

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

**THE ORDER OF WORSHIP**

**September 27, 2020 Seventeenth Sunday After Pentecost**

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**GATHERING**

WELCOME

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

CALL TO WORSHIP (from Psalm 25)

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

To you, O Lord, we lift up our souls.  
O our God, in you we trust;  
do not let us be put to shame.  
Make us to know your ways, O Lord;  
teach us your paths.  
Lead us in your truth, and teach us,  
for you are the God of our salvation;  
for you we wait all day long.  
Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love,  
for they have been from of old.  
To you, O Lord, we lift up our souls  
as we worship you today.

HYMN

*From All that Dwell Below the Skies*  
Holly Cameron, soprano; Maria vanKalken, organ

#8

**CENTERING**

PRAYERS OF INVOCATION AND CONFESSION

Rev. Dr. Dennis Calhoun

One: Holy One, you who have created us and sustain us: in these troubling times, we come with thanksgiving for moments like these, when we can ease the pace of our lives and listen for your voice amid the clamor. As we center ourselves in your presence, create a spirit within us that truly draws us toward you and toward our brother and sisters; a spirit deep, perceptive, gentle and bold. Clear our minds, open our hearts and touch us with your presence and your power. We offer this prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray...

LORD'S PRAYER (debts)

ALL: 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.

One: O God, you made us to be neighbors, members of one family blessed with great diversity. You created us to be helpers and friends to one another, entrusting to us your justice and your joy. Yet we have been complacent as justice and joy have been denied to so many, creating worlds of poverty, pain and lost hope. We have missed opportunities to right the wrongs we witness in our world. We come now to ask your forgiveness and pray to be transformed and restored to each other and to you. O God, mend our hearts as in silence we call to mind when and how we have fallen short...

## SILENT PRAYER

## ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Rev. Dr. Dennis Calhoun

One: Friends, hear and believe the good news: in Christ, all things are made new. Sin is forgiven. Souls are restored. Lives are made whole and we are a new creation. Thanks be to God. Amen.

## LISTENING

## A MOMENT WITH OUR CHILDREN

Karen Kilty

## HYMN

*Jesus, Joy of Our Desiring*

#106

Holly Cameron, soprano; Stephanie Scarcella, mezzo-soprano  
Maria vanKalken, piano

## FIRST READING

Philippians 2:1-8

Read by Kathleen Jasaitis

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

## GOSPEL READING

Matthew 21:23-32

Read by Ed Jasaitis

When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.” So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

“What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ He answered, ‘I will not’; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, ‘I go, sir’; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

SERMON

“Changing For The Better”

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

*Go Forth For God*  
Maria vanKalken, organ

# 352

BENEDICTION

Rev. Lindsay Popperson