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 NOVEMBER 8, 2026
STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY

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 Variations on Canonbury Christine Kramer
AnnLaura Tapia, organ

WELCOME Michelle Meuer

***CALL TO WORSHIP** Michelle Meuer

One: If we will but listen,
Many: God will speak to us in parables; God will tell us stories lived out by our grandparents.
One: If we will but remember,
Many: we will discover all we have heard and known, all the wonders God has in store for us.
One: If we will but share,
Many: we can tell our children and grandchildren - even those not yet born - the glorious stories of our God.

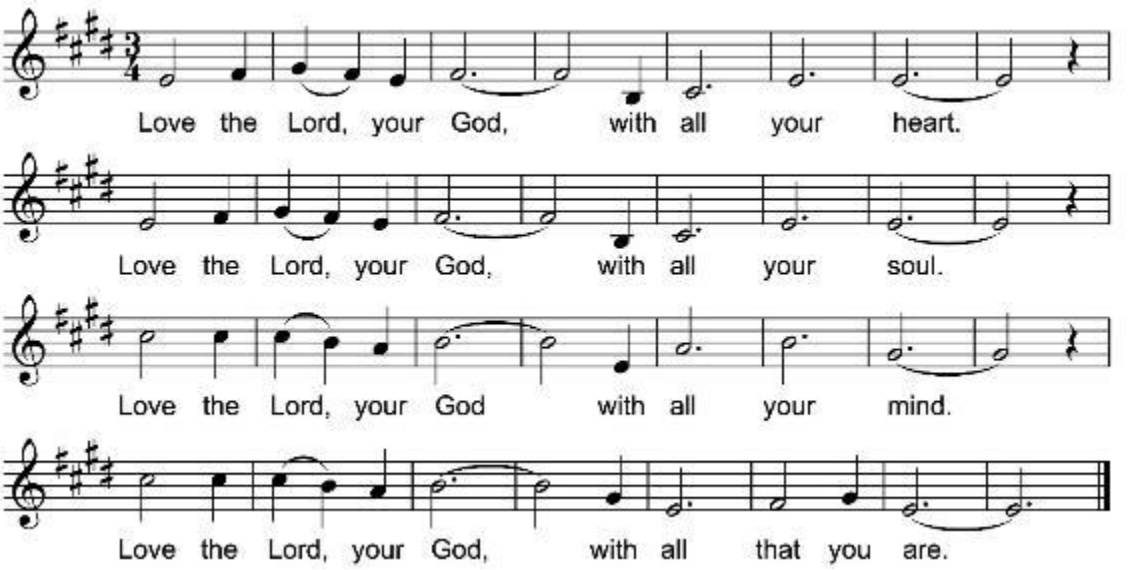
***OPENING HYMN** *New Century Hymnal #560*
By Whatever Name We Call You OGONTZ

***PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION** Michelle Meuer

Wise and just God, we do not want to come before you with empty words and meaningless acts. We know that your love has the power to transform us with compassion. We declare that your truth can liberate us and renew us as liberators in the world. In the midst of a world too often guided by the pursuit of power, privilege, and prestige, soften our hearts. Help us reject the othering of our neighbors and your beloved. Help us reflect your goodness and good news through our lives, in word and deed. Amen.

***HYMN** Love the Lord Your God

Words and Music: Jean and Jim Strathdee



SCRIPTURE: Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25 (NSRVUE) Michelle Meuer

Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel, and they presented themselves before God. And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Long ago your ancestors—Terah and his sons Abraham and Nahor—lived beyond the Euphrates and served other gods. Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan and made his offspring many.

"Now, therefore, revere the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt and serve the Lord. Now if you are unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living, but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."

Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods, for it is the Lord our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went and among all the peoples through whom we passed, and the Lord drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God.”

But Joshua said to the people, “You cannot serve the Lord, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. If you forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm and consume you, after having done you good.” And the people said to Joshua, “No, we will serve the Lord!” Then Joshua said to the people, “You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the Lord, to serve him.” And they said, “We are witnesses.” He said, “Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your hearts to the Lord, the God of Israel.” The people said to Joshua, “The Lord our God we will serve, and him we will obey.” So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day and made statutes and ordinances for them at Shechem.

KIDS QUEST Rev. Brian Damrow

SERMON Choose Rev. Brian Damrow

***HYMN** *New Century Hymnal #531*
God, Speak to Me, That I May Speak CANONBURY

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 Michelle Meuer

Place your gift in the offering plate
or
Text your gift to
708-688-5486
or



or go to
http://tinyurl.com/FCCLGChangingLives

OFFERTORY Now Let Us All Praise God and Sing Gordon Young
Chancel Choir, organ

Now let us all praise God and sing our great redeemer's praise;
That we may all with one accord our joyful voices raise. Sing Alleluia!

All ye servants of the Lord, Praise Him forever,
Sing Jehovah's mighty power, Praise Him forever.
Sing of His righteousness, Praise Him forever.

So let us all praise God and Sing our great Redeemer's praise;
That we may all with one accord our joyful voices raise. Sing Alleluia!

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) Michelle Meuer

We can stand at the edge and watch while you seek to bring hope, healing, peace, and joy to everyone in the world. Or we can take that step, of committing our lives as well as our gifts, in working with you in this ministry of grace. Bless our gifts, bless our lives, bless our service, we pray. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS Michelle Meuer

***HYMN** *New Century Hymnal #565*
God Whose Giving Knows No Ending AUSTRIAN HYMN

***BENEDICTION** Rev. Brian Damrow

POSTLUDE Postlude on Austrian Hymn John S. Dixon
AnnLaura Tapia, organ

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS:

Reader Leader: Michelle Meuer
Audio/Video: John Hoo and David Watts
Ushers: Lawrence Bain and Faith Ullrich
Greeter: JoAnne Konkle
Coffee Hour Host: Gary Melkonian
Laundry Hero: Sherri Ries

Gifts of Gratitude



FCCLG is once again partnering with Casa Central to provide Christmas gifts to children in the Early Learning Academy and School Aged Program. To select a child to purchase a gift for, please scan the QR code.

Gift instructions: Please wrap your gift or use a gift bag. Include a tag with the child's first name, last initial, age, group number (if applicable), and a description of the gift taped securely to the package. Drop off the gift in the Sanctuary on or before December 3rd. Suggested price range: $30-$35.

If you prefer not to sign up online, contact the office and we can help you select a recipient.

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.
- For Lisa and Al, friends of Jean O'Brien, who are going through health issues and job loss.
- For Tom Allinson, 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	**11/8**	10:00 a.m.	Celebration of Worship	Sanctuary/ online
		11:00 a.m.	Coffee Hour	Founders Room
		11:15 a.m.	All Teams Meetings	Dining Room
		11:30 a.m.	All-Ages Cantata Rehearsal	Choir Room
		7:00 p.m.	OA	Drawing Room
Monday	**11/9**	11:00 a.m.	Weekly Staff Meeting	Church Office
		6:30 p.m.	AA	Drawing Room
Tuesday	**11/10**	1:00 p.m.	Adult Faith Formation	Drawing Room
		5:00 p.m.	Meditative Prayer Ministry	Chapel
		7:00 p.m.	Adult Faith Formation	Drawing Room
Wednesday	**11/11**	6:30 p.m.	Harvest Home Dinner	Dining Room
		7:30 p.m.	Carillon Handbell Choir	Room 305
Thursday	**11/12**	7:00 p.m.	Chancel Choir	Choir Room
Friday	**11/13**	9:00 a.m.	OA	Drawing Room
		3:30 p.m.	Continuing Adult Education through Study	Zoom
Saturday	**11/14**	9:00 a.m.	Saturday Meals Program	Dining Room
Sunday	**11/15**	10:00 a.m.	Celebration of Worship	Sanctuary/ online
		11:00 a.m.	Coffee Hour	Founders Room
		11:30 a.m.	All-Ages Cantata Rehearsal	Choir Room
		7:00 p.m.	OA	Drawing Room

Together, We Can Close the Gap

This year we have incurred **$25,000** of unexpected, and therefore unbudgeted, property expenses. The majority were due to urgent plumbing issues for the church building as well as the manse. We invite you to prayerfully consider making a special gift to help close the gap created by these unanticipated events. Through generosity and shared commitment, **every contribution brings us closer to our goal.** Please include "Close the Gap" on the memo line of your check or if donating online select "Close the Gap" from the dropdown menu.

Announcements

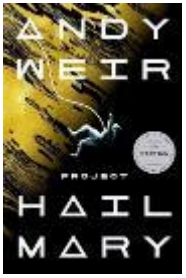
Did You Know?: Did you know that you can send pictures of happenings about the church to Amanda Murphy at digitaloutreach@fcclg.org? If you have pictures from Sandwich Sundays, Wacky Walkers, team meetings, rehearsals, or any other event, please be sure to send them in. Thank you!

Deck the Sanctuary: It is almost Advent which means it's time to decorate our beautiful sanctuary for the season. The "Hanging of the Greens" will be on November 22 following worship. There are tasks for the strong and limber as well as the detail-oriented who may prefer to sit. Thank you for your help in advance!

Ecumenical Thanksgiving Worship Service: On Sunday, November 22nd at 3:00pm, First Baptist Church of La Grange will be hosting an ecumenical Thanksgiving service, followed by a Thanksgiving Community Dinner.

New Members Sunday: If you are interested in joining the FCCLG family as a member, New Members Sunday will be on November 22nd. Please contact Rev. Damrow with any questions or to express interest.

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, December 6th 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.



FCCLG Book Club: Book Club will meet this Tuesday, November 10 at 7:30 pm. Our selected book is *Project Hail Mary* by Andy Weir. This survival story follows Ryland Grace, science teacher and former biologist, who awakens alone aboard a spacecraft with no memory of who he is or why he is there. 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).



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.

Update from the Pastoral Search Committee:

Thank you to everyone who filled out our survey over the last few weeks - we are grateful for your honest reflections on our church. Although this particular survey is closed, we are always open to conversations, emails, or thoughts you may have along the way. We can be reached at FCCLGSearchTeam@gmail.com.

We have met again on our own, and with our UCC representatives. They are very happy with how we are building our Local Church Profile; we are making great strides on completing the first draft! The UCC reps have been both encouraging and direct with their guidance. Our conversations together as we do this faithful work have been transparent and prayerful.

As we continue to meet more frequently over the next month, we ask you to keep us in your prayers.

In God's Service,
Your Search Committee (Jean, Stephanie, Nancy, LaShinda, Peter, Dick, and Amanda)

A Visit from St. Nikolaus Presented by Elmhurst Harmonie, German-American Chorus est. in 1907: Join us for carols in German and English, stories, hearing from St. Nikolaus & more. Kids FREE, Adult Donation to support our performance.

Saturday, Dec. 5 at 2:00pm –
St. John's Lutheran Church, 505 S. Park Rd, La Grange
Sunday, Dec. 6 at 6:00pm –
Immanuel Lutheran Church, 142 E. Third St., Elmhurst





The scriptural metaphor of the clay jar (2 Cor. 4) calls to mind one of the most important teachings of Christianity: the incarnation, that the presence of God was embodied in Jesus Christ, who is fully human and fully divine.

This ancient Christian teaching provokes the faithful to wonder about their own relationship between material and non-material life. As Christians, we are meant to ponder that life itself is a combination of the two. Human life is a combination of our physical and spiritual realities. The jar and what is in the jar are separate while connected. People of faith are reminded of this so that we do not become overly invested in material or spiritual life, but remain invested in the connection of those things, the incarnate life. The abundant, eternal promises of God, and salvation as we understand it…this is what is contained in the clay jar of the church, our faith, our very selves.

A clay jar is breakable, a world as we know it can end. But the spiritual contents spill out into the future, somehow unending.

Subversive stewardship exists at the same intersection. It means using your gifts to create the world that God calls us to build AND experiencing transformation in the process.

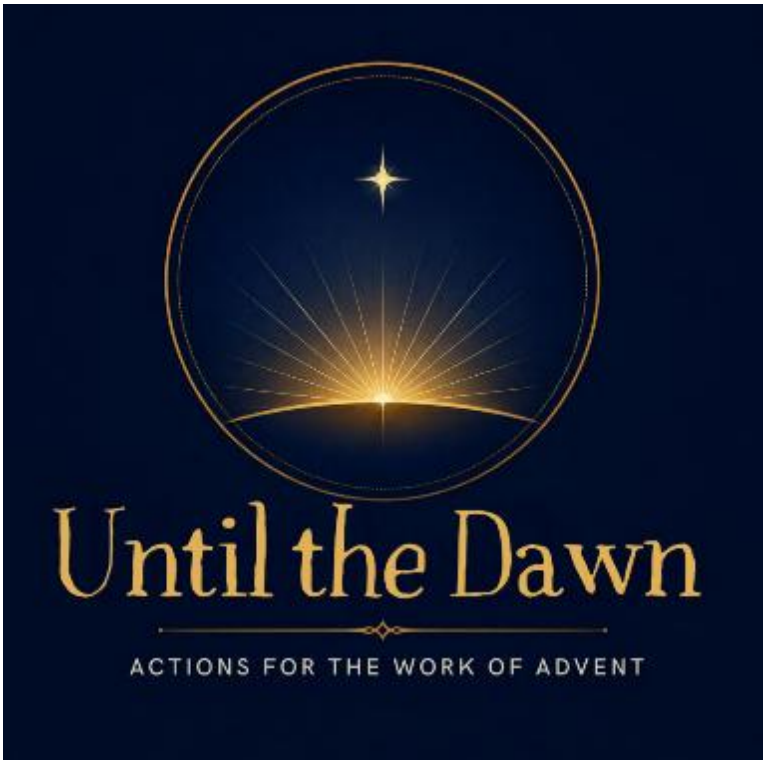
What if we saw our pledges as gifts that connect us to one another? That is a powerful shift of perspective from our regular spending, where spending dollars means receiving good and services. Subversive stewardship is way to see our giving as building God's world and playing by the rules of the Gospel to create a better world.

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.



Advent Worship

1st Sunday of Advent, November 29: Hope
Isaiah 64:1-9 & Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 Sermon: "Cry Out!"

2nd Sunday of Advent, December 6: Peace
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13 & Mark 1:1-8 "Start Somewhere"

3rd Sunday of Advent, December 13: Joy
Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 & John 1:6-8, 19-28 "Speak Up"

4th Sunday of Advent, December 20: Love
Luke 1:26-38, 46b-55 "Take Courage"

Christmas Eve, December 24
5:00pm & 10:00pm Services
"Angels Sing"

November 8, 2026
Matthew 25:1-13
Tending God's Light

Today's story reminds us that we all carry the light of Christ within us, and it is our joy as well as our responsibility as followers of Christ to tend to that light so that it can shine brightly in service of God and the world.
As this year's stewardship materials remind us, because of YOU and the light you shine in the world, our church changes lives. The materials claim, "It is a statement both bold and simple. It boldly expresses the truth about the ultimate nature and the purpose of the church: to engage in acts of transformation. It boldly asserts that we see our mission as one that gives assurance to every individual that their life matters, not because we say so, but because the gospel says so.
...We can be bold because we know it's true. Our own life stories bear witness that being a part of the beloved community in some way has either made us different or causes us to fervently believe that it will. It gives us hope, reminds us of our value, calls us to discover and claim our purpose, clarifies the moral Right and Wrong, motivates us to be a part of something bigger than ourselves all for the sake of change! Change that can more closely align us and our world with the values of the Realm of God. Our church matters because of you.
Our theme, Because of YOU, our church changes lives, is also simple. It recognizes that each of us, by our gifts and the decisions we make to employ them, power this sacred work. Our resources make ministry happen. The arithmetic is not complex. Our choice to grow in our generosity to the church increases the impact of the difference it makes.
By choosing to give even a little bit more, we will expand our shared quest to change lives - even our own. Be bold! Take a step forward in your generosity. It's simple! The choice is yours!"
God has given you a light to tend. How will you tend that light today and into the year to come? The choice to let your light shine is as simple as it is bold. Let it shine!

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

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST