

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

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

April 25, 2021

Fourth Sunday of Easter

GATHERING

WELCOME

Rev. Dr. Dennis Calhoun

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Though the journey seems long and the road rough,
All: we can trust the One who leads us
One: Though the way is unclear and the outcome unknown
All we can place our lives in God's loving care
One: Like a good shepherd, Christ finds us green pastures and still waters,
All: and restores our souls
One: Come, the Gate is open. Let us go in and rest a while.

HYMN

The Sun is on the Sea and Shore
Stephanie Scarcella, *mezzo-soprano*; Maria vanKalken, *piano*

#261

CENTERING

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

Gentle shepherd, we are your sheep. Lead us into the green pastures where we might rest. Bring us to cold, clear water where we might be refreshed. We are walking through the valley of the shadow of death, and we need your comfort, your presence, your gentle reassurance. Let us find it as we worship the one who taught us to pray,

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

John tells the disciples: "let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action."

We claim to love our neighbors as ourselves, but are slow and clumsy in acting on that love. In the silence, let us confess the ways we have failed to live up to our own ideals and to the lives to which God has called us.

SILENT PRAYER

Holy one, our world feels inescapably broken. We are tangled up in webs of injustice and oppression. We are held captive by systems we did not create and which we struggle to dismantle. We long for healing and wholeness for ourselves and our world. Forgive us every sin, and meet us in our brokenness, for it is in Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Let us proclaim the Good News:

God's love can soothe our broken hearts, and recreate our broken world. God's love lives in us, giving us strength, and courage, and hope. Freed from the systems that harm and destroy, we may also free others. Thanks be to God!

LISTENING

A MOMENT WITH OUR CHILDREN

Karen W. Kilty
Director of Children's Ministries

HYMN

My Shepherd Will Supply My Need
Holly Cameron, *soprano*; Maria vanKalken, *piano*

#88

FIRST LESSON

Psalm 23

Read by Kathleen Jasaitis

*The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want
He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul.
He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.
Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff—
they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long.*

GOSPEL LESSON

John 10:11-18

Read by Ed Jasaitis

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.'

SERMON

"Relentless Pursuit"

Rev. Dr. Dennis Calhoun

SILENT PRAYER

PASTORAL PRAYER

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

Sing of One Who Walks Beside Us
Maria vanKalken, *piano*

#212

BENEDICTION

Rev. Dr. Dennis Calhoun