

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

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

December 10, 2023

Second Sunday of Advent

10:00am

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Maria vanKalken, *organ*

WELCOME AND CONCERNS

CALL TO WORSHIP

The Song of Mary

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

Luke 1:46-55

One: “My soul proclaims your greatness, O God, and my spirit rejoices in you, my Savior.

**All: For you have looked with favor upon your lowly servant,
and from this day forward all generations will call me blessed.**

One: For you, the Almighty, have done great things for me, and holy is your Name.

Your mercy reaches from age to age for those who fear you.

All: You have shown strength with your arm; you have scattered the proud in their conceit;

you have deposed the mighty from their thrones and raised the lowly to high places.

One: You have filled the hungry with good things, while you have sent the rich away empty.

You have come to the aid of Israel your servant, mindful of your mercy—

**All: the promise you made to our ancestors—
to Sarah and Abraham and their descendants forever.”**

* HYMN

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

#114

CENTERING

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

The Hammond Family

One: Today we relight the first candle: the candle of Hope.

A Reading From Isaiah 11:1-10.

The Prince of Peace is coming soon. Righteousness and faithfulness shall be the belt around his waist. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

One: Today we light the second candle; the candle of Peace.

All: May we become people of infectious Peace. Come, Lord Jesus!

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: Let the desert rejoice, and let the dry land be glad, for God has come to save us. Let us confess our sin.

All: God of majesty and glory, we are thirsty for your grace. You made a way for us in the wilderness, and still, in our foolishness, we go astray. We hide our eyes from your presence. We do not listen to your word. We are lifeless when we ought to dance and speechless when we ought to sing. Forgive us, O Lord. Speak peace to our fearful hearts, strengthen our weak hands, and make firm our feeble knees as we seek to follow in your holy way. Hear us as we offer our silent confessions.

SILENT PRAYER

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: Now return to the Lord with joy and gladness.

All: Sing a song of redemption! Let sorrow and sighing be no more.

One: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

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.**

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.

*Children will now go to Sunday school;
their families can meet them in the classroom when the service is over.*

* HYMN

Comfort, Comfort Ye My People

#115

FIRST LESSON

Psalm 30

Read by Mark Roberge

Thanksgiving for Recovery from Grave Illness

A Psalm. A Song at the dedication of the temple. Of David.

I will extol you, O Lord, for you have drawn me up
and did not let my foes rejoice over me.

O Lord my God, I cried to you for help
and you have healed me.

O Lord, you brought up my soul from Sheol,
restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit.

Sing praises to the Lord, O you his faithful ones,
and give thanks to his holy name.

For his anger is but for a moment;
his favor is for a lifetime.

Weeping may linger for the night,
but joy comes with the morning.

As for me, I said in my prosperity,
"I shall never be moved."

By your favor, O Lord,
you had established me as a strong mountain;

you hid your face;
I was dismayed.
To you, O Lord, I cried,
and to the Lord I made supplication:
“What profit is there in my death,
if I go down to the Pit?
Will the dust praise you?
Will it tell of your faithfulness?
Hear, O Lord, and be gracious to me!
O Lord, be my helper!”
You have turned my mourning into dancing;
you have taken off my sackcloth
and clothed me with joy,
so that my soul may praise you and not be silent.
O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever.

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 1:76-79

Read by Mark Adams

And you, my child, will be called the prophet of the Most High,
for you'll go before our God to prepare the way for the Promised One,
giving the people the knowledge of salvation through forgiveness of their sins.
Such is the tender mercy of our God,
who from on high will bring the Rising Sun to visit us,
to give light to those who live in darkness and the shadow of death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

ANTHEM

Watchman, Tell Us of the Night

Joseph Parry, 1879

SERMON

“Songs of Mercy”

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

A MOMENT FOR SILENT REFLECTION

PASTORAL PRAYER

RESPONDING

MISSION MOMENT

Paul Hare

OFFERTORY

INVITATION

PRESENTATION OF OFFERINGS

Prayer for Ukraine
Senior Choir

Mykola Lysenko

* 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

Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying
(verses 2 & 3 only)

#128

* BENEDICTION

* CHORAL RESPONSE: (please join in singing

#121, verse 1

Come, thou long expected Jesus,
Born to set thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us;
Let us find our rest in thee. Amen.

POSTLUDE

Maria VanKalken, *organ*