

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 8, 2026

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

Jesus, I Will Ponder Now

Michael D. Costello
AnnLaura Tapia, organ

WELCOME

Sherri Ries

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Sherri Ries

One: We come, our souls thirsting for God, our spirits longing for love.

Many: We come to the One who supplies every need; we come to the One who gives us living water.

One: We come, with prayers in our hearts, and with words too painful to speak.

Many: We come to the One who listens to our hearts, who carries our suffering through eternity.

One: We come, with our brokenness and loss, with our hope to be made whole.

Many: We come to the One who knows all our secrets, who brings peace to all of us - and to each of us.

1 O God, who gives us life and breath, who shapes us in the womb,
2 O God, who calls your people out to venture and to dare,
3 O God of covenant and law, revealed in cloud and flame,

who guards our lives from birth to death, then leads us from the tomb:
to plumb the bleak abyss of doubt and find you even there:
your mighty deeds evoke our awe; we dare not speak your name.

de-liver us from fears that kill the life we have from you.
when we despair in wandering through wastes of empty lies,
Yet we by faith are drawn to you and will your people prove,

Help us to know your Spirit still is making all things new.
re-fresh us with the living spring of hope that never dies.
as on our hearts you write a new the covenant of love.

God of eternity, you know how often we travel down the rocky roads of doubt and fear. We pester others with our worries; we hurl bitter words at those we love. We have chances to offer ourselves in service but give only our contempt to those in need. We could share the living waters with the world but want to store it in jars for safe keeping. Fountain of Grace, you turn towards us, to meet us wherever we are. You break open our rock-hard stubbornness that leads us away from our true calling, transform us, so we might be made whole. In Jesus the Christ, our thirst for hope and joy is quenched. Amen.

SCRIPTURE:

John 4:5-42

Sherri Ries

So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?" Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back." The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband,' for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!" The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where

people must worship is in Jerusalem.” Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming and is now here when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us.” Jesus said to her, “I am he, the one who is speaking to you.”

Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, “What do you want?” or, “Why are you speaking with her?” Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, “Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?” They left the city and were on their way to him.

Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, “Rabbi, eat something.” But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” So the disciples said to one another, “Surely no one has brought him something to eat?” Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. Do you not say, ‘Four months more, then comes the harvest’? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.”

Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I have ever done.” So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world.”

MESSAGE IN MUSIC

Small Deeds

Words: Ruth Krehbiel Jacobs

Music: John D. Horman

Children's Choir

Refrain: Small deeds, done with great conviction;
Small deeds, each one wisely planned;
Small deeds, touched by truth and beauty;
Small deeds guided by the hand of God.

I may never be like Noah, and build a mighty ark,
but I can light one candle to drive away the dark. [refrain]

I may never be like Moses – from Pharaoh's yoke be freed,
but I can lend a helping hand to those who are in need! [refrain]

I may never be like Hannah, and give to God my son,
but I can give the gift of love to people, one by one. [refrain]

KIDS QUEST

Rev. Brian Damrow

SERMON

Longing for Relationships

Rev. Brian Damrow

MESSAGE IN MUSIC

By the Well, a Thirsty Woman

Words: Elizabeth Stilborn

Music: Diana Wilcox

Chancel Choir

By the well, a thirsty woman found the life that you could give,
we, too, thirst like empty vessels – fill us full that we may live.
Jesus, source of living water, Wellspring bubbling deep within,
By the waters of our baptism wisdom purpose life begin.

Plant us firm, like trees by water, send our roots down deep in you,
quench our parched and thirsty spirits with your water, pure and true.

Jesus, source of living water, Nourisher of all on earth,
By the waters of our baptism quicken growth and give new birth.

May we be your streams of justice, as the water, may we move
through your people – by your Spirit showing mercy, sharing love.
Jesus, source of living water, Groundswell forcing truth to view,
By the waters of our baptism set us free to live for you.

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.**

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

Sherri Ries

Place your gift in the offering plate

or

Text your gift to
708-688-5486

or



or go to

<http://tinyurl.com/FCCLGChangingLives>

OFFERTORY**I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say**

Chaz Bowers
Chancel Choir and organ

I heard the voice of Jesus say, "Come unto me and rest;
Lay down, O weary one, lay down your head upon my breast."

I came to Jesus as I was, so weary, and worn, and sad;
I found in him a resting place, and he has made me glad.

I heard the voice of Jesus say, "Behold, I freely give
The living water; thirsty one, stoop down, and drink, and live."

I came to Jesus, and I drank of that life-giving stream;
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived, and now I live in him.

I heard the voice of Jesus say, "I am this dark world's Light;
Look unto me, your morn shall rise, and all your day be bright."

I looked to Jesus, and I found In him my star, my sun;
And in that light of life I'll walk, till traveling days are done

***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; Cre - a - tor, Christ, and Spir - it One. A - men.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION (UNISON)**

Sherri Ries

We pray, Gracious God, that our gifts may provide nourishment to those who thirst for justice, strength to those who hunger for hope, a community to those living in loneliness. This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sherri Ries

***HYMN**

New Century Hymnal #79
May the Sending One Defend You

ROLLINGBAY

***BENEDICTION**

Rev. Brian Damrow

POSTLUDE

Glory Be to Jesus

Robert A. Hobby
AnnLaura Tapia, organ

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS:

Reader Leader: Sherri Ries
Usher: Lawrence Bain
Coffee Hour Hosts: Gail Allinson

Audio/Video: John Hoo & David Watts
Laundry Hero: Sherri Ries

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.

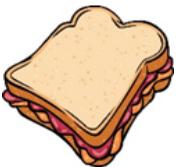
If you or someone you know needs pastoral care, please call the main office at (708) 352-0800

This Week at Church

Sunday	3/8	10:00 a.m.	Celebration of Worship	Sanctuary/ online
		11:00 a.m.	Coffee Hour	Founders Room
		11:15 a.m.	Ministry Teams Meeting	Dining Room
		11:30 a.m.	Ring and Sing	Room 304
		7:00 p.m.	OA	Drawing Room
Monday	3/9	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
		7:00 p.m.	Knitting/Crochet Group	Chapel Family Room
Wednesday	3/11	6:00 p.m.	Galaxy Theater Rehearsal	Dining Room
		7:30 p.m.	Carillon Handbell Choir	Room 305
Thursday	3/12	4:15 p.m.	Confirmation Class	Zackley Youth Center
Friday	3/13	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	3/14	9:00 a.m.	Saturday Meals Program	Dining Room
Sunday	3/15	10:00 a.m.	Celebration of Worship	Sanctuary/ online
		11:00 a.m.	Coffee Hour	Founders Room
		11:30 a.m.	Ring and Sing	Room 304
		7:00 p.m.	OA	Drawing Room

Announcements

March 15th Sandwich Sunday for BEDS Plus. Please join us in the dining room after service next Sunday to prepare a variety of sandwiches for clients of BEDS Plus. Through the various outreach services provided by BEDS Plus, over 100 sandwiches are distributed daily, so our help is much needed and appreciated. The Ministry of Missions will provide all the fixins' and donations will be accepted to help defray the cost of the sandwich ingredients. Contact any Missions Team member with questions. Thank you!



Wacky Walkers: Wacky Walkers will meet on Sunday, March 22nd. The walking will occur at 1:00, location to be announced. Fellowship will start at 2:30 at the Palmer house in Downers Grove. Please contact Petra Hentzel for more information.

Meditative Prayer Ministry: We are grateful for the many ways our church family continues to seek God's presence together. Today, we are pleased to introduce a new opportunity for quiet reflection and deeper communion with the Lord: a Meditative Prayer Ministry that will begin this Tuesday evening and continue each week, on Tuesday evening 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. If you have any questions, please see Tom Lowry or Rev. Brian.



Easter Flowers: Help bring the sanctuary to life on April 5 by dedicating a lily to a loved one. The cost per lily is \$20 and orders must be placed by Sunday, March 22nd, with the church office.

The lily cross that adorns the altar is another way to recognize a loved one. Please contact the office if you would like to donate the cross this year. The cost is \$135.

An additional tradition is the "Living Cross" - stay tuned for more info as Easter approaches.

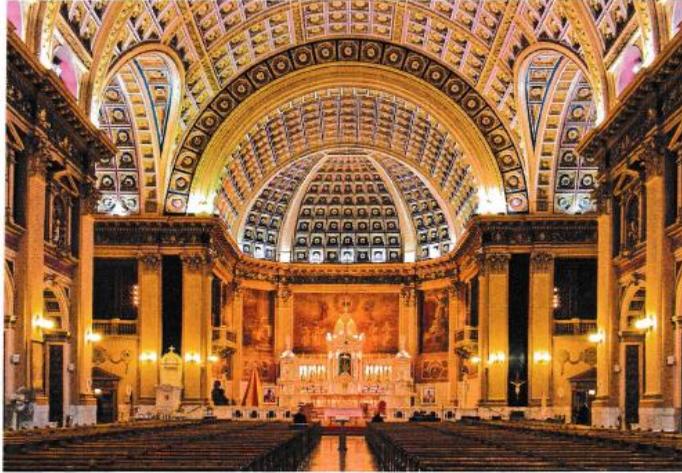
Women's Retreat: The Nurture Team is hosting a women's retreat July 10-12, 2026. It will be at Tower Hill, and Rev. Carol Ann Munro will be the guest speaker. For more details, please contact Angela Harrison: angiss2010@yahoo.com.

Office Hours: Please note – regular office hours are Mon & Tues from 9am-3pm, and Wed & Thurs from 9am-2pm.

Lenten Concert: On March 15 at 3pm, Walter Whitehouse, organ; Ryan Cox, baritone; AnnLaura Tapia, harp; and other wonderful musicians will be giving a concert of Lent and Easter music at Our Lady of Sorrows Basilica. The basilica is one of the architectural and acoustical treasures in the region. 3121 W. Jackson, Chicago, IL 60612. Free will offering. There is secure, off-street parking.

OUR LADY OF SORROWS BASILICA AND
NATIONAL SHRINE PRESENTS

A LAETARE SUNDAY CONCERT
March 15, 2026 at 3:00pm



Music for Lent, Holy Week and Easter

Featuring A Premier Vocal Quartet, Harp
Trumpet and Organ

Including works of Bach, Handel, Purcell, Eccard, Charpentier,
Pergolesi, Dubois and Biery

Free will Offering

Our Lady of Sorrows Basilica and National Shrine
3121 West Jackson Blvd.—Chicago, IL 60612
773/638-0159 ext, 114

Secured parking in rear off Van Buren St.

March 8, 2026

Third Sunday in Lent

John 4:5-42

There's an old stone well on my Vermont property dating back to the eighteenth century. It's no longer operational as it ran dry years ago. A deeper well has since been drilled. Still, there's something spiritually powerful about that old well. Each time I walk by the stone relic I find myself pausing for a blessed second, imagining Jesus offering me water in which I would never thirst again.

It was the same offer he extended to the Samaritan woman in the village near Shechem at Jacob's well, believed to have been built around 1906 B.C.

Jesus encounters the woman in the noontime sun. After getting past the societal faux pas of a Jew asking a Samaritan for water, and after disregarding the red flag waving that this woman is an outcast among her own people — after all, who draws water when the sun is the highest and the hottest — Jesus has the water conversation.

He doesn't talk about the refreshing liquid that quenches parched throats, but the refreshing Word of God that saturates souls that have become spiritual wastelands. Sir, how do I get this water? It's a question we should all ask, for what will satiate our thirsting for acceptance and wholeness?

Soon after moving to my fledgling farm that I named "Old Stone Well Farm," in honor of that well that captivated me, I began a Lenten spiritual practice. I would rise early in the morning and sit on the old rock slab covering the well's opening. I would then picture Jesus right beside me sharing all the beautiful things he sees in the world, and all the beauty he still sees in me just as he saw in the Samaritan woman.

My friends, although you can't physically join me at my old Vermont well this Lent, there is a well for you sit by this day. It is a place to retreat to and to close your eyes and to whisper to your Friend and Savior, "Jesus, I would very much like this water that you offer."

Thirst-quenching God, may we find ourselves asking Your Son boldly for the water in which we will never thirst for anything ever again. May this be the day we take a big holy gulp of hope, of love, of forgiveness, and of peace. 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)

