

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 MARCH 29, 2026

PALM SUNDAY

Dreaming God's Dream

NO GIFT TOO SMALL, NO DREAM TOO BIG.

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

A Solemn Processional

Raymond H. Haan

Bryant Millet, trumpet and AnnLaura Tapia, organ

WELCOME

Ellen Hamilton

***PROCESSIONAL**

Ellen Hamilton

One: Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Many: Hosanna in the highest heaven!

One: Open to us the gates of righteousness.

Many: We will enter and give thanks to the Lord.

One: Jesus comes to us in humility and peace.

Many: Let us welcome Christ with joy and faithful hearts.

***PROCESSIONAL HYMN**

New Century Hymnal #216
All Glory, Laud, and Honor

ST. THEODULPH

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Ellen Hamilton

One: Give thanks! God's love is constant and devoted to us.

Many: Let us say over and over: God's hope is unfailing in caring for us.

One: Give thanks, O give thanks! Justice is the gate God opens to all.

Many: Let us say over and over: God hears the cries of those who are forgotten.

One: Give thanks, O give thanks, people of God! God comes to bring us new life.

Many: Let us say this over and over: God takes the stone tossed aside by us to build the foundation of a life transformed.

***PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION**

Ellen Hamilton

We are so busy thinking about ourselves, God of constant love, that we cannot begin to ponder what was in Jesus' mind. We shout for joy on a day like this, smiling as we wave our palms, yet quickly toss them aside as we go out into the world. We harden our faces, not in discipleship, but to turn away those who come looking for help from us. Yet, because he was fully human like us, we too can be more like Jesus. So, as we begin our journey through Holy Week and beyond, may we choose humility over pride, weakness over strength, compassion over bullying, and seek to do whatever we are called to do, without any promise of reward. We pray this in the name of our Teacher, Jesus. Amen.

SCRIPTURE:

Matthew 21:1-11

Ellen Hamilton

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet:

“Tell the daughter of Zion,
Look, your king is coming to you,
humble and mounted on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

“Hosanna to the Son of David!
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, “Who is this?” The crowds were saying, “This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.”

KIDS QUEST

Rev. Brian Damrow

SERMON

A Theological Variance

Rev. Brian Damrow

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Brian Damrow

THE LORD’S PRAYER

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



1 Ride on, ride on, the time is right: the road - side
 2 on, ride on, your crit - ics wait, in - trigue and
 3 on, ride on, God's love de - mands. Jus - tice and



crowds scream with de - light; palm branch - es mark the
 ru - mor cir - cu - late; new lies a - bound in
 peace lie in your hands. E - vil and ang - el



pil - grim way where beg - gars squat and chil - dren play. 2 Ride
 word and jest, and truth be - comes a sus - pect guest. 3 Ride
 voic - es rhyme: you are the man and this the time.

MISSION MOMENT

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

Ellen Hamilton

Place your gift in the offering plate
 or
 Text your gift to
 708-688-5486
 or



or go to
<http://tinyurl.com/FCCLGChangingLives>

OFFERTORY

Hosanna to the Son of David

Malcolm Archer
Chancel Choir and organ

Hosanna to the Son of David.
Hosanna to the King of Israel.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

***OFFERTORY RESPONSE (UNISON) Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow OLD HUNDREDTH**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here be low;

Praise God for all that love has done; Creator, Christ, and Spirit One. Amen.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION (UNISON)**

Ellen Hamilton

Turn our palm branches into food for the hungry, turn the nails we hide behind our backs into justice for the forgotten, turn our shouts of joy into whispers of compassion for the broken. Turn our gifts into the hope, the grace, the life others need. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ellen Hamilton

***HYMN**

New Century Hymnal #213
Hosanna, Loud Hosanna

ELLACOMBE

POSTLUDE

The Royal Banners Forward Go

Robert J. Powell

Bryant Millet, trumpet and AnnLaura Tapia, organ

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS:

Reader Leader: Ellen Hamilton

Usher: Lawrence Bain

Coffee Hour Hosts: Ellen Hamilton

Audio/Video: John Hoo & Lizza Obeng

Laundry Hero: Gail Allinson

Prayer Requests

- For Juanita, family of Nancy Coleman, for strength and healing.
- For Reid Bannecker, brother-in-law of Julia and Kevin Cunningham, who is in hospice.
- For Church Member, Barbara Hultman, prayers for healing while she recovers at home.
- For Camille (Dave Watt’s sister) and Brian Bell.
- For church member Larry Adkison, prayers for healing.
- For church member Stephanie Johnston who is recovering from an injury.
- For Wyatt, nephew of Jean O’Brien’s friend, that God will show him a path.

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

This Week at Church

Sunday	3/29	10:00 a.m.	Celebration of Worship	Sanctuary/ online
		11:00 a.m.	Coffee Hour	Founders Room
		7:00 p.m.	OA	Drawing Room
Monday	3/30	11:00 a.m.	Weekly Staff Meeting	Church Office
		6:00 p.m.	Galaxy Theater Rehearsal	Dining Room
		6:30 p.m.	AA	Drawing Room
Tuesday	3/31	5:00 p.m.	Meditative Prayer Ministry	Chapel
		6:00 p.m.	Galaxy Theater Rehearsal	Dining Room

Wednesday	4/1	6:00 p.m.	Galaxy Theater Rehearsal	Dining Room
		7:00 p.m.	Chancel Choir	Sanctuary
Thursday	4/2	6:00 p.m.	Galaxy Theater Rehearsal	Dining Room
		7:00 p.m.	Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service	Sanctuary
Friday	4/3	9:00 a.m.	OA	Drawing Room
		3:30 p.m.	Continuing Adult Education through Study	Zoom
		7:00 p.m.	Good Friday Worship	Plymouth Place
Saturday	4/4	9:00 a.m.	Saturday Meals Program	Dining Room
Sunday	4/5	8:30 a.m.	Easter Breakfast	Founders Room
		10:00 a.m.	Celebration of Worship	Sanctuary/ online
		7:00 p.m.	OA	Drawing Room

Announcements

Holy Week Worship Schedule



Palm Sunday, 3/29: Celebration of Worship 10:00 a.m.

Maundy Thursday, 4/2: Tenebrae Service at 7:00 p.m.

Good Friday, 4/3: Worship Service at 7:00 p.m.
at Plymouth Place, 315 N La Grange Rd.

Easter Morning, 4/5: Celebration of Worship 10:00 a.m.

Help bloom the Living Cross – on Easter morning bring cut flowers and place them on the wooden frame. The cross will decorate the back of the sanctuary and is great for photos (and social media posts!).

Easter Morning Breakfast—The Nurture Team invites you and your family for breakfast on Easter morning, April 5, BEFORE church. Come by anytime from 8:30-9:55 a.m. in the Founder’s Room. We look forward to seeing you! Please note there is no coffee hour after the church service on Easter.

Missions Giving Priorities Survey: The Ministry of Missions seeks your input on key areas you want our church community to support through our monetary donations. There are paper surveys available on the table at the back of the church. Please fill out a form and place it in the treasure box, or use the QR code to fill out a form online.



Emergency Relief Funds: The UCC is asking for Emergency Relief Assistance for Hawaii and Kankakee. Rev. Damrow has more details.

Meditative Prayer Ministry: Our Meditative Prayer Ministry will be on Tuesday evenings from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., in our chapel. During these Tuesday evening hours, the chapel will be open to all. There will be no formal program, no required structure—only a sacred, welcoming space for silence, reflection, Scripture meditation, and personal prayer.

Friends of Music: We are fortunate to have a vibrant music program with volunteers as the cornerstone. Augmenting our volunteers with guest musicians for special services is made possible through the Friends of Music fund. Choral Sermons, Easter and Christmas Eve musicians, Jazz Sunday and other special services would not be possible without these gifts. This year's donations will also help sponsor a concert on June 7. Brochures are available or you may donate online.



Help Host Coffee Hour! The Nurture Team is looking for volunteers to host Coffee Hour. Don't worry—you won't be on your own! A team member will be there to assist as you serve the treats you provide. You can sign up online or in the Founders Room. Thank you for helping make this special time possible!



One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is a Special Mission Offering of the United Church of Christ that supports partners worldwide with ministries that fund health, education, and agricultural development, emergency relief, refugee ministries, and both international and domestic disaster response. We will be collecting for this offering through April 12th. Thank you for your support of this offering!



Pet Parade: Represent FCCLG in this year's Annual Pet Parade. The theme this year is decades, and ours is the 60's. Join us to walk the 1.5 mile route. (Wacky Walkers – this means you!) We're also looking for financial donations for swag to pass out to spectators, and for a banner to carry. Please note "Pet Parade" on your donation envelope or online donation.

HYGIENE KITS



Hygiene Kits for Clients of our Saturday Meals Program

The Ministry of Missions is organizing a hands-on project to provide personal hygiene kits for Saturday Meals clients. Over the next several weeks we are collecting items to include in these kits, various everyday necessities that promote cleanliness, safety, and peace of mind. Later in April we will gather on a Sunday after service to assemble the kits.

Please consider purchasing some of the following supplies and help contribute to the well-being of individuals and families we feed on Saturday. You can deposit your donations in the large bin by the Cossitt Avenue entrance door.

Items we are collecting include:

Unopened toothbrush

Toothpaste

Bar of soap

Wet Wipes

Stick deodorant

Shampoo

The above items should be travel-sized to make them easier to transport and store

Socks (large size, unisex)

Protein bars

Contact Kathy Donaldson or any member of the Missions team with questions.

JOIN US FOR A

Easter Dinner Celebration!



COMMUNITY OUTREACH EVENT

April 5th, 2026 • 1:00 P.M.

First Baptist Church

20 N Ashland Avenue

Hosted by Caring Place Foundation

Scavenger Egg Hunt Following Dinner!

For More Information, Call:

708-574-6304



FCCLG Leadership in 2026

Council:			
Moderator of Council	Kent Llewellyn	moderator@fcclg.org	
Past Moderator	Tom Lowry		
Vice Moderator	Patrick John		
Clerk	Sherrri Ries		
Treasurer	Amanda Ries	treasurer@fcclg.org	
Members At Large	Noah Gartner (yr 3/3) Kaki Lynch (yr1/3)		
Transitional Pastor	Rev. Brian Damrow	pastor@fcclg.org	
Ministries:			
Volunteer Coordinator	Stephanie Johnston		
Broadcasting	John Hoo Lizza Obeng	Amanda Murphy David Watts	
Faith Formation	Jerry Palmer (Adult Ed)	Amanda Ries (Sunday School)	
Green Team	Laurie Braun Claudia Byrne	Mary Ann Daniels Diane Kasnick	Dawn Mackie
Membership	Petra Hentzel* Janet Sampson	Sherrri 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	Open	Open	Open
Property	Dick Lauterbach Dave Ries	Mike Ries* Erik Sander	Dave Watts
Social Justice	Laurie Braun	Kathy Donaldson	
Social Media	Amanda Murphy		
Stewardship	Ellen Hamilton Kent Llewellyn	Tom Lowry Susan Lynch	Jean O'Brien Mike Ries
Worship	Lawrence Bain Lexie Carther	Bob Klestil*	
	*Team Contact		

Ministers
 Music Director
 Office Administrator
 Events & Building Coordinator
 Financial Coordinator

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

All of Us
 Ryan Cox
 AnnLaura Tapia
 Jamie Dougherty
 Tammy Bauer

Guilt and Forgiveness

March 29, 2026

Palm/Passion Sunday

Sixth Sunday in Lent

Matthew 26:14-27:66

Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.

Not the best dinnertime conversation to initiate but leave it to Jesus to bring it up just as everyone is enjoying a meal. We are there as well, at the table gathered for what will become known as The Last Supper. It is a night to wash feet, break bread and drink from the common cup. It is also the time for Judas, one of Jesus' 12 followers, to excuse himself from the festivities to sell Jesus out to the chief priests for 30 pieces of silver.

We already know what comes next as the Holy Week drama unfolds. Jesus is arrested, tried and crucified. We also know that Judas, so overcome with shame and guilt, will kill himself. What we don't know is that there is more to Judas' story. Often seen as the scapegoat in the story of salvation, Judas' real failing goes deeper than greed.

The ultimate betrayal was that Judas failed to believe in the depths of God's love for him — a love that forgives the deepest of betrayals. Rather than remember the grace Jesus spoke of, Judas allowed his guilt to consume him.

When I think of Judas' betrayal as one not trusting God's redemptive love, I begin hearing Jesus' dinner conversation differently. When he declares one of us will betray him, I squirm in my seat as others protest "Surely not I, Rabbi?" I know that many times I have run from God all because I couldn't trust the extent of love waiting to absolve me of my guilt and give me a new lease on life.

My friends, don't be like Judas — or me. Run to the loving arms of God, unafraid of the confessions that will come from your lips. Run, confess, repent — let it all out. Not only can God handle it, but God will also forgive.

Forgiving God, as much as we would like to say that we would not betray You, we know better. We are human and we are flawed. In this life, we will stray from Your ways. When we do, give us the courage to return to You, seeking the forgiveness You will not withhold from us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

(Rev. Donna Frischknecht Jackson is a communications specialist for the United Church of Christ and author of today's *Sunday Bulletin*.)

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)

