

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

**THE ORDER OF WORSHIP**

**March 19, 2023**

**Fourth Sunday in Lent**

**10:00am**

**GATHERING**

PRELUDE

Maria vanKalken, organ

WELCOME AND CONCERNS

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: People of God, Someone may have told you that you are not loved.

**All: We have entered the home of God's Love.**

One: People of God, Someone may have told you that you should feel ashamed.

**All: We have entered the home of God's compassion**

One: People of God, You may have come regretting a thing you have done, a guilt you still carry

**All: We have entered the home of God's mercy**

One: People of God, Welcome Home.

**All: Come, let us worship God.**

\* HYMN

*Our God, Our Help in Ages Past*

#80

**CENTERING**

PRAYER OF INVOCATION (Unison) Psalm 31

**In you, Lord, I have taken refuge;  
let me never be put to shame;  
deliver me in your righteousness.**

**Turn your ear to me,  
come quickly to my rescue;  
be my rock of refuge,  
a strong fortress to save me.**

**Since you are my rock and my fortress,  
for the sake of your name lead and guide me.**

**Keep me free from the trap that is set for me,  
for you are my refuge.**

**Into your hands I commit my spirit;  
deliver me, Lord, my faithful God.**

SILENT PRAYER

## THE LORD'S PRAYER (debts)

**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: We struggle to face the wrong we have done—but the power in confessing as a group is the reminder that *all* of us have done wrong. We have *all* sinned, and yet we *all* still belong in community, we *all* still receive God's love, and a chance to repair the harm we have done.

Merciful God, we have sinned against you; we have harmed your creation; we have ignored your call.

**All: God, forgive us.**

One: We have not loved you with our whole heart, mind, soul, and strength.

**All: God, forgive us.**

One: We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.

**All: God, forgive us.**

One: We have let opportunities to do justice slip through our fingers.

**All: God, forgive us.**

One: We have hardened our hearts.

**All: God, forgive us.**

One: We have closed our imaginations, failing to believe that another way of living together is possible.

**All: God, forgive us.**

One: In the silence, we confess all of the ways—individually, as a church, and as a society—that we have turned from God's ways.

## SILENT PRAYER

### ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: God is always more willing to hear than we are to pray, always more willing to forgive than we are to confess. God forgives us, and strengthens us for the work of repair.

**All: We have confessed our sins. We commit to changing our ways. We receive God's grace and mercy, and move forward as a forgiven people. Thanks be to God!**

\* CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

**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.**

*Following the Congregational Response, the children are invited  
to go up to children's church with Karen.*

*Please note that Children of all ages are always welcome to remain in the sanctuary."*

\* HYMN

*If You Will Trust in God to Guide You*

#94

**LISTENING**

**SCRIPTURE LESSON**

Romans 3: 21-26

Read by Rebecca Ehrhardt

But now, apart from law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed, and is attested by the law and the prophets, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith. He did this to show his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed; it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies the one who has faith in Jesus.

**ANTHEM**

*Spirit Seeking Light and Beauty Gaelic, from "Pius X Hymnal"  
Holly Cameron, soprano*

**SERMON**

"The Places We Go When We Fall Short" Rev. Don Remick

**PASTORAL PRAYER**

**RESPONDING**

**OFFERTORY**

**INVITATION**

**PRESENTATION OF OFFERINGS**

*An Irish Blessing  
Senior Choir*

Bob Chilcott

\* 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, Whose Love Through Humble Service*

#503

\* BENEDICTION

\* RESPONSE (please join in singing)

*I Feel the Winds of God Today*

tune: Kingsfold

**I feel the winds of God today,  
Today my sail I lift,  
Though heavy oft with drenching spray  
And torn with many a rift.  
If hope would light the water's crest,  
And Christ my bark will use,  
I'll seek the seas at His behest,  
And brave another cruise. Amen**

POSTLUDE

Maria vanKalken, *organ*