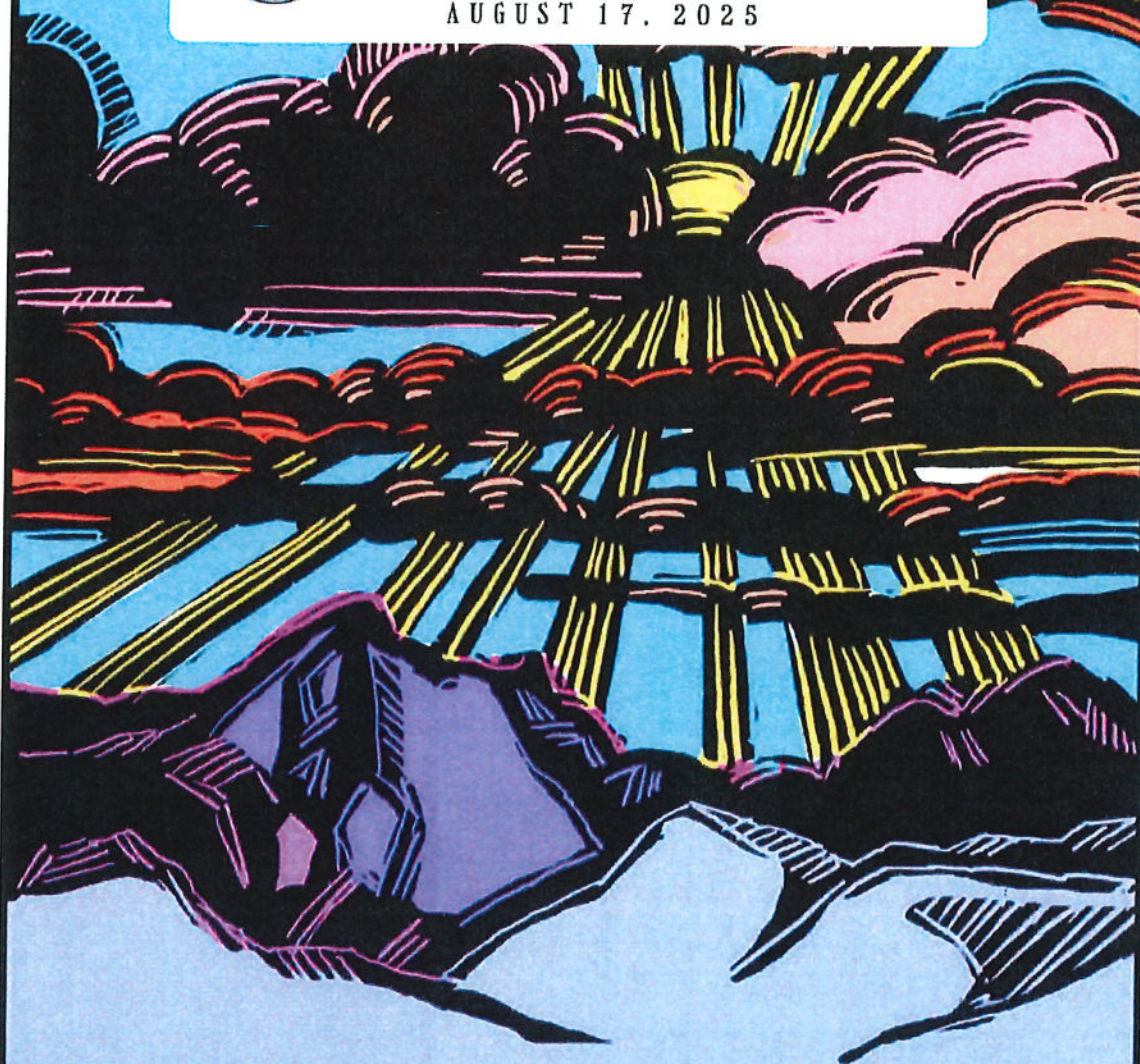




# TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

AUGUST 17, 2025



**WE ARE SURROUNDED  
BY SUCH A GREAT CLOUD  
OF WITNESSES....**

**HEBREWS 12:1**

**Welcome!** The mission of First Congregational United Church of Christ is to: **Live by faith, embody love, proclaim hope, and seek justice.** If you are worshipping with us for the first time, we hope that you will find God's presence among us. When the Friendship Folder is passed during the announcements, please sign it, and then pass it back across the pew to the inside aisle.

**All are welcome.** Jesus called us to welcome all into the family of God. A bathroom for all genders is located off the kitchen connected to the Community Room.

**Children are welcome in worship!** There is an area for parents and children at the front of the nave which allows children to be close to the action in worship. Our staffed nursery (downstairs) is an option as well. Kids are invited to pick up a book and an activity bag as they enter the sanctuary and remain with their families throughout worship.

**Worship Service Live Stream Notice.** Please be advised that all worship services held in the sanctuary of First Congregational UCC are live streamed on YouTube. Your voice and/or image may be visible in the broadcast. These recordings are publicly available on the First Congregational United Church of Christ of La Crosse YouTube page and will remain accessible at the church's sole discretion. If you prefer not to appear on camera, we invite you to sit in the last six rows of the sanctuary, which are not shown during the live stream. Thank you for your understanding.



**Please ask an usher** if you would like a large print or sensory friendly bulletin, or if you need directions or any other assistance. A Hearing Loop system is available. Turn your hearing device to the "T" setting.

#### Serving in Worship Today

Leading Worship & Preaching .....	Mary Runyon
Pianist.....	Nancy Allen
Reading Scripture.....	Emma Ledbetter
Head Usher.....	Randy Breeser
Ushers.....	Diane Breeser
Greeter.....	Tom Stolpa
Nursery .....	Zali Stanton

\* In the order of service indicates all who are able, please stand.

# Gathering

*in the presence of God*

## Gathering Music

"Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing"

arr. Brian Chung

"Here I Am Lord"

arr. Hayes

## Welcome and Announcements

*Thank you for joining us this Sunday where all are welcome. Please pass the Friendship Folder, share your name, and take note of those worshipping with you.*

## Prelude Music

"Holy God, We Praise Thy Name"

arr. Shackley

## \*Call to Worship

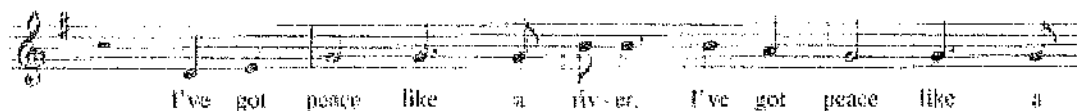
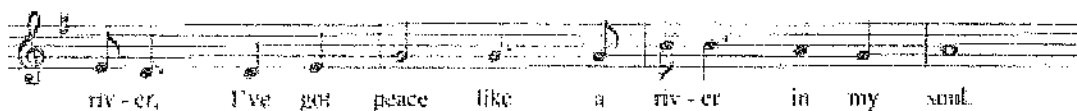
*inspired by Hebrews 11-12*

One: God has called us like Moses in the wilderness,  
the prophets in the hills, and the disciples in the cities.

Many: **They shared their blessings so that we might know God's  
presence here.**

One: Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses,  
let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely.

Many: **Let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us,  
looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.**



## Moment of Silence

*Take this moment of silence to be still and listen for God.*

## \*Hymn 494 *(All join in singing the hymns.)*

*"Step by Step"*

*Beaker*

## \*Sharing the Peace

*One:* The peace of Christ be with you.

*Many:* **And also with you.**

*Please greet those near you with a wave or bow and with words such as:*

*"Peace be with you. / And also with you."*

## Listening

*for the Still-speaking God*

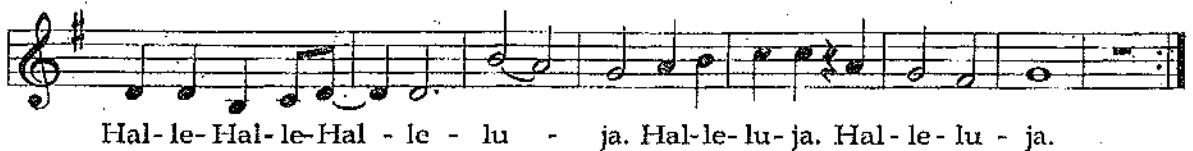
## The Word for Children

*Children will join the pastor in the center aisle as we walk forward for the Word for Children.*

## Acclamation *(Sung by all.)*

*Halleluja*

*All:*



## The First Lesson

Isaiah 5:1-7

Emma Ledbetter

## The Psalter

Psalm 82:1-8 *(Read responsively)*

*One:* God has taken his place in the divine council;  
in the midst of the gods he holds judgment:

*Many:* "How long will you judge unjustly  
and show partiality to the wicked?"

One: Give justice to the weak and the orphan;  
maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute.  
Many: **Rescue the weak and the needy;  
deliver them from the hand of the wicked.**  
One: They have neither knowledge nor understanding;  
they walk around in darkness;  
all the foundations of the earth are shaken  
Many: **I say, "You are gods,  
children of the Most High, all of you;  
nevertheless, you shall die like mortals  
and fall like any prince.**  
One: Rise up, O God, judge the earth,  
for all the nations belong to you!

## The Second Reading

Hebrews 11:29-12:2

## Sermon

"Faith to Run Your Race"

Rev. Mary Runyon

## Responding

*with the voice of hope*

\*Hymn 466 *(All join in singing the hymns.)*

"Take My Life and Let it Be"

HENDON

## The Community Invited into Prayer

Prayers of the Church

*The petitions end with: God, in our stillness,  
The people respond: hear our prayers.*

The Prayer of Jesus *(Said by all. Use language that reflects your view of God.)*

**Our (Father / Mother / Creator) 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 trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.

## ☞ Thanksgiving

*for the gifts of God*

Stories of Generosity

Rob Tyser

Music at the Offertory

"Just a Closer Walk With Thee"

arr. Keveren.

\*As the Gifts Are Presented: Sing to the tune of Old 100th (Hymn 147).  
(All who are able are invited to stand and sing.)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.  
Praise God, all creatures high and low.  
Praise God, for all that love has done,  
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One!



Prayer of Thanksgiving

## ☞ Going

*to be messengers of good news*

\*Hymn 496 (All join in singing the hymns.)  
"Leaning on the Everlasting Arms"

SHOW ALTER

\*The Blessing

Postlude Music

"I've Got Peace Like a River"

arr. Hayes

**Acknowledgements:** Hymns and service music reprinted and streamed with permission under Onelicense.net #A-728014.

*Flowers today are given in  
celebration of their 63rd wedding anniversary  
by Mary Hosler*

### First Congregational UCC Ministry Team

All the Members.....Ministers  
Rev. Dr. Laura Wright.....Senior Pastor  
Rev. Mary Runyon.....Associate Minister of Faith Formation  
Nancy Allen.....Organist & Choir Director  
Sue Retzlaff.....Bell Choir Director  
Michelle Logan.....Office Manager

**Contact Information:** First Congregational UCC, 2503 Main Street, La Crosse, WI 54601,  
608-784-8137 or [office@firstcongolax.org](mailto:office@firstcongolax.org), or visit us on the web at [www.firstcongolax.org](http://www.firstcongolax.org).

-----

What gifts did you give God this week?

Can we share your gift to God with the congregation?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### This Week in our Church:

#### Sunday, August 17

10:00 am Worship w/Nursery (No JAM)  
11:00 am Wise Committee Meeting (C)  
11:00 am Teacher Training (CR)

#### Tuesday, August 19

11:00 am Construction Mgmt Meeting (CR)  
6:00 pm Finance Meeting (L)

#### Wednesday, August 20

10:00 pm Sip & Scripture (CR)

#### Friday, August 22

##### Office Closed

5:00 pm Parent's Night Out/Kid's Night in

#### Sunday, August 24

10:00 am Worship w/JAM & Nursery  
11:00 am Ice Cream Social (CR)  
5:00 pm Teacher Training (L)

### CALENDAR KEY

CR = Community Room, C = Chapel, L = Lounge,

N = Narthex, S = Sanctuary, J = JAM Rooms



### Join Us for Welcome Back Sunday! Sunday, August 24

During worship we will:

- Present Bibles
- Share a Blessing of the Backpacks
- Enjoy an Ice Cream Social after worship

Bibles will be given to children who are new to our programs, as well as those entering the 1st/2nd grade or 3rd–5th grade classrooms.

All students—from preschool through college—along with teachers and school staff, are invited to bring their backpack (or whatever they carry) to receive a special blessing for the year ahead.

### It's that time of year again—Back to School!

At First Congo, Back to School means the start of Youth Faith Formation. We offer programs for children from birth through 12th grade, and we would love for you to be part of this ministry.

In the Gospels, Jesus tells us to *"love your neighbor as yourself."* One way we can live that out is by helping these beautiful children discover their place in God's creation. Please prayerfully consider how you might serve in our Faith Formation programs. It might feel challenging or even a little intimidating at first, but we make it simple—and you'll never be on this journey alone.



## FAITH Formation

Each week, it takes at least six adults to make our programs happen. Even if you can help just once a month or once a quarter, it makes a difference. As the saying goes, *"It takes a village to raise a child"*—and together we can help these kids grow into amazing adults. If you're interested, please let Pastor Mary know. **Our first training will be held this Sunday, August 17th, right after worship**—feel free to stay and see if this is a ministry you might want to join!