

***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, 2026 Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost 10:00am

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Maria vanKalken, *organ*

WELCOME

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

CALL TO WORSHIP

Psalm 130, translated by Pamela Greenberg

One: From the fathomless deep I have called to you, God.
Listen to the innermost depths of my voice.

**All: Open your ears to the sound of my cry.
If you kept a record of guilt, my Source of Strength,
who could remain standing?**

One: For with you is forgiveness;
from it, we learn how to hold you in wonder.

**All: I look for you, my soul looks for you wildly,
I wait for your word of response.**

One: My soul longs for you,
more than the watchman at the gate longs for morning,

**All: more than the tired watchman at the gate
longs for the first flicker of dawn.**

One: Let God's people put their hope in God,

**All: for with you is a storehouse of kindness,
and with the Holy One redemption abounds.**

* HYMN

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

#26

CENTERING

PRAYER OF INVOCATION (Unison)

Rev. Christine Hribar

God of love, take hold of us in this act of worship, and do not let us go until we have been glimpsed a vision of love, generous, gentle and forgiving, simple, wholesome, mysterious, profound. May we envision a world in which all are accepted and none rejected. A world threaded through with a love that never ends.

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

One: O Lord, our hearts are heavy with the violence of our world,
so much suffering through the ages,
wars and holocausts, genocide and abuse.
We cry on behalf of our violent world:

All: Lord, have mercy.

One: O Lord, you love and care for us as a parent;
you came to share life with us as a brother.
But we confess we have failed to live as your children
and instead have broken many bonds.
We cry on behalf of our violent world:

All: Lord, have mercy.

One: O Lord, you have called us to live together in community,
to consider one another as siblings and neighbors,
regardless of ethnicity, economic status, or popularity.
Yet we prejudge one another, refuse to love one another,
and victimize one another.
We cry on behalf of our violent world:

All: Lord, have mercy.

One: O Lord, giver of all life, you fearfully and wonderfully made us
and breathed into our nostrils the breath of life.
Yet we endanger the lives of one another,
abuse the lives of young children among us,
destroy those who are defenseless, and oppress those who are powerless.
We cry on behalf of our violent world:

All: Lord, have mercy.

One: Hear us in the silence as we bring our own confessions to you.

SILENT PRAYER

One: Pardon us through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: Proclaim together these words of assurance from the prophet Micah:

**All: Our God does not stay angry forever
but delights to show mercy.
God will again have compassion on us;**

One: God will tread our sins underfoot
and hurl all our sins into the depths of the sea.

All: Thanks be to God!

* 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.**

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 *In Deep Despair I Cry to You* #453

LISTENING

HEBREW BIBLE READING *Genesis 39:1-23* Read by Andrea Gilgulin

Now Joseph was taken down to Egypt, and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had brought him down there. The Lord was with Joseph, and he became a successful man; he was in the house of his Egyptian master. His master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord caused all that he did to prosper in his hands. So Joseph found favor in his sight and attended him; he made him overseer of his house and put him in charge of all that he had. From the time that he made him overseer in his house and over all that he had, the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; the blessing of the Lord was on all that he had, in house and field. So he left all that he had in Joseph's charge, and with him there he had no concern for anything but the food that he ate.

Now Joseph was handsome and good-looking. And after a time his master's wife cast her eyes on Joseph and said, "Lie with me." But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Look, with me here, my master has no concern about anything in the house, and he has put everything that he has in my hand.

He is not greater in this house than I am, nor has he kept back anything from me except yourself, because you are his wife. How then could I do this great wickedness and sin against God?” And although she spoke to Joseph day after day, he would not consent to lie beside her or to be with her. One day, however, when he went into the house to do his work, and while no one else was in the house, she caught hold of his garment, saying, “Lie with me!” But he left his garment in her hand and fled and ran outside. When she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and had fled outside, she called out to the members of her household and said to them, “See, my husband has brought among us a Hebrew to insult us! He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice, and when he heard me raise my voice and cry out, he left his garment beside me and fled outside.” Then she kept his garment by her until his master came home, and she told him the same story, saying, “The Hebrew servant, whom you have brought among us, came in to me to insult me, but as soon as I raised my voice and cried out, he left his garment beside me and fled outside.”

When his master heard the words that his wife spoke to him, saying, “This is the way your servant treated me,” he became enraged. And Joseph’s master took him and put him into the prison, the place where the king’s prisoners were confined; he remained there in prison. But the Lord was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love; he gave him favor in the sight of the chief jailer. The chief jailer committed to Joseph’s care all the prisoners who were in the prison, and whatever was done there, he was the one who did it. The chief jailer paid no heed to anything that was in Joseph’s care because the Lord was with him, and whatever he did, the Lord made it prosper.

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 5:11-12 Read by Katharine Redmond

“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

ANTHEM

His Eye Is on the Sparrow
Holly Cameron, *soprano*; Senior Choir

Charles Gabriel

SERMON

“Wrongfully Imprisoned”

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

PASTORAL PRAYER

RESPONDING

OFFERTORY

INVITATION

PRESENTATION OF OFFERINGS

Brother James’s Air
Senior Choir

Gordon Jacob

* DOXOLOGY: 46

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ and Spirit, One. Amen.

* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

* CHORAL RESPONSE

SENDING

* HYMN *Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing* #407

* BENEDICTION

* RESPONSE *Savior, Again to Thy Dear Name* #334 verse 4

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 *Maria vanKalken, organ*