

The First Church of Christ in Marblehead
Old North Church, United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation
THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

January 8, 2023

Epiphany Sunday

10:00am

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Maria vanKalken, *organ*

WELCOME AND CONCERNS

CALL TO WORSHIP (Howard Thurman's "The Work of Christmas")

One: When the song of the angels is stilled,
when the star in the sky is gone,

**All: when the kings and princes are home,
when the shepherds are back with their flocks,**

One: the work of Christmas begins:

**All: to find the lost,
to heal the broken,**

One: to feed the hungry,
to release the prisoner,
to rebuild the nations,

**All: to bring peace among the people,
to make music in the heart.**

* HYMN

O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright

#161

CENTERING

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

One: Come, Lord.

All: Come be light for our path and a lamp in our darkness.

One: Come, Lord.

All: Fill our days with song and our nights with blessing.

One: Come, Lord.

All: Deepen our prayers for others and quicken our steps to do justice.

One: Come, Lord.

All: Enlighten our worship and bless us with peace.

SILENT 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 and ever. Amen

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Unison)

God of eternal hope, you place a light into every darkness and a star in every sky, and yet we prefer to walk in the darkness of despair and worry. We cover over the light of possibility with a flurry of worry. We walk bent over with care and concern and miss the reach of the stars. We fear the worst and distrust the best. We forge ahead on our own, not noticing your outstretched hand. We forget that there is never a moment that you are not with us, that your Son was called Immanuel, which means "God with us" You bring a candle of hope, the light of peace, the radiance of joy.

Shine your light on our path and walk with us through all our valleys with the sun at our backs. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

CHORAL RESPONSE

Glory to the Creator, and to the Christ, and to the Spirit One,
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
World without end, Amen, Amen.

* HYMN

We Three Kings of Orient Are

#162

LISTENING

FIRST LESSON

Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

Read by Mark Roberge

Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to a king's son.
May he judge your people with righteousness,
and your poor with justice.
May the mountains yield prosperity for the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.
May he defend the cause of the poor of the people,
give deliverance to the needy,
and crush the oppressor.
May he live while the sun endures,
and as long as the moon, throughout all generations.

May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass,
like showers that water the earth.
In his days may righteousness flourish
and peace abound, until the moon is no more.
May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles
render him tribute,
may the kings of Sheba and Seba
bring gifts.
May all kings fall down before him,
all nations give him service.
For he delivers the needy when they call,
the poor and those who have no helper.
He has pity on the weak and the needy,
and saves the lives of the needy.
From oppression and violence he redeems their life;
and precious is their blood in his sight.

GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 2:1-12

Read by Rebecca Ehrhardt

After Jesus' birth—which happened in Bethlehem of Judea, during the reign of Herod—astrologers from the East arrived in Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the newborn ruler of the Jews? We observed his star at its rising and have come to pay homage.” At this news Herod became greatly disturbed, as did all of Jerusalem. Summoning all the chief priests and religious scholars of the people, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born.

“In Bethlehem of Judea,” they informed him. “Here is what the prophet has written:
And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah,
by no means least among the leaders of Judah,
since from you will come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.”

Herod called the astrologers aside and found out from them the exact time of the star's appearance. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, after having instructed them, “Go and get detailed information about the child. When you have found him, report back to me—so that I may go and offer homage, too.”

After their audience with the ruler, they set out. The star which they had observed at its rising went ahead of them until it came to a standstill over the place where the child lay. They were overjoyed at seeing the star and, upon entering the house, found the child with Mary, his mother. They prostrated themselves and paid homage. Then they opened their coffers and presented the child with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

They were warned in a dream not to return to Herod, so they went back to their own country by another route.

ANTHEM

Wise men Seeking Jesus
Senior Choir

K.G. Finlay

SERMON

“All Our Journeys”

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

A TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION

PASTORAL PRAYER

RESPONDING

OFFERTORY

INVITATION

PRESENTATION OF OFFERINGS

Noël Nouvelet (Noel, Sing Noel)
Senior Choir

arr. Ian Humphris

* DOXOLOGY #48

To God, all glorious heavenly Light
To Christ revealed in earthly night,
To God the Spirit now we raise
Our joyful songs of thankful praise. Amen

* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

CHORAL RESPONSE

SENDING

* HYMN

Go Tell It on the Mountain

#160

* BENEDICTION

* RESPONSE (please join in singing)

God, Bid Your Servant Go in Peace, verse 1

God, bid your servant go in peace, your word is now fulfilled.
These eyes have seen salvation's dawn, this child so long foretold.

POSTLUDE

Maria vanKalken, *organ*