

The First Congregational Church of West Brookfield

United Church of Christ




May 3, 2026; 10 a.m.

REFLECT

*God, You are enough for us; you give us rest in soft fields and beside whispering streams;
you restore and renew us, and lead us into life-giving ways;
When death and evil come close to us, you carry us through, you protect and comfort us;
when others seek to do us harm, your grace uplifts and provides for us in public view;
You fill us with your strength and we enjoy overflowing abundance;
We have confidence that your goodness and compassion will fill our days,
and we will stay immersed in your life and presence forever. Amen.*
--"God, You Are Enough," a paraphrase/prayer by John van de Laar

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
ORDER OF WORSHIP

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

 Please stand as you are able.

Congregational Announcements

Pastoral Greeting "You Satisfy the Hungry Heart" (Ref., v.1, Ref.) #705

Prelude and Candle Lighting Stephen Page

A Call to Worship and Shared Prayer Helen Lapierre

Leader: Come, walk in green pastures.

All: We follow the Shepherd.

Leader: Come, lie down in green pastures.

All: We trust the Shepherd.

Leader: Come, dine at the table of abundance.

All: We are fed by the Shepherd.

Leader: Come, dwell in God's house.

All: We live in the Shepherd's care.


Leader: Let us unite our voices in prayer:

All: Loving Shepherd, you know our names; you care for us.

When we face darkness and death, walk beside us.

When we hunger for your love, fill us with your presence.

**When we are fearful, feed us at your table. May we dwell in
the house of goodness and mercy all the days of our lives. Amen.**

 **Hymn** "Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us" #440

The Psalter (from Psalms for Praying by Nan C. Merrill) Psalm 23

A Prayer of Confession

Leader: Let us pray together:

**All: Good Shepherd, we take your care for granted. In the
midst of your many blessings, we complain of not having
enough. In the midst of danger, we fail to trust your abiding love.**

When you set a table before us, we turn aside from you.

**Call us back into your care and help us to trust your caring
presence, that our actions may proclaim your truth. Amen.**

[A silence is kept.]

Leader: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our lives. God forgives our failures and calls us back into the flock.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel

John 10:11-18

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

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.

Call to Offering and Offertory Music

Choir Anthem: "All Are Welcome at the Table"

(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

"Nests of Hope"

Rev. Doug Williamson

A Celebration of Holy Communion

(Without exception, in this community of faith, all are welcome at God's table.)

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. 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.

Equip us to work to end hunger in this creation that provides amply for all. Nourished in spirit by the Body which is within our own, may we strive for the incorporation of all: 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.


Pastor: 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. Let us partake of these gifts. [*Bread served first; all partake together; cups served; we all partake together.*]

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.**

 **Hymn**

“You Satisfy the Hungry Heart” (vv.2-5)

#705

 **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.

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