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

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

November 29, 2026 First Sunday of Advent 10:00am

GATHERING

WELCOME Rev. Lindsay Popperson

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: O come, Emmanuel, come to us, for we are lonely for God.
All: Come, bring the peace of God-with-us.
One: O come, Wisdom from on high,
All: lead us in the ways of knowledge, and show us the paths of peace.
One: Glorious Shoot from the Jesse tree,
All: come and bring life,
fresh and green and lovely, to our spirits.
One: O Rose which blooms in the snow of winter,
All: come and grant to us the blessed gift of hope.
One: O Bright Morning Star of the darkened world,
All: come and be for us the Light, the Truth, and the Way.
One: Jesus our Christ, we welcome you.
All: Come and be known among us, for we want to be your people.

* HYMN *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* #114

CENTERING

LIGHTING THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE OF HOPE The Waldo Family

One: Frederick Buechner wrote, "In the silence of a midwinter dusk, there is a sound so faint that for all you can tell it may be only the sound of the silence itself. You hold your breath to listen. You are aware of the beating of your heart. The extraordinary thing that is about to happen is matched only by the extraordinary moment just before it happens. Advent is the name of that moment."

In Advent, we light candles to prepare for Christ's coming. These candles mark time and light our way. These candles invite us to pay attention, and to look for God with us.

[The first purple candle is lit]

One: We pray together:

All: Light of the world,
we wait in darkness for you to come.
Make yourself known in the darkness and in the waiting. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (Unison) Rev. Christine Hribar

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: Let us prepare the way for the Lord,
in our world and in our hearts.

All: Merciful God,
always with us, always coming:
we confess that we do not know how to prepare for your Advent.
We have forgotten how to hope in miracles;
we have ignored the promise of your Kingdom;
we get distracted by all the busyness of this season.
Forgive us, God.
Grant us the simple wonder of the shepherds,
the intelligent courage of the Magi
and the patient faith of Mary and Joseph,
that we may journey with them to Bethlehem,
and find the Good News of a child born for us.
Now, in the quiet of our hearts,
we ask you to make us ready for his coming.

SILENT PRAYER

All: Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON Rev. Christine Hribar

One: The Good News of this Advent season
is forgiveness of sin and new life.
Let us commit our lives to Christ's way of hope and peace.

All: Thanks be to the Advent God,
who comes among us,
setting us free to love and serve.

* 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 *Comfort, Comfort Ye My People* #115

LISTENING

HEBREW BIBLE READING Read by Rebecca Ehrhardt

Habakkuk 1:1-7; 2:1-4; 3:[3b-6], 17-19

The oracle that the prophet Habakkuk saw.

O Lord, how long shall I cry for help,
and you will not listen?
Or cry to you "Violence!"
and you will not save?
Why do you make me see wrongdoing
and look at trouble?
Destruction and violence are before me;
strife and contention arise.
So the law becomes slack,
and justice never prevails.
The wicked surround the righteous;
therefore judgment comes forth perverted.

Look at the nations and see!
Be astonished! Be astounded!
For a work is being done in your days
that you would not believe if you were told.
For I am rousing the Chaldeans,
that fierce and impetuous nation,
who march through the breadth of the earth
to seize dwellings not their own.

Dread and fearsome are they;
their justice and dignity proceed from themselves.

* * *

I will stand at my watchpost
and station myself on the rampart;
I will keep watch to see what he will say to me
and what he will answer concerning my complaint.
Then the Lord answered me and said:
Write the vision;
make it plain on tablets,
so that a runner may read it.
For there is still a vision for the appointed time;
it speaks of the end and does not lie.
If it seems to tarry, wait for it;
it will surely come; it will not delay.
Look at the proud!
Their spirit is not right in them,
but the righteous live by their faithfulness.

* * *

Though the fig tree does not blossom
and no fruit is on the vines;
though the produce of the olive fails
and the fields yield no food;
though the flock is cut off from the fold
and there is no herd in the stalls,
yet I will rejoice in the Lord;
I will exult in the God of my salvation.
God, the Lord, is my strength;
he makes my feet like the feet of a deer
and makes me tread upon the heights.

GOSPEL READING Read by Bonnie MacDonald

Matthew 26:36-38

Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee and began to be grieved and agitated. Then he said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me."

ANTHEM *Of Eternal Love Begotten* Plainsong, Mode V
Senior Choir (13th century)

SERMON "While You Wait" Rev. Lindsay Popperson

RESPONDING

PASTORAL PRAYER

OFFERTORY

INVITATION

PRESENTATION OF OFFERINGS

Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending arr. K. Hildebrand
Senior Choir

* DOXOLOGY: 47

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.

CHORAL RESPONSE

* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

SENDING

* HYMN *Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying* #128

* BENEDICTION

* 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*