1
Scott Poulos	2
Judy Flury	3
Gwyneth Osterby	3
Judy Gonzalez	5
Megan LeResche	6
Mona Malay	6
Phil Woolley	7
Jean Deptolla	8
Andy Poulos	10
Ethan Flaks	12
Anne Eustis	16
Ellen Huxtable	17
Charlotte McDonnell	17
Carolyn Oke	19
Becky Hall	21
Suzy Daly	22
Ellen Field	22
Carol Borelli Collins	24
Evelyn Flaks	24
Frank Kane	24
Bill Blair	26
Scott Doty	27
Carter Churney	27
Jonny Shumaker	28
Dick MacFeely	30
Caroline Weiss	30

## March Anniversaries

Dale & Marjie Grischow	2
Amy Allan & Michael Graves	9
Brian & Tracy McDonnell	11
Tony & Mona Malay	29



## Batavia Nursery School



Trip to Funway

We have “weathered” through February with a little more sunshine in our morning weather chats and a little less snow! It will be another busy month for us as we head to the new location of the Batavia Food Pantry for a tour and to stock shelves with some of the food we collected during our month-long food drive, to decorate bags for shoppers while our chaperones (parents and grandparents) check for outdates. We will also be welcoming parents or other significant adults into our classrooms for Parent Visit Days mid-month. They are always amazed at how busy we stay and how much the students accomplish in that two-and-a-half-hour window!

Our new fundraiser will be starting sometime in late March or early April — watch for details to help support BNS. I will pass on the important information to the church office as soon as I get it.

This month our enrichment class is full, so we have two teachers running this popular class: Super Science. There will be many fun experiments going on during the four-week class. We will then end our school year with a final new enrichment class focusing on the Jory John food group series.

Please remember that if you know of anyone looking for a preschool this fall, send them our way. All classes still have openings, and we would love to get some more tours and registrations this spring. Contact the BNS office email [office@batavianurseryschool.org](mailto:office@batavianurseryschool.org) or 630-879-9470 for more information.

Keep looking for those longer afternoons of daylight and sunshine!

Pam Foelske, Director



**Don't wait. The time will never be just right.**

*Napoleon Hill*

## 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— Jennifer Larson Angelini

Vice Moderator — Amy Allan

Treasurer — Annie Barsch

Clerk — Jean Deptolla

Members-at-Large —

Judy Jablecki • Jeff Crane

**Connections:** Susan Price

**Decorating:** Ann Alexander

**Facilities:** Dave Hummel

### Finance:

Chair— Lynne Potter

Treasurer — Annie Barsch

Financial Secretary — Matt Wicks

Ellen Field • Larry Grant • Becky Hall

Sarah Greenhagen McCrea • Lane

Severson

**Justice & Witness:** Ann Alexander

**Outreach:** Judy Lutz • Don Smith

**Worship:** Judy Jablecki

**Archivist:** Larry Grant

**Systems Administrator:** Phil Woolley

**Tower Editor:** Barb Zillgitt

## Women's Connection

Sunday, March 15, 2026

6:00 p.m.

Church library

Elsie Ann Cole will lead a discussion of  
*Still Life with Breadcrumbs* by Anna Quindlen.

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.*

## Gender & Sexuality Justice Ministries

Gender & Sexuality Justice Ministries seeks transformative justice for our faith communities and congregations by just action and love for all.

We believe in the justice-oriented ministry of Jesus and act with those facing systemic oppression at the intersection of gender and sexuality to offer care, sex positive education and curriculum, gender and bodily autonomy education and programming, policy and advocacy and partnership and outreach opportunities.

The fluidity of God's design is wondrous and vast. No matter who you are, your sexuality or gender, God makes no mistakes. You are beloved and wonderfully made.

Helpful Links: [Resources](#) [Contact Us](#)

Taken from the UCC Website: [ucc.org](http://ucc.org)



*Time sometimes flies like a bird,  
sometimes crawls like a snail;  
but a man is happiest when he  
does not even notice whether it  
passes swiftly or slowly.*

Ivan Turgenev