

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF LAGRANGE

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

S. LAGRANGE RD AT COSSITT AVE.
100 S. Sixth Ave.
LAGRANGE, IL

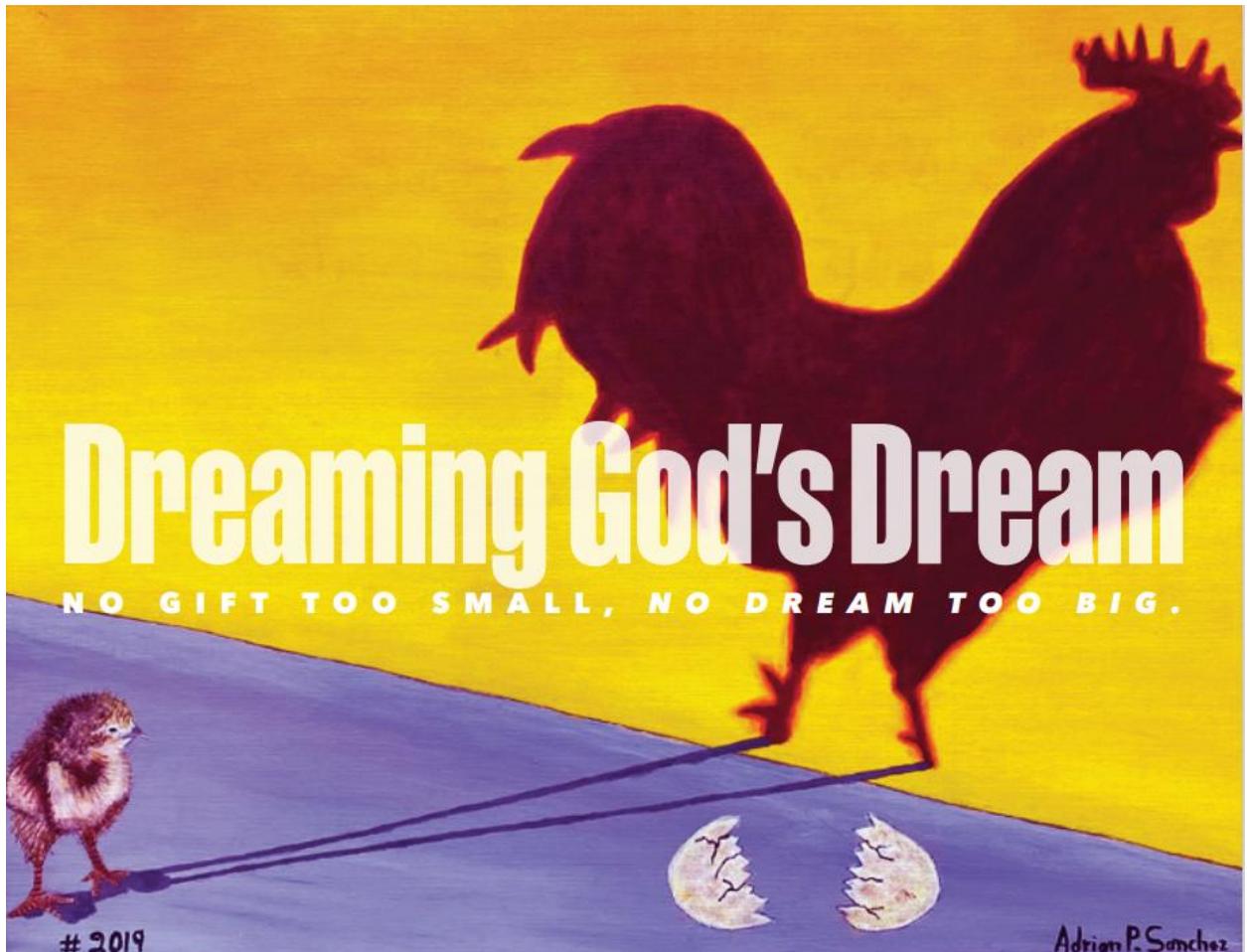
mainoffice@FCCLG.org
www.FCCLG.org
708.352.0800

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 16, 2025

WE EXTEND A WARM WELCOME TO ALL WHO WORSHIP WITH US TODAY

We acknowledge that First Congregational Church of LaGrange sits on the unceded, traditional, and ancestral homelands of Native peoples. We honor with gratitude the land itself and the Indigenous peoples who have been caretakers of the land for thousands of years, into the present day.

**Signifies Please stand as you are able.*



PRELUDE

For the Beauty of the Earth

arr. Clay Christiansen
AnnLaura Tapia, organ

WELCOME

Michelle Meuer

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Michelle Meuer

One: God of the past, we gather together to remember and to give you our special thanks

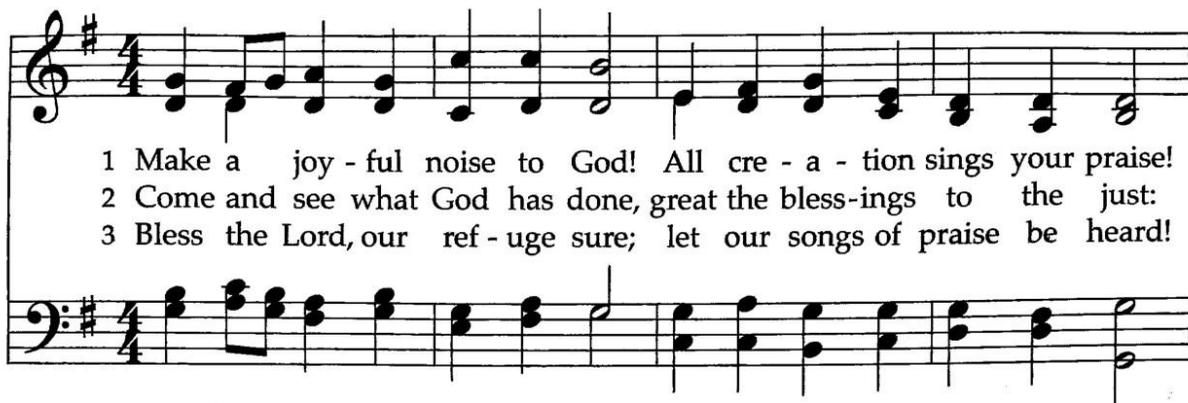
Many: Holy God, countless generations have experienced your loving guidance and blessing.

One: God of the present, we gather together to rejoice in how we do experience you now.

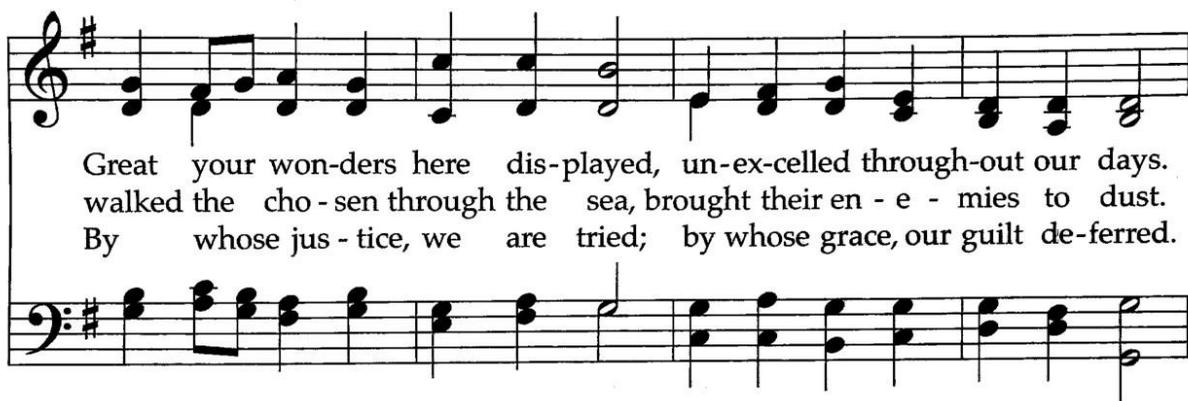
Many: Generous God, we celebrate and give thanks for God's continuing grace and mercy.

One: God of the future, we gather together in hope and faith as we are held in your hands.

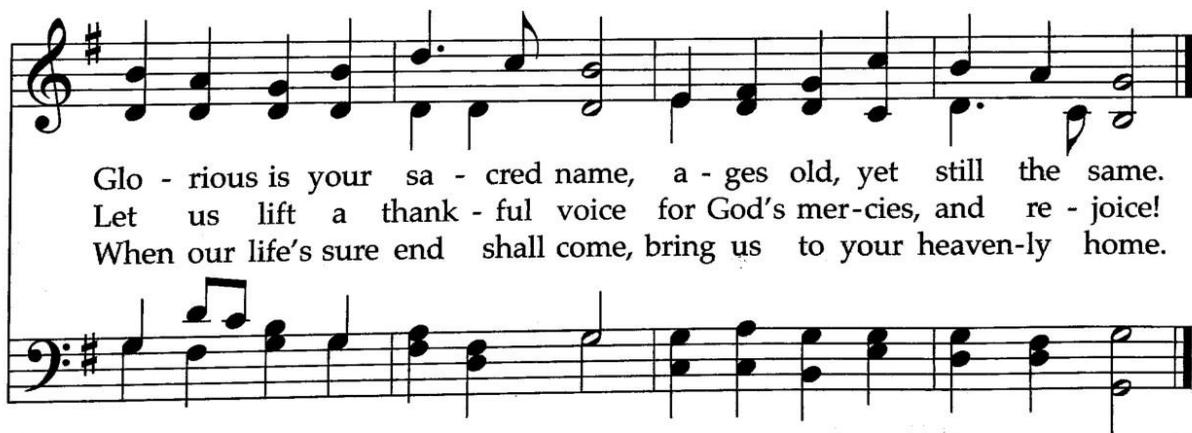
Many: Guiding God, help us to understand that we live and act tomorrow, through the life of today and yesterday; and so, as a community of faith we offer our thankfulness for your steadfast love, mercy and grace poured out over each succeeding generation.



1 Make a joy - ful noise to God! All cre - a - tion sings your praise!
 2 Come and see what God has done, great the bless - ings to the just:
 3 Bless the Lord, our ref - uge sure; let our songs of praise be heard!



Great your won - ders here dis - played, un - ex - celled through - out our days.
 walked the cho - sen through the sea, brought their en - e - mies to dust.
 By whose jus - tice, we are tried; by whose grace, our guilt de - ferred.



Glo - rious is your sa - cred name, a - ges old, yet still the same.
 Let us lift a thank - ful voice for God's mer - cies, and re - joice!
 When our life's sure end shall come, bring us to your heav - en - ly home.

***PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION (*unison*)**

Michelle Meuer

Gracious and Loving Creator, you have chosen us for a purpose – that we might bear lasting fruit for Your Kin-dom. You call us to walk humbly before you and to share in the struggle with the least of these, yet we have failed to live up to this call.

Silent prayer of self-examination.

When the church becomes the center of our world and we fail to see beyond its walls.

Transform our spiritual mind.

When our eyes become so fixed on priorities of our own making, that we fail to look for Jesus in the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and the imprisoned.

Transform our spiritual eyes.

When we praise You with our lips yet fail to reach out to others with acts of loving and caring, justice and mercy.

Transform our spiritual hearts.

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

***SONG**

May the Peace of Christ Be with You

arr. Lori True

May the peace of Christ be with you. May the love of Christ dwell
deep in your heart. May the Spir - it en - light - en your
way. May you walk in the com-fort of God's care.

SCRIPTURE:
SUNG PSALM

Psalm 66:1-20
New Century Hymnal 662

KIDS QUEST

Rev. Brian Damrow

SERMON

A Stewards Praise

Rev. Brian Damrow

MESSAGE IN MUSIC

For this Joy

Lyrics: Charles Anthony Silvestri

Music: Susan LaBarr

Chancel Choir; Anna Velzo, oboe; AnnLaura tapia, piano

Praise for the sun, who by day gives us warmth and enlightens;
Praise for the moon, who the darkest night cheerfully brightens;
Each glittering star shining from ages afar,
Driving away all that frightens.

Praise for the sky under heaven that widely contains us;
Our fertile earth, and her harvest that gently sustains us;
Birds on the wing, lifting their voices to sing,
Free us from all that restrains us.

Our tender hearts, which so wondrously in chambers deeping,
Cherish the joys of new love and, at death's call, the weeping.
Sorrow and pain turn to rejoicing again;
Love now in memory keeping.

Praise for this joy in our hearts as we sing of creation!
Wondrous are all things from firmament down to foundation!
Joyful our praise as all our voices we raise,
Singing in glad celebration!

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Brian Damrow

THE LORD'S PRAYER (UNISON)

Rev. Brian Damrow

**Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

MISSION MOMENT Missions

Michelle Meuer

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

Michelle Meuer

Place your gift in the offering plate

or

Text your gift to

708-688-5486

or



or go to

<http://tinyurl.com/FCCLGChangingLives>

OFFERTORY

Come Thou Font of Every Blessing arr. Duane Funderburk
Anna Velzo, oboe and AnnLaura Tapia, piano

***OFFERTORY RESPONSE (UNISON)** Dream God's Dream Words and music: Bryan Sirichio

Chorus



Dream God's dream! Ho - ly Spir - it help us dream of a
world where there is jus - tice and where ev - 'ry one is
free to build and grow and love, and to sim - ply have e -
nough. The world will change, when we dream God's dream.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION (UNISON)**

Michelle Meuer

God of all creation, accept our gifts as a sacrifice of praise. Bless and multiply the treasure we offer that we bring today so that your love may be known by the work of our community. Bless and multiply all our gifts of your people. So that whether at home, at work, or at play your glory may be known. We ask all this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Michelle Meuer

***HYMN**

New Century Hymnal #4
Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You

HYMN TO JOY

***BENEDICTION**

Rev. Brian Damrow

POSTLUDE

Recessional on "Hymn to Joy"

arr. Matthew Corl
AnnLaura Tapia, organ

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS:

Reader Leader: Michelle Meuer
Usher: Lawrence Bain & Faith Ullrich
Coffee Hour Hosts: The Nurture Team

Audio/Video: John Hoo & Lizza Obeng
Laundry Hero: Kathy Donaldson

Prayer Requests

- For Bill and Juanita, family of Nancy Coleman, for strength and healing.
- For Reid Bannecker, brother-in-law of Julia and Kevin Cunningham, who is battling stage four cancer.
- For Church Member, Barbara Hultman, prayers for healing while she recovers at home.
- For Camille (Dave Watt's sister) and Brian Bell.

If you or someone you know needs pastoral care, please call the main office at (708) 352-0800

Gifts of Gratitude



FCCLG is again partnering with Casa Central to provide Christmas gifts to children in their early childhood programs. To select a child to purchase a gift for, scan the QR code below or go to our sign up:

<https://signup.com/go/OJCJGW>

Gift instructions: Please wrap your gift or use a gift bag. Securely attach to the gift, with tape, a tag with the child's name and a brief description of the gift (for example: Toy, clothes, book). Drop off the gift in the sanctuary on or before December 7th. Suggested price range: \$30-\$35. If you prefer not to sign up online, contact the office and we can help you select a recipient.



This Week at Church

Sunday	11/16	10:00 a.m.	Celebration of Worship	Sanctuary/ online
		11:00 a.m.	Coffee Hour	Founders' Room
		11:30 a.m.	Ring & Sing	Choir Room
		2:00 p.m.	Galaxy Theater Set Building	Room 304
		7:00 p.m.	OA	Drawing Room
Monday	11/17	11:00 a.m.	Weekly Staff Meeting	Church Office
		6:30 p.m.	AA	Drawing Room
		7:00 p.m.	Hooks and Needles	Chapel Family Room
Tuesday	11/18	7:30 p.m.	Carillon Handbell Choir	Room 305
Wednesday	11/19	7:00 p.m.	Church Council Meeting	Drawing Room
		7:30 p.m.	Carillon Handbell Choir	Room 305
Thursday	11/20	4:15 p.m.	Confirmation Meeting	Zackley Youth Center
Friday	11/21	7:00 p.m.	Chancel Choir	Choir Room
		9:00 a.m.	OA	Drawing Room
		3:30 p.m.	Continuing Adult Education through Study	Zoom
Saturday	11/22	9:00 a.m.	Saturday Meals Program	Dining Room
Sunday	11/16	10:00 a.m.	Celebration of Worship	Sanctuary/ online
		11:00 a.m.	Coffee Hour	Founders' Room
		11:15 a.m.	Social Justice Meeting	Drawing Room
		11:30 a.m.	Ring & Sing	Room 304
		7:00 p.m.	OA	Drawing Room

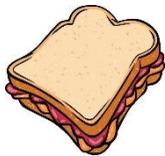


FCCLG Food Drive. Due to the severe crisis of food insecurity caused in part by the pause in governmental food assistance, the FCCLG Missions Team is sponsoring a food drive through December 21st. Kindly drop off nonperishable food items in the boxes labeled 'food drive' inside the Cossitt Ave. entrance. Suggested donations include peanut butter, jelly, pasta, rice, cereal, and canned goods such as meats, fish, fruit and vegetables. Collected items will be distributed to the First Baptist Food Pantry and other local food banks in the area.



Announcements

Sandwich Sunday for BEDS Plus –Today- November 16th. All are welcome to join members of the Missions Team in the Dining Room, after service, to make a variety of sandwiches for clients of BEDS Plus—we'll provide all the fixins'. Through the various outreach services provided by BEDS Plus, over 100 sandwiches are distributed daily, so our help is much needed and appreciated!



Donations will be accepted to help defray the cost of sandwich ingredients. Contact any Missions Team member with any questions.

November 23rd Consecration Sunday and Potluck. Please plan to join us after service in the Founder's Room for a potluck luncheon. Bring your favorite crockpot or casserole creation, salad, or dessert to share! Drop off items in the Founders Room before service. Contact the office with any questions.



FCCLG is now accepting nominations for Vice Moderator of the Church Council. This is an important leadership position that helps guide the direction of our church community. If you feel called to serve—or know someone whose gifts would bless our congregation—please submit your nomination or address any questions to any church council member. Let's discern together who God is calling to lead this season.

Deck the Sanctuary: It is almost Advent which means it's time to decorate our beautiful sanctuary for the season. The 'Hanging of the Greens' will be on November 23rd at 11am. There are tasks for the strong and limber as well as the detail-oriented who may prefer to sit. Thank you for your help in advance!



The Wacky Walkers Christmas Party will be held on Saturday, December 13th at 2:30pm. No walking this time, only a gathering in fellowship to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. As always, we will gather at the Palmer house, 7912 Summer Lane, Downers Grove. We understand the hustle and bustle of the season, but we sincerely hope you'll be able to take just a couple hours of your day to come and enjoy being in fellowship with each other. Your RSVP is greatly appreciated: Petra Hentzel, 630-272-9135 or hentzel91@comcast.net



FCCLG will be hosting a Flu Shot Clinic on Saturday December 6th, during Saturday Meals. Please stop by the Dining Room between 9am-12pm, no Appointment needed, to receive a shot! (Medical services arranged through Walgreens).

FCCLG Leadership in 2025

Council:		
Moderator of Council	Tom Lowry	moderator@fcclg.org
Past Moderator	Nancy Coleman	
Vice Moderator	Kent Llewellyn	
Clerk	Sherri Ries	
Treasurer	Amanda Ries	treasurer@fcclg.org
Members At Large	Kevin Cunningham (yr 3/3) Noah Gartner (yr 2/3)	
Transitional Pastor	Rev. Brian Damrow	pastor@fcclg.org
Ministries:		
Volunteer Coordinator	Stephanie Johnston	
Communications (social media)	Amanda Murphy	
Communications (Broadcasting)	John Hoo Lizza Obeng	Amanda Murphy David Watts
Education	Jerry Palmer (Adult Ed) Amanda Ries (Sunday School)	
Membership	Petra Hentzel* Janet Sampson	Sherri Ries Faith Ullrich
Missions	Lisa Aulerich-Marciniak Kathy Donaldson* Jim Marciniak	Michelle Meuer Wendy Seifert
Nurture	Betsy Colombe * Amy Crumrine LuAnn Hall Angela Harrison	Sue Hoffman Sandra Kappmeyer Amanda Ries
Personnel	Noah Gartner LaShinda C. John	Jill Tobin*
Property	Peter Blais Dick Lauterbach Dave Ries	Mike Ries* Erik Sander Dave Watts
Stewardship	Ellen Hamilton Susan Lynch	Jean O'Brien Mike Ries
Worship	Lawrence Bain Lexie Carther	Bob Klestil*
	*Team Contact	

Ministers
 Music Director
 Organist
 Office Administrator
 Events & Building Coordinator

www.fcclg.org
Ryan@fcclg.org
AnnLaura@fcclg.org
MainOffice@fcclg.org
Events@fcclg.org

All of Us
 Ryan Cox
 AnnLaura Tapia
 Tammy Bauer
 Jamie Dougherty

November 16, 2025

Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost

Isaiah 65:17-25

Imagine a world where everyone gets along. A place where the Lord says nothing shall be hurt or destroyed, where even the wolf and the lamb eat together peacefully.

This is the vision of a peaceable kingdom that the prophet Isaiah brings to us today. It is a world where only happiness and rejoicing exists. There is no pain nor sorrow.

My friends, such a world is possible because our God is one who holds infinite possibilities. It is only our own limited capacities for love and redemption that keep us captive to finite probabilities.

What if this day, though, we could lay aside our disbelief and enter the God possibilities? What if we could finally believe the world can change for the better, starting with our own hearts realizing that nothing is ever hopeless.

Take for instance the miraculous story of the wolf of Gubbio, which is found in the 14th-century short story collection, *The Little Flowers of St. Francis*. The story tells of the saint's encounter with the good people of Gubbio, Italy, who are being terrorized by a heartless and vicious wolf. The wolf not only steals their food but also their children.

Francis finds the wolf, but before the animal can attack, the saint makes the sign of the cross over its head. The wolf bows down and leans into Francis, who then asks the wolf why the residents of Gubbio are angry with him. The wolf says he is simply hungry.

Francis then makes a deal with the townsfolk to feed the wolf, who he has now named "Brother Wolf."

In return, Brother Wolf promises not to do any harm. For years, wolf and people live in peace, with Brother Wolf roaming the village streets and entering homes without incident. When Brother Wolf dies, Gubbio grieves deeply. The feared enemy had become a dear friend, and all it took was for someone to listen to the one who was misunderstood. All it took was for someone to take note of the struggle beneath the façade of strength to make peace in Gubbio possible.

While just a legend, the story is a moving tale that not only tugs at our heartstrings but invokes a vision of God's hope for us all — to live in harmony with one another.

What if we stopped fearing the wolves in our lives and seek to understand the "enemy" we tend to mistrust and hate all too quickly? Perhaps if we did, we would come to tame not only the wolf roaming about, but the wolf within.

Mission Moments tell a story about our congregation's connection with the United Church of Christ. You make possible these ministries through our gifts to Our Church's Wider Mission in our Annual Budget. For more information visit [https:// www.ucc.org](https://www.ucc.org)

