

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

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708.352.0800

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 6, 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 uncended, 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.*

"But if that person refuses to listen, then go to him again and bring one or two people with you."

- Matthew 18:16-17 NLT -



PRELUDE

Meditation on St. Columba

Gregory Hamilton
AnnLaura Tapia, organ

WELCOME

Tom Lowry

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Tom Lowry

One: As we gather together to worship, let us remember the words of Scripture:

Many: Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil.

One: Jesus sent his disciples out two by two and gave them authority over evil spirits.

Many: For with two, if you fall, someone is there to help you up.

One: Jesus says, "Where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."

Many: For God created us to be in a holy relationship with one another.

One: Every day the believers continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts.

Many: Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

One: Let us consider how we may spur each other on toward love and good deeds.

Many: A threefold cord is not quickly broken.

One: So let us not give up meeting together but let us encourage one another.

Many: Let us worship God together.

***OPENING HYMN**

New Century Hymnal #533
Children of God
verses 1-3

WELWYN

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION

Tom Lowry

Merciful God, we like to think that we do everything well. We pat ourselves on the back when we act with love and mercy toward others, complimenting ourselves in self-righteousness. But you know us better. You know our faults and our failings. You know when we falsely proclaim that we are truly living as you would have us live. Teach us again about the true nature of healing love. Show us ways of merciful living that we may extend the love and mercy you have given us to others. Guide us in this transformation, for we ask these things in Jesus' Name. AMEN.

SCRIPTURE:

Matthew 18:15-20 (NSRVUE)

Tom Lowry

“If your brother or sister sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If you are listened to, you have regained that one. But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If that person refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church, and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a gentile and a tax collector. Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

KIDS QUEST

Rev. Brian Damrow

SERMON

Unity's Pathway

Rev. Brian Damrow

verses 1-3

1 Put peace in - to each oth - er's hands and like a
 2 Put peace in - to each oth - er's hands with lov - ing
 3 Put peace in - to each oth - er's hands like bread we
 4 Give thanks for strong— yet ten - der— hands, held out in
 5 Reach out in friend - ship, stay, with faith, in touch with

treas - ure hold it; pro - tect it like a
 ex - pec - ta - tion; be gen - tle in your
 break for shar - ing; look peo - ple warm - ly
 trust and bless - ing. Where words fall short, let
 those a - round you. Put peace in - to each

can - dle flame, with ten - der - ness en - fold it.
 words and ways, in touch with God's cre - a - tion.
 in the eye: our life is meant for car - ing.
 hands speak out, the heights of love ex - press - ing.
 oth - er's hands: the Peace that sought and found you.

Place your gift in the offering plate

or

Text your gift to

708-688-5486

or



or go to

<http://tinyurl.com/FCCLGChangingLives>

OFFERTORY

Trinitarian Blessings

Lyrics: Brian Wren

Music: K. Lee Scott

Ryan Cox and AnnLaura Tapia

May the Sending One sing in you,
May the Seeking One walk with you,
May the Greeting One stand by you,
in your gladness and in your grieving.

May the Gifted One relieve you,
May the Given One retrieve you,
May the Giving One receive you,
in your falling and your restoring.

May the Binding One unite you,
May the One Beloved invite you,
May the Loving One delight you,
Three-in-One, joy in life unending.

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

Musical score for the hymn "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow" (Old Hundredth). The score is written for a unison voice part and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is common time (C). The melody is simple and hymn-like, with a range of one octave. 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; Cre - a - tor, Christ, and Spir - it One. A - men."

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

God of Grace, you continually forgive and renew us. Teach us to extend that same mercy to others. Transform these offerings into ministries of compassion that reflect your love for the world. We give with grateful hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

***COMMUNION HYMN**

New Century Hymnal #337

Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether

UNION SEMINARY

COMMUNION INVITATION

Rev. Brian Damrow

COMMUNION PRAYER

May God be with you!

And also with you!

People of God, open your hearts.

We open them to the One who feeds us with freedom and hope.

Children of God, sing songs of thanksgiving to the One who journeys with you!

Graced with abundant life, we join our hearts and voices in praise to our loving God!

The moment you spoke and liberated chaos, Holy God, time marked the beginning of created beauty and glory. You watered earth with tears of joy, planting those seeds of hope and peace so we might be fed by your heart. But asked simply to be your children, we could not obey that request but wandered off to feast at the table groaning with lies and curses. Your gracious words were sung in new ways by the prophets, but we tuned them out, so we could listen to the seductive songs of greed. You sent us your hope in Jesus the Christ, who came to set our hearts free from the lies of the world.

So, with those who longed for your coming, packed and ready to journey to freedom, we sing our praises in the company of our sisters and brothers from every time:

Holy, holy, holy! God the Almighty! Early in the morning we praise your majesty. Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty! God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

As you have prepared this Table for us, gather us as your children, so we might remember all the promises fulfilled to us in Christ. When we eat of the Bread, Christ's life strengthens us; when we drink from the Cup, Christ's Spirit nourishes us; when we go to serve others, we proclaim Christ's death and resurrection.

BREAKING BREAD, POURING WINE

As you bless the gifts of the Bread and the Cup, anoint us with your Spirit which brings us together. As your grace touches our lips with hope and healing, may we reach out our hands to set free those captive to injustice. As your peace is poured into the empty corners of our hearts, may we go forth to love others as much as we love ourselves, and to serve them as we show our love for you.

SHARING THE ELEMENTS *The bread is gluten-free and the cup is grape juice.*

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

Tom Lowry

*HYMN

New Century Hymnal #397

Thank Our God for Sisters, Brothers

PLEADING SAVIOR

*BENEDICTION

Rev. Brian Damrow

POSTLUDE

Jesus, Greatest at the Table

Setting by Jacob B. Weber
AnnLaura Tapia, organ

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS:

Reader Leaders: Tom Lowry

Usher: Lawrence Bain

Coffee Hour Hosts: Ellen Hamilton

Audio/Video: John Hoo

Laundry Hero: Kathy Donaldson

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.
- For Carol, sister of Judith Fennema, for strength and healing.

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

This Week at Church

Sunday	9/6	10:00 a.m. Celebration of Worship 11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour 7:00 p.m. OA	Sanctuary/ online Founders Room Drawing Room
Monday	9/7	Labor Day Office Closed 6:30 p.m. AA	Church Office Drawing Room
Tuesday	9/8	10:00 a.m. Weekly Staff Meeting 5:00 p.m. Meditative Prayer Ministry	Church Office Chapel
Wednesday	9/9	7:30 p.m. Carillon Handbell Choir	Room 305
Thursday	9/10	7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir	Choir Room
Friday	9/11	9:00 a.m. OA 3:30 p.m. Continuing Adult Education through Study	Drawing Room Zoom
Saturday	9/12	9:00 a.m. Saturday Meals Program	Dining Room
Sunday	9/13	10:00 a.m. Celebration of Worship 11:00 a.m. Kickoff Sunday! 7:00 p.m. OA	Sanctuary/ online Dining Room Drawing Room

Announcements

Kickoff Sunday is next week, September 13th!

Please bring a side dish or dessert to share. Nurture will be providing hot dogs, condiments, and beverages. 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 sign up on the sheet in the Founders Room.

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

Please note: All Teams will meet on Sunday, September 20th.

The church office will be closed Monday, September 7th, in honor of Labor Day.

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 for best days and times. The survey is available online via the QR code, or paper copies are in the Founders Room.



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: Rehearsals continue on Thursday evenings at 7pm. All singers of high-school age and up are welcome. It's not too late to join!

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.



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!

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.



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!



Every **\$60** provides
a piglet that connects a
family to a long-lasting
source of income.
Thank You!

**CROP
HUNGER WALK**
ENDING HUNGER ONE STEP AT A TIME
BY **CWS**

CROP Hunger Walk: What are you doing on Sunday afternoon, September 27? Here is an opportunity to visit with friends, make new friends, enjoy the outdoors, get exercise AND help change the world! Come walk with us in the CROP Hunger Walk to raise funds to fight hunger in our community AND around the world. Walkers will meet at 1:30 pm at the Donaldson residence, 900 N. Stone Avenue, LaGrange Park, right by the entrance to the Salt Creek Trail where our walk begins. After the walk, around 2:30 pm, we will gather for food and fellowship back at the Donaldsons. Everyone is welcome!

You can make an online donation through the QR code which will take you to FCCLG's Team Linda page. From there you can click on the yellow 'Make a Donation' button.



You also can contribute with a check. Please make checks payable to FCCLG and write CWS Crop Walk on the memo line. There will be opportunities to donate at Coffee Hour through the month of September.

Thank you for your support of individuals and families impacted by poverty and disaster.



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!

