

Rangeley Congregational Church
Order of Worship – February 21, 2021

First Sunday of Lent

Do you fast? Give me proof of it by your works.
If you see a poor man, take pity on him.
If you see a friend being honored, do not envy him.

Do not let only your mouth fast,
but also the eye and the ear and the feet and the hands
and all the members of our bodies.

Let the hands fast, by being free of avarice.
Let the feet fast, by ceasing to run after sin.
Let the eyes fast, by disciplining them
not to glare at that which is sinful.
Let the ear fast, by not listening to evil talk and gossip.
Let the mouth fast from foul words and unjust criticism.

For what good is it if we abstain from birds and fishes,
but bite and devour our brothers and sisters?

May the One who came to the world to save sinners,
strengthen us to complete the fast with humility,
have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

John Chrysostom (347-407)

RINGING OF THE BELL

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE: Ribbon in the Sky (1982)
Stevie Wonder (1950 -)

CALL TO WORSHIP

Officiant: We come to hear.

Liturgist: We come to know.

Officiant: As darkness gives way to light and winter sleep to fresh beginnings,

Liturgist: We come today to be reminded of God's love for us.

Officiant: Like the green shoots of renewed life, stirring beneath the soil,

Liturgist: We welcome an awakening of God's word in our lives.

Officiant: In this time of reflection and repentance,

Liturgist: We affirm our identity, we claim our security, as children of God.

Officiant: Thanks be to God.

INVOCATION

OPENING HYMN: In the Midst of New Dimensions, Verses 1-3
Julian Rush

PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE

Liturgist: **Jesus Christ boldly faced the wilderness, its dangers and wonders. He struggled with his mission to make known God's loving purposes for all people.**

Guarded and guided by God's Spirit, he was triumphant and began to proclaim the Gospel, and the hope that the reign of God would bring oppression to an end and deliverance for those held captive.

Officiant: On our lack of repentance and our failure to believe the good news:
Lord, have mercy.

Liturgist: **Lord Jesus, your victory in the desert assures us that as you followed the way of the cross there were victories over evil in its many forms until its powers were broken on the cross, and you were raised triumphant forever.**

Officiant: On our lack of repentance and our failure to believe the good news:
Christ, have mercy.

Liturgist: **Grant us vision and courage that in our time we may recognize and struggle with all oppressing and dehumanizing forces in the world, and become signs of the in-breaking of the reign of God.**

Officiant: For our lack of repentance
For our failure to believe the good news:
Lord, have mercy.

Liturgist: **Forgive us
Call us back to You that we may put our trust in You and not be afraid.**

Officiant: May we hear the words so clearly
That we may rise up, and not be afraid.
In the name of Jesus,
who loves us and offers us forgiveness, we pray. Amen.

...time for silent prayer...

WORDS OF ASSURANCE ~ Officiant

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 9:8-17 Liturgist

9:8 Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him,

9:9 "As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you,

9:10 and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark.

9:11 I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth."

9:12 God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations:

9:13 I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.

9:14 When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds,

9:15 I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh.

9:16 When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth."

9:17 God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth."

1 Peter 3:18-22 Liturgist

3:18 For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God.

Mark 1:9-15 Officiant

1:9 In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

1:10 And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him.

1:11 And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

1:12 And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness.

1:13 He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

1:14 Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God,

1:15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."

SERMON

HYMN OF RESPONSE Take Me to the Water
African-American Spiritual

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

(As you name a joy or concern later in the prayer, please finish by saying "This is my prayer." The church family responds by saying "This is our prayer.")

We pray for: Rev. Kit Ripley, Janet House, Becky and Dave Walker, Patrick Egan, Sam Meehan's Mom and her husband Nicole & LeRoy Hileman, Erin Smith, Tony McNaughton, Linda Caspar's niece Aubree Yanchick and her family, Scott and Janet Wilson and Janet's father John Owens, Marcia Baker's niece, Kris Nozal, Dave Walker's brothers, Tom & Peter Walker, Haelyn Vorous, the Daileys' son Rob, and our Members in Discernment Becky Walker and Scott Hatfield.

Our law enforcement personnel, medical personnel and first responders, and our military personnel worldwide, and all those who serve our country We pray for the people around us this day for those who are upon our hearts and minds because of a need that they have...

PASTORAL PRAYER

OUR 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 (sins, debts, trespasses) as we forgive those who (sin, our debtors, trespass) against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever, Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: Lord, I Want To Be a Christian
African-American Spiritual

Dismissal:

Officiant: God, send us forth into the world,

Liturgist: so we will go to walk miles in the shoes of others.

Officiant: Jesus, call us to serve everyone we meet,

Liturgist: so we will become all things to all people.

Officiant: O Holy Spirit, encourages us to let go of our gospel-given rights,

Liturgist: so we may breathe new life into all who might faint.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE: I Feel the Spirit Moving
(*Old Time Religion & Every Time I Feel the Spirit*)
African-American Spirituals / Arr. Mark Hayes

Special thanks to Lucy Simonds for being our Liturgist, Dave Walker will lead the singing, Dave Walker for the PowerPoint slideshow presentation and Sam Meehan for setting up the Zoom live stream so we can worship together.

Deacon of the Month:

Evelyn Franson

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