



First Congregational United Church of Christ

3465 N. MacArthur Rd.
Decatur, Illinois 62526
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firstchurchdecatur.org

Sunday, September 6, 2026
9:00 a.m.
Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2026
9:00 A.M.
FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Ryan D. Travis, Pastor

PRELUDE

"Festivity"

"You have turned my mourning into dancing and filled me with gladness." Psalm 30:11

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CALL TO WORSHIP

Liturgist: God's people once gathered on a night unlike any other night. They were still in Egypt, still surrounded by bondage, and yet God told them to prepare for freedom. Before they could see the road ahead, God gave them a promise. Before Pharaoh had let them go, God told them to be ready to leave. So we come today remembering that our faith rests not upon what we can see, but upon the God who acts to save. The God who brought Israel out of bondage is the God who meets us in Jesus Christ, breaks the power of sin and death, and leads us into life. Come, let us worship the God of our deliverance.

SUNG RESPONSE

"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

#72 (refrain)

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Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed thy hand hath provided –
great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

INVOCATION

Liturgist

All: God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, you heard the cries of your people in Egypt and remembered your covenant with them. You acted when they could not free themselves, and you made a way where there seemed to be no way. Gather us now beneath your promise. Open our ears to your Word, deepen our trust in your mercy, and turn our hearts again toward Jesus Christ. By your Holy Spirit, make us ready to follow wherever you lead, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

***OPENING HYMN**

"O Worship the King"

#2

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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, you call us to trust your promise, yet we so often trust what we can control. You call us out of bondage, yet we sometimes cling to the very things from which you would set us free. You tell us to be ready to follow, yet we hesitate when the road ahead is uncertain. We confess that we have forgotten your mighty acts, doubted your faithfulness, and tried to save ourselves. Forgive us for the sin that binds us and the fear that keeps us from following you. Free us through Jesus Christ, and give us faith to walk in the new life you have prepared for us. Amen.

***WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

Pastor: Hear the good news: Israel's deliverance began not with Israel's strength, but with God's promise. And our salvation rests not upon our strength, but upon the grace of God revealed in Jesus Christ. Christ has given himself for us; sin and death do not have the final word. In Jesus Christ, you are forgiven, you are set free, and you are called forward into new life. Thanks be to God. Amen.

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

"Declare Your Maker's Praise"

First Church Choir

arr. Lloyd Larson Copyright © 1986 BMG VM Music Ltd. Copyright ©2015 Hal Leonard Corporation ICS ARR
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CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Mindy Bunselmeyer

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***"...serve one another humbly in love."
Galatians 5:13***

SCRIPTURE READING

Exodus 12:1-14

Liturgist

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Liturgist: A reading from the book of Exodus in the 12th chapter.

People: Glory to you, O Lord.

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, ² "This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. ³ Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household. ⁴ If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbor in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it. ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶ You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight. ⁷ They

shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. ⁸ They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. ⁹ Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs. ¹⁰ You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn with fire. ¹¹ This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand, and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is the Passover of the LORD. ¹² I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, from human to animal, and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. ¹³ The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. ¹⁴ “This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance.

Liturgist: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

“When God Makes a Way Out”

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

"Change My Heart, O God"

Eddie Espinosa arr. Mark Hayes

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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: God of deliverance, everything we have comes from your gracious hand. You brought your people out of slavery and gave them a future they could not yet see. Receive now these gifts as signs of our trust in you. Use them to proclaim the good news, to serve our neighbors, to feed those who hunger, to strengthen your church, and to announce freedom to those who remain in bondage. And as we offer these gifts, teach us to offer ourselves, ready to go wherever you call us, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN**

“Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah”

#501

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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

“Carillon Toccata”

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You Are In My Prayers

**September 6, 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, Becky Corbin,
Nancy Leoucis, Marilee Gordon, Letsa, Randy Habbe,
Eric Wolfram, Don S, Mary Stewart, Murray Elliott,
John & Lois Pennock, Richard Laswell, Ellen Heavner,
Tom Cooley, Matt, Olivia Wernecke Dees, Kerry Waltenbaugh,
Glenn Wolfram, Jerrold Fallstrom, Laura Fankhauser,
Pat Woodcock, Erika Kelley, Meg Phillips, Shelly Long,
Michelle, Mathew Clary, Gary Heymen, Erica Moster, David Marshal,
Jason Mumm, Norma Lingenfelter, Sheila S, Malinda Callaway,
Ty Ditty, Lexi Boyer, Kim Leon, Band Family, Aaron Heartt,
Carl Erbsen, Michelle Unruh, Connie Hall, 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, Melba, Tom and wife,
Sharon Whitten, George and Kathleen Stevens, Judy Schwartz,
Michaela Council, Julie Fallstrom, Sally, Betty Henry.

