

# 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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LAGRANGE, IL

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708.352.0800

SUNDAY JUNE 7, 2026

COMMUNION SUNDAY

## 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**

Come, Let Us Eat

Setting by Matthew Machemer

AnnLaura Tapia, organ

**WELCOME**

LaShinda John

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

LaShinda John

**Pastor:** We are part of the Church universal – faithful people of every color, gender, class, sexual orientation, age, and ability, gathered to love and serve God.

**One:** We are an Open and Affirming church. Together, let us worship God, rejoicing in the good news which we celebrate this day!

**Many:** **There is a place in God's heart, there is a place at Christ's table, there is a place here and in every welcoming church for all people – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Straight!**

**One:** Christ who gathers us, bids us follow in the ways of love and justice.

**Many:** **May our hearts be open to Christ's leading in our worship and our living, this day and always.**

**\*READING OUR COVENANT**

**\*OPENING HYMN**

*New Century Hymnal #400*  
Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation

REGENT SQUARE

**\*PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION**

LaShinda John

**When we look for our place cards at the table of honor, do we see you standing at the back of the room with the servers? When we walk around the homeless on the way to the ballgame, do we see you sitting in the doorway with the hungry children? When we tell others to pull themselves up, have we forgotten how many people reached out their hands to us along the way? Transform us and give us new eyes to see you through all our neighbors. If we would truly follow, we must be willing to take off our Sunday best and put on the aprons of service, offering everyone we meet the bread of life and cup of hope which have come to us through Jesus the Christ. Amen.**

**SCRIPTURE:**

Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26

LaShinda John

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax-collection station, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him.

And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with Jesus and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" But when he heard this, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous but sinners."

While he was saying these things to them, suddenly a leader came in and knelt before him, saying, "My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live." And Jesus got up and followed him, with his disciples. Then suddenly a woman who had been suffering from a flow of blood for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak, for she was saying to herself, "If I only touch his cloak, I will be made well." Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, "Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well." And the woman was made well from that moment. When Jesus came to the leader's house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, he said, "Go away, for the girl is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him. But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. And the report of this spread through all of that district.

SERMON

To Be the Church: Community Trumps Isolation

Rev. Brian Damrow

\*HYMN

The Church Is Wherever God's People

OLD CORNISH CAROL

1 The church is wher - ev - er God's peo - ple are prais - ing, sing - ing God's  
 2 The church is wher - ev - er God's peo - ple are help - ing, car - ing for

good - ness for joy on this day. The church is wher - ev - er dis -  
 neigh - bours in sick - ness and need. The church is wher - ev - er God's

ci - ples of Je - sus re - mem - ber his sto - ry and walk in his way.  
 peo - ple are shar - ing the words of the Bi - ble in gift and in deed.

Chord markings: Gm/F, Fmaj7, Gm/F, Fmaj7, C7, F6, C, Bb, Gm, C7, F

## MISSION MOMENT

## INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

LaShinda John

Place your gift in the offering plate

or

Text your gift to

708-688-5486

or



or go to

<http://tinyurl.com/FCCLGChangingLives>

## OFFERTORY

God, Help Us to Treasure

Words: John Oldham

Music: Lori Erhardt, arr. Bruce Harding

Ryan Cox and AnnLaura Tapia

God, help us to treasure these moments of mystery;  
to hallow the Sacred in all that we do.  
Throughout every season may we be your agents  
of love, joy, and blessing as hearts are renewed.

God, help us to honor your presence among us  
in newborn, in elder, in family in need.  
By sharing with others we soon will discover  
your kindness and loving in generous deeds.

God, help us to value each moment of wonder  
when peace shall o'ershadow our sorrow and pain.  
In times shared a Table with all who are kindred,  
may we find the healing to sing Love's refrain.

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

Praise God from whom all bless-ings flow; Praise God, all crea-tures here be - low;  
Praise God for all that love has done; Cre - a - tor, Christ, and Spir - it    One. A - men.

The image shows a musical score for a unison response. It consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first system covers the first two lines of lyrics, and the second system covers the remaining two lines. The music is written in a simple, homophonic style suitable for unison singing.

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

LaShinda John

**We offer our gifts to the God of all. We joyfully give our treasure to bring hope, justice, love and healing to those who are hurting. May these gifts be blessed and multiplied and used to provide ministry for those who are too often pushed to the margins in society. Let the generosity represented here be magnified and amplified to stretch beyond our human thought and imagination.**

**\*COMMUNION HYMN**

*New Century Hymnal #349*

I Come with Joy

DOVE OF PEACE

**COMMUNION INVITATION**

Rev. Brian Damrow

**COMMUNION PRAYER**

In the presence of the Sacred, let us be still and at peace with ourselves, with one another and with that which we call 'God'.

*Silence*

And so, in thankfulness, let us commit ourselves once again to the new ways of life shown to us by Jesus.

**May the Wisdom that is 'God' teach us afresh that sacrificial love is an encounter with all that is Sacred: that it is giving of ourselves in service to our families, friends and neighbors that we are transformed so that we may become more like Jesus.**

And now we gather around this table of remembrance celebrating the presence of the Continuous Creator of all that is within and beyond each one of us.

**We are here in the presence of the Sacred Spirit of Acceptance and Understanding, calling and rejoicing in each one of us just as we are.**

*Silence*

Let us recall times from our past and give thanks for the friendship and support of the Divine Spirit within us and within others as we have journeyed upon our pilgrimage of faith, encouraging us to become the people that we are now.

Let us not be afraid of the future but, instead, be aware of the presence of the Indwelling Spirit inviting us to be at ease about what is come as we joyfully step into the unknown.

Today at this table we are reminded once again about our call to love one another and be co-creators of a community of love, justice, and mercy.

**God, we gather at this table representing all people in all places in our world. We bless and pass the bread and cup as Christ passed it to his friends. Please allow these elements to remind us of the good that you have done and inspire us to do the good that Christ calls us to do. May we leave this table revived and refreshed having sipped from the cup of bold courage so that we may challenge all forms of injustice and pain. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.**

#### REMEMBRANCE

#### SHARING THE ELEMENTS

#### PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

**Gracious and loving God, you have made us one in the body of Christ and nourished us at your table with holy food and drink. Thank you for feeding our hunger and relieving our thirst. Now send us into the world to do the work you have called us to do: to find the lost and lonely, to heal broken souls, to free prisoners, and to make the powerful care. Grant us the strength to persevere in resisting evil, to proclaim in all we say and do, your good news in Christ Jesus. Amen.**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

LaShinda John

### \*HYMN

*New Century Hymnal #391*  
In the Midst of New Dimensions  
*verses 1-3*

NEW DIMENSIONS

### \*BENEDICTION

Rev. Brian Damrow

### POSTLUDE

Regent Square

Charles Callahan  
AnnLaura Tapia, organ

### THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS:

Reader Leaders: LaShinda John

Usher: Lawrence Bain

Coffee Hour Hosts: Nurture Team

Audio/Video: John Hoo and 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 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.
- For the family of Patricia Cline, sister of Penny Miller.
- For Mike Tobin, brother of Jill, who is going through treatment for kidney cancer.

*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>6/7</b>	10:00 a.m. Celebration of Worship	Sanctuary/ online
		11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour	Founders Room
		3:00 p.m. Great Music for Great Causes Concert	Sanctuary
		7:00 p.m. OA	Drawing Room
<b>Monday</b>	<b>6/8</b>	11:00 a.m. Weekly Staff Meeting	Church Office
		6:30 p.m. AA	Drawing Room
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>6/9</b>	5:00 p.m. Meditative Prayer Ministry	Chapel
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>6/10</b>		
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>6/11</b>		
<b>Friday</b>	<b>6/12</b>	9:00 a.m. OA	Drawing Room
		3:30 p.m. Continuing Adult Education through Study	Zoom
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>6/13</b>	9:00 a.m. Saturday Meals Program	Dining Room
		2:00 p.m. Ladies' Tea	Drawing Room
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>6/14</b>	10:00 a.m. Celebration of Worship	Sanctuary/ online
		11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour	Founders Room
		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



**Great Music for Great Causes:** Today at 3pm the Chancel Choirs of FCCLG and First United Methodist of La Grange will perform Antonio Vivaldi's *Gloria* and Ola Gjeilo's setting of the Walt Whitman poem "Song of the Universal." The concert is free to attend with an offering going to BEDS Plus and the Saturday Meals Program. Invite your friends and neighbors, and join us for an afternoon of beautiful music.



**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!

**Calling all men.** It's been a while since we have held our men's fellowship, so let's do it again. Come to the fire pit in the church parking lot for a time of talk, food and beverage at 6:30 on June 27. We will grill brats, but be sure to bring a dish to share and your favorite beverage. If you plan to come, please contact Jerry Palmer via text, (708) 408-9243, or via e mail, [palmjer@comcast.net](mailto:palmjer@comcast.net). Please respond prior to Wednesday, June 24, since we need to plan the quantity of food.

**Thank you for shaping our Missions Giving Priorities:** A big *thank you* to everyone who completed our Missions Giving Priorities Survey! Your thoughts and prayers mean a lot to us. Because of your input we now have a clearer understanding of the causes and initiatives that matter most to our church community. Your feedback is helping us set a clear direction and focus our giving for 2026.

Here is a quick look at what you shared:

- **Top Priority:** Food Insecurity (hunger relief, emergency meal distribution, food deserts)
- **Second Priority:** Housing Insecurity (emergency shelter, affordable housing, addressing homelessness)
- **Third Priority:** Mental Health (suicide prevention, crisis intervention, counseling services)

Future announcements will include the charitable organizations we have gifted, the important work they are doing, and their impact.

**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.

**Meditative Prayer Ministry:** At FCCLG, we meet in the Beatitudes Chapel (the 6th Avenue Entrance will be open) from 5–7 pm on most Tuesdays to quiet our minds and listen for God’s presence within. Come whenever you are able and stay for as long as you like. All are welcome.



**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.

**Women’s Retreat:** The spots for our Women’s Retreat have filled. But if you would like to be kept on a waiting list in case a spot opens, please let Angela Harrison know: [angiss2010@yahoo.com](mailto:angiss2010@yahoo.com). The retreat is July 10-12 at Tower Hill Camp, with Dr. Carol Ann Munro as the guest speaker.



**Help Host Coffee Hour!** The Nurture Team is looking for volunteers to host Coffee Hour. You can sign up with a member of the Nurture Team or a friend. And the Nurture team will be there to assist as you serve the treats you provide. Our church community truly values this time of connection and fellowship. Please sign up online or on the poster in the Founders Room. Thank you for helping make this special time possible!

**H.U.G. 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](http://hugcamp.com).

**Camp youTHRIVE:** Join the Lyons Township Mental Health Commission for a fun and supportive summer program filled with sports, arts, academic practice, and social-emotional learning.

-June 15th – July 2nd

-Hope Church – La Grange Highlands

-Free registration – See the flyers in the Founders Room



If you are interested in reading the book that is the basis of Rev. Damrow’s current sermon series, it is available for purchase at various retailers online. Please be sure to order the second edition.

“Lord, help me release what no longer serves Your mission, and give me courage to embrace the new thing You are doing in me and in our church.”

# FCCLG Leadership in 2026

<b>Council:</b>			
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	
<b>Ministries:</b>			
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		
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

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All of Us  
 Ryan Cox  
 AnnLaura Tapia  
 Jamie Dougherty  
 Tammy Bauer

## The Call of Abram

June 7, 2026

Second Sunday after Pentecost

Genesis 12:1-9

Corrie Ten Boom once said, “Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God.” It was that belief in God’s protection that gave her the courage to hide Jewish families during the World War II German occupation. It’s amazing what we can do when we trust our next steps to God. Sadly, many of us never get the chance to be awed by this great God because we prefer the safety of what we are familiar with rather than risk any new beginning. Yet throughout the generations the stories overflow of those who dared to say “yes” to God’s invitation to step off the beaten path. Abram is one of those who can tell such a tale. Although Abram was beyond the dreaming big stage, as we often believe we enter as we age, God told him to leave kindred behind. It was time to go to a land where God would make Abram’s name great. It would be a place Abram’s offspring would inhabit and keep multiplying in. Abram couldn’t pass up this offer. It was too enticing, especially since he and his wife, Sarai, were childless. Could there still be a chance to leave a legacy? They packed their belongings and set forth. And God did not disappoint. Abram, whose name was changed to Abraham, signifying the new thing God was doing in his life, had descendants as numerous as the stars in heaven. Sarai’s name was also changed to Sarah. I’ve always been enamored by Abram’s call story, as it has bolstered my fainting heart when daring to step into an unknown future. But before you applaud my faith, let me point out that my Abram moments happened when I was filled with youthful ignorance. Now that I’m older, I find myself hesitant to go in any direction without first asking God, “Does the journey come with a pension and health care?” I had always hoped my faith, not my fear, would grow stronger as I aged. It’s one thing to heed God’s call in our youth, but who among the AARP card carriers would be excited for such a journey? Our golden years should be ones of rest and comfort, not unknown adventures. Yet God doesn’t worry about the fire hazard those numerous candles on our birthday cakes have turned into. God still wants to blaze a glorious future for us. Who will dare to have the faith of old Abram? I pray I will. I pray you will. For we all have a call story still waiting to be told.

*God of amazing adventures and divine protection, may this day we tell our fears to be gone. May faith overflow in our hearts, helping us to trust our unknown futures to a God who we do know: the God of love who never lets us down. 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)

