

# CONGREGATIONAL CHRONICLES

Declaring the Good News to all.



## Notes from the Undershepherd's Heart

By Pastor Ben Spera

It's that time of year again, Baxter Fun Days is right around the corner. The streets will be filled with friends, family, community members and visitors; Our church will be full of hungry stomachs looking for a good meal and cool place to rest, and Sunday morning dozens of people will gather up at the community center for a worship service; and that means dozens, if not hundreds of opportunities to share the love of Christ. So, I want to quickly give you three things you can do to share Christ this coming Fun Days (and really anytime).

1. **Serve people well.** Jesus washed the feet of his disciples as an act of service, and said Go and do likewise. Our church always goes above and beyond when it comes to serving the crowds of people that come for lunch. Let them see the love of Christ in you as you fill their plates or clean their spots, and whenever you get the chance, remind them how much Jesus loves them.
2. **Offer to Pray.** Often at these big events, you get the opportunity to catch up with old friends, and people will give you major life updates. When people tell you about struggles they are facing or big things happening in their lives, offer to pray for them. Don't wait, just pause for a moment and lift it up to G-d. Let them see you trust in Christ and call out to G-d on their behalf. Praying for people can be a powerful witness.
3. **Tell people about Jesus.** The Gospel is good news; it's a message to be told to people. Romans 10:14 says, "How are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard?" So look for opportunities to tell people about what Jesus has done for you and invite them into what Jesus has done for them.

These are things we can do, not just during Fun Days, but every day to help point people to Jesus. I pray that this coming Fun Days weekend, our lunch, the community service, and whatever else our members are a part of, we will stand out as witnesses for Jesus Christ.

### Sunday Service

Every Sunday  
10:00-11:00 am

### Ministries for Youth

Every Sunday during service,  
from September - May.  
For children PreK - 5th grade.

### Ministries for Teens

Every Sunday during service,  
from September - May  
For teens 6th - 12th grade.

### Women's Fellowship

A gathering of women to share  
in service to God. Meetings are  
held monthly on the third  
Tuesday, at 10:15 am.

### Upcoming Scripture Readings

- **July 6th:**  
Genesis 7:6-8:19 - Isaiah 50:4-11
- **July 13th:**  
Baxter Fun Days / SaltLight Group  
Community Worship Service
- **July 20th:**  
Genesis 8:20-9:11 - Isaiah 51:1-8
- **July 27th:**  
Genesis 9:12-17 - Isaiah 5:9-16

### Prayer Emphasis

This month, let us join together in  
praying for our Public Witness - with  
4th of July, Fun Days, and a slew of  
summer activities pray that we would  
put our faith in Jesus on display and  
tell people what He has done for us.

## Hymn of the Month

### Have Thine Own Way, Lord #325

In 1902 a well-known hymn writer (an Iowa Native) named Adelaide Pollard visited a prayer meeting. As a small number of people gathered to pray for the revival meetings, she was going to play music for, she was caught off guard by the prayer of a quite elderly lady who prayed "Have Thine Own Way Lord". Pollard held on to that line, integrating it into her own prayer life. Over time, Pollard twiddled that line around in her heart, and one day she was in a Bible Study where she became struck by Jeremiah 18:6 "O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter has done? declares the Lord. Behold, like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel." She took that line she heard the little old lady pray back in 1902 and wrote this beautiful hymn asking G-d to work in her and make her more and more into the image of Christ. In 1907, Pollard put together a small collection of hymns to raise money for a mission's trip to Africa and she published this hymn; it has since served the church of Jesus Christ as a prayer, asking G-d to "Have Thine Own Way Lord".



### Test Your Knowledge!

*Genesis - The Creation Story*  
*Order the days of God's creation.*

- Day 1: \_\_\_\_ A. God creates sea creatures & birds.  
Day 2: \_\_\_\_ B. God creates dry land & seas, as well as vegetation.  
Day 3: \_\_\_\_ C. God rests & blesses this day.  
Day 4: \_\_\_\_ D. God creates light & separates it from darkness, establishing day & night.  
Day 5: \_\_\_\_ E. God creates the sun, moon, & stars to govern the day & night, and mark the seasons.  
Day 6: \_\_\_\_ F. God creates the firmament (sky) to separate the waters above from the waters below.  
Day 7: \_\_\_\_ G. God creates land animals & humanity - Adam & Eve - in God's image.

Psst! You can find answers at the bottom of the last page, or your Bible!

## A Word From Women's Fellowship

By Marlys Colyn

Seven ladies were present for the June 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. Devotions were given by Diane E. She used Deuteronomy 31:6 for her scripture which says, "So be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid and do not panic before them. For the Lord your God will personally go ahead of you. He will neither fail you nor abandon you."

The Discover Hope collection is going well, and we will plan to end the donation collections on June 29<sup>th</sup>. We discussed the possibility of suggesting they use cookies from the monthly breadline to freeze and have available as needed.

The garbage disposal has been replaced, and we have been encouraged to use it weekly to keep it functioning well.

Thank you letters from each of the Ronald McDonald houses were also read.

Plans for the Baxter Fun Days lunch and the Sunday morning coffee time were discussed. -

**A monetary donation to help purchase food and disposable tableware for the Fun Days lunch would be appreciated from those who are not working the event or donating food.**

**Please send or give donations to Phyllis Johnson at:**

**PO Box 338, Baxter, IA 50028 as soon as possible. Thank you!**



### Baxter Congregational & Baxter Fun Days

Join us in all the exciting events happening during Baxter Fun Days!

Where do we begin! There are so many awesome things going on, let's start with the parade. Our 140<sup>th</sup> Anniversary committee has been brainstorming and working on a float for this year's Baxter Fun Days parade. We are excited to showcase our float & 140<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event to the community. The parade will be on Saturday, July 12<sup>th</sup>. The float lineup will start at 9:30am at the Sports Complex, and then the parade will begin at 10:30am, traveling down Main Street.

After the parade, come on over and have lunch with us in the cool air conditioning of our fellowship hall. Lunch will run from 11am - 1pm. We will be serving up beefburgers, hot dogs, and chili dogs, with plenty of sides and sweet treats.

Lastly, please don't forget to join us on Sunday, July 13th in the Community Building for the town church service. There will be refreshments starting at 9:30am, with the music group SaltLight leading our Fun Days Worship at 10am. Check their music out ahead of time at [saltlightmusic.com](http://saltlightmusic.com) or on their Facebook page. We can't wait to worship with you!

## WE BELIEVE

Dear Baxter Congregational Church,

Over the last number of months our church council has put in a lot of time and effort to bring together a statement of faith that would serve this church well. I think we did it. I want to thank all the council members who sat through late night discussions and extra meetings to bring this together, I want to thank everyone for their patience and contribution, and I want to give a special thank you to Karen Finch who was the primary person to compile the version we present to you all today. I believe this statement of faith will serve our church well - 1) providing guard rails for the gospel and teaching ministry of this church - 2) helping give biblical vision and direction to our work and ministry - 3) and most importantly will help increase unity in the Lord Jesus Christ. The council presents this statement of faith to you, the congregation, for your consideration and approval.

A congregational vote will be held **Sunday July 20th**, and I (Pastor Ben) encourage you all to vote to accept this new statement of faith.

### Baxter Congregational Church Statement of Faith OUR BELIEFS

**I. WE BELIEVE** in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

**WE BELIEVE** in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

**WE BELIEVE** in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic church\*, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

*\* means the universal church*  
(Apostle's Creed)

**II. WE BELIEVE** in one true God eternally existing in three distinct persons (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) each of Whom is fully and equally God; possesses all of the divine nature and attributes and is totally worthy of our worship and service.

(Matt. 28:19; John 1:14; 10:30; 2 Cor. 13:14)

**III. WE BELIEVE** the Bible to be the inspired, Inerrant, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God revealing the love of God to the world.

(1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; John 3:16)

**IV. WE BELIEVE** we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ; His death, burial, and resurrection; which is applied to us by faith granting salvation to all who believe. Salvation is a gift from God, not a result of our good works or any human efforts.

(Ephesians 2:8-9; Galatians 2:16, 3:8; Titus 3:5; Romans 10:9-10; Acts 16:31; Hebrews 9:22)

**V. WE BELIEVE** that the Lord's Supper is done in remembrance of Christ's finished work on the cross which symbolizes and confirms to his people the benefits of his death. We make provisions for infant dedication, infant baptism and believers baptism. Children being baptized enter into the covenant of baptism under which at least one parent stands, but each child needs to confirm the promises made at baptism for him or herself in due course. For believers, baptism declares publicly an existing identification with Christ in his burial and resurrection.

(1 Corinthians 11:23-26, 7:13-14; Acts 16:15; Romans 6:4-5)

**VI. WE BELIEVE** the Church is called to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength and to love our neighbor as ourselves. We will act compassionately toward the poor and needy, pursuing justice for the afflicted.

(Mark 12:29-31; Isaiah 1:17; James 1:27)

**This statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. We believe as God's inspired and inerrant Word, the Bible, is, was, and will always be the final authority concerning truth, morality, and humanity's proper conduct.**

## Sunday School Sessions

### Summer Activities

Vacation Bible School hosted by Bethany UCC



Bethany UCC Vacation Bible School: What a Mess!

📅 July 27–31 | ⌚ 6:00–7:30 PM

📍 Bethany United Church of Christ  
5627 N 95th Ave W, Baxter, IA 50028

Join Bethany UCC for a week of faith, fun, and a little bit of mess!

This year's Vacation Bible School theme is What a Mess!

We can't wait to dive into all the sticky, silly, and heartwarming stories that show how God meets us in the middle of life's messes.

🗣️ Open to kids age 4 through those going into 5th grade

🎨 Crafts, games, music, snacks, and Bible stories each night!

🚌 Need a ride?

A bus will leave from Baxter Congregational Church on Main Street at 6:00 p.m. and return at 7:30 p.m. each evening for kids needing transportation.

Whether you're a part of the Bethany UCC family or just looking for a fun and meaningful way to spend your summer evenings, all are welcome!

Come as you are—God's love meets us in every mess! ❤️

## Upcoming Meetings

- **Women's Group:**  
7/15/25 at 10:15 am
- **Diaconate/Pastor Parish:**  
7/28/25 at 5:15 pm
- **Council:**  
7/29/25 at 6:30 pm
- **Women's Group:**  
8/19/25 at 10:15 am
- **Council:**  
8/26/25 at 6:30 pm

## Talk To Us

### Main Office

(641) 227-3382

[office@baxtercongregational.com](mailto:office@baxtercongregational.com)

218 S Main St

Baxter, IA 50208

[www.baxtercongregational.com](http://www.baxtercongregational.com)

[www.facebook.com/BaxterCongregational](https://www.facebook.com/BaxterCongregational)

### Contact Pastor Ben

(641) 840-1102

[bspera@baxtercongregational.com](mailto:bspera@baxtercongregational.com)

## Upcoming Events

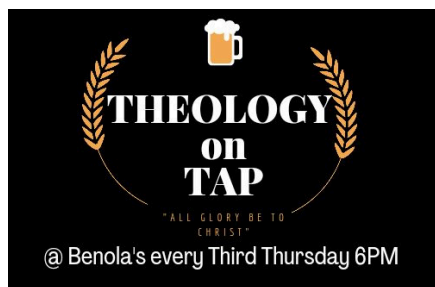


### Midweek Bible Study

With Pastor Ben

Every Wednesday at the Church

6:00 - 7:00 pm



### Theology on Tap

With Pastor Ben

Every Third Thursday at Benola's

6:00 - 7:00 pm



### Friday Prayer Meetings

With Pastor Ben

Every Friday at the Church

10:30 - 11:30 am