

THIRD
SUNDAY OF
STEWARDSHIP

NOVEMBER 16, 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 God's family. Join our Fellowship Hour after worship where everyone is invited to enjoy refreshments in the Community Room. A restroom for all bodies and families is in the narthex.

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. After the word for children, the kids will go to their JAM classrooms.

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 at the church's discretion. If you prefer not to appear, we invite you to sit in the sanctuary's last six rows, which are not shown on camera.



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.....	Laura Wright
Leading Worship & Faith Formation.....	Mary Runyon
Organist, Pianist, & Choir Director	Nancy Allen
Reading Scripture.....	Chuck Hanson
Head Usher	Michael Feuerhelm
Ushers	Sue Heuer
Greeter	Tom Stolpa
Nursery.....	Zali Stanton
Fellowship.....	Service & Worship

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

Gathering

in the presence of God

Gathering Music

"Festal March"

Nancy Allen

Arr. by Blake

Welcome and Announcements

Thank you for joining us this Sunday. Please pass the Friendship Folder and take note of those worshipping with you.

Prelude Music

"Jesus Loves Me"

Annabelle Brouwer

"This Train"

Peter White

"Ode to Joy"

Nada Austin

"Starry Planets"

"Jesus Loves Me"

Autumn White

"Morning Has Broken"

Jonah Brouwer

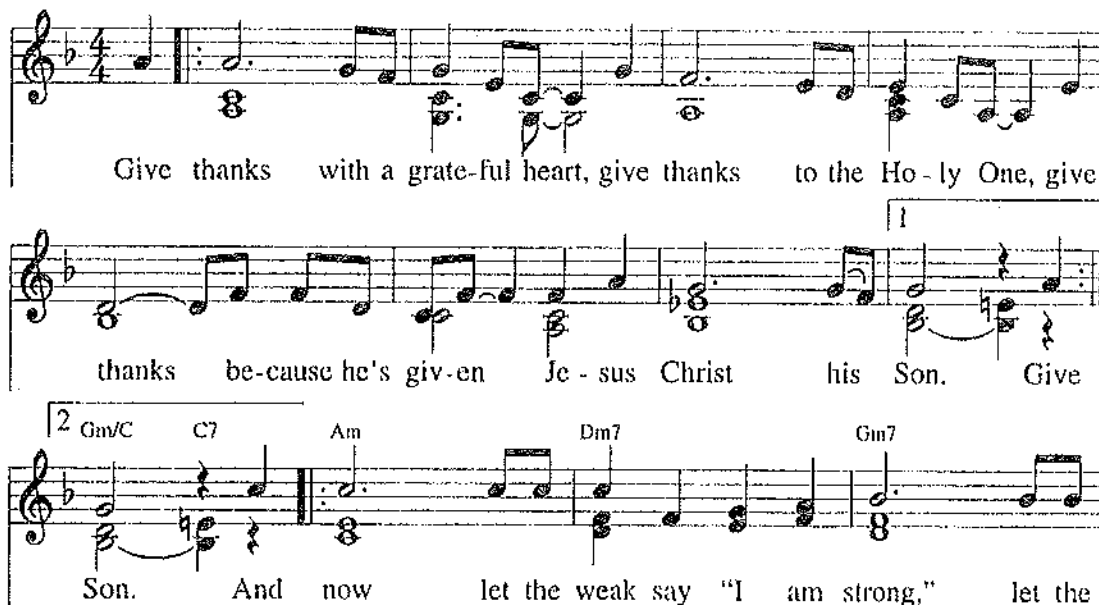
*Call to Worship

One: Look! God is creating new heavens and a new earth—not someday, but here among us, in the lives we build and the love we share.

Many: **God dreams of joy that replaces weeping,
homes built and lived in, gardens planted and harvested in peace.**

One: We come to worship the One who makes all things new—
and invites us to do the same.

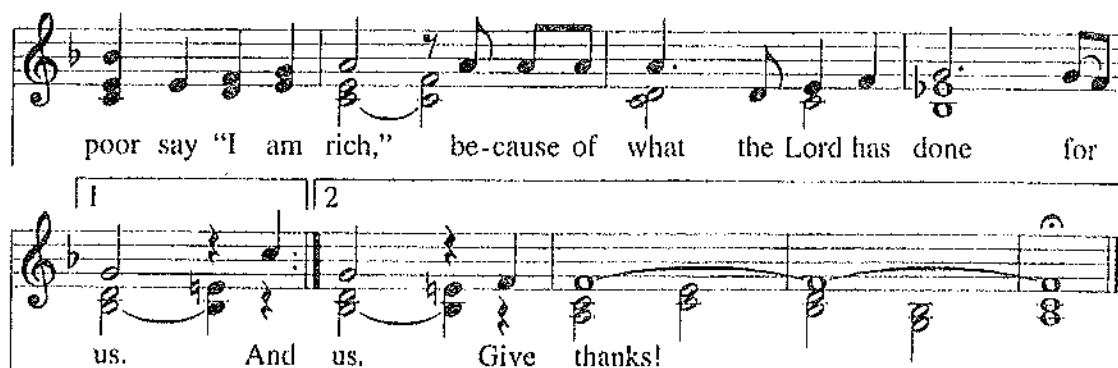
Many: **Come, let us build together the world God imagines.**



Give thanks with a grate-ful heart, give thanks to the Ho-ly One, give

thanks be-cause he's giv-en Je-sus Christ his Son. Give

Son. And now let the weak say "I am strong," let the



Moment of Silence

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

*Hymn 23 *(All join in singing the hymns.)*

"All Creatures of our God and King"

Lasst Uns Erfreuen

*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

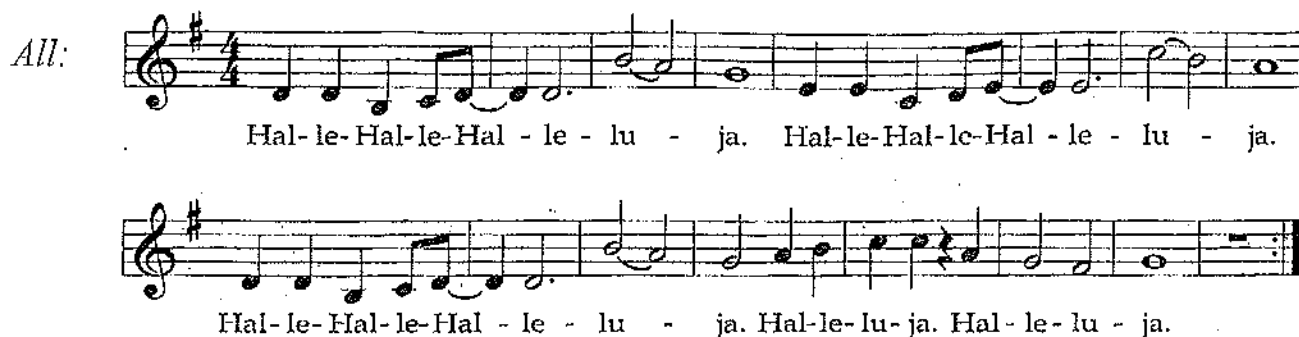
for the Still-speaking God

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 classes as the congregation sings.

Acclamation *(Sung by all.)*

Halleluja



The First Lesson

Isaiah 65:17-25

Chuck Hanson

The Psalter

Psalm 98 (*Read responsively from The Message.*)

One: Sing to God a brand-new song.

God has made a world of wonders!

Many: **God rolled up divine sleeves.**

God set things right.

One: God made history with salvation,

God showed the world what could be done.

Many: **God remembered to love us,**

a gift to God's dear family — Israel — indefatigable love.

One: The whole earth comes to attention.

Look — God's work of salvation!

Many: **Shout your praises to God, everybody!**

Let loose and sing! Strike up the band!

One: Round up the orchestra to play for God.

Add on a hundred-voice choir.

Many: **Feature trumpets and trombones.**

Fill the air with praises to God.

One: Let the sea and its fish give a round of applause,

with everything living on earth joining in.

Many: **Let ocean breakers call out, "Encore!"**

And mountains harmonize the finale —

One: a tribute to God when God comes to set the earth right.

God straightens out the whole world.

Many: **God will put the world right,**

and everyone in it.

The Gospel

Luke 21:5-19

Sermon

"Behold, I'm Doing a New Thing—Through You" Missions & Social Justice

Responding

with the voice of hope

Anthem

"All Things New"

The Sanctuary Choir
Arr. by Elaine Hagenburg

The Community Invited into Prayer

Prayers of the People

Leader: God, in your love,

All: Hear our prayer.

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

John Hamilton
Victoria Ratsch
Meagan Ronsman

Music at the Offertory

***As the Gifts Are Presented:** Sing to the tune of Old 100th (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 661** *(All join in singing the hymn.)*

"All People That on Earth Do Dwell"

Old 100th

*The Blessing

Postlude Music

"To God Be the Glory"

Arr. by Krug

Acknowledgements: "Give Thanks," words and music © 1978 Integrity's Hosanna Music. "All Creatures of Our God and King," music in the public domain. "All People That on Earth Do Dwell," words and music in the public domain. Hymns and service music reprinted and streamed with permission under Onelicense.net #A-728014.

Cover Image: The cover image is an image of the Madaba map of Jerusalem which was a mosaic in the floor of the Byzantine church of Saint George in Madaba, Jordan. The prophet in the last third of Isaiah imagined a new Jerusalem where the world was remade and whole. Today, we imagine that new world.

*Flowers today are given by Chuck Hanson and family
in memory of Cheryl Hanson.*

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, November 16

10:00 am Worship
10:00 am Nursery
10:20 am J.A.M.
11:00 am Fellowship (CR)
11:00 am WISE Committee Meeting (C)

Tuesday, November 18

7:00 pm Finance Meeting (L)

Wednesday, November 19

10:00 am Sip & Scripture (P)

Thursday, November 20

7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal (S)

Friday, November 21

Office Closed

10:30 am Bell Choir Rehearsal (CR)
4:15 pm 175th Anniversary Committee Mtg (L)

Sunday, November 23

10:00 am Worship
10:00 am Nursery
10:20 am J.A.M.
11:00 am Meal of Thanksgiving (CR)

CALENDAR KEY

CR = Community Room, C = Chapel, J = JAM Room L = Lounge, N = Narthex, P = Pastor's Office, S = Sanctuary

Next week, keep an eye out for the Giving Tree in the Narthex!



Giving Tree – Sharing Christmas Joy!

This year, First Congregational Church is sponsoring 2 families from North Woods Elementary School. Our hope is to make Christmas a little happier for the kids and a little less stressful for their parents. Any way you can help will make a big difference!

Jesus calls us to love and care for those who have less than we do—this is a beautiful way to live out that calling.

How it works:

1. Pick a tag from the Giving Tree in the Narthex.
2. Sign your tag out on the clipboard (so we can keep track of which tags are taken).
3. Purchase a gift that matches the request on your tag.
4. Bring the gift back *unwrapped* to the church by **December 10th**.

That's it – easy as pie! Thank you for helping make this family's Christmas a little brighter and filled with love and hope.



2026 ALTAR FLOWER SIGN-UP ARE NOW OPEN



We are signing folks up for 2026 altar flowers. Dates have been reserved for those who have regularly asked for them. If any changes need to be made, please contact Sue Heuer. All arrangements are \$45 payable to the church with altar flowers in the memo line. Available dates for 2026 are:

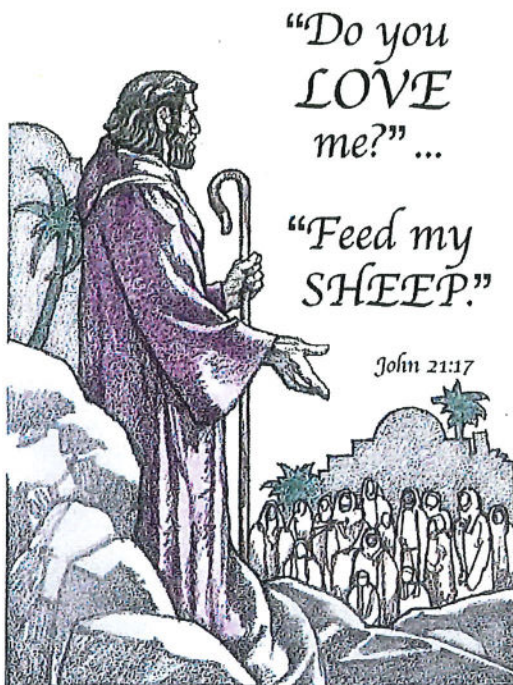
February 22
March 1
March 8
March 15
March 22
April 26

May 3
May 24
May 31
July 26
August 23
September 27

October 18
October 25
November 8
November 15
December 20
December 27

With the Greeting now being published quarterly, information regarding flowers needs to be received as early as possible. Remember these flowers not only beautify our worship services but are used by the Visitation Team for hospital visits, homebound parishioners, and others in need of love and support. If you would like to reserve one of these dates, contact Sue Heuer at 608-526-9397, 608-769-3209 or email her at fredsue45@gmail.com. You can also contact Michelle in the church office at (608) 784-8137 of office@firstcongolax.org.





WARMING SHELTER MEALS

Once again, we seek to participate with others in our community and to provide for the needs of our unsheltered neighbors through the La Crosse Warming Center, which operates from November 1 to May 1. We are scheduled to provide meals on the 2nd and 3rd Sundays of every month. The open dates are:

Jan 11th (20 Meals)
Jan 11th (20 Meals)
Feb 15th (20 Meals)
Feb 15th (20 Meals)
March 8th (20 Meals)
March 8th (20 Meals)

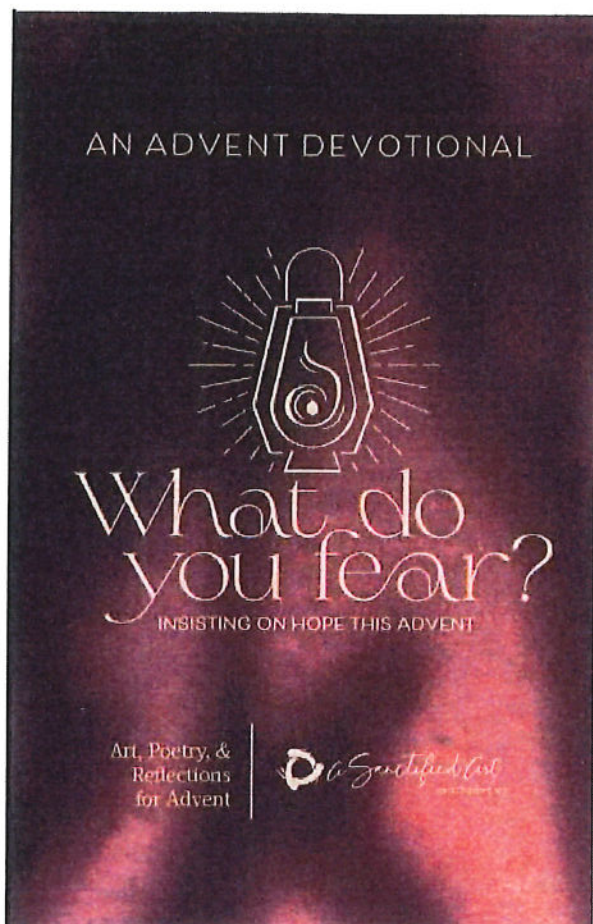
March 15th (20 Meals)
March 15th (20 Meals)
April 12th (20 Meals)
April 12th (20 Meals)
April 18th (20 Meals)
April 18th (20 Meals)

Here is how to get involved:

- Sign up in the narthex to provide an evening meal on the dates we have reserved:
 - The 2nd and 3rd Sundays of every month.
 - Prepare a meal for 20, or if you prefer, take both slots and prepare for 40.
 - A meal includes an entree, salad or veggies, and a dessert. There is no need to include milk as it is being provided by a congregation member each week.
 - When preparing a meal, items may be available for free from the Hunger Task Force. Tell them you are prepping a meal for the Warming Center.
 - It is best to deliver in disposable containers.
 - Please drop off the meal by 6:30 pm at 413 s. 3rd Street, La Crosse.
 - You would be welcome to stay and help serve the meal, but it is not required.
 - Be creative. Make it a potluck with others in your family or social group or sponsor a catered meal (think pizza, Festival favorites, or other, unlimited ideas).

Let's Build a Community

One Connection Group at a Time!



Beginning **Sunday, November 30**, we'll gather in small **Connection Groups** to explore the Advent Devotional "*What Do You Fear?*"

This Advent series takes seriously the angels' message of "*Do not be afraid*" and reminds us that Christ's birth truly is *good news of great joy for all people*.

Join your faith community on this meaningful journey—building deeper connections through Scripture, reflection, and conversation.

Sign up today! Choose the time and place that works best for you:

- **Tuesday:** 6:00 p.m. – 15 Street South, La Crosse, Led by Pastor Laura
(December 2nd, 9th, & 16th)
- **Wednesday:** 10:00 a.m. – Church, Led by Pastor Laura
(December 3rd, 10th, 17th)
- **Wednesday:** 7:00 p.m. – 819 5th Ave, La Crosse, Led by Vickie & Eli
(December 3rd, 10th, 17th)
- **Saturday Brunch:** 11:00 a.m. – N7123 Bice Ave, Holmen,
Led by Carole McQueen & Steve Mieden (Full)
(December 6th, 13th, 20th)

Let's walk through Advent together—one connection at a time.

You are invited to a...



Meal of Thanksgiving

Sunday, November 23rd
Following Next Sunday's 10am Worship
in the Community Room

You are invited to join your church family for our traditional *Meal of Thanksgiving*. Everyone is welcome—bring the whole family!

What to Bring:

If your last name begins with:

- **A–H:** Please bring a *dessert* (sliced and ready to serve)
- **I–P:** Please bring a *salad*
- **R–Z:** Please bring a *vegetable* to share

The church will provide **turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes, gravy, rolls, and cranberries**. A *free-will offering* will help cover the cost of this special meal.

Volunteers Needed!

Coordinator Julie Shelby needs plenty of helping hands to make this cherished event possible. If you can help with *setup, serving, or cleanup*, please sign up in the narthex or contact Julie at mamashelbs2@gmail.com.



BASKETS OF BELONGING

for the recently housed

Baskets of Belonging

This is a collaborative effort of all faith communities and Pathways Home, supporting individuals and families who are moving out of homelessness and into stable housing. Each basket immediately provides essential household items that help transform an empty apartment into a place of welcome, comfort,

and dignity. Currently, wait times for other non-profits providing essentials in town can be up to a month.

By contributing, our congregation helps quickly create a warm start for our neighbors as they take courageous next steps toward stability and hope.

What Are We Collecting?

First Congregational Church has been asked to gather **30-40 of each** of the following items:

- Bath towels
- Hand towels
- Washcloths
- Shower curtains
- Small trash cans

We also invite donations of a few **higher-price items** as you are able, such as:

- Silverware sets
- Knife sets
- Pots and pans
- Mixing bowls

All items should be **like-new or new**. You will place them on the pews outside the Pastors' Offices in the Narthex. The Church will then deliver the items to Trinity Lutheran where all baskets are assembled with items from churches across the county. Thank you for helping our newly housed neighbors feel at home.

A Home for the Holidays 2nd Annual Gala

Saturday, December 13th
Radisson Hotel Ballroom
5:30pm - 11:00pm

Please join us for an
evening full of cheer,
compassion & community!

This fabulous event will
feature a cocktail reception,
dinner, auctions, dancing &
lots of fun surprises!



www.karunahousing.org