

The First Congregational Church of West Brookfield

United Church of Christ



April 5, 2026; 10 a.m.


REFLECT

"They met him again after they had seen him killed. And then after they had been formed into a little society or community, they found God somehow inside them as well, directing them, making them able to do things they had not done before."

--C.S. Lewis, in Mere Christianity—

**EASTER SUNDAY
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 Affirmation of Resurrection and Community

Karen Williamson

Leader: We gather: a community of faith in God's subversive world.

**All: We gather to celebrate that no darkness can extinguish light,
to remember that love will always be more powerful than death, and to trust that
peace will always be stronger than violence.**

Leader: We gather,

**All: People of faith in the light of God's world, celebrating the
hope, love, and joy of the Risen Christ!**

 **Hymn**

"Christ the Lord is Risen Today"

#288

An Easter Prayer

Leader: Gracious God, we praise you for the light of new life made possible through Jesus.

All: We praise you for the light of new life that shone on the first witnesses of resurrection.

**We praise you for the light of new life that continues to shine in our hearts today. We pray
that the Easter light of life, hope and joy, will live in us each day; and that we will be bearers
of that light into the lives of others. Amen.**

A Reading from the Prophets

Isaiah 65:17-25

Prayer Hymn (please feel free to remain seated)

"Goodness is Stronger than Evil #296

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 20:1-18

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

Call to Offering and Choir Anthem: "Resurrection Glory"

(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 Skin on the Face of God"

Rev. Doug Williamson

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

An Easter Celebration of Holy Communion

Pastor: Jesus calls us to the well, inviting us to drink of the Living Water, and the life eternal.

**All: Jesus calls us out of the shadows, out of the graves,
to be entirely known, and entirely filled with God's presence.**

Pastor: Jesus calls us all: all who were made in God's own image,
all who breathe the breath of God's spirit: the Spirit of Life.

All: Jesus calls us to the table, to the meal that nourishes our bodies and binds our dry bones into one Body, living in Christ.

Pastor: Jesus calls us, here and now. Come to this table, you who are beloved in Christ. Come, not because you must, but because you may.

As we prepare to partake of the gifts of this table, set by God for all God's children, without exception, let us join our hearts, minds, and voices in prayer:

**All: Source of life, and breath, and being, breathe into the dry dust of our existence.
Nourish us in body by bread and juice,
that we may strive for the nourishment of all bodies.**

Nourished in spirit by the Body which is within our own, may we work to break the barriers that divide us from one another and from you. In the love that sustains us, and the Spirit that animates us, may we give all thanks and praise to you, O God of all. Amen.

Pastor: When Jesus shared the bread with his friends at the meal we call the Last Supper, he explained that he is the Bread of Life. When we eat the bread together, we are strengthened as a community to remember Jesus and do the things Jesus would do in our world.

At that same meal, Jesus offered a cup of wine to the disciples, and comparing the wine to his blood, he proclaimed that in his own sacrifice he modeled for his disciples and all who would follow him a type of sacrificial living that shares love and hope and builds true community.

The gifts of God, for the people of God: The bread of life – a symbol of abundance for all. The poured-out wine – a symbol of sacrificial living. Rejoice now, and partake of these gifts. ***[The bread (gluten-free) will be served, and all will partake together; then the cup will be served and all will partake together.]***

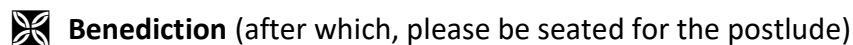
Prayer after Communion

Pastor: Let us join together in prayer: **All: God of gentleness, thank you for relieving our burdens and for filling our emptiness with the Bread of Life. Create of us the living Body of Christ, that in these challenging times we might witness the power and possibility of your love and peace in our world today. Amen.**



“Now the Green Blade Rises”

#311



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.

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