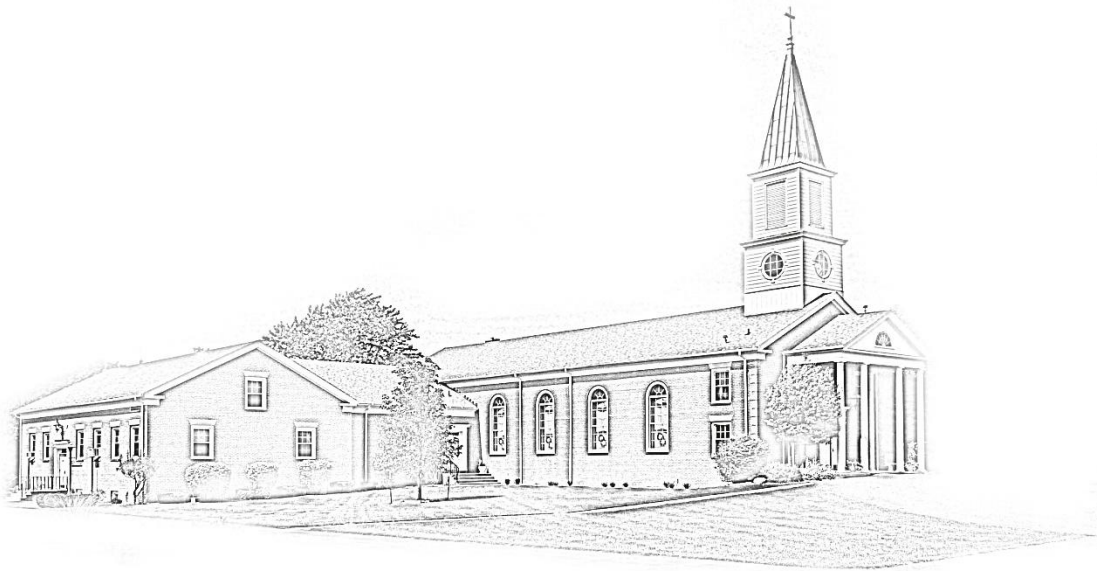




First Congregational United Church of Christ

3465 N. MacArthur Rd.
Decatur, Illinois 62526
(217) 877-2216
firstchurchdecatur.org

Sunday, October 4, 2026
9:00 a.m.
World Communion Sunday

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2026
9:00 A.M.
WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Ryan D. Travis, Pastor

PRELUDE

"Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah"

John Hughes arr. Dan Forrest and Douglas E Wagner Copyright © 2015
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CALL TO WORSHIP

Liturgist: Today is World Communion Sunday. Christians across the world will gather around the Lord's Table in different places, languages, and traditions. Some will come with joy; others will come carrying fear or regret. Christ welcomes them all, just as he welcomes us. The God who made a way through the sea still calls people out of bondage and into freedom. So let us come as we are, trusting that God's mercy is greater than anything that pursues us. Let us worship God.

SUNG RESPONSE

"One Bread, One Body"

#689 (refrain)

John B. Foley arr. Gary Alan Smith, alt. Copyright © 1978 John B. Foley, S.J.,
and New Dawn Music Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE #M-400804 All rights reserved

***One bread, one body, one Lord of all,
One cup of blessing which we bless.
And we, though many throughout the earth,
We are one body in this one Lord.***

INVOCATION

Liturgist

All: God of freedom and mercy, you led your people through the sea and brought them safely to the other shore. Through the waters of baptism, you have joined us to Jesus Christ and given us new life. Be present with us now. Quiet the voices that tell us we cannot be forgiven, and open our hearts to the welcome of Christ, who comes near and shares his table with us. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN**

"In Christ There Is No East or West"

#603

Public Domain

***CONFESSION**

Liturgist: Let us call to mind those ways we have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. *(Silence is kept to reflect on our sins.)*

All: Merciful God, you have called us to live as people set free, yet we sometimes return to old fears and old ways. We doubt your mercy for ourselves, and we are slow to believe that others can change. We remember sins you have forgiven and hold against our neighbors what you have invited us to release. Forgive us. Lead us again through the waters of your grace, and teach us to live in the freedom you have given us in Jesus Christ. Amen.

***WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

Pastor: Hear the good news: Jesus Christ comes near to sinners. He sits at the table with those who need his mercy, and he does not leave them as he found them. In Christ, God forgives our sins and frees us for new life. The past does not have the final word over us; God does.

People: Thanks be to God!

***GLORIA PATRI**

#734

***Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be
World without end. Amen, Amen.***

MUSIC MINISTRY

"Down to the River to Pray/Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying"

Traditional Spiritual: new words and music Ken Medema arr. Mary McDonald Copyright © 1978, 2015 and this arr.

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CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Mindy Bunselmeyer

New International Version (NIV) Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®
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***"Your word is a lamp for my feet,
a light on my path."
Psalm 119:105***

SCRIPTURE READING

Exodus 14:5-7; 10-14; 21-29

Liturgist

New Revised Standard Version, Updated Edition. Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Liturgist: A reading from the book of Genesis in the 14th chapter.

⁵ When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, the minds of Pharaoh and his officials were changed toward the people, and they said, "What have we done, letting Israel leave our service?" ⁶ So he had his chariot made ready and took his army with him; ⁷ he took six hundred elite chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them.

¹⁰ As Pharaoh drew near, the Israelites looked back, and there were the Egyptians advancing on them. In great fear the Israelites cried out to the LORD. ¹¹ They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you

done to us, bringing us out of Egypt? ¹² Is this not the very thing we told you in Egypt, ‘Let us alone so that we can serve the Egyptians’? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.” ¹³ But Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid, stand firm, and see the deliverance that the LORD will accomplish for you today, for the Egyptians whom you see today you shall never see again. ¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to keep still.”

²¹ Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and turned the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided. ²² The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. ²³ The Egyptians pursued and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh’s horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. ²⁴ At the morning watch the LORD, in the pillar of fire and cloud, looked down on the Egyptian army and threw the Egyptian army into a panic. ²⁵ He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, “Let us flee from the Israelites, for the LORD is fighting for them against Egypt.” ²⁶ Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers.” ²⁷ So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the LORD tossed the Egyptians into the sea. ²⁸ The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. ²⁹ But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

Liturgist: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD’S PRAYER

Pastor: Lord Jesus Christ, you have released us...

All: Our Father, 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 debts as we forgive our debtors.**

**And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

***APOSTLES’ CREED**

Pastor: Please rise and join me in confessing what Christians have believed throughout history in the words of the Apostles’ Creed.

**All: I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

**He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy universal Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

OFFERTORY

"Be Still, My Soul" from *Vignettes*"

Jan Sibelius arr. Heather Sorenson Copyright © 2026 Heather Sorenson Music ARR
Streamed with permission from the composer

***DOXOLOGY**

Old Hundredth

***Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God above ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.***

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Liturgist

Liturgist: Generous God, you have welcomed us, forgiven us, and made a way for us to live in freedom. Receive these gifts as an expression of our gratitude. Use them to extend Christ's welcome, feed those who hunger, and help your church bear witness to your mercy throughout the world. In Jesus' name we pray.

All: Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

Minister: Today, Christians throughout the world gather at the table of Jesus Christ. We come from many nations and traditions, speaking many languages, yet Christ calls us together as one body. The God who led Israel through the sea has brought us through the waters of baptism into the life of Christ. We come to this table trusting the mercy of the One who welcomes sinners, forgives our sins, and sets us free.

Minister: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Minister: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Minister: It is our joy and our peace, at all times and in all places, to give thanks to you, holy God, creator of heaven and earth. You heard the cries of your people in Egypt and made a way for them through the sea. When they stood afraid, with bondage behind them and the waters before them, you brought them safely through. In the fullness of time, you sent Jesus Christ, the true Lamb who has taken away the sin of the world. He came near to sinners and shared their tables. Through his death you have destroyed death, and through his resurrection you have restored us to life. In baptism you join us to him, wash away our sins, and call us your own. Therefore, with your church in every land and with the whole company of saints, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

People: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Minister: On the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread. After giving thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: "Take, eat. This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

In the same way, after supper, he took the cup. After giving thanks, he gave it to them, saying: "Drink from this, all of you. This cup is the new covenant in my blood, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Minister: At this table we remember that the One who brought his people through the sea has made a way for us through Jesus Christ. Sin may pursue us, and voices may accuse us, but in Christ our sins are forgiven and their claim upon us is broken. We proclaim the mystery of faith:

People: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Minister: Let us pray. Lord God, send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts. May the bread which we break be the communion of the body of Christ, and the cup which we bless the communion of his blood. Pour out your Spirit upon your church throughout the world. Join us together in Christ, strengthen us in the unity of the faith, and help us grow into him who is the head of the church, Jesus Christ our risen Lord.

People: Amen.

Minister: This table does not belong to First Congregational Church or to the United Church of Christ. It belongs to Jesus Christ, who is our host. We come because he welcomes us, forgives us, and feeds us with his life. Come, for all is ready.

People: We praise you, Lord, for these gifts of bread and wine. We offer ourselves as your people in your service.

The bread will be distributed first. Please consume the bread immediately. The wine will be distributed second. The outer rings contain wine, the inner rings grape juice. Please hold on to your cup, and we will drink the fruit of the vine together when the pastor says, "The blood of Christ, the cup of salvation: Take and drink." Children may commune at an age considered appropriate by their parents or guardians. We practice open communion, meaning that anyone who has examined his or her conscience and wishes to publicly identify with Jesus may partake, regardless of denominational affiliation. If you have questions, please speak with the Pastor after worship.

COMMUNION MUSIC

"Bread of the World"

Louis Boarglois arr. David Cherwien Copyright © 1997 Summa Productions assigned 2002 to Lorenz Publishing Company, a division of The Lorenz Corporation ARR
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POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Pastor Ryan

Pastor: Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the sacrament of his body and blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord.

People: Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN**

"This Is the Feast of Victory"

#315

Words: John W. Arthur (1922-1980); para. Rev. 5:12-13

Music: Richard Hiller (1923-). Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE #M-400804 All rights reserved

***BENEDICTION**

Pastor: May the LORD bless you and keep you. May the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious. May the LORD look upon you with favor and grant you peace. Go in peace and serve the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

***BENEDICTION RESPONSE**

*O God of love, help me to be more loving.
God of forgiveness, help me to forgive.
God of all grace, help me to be more gracious.
God of all gifts, help me more freely give.
O God of truth, help me to work for justice.
O God of mercy, help me to be kind.
O God of peace and goodness, help me serve you,
with all my heart and strength and mind.*

POSTLUDE

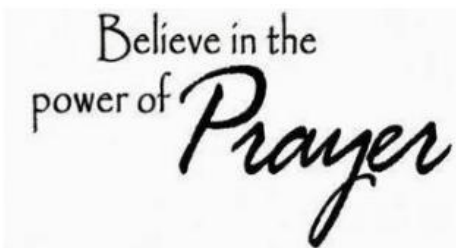
"Trumpet Tune in Bb Major"

Boy Brunner Copyright © 1995 H. W. Gray Company ARR

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About Today's Music

The offertory, "Be Still, My Soul," is one of your Minister of Music's favorite hymns. This arrangement was released on September 20, 2026 - so it is "hot off the presses." Heather Sorenson is an amazingly talented composer and performer living in Texas with her basset hound, Darla, whose works have blessed countless churches and concert halls. While her choral writing is always a blessing, her compositions at the keyboard are truly divinely inspired. It is a joy for me to share these new works with you in worship.



October 4, 2026
From Our Prayer Chain
Please Remember in Your Prayers

Joan Wolfram, Katie Elvidge, Larry Huckile, Martha Crookshank,
Clint Whitrock, Robin Reynolds, Marian Simpson-Rorick,
Helen Johnson, Steve Martin, Kelly Gonzalez, Dean Lorbach,
Robert Bean, Norma Morrison, Tom Irwin, Margaret, Diana Kitchell,
Jennifer K, Brad Johnson, Olivia Wernecke Dees, Becky Corbin,
Nancy Leoucis, Marilee Gordon, Letsa, Randy Habbe, Eric Wolfram,
Don S, Mary Stewart, Murray Elliott, John & Lois Pennock,
Richard Laswell, Malinda Callaway, Ellen Heavner, Tom Cooley,
Matt, Glenn Wolfram, Jerrold Fallstrom, Laura Fankhauser,
Pat Woodcock, Erika Kelley, Meg Phillips, Shelly Long, Michelle,
Mathew Clary, Gary Heymen, Lexi Boyer, Norma Lingenfelter,
Erica Moster, David Marshal, Jason Mumm, Sheila S,
Ty Ditty, Kim Leon, Band Family, Aaron Heartt, Carl Erbsen,
Michelle Unruh, Jodie Trembe, Kay Penk-Burrus, Heather,
Quinton Lefler, Mike Travis, August Scherer, Noah Gallion,
Barbara Wence, Sam Miller, Sue, Madeline Mitchell,
Larry Elvidge, Rhett Ruecker, PJ Patterson, Lucas, Jessica,
Maddy, Marcus' sister, Tom and wife, Judy Schwartz,
Michaela Council, Julie Fallstrom, Betty Henry,
Sally, Martha Foster, Johnny Ewing.

With our deepest
Sympathy

Family and friends of Marian Simpson-Rorick, who passed.