**+ FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

**An Open and affirming congregation of the**

**United Church of Christ, Saugus, Massachusetts**

**Service of Worship 10 a.m.**

**1st Sunday in Lent, February 1, 2018**

**\*Indicates for those who are able to, please stand.**

**Bold print indicates congregational response.**

**NCH = New Century Hymnal (black cover)**

**HOP = Spiral bound cover**

*Scripture reader is Richard Warbin.*

*Greeters & Ushers are Betty Neth & Marie Brooks.*

*Deacon is Barbara Davis.*

*All are invited to church luncheon & meeting following the service.*

PRELUDE “Were You There?” Rebecca Harrold

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS Rev. Martha Leahy

LIGHTING THE PEACE CANDLE “Surely the Presence” HOP 74

***Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place;***

***I can feel his mighty power and his grace.***

***I can hear the brush of angel’s wings,***

***I see glory on each face;***

***surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.***

CALL TO WORSHIP (“God, we’re here!”)

L: God speaks to us in songs of angels;

**P: God speaks to us in the wildness of creation.**

L: We are tempted to choose the tamer of the two;

**P: at least the one we *think* is tamer.**

L: The voices of angels may soothe us into staying put;

**P: wild animals may tempt us to adventures in the wilderness.**

**L: So which shall we choose? Where will we end up?**

**All: We will follow Jesus on his journey, trusting our destiny and our destination to him.**

**\*OPENING HYMN: “Angels Watching Over Me” (insert)**

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION (“God, we’re sorry”): **Guiding Spirit, we confess that, in this season of Lent, we are wandering in the wilderness, sorely tempted to turn around in mid-journey, ready to give in before we’ve begun. Forgive us. Give us the strength to stay the course and face the truth about ourselves that you will show us. Stay always by our side, encouraging us to trust you so we can learn which path you would have us follow. Amen.**

**CHORAL RESPONSE: “Thy Word” HOP 92**

***Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. (2x)***

**\***ASSURANCE OF PARDON (“God forgives us”), in unison: **Forgiving God, you know our natures and the temptations we face. Thank you for offering us second chances and opportunities for recovery and renewal. Amen.**

\*GLORY TO GOD “Holy, Holy, Holy” NCH #277

***Holy, holy, holy, God the Almighty! Early in the morning we praise your majesty./ Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty/ God in three persons/ blessed Trinity!***

LENTEN TESTIMONY: “God-Incidences”

SCRIPTURE: Mark 1:9-15 (SP707, LP1552)

(SP=Small print Bible; LP=Large print Bible)

MESSAGE: “Wild Beasts and Angels” Rev. Martha Leahy

**PRAYER INTRO: “Sanctuary” HOP 135**

***Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary/pure and holy,***

***tried and true./With thanksgiving, I’ll be a living***

***sanctuary for you.***

PASTORAL PRAYER & LORD’S PRAYER

**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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

**PRAYER RESPONSE:** “**Take My Life & Let it Be” HOP 129** ***Take my life and let it be/Consecrated Lord, to thee./ Take my hands and let them move at the impulse of thy love/ At the impulse of thy love.***

OFFERTORY INVITATION (“God, we give back”), in unison:

**Every day is a new day, a gift of God for all creation. Every day is a new chance to turn toward or away from God. Let us respond to this day by offering our treasures and asking God to turn them into life-giving ministries for us and for all. Amen.**

**OFFERTORY: “Be Now My Vision” NCH 451**

\*DOXOLOGY: NCH #778 lyrics; NCH 780 tune

***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 FOR OUR GIFTS & PLEDGES (“God bless our gifts”), in unison: **Loving God, we bring to your altar precious gifts we’ve worked hard for. We offer them up for the work that still needs to be done, to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ. We ask that you bless them and use them for your purposes. We pray that new life may spring from our sacrifice and your blessing. Amen.**

**\*CLOSING HYMN: “Strength for the Journey” (insert)**

\*COMMISSION AND BLESSING (“God, we will try”), in unison:

**God of Wild Animals and Angels, we will try to recognize the difference between our desires and your will for us. Bless us in our trying. Amen.**

BENEDICTION (“God, please bless us”):

L: God speaks to us in songs of angels;

**P: God speaks to us in the wildness of creation.**

L: We are tempted to choose the tamer of the two;

**P: at least the one we *think* is tamer.**

L: The voices of angels may soothe us into staying put;

**P: wild animals may tempt us to adventures in the wilderness.**

**L: So which shall we choose? Where will we end up?**

**All: We will follow Jesus on his journey, trusting our destiny and our destination to him.**

**\*CHORAL BENEDICTION: “Strength for the Journey” v1**

POSTLUDE “We Praise Thee, O God” Rebecca Harrold

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*Christ in the Wilderness*

*By Moretto Da Brescia*

*Metmuseum.org*

**“Wild Beasts and Angels”**

**1st Sunday in Lent**

**February 18, 2018**



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# Jesus in the Wilderness

# Mark 1:9-15

**9**At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. **10**Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. **11**And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”

**12**At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, **13**and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=mark+1%3A9-15&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24229a)] by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

**14**After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. **15**“The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!”

**Angels Watching Over Me**

***Refrain:***

***All night, all day.
Angels watching over me, my Lord.
All night, all day.
Angels watching over me.***
**Sun is a-setting in the West;
Angels watching over me, my Lord.
Sleep my child, take your rest;
Angels watching over me.**

***Refrain***

**Now I lay me down to sleep,
Angels watching over me, my Lord.
I pray the Lord my soul to keep,
Angels watching over me.**

***Refrain***

**Strength for the Journey**

**By Michael John Poirier**

***Refrain:***

**I will be; I will be: I will be strength for the journey.**

**I will be; I will be: I will be strength for the journey.**

**There is a road meant for you to travel,**

**Narrow and steep is the shepherd’s way.**

**And as you say “yes,” letting me guide you,**

**I will be strength for the journey.**

***Refrain***

**There is a cross meant for you to carry.**

**There is a cross meants for you alone.**

**And as you bow down humble surrender,**

**I will be strength for the journey.**

***Refrain***

**How many times have you doubted my word?**

**How many times must I call your name?**

**And as you say “yes,” letting me love you,**

**I will be strength for the journey.**

***Refrain***