

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

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

August 30, 2026 Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost 8am

GATHERING

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

Job 12:7-10

One: But turn to the animals, and let them teach you;
the birds of the air will tell you the truth.

**All: Listen to the plants of the earth, and learn from them;
let the fish of the sea become your teachers.**

One: Who among all these does not know
what the hand of the Lord has done?

**All: In God's hand is the soul of every living thing;
in God's hand is the breath of all humankind.**

CENTERING

PRAYER OF INVOCATION (Unison)

Rev. Christine Hribar

Creator God, you made the regal right whales, the flitting wren, and you made us. All your creation reflects your beauty, your power, and your tenderness. Come to us, today and always: in the patient waiting of a dog at a window, in the well-woven web of a spider, in the freedom of a bird in flight. Sustain us, as you sustain all the world, and hear us as we pray the words Jesus taught:

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. Christine Hribar

written by Ted Perry in 1971, inspired by a speech given by Chief Seattle in 1894

One: This we know, the earth does not belong to us:

All: we belong to the earth.

One: This we know, all things are connected:

All: like the blood which unites one family.

One: For we did not weave the web of life:

All: we are merely a strand of it.

One: Whatever we do to the web,

All: we do to ourselves.

One: In the silence, we call to mind the ways we have torn and frayed the web of life. We ask for forgiveness for what we have done and failed to do, and for courage to live as God calls us.

SILENT PRAYER

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Rev. Christine Hribar

One: God spoke through the prophet Isaiah, saying,

“Let the corrupt abandon their ways,
the evil, their thoughts.

Let them return to YHWH, and I will have mercy on them;
return to God, for I will freely pardon.”

All: The God of mercy is still speaking, still healing, still working.

One: We are forgiven, and we are freed to live lives of love.

All: Thanks be to God!

LISTENING

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Matthew 6:25-34

Bonnie MacDonald

[Jesus continued,] “That’s why I tell you not to worry about your livelihood, what you are to eat or drink or use for clothing. Isn’t life more than just food? Isn’t the body more than just clothes?

“Look at the birds in the sky. They don’t sow or reap, they gather nothing into barns, yet our God in heaven feeds them. Aren’t you more important than they? Which of you by worrying can add a moment to your lifespan? And why be anxious about clothing? Learn a lesson from the way the wildflowers grow. They don’t work; they don’t spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in full splendor was arrayed like one of these. If God can clothe in such splendor the grasses of the field, which bloom today and are thrown on the fire tomorrow, won’t God do so much more for you—you who have so little faith?

“Stop worrying, then, over questions such as, ‘What are we to eat,’ or ‘what are we to drink,’ or ‘what are we to wear?’ Those without faith are always running after these things. God knows everything you need. Seek first God’s reign, and God’s justice, and all these things will be given to you besides. Enough of worrying about tomorrow! Let tomorrow take care of itself. Today has troubles enough of its own.

POETRY READING

“Sojourns in the Parallel World”

Ruth Duell

Denise Levertov

We live our lives of human passions,
cruelties, dreams, concepts,
crimes and the exercise of virtue
in and beside a world devoid
of our preoccupations, free
from apprehension—though affected,
certainly, by our actions. A world
parallel to our own though overlapping.
We call it “Nature”; only reluctantly
admitting ourselves to be “Nature” too.
Whenever we lose track of our own obsessions,
our self-concerns, because we drift for a minute,
an hour even, of pure (almost pure)
response to that insouciant life:
cloud, bird, fox, the flow of light, the dancing
pilgrimage of water, vast stillness
of spellbound ephemerae on a lit windowpane,
animal voices, mineral hum, wind
conversing with rain, ocean with rock, stuttering
of fire to coal—then something tethered
in us, hobbled like a donkey on its patch
of gnawed grass and thistles, breaks free.
No one discovers
just where we’ve been, when we’re caught up again
into our own sphere (where we must
return, indeed, to evolve our destinies)
—but we have changed, a little.

SERMON

“Worried”

Rev. Lindsay Popperson

PASTORAL PRAYER

SENDING

BENEDICTION

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

You are invited to bring your animal—or a picture of your animal—up to the pastors, who will offer a blessing.

[Animal's name] you were created by God, and you are loved by God. May you and your human family experience joy and companionship together, and continue to be a blessing to each other.

For animals that have died: *[Animal's name] you were created by God, and you are loved by God. The love you shared in this life continues on in your human family and in all the lives you touched.*

Announcements Sunday, August 30, 2026

TODAY

Today's Deacons are: Bonnie MacDonald and Ruth Duell at 8am and Ruth Duell at 10am.

Blessing of the Animals TODAY—Our worship includes a Blessing of the Animals. Our pets transform and enrich our lives; they show us unconditional love like nothing else; they open us up to joy and show us the meaning of offering care. We will recognize these gifts, and offer blessings to our pets—those who are living with us now, and those who have died (as many of our beloved animal companions have this year). Bring your pets to church—your dogs, your cats, your snakes, etc—or bring a photo of a pet, living or dead, who is special to you; Rev. Lindsay and Rev. Christine will be delighted to bless them all!

Elevator Unavailable— Please note that the elevator is unavailable for church today due to work being completed on the Parish Hall floor. We apologize for the inconvenience.

Coffee Hour at the Lighthouse – Please join us for coffee hour after the service at the Lighthouse. Don't forget to bring your travel cup so we can reduce waste and save trees. In keeping with our church's commitment to being green, all items utilized and served at the lighthouse coffee are compostable. A compost bin is provided for cups, napkins and utensils.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday, September 6 is our last worship service at Chandler Hovey Park for the season. Please join us back in the sanctuary for worship at 8 and 10am on September 13.

CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRY

Time to Register Children and Youth for Church Activities—Nursery care, Church School, Youth Group: please register your child(ren) here using the QR code to participate in church activities this academic year!



Bibles for Children and Families—Beloved families, this church has a history of giving Bibles to third graders, but the tradition has lapsed in the past handful of years. We'd love to get bibles into the hands of children and families that will actually be read and used. If you'd like to be part of thinking through giving out bibles (be it to 3-5th graders or a sort of Bible Book Fair) let Rev. Christine (rev.christinehribar@gmail.com) know!

North Shore Youth Ministry—Jess Easter has served as the Youth Group Leader for the North Shore Youth Ministries (NSYM), which is a collaboration between four churches (Old North Church, Clifton Lutheran Church, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, and First Church Swampscott) since 2024. She is a recent graduate of BU School of Theology. To get in touch with Jess for more details about youth programs, or if finding a ride to any youth events is ever an issue, please reach out to Jess (jess@thensym.org) as she can make connections between families to make sure our youth have the opportunity to join.

OUTREACH MINISTRY

Join The Haven Project's 5K Run/Walk!—Lace up your sneakers and hit the trails at Lynn Woods Reservation on Saturday, September 12th to support housing-unstable youth ages 17–24.

Every step you take and every dollar raised will directly benefit The Haven Project's programming—providing essential resources, housing support, and opportunities for young people in need. Whether you're a seasoned runner or just looking to make a difference, this event is the perfect chance to contribute to a brighter future for our community's youth.

After the race, enjoy the festival area with food trucks, local vendors, and family activities. It's a family-friendly, dog-friendly event, so bring the whole crew!

You can sign up by using the QR code.



When you register, select "join an existing team" and select "Old North Church, Marblehead."

CHURCH FAIR

Hello Church Fair table heads (and others!)—Let's kick off the planning for this year's Holiday Marketplace on Wednesday, Sept. 2nd in the Great Room at 7pm. Spread the word, share the excitement, and if you know someone who would like to be involved, please bring them with you! We'll brainstorm ideas for crafts to make and sell as well as begin to coordinate our efforts. I look forward to seeing those who can be there! - Jill Dearborn 781-632-3369

Important dates:

Preview Party: Fri. Nov 13

Holiday Marketplace: Sat Nov 14

After church sale: Sun Nov 15

COMMUNITY LIFE

Gestures of Cheer – If you know of anyone, either here at Old North or in the wider Marblehead community, who is going through a difficult time, the Community Life Board would like to reach out with a little plant and a friendly note. Please contact Lynda Hare at hares8carrots@hotmail.com or 781-639-0107 if you know someone who would appreciate a little extra cheer.

The Narthex display for Summer – America's 250th! "First Church Members in the Revolution" – In honor of America's birthday, the narthex display through the summer features historical members of the congregation who were heroes in the cause for Independence as well as modern ones who portray them.

We want you! – The Community Life Ministry brings our church community together outside of the Sunday morning worship services and we are looking for new members. We meet the first Tuesday of the month at 7 pm for about an hour, September through May, and our aim is to plan an activity or event once a month throughout the church calendar year. Please contact Janet Doyle if you think you might be interested. janet@doylesailsonedesign.com or cell: 781-530-0065

Heartfelt Thanks from The Village Organic Garden! –We are having a wonderful, productive season at the VOG, providing hundreds of pounds of produce and flowers to the Marblehead Food Pantry every Tuesday and Thursday. So much of this success is because of the many volunteers we have had from Old North! For details and to sign up, please visit the SPUR website:

<https://www.spurnorthshore.org/>