

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 JULY 26, 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

Grace

Thomas Keesecker
AnnLaura Tapia, piano

WELCOME

Tom Lowry

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Tom Lowry

One: Wisdom cries out in the street.

Many: What does Wisdom say?

One: She calls for us to listen and to love one another.

Many: We come today to listen and to love.

One: Wisdom is here with us.

Many: We are ready to worship God.

***OPENING HYMN**

Open Your Ears, O Faithful People

YISRAEL V'ORAITA

1 O - pen your ears, O faith - ful peo - ple, o - pen your ears and
2 They who have ears to hear the mes - sage, they who have ears, now
hear God's word. O - pen your hearts, O
let them hear. They who would learn the
faith - ful peo - ple, God now speaks to you.
way of wis - dom, let them hear God's word.

Refrain

God has spo - ken to the peo - ple, hal - le - lu - jah! _____

And those words are words of wis - dom, hal - le - lu - jah! Hal - le - lu - jah! jah!

The musical score is written on five staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is composed of eighth and quarter notes. The lyrics are written below the staff, with two verses indicated by the numbers 1 and 2. The second staff continues the melody with a half note and a quarter note. The third staff continues with a half note and a quarter note. The fourth staff is the refrain, marked with a double bar line and a repeat sign. The fifth staff continues the refrain with a double bar line and a repeat sign. The key signature remains one sharp throughout.

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION

Tom Lowry

Loving God, your Wisdom calls to us but we do not hear. We confess that we ignore your calls and your commandments to welcome the stranger. We exclude, ignore and demean each other by drawing lines and building borders. Guide our transformation to overcome our selfishness and our lack of theological imagination. Holy Wisdom, stir our hearts and inspire us to build your peace, justice, and covenantal unity not only in our community but around the world. Amen.

*HYMN

Come and Seek the Ways of Wisdom

MADELEINE



1 Come and seek the ways of Wis-dom, she who danced when
 2 Lis - ten to the voice of Wis-dom, cry - ing in the
 3 Sis - ter Wis - dom, come, as - sist us; nur - ture all who



earth was new. Fol - low close - ly what she teach - es,
 mar - ket - place. Hear the Word made flesh a - mong us,
 seek re - birth. Spir - it - guide and close com - pan - ion,



for her words are right and true. Wis - dom clears the
 full of glo - ry, truth, and grace. When the word takes
 bring to light our sa - cred worth. Free us to be -



path to jus - tice, show - ing us what love must do.
 root and rip - ens, peace and righ - teous - ness em - brace.
 come your peo - ple, ho - ly friends of God and earth.

SCRIPTURE:

1 Kings 3:5-12

Tom Lowry

At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I should give you." And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you, and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. Give your servant, therefore, an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil, for who can govern this great people of yours?"

It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. God said to him, "Because you have asked this and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or for the life of your enemies but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, I now do according to your word. Indeed, I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you, and no one like you shall arise after you.

KIDS QUEST

Rev. Brian Damrow

SERMON

Wisdom of the Wise

Rev. Brian Damrow

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Brian Damrow

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Rev. Brian Damrow

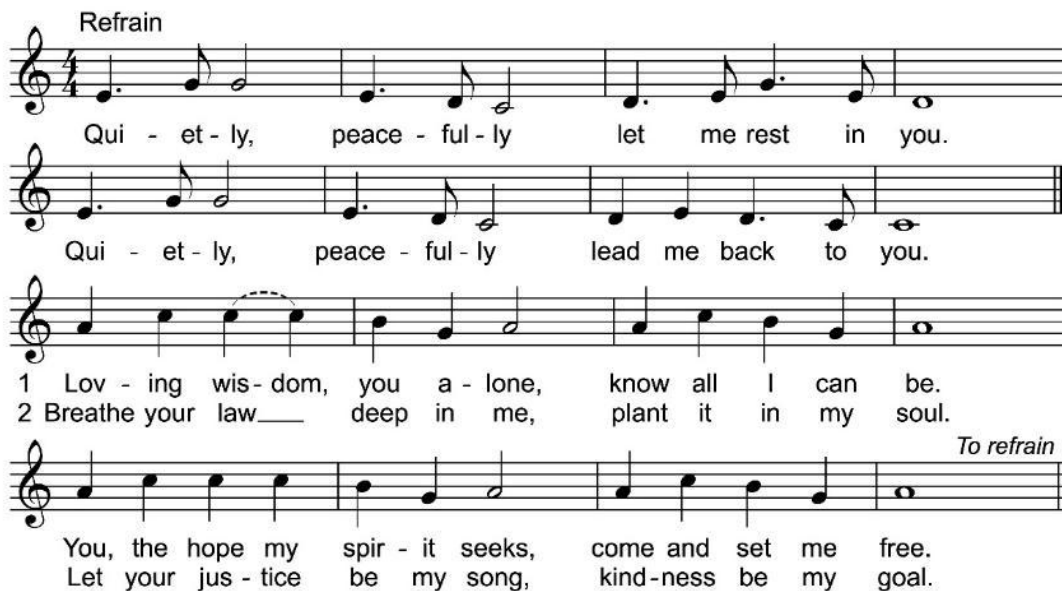
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

***HYMN**

Quietly, Peacefully

NEW WORLD

Refrain



Qui - et - ly, peace - ful - ly let me rest in you.
Qui - et - ly, peace - ful - ly lead me back to you.

1 Lov - ing wis - dom, you a - lone, know all I can be.
2 Breathe your law deep in me, plant it in my soul.

To refrain

You, the hope my spir - it seeks, come and set me free.
Let your jus - tice be my song, kind - ness be my goal.

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

Tom Lowry

Place your gift in the offering plate

or

Text your gift to

708-688-5486

or



or go to

<http://tinyurl.com/FCCLGChangingLives>

OFFERTORY

Amazing Grace

arr. Virginia Harmony

Amanda Murphy, Noah Gartner, and AnnLaura Tapia

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found, was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils and snares I have already come.
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.

When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun,
we've no less days to sing God's praise than when we'd first begun.

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

The musical score is written for a unison response. It consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff joined by a brace. 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 line of the hymn, and the second system covers the second line, ending with a double bar line.

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.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (*UNISON*)

Tom Lowry

Gracious God and source of all good gifts, thank you for the resources in our lives, in our church and in our community. Thank you for all that we share today to make our lives and community more welcoming. Bless us in our continued ministries that seek your peace and justice. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tom Lowry

*HYMN

New Century Hymnal #355
God the Spirit, Guide and Guardian
verses 1,3,4

HYFRYDOL

*BENEDICTION

Rev. Brian Damrow

POSTLUDE

Old Hundredth

Donald Rotermund
AnnLaura Tapia, organ

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS:

Reader Leaders: Tom Lowry

Usher: Lawrence Bain

Coffee Hour Hosts: Sandra Kappmeyer

Audio/Video: John Hoo and Lizza Obeng

Laundry Hero: Gail Allinson

Prayer Requests

- For Juanita, family of Nancy Coleman, for strength and healing.
- 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 Kenneth McIntosh, brother of Joyce Hagen-McIntosh, who is in the hospital fighting an infection.
- For Mike Tobin, brother of Jill, who is going through treatment for kidney cancer.
- For the family of Reid Bannecker, brother-in-law of Julia and Kevin Cunningham, who is now at peace.

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

This Week at Church

Sunday	7/26	10:00 a.m. Celebration of Worship	Sanctuary/ online
		11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour	Founders Room
		11:15 a.m. Social Justice meeting	Drawing Room
		7:00 p.m. OA	Drawing Room
Monday	7/27	11:00 a.m. Weekly Staff Meeting	Church Office
		6:30 p.m. AA	Drawing Room
Tuesday	7/28	5:00 p.m. Meditative Prayer Ministry	Chapel
Wednesday	7/29		
Thursday	7/30		
Friday	7/31	9:00 a.m. OA	Drawing Room
		3:30 p.m. Continuing Adult Education through Study	Zoom
Saturday	8/1	9:00 a.m. Saturday Meals Program	Dining Room
Sunday	8/2	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

Social Justice Team will meet after the service in the Drawing Room.
All are welcome!

Wedding Photos: Were you married at FCCLG? Maybe you attended someone else's wedding? We are looking for photos of couples during their nuptials to help promote our space in our social media and on our website. Couples at the altar or reception photos (if they take place in the building) are great! If you have photos (and have permission to share), please email them to Digital Outreach at digitaloutreach@fcclg.org. Thank you!

Willowbrook Farms in Cassopolis, MI: Have you always wanted Fresh meats, honey, eggs directly from the farm? Your opportunity has arrived! Check out the website for Willowbrook farm, <https://willowbrookmi.com>, because LaShinda John will be placing an order on Monday, July 27 with delivery taking place Saturday, August 1. Phone or text LaShinda: (773) 368-5531

School Supply Drive: June 28 – August 2: Ministry of Missions is collecting school supplies to support students in the greater La Grange area* along with families served by the Migrant Ministry. We are requesting a wide range of supplies, including:

- BACKPACKS
- MEAD SPIRAL NOTEBOOKS
- CRAYOLA CRAYONS
- CRAYOLA MARKERS (BROAD AND FINE LINE)
- CRAYOLA COLORED PENCILS
- PRE-SHARPENED PENCILS
- ELMER'S WASHABLE GLUE STICKS
- PAPERMATE ERASERS
- KIDS' SCISSORS
- POST-IT NOTES (3in x 3in)



Please bring donations to the back of the sanctuary and place in the containers provided.

*Collection and distribution coordinated by the LaGrange Public Library in partnership with local organizations.

Ministerium Letter Update: As you may remember, Rev. Damrow and other clergy of the ministerium wrote a letter to be sent to our local, state, and federal representatives and leadership. The ministerium has made it available for individuals to sign via the QR code. You may review the letter and if you so choose, fill out the form to add your signature. For the question about your signature representing the congregation, you may select “no.” The form will be open to sign until mid-August. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the office or Rev. Damrow.



Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) is the way our congregation participates in the ministry of the wider United Church of Christ — supporting vital work **in the Illinois Conference and across the globe.**

Through OCWM, local churches like ours empower:

- **Leadership support and care** for clergy and congregations across Illinois
- **Resources and training** that strengthen churches in times of change
- **Justice and compassion ministries** serving communities in need
- **National and global mission work**, including disaster relief, refugee support, and long-term community development

Every gift to OCWM helps extend Christ's love far beyond our own walls — strengthening the church, equipping leaders, and supporting ministries of compassion, justice, and welcome throughout the world.

Thank you for giving generously to this wider mission we share.

Meditative Prayer Ministry: At FCCLG, we meet in the Beatitudes Chapel (the 6th Avenue Entrance will be open) from 5–7pm 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.

Green Team tip: Thinking about adding native plants or a rain garden to your landscaping and looking for inspiration? The La Grange Park Sustainability Commission and the La Grange Environmental Quality Commission are again sponsoring a Native Plant Tour on July 26. Visit local homes and talk with homeowners about their native plants. Details about the tour are on the attached flyer.

A flyer for the 2026 La Grange Area Native Plant Tour. The flyer has a purple border. The text is in purple and black. It includes a QR code, a website URL, and logos for the La Grange Park Sustainability Commission and the La Grange Environmental Quality Commission. There is also a line drawing of three native plants: a coneflower, a black-eyed Susan, and a tall grass-like plant.

2026 La Grange Area

Native Plant Tour

Sunday
July 26
1–4 p.m.

Discover the beauty of native plants
in over a dozen local gardens!



For more information about this year's participating addresses, scan this QR Code or visit www.lagrangeil.gov/NativePlantTour



LA GRANGE
EQC

FCCLG Leadership in 2026

Council:

Moderator of Council	Kent Llewellyn	moderator@fcclg.org
Past Moderator	Tom Lowry	
Vice Moderator	Patrick John	
Clerk	Sherri 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

Ministries:

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	Sherri 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 Sandra Kappmeyer Dick Lauterbach	Mary Anne Daniels Lisa Aulerich-Marciniak Diane Kasnick	Susan Lynch Jim Marciniak Jill Tobin and many more!
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

www.fcclg.org
Ryan@fcclg.org
MainOffice@fcclg.org
Events@fcclg.org
Bookkeeper@fcclg.org

All of Us
Ryan Cox
AnnLaura Tapia
Jamie Dougherty
Tammy Bauer

Weaving the Future

July 26, 2026

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

I have been on a quest to understand better the days of old by learning how to master 18th-century living skills long forgotten. My most recent adventure was a class on how to grow flax, spin it into thread, and then weave it into cloth.

It was there at the loom that my weaving became a prayerful act, and with each pass of the shuttle, I thought of the series of “The Kingdom of God is like” parables that Jesus shared so long ago.

The Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed — the smallest of seeds that grows so great it becomes a haven where birds make their nests among the branches. The Kingdom of God is like yeast that rises into a pillowy loaf of warm bread.

The Kingdom of God is like ...

I mused that if Jesus was at the loom with me, he would begin teaching how the Kingdom of God is like a weaver creating a tapestry with various colors of threads.

The effectiveness of Jesus’ many teachings has always been that he was able to take what was right in front of him and make it a teachable God moment. It was a gift that made God’s Kingdom more accessible to others. There was no secret handshake or password to gain entry. Rather, the Kingdom was — and is — all around in ways we are often blind to.

Take a look where you are right now. What is a Kingdom of God parable Jesus would speak of?

Chances are you are sitting in a pew, and you think there is no sign of the Kingdom. Look again.

Could it be that the Kingdom of God is like the threadbare cushion you might sit on? Its patted down stuffing testifying to the generational stories of faith that need to be heard and the ones that still need to be told. Or perhaps the Kingdom of God is like a cracked vase that is holding the flowers on the chancel. Once shattered but not discarded. Rather, lovingly restored by hands who still saw its beauty and worth.

The Kingdom of God is like...

It’s now your turn to see with eyes of faith and make a new parable for today.

Story-telling God, may our voice speak of the parables still needing to be told. May everything we see and savor, touch and taste, remind us of the goodness of Your kingdom that is here on Earth all around us. 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)

