

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

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

July 26, 2020

Eighth Sunday After Pentecost

GATHERING

WELCOME

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

Come and worship, proclaim God's ways of faithfulness and steadfast love.
We will tell of God's love, which unfolds in our lives.
Come and worship, for we are God's people, rejoicing in his graciousness.
God is always with us, there is nothing which can keep us apart.
Come to the One who tells stories; worship our God who keeps promises.
We rejoice with God who is with us always.

CENTERING

PRAYER OF INVOCATION AND CONFESSION

Rev. Dr. Dennis Calhoun

One: Gracious God, Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

ALL: Light up the darkness in our lives.

One: In the darkness of our uncertainty,
when we don't know what to do, when decisions are hard to make:

ALL: give us light to guide us.

One: In the darkness of our anxiety,
when we are worried about what the future may bring,
when we don't know where to turn:

ALL: give us the light of your peace.

One: In the darkness of our despair,
when life seems empty,
when we feel there is no future worth seeking:

ALL: give us the light of your hope.

One: In the darkness of oppression, injustice, and poverty,
when so many don't have enough food to eat,
when so many don't have a place to live:

ALL: give us the light of your love and justice.

One: In the darkness of our sin,
when we fail you and others, when we choose the wrong paths:

ALL: give us the light of your forgiveness.

One: Gracious God, Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

ALL: Light up the darkness in our lives.

One: Now hear us as we pray in the words of Jesus...

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.

One: God hears the prayers of the faithful, even when offered in sighs too deep for words. Relying on the abundant grace of God, let us offer our prayers of confession in silence...

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON AND GRACE

Rev. Dr. Dennis Calhoun

One: Friends, believe the good news: God's grace abounds. God's mercy never ends. God's love is without limit.

**ALL: In Jesus Christ, we are a new creation! Thanks be to God!
Amen.**

LISTENING

HYMN

The Sun is On the Sea and Shore
Maria vanKalken, piano

#261

MOMENTS WITH CHILDREN

Karen Kilty, Director of Children's Ministries

FIRST READING

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-46

Read by Ed Jasaitis

Jesus put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.

He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

SECOND READING

"Beginners"

Read by Kathleen Jasaitis

by Denise Levertov

Dedicated to the memory of Karen Silkwood and Eliot Gralla

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*From too much love of living,
Hope and desire set free,
Even the weariest river
Winds somewhere to the sea—'*

But we have only begun
to love the earth.
We have only begun
to imagine the fullness of life.
How could we tire of hope?
—so much is in bud.
How can desire fail?
—we have only begun
to imagine justice and mercy,
only begun to envision
how it might be
to live as siblings with beast and flower,
not as oppressors.
Surely our river
cannot already be hastening
into the sea of nonbeing?
Surely it cannot
drag, in the silt,
all that is innocent?
Not yet, not yet—
there is too much broken
that must be mended,
too much hurt we have done to each other
that cannot yet be forgiven.
We have only begun to know
the power that is in us if we would join
our solitudes in the communion of struggle.
So much is unfolding that must
complete its gesture,
so much is in bud.

SERMON

“So Much Is Unfolding”

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

RESPONDING

OFFERTORY MOMENT

Rev. Dr. Dennis Calhoun

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.

SENDING

HYMN

Be Thou My Vision
Maria vanKalken, piano

#445

BENEDICTION

Rev. Lindsay Popperson