



EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

AUGUST 3, 2025

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 as we sit beneath the trees.

All are welcome. Jesus called us to welcome all into the family of God. We welcome you to a holy meal after worship in the shelter where everyone is invited to enjoy conversation and a meal.

Children are welcome in worship! We invite children to participate in worship and come forward for the kids' message.

Please ask an usher, if you would like a large print or sensory friendly bulletin, or if you need directions or any other assistance.

Serving in Worship Today

Leading Worship & Preaching.....	Laura Wright
Leading Worship.....	Mary Runyon
Pianist	Nancy Allen
Reading Scripture.....	John Storlie
Head Usher	Shelby Webb
Ushers	Rich, Pein, Tom Stolpa
Greeter	Leo Servais
Communion Assistants	Erin Hussey, Jill Pein
Coordinating Meal	Maury Weiland

Gathering Music

"Peace"

"Let All Things Now Living"

Arr. by Summers

Arr. by Eithrun

Welcome and Announcements

Thank you for joining us this Sunday where all are welcome.

Prelude Music

"For the Beauty of the Earth"

Arr. by Willhem

Call to Worship

Inspired by Luke 12

One: Come, beloved of God, and rest beneath these trees.

Let the wind through the branches remind you:

life is not richest when full of possessions.

Many: We are not what we own.

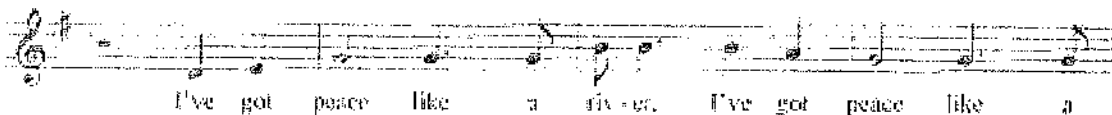
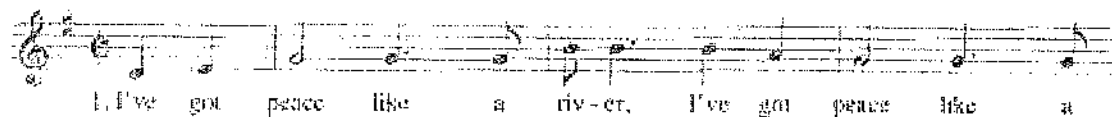
We are not what we store away.

We are what we share. We are what we give.

One: Jesus tells today a story of barns and greed—so look around:

the trees do not hoard their fruit, the soil does not withhold its gifts.

Many: So let us worship while surrounded by the wisdom of creation:



Moment of Silence

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

Hymn (*All join in singing the hymns.*)
 "All Things Bright and Beautiful"

Refrain (Unison)

Chords: $\frac{G}{B}$ G $\frac{D7}{A}$ G C $\frac{D7}{A}$ $\frac{G}{B}$ G $\frac{C}{E}$ C D G Am7

All things bright and beau-ti - ful, all crea-tures great and small,

Chords: G $\frac{G}{F}$ $\frac{C}{E}$ $\frac{G}{D}$ C $\frac{D7}{A}$ $\frac{G}{B}$ G $\frac{C}{E}$ C D G

all things wise and won-der-ful: the Lord God made them all.

Chords: N.C. G G7 C Am D $\frac{Am}{D}$ D $\frac{D}{C}$ $\frac{G}{B}$ G

1 Each lit - tle flower that o - pens, each lit - tle bird that sings,
 2 The pur - ple-head-ed moun-tains, the riv - er run-ning by,
 3 The cold wind in the win - ter, the pleas-ant sum-mer sun,
 4 God gave us eyes to see them, and lips that we might tell

to Refrain
Am7

N.C. G $\frac{D}{F\sharp}$ Em7 D C Am D $\frac{D}{C}$ $\frac{G}{B}$ C D G

God made their glow-ing col - ors, and made their ti - ny wings.
 the sun - set and the morn - ing that bright-ens up the sky.
 the ripe fruits in the gar - den: God made them ev - ery one.
 how great is God Al - might - y, who has made all things well.

Sharing the Peace

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

Please stand, if you would like, and 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 front by the stone wall.

Acclamation *(Sung by all.)*

Halleluja

All:

Hal - le - Hal - le - Hal - le - lu - ja. Hal - le - Hal - le - Hal - le - lu - ja.

Hal - le - Hal - le - Hal - le - lu - ja. Hal - le - lu - ja. Hal - le - lu - ja.

The First Lesson

XXX

Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14, 2:18-23

The Psalter

Psalm 49:1-9; 16-20 (*Read responsively from The Message.*)

One: Listen, everyone, listen —
earth-dwellers, don't miss this.

Many: **All you haves and have-nots, all together now: listen.**

One: I set plainspoken wisdom before you, my understanding of life.
I fine-tuned my ear to the sayings of the wise.
I solved life's riddle with the help of a harp.

Many: **So why should I fear in bad times, hemmed in by enemy malice,
shoved around by bullies, demeaned by the arrogant rich?**

One: Really! There's no such thing as self-rescue,
pulling yourself up by your bootstraps.

Many: **The cost of rescue is beyond our means,
and even then it doesn't guarantee life forever,
or insurance against the Pit.**

One: So don't be impressed with those who get rich
and pile up fame and fortune.

Many: **They can't take it with them;
fame and fortune all get left behind,**

One: just when they think they've arrived,
and others praise them because they've made good.

Many: **They enter the family burial plot
where they'll never see sunshine again.**

One: We aren't immortal. We don't last long.

The Gospel

Luke 12:13-21

Sermon

"Rich in Stuff, Poor in Spirit"

Rev. Dr. Laura Wright

Responding

with the voice of hope

Voluntary

"New Wine"

Victoria Ratsch & Eli Carr

Ligertwood, Arr. by Victoria Ratsch

The Community Invited into Prayer

Prayers of the Church

The petitions end with: God of all creation,

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

Music at the Offertory

"How Beautiful"

Arr. by Hayes

*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

The Great Thanksgiving

One: God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

One: Open up your minds.

Many: We open them to God.

One: Let us say thank you to God.

Many: It is wise and healthy to give God thanks and praise.

One: It is truly wise and our greatest joy ... Therefore, we join our voices with all the ancestors in the faith to sing forever:

All:

ev. 2,3

1 Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho - ly! Lord God Al-might - y!

5 ear - ly in the morn - ing our song shall rise to

8 thee; ho-ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! mer - ci - ful and

12 might - y! God in three per-sons, bless-èd Trin - i - ty!

One: On the night before Jesus was betrayed... Then Jesus said after supper, "This cup that is poured out for you — this is my new promise to you — my new covenant. So now we can proclaim,

All: **Christ has died;**
Christ is risen;
Christ will come again.

One: Jesus promised his disciples that though he was about to leave them in death—he would send the Holy Spirit to be with them ... Let us eat of this meal together—remembering that God has provided for all of us and God's Spirit is now with us.

Sharing Communion

This is the table of Christ, not of this church. All are welcome and encouraged to join in the sharing of communion at Christ's Table, regardless of age or tradition, for it is this meal which binds all of us, different as we are, together.

We will receive communion by intinction (dipping the bread into the cup). All bread is gluten-free to welcome all at the table of Christ. Please come to the front of the church by way of the center aisle and return by the side aisles. If you need to receive communion where you are seated, please let an usher know.

Thanksgiving after Communion


Going

to be messengers of good news


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

"For the Beauty of the Earth"

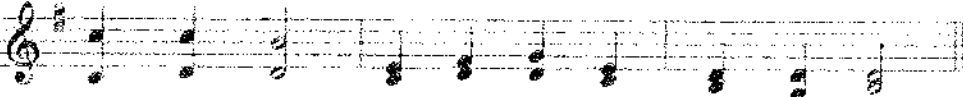
Dix




1 For the beau - ty of the earth, for the
 2 For the won - der of each hour of the
 3 For the joy of ear and eye, for the
 4 For the joy of hu - man love, broth - er,
 5 For thy - self, best gift di - vine, to our



glo - ry of the skies, for the love which
 day and of the night; hill and vale, and
 heart and mind's de - light, for the mys - tic
 sis - ter, par - ent, child, friends on earth, and
 world so free - ly giv'n; for that great, great



from our birth o - ver and a - round us lies:
 tree and flow'r, sun and moon, and stars of light:
 har - mo - ny link - ing sense to sound and sight:
 friends a - hove; for all gen - tle thoughts and mild:
 love of thine, peace on earth and joy in heav'n:



Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grate - ful praise.

The Blessing

Postlude Music

"Come Christians, Join to Sing"

Arr. by McDonald

Acknowledgements: "All Things Bright and Beautiful," words and music in the public domain. "For the Beauty of the Earth," words and music in the public domain. Hymns and service music reprinted and streamed with permission under Onelicense.net #A-728014.

Cover Image: Used with permission based on the church's subscriptions.

*Flowers today are given in honor of David W. & Janice (Sis) Hogue
by their family.*

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, or visit us on the web at 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 3

WAFER Sunday

10:00 am Outdoor Worship w/Communion
(Red Cloud Park)

11:00 am Lunch (Red Cloud Park)

11:00 am Confirmation (Red Cloud Park)

Tuesday, August 5

11:00 am Construction Management
Meeting (L)

Wednesday, August 6

10:00 am Sip & Scripture (L)

3:00 pm Circles of Support Training (L)

5:00 pm Kid's Choir (S)

Friday, August 8

Office Closed

Sunday, August 10

10:00 am Worship w/JAM & Nursery

11:00 am Missions & Social Justice Meeting
(L)

CALENDAR KEY

CR = Community Room, C = Chapel, L = Lounge, N = Narthex, S = Sanctuary, J = JAM Rooms



Join us for TUBING ON THE ROOT RIVER

When:

August 9th

Where:

Root River in Lanesboro

Meet:

8:00 am at the Church

Cost:

\$25.00/Person