

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF LAGRANGE

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

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THURSDAY APRIL 2, 2026
MAUNDY THURSDAY

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.*



Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.
Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor.
Exsultemus, et in ipso jucundemur.
Timeamus et amemus Deum vivum.
Et ex corde diligamus nos sincero.
Amen.

Where charity and love are, God is there.
The love of Christ has gathered us together.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it.
Let us revere and love the living God.
And from a sincere heart let us love one another.
Amen.

***GATHERING WORDS**

Rev. Brian Damrow

*** GATHERING PRAYER (*UNISON*)**

Rev. Brian Damrow

Holy One of compassion and courage, on this night we remember the table where love was poured out, where bread was broken and shared without condition, where even the one who would betray was offered a place. Gather us now as you gathered your friends long ago— diverse in story, yet united in your vision of a world made whole. Wash from us the dust of fear and the weight of judgment, that we may rise from this table ready to serve with joy. In the breaking of bread and the sharing of the cup, may we taste your radical welcome, and be strengthened to love as you have loved— without limit, without exception, without end. Amen.



1 An up - per room did our Lord pre - pare for those he
2 A last - ing gift Je - sus gave his own: to share his
3 And af - ter sup - per he washed their feet, for ser - vice,
4 No end there is! We de - part in peace. He loves be -



loved un - til the end: and his dis - ci - ples still
bread, his lov - ing cup. What - ev - er bur - dens may
too, is sac - ra - ment. In Christ our joy shall be
yond our ut - ter - most: in ev - ery room in our



gath - er there to cel - e - brate their ris - en friend.
bow us down, he by his cross shall lift us up.
made com - plete: sent out to serve, as he was sent.
Fa - ther's house Christ will be there, as Lord and Host.

SCRIPTURE:

John 13: 1-17, 34-35

Peter Van Kempen

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from supper, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am

doing, but later you will understand.” Peter said to him, “You will never wash my feet.” Jesus answered, “Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.” Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!” Jesus said to him, “One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you.” For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, “Not all of you are clean.” After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had reclined again, he said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for that is what I am. So, if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, slaves are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

SERMON On This Night: When a New Covenant Was Revealed

Rev. Brian Damrow

***HYMN**

Where Charity and Love Prevail

MORNING SONG



1 Where char-i - ty and love pre - vail, there God is ev - er found; Brought
 2 With grate-ful joy and ho-ly fear true char-i - ty we learn; Let
 3 For-give we now each oth-er's faults as we our faults con-fess; And
 4 Let strife a-mong us be un-known, let all con - ten - tion cease; Be



here to - geth - er by Christ's love, by love are we thus bound.
 us with heart and mind and strength now love Christ in re - turn.
 let us love each oth - er well in Chris - tian ho - li - ness.
 Christ the glo - ry that we seek, be ours Christ's ho - ly peace.

Christ gave us the mandate to love one another.

Christ gave us the peace that we will never be left alone.

Christ gave us the picture that we are connected as vine and branches.

Christ gave us the assurance that no one will take away our joy.

One: God is with you!

Many: God is with us all!

One: Open wide our hearts.

Many: We open them to new possibilities.

One: From here tonight to dining room tables, this is the time to give God our thanks and praise.

Many: this is the time to give God our thanks and praise.

One: Jesus the Christ has created a realm of love for each of us- one in which we will be reunited with loved ones, one full of sacred memories, one in which we are assured of God's comfort.

It was a night filled with teachings and memories. Undoubtedly, tears were shed and laughs raised. This was the night before Jesus died. Jesus took bread. As he blessed it and broke it, he said to his friends "Whenever you eat this bread, eat in remembrance of me".

Later, Jesus blessed a cup filled with fruit of the vine. Friends, this is the new covenant. Drink this to remember me. Drink to remember our time together.

Spirit of God, surround the bread. Surround the cup. Surround us – here and elsewhere. Bless us in our eating and drinking. Bless our connection – near and far. No matter if close or distant, our covenant with God will keep us together.

Many: May we spend this time remembering: The ones who can't be at the table. The ones who are no longer at the table. And the one Christ who created this sacramental table experience. Amen.

SCRIPTURE:

Mark 14:32-42

They went to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." He took with him Peter and James and John and began to be distressed and agitated. And he said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake." And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. He said, "Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me, yet not what I want but what you want." He came and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. And once more he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy, and they did not know what to say to him. He came a third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed. Get up, let us be going. Look, my betrayer is at hand."

MESSAGE IN MUSIC

Jesus, Show Us How to Pray

Words: Adam M.L. Tice

Music: C. Leonard Raybon
Chancel Choir and keyboard

Jesus, show us how to pray, facing times that numb and stun.
Are there any words to say? "Not my will but yours be done."

When we ask our angry "why," when our tears have just begun:
Still, as you have prayed, we cry, "Not my will but yours be done."

When our hopes are hollowed out, all our prayers roll into one,
Filled with fear and nagging doubt: "Not my will but yours be done."

God, our hope is out of reach. Hear us, as you heard your Son!
We know you respond to each "Not my will but yours be done."

SCRIPTURE:

John 18:2-5

Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, "For whom are you looking?" they answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus replied, "I am he." Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them.

SCRIPTURE:

Matthew 26:57-68

Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered. But Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and going inside he sat with the guards in order to see how this would end. Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they might put him to death, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.'" The high priest stood up and said, "Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?" But Jesus was silent. Then the high priest said to him, "I put you under oath before the living God, tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God." Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven." Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He has blasphemed! Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy. What do you think?" They answered, "He deserves death." Then they spat in his face and struck him, and some slapped him, 68 saying, "Prophecy to us, you Messiah! Who is it that struck you?"

HYMN

New Century Hymnal #202
O God, How We Have Wandered
verse 3

PASSION CHORALE

SCRIPTURE:

Matthew 27:27-31

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spat on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

HYMN

New Century Hymnal #226
O Sacred head, Now Wounded
verse 1

PASSION CHORALE

SCRIPTURE:

Matthew 27:32-37

As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall, but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

SCRIPTURE:

Matthew 27:38-44

Then two rebels were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, the rebels who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way.

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 27:45-54

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling for Elijah." At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

MESSAGE IN MUSIC

When Jesus Wept
arr. Gwyneth Walker
Chancel Choir; Peter Van Kempen, percussion; piano

When Jesus wept, the falling tear in mercy flowed beyond all bound.
When Jesus groaned, a trembling fear seized all the guilty world around.

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 27:55-61

Many women were also there, looking on from a distance; they had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him. Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph, who also was himself a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. So, Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

PRAYER

Rev. Brian Damrow

MESSAGE IN MUSIC

Were You There?

Spiritual
Ryan Cox

STREPITUS

(A loud noise, often the slamming of a Bible, signifying the sealing of the tomb.)

Depart in Silence.

