

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 MAY 10, 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

Andante con moto

Alexandre Guilmant
AnnLaura Tapia, organ

WELCOME

Dick Lauterbach

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Dick Lauterbach

One: Welcome, beloved community, to worship the One who mothers us all— the God who births creation, nurtures life, and holds us close.

Many: We come to honor the many faces of love: birth mothers, adoptive mothers, foster mothers, chosen mothers, and all who offer care, guidance, and compassion.

One: We remember those for whom this day is tender— those who grieve, those who long, those who have complicated stories.

Many: In God's presence, there is room for joy and sorrow, for gratitude and lament, for hope and healing.

One: Let us worship the One whose love is wider than we can imagine, whose embrace welcomes every child, every story, every heart.

Many: We come to worship God— our Creator, our Sustainer, our Mother and Father, the Source of all life and love.

*OPENING HYMN

The Body Is One Words and Music: Ruth S. Sandberg
Led by the Children's Choir

The bo - dy is one, the mem - bers are man - y. Cre -

- a - ted are we no two the same. Yet there is one true God we serve.

1. Man - y are the bless - ings we be - hold here a - mong our sis - ters
2. Man - y are the gifts that God be - stows, tal - ents to be mul - ti -
3. In the shad - ow of the emp - ty cross we are all re - refresh - ed, re -

and our broth - ers. Cel - e - brate the God who makes us one,
- plied not hid - den. Drive the fear of fail - ure from our hearts.
- newed, for - giv - en. "Take my yoke up - on you," Je - sus said.

cel - e - brate the gifts, the gifts that make us oth - er.
Set us free in joy, in joy to do love's bid - ding.
Love will give us strength, the strength for an - y bur - den.

The The bo - dy is one, the mem - bers are man - y.

Yet there is one true God we serve. Yet there is one true God we serve.

On this day, we honor the hands that have held us, the voices that have guided us, and the hearts that have believed in us even when we could not believe in ourselves. We give thanks for mothers of birth and mothers of choice, for parents, guardians, mentors, and friends who have mothered us in ways beyond biology. Bless those who are in seasons of joy, watching their children grow strong and free. Bless those who are in seasons of grief, missing a mother's embrace or longing for a child. Transform our love into action— that we may nurture justice as fiercely as a mother protects her child, that we may cradle the brokenhearted with tenderness, and that we may birth new hope in places where despair has taken root. May we remember that mothering is not bound by gender, nor by blood, but by the courage to care, the patience to listen, and the willingness to grow alongside another soul. Today, let our gratitude become a seed— planted deep in the soil of compassion— so that generations yet to come will harvest a world more gentle, more just, and more whole. Amen.

MESSAGE IN MUSIC:

Praise the Lord of Love

Lani Smith
Children's Choir

Chorus: Praise the Lord in the earth below, praise the Lord in the sky above.
Praise the Lord everywhere you go; Praise the Lord of love.

Praise God in the brooks and fountains, praise God in the mighty seas,
Praise God in the hills and valleys, praise God in the flowers and the trees. [chorus]

Praise God for the life given us, praise God for tender care,
Praise God for gentle guidance, praise God for the love that we can share. [chorus]

A LITANY FOR MOTHER'S DAY

Rev. Brian Damrow and Dick Lauterbach

One: God of Mothers, Mothering God,

Two: Thank you for mothers who, like you, knew us in the womb,

All: Who brought us into this brave new world.

One: Thank you for mothers who did not give birth to us,

Two: Yet claimed us just the same:

All: Who adopted us formally and informally.

One: Like Naomi who took on her daughters-in-law Ruth and Orpah,
Two: We thank you for grandmas, aunties, big sisters, and female cousins,
All: Who were “mamas” to us when we needed it.

One: We remember encouragement when we have felt unsure or afraid;
Two: We are blessed for their kindness when the world was not kind.
All: We still cherish comforting arms, kisses over our teared cheeks.

One: Like the Canaanite woman who took on Jesus,
Two: We survived because of mama-bear-with-cubs protection.
All: We know, Loving God, that this instinct comes from you.

One: Like Timothy’s mother Lois, his grandmother Eunice,
Two: We are fortunate for guidance, wisdom, instruction,
All: For outright correction to steer clear of wrong paths.

One: As with Jesus’ mother Mary, we grieve with you, God.
Two: For mothers who lost children long before their time,
All: Whether due to miscarriage, family strife, illness, or violence.

One: We lament with you, God, for mothers like Sarah,
Two: Stymied by obstacles, some self-made, in their parenting.
All: We ask for reconciliation if possible, but if nothing else, peace.

One: We bear witness that like Moses’ mother Jochebed,
Two: Not all mothers have the same power, resources, or support.
All: We commit to putting our shoulder to the wheel for their rights.

One: We lift the ones who have mothered us but have passed on.
Two: We know they rest in your eternal embrace, but we miss them so.
All: We look forward to feasting with them at your heavenly banquet.

One: Today, we also recognize men who must be both father and mother.
Two: We offer care, support, and understanding
All: To them and to their children as they move through the world.

One: For all those who have mothered us, we give thanks for their legacy.
All: Inspire us to live in ways that their sacrifices and their love live on.
In the name of the One Who Is Mother, Father, Parent to Us All, Amen.

SCRIPTURE:

Esther 4:12-17

Dick Lauterbach

When they told Mordecai what Esther had said, Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, "Do not think that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews. For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. Who knows? Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for just such a time as this." Then Esther said in reply to Mordecai, "Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will also fast as you do. After that I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish." Mordecai then went away and did everything as Esther had ordered him.

SCRIPTURE:

Matthew 15:21-28

Dick Lauterbach

Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon." But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed from that moment.

KIDS QUEST

Rev. Brian Damrow

SERMON

The Feminine Tone

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. She came to Je - sus from out - side the fold—
 2. Claim - ing a bless - ing, a touch of God's grace,
 3. God, you still bless those who seek you in prayer.



Ca - naan - ite wo - man! Per - sis - tent and bold!
 She knew God's love was not bound - ed by place.
 You wel - come dream - ers who faith - ful - ly dare.



Look - ing to Je - sus, she wan - ted to see
 Je - sus, you lis - tened, de - ba - ted— then healed—
 In Christ, now ris - en, your mer - cy ex - tends:



One who would help her and set her child free.
 For in her ask - ing, her faith was re - vealed.
 Those on the out - side are wel - comed as friends.

MISSION MOMENT

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

Dick Lauterbach

Place your gift in the offering plate

or
 Text your gift to
 708-688-5486
 or



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

OFFERTORY

Faith of Our Mothers

Words: Mary Louise Bringle

Music: Sally Ann Morris

Chancel Choir; Indi Shannon, soprano saxophone

"Faith of our mothers, living still, through gifts derided, calls denied,
Striving undaunted through the years, till bolted doors have opened wide:
Faith of our mothers, firm and strong, voices long silenced rise in song!

Faith of our sisters, serving still, with towel and basin, cup and bread,
Tending earth's needs with patient care, 'til hurts are healed and hungers fed:
Faith of our sisters' art and skill Loving with heart and mind and will

Faith of our daughters, hoping still, venturing pathways yet untrod,
Partners in witness to the world, seeking a living, moving God;
Faith of our daughters, bold and true, restless till Christ makes all things new.

***OFFERTORY RESPONSE (UNISON)**

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

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)**

Dick Lauterbach

Loving Creator, on this day when we honor mothers and all who nurture life, we bring our offerings with gratitude and hope. We remember that every gift we give — whether coins, bills, or digital clicks — is more than a transaction; it is a seed of compassion, planted in the soil of your love. May its fruit feed the souls of this world. Amen.

*HYMN

There Is a Line of Women

AURELIA



1. There is a line of wom - en ex - tend - ing back to Eve whose
 2. So sing a song of Sa - rah— to laugh - ter she gave birth; and
 3. There is a line of wom - en who took on pow'r - ful men, de -
 4. So sing a song of Shiph - rah with Pu - ah close at hand: en -
 5. There is a line of wom - en who stood by Je - sus' side, who
 6. So sing a song of An - na who saw Christ's in - fant face; and



role in shap - ing his - t'ry God on - ly could con - ceive; and
 sing a song of Ta - mar who stood for wom - en's worth; and
 fy - ing laws and scru - ples to let life live a - gain; and
 gaged to kill male chil - dren, they foiled the king's com - mand; and
 housed him when he min - is - tered and held him when he died; and
 sing a song of Mar - tha who gave him food and space; and



though through end - less ag - es their wit - ness was re - pressed, God
 sing a song of Han - nah who bar - gained with her Lord; and
 though, de - spite their tri - umph, their sto - ries stayed un - told, God
 sing a song of Ra - hab who shel - tered spies and lied; and
 though they claimed he'd ris - en, their news was deemed sus - pect, till
 sing of all the Mar - ys who heed - ed his re - quests, and



val - ued and in - spired them through whom the world was blessed.
 sing a song of Mar - y who bore and bred God's Word.
 kept their num - ber grow - ing, cre - a - tive, strong, and bold.
 sing a song of Es - ther pre - vent - ing gen - o - cide.
 Je - sus stood a - mong them, his wom - an - ly e - lect.
 now at heav - en's ban - quet are Je - sus' fond - est guests.

Text: John L. Bell, b.1949; © 2002, WGRG, c/o Iona Community, GIA Publications, Inc., agent
 Tune: AURELIA; Samuel Sebastian Wesley, 1810–1876

***BENEDICTION**

Rev. Brian Damrow

POSTLUDE

The Church's One Foundation

Nigel Williams
AnnLaura Tapia, organ

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS:

Reader Leader: Dick Lauterbach

Audio/Video: David Watts & Amanda Murphy

Usher: Lawrence Bain

Laundry Hero: Sherri Ries

Coffee Hour Hosts: Jennifer Hubl and Petra & Jerry Palmer

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 Wyatt, nephew of Jean O'Brien's friend, that God will show him a path.
- For the family of Beverly Figge.
- For Kenneth McIntosh, brother of Joyce Hagen-McIntosh, who is in the hospital fighting an infection.

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

This Week at Church

Sunday	5/10	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
Monday	5/11	7:00 p.m.	OA	Drawing Room
		12:00 p.m.	Weekly Staff Meeting	Church Office
		6:00 p.m.	Galaxy Theater Rehearsal	Dining Room
		6:30 p.m.	AA	Drawing Room
Tuesday	5/12	7:00 p.m.	Knitting/Crochet Group	Chapel Family Room
		5:00 p.m.	Meditative Prayer Ministry	Chapel
Wednesday	5/13	7:30 p.m.	Carillon Handbells	Room 305

Thursday	5/14	4:15 p.m.	Confirmation Class	Zackley Room
		7:00 p.m.	Chancel Choir	Choir Room
Friday	5/15	9:00 a.m.	OA	Drawing Room
		3:30 p.m.	Continuing Adult Education through Study	Zoom
Saturday	5/16	9:00 a.m.	Saturday Meals Program	Dining Room
Sunday	5/17	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

Upcoming Sundays at First Congregational

May 17: Confirmation Sunday, Sermon: "Journey Over Destination"

May 24: Pentecost Sunday – Wear Red, Sermon: "To Be the Church"



Pet Parade and Wacky Walkers: 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) where we will fellowship with soup and bread. Please let me know if you will join us!! 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.

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.

Great Music for Great Causes: On June 7 at 3pm FCCLG is hosting a concert benefitting Beds+ and the Saturday Meals Program. The Chancel Choirs of FCCLG and First United Methodist of La Grange will perform Antonio Vivaldi's *Gloria* and Ola Geilo's setting of the Walt Whitman poem "Song of the Universal." The concert is free to attend with an offering going to the organizations. The Friends of Music and First Conservatory are sponsoring the musicians.

Ryan Cox and AnnLaura Tapia are presenting a concert of arias and songs at Plymouth Place on May 17 at 3pm. The free concert will be in Dole Hall and all are welcome to attend.



Strengthen the Church

The Strengthen the Church Offering furthers the work of our conferences and the national UCC as we work together to strengthen and renew existing congregations, fund leadership development, and provide exciting new programs for youth and young adults. The offering is divided with 50% staying regionally within your conference and 50% supporting the National Ministries.

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).

New Battery Law--Part 2: Last week, the Green Team told you that Illinois has a new law prohibiting the disposal of batteries in trash or recycling. So how do you safely store your used batteries until you can take them to a dropoff site? For complete information on Illinois' new law, instructions on how to safely store batteries, and a link to finding a dropoff location near you, visit <https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/waste-management/waste-disposal/household-hazardous-waste/batteries.html>

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.

Ladies High Tea: The Ministry of Nurture invites the ladies of the church to High Tea on Saturday, June 13 at 2 pm in the Drawing Room. Bring your friends and enjoy fellowship, refreshments, and tea served in the gracious living room of our church by Tea Butlers! Sign up in the Founders Room or call or text Betsy Colombe at 708-254-9222. Only 30 seats available, so please don't delay. See you there!

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. Visit their website for more info: hugcamp.com.

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 - for more information to sign up, or add your name to the sheet located in the Founders Room.

Witness of Love

May 10, 2026

Sixth Sunday of Easter

John 14:15-21

When asked to sum up the Christian faith, Karl Barth, the Swiss Reformed theologian who published his multi-volume theological summa and magnum opus known as *Church Dogmatics*, did not reply with an equally extensive, deep-dive answer. Rather Barth was uncharacteristically short in his summation, replying simply, “The most profound truth I have ever known is this: Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so.”

Love. It is the heart of the Gospel, and it really is all we need in the world. Love is the very essence of God. So, when Jesus, before finally ending his post-resurrection Earthy tour to take his place at the right hand of God, tells his friends, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments,” he was pointing to the greatest commandment of all: To love one another.

Loving others as Jesus loved was the very mandate he gave to the 12 who were gathered in the Upper Room on what we now observe as Maundy Thursday. In Latin, maundy means “mandate.” So, Jesus wasn’t suggesting but mandating that we love even when friends hurt and deceive us, just as Judas did after hearing Jesus speak those “love” words. Love through the betrayals. Love through the tears. Love through the gunk in life.

How are we doing with being the great witnesses of love in the world these days? Is love just lip service or are our actions speaking louder than all-too empty sentiments? Are we loving with the unselfish and non-judgmental love of God? Are we letting the love of God infiltrate political camps, dismantle harmful ideologies and remove the hateful distrust of all those who look or think differently than us? For that, my friends, is the love Jesus speaks of. It’s a love he shows you and me — always. It’s time we start witnessing to that kind of love.

Holy and Ever-Present God, may this day we become the powerful witnesses to Your love, caring for others as Your Son taught us by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, befriending the lonely, tending the sick, and visiting those who are imprisoned. 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)

