

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

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

December 7, 2024

Second Sunday of Advent

10:00am

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Maria vanKalken, *organ*

WELCOME AND CONCERNS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Christine Hribar

One: O God, in mystery and silence you are present in our lives,

All: Bringing new life out of despair, growth out of difficulty.

One: We are thankful that you do not leave us alone.

All: The wind rustles what is withered and dry.

One: You labor to make us whole, breathing new life into this world.

* HYMN

Come, Thou Long -Expected Jesus

#121

CENTERING

LIGHTING THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE OF PEACE

*We light our Advent wreath each week with these words from the prophet Isaiah
(Isaiah 61:1-3). Jesus claimed these words as a guide for his ministry, and we can claim them,
too. Today, our Advent candle lighting is led by the Arren family.*

One: The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me;

All: God has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
[Pause to light the first candle]

One: to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives
and release to the prisoners;
[Pause to light the second candle]

**All: to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor
and the day of vindication of our God;**

One: to comfort all who mourn;
to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
**All: to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the Lord, to display God's glory.**
One: We light these candles as a sign of our waiting
and hope for the coming Christ.

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. Lindsay Popperson

One: If we look at our own lives, we must confess the mixture of giving and selfishness, our waiting on the Lord turned into an endless rush, our missing the mark of Advent. We come now before our patient, merciful God.

One: If we have given ourselves over to rushing and scurrying to get things done,

All: we confess to you, O God of peace.

One: If we have been harsh and unkind, impatient and irritable,

All: we confess to you, O God of mercy.

One: If we have come to accept the world as it is, instead of believing in the possibility it can be transformed,

All: we confess to you, O God of justice.

One: If we have believed that the coming of Christmas rests on our shoulders—on our frantic preparations, on our perfection,

All: we confess to you, O God of joy.

One: If we have forgotten that you are coming to us, just as you came to Mary and Joseph in a stable, just as you came to shepherds in the fields,

All: we confess to you, O God of hope.

One: Here in the silence, we take stock of our souls this week, and seek God's healing.

SILENT PRAYER

One: Come, O long expected Jesus

All: born to set your people free.

**From our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: Be assured of this: whatever we have done, and whatever we have failed to do, Christ still comes to us.

All: Christ offers mercy and healing.

One: The Holy Spirit breathes new life into us, day by day.

**All: We move forward: renewed, forgiven, and refreshed.
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.**

LISTENING

MOMENTS WITH CHILDREN

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

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.
They will return to sit with their families during communion.*

*** HYMN**

O Christ, How Shall I Meet You

#130

OFFERTORY

O Heiland Reiss, die Himmel Auf

arr. Robert Lind

Maria vanKalken, organ

All praise, eternal Christ, to thee
Whose advent sets thy people free;
Once more upon thy people shine
And fill the world with love divine. Amen.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

GOSPEL LESSON

Ezekiel 37:1-13

37 The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. **2** He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. **3** He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord God, you know." **4** Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. **5** Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. **6** I will lay sinews on you and will cause flesh to come upon you and cover you with skin and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the Lord."

7 So I prophesied as I had been commanded, and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. **8** I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them, but there was no breath in them. **9** Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." **10** I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

11 Then he said to me, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.' **12** Therefore prophecy and say to them: Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people, and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. **13** And you shall know that I am the Lord when I open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people. **14** I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord."

SERMON

"No Boundary Too Great"

Rev. Christine Hribar

A MOMENT FOR SILENT REFLECTION

PASTORAL PRAYER

RESPONDING

THE SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

All are welcome to receive communion at Old North—young and old, baptized and not.

There is gluten free bread on each tray, and we serve only non-alcoholic grape juice.

The Deacons will bring the elements to each row.

We wait until everyone is served, and then partake of the elements together.

INVITATION

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

COMMUNION BY INTINCTION

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

SENDING

**Come, Desire of nations,
bind all people in one heart and mind;
bid envy, strife and quarrel cease;
fill the whole world with heaven's peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel! Amen.**

POSTLUDE

Maria vanKalken, organ