

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF LA GRANGE

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

S. LA GRANGE RD AT COSSITT AVE.
100 S. Sixth Ave.
LA GRANGE, IL



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SUNDAY OCTOBER 25, 2026

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

How Firm a Foundation

arr. Anna Laura Page
Carillon Handbell Choir

WELCOME

LaShinda John

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

LaShinda John

One: We gather in this church that has changed its mind before.

Many: And may need to again.

One: We are the heirs of people who read for themselves and would not stop.

Many: Make us that kind of heir,

One: Not the keepers of a monument –

Many: But a household still under construction.

***OPENING HYMN**

All Are Welcome

TWO OAKS



1 Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safe - ly live,
2 Let us build a house where proph-ets speak, and words are strong and true,
3 Let us build a house where hands will reach be - yond the wood and stone
4 Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and vi - sions heard



a place where saints and chil - dren tell how hearts learn to for - give.
where all God's chil - dren dare to seek to dream God's reign a - new.
to heal and strength-en, serve and teach, and live the Word they've known.
and loved and trea - sured, taught and claimed as words with - in the Word.



Built of hopes and dreams and vi - sions, rock of faith and vault of grace;
Here the cross shall stand as wit - ness and as sym - bol of God's grace;
Here the out - cast and the stran - ger bear the im - age of God's face;
Built of tears and cries and laugh - ter, prayers of faith and songs of grace,



here the love of Christ shall end di - vi - sions;
here as one we claim the faith of Je - sus:
let us bring an end to fear and dan - ger:
let this house pro - claim from floor to raf - ter:

Refrain



All are wel-come, all are wel-come, all are wel-come in this place.

The church once blessed the slave ship and the auction blocks.

The church was reformed and is always being reformed.

The church once told our Jewish neighbors they were the enemy of God.

The church was reformed and is always being reformed.

And the church still argues about who we may love, marry, and lead, and belong.

Reform us again. We are not finished.

And when this argument is over –

Give us the humility to expect the next one.

Ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda.

Reformed, and always being reformed.

Silent prayer

Holy One, we have inherited a good argument and mixed record. We were given a gospel anyone could read, and we used the same presses to publish contempt for our Jewish neighbors and demean the LGBTQIA+ community. We were given a word of freedom, and when the poor took it seriously, we sided with the ones who had swords. We found courage to break with an authority we could not accept, and then we punished the people who broke with us. We have said the word reformed as though it were finished. Transform our spiritual blindness and our silence into not speaking about the parts of this story we rather not tell and give us the nerve to speak truth to power in all things.

*HYMN

The Lord Is God

AZMON

This hymn paraphrases the Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4-9), an ancient and central affirmation of Jewish monotheistic faith that observant Jews still recite twice a day.

Jesus knew it well and called it the first and great commandment (Matthew 22:38/Mark 12:28-29/Luke 10:26-28).

Please turn page for hymn insert.

1 The Lord is God, the Lord a - lone! Give hon - or, thanks, and praise
 2 With all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and might,
 3 At night or day, at home, a - way, to - geth - er and a - part,
 4 The Lord is God, the Lord a - lone! Give hon - or, thanks, and praise

to God, the mak - er of all things and giv - er of our days.
 O peo - ple, love the Lord your God, the source of truth and light.
 O chil - dren, take these ho - ly words and keep them in your heart.
 to God, the mak - er of all things and giv - er of our days.

SCRIPTURE:

Matthew 22:34-40 (NSRVUE)

LaShinda John

When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, an expert in the law, asked him a question to test him. "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" He said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

SERMON

Loving God By Loving Neighbor

Rev. Brian Damrow

MESSAGE IN MUSIC

All Who Dwell in the Shadow of the Lord

Z. Randall Stroope
Chancel choir and piano

At the first light of day, Lauda, laude! When the sun reaches noon, Lauda, laude!
And then at sunset, Lauda, laude! Or at the midnight, Lauda laude!

Refrain: All who dwell in the shadow of the Lord, find a refuge and fortress;
Nation, village or faith of a small child, home they find in him.

May we sing, sing for joy, Lauda, laude! May our days all be glad, Lauda, laude!
May we have wisdom, Lauda, laude! May we have truth, Lauda, laude! [refrain]

Plagues and serpents of the dark, pestilence that stalks the night,
They who harm, who destroy, those who spread fear and terror,
But those who make the Lord most high their refuge and their dwelling,

No fear, no harm, no foe will come near your land,
No shame, no death, no evil consume or destroy. Lauda, laude!

All who dwell in the shadow of the Lord,
Find a refuge and fortress; Lauda, Laude!

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Brian Damrow

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.

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

Jubilation

Mary Kay Parrish
Carillon Handbell Choir

***OFFERTORY RESPONSE (*UNISON*)** As Those of Old Their Firstfruits Brought

FOREST GREEN

**As those of old their firstfruits brought of vineyard, flock, and field
to God, the giver of all good, the source of bounteous yield,
so we today our firstfruits bring, the wealth of this good land:
of farm and market, shop and home, of mind and heart and hand.**

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

LaShinda John

Lord of all we see and all that we cannot see: Give us this day a glimpse of the complexities of the world and the simplicity of living our lives centered in you; loving you with all our heart, soul, and mind, and loving our neighbors well. Bless the gifts we offer you; but in our giving, help us focus on these other more basic gifts. May the love we show you and others be a testimony of whom we follow and who is worthy of our devotion. In Christ's holy name, we pray. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LaShinda John

1 O God, we read the ho - ly law to
2 All peo - ple born of God a - bove will
3 So let our love for God be known in

shape our ways of liv - ing like those who first in fear
live as Je - sus taught us: God's cho - sen chil - dren prac -
how we treat cre - a - - tion— true love in word and ac -

and awe re - ceived it with thanks giv - - ing. These
- tice love, for God in love has sought us. We
- tion shown to ev - ery tongue and na - - tion. If

laws that Je - sus knew he sum - ma - rized with
know love ne - ver fails; and through love, good pre -
we would heed this call and of - fer love to

two that cap - ture best the whole: "With heart, mind, strength, and
vails. When all else turns to dust, in this we place our
all, then we must sure - ly praise our source of love al -

soul, love God, and love your neigh - - bor.
trust: God's love en - dures for - ev - - er.
ways: to God a - lone be glo - - ry!

*BENEDICTION

Rev. Brian Damrow

POSTLUDE

Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott, BuxWV 184

Dietrich Buxtehude

AnnLaura Tapia, organ

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS:

Reader Leader: LaShinda John

Audio/Video: John Hoo and David Watts

Usher: Lawrence Bain

Laundry Hero: Laurie Braun

Coffee Hour Host: Kaki and Susan Lynch

Prayer Requests

- For Juanita, family of Nancy Coleman, for strength and healing.
 - For Kenneth McIntosh, brother of Joyce Hagen-McIntosh, as he continues to deal with health challenges.
 - For Mike Tobin, brother of Jill, who is going through treatment for kidney cancer.
 - 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	10/25	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
		11:30 a.m. Ring and Sing	Room 304
		12:00 p.m. Youth Handbell Ensemble	Room 305
Monday	10/26	7:00 p.m. OA	Drawing Room
		11:00 a.m. Weekly Staff Meeting	Church Office
		6:30 p.m. AA	Drawing Room
Tuesday	10/27	1:00 p.m. Adult Faith Formation	
		5:00 p.m. Meditative Prayer Ministry	Chapel
		7:00 p.m. Adult Faith Formation	
		7:30 p.m. Carillon Handbell Choir	Room 305
Wednesday	10/28	7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir	Choir Room
Thursday	10/29		
Friday	10/30	9:00 a.m. OA	Drawing Room
		3:30 p.m. Continuing Adult Education through Study	Zoom

Saturday	10/31	9:00 a.m. Saturday Meals Program	Dining Room
Sunday	11/1	10:00 a.m. Celebration of Worship	Sanctuary/ online
		11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour	Founders Room
		11:30 a.m. Ring and Sing	Room 304
		12:00 p.m. Youth Handbell Ensemble	Room 305
		7:00 p.m. OA	Drawing Room

Announcements

The Social Justice team will meet today at 11:15am in the Drawing Room.

Did You Know?: Did you know that we celebrate Indigenous Peoples' Day in October? FCCLG adopted our land acknowledgement found on the front of the bulletin in 2022. Additionally, one-third of our Neighbors in Need offering is given to the Council for American Indian Ministries.



The Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM) is the voice for American Indian people in the UCC. CAIM provides Christian ministry and witness to American Indians and to the wider church. Justice issues that affect American Indian life are communicated to the whole UCC by CAIM. Historically, the forebears of the UCC established churches and worked with Lakota, Dakota, Nakota, Mandan, Hidatsa, Arickara, and Hocak in North and South Dakota, Wisconsin and northern Nebraska. Today there are 20 UCC

congregations on reservations and one urban, multi-tribal UCC congregation in Minneapolis, Minnesota. CAIM supports these local churches and their pastors. In addition, CAIM strives to be a resource for more than 1,000 individuals from dozens of other tribes and nations who are members of other UCC congregations and to strengthen their participation in the life of the church.

Envelopes for our Neighbors in Need offering can be found at the back of the sanctuary, or you can give online by selecting "Give to Neighbors in Need" from the dropdown. One-third of the Neighbors in Need offering supports the ministries of the Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM). Learn more at www.ucc.org/nin

All Saint's Day Remembrance. If you would like to include a loved one as part of All Saints Day Service, please complete the card located at the back of the sanctuary and return with a picture of your loved one by October 30th.

Ryan Cox and AnnLaura Tapia are presenting a concert of arias and songs at Plymouth Place on November 1, at 3pm. The free concert will be in Dole Hall and all are welcome to attend.

Help Host Coffee Hour: The Nurture Team is looking for volunteers to help host coffee hour in November and December. Please sign up on the poster in the Founders Room. Thank you for helping make this special time possible!

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.

Giving Tree: As we continue our pledge drive, we want to encourage everyone to consider how FCCLG has blessed them, and what they hope for FCCLG’s future. In the Founders Room there are leaves on the Sanctuary side ledge for you to write your blessings and hopes on and attach them to the branches of our Giving Tree. Please write as many leaves as you would like and help fill our tree.

Your Search Committee needs your thoughtful input! WE WILL BE COLLECTING YOUR IDEAS THROUGH SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25. You may have received an email from the church office this week with a Google Form link called ‘Pastor Profile Questions’. There are also paper copies in the back, and a box for you to place them when you are finished. Or you can scan the QR to access the online form. Thank you for prayerfully considering these challenging questions to answer for our Local Pastor Profile. You do not need to answer all of them; we ask you to do your best. You can answer these alone, or as a group. Feel free to ask others around you! Your answers don’t need to be poetic, perfected, or edited. A few words, or a brain dump – all is accepted!



Your responses will help your Search Committee carefully consider how we frame the needs of the Congregation. Your input is deeply valued. Thank you!

Migrant Ministry Winter Collection: The Migrant Ministry, part of Catholic Parishes of Oak Park, is now collecting children’s winter coats, clean blankets and bath towels (no stains, rips, strong smells). Drop off items by Sunday, November 15 after service. Place them along the back wall next to the closets in the Founder’s Room. In the past, the ministry leaders have written letters thanking us for our donations because they definitely appreciate them. Contact LaShinda with questions.

NOVEMBER 11, 2026

HARVEST HOME DINNER

6:30 PM DINING ROOM

You are cordially invited to our annual Harvest Home dinner. Bring your family and friends to enjoy a traditional turkey dinner complete with pumpkin pie! See you there!

Tickets: \$15 Adults; \$7 Children 4-12
Age 3 and under are FREE. Tickets available at coffee hour through Nov. 8th along with volunteers sign-up list.



The Corinthian church lived in a culture that prized wealth, polish, and competition—and they were tempted to bring those same standards into their faith. Paul reminded them that God’s wisdom does not look like the world’s wisdom. It is not measured by numbers, status, or polish, but revealed through the Spirit in ways that often seem foolish to the world.

We face those same temptations today. Our culture whispers that success is found in bigger paychecks, well-padded retirement accounts, fuller sanctuaries, and shinier programs. We catch ourselves comparing—measuring our worth against the megachurch down the street or the neighbor who seems to have it all together.

But stewardship invites us into a different story, one not rooted in comparison or accumulation, but in trust, generosity, and grace.

Faith and generosity are not automatic—they grow through practice. Over time, endurance grows and builds a giving muscle.

Likewise, stewardship is not a single act, not a duty to check off, but a way of training our lives in the direction of God’s grace.

Gift by gift, practice by practice, we are being shaken and shaped into people whose very lives tell the story of God’s abundance. That’s the race we are running together, a race that leads us deeper into the wisdom of God. Each time we give, each time we open our hands, we are being stretched, shaken, and reshaped. Over time, what feels hard or uncertain begins to grow lighter, even joyful. That is how our lives echo the wisdom of God, not the wisdom of this age.

CONSIDER YOUR GIVING AS A PERCENTAGE OF YOUR MONTHLY INCOME.

Annual Income	Monthly Income	2%	3%	4%	5%	10%
20,000	1,667	33	50	67	83	167
25,000	2,083	42	63	83	104	208
30,000	2,500	50	75	100	125	250
35,000	2,917	58	88	117	146	292
40,000	3,333	67	100	133	167	333
45,000	3,750	75	113	150	188	375
50,000	4,167	83	125	167	208	417
60,000	5,000	100	150	200	250	500
75,000	6,250	125	188	250	313	625
100,000	8,333	167	250	333	417	833
125,000	10,417	208	313	417	521	1042
150,000	12,500	250	375	500	625	1250
200,000	16,667	333	500	667	833	1667

On average, Americans give 2% of their income to charity. Giving even 1% more of our annual income would be transformative for our congregation and other organizations doing good in God’s world. Thank you for prayerfully considering your commitment!

Online 2027 Pledge Form: If you prefer to submit your 2027 Pledge Form online instead of the paper form, please use the QR code here, or visit the Donate page on our website: [FCCLG.org](https://www.fcclg.org).



October 25, 2026

Matthew 22:34-46

The Compassionate Life

People ask Jesus questions for a variety of reason. Sometimes they want to seek answers or ideas. They want to know more about themselves and their place in Christ's kin-dom. They want to hear Jesus' teachings and stories. And sometimes, they just want to trick Jesus, or trip him up. They want to ask him a question with no answer.

When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, an expert in the law, asked him a question to test him. "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" He said to him, " 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

After this exchange, Jesus asks a question that those gathered cannot answer, about the nature of humanity and divinity. Question and answer exchanges are part of living and loving. On this Higher Education Sunday, we honor those institutions connected with the United Church of Christ where questions are welcome not as a barrier to faith, but as a sign of it.

There are 48 educational institutions related to the United Church of Christ, including academies, colleges, universities, and seminaries. They span the United States. Each is independent, self-governing, and fully accredited.

Each institution expresses partnership with the church. Closely related schools participate as full members of the UCC Council for Higher Education. Others are historically related, which means they recognize a past relationship with the church but are not full members of the Council.

These institutions provide opportunities to explore moral values, the importance of social responsibility, an ethic of service, and the ability to think critically. Many have campus ministries that are ecumenical and interfaith. Each embodies the UCC ethos where God is Still Speaking (<https://www.ucc.org/about/higher-education/>).

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)

