

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

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

October 11, 2020 Nineteenth Sunday After Pentecost

GATHERING

WELCOME

Rev. Dr. Dennis Calhoun

CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Dr. Dennis Calhoun

One: Hope brings us here:
 hope of comfort,
 hope of inspiration,
 hope of restoration,
 hope of connection.
 God gives us hope.
 God is our hope.
 Come, let us worship together
 in the hope that brings us here.

HYMN

I to the Hills Will Lift My Eyes
Holly Cameron, soprano; Maria vanKalken, organ

#92

CENTERING

PRAYERS OF INVOCATION AND CONFESSION

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

One: Creator God, you made this whole beautiful world. All around us, the world is changing. The trees are letting go of their leaves, dropping what no longer serves them. The animals are gathering what they need to make it through the winter. All around us, so much is staying the same: the tides go in and out, the sun rises and it sets. In this season of transition, help us to let go of what we do not need, and hold fast to your love, your presence, and the light that remains. We pray in the enduring words that Jesus taught us, saying:

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.

CONFESSION

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

One: Jesus said, come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. In the silence, let us bring all of our burdens to God, who is eager to forgive us:

SILENT PRAYER

One: Loving and all-knowing God, forgive us where we have failed to support one another and to be what we claim to be. Forgive us where we have failed to serve you and to love others as you love them. Forgive us where our thoughts and actions have been contrary to yours. Receive our confessions and grant us grace and peace. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

One: Beloved ones, Christ receives each and every one of our burdens, and gives us rest from our fretting and our shame. Praise to God who has created us, praise to God who has accepted us, praise to God who sends us into the world as people of reconciliation and hope. Amen!

LISTENING

HYMN

Jesus Calls Us, O'er the Tumult

#304

Stephanie Scarcella, mezzo-soprano; Maria vanKalken, piano

FIRST READING

Exodus 32:1-14

Read by Melissa MacDonald

When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered around Aaron, and said to him, "Come, make gods for us, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." Aaron said to them, "Take off the gold rings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me." So all the people took off the gold rings from their ears, and brought them to Aaron. He took the gold from them, formed it in a mold, and cast an image of a calf; and they said, "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!" When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation and said, "Tomorrow shall be a festival to the Lord." They rose early the next day and offered burnt offerings and brought sacrifices of well-being; and the people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to revel.

The Lord said to Moses, "Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely; they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I commanded them; they have cast for themselves an image of a calf, and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!'" The Lord said to Moses, "I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are. Now let me alone, so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them; and of you I will make a great nation." But Moses implored the Lord his God, and said, "O Lord, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? Why should the Egyptians say, 'It was with evil intent that he brought them out to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth?' Turn from your fierce wrath; change your mind and do not bring disaster on your people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, how you swore to them by your own self, saying to them, 'I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.'

And the Lord changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people.

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 21:33-46

Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. Again he sent other slaves, saying, 'Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.' But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his slaves, 'The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.' Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests. "But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, and he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' For many are called, but few are chosen."

SERMON

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

Let There Be Light, Lord God of Hosts
Maria vanKalken, organ

#511

BENEDICTION

Rev. Dr. Dennis Calhoun