

# FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF LAGRANGE

*An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ*

S. LAGRANGE RD AT COSSITT AVE.  
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SUNDAY MAY 3, 2026

## Dreaming God's Dream

NO GIFT TOO SMALL, NO DREAM TOO BIG.

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### 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.*

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### PRELUDE

God, Our Author and Creator

arr. Tim Osiek  
Ensemble

### WELCOME

Diane Kasnick

### CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Brian Damrow and Diane Kasnick

*(Based on: Psalms 19, 23, 104, 118; Song of Solomon 2; Matthew 6; Job 39; and Habakkuk 2)*

Speaker 1: This is the day that the Lord has made,

Speaker 2: Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Speaker 1: The heavens declare the glory of God--

Speaker 2: Not in words but in a glorious technicolor light show, everyday shouts in wordless language that God made.

Speaker 1: "Morning has broken, like the first morning, blackbird has spoken, like the first bird. Praise for the singing, praise for the morning, praise for them springing fresh from above."

Speaker 2: Blackbird has spoken and the voice of the turtle dove is heard in the land.

Speaker 1: Look at the birds of the heaven, Jesus says in his Sermon, take a lesson from them.

Speaker 2: Consider the stork, God says to Job. When she spreads her feathers to run, she laughs at horse and rider.

Speaker 1: One of our old confessions tells us that “the universe lies before our eyes like a beautiful book in which all creatures, great and small, are as letters to make us ponder the invisible things of God.”

Speaker 2: Jesus says, “Consider the lilies” to make us ponder the invisible things of God - his providential care and his love of beautiful things.

Speaker 1: When Jesus walked the earth,

Speaker 2: He walked the earth!

Speaker 1: His feet were dirty with the dust of the earth. His sermon illustrations were about flowers and trees and seeds and vineyards and birds and fish and sheep and goats and pigs.

Speaker 2: The Psalmist lies down in green pastures beside still waters and he finds peace.

Speaker 1: He imagines God dressed up in sunshine with all heaven stretched out for his tent.

Speaker 2: He imagines God laughing as his pet dragon, the leviathan, frolics in the sea.

Speake 1: And he exclaims, “What a wildly wonderful world, God! The glory of the Lord, let it last forever.”

Speaker 2: We are gathered here this morning, on this Creation Sunday with the tent of the sky stretched above us to worship the creator of the universe.

Speaker 1: God is in his holy temple,

Speaker 2: and that temple is the whole blooming creation.

Speaker 1: God is in his holy temple,

Speaker 2: let all the earth keep silence before him.

Speaker 1: Let us sing to the glory of our God:



1 In the bulb there is a flow - er; in the seed, and ap - ple tree;  
2 There's a song in ev - ery si - lence, seek - ing word and mel - o - dy;  
3 In our end is our be - gin - ning; in our time, in - fin - i - ty;



in co - coons, a hid - den prom - ise: but - ter - flies will soon be free!  
there's a dawn for ev - ery dark - ness, bring - ing hope to you and me.  
in our doubt there is be - liev - ing; in our life, e - ter - ni - ty.



In the cold and snow of win - ter there's a spring that waits to be,  
From the past will come the fu - ture; what it holds, a mys - te - ry,  
In our death, a res - ur - rec - tion; at the last, a vic - to - ry,



un - re - vealed un - til its sea - son, some - thing God a - lone can see.  
un - re - vealed un - til its sea - son, some - thing God a - lone can see.  
un - re - vealed un - til its sea - son, some - thing God a - lone can see.

**SCRIPTURE:**

Psalm 31:9-16 paraphrase

Rev. Brian Damrow

Be gracious to the earth, O God, for it is in distress; the ice caps melt away from the warming of rampant industrialization, the soul of the trees of the field, which once clapped their hands, are scattered and the bodies of creatures are endangered.

The life of soil is spent in single-crop farming, and years of care for national parks and all the sacred places of God's children are just sighs to those who mine them.

The strength of pollinators fails amid their migration, and the bones of the mountain tops are choking the waterways. The earth's body is the scorn of the powerful, a horror is the rainforest becomes a savannah. It has become an object of dread even to those who long to repair its damage. On the streets or in the sky — those who monitor carbon emissions long to flee, but there is nowhere to go. The earth has passed out of mind of

the wealthy. It has become a broken vessel. Those without grandchildren or whose grandchildren mean nothing to them or who do not know that children everywhere are their progeny scheme together, plotting to be rich now and escape somewhere, someday. They take the life of the earth. But we trust in you, O God, and know that you trust in us. Our times are in your hands, and your times are in our hands.

Deliver us from all who scheme destruction. Let your light shine upon us and teach us to be savers for you, to become the doers of your steadfast love.

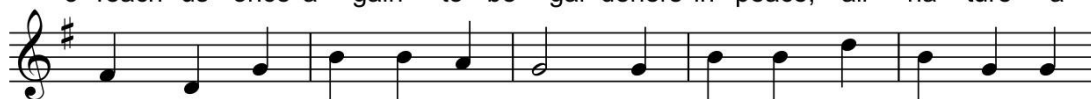
**\*HYMN**

For Beauty of Meadows  
verses 1 & 2

ST. DENIO



1 For beau - ty of mead - ows, for gran - deur of trees, for flow - ers of  
 2 As stew - ards of beau - ty re - ceived at your hand, as crea - tures who  
 3 Teach us once a - gain to be gar - deners in peace; all na - ture a -



wood - lands, for crea - tures of seas, for all you cre - a - ted and  
 hear your most ur - gent com - mand, we turn from our waste - ful de -  
 round us is ours but on lease; your name we would hal - low in



gave us to share, we praise you, Cre - a - tor, ex - tol - ling your care.  
 struc - tion of life, con - fess - ing our fail - ures, con - fess - ing our strife.  
 all that we do, ful - fill - ing our call - ing, cre - at - ing with you.

**\*SCRIPTURE:**

Job 12:7-10

Diane Kasnick

But ask the animals, and they will teach you, the birds of the air, and they will tell you; ask the plants of the earth, and they will teach you, and the fish of the sea will declare to you. Who among all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of every human being.

**\*HYMN**

For Beauty of Meadows  
verse 3

ST. DENIO

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God, for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its enslavement to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning together as it suffers together the pains of labor, and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope, we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope, for who hopes for what one already sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

**MESSAGE IN MUSIC**

Tune My Soul

Dick Thompson

Chancel Choir; rhythm section; Amanda Murphy, soloist

Tune my soul, Lord! Tune my soul! Lord, my soul feels out of key!  
Tune in high, Lord! Tune it low! Put me back in harmony!

Lord, my soul feels out of key! Tune it to your perfect harmony!

Trouble keeps pullin' my soul up sharp! Worry's wearin' me down!  
My soul should sing like David's harp, or Jerico's trumpet sound!

But I'm out of tune, I'm out of key! Lost my place in the melody!  
I long to be back in harmony! With the song creation rings!

Oh, Lord, my soul's so out of tune, come on and tune it!  
Tune it up high, or tune it low down!  
I'm out of key, put me back in perfect harmony!

**KIDS QUEST**

Rev. Brian Damrow

**SERMON**

She Cries to be Free

Rev. Brian Damrow

**PASTORAL PRAYER**

Rev. Brian Damrow

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

Diane Kasnick

Place your gift in the offering plate

or  
Text your gift to  
708-688-5486  
or



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

## OFFERTORY

All Creatures of Our God and King

arr. Deanna Witkowski  
Ensemble

## \*OFFERTORY RESPONSE (*UNISON*)

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

Musical notation for the Offertory Response, consisting of four staves of music in G major (one sharp). The lyrics are: "Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise God, all creatures here be low. Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia! Praise God for all that love has done; Cre-a-tor, Christ, and Spir-it, One. Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-a! Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia!"

Praise God from whom all bless-ings flow. Praise God, all crea-tures here be  
low. Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia! Praise God for all that love has  
done; Cre-a-tor, Christ, and Spir-it, One. Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-  
lu-a! Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia!

**\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (UNISON)**

Diane Kasnick

**For the wondrous gift of creation, we are thankful, O God. Your generous outpouring of grace reminds us of the fruitful life we are called to bear. May these gifts of time and labor, therefore, embody our desire to share and contribute to your call of service to your world. Amen.**

**\*COMMUNION HYMN**

*New Century Hymnal #330*

Let Us Break Bread

LET US BREAK BREAD

arr. Bill Carter

**INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

**PRAYER OF COMMUNION:**

God be with you and in you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to God.**

Give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Throughout all ages, as mountains dance and trees applaud the cries of birth are also loud for all to hear and tend. Your Sabbath and Jubilee made space for all Creation's refreshment. But we made exceptions. Your People sought milk and honey, yet injustice laid lands waste. Your prophets: priests and farmers call us to account. Yet your loving signs of warning fall often by the wayside. And greed and pride inspire harmful choices knowingly embraced. Yet still comes Christ Jesus, friend of wildlife, beloved of the poor and marginalized, scolding the seas, teaching with trees, and God's wildness in Wind, With Christ we shoulder the cross of healing; we shudder at the disaster of truth denied by power, And yet...

Risen and present through food and faith Christ calls us afresh to care for a damaged world, and to sing of Gods glory:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! God the Al - might - y! Ear - ly  
in the morn - ing we praise your maj - es - ty. Ho - ly,  
ho - ly, ho - ly! Mer - ci - ful and might - y! God  
in three per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!

God of power shared Sky and soil's abundant glory:

**Hosanna: help us God! Hosanna: heal Creation!**

Creator, Sustainer, gusting and fluttering life with the good things of the Earth: food and drink we offer; flesh and blood we are. As Jesus did, so do we remember:

We break this bread,

We share this cup of the vine,

We trust that

**Christ who died is Christ who rose And Christ who is with us now.**

The gifts of God for the people of God.

## SHARING THE ELEMENTS

COMMUNION MUSIC

Bread of Life

arr. Tim Osiek  
Ensemble

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING:

**God-with-Earth, invited and fed at your table we are remade, repurposed. May this food empower us to cherish your Creation who we also are. And whether our cares are light or heavy, our songs be strong or weak, keep our hearts warm, our hands open, our lives ever embracing and embraced by your love. Amen.**

**\*HYMN**

Creative God, You Spread the Earth

ELLACOMBE  
arr. Bill Carter



1 Cre - a - tive God, you spread the earth with life in man - y forms:  
2 The plan - et teemed with liv - ing things be - fore all hu - man birth,  
3 O play - ful God, you fill the field with lav - en - der and blue.



the deer and elk and col - um - bine, the bee in hum - ming swarms.  
and e - ven fire and beasts of prey re - newed the life of earth.  
You paint the bird with in - di - go, with red or taw - ny hue.



For - give us for each flower and bird now van - ished by our hand.  
For - give us, that, the last to come, we threat - en sea and air.  
For - give us that we grieve your heart, de - stroy - ing what you do,



Teach us to treat with lov - ing care the crea - tures of the land.  
Teach us to tend life's frag - ile web with wise and ten - der care.  
and teach us simp - ler, gent - ler ways to live on earth with you.

**\*BENEDICTION**

Rev. Brian Damrow

**POSTLUDE**

Praise to the Lord (Lobe den Herren)

arr. Tim Osiek  
Ensemble

**THANK YOU TO TODAY'S INSTRUMENTALISTS:**

Bob Sutter, piano  
Patrick Williams, bass  
Bret Zwier, drums  
Indi Shannon, soprano saxophone  
Brian Shannon, alto saxophone  
Jim Kloss, trumpet

Jim Kloss is playing in loving memory of Ron Kloss, Dolores Kloss and John Bednar.

## THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS:

Reader Leader: Diane Kasnick

Usher: Lawrence Bain

Coffee Hour Hosts: Sue Hoffman and Tim Merker

Audio/Video: John Hoo & David Watts

Laundry Hero: Wendy Seifert

## 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 Camille (Dave Watt's sister) and Brian Bell.
- For church member Larry Adkison, prayers for healing.
- 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

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>5/3</b>	10:00 a.m.	Celebration of Worship	Sanctuary/ online
		11:00 a.m.	Coffee Hour	Founders Room
		11:30 a.m.	Ring & Sing	Room 304
		7:00 p.m.	OA	Drawing Room
<b>Monday</b>	<b>5/4</b>	11:00 a.m.	Weekly Staff Meeting	Church Office
		6:30 p.m.	AA	Drawing Room
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>5/5</b>	5:00 p.m.	Meditative Prayer Ministry	Chapel
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>5/6</b>	7:30 p.m.	Carillon Handbells	Room 305
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>5/7</b>	4:15 p.m.	Confirmation Class	Zackley Room
		7:00 p.m.	Chancel Choir	Choir Room
<b>Friday</b>	<b>5/8</b>	9:00 a.m.	OA	Drawing Room
		3:30 p.m.	Continuing Adult Education through Study	Zoom
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>5/9</b>	9:00 a.m.	Saturday Meals Program	Dining Room
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>5/10</b>	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*

Dear Church Family,

As our church enters the next season of our transition journey, we are prayerfully beginning the process of discerning and calling a new, permanent minister to lead and shepherd our congregation. This is a sacred responsibility, and we are seeking individuals who feel called to serve on the Minister Selection Committee.

The Committee will be entrusted with guiding the search process, starting with writing the new minister's profile, reviewing candidates, engaging in thoughtful discussions with the Congregation and seeking God's wisdom every step of the way. We are looking for members who represent the diversity and heart of our church community. Additionally, you may be called to use your talents in specific aspects of the process, for example writing job profiles.

Serving on this committee is a meaningful opportunity to help shape the future of our church. If you feel led to serve, please speak to a member of church leadership to include your name for consideration. Over the next several weeks we will gather the names of those interested and then will hold an informational meeting for all to explain the details of the assignment.

With hope and gratitude,

The Church Council

## *Upcoming Sundays at First Congregational*

**May 10:** Mother's Day; Sermon: "The Feminine Tone"

**May 17:** Confirmation Sunday; Sermon: "Journey Over Destination"

**May 24:** Pentecost Sunday; Sermon: "To Be the Church"

**Faith Formation Team:** Would you be interested in joining the Faith Formation Team? You would not need to lead a class, but would be instrumental in guiding our formation programs going forward. Please speak to Rev. Brian if you would like to know more.

**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.

**Sandwich Sunday for BEDS Plus today:**



Please join us in the dining room after service today to prepare a variety of sandwiches for clients of BEDS Plus. Cash donations will be accepted to help defray the cost of the sandwich ingredients, or you can donate online through the church website by giving to “ACH Unpledged Contributions” and adding “Sandwich Sunday” in the comments field. Contact any Missions Team member with questions. Thank you!

**FCCLG Book Club:** Book Club will meet next on Tuesday, May 12 at 7:30 pm. Our selected book is *Lula Dean's Little Library of Banned Books* by Kirsten Miller. Described as "a sharp, funny and socially observant novel," the story is set in a small Georgia town where a campaign against “dangerous” books sets off a chain of unexpected consequences. The author is said to have the ability to take a serious subject and make it funny and entertaining.

Book Club meets virtually via Zoom. All readers are welcome! For a Zoom invitation or with any questions, please email Kathy Donaldson ([kathygdonaldson@gmail.com](mailto:kathygdonaldson@gmail.com)).



**Pet Parade and Wacky Walkers:** What a great event for the Wacky Walkers and others from First Congregational. The Pet Parade is on May 30th at 9:30 a.m. It is approx. a 1.5 mile walk. What a great way to show our support from our church, by having a great turn out!! We will meet as usual at 2:30 p.m. at the Palmer House (Jerry and

Petra Palmer, 7912 Summer Ln., Downers Grove, 630-272-9135, [hentzel91@comcast.net](mailto:hentzel91@comcast.net)) where we will fellowship with soup and bread. Please let me know if you will join us!! A great cause to support, and a great way to get to know the great people in our church. We’re looking for candy donations (no chocolate). Candy can be left in the bin outside the church office. We’re also looking for financial donations. Please note “Pet Parade” on your donation envelope or online donation.

**New Battery Disposal Law:** Did you know that as of January 1, 2026, Illinois residents are no longer allowed to dispose of household batteries in the trash, not just the lithium-ion type but even those common alkaline batteries used in kids’ toys, remotes, electric toothbrushes, and countless other items? In coming weeks, the Green Team will provide more information in this space about how to properly store used batteries and how to find designated drop-off locations.

**Women’s Retreat 2026:** Join us for a weekend of reflection, empowerment, and sisterhood. July 10-12 at Tower Hill Camp. Dr. Carol Ann Munro will be the guest speaker. Contact Angela Harrison – [angiss2010@yahoo.com](mailto:angiss2010@yahoo.com) - for more information to sign up, or add your name to the sheet located in the Founders Room.

**Summer Camp:** Looking for a week of adventure for the kids this summer? Have you considered church camp at Tower Hill? H.U.G. (Helping Us Grow) Camp is July 5-10 for campers finishing 4th grade thru 11th. There are all sorts of activities including an adventure course, archery, crafts, hiking, spongeball, and ultimate frisbee as well as time on beautiful Lake Michigan. Add in songs and s'mores around a fire, a visit to God's mailbox and a shaving cream extravaganza and you have a week of fun and friendship that keeps you coming back. Visit their website for more info: [hugcamp.com](http://hugcamp.com).