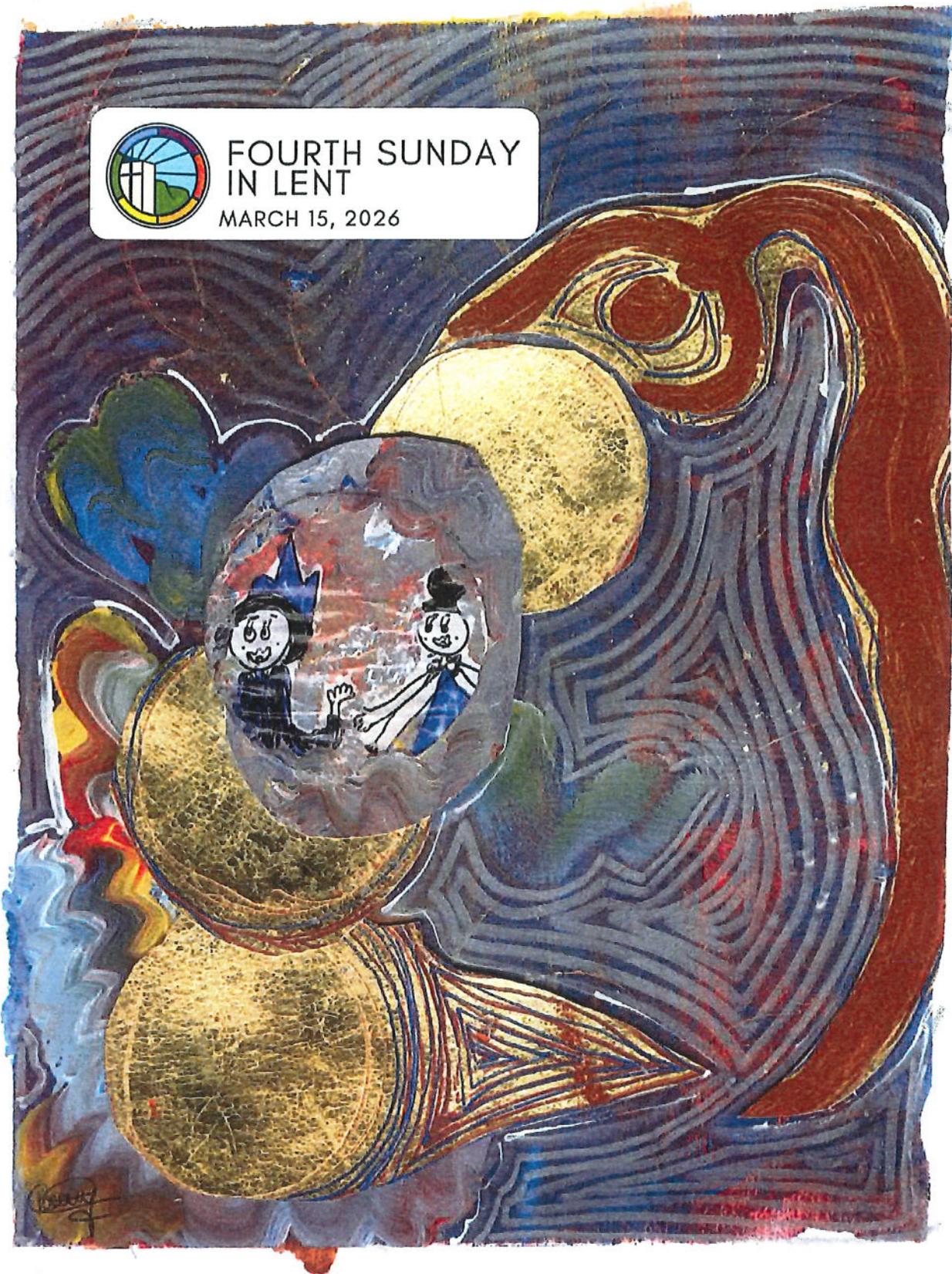




FOURTH SUNDAY
IN LENT

MARCH 15, 2026



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. You are invited to our Fellowship Hour after worship where everyone is invited to enjoy refreshments in the Community Room. A restroom for families and all bodies is in the narthex 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; all kids workers have undergone a background check. Today, the children will join their age-specific classes downstairs after the Word for Children.

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.

Serving in Worship Today

Leading Worship & Preaching..... Laura Wright
Organist, Pianist, and Choir Director..... Nancy Allen
Reading Scripture..... Kaverick Stanton
Head Usher Allan Beatty
Ushers Matea Bersagel-Braley, Jean Feeney, Emmie Runyon
Nursery Zali Stanton & Madison Rummel
Fellowship Membership

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

Gathering

in the presence of God

Gathering Music

"Be Thou My Vision"

Nancy Allen
Arr. Wagner

Welcome and Announcements

Thank you for joining us today. Please pass the Friendship Folder, fill out the information you wish to share, & note those worshipping in your pew so you can greet them by name.

Prelude Music

"On a Clear Day"

Logan's Acapella Choir

*Call to Worship

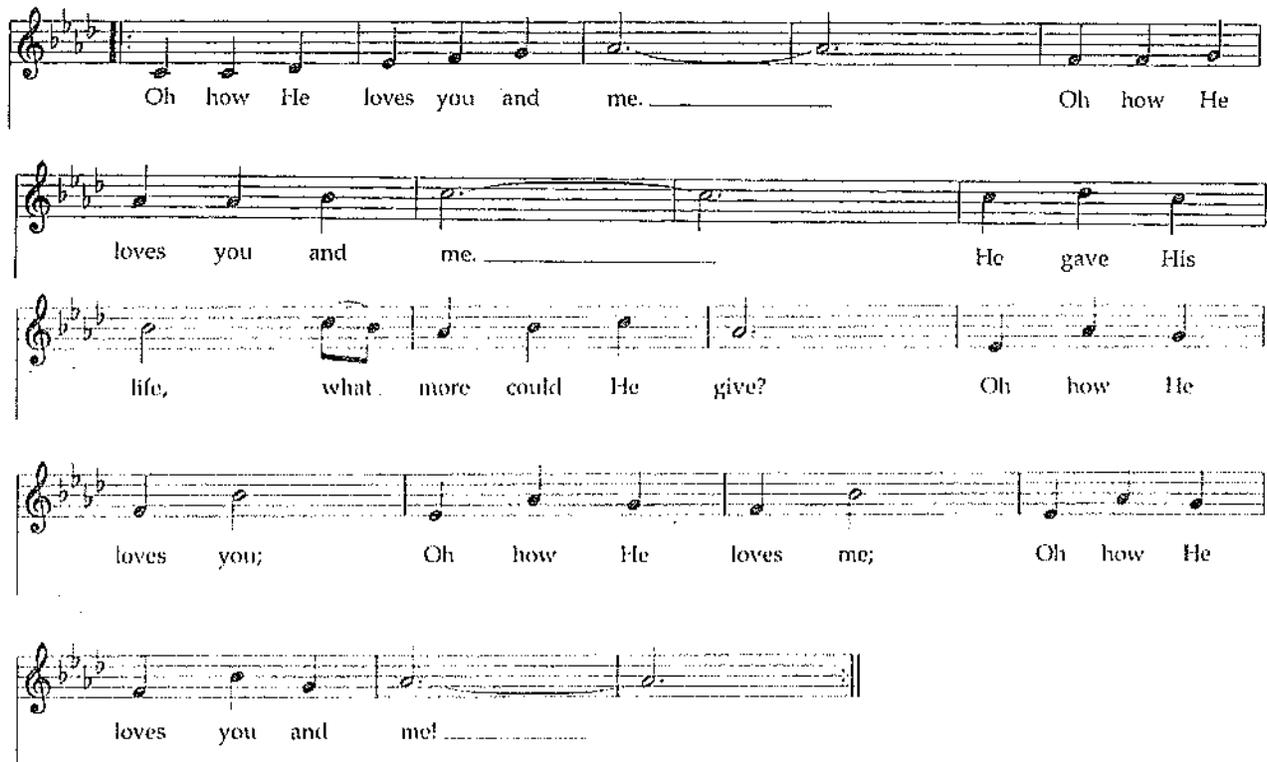
Greta Runyon

One: The people brought the children to Jesus—small hands, curious eyes, laughter, and questions—and the disciples tried to turn them away.

All: **But Jesus said, "Let the children come to me."**

One: For the kingdom of God is found where the smallest are welcomed, where the overlooked are seen, where every body is blessed.

All: **We come as children of God to sing:**



Oh how He loves you and me. _____ Oh how He
loves you and me. _____ He gave His
life, what more could He give? Oh how He
loves you; Oh how He loves me; Oh how He
loves you and me! _____

Moment of Silence

Take this moment of silence to grow still and attentive to God. If it helps, try breathing in and silently praying, "God of love" and breathing out while praying "I am here."

*Hymn 30 (All join in singing the hymns.)

"All Things Bright and Beautiful"

Royal Oak

*Sharing the Peace

One: The peace of Christ be with you on your Lenten journey.

Many: **And also with you.**

Please greet those near you with a wave or a bow and with words such as: "Peace be with you. / And also with you."

Listening

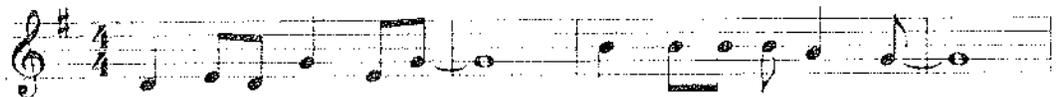
for the Still-speaking God

The Word for Children

Children will join the pastor in the center aisle as we walk forward for the Word for Children. Kids will go downstairs to their age-specific classes after the Word for Children.

Acclamation (Sung by all.)

All:



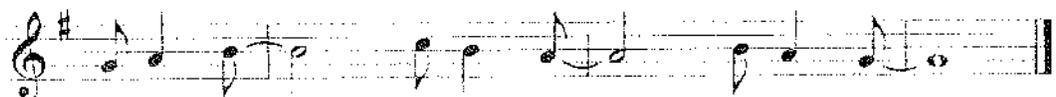
This lit-tle light of mine, I'm gon-na let it shine!



This lit-tle light of mine, I'm gon-na let it shine!



This lit-tle light of mine, I'm gon-na let it shine!



Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!

The First Lesson

Kaverick Stanton

Deuteronomy 24:17-22

The Psalter

Psalm 8:1-5 (*Reading is based on the Common English Bible.*)

One: LORD, our LORD, how majestic is your name throughout the earth!
You made your glory higher than heaven!

Many: **From the mouths of babies, you have laid a strong foundation.**

One: When I look up at your skies, at what your fingers made—

Many: **when I look up at the moon and the stars that you set firmly in place—**

One: what are human beings that you think about them?

What are human beings that you pay attention to them?

Many: **You've made them only slightly less than divine,
crowning them with glory and grandeur.**

One: You've let them exercise authority over the works of your hands,
setting everything under their feet—

Many: **all sheep and all cattle, the wild animals too,
the birds in the sky, the fish of the ocean,
everything that travels the pathways of the sea.**

One: LORD, our LORD, how majestic is your name throughout the earth.

The Gospel

Matthew 19:13-15

Sermon

"Small People, Big Kingdom"

Rev. Dr. Laura Wright

Responding

with the voice of hope

*Voluntary

"And No Bird Sang"

The Sanctuary Choir

Doug Wagner

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

Music at the Offertory

Logan's Acapella Choir

"Mary, Did You Know"

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

"Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love"

Chereponi

*The Blessing

Postlude Music

Nancy Allen

"Rejoice, the Lord is King"

Arr. Payne

*Flowers today are given by Diane and David Schumacher
in honor of those who work hard to make
our church a special place.*

Acknowledgements: "Oh How He Loves You and Me," words and music by Kurt Kaiser © 1975 Word Music, LLC (Word Music, Inc.). "All Things Bright and Beautiful," words and music in the public domain. "The Little Light of Mine," words and music in the public domain. "Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love," words and music © 1969, 1997 Hope Publishing Company. Hymns and music reprinted and streamed with permission under Onelicense.net #A-728014.

Cover Image: Carmelle Beaugelin Caldwell. "Let the Little Children Come." Acrylic, gold leaf, pen, on paper, 11" x 14." The artist created this piece with her five-year-old niece, Angelina, who joyfully scribbled the central image in under three minutes, churning out drawing after drawing and handing each one to Carmelle with an eager smile. In this piece, her niece first drew a self-portrait where the niece wears a crown and then graciously included the artist, taking liberty to add a third arm on Carmelle. In God's kingdom, the children's image of the world is welcomed and celebrated. This image is part of the Lenten devotional, "Tell Me Something Good: Grounding Ourselves in the Good News This Lent," produced by Sanctified Arts. This is the same devotional that the church is using in our Connection Groups. The Lenten services will mirror the topics covered in these small groups.

First Congregational UCC Ministry Team

All the Members..... Ministers
Rev. Dr. Laura Wright..... Senior Pastor
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, March 15

**One Great Hour of Sharing
Deadline for Spring Greeting**

The Fourth Sunday in Lent

9:00 am Connection Group:
Grounded: Community for Men (N)
10:00 am Worship
10:00 am Nursery
10:20 am JAM
11:00 am Confirmation (J)
11:00 am Fellowship (CR)
11:00 am Finance Meeting (L)

Monday, March 16

7:00 pm Connection Group:
Intergenerational Evening (Eagle Crest South)

Tuesday, March 17

Happy St. Patrick's Day

5:30 pm Connection Group:
Spirit & Spirits (Java Vinos)

Wednesday, March 18

10:00 am Connection Group: Sip & Scripture
(McDonald's, Losey Blvd & Ward Ave.)

Thursday, March 19

7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir (S)

Friday, March 20

Office Closed

10:30 am Bell Choir Rehearsal (CR)

Saturday, March 21

3:30 pm Lego Tournament (CR)

Sunday, March 22

The Fifth Sunday in Lent

9:00 am Connection Group:
Grounded: Community for Men (N)
10:00 am Worship
10:00 am Nursery
10:20 am JAM
11:00 am Fellowship (CR)

CALENDAR KEY

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



WANTED: YOUR SMILE

Keep the Pictures Coming!

We are gathering current photos for our updated church picture directory, and we would love you to be included. If you'd like to participate, please send us a 3x5 or 4x6 photo taken within the last year. This spring, we will compile a new directory using all submitted photos, helping us better recognize and stay connected with one another. Thank you for helping us put faces to names and strengthen our church community.

Journey to Jerusalem

Join us on Palm Sunday

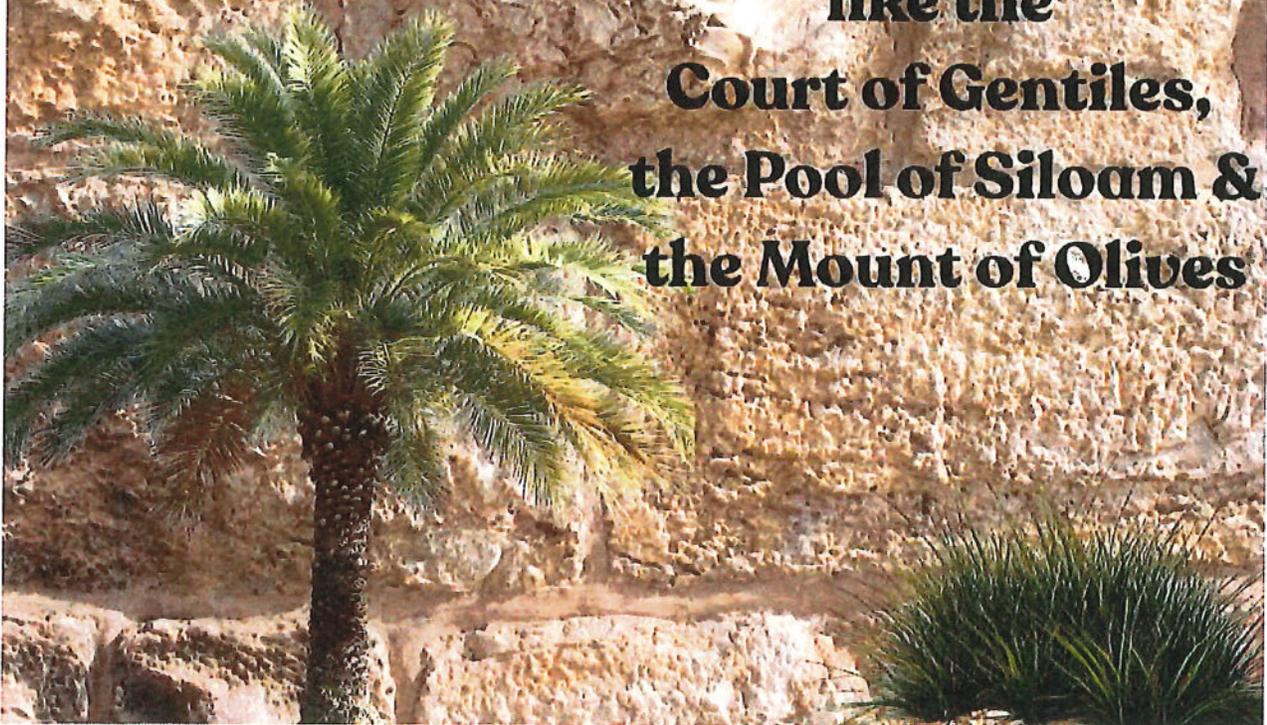
March 29th,

Right After Worship

In the Community Room

- **Sample Food From the Region**
- **Wander Through a Souk**
- **Learn the Elements of a Seder**
- **Enjoy Crafts and Activities**
- **Imagine the Sites Jesus Visited**

**like the
Court of Gentiles,
the Pool of Siloam &
the Mount of Olives**





One Great Hour of Sharing

Is a Special Mission Offering of the United Church of Christ that supports partners worldwide with ministries that fund:

- Health 
- Education 
- Agricultural Development 
- Emergency Relief 
- Refugee Ministries 
- International and Domestic Disaster Response.

Thank you for your support of this offering on

March 15th





The Ministry of Missions & Social Justice Grant Application Process Opens March 16

It's that time of year again! Beginning Monday, March 16, the Ministry of Missions & Social Justice will open the grant application process.

What a wonderful privilege we share at First Congregational United Church of Christ—to put our resources into action in our community. For the third year in a row, we have up to \$10,000 available to distribute to non-profit organization(s) serving the greater La Crosse region. We are seeking to support organizations and programs that address priorities such as diversity, food insecurity, homelessness, environmental justice, and other mission and justice concerns. Grants are open to 501(c)(3) organizations. The application form will be available beginning March 16 on our website: firstcongolax.org. Applications are due April 24, 2026.

If you know of organizations that might benefit from this opportunity, please share this information with them. They may visit our website or contact Michelle in the church office with questions.

CELEBRATE

The Resurrection

Order Your Easter Flowers!

It's time to order your Easter flowers for Easter Sunday, April 5th!

- Cost: \$18.00 per flower
- Deadline: Orders must be submitted by Sunday, March 15th
- Payment: Please make payment to FCC (write Easter Flowers in the memo section).

Please complete this form and return it to the church office. Thank you for helping to beautify our Easter worship service!



ORDER FORM

GIVEN BY: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

DEDICATIONS (OPTIONAL):

• IN HONOR OF: _____

• IN MEMORY OF: _____

FLOWER DELIVERY OPTION:
(PLEASE CHECK ONE)

I WILL TAKE MY FLOWER HOME AFTER WORSHIP.

PLEASE DELIVER TO SOMEONE ON THE VISITATION LIST.

NOTE: SPRING FLOWERS WILL BE RANDOMLY ASSIGNED BY THE FLORIST.