

The First Congregational Church of West Brookfield

United Church of Christ



March 8, 2026; 10 a.m.

REFLECT

“St. Augustine [said]: ‘Love God, and do whatever you please.’ This catches students off guard. It sounds like a license to live a double life. However, Augustine made this point when preaching on I John 4:4-12, where John calls us to love, because love is of God, and because God first loved us. Augustine’s full quotation was, ‘Love God and do whatever you please: for the soul trained in love to God will do nothing to offend the One who is Beloved.’ Isn’t that beautiful?” --Dr. Bill Strom—

**THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT
ORDER OF WORSHIP**

*Words in **bold** are to be spoken in unison.*

 *Please stand as you are able.*

Congregational Announcements

Pastoral Greeting

Prelude and Candle Lighting

Stephen Page

An Opening Litany of Call and Acceptance

Paul Andersen

Leader: Come with what you have. For you who grieve this day know that you are invited to bring the broken pieces of your heart.

All: Loved by one another, we discover God's love for us.

Pastor: Come with what you have. For you who come with gladness know that your melody will find harmony.

All: Accepting God's love for us, we are called to love one another.

Leader: Come with what you have. For you weighed down by too many 'shoulds' and 'what-ifs,' know that here you may lay down the burdens of guilt and shame.

All: Loved by one another, we discover God's love for us.

Pastor: Come with what you have. For you who have the answers, know that new questions await you.

All: Accepting God's love for us, we are called to love one another.

Leader: Come with what you have. For you who come seeking, know that your questions are safe in the presence of God.

All: Loved by one another, we discover God's love for us. Thanks be to God!

 **Hymn**

“Jesus, Come, for We Invite You”

#669

A Reading from the New Testament

I John 4:4-12

Prayers of the People Sharing Concerns, Joys ~ Pastoral Prayer

~ Lord's Prayer~

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.

The Gospel

John 2:1-11

Reader: May God bless our hearing and understanding of this reading from our sacred texts.

All: Word of God, Word of Life, Thanks be to God

✠ An Affirmation of Our Faith

Leader: In this season of Lent, let us affirm the faith that draws us to Jesus, our Christ.

**ALL: We believe in a word that forms on the lips of the creator and echoes in our souls:
a word that is LOVE.**

Left and Pastor: We believe in a word that breaks the silence of evil and disturbs the noise of ignorance: a word that is LOVE.

Right and Leader: We believe in a word that brings life out of death and laughter with the morning: a word that is LOVE.

Left and Pastor: We believe in a word that tears up the darkness, flooding it with light: a word that is LOVE.

Right and Leader: We believe in a word that speaks to all loneliness with self-giving compassion and care: a word that is LOVE.

**ALL: We believe in a word that speaks to our futures, calling us by name, to trust anew,
and believe once more in a word called LOVE.**

Call to Offering and Offertory Music

(Offering plates are in the front and rear of the sanctuary for your gifts; you may place them in the plates during the music)

✠ A Doxology

Tune: # 34 (Old 100th)

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all creatures here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
One God, triune, whom we adore. Amen.**

Youth Message

Special Music

Stephen Page

Sermon

“The Good Stuff”

Rev. Doug Williamson

✠ Hymn

“There’s A Spirit in the Air”

#133

✠ Benediction (after which, please be seated for the postlude)

Postlude



Our Mission and Vision Statement:

We are a church where all are welcome to worship together, to share in fellowship and to grow spiritually in our journey with Christ. We value justice, diversity, and freedom of expression. We strive to serve our community and all God's creation and to spread the love of God to all people.

Welcome members, friends, and visitors to our service this morning! If you are a guest with us, we invite you to sign our guest register and/or fill out a visitor card. Activity bags are available in the back of the sanctuary for children who are with us in worship.

Prayer Requests

Would you like to ask for prayers for someone? You may write your request in the red prayer book on the table located in the back of the sanctuary. A deacon will share them with the pastor. Please see a deacon with any questions.

First Congregational Church of West Brookfield

36 N. Main Street

PO Box 371

West Brookfield, MA 01585

508-867-7078

FCCWBWorship@gmail.com

Westbrookfieldcongregationalucc.org

Rev. Dr. Doug Williamson – 913-387-9947

djwnscaa@gmail.com

P.O. Box 74, Barre, MA 01005