

THIRD SUNDAY
IN LENT
MARCH 8, 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. Join 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.

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 (4-years old & up) will remain with their families after the Word for Children so that our teachers can enjoy their spring break.

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..... Rev. Curtis Miller and Rev. Jean Feeney
Organist, Pianist, and Choir Director..... Nancy Allen
Reading Scripture..... Jill Pein
Head Usher Michael Feuerhelm
Ushers Tom Stolpa, Cam Roberts
Greeter Carlene Roberts
Nursery..... Zali Stanton
Fellowship..... Membership

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

Gathering

in the presence of God

Gathering Music

"We Gather Together"

Nancy Allen

Arr. Smith

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

"My Jesus, I love Thee"

Nancy Allen

Arr. Hayes

*Call to Worship

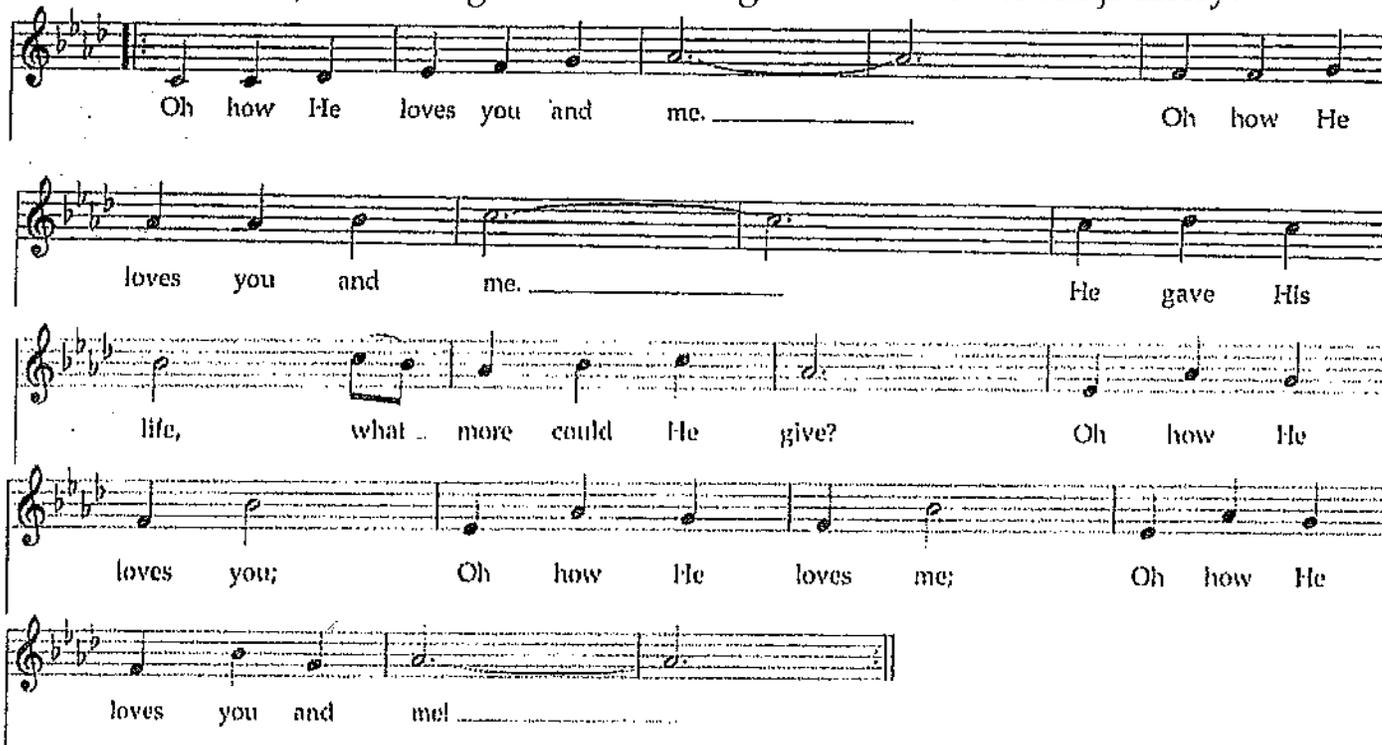
One: We gather together in this space seeking a deeper connection to Jesus, our savior who gives his life for us.

All: **We long for a deeper faith, greater understanding,
And hope and peace in the midst of our troubled world.**

One: The Holy One who holds all things seen and unseen comes to meet us and be our guide.

All: **Let us follow with open eyes, willing hearts,
and strong convictions that our faith will lead us through.**

One: Come, let us sing of God's loving care on this Lenten journey:



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 250 (All join in singing the hymns.)

"Throughout These Lenten Days and Nights"

Winchester New

*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 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

Diane Stoffregen

Children will join Diane in the center aisle as we walk forward for the Word for Children. Kids will return to their families after the Word for Children so our teacher can enjoy a spring break.

Acclamation (Sung by all.)

This Little Light of Mine

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

Exodus 17:1-7

Jill Pein

The Psalter

Psalm 95 (*Reading is based on The Message.*)

One: Come, let's shout praises to God,
raise the roof for the Rock who saved us!

Many: **Let's march into his presence singing praises,
lifting the rafters with our hymns!**

One: And why? Because God is the greatest,
High King over all the gods.

Many: **In one hand he holds deep caves and caverns,
in the other hand grasps the high mountains.**

One: He made the Ocean – he owns it!
His hands sculpted Earth!

Many: **So come, let us worship: bow before him,
on your knees before God, who made us!**

One: Oh yes, he's our God,
and we're the people he pastures, the flock he feeds.

Many: **Drop everything and listen, listen as he speaks:
"Don't turn a deaf ear as in the Bitter Uprising,**

One: As on the day of the Wilderness Test,
when your ancestors turned and put me to the test.

The Gospel

John 4:5-42

Sermon

"Puzzling with Life and Faith"

Rev. Curtis Miller

Responding

with the voice of hope

*Anthem

"And It Was Night"

The Sanctuary Choir

Arr. Martin

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

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

"Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days"

Land of Rest

***The Blessing**

Postlude Music

“Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart”

Nancy Allen
Arr. Wagner

*Flowers today are given by Jamie & Julie Mannion
in honor of Jim Mannion.*

Acknowledgements: “Oh How He Loves You and Me,” words and music by Kurt Kaiser © 1975 Word Music, LLC (Word Music, Inc.). “This Little Light of Mine” words and music in the public domain. (Word Music, Inc Hymns and music reprinted and streamed with permission under Onelicense.net #A-728014.)

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 8

Daylight Savings Time Begins

The Third Sunday of Lent

- 9:00 Connection Group:
Grounded: Community for Men (N)
- 10:00 am Worship
- 10:00 am Nursery
- 11:00 am Fellowship (CR)
- 11:00 am Missions & Social Justice Meeting (L)
- 4:30 pm Congo Crew (L)

Monday, March 9

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

Tuesday, March 10

- 5:00 pm Creation Care Meeting (Zoom)
- 5:30 pm Connection Group:
Spirit & Spirits (Java Vinos)
- 7:00 pm Rummage Sale Committee (CR)

Wednesday, March 11

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

Thursday, March 12

- 6:30 pm Building & Grounds Meeting (CR)
- 7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir (S)

Friday, March 13

- Office Closed**
- 10:30 am Bell Choir Rehearsal (CR)

Sunday, March 15

One Great Hours of Sharing Daylight Savings Time Begins Deadline for Spring Greeting

The Third Sunday of 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 Justice Meeting (L)

CALENDAR KEY

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



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

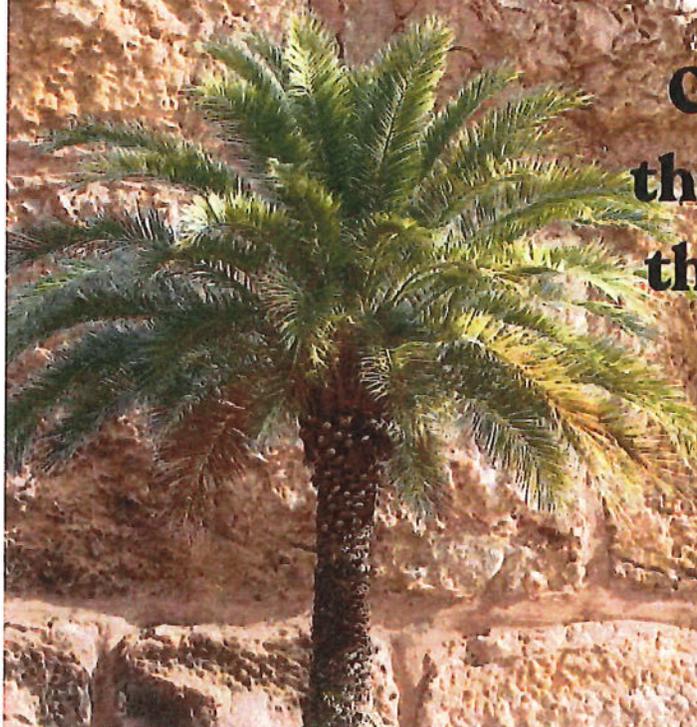
March 29th,

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**



RUMMAGE EXTRAVAGANZA! APRIL 10TH & 11TH



Photo illustration by Iheo Ortega

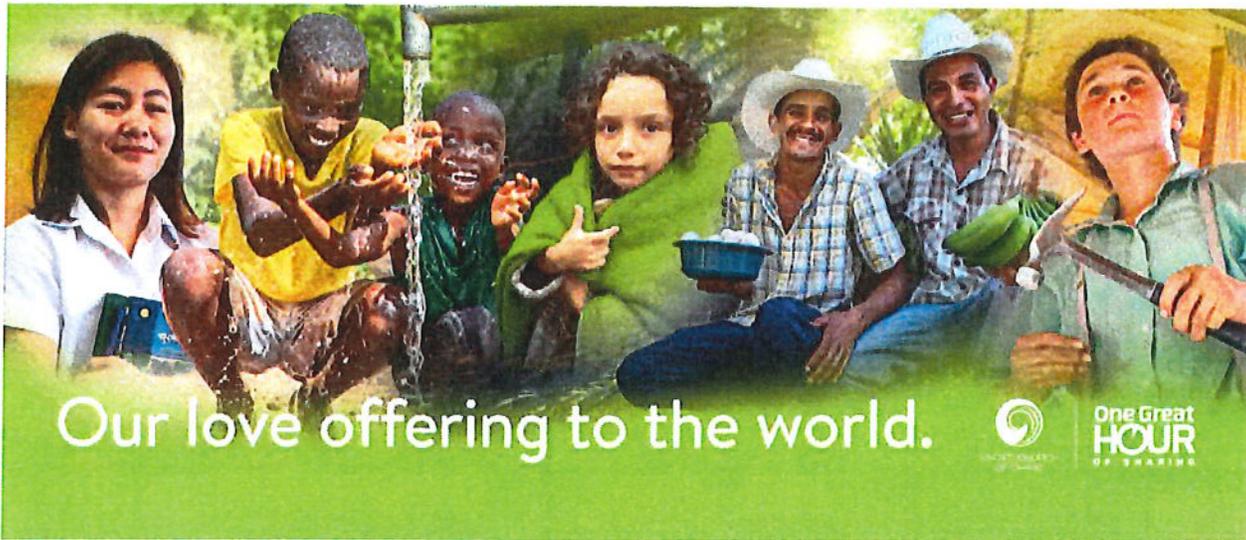
The Demon, the Desert, and the Wardrobe

Monstrous mountains of our own making are growing in number in the driest non-polar desert on Earth.

Every year, people buy more new clothes than they truly need. Have you ever wondered what happens to the clothes you no longer want or need? Unfortunately, many of them end up discarded. The image above, sourced from an article by Céire Kealty in the July 2022 issue of *Sojourners Magazine*, depicts the fate of abandoned clothing in the Atacama Desert, Chile. However, one of the simplest steps we can take to combat this issue is to reuse or resell our unwanted items.

That's where our Rummage Extravaganza comes in! Instead of tossing out clothes you no longer wear, consider donating them to the church. Bring your washed and ready-to-sell items on Thursday, April 9th, from 7:30 AM to 7:00 PM, and Friday, April 10th, from 8:00 AM to Noon. We will include your no-longer-needed items in our Extravaganza. Let's work together to keep these clothes out of landfills!

Help us be good stewards of God's creation!



One Great Hour of Sharing

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

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

Thank you for your support of this offering on

March 15th



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 17th
- 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.