

***The First Church of Christ in Marblehead
Old North Church, United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation***

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

September 6, 2020

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

GATHERING

WELCOME

Rev. Dr. Dennis Calhoun

CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Dr. Dennis Calhoun

Beloved people: our hearts were made for the glory of God.
Let us open our hearts to reflect that glory!
Beloved people: we were created in the image of God.
Let us live our lives in the likeness of God!
Beloved people: we have gathered to worship together.
Let us lift our hearts and minds and hands to God!

CENTERING

PRAYERS OF INVOCATION

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

(from "Listen, Lord" by poet James Weldon Johnson)

O Lord, we come this morning
Knee-bowed and body-bent
Before Thy throne of grace.
O Lord—this morning—
Bow our hearts beneath our knees,
And our knees in some lonesome valley.
We come this morning—
Like empty pitchers to a full fountain,
With no merits of our own.
O Lord—open up a window of heaven,
And lean out far over the battlements of glory,
And listen this morning.

SILENT PRAYER

When we are out of words, when our hearts are full of fears and hopes too deep to express,
Jesus gives us the words to pray, saying:

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 and ever. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

In the light of his love, Christ calls us to examine our consciences and reflect on our living. Our confession today will be a series of questions, followed by pauses for reflection.

Am I at peace within myself?

Do I accept that I am profoundly loved and need never be afraid?

Am I keeping myself open to the source of being, the great compassion?

Have I caused suffering to another?

Am I attentive to the voice that calls me towards courage and service?

Am I willing to accept the mercy and forgiveness that God is so eager to give?

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

People of God, we are, all of us, works in progress. We are, all of us, broken people living in a broken world. Here is our hope: our God has given us to each other, to tend and heal and bear and comfort and accompany. Let us extend God's deep mercy to ourselves and to one another, so that love might grow and flourish in our community. Amen.

HYMN:

Awake, Awake to Love and Work
Maria vanKalken, piano

#259

LISTENING

A MOMENT WITH OUR CHILDREN

Karen Kilty
Director of Children's Ministries

FIRST READING

Ezekiel 33:7-11

Read by Rebecca Ehrhardt

So you, mortal, I have made a watchman for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. If I say to the wicked, 'O wicked ones, you shall surely die', and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at your hand. But if you warn the wicked to turn from their ways, and they do not turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but you will have saved your life.

Now you, mortal, say to the house of Israel, Thus you have said: 'Our transgressions and our sins weigh upon us, and we waste away because of them; how then can we live?' Say to them, 'As I live,' says the Lord God, 'I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?'

SECOND READING

Psalm 119:33-40

Read by Katharine Redmond

Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes,
and I will observe it to the end.
Give me understanding, that I may keep your law
and observe it with my whole heart.
Lead me in the path of your commandments,
for I delight in it.
Turn my heart to your decrees,
and not to selfish gain.
Turn my eyes from looking at vanities;
give me life in your ways.
Confirm to your servant your promise,
which is for those who fear you.
Turn away the disgrace that I dread,
for your ordinances are good.
See, I have longed for your precepts;
in your righteousness give me life.

SERMON

“Dire Warnings and Enduring Hopes”

Rev. Dr. Dennis Calhoun

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Dr. Dennis Calhoun

RESPONDING

OFFERTORY MOMENT

DOXOLOGY #45

Praise God for love we all may share.
Praise God for beauty everywhere.
Praise God for hope of good to be.
Praise God for truth that makes us free. Amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

INVITATION

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

OFFERING OF THE BREAD

OFFERING OF THE CUP

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

SENDING

HYMN:

I Feel the Winds of God Today
Maria vanKalken, piano

tune: Kingsfold

BENEDICTION

Rev. Dr. Dennis Calhoun

