

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

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

January 25, 2026

Third Sunday after Epiphany

10:00am

GATHERING

PRELUDE

MaryAnn Schultz, *piano*

WELCOME AND CONCERNS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

One: Let us gather and turn, turn towards the light.

All: Let us gather and turn, turn towards each other.

One: Let us gather and turn, turn towards God.

All: And be reborn, renewed, renamed, as God's children.

* HYMN

Come, Teach Us, Spirit of Our God

#226

CENTERING

PRAYER OF INVOCATION from *Psalms 139:7, 13-18*

Rev. Christine Hribar

All: Where can I go from your spirit?

Where can I flee from your presence?

One: For it was you who formed my inward parts;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.

I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Wonderful are your works; that I know very well.

All: Where can I go from your spirit?

Where can I flee from your presence?

One: My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret,
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.

In your book were written all the days that were formed for me,
when none of them as yet existed.

**All: Where can I go from your spirit?
Where can I flee from your presence?**

One: How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God!
How vast is the sum of them!
I try to count them – they are more than the sand;
I come to the end – I am still with you.

**All: Where can I go from your spirit?
Where can I flee from your presence?**

THE LORD'S PRAYER (Unison)

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

Rev. Christine Hribar

One: Almighty and Merciful God, you created and are creating still.

All: We confess our unclean lips, our cold hearts, our turning away from neighbors, our broken promises, and our unrepentant hours. Forgive us, O Holy One.

One: We confess that we have squandered the gifts you have given.

All: We have neglected the land. We have grasped for goods. We have used each other. We have loved power more than people. Forgive us, O Holy One.

One: Come into our hearts and make us new again. We pray in the name of Jesus, Amen.

SILENCE

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: May Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive all our sins through Jesus.

All: May God strengthen us in goodness.

One: God's love extends to all people, to all corners of the earth. May we live into this newness of life. Amen.

* CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (please join in singing)

**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.**

LISTENING

MOMENTS WITH CHILDREN

May you know that you belong here and can always come home.

May you grow, learn, and question.

May you feel the love of God wherever you go.

We invite any children interested to now join their teachers in leaving the sanctuary for Sunday School. Their families can meet them in the classroom when the service is over.

* HYMN

Gracious Spirit Dwell With Me

#223

GOSPEL READING

John 3:1-21

Read by Mark Roberge

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with that person." Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" Jesus answered him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?"

"Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things?"

No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life."

“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned, but those who do not believe are condemned already because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

ANTHEM *Jesus Christ the Apple Tree* Daniel Pinkham
Anne Burgett, Holly Cameron, Rick VonRueden

SERMON “Born Again?” Rev. Lindsay Popperson

PASTORAL PRAYER

RESPONDING

OFFERTORY

INVITATION

PRESENTATION OF OFFERINGS

Brother James’s Air
Senior Choir

arr. Gordon Jacob

* 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.

* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

* CHORAL RESPONSE

SENDING

* HYMN *Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing* #333

* BENEDICTION

* RESPONSE (please join in singing)

Grant us thy peace throughout our earthly life,

Our balm in sorrow, and our stay in strife;

Then, when thy voice shall bid our conflict cease,

Call us, O Lord, to thine eternal peace. Amen

POSTLUDE MaryAnn Schultz, *piano*