

Northern Illinois Conference 2024 One Matters Award

Batavia United Methodist Church

Batavia, IL – Prairie Central



In the beginning of my appointment at Batavia United Methodist Church, listening sessions were held to help tell our story together. What brought people to the church? What did they love about the church? Why do they stay at the church? What hopes and dreams do they have for the church? Many of the comments were similar and the phrase “Well, before covid...” was common. Over the past year, we have worked together to re-invigorate our passion for ministry in an after covid reality.



We have received 12 new members by profession of faith or transfer. Our worship attendance in person has increased 25% over the last year & our online worship attendance has increased 23%. These numbers reflect a part of the story of the new life being discovered throughout the conversation.



Recently, after a remembrance of our baptism, a newly attending person asked questions about what just happened. “I haven’t thought about my baptism in more than 20 years. Thank you for helping me to remember that I have always been loved by God. I needed to be reminded.” On a Communion Sunday, another person newer to faith hadn’t received communion and had many questions. Like how to take communion... what



they were supposed to say... is it really ok for someone who isn’t a member to take communion? They expressed that they didn’t want to be disrespectful and wanted to do it right. “The best right way is be your self going up there. You are more than welcome,” I told them. It took a couple more minutes before they went and received. “Woah. That was awesome.” They said when they returned.



We’ve continued to tell our story around tables– eating meals, ice cream sundaes, apple nachos, root beer floats, pancakes and more! Each opportunity allows for people to invite friends, family, neighbors, and others to be a part of the story. Life is full and delicious a Batavia UMC!

As we continue to rediscover our passion for ministry together, we are working on a strategic plan to put the hopes and dreams we have for our church into action as we live into our mission... To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.. To build the kingdom here and now and for the future. To Love God, Love Others, & Serve. This story is still being written and we’re excited to be a part of the work of the Wild and Holy Spirit.



Written by Rev. Melissa Meyers