

The First Congregational Church of West Brookfield

United Church of Christ

September 13, 2026; 10 a.m.



REFLECT

“The Lord wants double-edged artistry, praising God’s name and setting things straight.” —Calvin Seerveld—

**SIXTEENTH 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

A Reading from the Gospel

Stephen Page
Matthew 20:1-16

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

Gathering for Worship in the Spirit of the Gospel Text

Paul Andersen

Leader: Our eyes are heavy. Our hope is soaring.

We wait in the marketplace. **All: Our God is gracious.**

Pastor: Our feet are tired. Our expectations rise.

We are hired first. **All: Our God is merciful.**

Leader: Our backs are sore. Our spirits are low.

We are paid last. **All: Our God is slow to anger.**

Pastor: Our tempers flare. Our anger rages.

We take what belongs to us. **All: Our God abounds in steadfast love.**

 A Hymn for the Season of Creation “Touch the Earth Lightly” #38

A Litany (inspired by Matthew 20: 1-16)

Leader: Let us join our hearts and voices together in prayer:

All: Call all the laborers, O God, Call your laborers who woke early,

**Call your laborers who came late, Call your laborers who feel
wronged,**

Call your laborers who feel overlooked,

Call your laborers who can't feed their children with this wage,

Call your laborers who know they are working in your fields,

Call your laborers who use their wage to increase your love,

Call all your laborers, O God, Tell us to roll up our sleeves

For we know that we have work to do.

**Let us find you in the work we share here and now, in Christ's
presence we pray. Amen.**

A Contemporary Psalm

(based upon Psalm 105)

--from *Psalms for Praying*, by Nan C. Merrill--

Prayer Hymn

“Grant Us Wisdom to Perceive You”

Insert

(please feel free to remain seated)

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

“The Scandal of Grace”

Rev. Doug Williamson

✠ **A Closing Hymn**

“Praise and Thanksgiving”

#722

✠ **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.

First Congregational Church of West Brookfield UCC

An Open and Affirming Church

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