

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 30, 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

O Gracious Lord, with Love Draw Near

Setting by Matthew Machemer
AnnLaura Tapia, organ

WELCOME

Stephanie Johnston

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Stephanie Johnston

One: Gathered as God's people, we come to worship together:

Many: singing praises to the One who loves us, opening our hearts to the One who calls us.

One: Called to be followers of Jesus.

Many: We come to share our lives together: to celebrate the joys of our hearts, to mingle our tears with God's.

One: Challenged to become partners with the Spirit, we will seek peace and hope:

Many: offering our food to our enemies, giving a drink of water to those who have drained our souls.

***OPENING HYMN**

New Century Hymnal #575

O For a World

AZMON

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION

Stephanie Johnston

Loving Creator, I come before You yearning for a heart transformed by Your Spirit. Where there is hardness, bring tenderness. Where there is selfishness, sow selflessness. Pluck out every root of pride, envy, and bitterness, and replace them with the fertile soil of humility, love, and grace. Create in me a heart that beats in rhythm with Yours—a heart that loves what You love, grieves over what grieves You, and seeks after Your purposes above all else. Let my transformed heart be a wellspring of life, reflecting Your character to a watching world. Amen.

SCRIPTURE:

Romans 12:9-21 (NSRVUE)

Stephanie Johnston

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil; hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal; be ardent in spirit; serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; pursue hospitality to strangers.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be arrogant, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says the Lord." Instead, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink, for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

KIDS QUEST

Rev. Brian Damrow

SERMON

The Marks of Christianity

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**

New Century Hymnal #539
Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant

SERVANT SONG

MISSION MOMENT

Julie Ryan
Pillars Community Health

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

Stephanie Johnston

Place your gift in the offering plate

or

Text your gift to
708-688-5486

or



or go to

<http://tinyurl.com/FCCLGChangingLives>

OFFERTORY

Ubi Caritas (Welcome Love)

Gwyneth Walker
Ryan Cox and AnnLaura Tapia

When we truly welcome love, we welcome God.

Let our love bloom in many forms.

The love of Christ, uniting us in joy,

The love and reverence of the living God,

The honest love that binds our human hearts.

When we truly welcome love, we welcome God.

Let our welcome be rich and free.

Welcome the friendly unfamiliar thought,

Farewell to bitter quarrels, welcome peace,

Welcome dear Christ with us, Emmanuel.

When we truly welcome love, we welcome God.
 So let true joy be our reward:
 The joy that we will share with all the saints,
 The glorious joy to see the face of God,
 The great and good and everlasting joy.

When we welcome love, when we truly welcome love, we welcome God.

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

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*)** Stephanie Johnston

Tempted to turn away, remind us that we stand on holy ground when we walk with the lonely, work beside those seeking justice, bring hope to the forgotten, and share from our abundance with those who have nothing. May our giving this day be but a beginning of that journey. Amen.

*HYMN

Help Us Accept Each Other

BARONITA



1 Help us ac - cept each oth - er as Christ ac - cept - ed us;
 2 Teach us, O Lord, your les - sons, as in our dai - ly life
 3 Let your ac - cep - tance change us, so that we may be moved
 4 Lord, for to - day's en - coun - ters with all who are in need,



teach us as sis - ter, broth - er, each per - son to em - brace.
 we strug - gle to be hu - man and search for hope and faith.
 in liv - ing sit - u - a - tions to do the truth in love;
 who hun - ger for ac - cep - tance, for jus - tice and for bread,



Be pres - ent, Lord, a - mong us and bring us to be - lieve
 Teach us to care for peo - ple, for all, not just for some,
 to prac - tice your ac - cep - tance un - til we know by heart
 we need new eyes for see - ing, new hands for hold - ing on:



we are our - selves ac - cept - ed, and meant to love and live.
 to love them as we find them, or as they may be - come.
 the ta - ble of for - give - ness, and laugh - ter's heal - ing art.
 re - new us with your Spir - it; Lord, free us; make us one!

*BENEDICTION

Rev. Brian Damrow

POSTLUDE

Postlude on Azmon

Richard A. Williamson
 AnnLaura Tapia, organ

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS:

Reader Leaders: Stephanie Johnston
Usher: Lawrence Bain
Coffee Hour Hosts: Mission Team

Audio/Video: John Hoo and David Watts
Laundry Hero: Mary Anne Daniels

Prayer Requests

- For Juanita, family of Nancy Coleman, for strength and healing.
- For Camille (Dave Watt’s sister) and Brian Bell.
- 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 Mark Twain Elementary School community.
- For Bob Berg, brother of Tom Berg, for healing.

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

This Week at Church

Sunday	8/30	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	8/31	11:00 a.m. Weekly Staff Meeting	Church Office
		6:30 p.m. AA	Drawing Room
Tuesday	9/1	5:00 p.m. Meditative Prayer Ministry	Chapel
Wednesday	9/2		
Thursday	9/3	7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir	Choir Room
Friday	9/4	9:00 a.m. OA	Drawing Room
		3:30 p.m. Continuing Adult Education through Study	Zoom
Saturday	9/5	9:00 a.m. Saturday Meals Program	Dining Room
Sunday	9/6	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



Choirs and Ensembles Begin Soon: It's time to sing, ring, and play together again! FCCLG ensembles are for everyone and are a great way to introduce the community to our church. Contact ryan@fcclg.org to express interest.

Chancel Choir: 1st rehearsal is Thursday, September 3 at 7pm.

All singers of high-school age and up are welcome.

Carillon Handbell Choir: 1st rehearsal is Wednesday, September 9 at 7:30pm.

All ringers of high-school age and up are welcome.

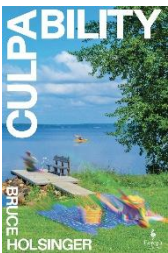
Ring and Sing: 1st rehearsal is 9/20 at 11:30am for 1st - 8th graders.

Youth Handbell Ensemble: 1st rehearsal is 9/20 at 12pm for 4th - 8th graders.

Kickoff Sunday is September 13th!

Worship will take place at 10:00am in the Sanctuary. After worship, we will move downstairs to the Dining Room for lunch, fellowship, and fun. Nurture will be providing hot dogs, condiments, and beverages. The congregation is asked to bring side dishes or desserts to share. There will be a bounce house and games in the parking lot, so we need adults to take turns monitoring outside. Do you have a cornhole set you would be willing to bring? Or other outdoor games such as giant Connect 4 or Jenga? If you are willing to help monitor the parking lot or have games you can bring, please let AnnLaura know in the office, or signup on the sheet in the Founders Room.

Thank you for helping to make Kickoff Sunday a fun event for all!



FCCLG Book Club: Book Club will meet next on Tuesday, September 15 at 7:30 pm. Our selected book is *Culpability* by Bruce Holsinger, a contemporary family drama that explores the moral complexities of technology and responsibility following a fatal self-driving car accident involving the Cassidy-Shaw family.

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).



Adopt-a-Chair Campaign: We have 41 choir chairs in our Sanctuary that have served us faithfully for many years and are now badly in need of reupholstering. For a suggested donation of \$150—or contributing whatever amount you can—you can adopt one of our choir chairs and help give it a much-needed new lease on life.

Please indicate “Adopt a Chair” in the comment line of your donation. Thank you!

Adult Bible Class Survey: Rev. Damrow will be starting adult Bible class as part of our Faith Formation program. Please fill out the survey to help us plan. The survey is available online via the QR code, or paper copies are in the Founders Room



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. On Sundays without volunteers, there will not be a coffee hour. Please sign up on the poster in the Founders Room. Thank you for helping make this special time possible!

WALK. GIVE. CHANGE THE WORLD.

2026
CROP HUNGER WALKS

ENDING HUNGER
ONE STEP AT A TIME

Save the Date - CROP Hunger Walk - Sunday afternoon, September 27th: Four weeks from today we will gather to raise money to help fight hunger both in our community and around the world. The Ministry of Missions and the Wacky Walkers are jointly sponsoring this event which we are dedicating to Linda Lauterbach who was a strong supporter of CROP for many years. We need both Walkers and Donors so please plan to walk with us that afternoon or join us

after the walk for food and fellowship. More information to follow about the Walk, our fundraising page and how you can donate to this important cause.



Electronics Recycling and Shredding Event: First Presbyterian Church of La Grange is hosting an electronics recycling and paper shredding event on Saturday, September 19, in their parking lot from 10:00am-1:00pm. This free event will be managed by the Cook County Center for Hard to Recycle Materials (CHaRM for short). FPCLG is partnering with the La Grange Rotary Club and also Community

Assisted Rides (CARS) to support this event.

Electronics and small appliances: computers, computer accessories, gaming devices, televisions, mobile devices, printers, air conditioners, microwaves, small kitchen appliances, etc. Anything with a plug or battery, that is small enough to lift. CHaRM disposes of these sustainably through certified recycling partners. Since these devices contain toxic metals like lead, mercury, cadmium and arsenic, they are banned from landfills and need to be recycled.

Paper shredding: Household documents (limit 2 boxes per car). Staples and plastic covers are okay, but no binder clips. On-site document destruction ensures your confidential materials are shredded securely. All shredded paper is recycled, which saves trees and reduces methane emissions from landfills.

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. Bibles and prayer cards are available in the chapel. All are welcome.



Additional Event Hosts Needed!

We are seeking church members ages 18 and up to serve as event hosts for onsite events. Our event hosts play an important role in helping ensure that events are properly supported, welcoming, and successfully carried out.

We cannot book or host onsite events unless an approved event host is available to assist. Event hosts are an essential part of the event process, and their availability must be confirmed before an event can be scheduled.

Event Host Requirements

To serve as an event host, individuals must:

- Be 18 years of age or older.
- Be a church member or relative/trusted friend of a church member.
- Complete the required training on the church's Safe Church Policy before serving as an event host.
- Be available to assist with the onsite responsibilities associated with the event.

Event hosts may assist with greeting and welcoming attendees, hospitality, directing guests to restrooms, checking on supplies, and other onsite event support such as light cleanup.

Event Host Compensation

Each event host will receive \$180 in cash for their service at the event. Each event is approximately 4-6 hours in length.

To volunteer or learn more about becoming an event host, please contact Jamie Dougherty in the church office (events@fccg.org).

Thank you for your willingness to serve and help support our church's onsite events!



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

Spirit-Led Living
August 30, 2026
Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Romans 12:9-21

I've been told all my life to stop wearing my heart on my sleeve — a saying popularized in William Shakespeare's *Othello*, where the villain asks, "Shall I wear my heart upon my sleeve for daws to peck at?" (By the way, a "daw" is a bird in the crow family.) Shakespeare, though, can't take full credit for the saying. Its origin can be traced to medieval jousts when dashing knights would literally wear the affection of fair maidens in the way of ribbons and other trinkets tied to their armor sleeve.

Today, wearing one's heart is far from romantic. It's viewed as a negative trait of a sensitive soul that's weak. Yet saints like Catherine of Sienna and Thérèse of Lisieux saw sensitive souls as grace-filled gifts to the world. So, for all you sensitive souls reading this, know that you are strong beyond measure and that the world needs such love and care on display. For that heart on your sleeve is beating with the heart of God, showing others what it truly means to live a spirit-led life. Spirit-led living is something of a struggle these days as it is marked by authenticity and vulnerability. It also means doing that hardest thing we can ever do — love in all circumstances, especially when you are in the presence of your enemies.

Paul, the very apostle who told us to "rejoice in the Lord always," while imprisoned in Rome, was also the one who urged us to let love be genuine. If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. While I've always appreciated Paul's advice, very seldom have I followed it. It's more satisfying (albeit a short-lived satisfaction) to stoop down to the enemies' level. But overcoming evil with evil, is not a marker of a spirit-led life. Rather, vulnerable love is, and such love is disarming in today's world.

There is no preventive to take to ensure we never get hurt, betrayed or rejected in life. I wish there was. But allowing true feelings to be expressed and not buried, allowing tears to fall with those who are hurt, makes for an environment where God can come and transform the gunk into something beautiful. And when our sensitive souls are on display, what we are showing is that we know our worthiness comes from God alone.

I don't know about you, but my heart will always be on my sleeve for all to see. Where is your heart?

Loving God, in a world of raging hate and distrust, may our lives reflect Your goodness and grace. Help us to stop trying to protect our hearts from hurts, but to share them openly. May this day the heart on our sleeves that the world sees be not our own, but Yours. 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)

