

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

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

March 22, 2026

Fifth Sunday in Lent

10:00am

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Mark Shilansky, *piano*

WELCOME AND CONCERNS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Psalm 146

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

One: Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul!

**All: I will praise the Lord as long as I live;
I will sing praises to my God all my life long.**

One: Do not put your trust in princes,
in mortals, in whom there is no help.

**All: When their breath departs, they return to the earth;
on that very day their plans perish.**

One: Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob,
whose hope is in the Lord their God,
who made heaven and earth,
the sea and all that is in them;

**All: who keeps their faith forever;
Who executes justice for the oppressed;
who gives food to the hungry.**

One: The Lord sets the prisoners free;
the Lord opens the eyes of the blind.
The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;
the Lord loves the righteous.

**All: The Lord watches over the strangers;
She upholds the orphan and the widow,
but the way of the wicked She brings to ruin.**

One: the Lord will reign forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations.

All: Praise the Lord!

* HYMN

Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service

#503

CENTERING

PRAYER OF INVOCATION (Unison)

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

God of wholeness, God of wonder, the mysteries of the seasons unfold – tender shoots push through barely thawed ground, the sunlight holds the land longer each day. Amid the biting winds of Lent, we remember your love. We solicit your presence here, and your call to break from our cocoons of isolation. Be with us as we form community here, celebrating your life and word and ongoing story.

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

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

One: Some see confession as a burden – why lay out our misdeeds? Why name them at all?

In our faith, confession comes as a relief. God's love overwhelms our brokenness. Knowing our missteps are not carried and counted against us, we confess to lighten our load and live into God's love.

We confess our pride: talking more than listening, thinking ourselves above rather than walking alongside.

All: Lord, have mercy.

One: We confess our inattention: our focus on prestige and wealth, commodities rather than care.

All: Lord, have mercy.

One: We confess our greed: our failure to see beyond ourselves and our immediate circles, to know that injustice anywhere threatens justice everywhere, to care for children around the world as if they were our own.

All: Lord, have mercy.

One: We confess our fear: our tendency to let worry and suspicion overtake us, our clinging to control.

All: Lord, have mercy.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: God will never let us face our perils alone. As Thomas Merton prayed to God,

All: **“I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road, though I may know nothing about it. Therefore will I trust you always, though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.”**

* 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.**

*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

Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley

#191

SCRIPTURE READING

John 19:1-16a

Read by Mark Roberge

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” and striking him on the face. Pilate went out again and said to them, “Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him.” So Jesus came out wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Behold the man!” When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, “Crucify him! Crucify him!” Pilate said to them, “Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him.” The Jews answered him, “We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God.”

Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore said to him, "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you and power to crucify you?" Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin." From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are no friend of Caesar. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against Caesar."

When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha. Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover, and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, "Here is your King!" They cried out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

ANTHEM *Show Me* Audrey Assad and Sarah Hart
Holly Cameron; *soloist*

SERMON "Who Is Your King?" Rev. Lindsay Popperson

PASTORAL PRAYER

RESPONDING

OFFERTORY

INVITATION

PRESENTATION OF OFFERINGS

We Shall Walk Through the Valley in Peace
Senior Choir

Moses Hogan

* 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

SENDING

* HYMN *He's Got the Whole World in His Hands* African American Spiritual

1. He's got the whole world in His hands,
 He's got the whole world in His hands.
2. He's got the wind and the rain in His hands...
 He's got the whole world in His hands.
3. He's got the sun and the moon in His hands...
 He's got the whole world in His hands.
4. He's got the little bitty baby in His hands...
 He's got the whole world in His hands.
5. He's got you and me Brother in His hands...
 He's got the whole world in His hands.
6. He's got you and me Sister in His hands...
 He's got the whole world in His hands.
7. He's got everybody here in His hands...
 He's got the whole world in His hands.

* BENEDICTION

* RESPONSE (please join in singing)

Lord, who throughout these forty days
for us didst fast and pray,
teach us with thee to mourn our sins,
And close by thee to stay. Amen.

POSTLUDE

Mark Shilansky, *piano*