



*SIXTEENTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST*

SEPTEMBER 28, 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. 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. Join our Fellowship Hour after worship where everyone is invited to enjoy conversation and refreshments in the Community Room. A restroom for all is located next to the Chapel.

Children are welcome in worship! Activity bags are available in the narthex. 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. Our kids are invited to go to their classrooms after the kids' message.

Livestreaming Notice for Worship. We strive for worship to be accessible for all, so we livestream our worship services on our YouTube channel, First Congregational UCC, La Crosse. Your voice and/or image may be visible in the broadcast. These recordings are publicly available and will remain accessible at the church's 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 in the livestream.



Please ask an usher if you need assistance or would like a large-print or sensory-friendly bulletin. A Hearing Loop system is available.

Serving in Worship Today

Leading Worship & Preaching.....	Laura Wright
Leading Worship.....	Mary Runyon
Pianist	Nancy Allen
Reading Scripture.....	Jean Feency
Head Usher	Allan Beatty
Ushers	Cam Roberts, Tom Stolpa
Greeters.....	Carlene Roberts
Nursery.....	Zali Stanton

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

Gathering

in the presence of God

Gathering Music

"Let All Things Now Living"

Arr. by Larson

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

"Allegro"

Percell/ Arr. by Hopson

*Call to Worship

Inspired by Luke 16

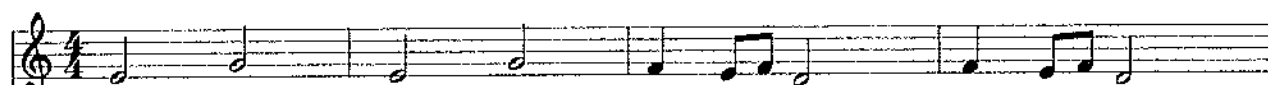
One: Come, beloved of God — in God's house,
the poor are lifted up, the hungry are filled,
and the sorrowful find comfort.

Many: **We come, longing for God's justice,
thirsting for mercy that has no end.**

One: The world may build gates and draw lines,
but God opens the door wide and welcomes all to the table.

Many: **We come to be shaped by God's story,
to cross the chasms of fear and indifference.**

One: Let us worship with open eyes and open hearts,
ready to be transformed by love:



In my life, Lord, be glo-ri-fied, be glo-ri-fied.
In my song, Lord, be glo-ri-fied, be glo-ri-fied.
In Your church, Lord, be glo-ri-fied, be glo-ri-fied.
In my heart, Lord, be glo-ri-fied, be glo-ri-fied.
In my home, Lord, be glo-ri-fied, be glo-ri-fied.



In my life, Lord, be glo-ri-fied to - day.
In my song, Lord, be glo-ri-fied to - day.
In Your church, Lord, be glo-ri-fied to - day.
In my heart, Lord, be glo-ri-fied to - day.
In my home, Lord, be glo-ri-fied to - day.

Moment of Silence

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

*Hymn 575 *(All join in singing the hymns.)*

"Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service"

Beach Spring

*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. Kids will then go to their JAM classrooms after the Word for Children as the congregation sings.

Acclamation *(Sung by all.)*

Halleluja

All:



The First Lesson

Jean Feeney

Jeremiah 32:1-3a; 6-15

The Psalter

Psalm 91:1-6, 14-16 *(Read responsively from The Message.)*

One: You who sit down in the High God's presence,
spend the night in Shaddai's shadow,

Many: say this: "God, you're my refuge.

I trust in you and I'm safe!"

One: That's right—he rescues you from hidden traps,
shields you from deadly hazards.

Many: **His huge, outstretched arms protect you—**

under them you're perfectly safe; his arms fend off all harm.

One: Fear nothing—not wild wolves in the night,
not flying arrows in the day,

Many: **"not disease that prowls through the darkness,
not disaster that erupts at high noon.**

One: "If you hold on to me for dear life," says God,
I'll get you out of any trouble.

Many: **I'll give you the best of care
if you'll only get to know and trust me.**

One: Call me and I'll answer, be at your side in bad times;
I'll rescue you, then throw you a party.

Many: **I'll give you a long life,
give you a long drink of salvation!"**

The Gospel

Luke 16:19-31

Sermon

"Life Advice from Hades"

Rev. Dr. Laura Wright

Responding

with the voice of hope

Anthem

The Sanctuary Choir, Flutes: Nancy Von Arx & Mona Gardner

"Glory to God"

Handel, Arr. by Liebergen

The Community Invited into Prayer

Prayers of the Church

The petitions end with: God, in your love,

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

*As the Gifts Are Presented: Sing to the tune of Hymn 34.

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

"The Church of Christ in Every Age"

Wareham

*The Blessing

Postlude Music

"Praise the Lord with Drums and Cymbals"

Arr. by Hopson

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<https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=59195> [retrieved September 10, 2025]. Original source: Estate of Frank Wesley, http://www.frankwesleyart.com/main_page.htm.

*Flowers today are given by Joan Budnik
in loving memory of her parents
and in celebration of her birthday.*

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

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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, September 28

Heritage Worship

Noisy Offering

9:00 am JAM Breakfast (CR)

10:00 am Worship w/JAM & Nursery

11:00 am Fellowship (CR)

Tuesday, September 30

5:45 pm *The Serviceberry* Watch Party (L)

Wednesday, October 1

10:00 am Sip & Scripture (Pastor's Office)

5:00 pm Kid's Choir Practice (S)

Thursday, October 2

5:45 pm Service & Worship Meeting (CR)

7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal (S)

Friday, October 3

Office Closed

10:30 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal (CR)

Sunday, October 5

9:00 am Faith Forum: Pathways Home (C)

10:00 am Worship w/Holy Communion

10:00 am JAM & Nursery

11:00 am Fellowship (CR)

11:00 am Confirmation (L)

CALENDAR KEY

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



First Congo Living

The Gospel Since 1852

Today we celebrate Heritage Sunday!

We give thanks for 173 years of First Congregational United Church of Christ listening to the Holy Spirit and faithfully following where we are led.

Much has changed in our world, our country, and our community over these 173 years. Yet one thing has remained constant—First Congo's commitment to living the gospel and being a community of faith.

If you look at your bulletin insert, you'll see the names of 100 people who have been part of this amazing, faith-filled community for 40 years or more. In fact, two of our members were confirmed here in 1949 and remain members to this very day.

So today we pause to give thanks—for this church, for this community of faith, and for the people with whom we have the privilege of worshiping and walking this journey together.

Honoring Our 40+ Year Members

76 Years

Mary Lou Furan
H. King Holley III

72 Years

Barbara Marco

70 Years

Ruby Gross

67 Years

Shirley Anderson

66 Years

Vicki Wheeler

65 Years

Ruby Biering
Sue Heuer
Dorothy Wetterlin

64 Years

Joyce Soffa
Mary Wadium
Carolie Whiteway

62 Years

Duane Ring
Sue Sprehn

61 Years

Jeannie Gordon
Shirley Haas
Ornelle Jorgensen

60 Years

Linda Hanes
Karen Schultz

59 Years

Kay Morton

58 Years

Ellen Gordon

57 Years

Jane Rivera
Terry Witzke

56 Years

Robert Kramer

55 Years

Loren Anderson
Joyce Arthur
Olga Hoesley

54 Years

Lee Rodman

53 Years

John Helming
Steve & Katie Webster
Doris Witmer

52 Years

Jeanne Buehler
Roy Campbell
Sue Suchy

51 Years

Caroline Heisler
George & Sherry
Hammond
Barbara Helgeson
Julie Larson
David & Sharon Miller
Laurie Ringstrom

50 Years

Tim Helming
Audrey Kader
Emma Ledbetter
David & Susan
McDowell
Kurt Schuldes
Joanie Smith
Vicki Truscott-Tridle

49 Years

David Ring

48 Years

Laurie Gabrielson
Dan Gordon
Dennis & Anne
Mackeben
Cam & Carlene Roberts
Charlie & Lynn Smader

47 Years

Priscilla Hunnewell
Deborah Kramer
Joan Schultz
Margie Webster

46 Years

Bill & Judy Blank
Chuck Hanson
Kurt Hulse
Don & Ginny Iverson
David & Carolyn
Norenberg
Bob Spencer

45 Years

Jack & Joyce Robinson

44 Years

Daniel & Bonnie Felten
Paul & Natalie Geyer
Merlin Hoeth
Carol Popelka
Jim Ringstrom
Rebecca Wilkins
Mavis Wolstad

43 Years

Randy Breeser
John Hamilton
Roger Kwong
Dean & Linda Nelson
Roger Popelka
Sue Retzlaff
Julie Welch

42 Years

John Richards
Dawn Swenson

41 Years

Kathy Anderson
Chris & Ellen
LaShorne

40 Years

Nancy Burgett



Celebrate Our Heritage