



Congregational
Church of Batavia

THE TOWER

Congregational Church of Batavia

United Church of Christ

21 South Batavia Avenue, Batavia, IL 60510



September 2026

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

The theme for the fall is
peculiar parables.

What's Happening?

September 13 — New members

September 16 — Taizé service

September 22 — *Tower* articles due

September 30 — Primer on Christian
Nationalism*

October 6, 13 — Death, Grief, and
Living the Good Life*

October 7, 21, 28 — Primer on
Christian Nationalism*

October 24 — Batavia Batfest & Trunk
or Treat

October 25 — Gospel of Thomas*

November 1, 15 — Gospel of Thomas*

November 8 — Terry & Darlene
Wildman, First Nations*

*See related article



Church Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday,
Friday —

8:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Wednesday — 8:30-11:00 a.m.

The office will be closed on
Labor Day, September 7.

From Our Moderator . . .



There is something about autumn that invites us to notice change.

The leaves begin to turn, the days grow shorter, and the familiar landscape takes on a different character. With school back in full swing, my family is navigating life with two high school boys, one of whom is in his senior year. Talk about anticipating change! This mama is feeling all the feels.

Like the rest of us, I'm moving from the fullness of summer toward a new season, reminded that change is a natural part of life — and perhaps of faith as well.

Ecclesiastes 3 reminds us that there is “a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven” — “a time to plant and a time to harvest, a time to hold on and a time to let go.” Autumn seems to embody that wisdom especially well. It's a season of gathering, preparing, and trusting in what comes next.

Our church, too, is entering a season of change and renewal.

Some of that change is easy to see. Through our Capital Campaign projects, we are caring for and improving our physical home. As we receive bids for **outdoor tuck pointing and masonry work**, your generous giving will begin to take shape in a tangible way — an investment in caring for the building that has served generations of our congregation. We are also seeking bids for improvements to our **sanctuary audio and visual systems**, creating a more welcoming and accessible worship experience. Other changes, such as our review of **membership language and policies**, are less visible but equally important.

Together, these changes are part of something larger: **caring for the church we have inherited while preparing it for the church we are becoming.**

Sometimes change can make us uncomfortable. We value the familiar—the people, traditions, spaces, and routines that have become part of our lives. But we are reminded that God is continually at work making all things new.

That doesn't mean we leave the past behind. I believe we carry with us the faithfulness, wisdom, stories, and love of those who came before us. We honor what has been, even as we make room for what God may be calling us toward.

Perhaps that is **the invitation of this season**: not to fear change, but to meet it with faith.

May we have the courage to tend what needs tending, repair what needs repairing, reconsider what needs reconsidering, and make room for new gifts and possibilities. May we trust that the Spirit is still at work among us, as it has been throughout our congregation's history.

The leaves will change. The light will change. Our church will change, too.

Jen Larson Angelini

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

office@congregationalchurch.org
or 630 879 1999.



Just a Click Away!

Our worship services are live-streamed and then available later for viewing on YouTube. You can find the link for the current worship service in the weekly e-news which is sent out every Tuesday and Friday, on the [church website](#), and on the [online calendar](#). When using the online calendar, simply click on "Worship Service" on any given Sunday to open a window containing the stream link. Our past services are available on the [church YouTube](#) channel.

Send your October Tower articles to
bzillgitt685@gmail.com
by Tuesday, September 22.

From Pastor Paige . . .



School is Back In Session

*The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge,
and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge. Proverbs 18:15*

*Education is the most powerful weapon which
you can use to change the world. -Nelson Mandela*

Being the nerd that I am, I always loved the start of the new school year. I looked forward to the slowly cooling autumn days, the snazzy new wardrobe additions, and the intoxicating smell of fresh lined paper, new erasers, and just a whiff of rubber cement glue to hold it all together. But mostly, I looked forward to the start of classes, the opportunity to have new horizons of possibility open up before me as I studied literature, history, science, and yes, even math. I loved the thrill of discovery, the satisfaction when something I'd been working at finally clicked into place, and the way the world opened up before me in all its wonder and beauty. The arrival of the fall marked the beginning of it all.

I'm feeling all of that childhood excitement again, as I stand on the cusp of September. And that's because we have so many fantastic adult education offerings here at the Congregational Church of Batavia this season. I know, I know, I've been talking about it a lot in worship the last few weeks, but that's because I'm genuinely looking forward to the classes, the experts coming in to teach them, and the worlds they might open up for all of us. And I hope you get excited about them as I am!

- **A Primer on Christian Nationalism: What It Is & Why We Should Be Concerned**, with Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer; Wednesdays, September 30, October 7, 21, and 28, at 6:00 p.m.
- **Death, Grief, & Living the Good Life**, with Death Doula & Grief Educator Kim Rich; Tuesdays, October 6 and 13, at 6:00 p.m.
- **The Gospel of Thomas & Other Early Jesus Sayings**, with Dr. Michael Graves; Sundays, October 25, November 1 and 15, following worship at 11:15 a.m.
- **Worship with Terry and Darlene Wildman**, of *The First Nations Version of the New Testament, Psalms & Proverb*. Sunday, November 8, at 10:00 a.m.

Tell a neighbor, bring a friend, and join us for some exciting education offerings this autumn!



*Taking care is one way to
show your love. Another way
is letting people take good
care of you when you need it.*



Fred Rogers



Outreach Ministry Team



BATAVIA
Interfaith Food Pantry
and Clothes Closet

Please consider donating these items to the **Batavia Interfaith Food Pantry** during the month of September:

- Coffee: regular, decaf
- Pasta: any type except spaghetti
- Cake mix
- Brownie mix
- Toothpaste
- Shampoo
- Conditioner

Thank you from the Outreach Team!

truth

kindness can heal.
 kindness can inspire.
 kindness can motivate.
 kindness can help.
 kindness can grow.
 kindness can create.
 kindness can calm.
 kindness can connect.
 kindness can bless.
 choose kindness.

words by rochel marie martin
fundazjy.net



Capital Campaign Progress!

The Capital Campaign Team is making great progress! We meet monthly or more often as needed. We've developed processes for seeking bids, getting contract approvals, and working through projects as a team.

We are working on more ways to bring regular updates to the congregation. Watch for more information on that soon.

Project progress so far includes the projects completed in 2025 (boilers, roofs, and solar), launch of the Audiofetch system, and replacement of broken concrete in the north courtyard. Bids are coming in for more "first priority" projects including tuck pointing, security and ADA improvements, and more exterior repairs.

Are you interested in helping with any of the upcoming projects? The team would love more hands to help! See Jennifer Larson-Angelini, Dave Hummel, Karen Kosky, or any other members of the Capital Campaign team.

Justice and Witness



Justice and Witness had its first planning meeting on August. 23, to discuss the proposed **Community Dinners**. Our \$10,000 grant has no official time restrictions, so we want to start slowly to build this program.

One of the features of the grant proposal was to augment the **Pastor's Care & Share fund**. More people than ever are coming to us needing help with rent, food, gas, etc. Pastor Paige is going to confer with Laura Bernabei and suggest a reasonable amount that can be allocated on a regular basis.

We then considered a few options to get started with our dinner program. Since fellowship is another feature of our grant, a **Thanksgiving potluck** was discussed. CCOB members could host a community meal on Thanksgiving. We would provide the food, the staff, and the fellowship. This should appeal to those in the area who might be alone or struggling financially.

Another option is to start off with perhaps four quarterly dinners. Our kitchen is small and storage limited, so we'd like to ask local restaurant to consider donating food/meals in return for a charitable donation, good will, and advertising. **If anyone has a connection with a restaurant we might solicit, please contact the office.**

We are lucky to have Pam Foelske, Director of our Batavia Nursery School, as an advisor. She has been in charge of the monthly Community Dinners at Bethany Lutheran for over 20 years, and is a fount of information (and recipes). Also, Pastor Paige has a Barrington friend who has experience with a similar program. We do not have to reinvent the wheel.

Ann Alexander, J&W chair



The simple act of caring is heroic.

Edward Albert

Celebrate!



Troop 43



September Birthdays

Kimo Hemmes	1
Susan Price	3
Pam Foelske	4
Judy Miller	4
Judy Tablecki	6
Jeff Potter	7
Valerie Young	8
Bella Linde-Marin	9
Riley Rea-Dorn	10
Jayne VandenHeuvel	10
Susan Blair	14
Katie Jones	15
Alan Offenbecher	15
Sarah Plamondon	17
Dave Hummel	18
Gretchen Schrader	18
Jeff Palmquist	19
Kristin Wicks	21
Jill Huber	22
Taylor Churney	23
Steve Daunheimer	23
Jose Gonzalez	24
Penny Tracy	25
Sean Osterby	27
Joshua Kosky	28

September Anniversaries

Andy & Cherie Poulos	10
Jean & Karl Deptolla	13
Alan & Kristen Beth Offenbecher	13
Julie Crane & Rob Knanishu	20
Bryn & Eric Nelson	20
Carrie & Scott Schafer	27

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
 or 630 879 1999.

Greetings from Troop 43! August sees Scouts returning to balancing school, activities, and rededicating to everything scouts.

The start of the month saw our representatives return from the National Jamboree in West Virginia with great stories and new Scout friends, including meeting Scouting royalty in the founder's grandson.

The first event in August was the trek to a local Arby's for a Meat Mountain Expedition, which produced great smiles and full bellies. This was fully dreamt up and organized by one of our middle school Scouts.

Five of our Scouts returned to Batavia HS Marching Band at the end of July, which will take them away from Scouts through October. By mid-August all Scouts were back in schools, which means they are back in full uniform for our Monday meetings.

Campout this month goes to Raging Waves water park to splash through the last of the summer fun.



Batavia Nursery School



We have started our 52nd year! Our numbers are down, so we are now running five classes rather than the six we had last year.

We will jump right in with a field trip to one of our favorite spots, Windy Acres, for apple picking and lessons on bee keeping. The Srail family has done an amazing job providing this wonderful programming on their beautiful farm!

With the library under renovation this year, our monthly story hour will take place in Paxton Hall until the work has been completed.

Energy, music, and laughter will fill our halls this month as we get back into our school routine! Stop over any Sunday morning and take a peek into our inviting classrooms!

Pam Foelske, Director



Some people care too much. I think it's called love.

Winnie the Pooh

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

The Men's Bible Study group is a vibrant community that enjoys fun fellowship and engaging study. We spend our time together exploring the Bible and Christian books that help us live more intentionally. We also support each other, pray with each other, and cultivate meaningful friendships. So, grab your cup of coffee: we warmly invite you to join our weekly Saturday morning online meetings. Contact the church office (office@congregationalchurch.org) for the meeting link or if you have any questions.

Pastor: Paige Wolfanger
Director of Children's Ministries:
Laura Bernabei
Director of Youth Ministries: Suzy Daly
Director of Music: Vicki Linich
Office Manager: Laura Bernabei
Communications Manager: Lisa Youngdahl

Organist: Lily Li
AV Manager: Caleb Serrano
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
Tower Editor: Barb Zillgitt

Women's Connection

6:00 p.m.
Church library

Sunday, September 20, 2026

Margo Cooper will lead a discussion of
*Ravenmaster: My Life With the Ravens at the
Tower of London* by Christopher Skaife.

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



United Church of Christ NEWS

*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 two core programs of **Environmental Justice Ministries** for the UCC are Creation Justice Churches and Climate Hope Affiliates.

The **Creation Justice Churches** program guides congregations in discerning how they can best embody a commitment to care for God's creation as a central part of their DNA. Churches that complete this discernment process are designated as Creation Justice Churches. [Learn five important reasons congregations become Creation Justice Churches!](#)

The **Climate Hope Affiliates** program addresses the interconnected crises of climate change and societal injustice by working to advance or protect federal legislation through ongoing relationships with members of Congress, the local media, and the community. [Learn more about how we generate hope through action!](#)

Whether it is taking on climate change or addressing the lead poisoning of children, environmental justice ministries could not have a higher purpose or calling than they do now. Join the movement and become a Creation Justice Church. [Learn about the five steps for doing just that.](#)

Information taken from the UCC website: ucc.org



*You give but little when you give of
your possessions. It is when you
give of yourself that you truly give.*

Kahlil Gibran