

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 AUGUST 2, 2026

COMMUNION SUNDAY

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

Pastorella

J.S. Bach

AnnLaura Tapia, organ

WELCOME

Jean O'Brien

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Jean O'Brien

One: All who are thirsty, come!

Many: God is the fountain for our lives.

One: All who are hungry, come!

Many: Jesus feeds us with goodness and grace.

One: Rich and poor, young and old, neighbor and guest, come!

Many: The Holy Spirit gathers everyone around the Table.

***OPENING HYMN**

All Who Hunger

HOLY MANNA



1 All who hun-ger, gath-er glad - ly; ho - ly man-na is our bread.
2 All who hun-ger, nev-er strang-ers, seek-er, be a wel-come guest.
3 All who hun-ger, sing to - geth- er; Je- sus Christ is liv - ing bread.



Come from wil - der - ness and wan - dering. Here, in truth, we will be fed.
Come from rest-less-ness and roam-ing. Here, in joy, we keep the feast.
Come from lone - li - ness and long - ing. Here, in peace, we have been led.



You that yearn for days of full - ness, all a - round us is our food.
We that once were lost and scat-tered in com - mu-nion's love have stood.
Blest are those who from this ta - ble live their days in grat-i - tude.



Taste and see the grace e - ter - nal. Taste and see that God is good.

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION

Jean O'Brien

We are sure we do not have enough to end hunger in our communities, Holy God. Forgive us that we forget that, by your presence and power, very little can do so much. We believe we are the only ones who carry heartache around with us. Forgive us, Compassion's Heart, that we do not see, or embrace the despair of those around us. We think we do not have the words with which to offer hope and healing to strangers. Forgive us, Welcoming God, for not having the courage to run up to them with your grace. We convince ourselves that we need to devote all our time, our energy, our resources, our lives on keeping up with others. Forgive us for not living that joyful, gracious life modeled for us by your Son and our brother Jesus. Amen.

SCRIPTURE:

Matthew 14:13-21

Jean O'Brien

Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves." Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." And he said, "Bring them here to me." Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and blessed and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And all ate and were filled, and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

KIDS QUEST

Rev. Brian Damrow

SERMON

Ministry That Feeds

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.

HYMNNew Century Hymnal #343*

Jesus Took the Bread

NEW HOPE

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

Jean O'Brien

Place your gift in the offering plate

or

Text your gift to

708-688-5486

or



or go to

<http://tinyurl.com/FCCLGChangingLives>

OFFERTORY

Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us

arr. Luigi Zaninelli

Ryan Cox and AnnLaura Tapia

Savior, like a shepherd lead us, much we need thy tender care;
In thy pleasant pastures feed us, for our use thy folds prepare.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, thou hast bought us, thine we are;
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, thou hast bought us, thine we are.

Thou hast promised to receive us, poor and sinful though we be;
Thou hast mercy to relieve us, grace to cleanse, and power to free.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus.

Savior, like a shepherd lead us, much we need thy tender care;
In thy pleasant pastures feed us, for our use thy folds prepare.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, thou hast loved us, love us still;
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, thou hast loved us, love us still.

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

The musical score is written for two voices (Soprano and Bass) in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with a mix of quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics are: 'Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here be low; Praise God for all that love has done; Creator, Christ, and Spirit One. Amen.' The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures 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)**

Jean O'Brien

**Creator, thank you for the opportunity to share in your abundant and renewing work.
Use these gifts for the kingdom. Sow wisdom and discernment as we support the
ministry of this church in your name. Amen.**

***COMMUNION HYMN**

New Century Hymnal #321
Break Now the Bread of Life

BREAD OF LIFE

COMMUNION INVITATION

Rev. Brian Damrow

COMMUNION PRAYER

The God of crossings and healings be with you.

And also with you.

People of God, lift your hearts to the One who travels every journey with you.

We lift them to the God who gives us rest when we are weary.

People of God, offer your praise and thanks to the God who feeds the hungry.

It is our greatest joy to sing to the One who fills our emptiness with grace and joy.

Standing at the edge of chaos, you took all the goodness in your heart, and shaped it into the glory of creation, God of Imagination. Looking up, you placed the moons, stars, and planets into the cradle of the sky. You took the dust of the earth, blessing it, and forming us into your image of hope and grace. We were filled with the abundance of your constant love, but we longed for the empty promises of darkness and death, breaking your heart as we followed after them. Prophets came to tell the truth of your everlasting covenant, but we turned our backs on them. So, to put an end to your great sorrow, you sent Jesus to us, bringing us all the gifts you had stored up for us.

Holy, holy, holy are you, God who listens to our prayers. All creation beholds your face in righteousness. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is the One who feeds us with grace and wonder. Hosanna in the highest!

As we wondered through the barren lands lost you sent to us your son Jesus. Our true blessing and hope for us. When he could have deserted us, as we continued to stumble through the darkness he was filled with compassion, and came to be with us in our pain. When he could have kept silent in response to our fears and doubts, he told stories of your love and grace.

When he could have detoured around our violence and anger, he walked straight into death, so we might see and understand the true power of love. As we remember all the gifts he shared with us, as we tell of his healings and feedings for all, we speak of that faith which is often a mystery:

Christ died, Christ was raised, Christ is with us this day.

As we gather at the edge of your kingdom, coming once again to the Table, we pray you would pour out your Spirit of reconciliation upon us, and on the gifts of the bread and the cup. You feed us with this meal, not that we might become gluttons, but so we might become servants in your kingdom. Where we see only crumbs on the Table, you see enough leftovers for us to take to feed a hungry world. Where we see only the last few drops in the cup, you see enough grace for us to fill the empty hearts of your children forgotten and alone in the world. We now come and join our brothers and sister to gather around your Table of grace, joining with all who will forever sing of your love, God in Community, Holy in One. 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

Jean O'Brien

*HYMN

New Century Hymnal #562

Take My Gifts

TALAVERA TERRACE

*BENEDICTION

Rev. Brian Damrow

POSTLUDE

Trumpet Voluntary in G

David Lasky
AnnLaura Tapia, organ

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS:

Reader Leaders: Jean O'Brien

Usher: Lawrence Bain

Coffee Hour Host: Geordan Stenson

Audio/Video: John Hoo and David Watts

Laundry Hero: Wendy Seifert

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.

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

This Week at Church

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
Monday	8/3	11:00 a.m. Weekly Staff Meeting	Church Office
		6:30 p.m. AA	Drawing Room
Tuesday	8/4	5:00 p.m. Meditative Prayer Ministry	Chapel
Wednesday	8/5		
Thursday	8/6		
Friday	8/7	9:00 a.m. OA	Drawing Room
		3:30 p.m. Continuing Adult Education through Study	Zoom
Saturday	8/8	9:00 a.m. Saturday Meals Program	Dining Room
Sunday	8/9	10:00 a.m. Celebration of Worship	Sanctuary/ online
		11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour	Founders Room
		11:15 a.m. Ministry Teams Meetings	Dining Room
		7:00 p.m. OA	Drawing Room

Announcements



Adopt-a-Chair Campaign: We have a special adoption opportunity, and there are no background checks, home visits, or feeding required! We have 41 choir chairs in our Choir Room and Sanctuary that have served us faithfully for many years and are now badly in need of reupholstering.

So, we're launching our "Adopt-a-Chair" campaign! For a suggested donation of \$150, you can adopt one of our choir chairs and help give it a much-needed new lease on life.

You don't have to take it home, and thankfully, it won't need to be walked or fed. We'll keep it right here at church!

Our goal is to have all 41 chairs adopted, so please consider adopting a chair—or contributing whatever amount you can—to help keep our choir sitting pretty for years to come. Please indicate "Adopt a Chair" in the comment line of your donation.

Thank you!

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.



2026 FCCLG Second Quarter Financial Report: Through June of 2026 our financial picture is stable; with income of ~ \$263,000 and expenses of ~ \$261,000. Due to the completion of the endowment transfer and timing of some pledge payments, the Second Quarter income is in excess of the YTD amount by approximately \$32,000.

The current expenses exceed our YTD budgeted expenses by nearly \$19,000 due to timing of property insurance payments, boiler repairs, and unexpected plumbing costs.

	Through Q2 2025	Through Q2 2026	2026 YTD Budget	2026 Annual Budget
Income	\$295,214	\$263,463	\$231,439	\$462,878
Expense	\$255,394	\$261,717	\$242,975	\$485,950



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.**

In isolation, no single congregation can completely answer God's call to love. Together we are a bold witness to God's extravagant love for all. We share resources to bring our vision to life. Gifts from congregations like ours to OCWM Basic Support make it possible for our Conferences and the National Ministries to strengthen local churches and leaders and engage us in mission well beyond our community.

Most of our OCWM Basic Support dollars remain in our Conferences to help local congregations thrive. Direct support in Conferences comes through leadership initiatives, such as communities of practice, committees on ministry, and one-on-one mentoring. Conferences also share in congregational vitality work. This includes conflict transformation, resourcing leaders as they reimagine ministry, and grants to churches.

The National Ministries of the UCC, a crucial partner of our Conference and each congregation, helps us put love into action, especially through ministry that no one congregation could do alone.

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.

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
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Events@fcclg.org
Bookkeeper@fcclg.org

All of Us
Ryan Cox
AnnLaura Tapia
Jamie Dougherty
Tammy Bauer

Face to Face

August 2, 2026

Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

Matthew 14:13-21

Carrie Breck had her hands full tending to five children while making meals, washing laundry, and knitting socks for those many little feet. And yet the young homemaker, born in 1855, found the time to write poetry — lyrical words inspired by her praises to God that were always on the tip of her tongue. It is said that many times she wondered, while busily doing chores, what it would be like to see Christ. So, with the words from 1 Corinthians 13 on her heart that spoke of seeing through a dark glass now but then seeing the heavenly promise clearly — face to face — she began writing.

Her poem would later become the beloved hymn, “Face to Face with Christ My Savior,” which was first sung in 1899.

Only faintly now I see him | With the darkened veil between | But a blessed day is coming | When his glory shall be seen.

Five thousand people once had a blessed day that came to them unexpectedly. They gathered on the mountainside hungering to hear Jesus’ beautiful words of life — and found themselves soon hungering for something to silent their growling bellies.

Jesus’ friends were quick to suggest sending them away to get their dinners in the surrounding villages. Jesus wouldn’t have that. He told his friends to give the crowd something to eat. I could only imagine the shock on their faces as they just didn’t know how they would feed such masses.

When told there was nothing but five loaves of bread and two fish on hand, Jesus had them bring the measly offering to him. It was then he blessed and broke the loaves and had the food distributed.

Everyone had their fill and still there was enough leftover bread to overflow 12 baskets.

There will be a day when we will all come face to face with Christ our Savior. A day when all his glory shall be seen. But until then, we need to keep alert to the glimpses of glory that shine now in the dark. We need to train our eyes to see the God moments. We need to actively seek those God moments, for they are everywhere. Miracles still abound. There is always a measly loaf of bread in our lives waiting to bless, break and share.

Dazzling God, we know that while now we see dimly in a mirror, we will come face to face with You and all Your glory. Help us this day to live into the God moments, expecting miracles where they are least expected. May we go about our busy lives always with Your promise of provision in our hearts. 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)

