

*The First Congregational Church of West Brookfield*

*United Church of Christ*



**July 26, 2026; 10 a.m.**

**REFLECT**

***“Properly understood, Christianity is by no means  
the opiate of the people.  
It’s more like the smelling salts.”***

Timothy Keller, 1950-2023

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

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

An Opening Litany of Wonder and Praise

Stephen Page  
Deanna Randall

Leader: What mysteries there are in God's world!

**All: We, so sophisticated, stand in awe at the wonders of the natural world.**

Leader: We look at the tiniest of seeds and wonder what will happen

**All: From that small seed will grow a large shrub.**

Leader: Although we consider our gifts to be small and insignificant,

**All: God will use our gifts in miraculous ways.**

**Praise the God of small seeds and mighty power. Amen.**

 An Opening Hymn

"Lord of the Dance"

#118

A Prayer of Petition

Pastor: Teach me Your ways, O God,

**All: that I may come down from my heights and be open to the same Spirit who moved over the face of the waters in the first day of creation, and moves also over the chaos of this time to fashion a day like this, a world like ours, a life like mine, a realm acting as leaven in the bread of earth.**

**And make me aware of the miracles of life, of warm and cold, of starkness and order, of screaming wind and impenetrable silences, and of the unfathomable mystery of amazing grace in which I am kept.**

Leader: Teach me Your ways, O God,

**All: that I may praise You for all the surprising, ingenious ways You bless me, and for all the wondrous gifts You give me, along with all the pain and joy I sustain.**

Pastor: Teach me Your ways, O God,

**All: that I may accept my own talent openly, nurture it hopefully, develop it faithfully, and give it freely.**

Leader: Teach me Your ways, O God,

**All: that I may love Your kindness and practice it toward the hungry of the world, the poor and sick, and oppressed, that I may learn the healing humility that comes from You.**

Pastor: Teach me Your ways, O God,

**All: so that my heart is flooded with Your mercy—emptying it of what makes it firmly opposed to Your ways, so that it beats more in rhythm with You and pounds greatly for Your realm. Amen.**

**A Reading from the Gospel**

**Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52**

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**

**Prayer Hymn**

**"Nothing Can Trouble"**

**#421**

*(please feel free to remain seated; we will sing the hymn three times)*

**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**

*(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**

**Music for Reflection and Inspiration**

**Stephen Page**

**Sermon**

**"Show, Don't Tell"**

**Rev. Doug Williamson**

 **A Closing Hymn**

**"They'll Know We Are Christians"**

**#595**

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

**Postlude**



### **Our Covenant of Welcome**

*We, the members of the First Congregational Church of West Brookfield, UCC, are a people of faith, following Jesus and sharing God's abundant love, believing each of us is created in God's image. We seek to demonstrate God's love through respect and care for one another. We celebrate and learn from differences in race, culture, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, economic and political background, and physical and cognitive challenges. We welcome those who have no church home, need strength, want to follow Christ, or are seekers in their spiritual lives.*

*All are invited to participate fully in the life, leadership, ministry and mission of this church as we strive to grow in a safe and nurturing community of faith. No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.*

**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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| <p><b><i>Rev. Dr. Doug Williamson – 913-387-9947</i></b></p> |
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