

First Congregational United Church of Christ

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Decatur, Illinois 62526
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Sunday, November 8, 2026

9:00 a.m.

Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2026
9:00 A.M.
TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Rev. Ryan D. Travis, Pastor

PRELUDE "Pastorale"

Psalm 4:8 "I will lay me down in peace and sleep, for You,
O Lord, only make me dwell in safety."

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CALL TO WORSHIP

Liturgist: We come before God not because we have earned the right to stand in his presence, but because he has invited us through his grace. We bring no accomplishments that can purchase his favor, nor any righteousness that can make us worthy of his love. Yet God freely offers us forgiveness, healing, and new life through Jesus Christ. Let us receive his gifts with faith and thanksgiving, and respond with lives of gratitude and devotion. Come, let us worship the Lord!

SUNG RESPONSE "Grace Alone" #436 (v. 2)

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Every soul we long to reach, Every heart we hope to teach;
Everywhere we share His peace Is only by His grace.
Every loving word we say, Every tear we wipe away;
Every sorrow turned to praise Is only by His grace

Grace alone Which God supplies;
Strength unknown He will provide.
Christ in us, Our cornerstone,
We will go forth in grace alone.

INVOCATION Liturgist

All: Gracious God, you give us blessings we could never earn and offer us mercy we could never deserve. Too often, we struggle to accept the simplicity of your promises, imagining that we must somehow prove ourselves worthy of your love. Open our hearts to receive your grace with faith and thanksgiving. May the gifts you freely bestow upon us inspire lives of gratitude, faithfulness, and devotion to you. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN** "Grace Greater than Our Sin" #670

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***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, we confess that we often place our confidence in ourselves rather than in you. We imagine that our good deeds can outweigh our failures, that our accomplishments make us worthy of your favor, and that we must somehow earn the forgiveness you freely offer. Yet even when we receive your blessings, we often fail to respond with gratitude and faithfulness. We take your gifts for granted and continue to live as though we belong only to ourselves. Forgive our pride, our ingratitude, and our lack of devotion. Renew our faith in your promises, and teach us to live as people transformed by your grace. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

***WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

Pastor: Hear the Good News! Our forgiveness does not rest upon what we have accomplished, but upon what Jesus Christ has accomplished for us. Through his death and resurrection, Christ has reconciled us to God. By grace we have been saved through faith, and this is not our own doing; it is the gift of God. In Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Receive this promise with thanksgiving, and live in the freedom of God's grace.

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 "Lord of All"

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CHILDREN'S MESSAGE Mindy Bunselmeyer

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…"give thanks to the LORD, for he is good…"
Psalm 107:1

SCRIPTURE READING 2 Kings 5:1-15a Liturgist

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Liturgist: A reading from the book of 2nd Kings in the 5th chapter.

5 Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Aram, was a great man
and in high favor with his master because by him the LORD had given victory
to Aram. The man, though a mighty warrior, suffered from a skin
disease. **2** Now the Arameans on one of their raids had taken a young girl
captive from the land of Israel, and she served Naaman's wife. **3** She said to
her mistress, "If only my lord were with the prophet who is in Samaria! He
would cure him of his skin disease." **4** So Naaman went in and told his lord
just what the girl from the land of Israel had said. **5** And the king of Aram
said, "Go, then, and I will send along a letter to the king of Israel." He went,
taking with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold, and ten
sets of garments. **6** He brought the letter to the king of Israel, which read,
"When this letter reaches you, know that I have sent to you my servant
Naaman, that you may cure him of his skin disease." **7** When the king of
Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, "Am I God, to give death
or life, that this man sends word to me to cure a man of his skin disease?
Just look and see how he is trying to pick a quarrel with me." **8** But when
Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, he
sent a message to the king, "Why have you torn your clothes? Let him come
to me, that he may learn that there is a prophet in Israel." **9** So Naaman
came with his horses and chariots and halted at the entrance of Elisha's
house. **10** Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go, wash in the Jordan

seven times, and your flesh shall be restored, and you shall be clean." **11** But Naaman became angry and went away, saying, "I thought that for me he would surely come out and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God and would wave his hand over the spot and cure the skin disease! **12** Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?" He turned and went away in a rage. **13** But his servants approached and said to him, "Father, if the prophet had commanded you to do something difficult, would you not have done it? How much more, when all he said to you was, 'Wash, and be clean'?" **14** So he went down and immersed himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God; his flesh was restored like the flesh of a young boy, and he was clean. **15** Then he returned to the man of God, he and all his company; he came and stood before him and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel; please accept a present from your servant."

Liturgist: This is the word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON "How Grace Both Offends and Passivizes" Pastor Ryan

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor: Lord Jesus Christ, we pray for persistence…

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 "Chacone in A Flat"

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***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 given us more than we could ever earn or repay. Your grace is freely offered, and your blessings are beyond measure. We bring these gifts not to purchase your favor, but as expressions of our gratitude and devotion. Receive these offerings and use them for the work of your church, that others may come to know the grace and love you have shown us through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN** "Amazing Grace" #422

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***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.

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POSTLUDE "Glad Tidings"

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November 8, 2026

Please Remember in Your Prayers

Joan Wolfram, Katie Elvidge, Larry Huckile, Martha Crookshank,
Clint Whitrock, Robin Reynolds, 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,
Erika Kelley, Meg Phillips, Shelly Long, Michelle, Mathew Clary,
Gary Heymen, Lexi Boyer, Norma Lingenfelter, Erica Moster,
David Marshal, Jason Mumm, Ty Ditty, Kim Leon, Band Family,
Aaron Heartt, Carl Erbsen, Michelle Unruh, Jodie Trembe,
Quinton Lefler, Mike Travis, August Scherer, Noah Gallion,
Barbara Wence, Sam Miller, Sue, Madeline Mitchell,
Rhett Ruecker, PJ Patterson, Lucas, Jackie, Tom and wife,
Judy Schwartz, Betty Henry, Sally, Martha Foster, Terry Alden,
Larry Elvidge, Rachel, Gary Ochs, Carter & Riley Anderson,
Ron Carlson, Jen, Marie Davis, Brittany Jenkins,
Pastor Jan Johnson, Maxine and Harry Paull

Johnny Ewing Pat Woodcock Kay Penk-Burrus