

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

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

April 11, 2021

Second Sunday of Easter

GATHERING

WELCOME

Rev. Dr. Dennis Calhoun

CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Dr. Dennis Calhoun

Jesus died.
He was buried.
On the third day
he rose from death to life.
We come from our scattered homes
and our varied lives
to give thanks to God,
for hope
when hope seems lost
and for life
when death is all around.
In these pandemic times
when so many are suffering,
may God resurrect within our world
the faith and hope and love
we need to survive.
And may the Healer of our every ill,
be in us and among us
as we join our hearts and minds
to worship our God
who breathed us, each and all,
into being.

HYMN

Now the Green Blade Riseth

#208

Holly Cameron, *soprano*; Stephanie Scarcella, *mezzo-soprano*
Maria vanKalken, *organ*

CENTERING

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

Holy one, we come this morning eager for new life, but we do not want the growing pains. We come to witness resurrection, but we do not wish to face death. Remind us of seeds, which must die in the ground before they can sprout. Give us the wisdom of fire poppies and jack pine cones which grow only in the ashes of utter destruction. Help us to open like that. Give us that sort of resurrection. We pray now in the words that Jesus--who died and rose again, with scars--taught us:

LORD'S PRAYER (debts)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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

The biblical author John writes, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:8) Knowing that all have sinned, we confess together.

One: We have sowed enmity and division, rather than seeking community and wholeness. Lord, have mercy.

Many: Lord, have mercy.

One: We have not lived in the fullness of your love. We have not shared your love with others. Christ, have mercy.

Many: Christ, have mercy.

One: We have hardened our hearts to you and to our neighbors, making them into locked rooms. Lord, have mercy.

Many: Lord, have mercy.

SILENT PRAYER

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

One: In today's gospel reading, the disciples have locked themselves into an upper room because they are afraid. Not stopped by latch and deadbolt, Christ comes among them, saying, "peace be with you."

Many: Christ comes to our fearful, hardened hearts and says, "peace be with you." Christ comes to our shattered, war-torn world, and says, "peace be with you." Christ breaks through every barrier we construct, offering wholeness, forgiveness, and freedom. Thanks be to God! Alleluia!

LISTENING

MOMENTS WITH OUR CHILDREN

Karen Kilty

Director of Children's Ministries

HYMN

At the River, from Old American Songs
Claire Tips, *soloist*

arr. by Aaron Copland

FIRST LESSON

Acts 4:32-35

Read by Melissa MacDonald

Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

SERMON

"From Behind Closed Doors"

Rev. Dr. Dennis Calhoun

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Dr. Dennis Calhoun

RESPONDING

OFFERTORY MOMENT

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

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

The Day of Resurrection!
 Maria vanKalken, *organ*

#216

BENEDICTION

Rev. Dr. Dennis Calhoun