



Rangeley Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
Rangeley, Maine

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An Open and Affirming Church
Third Sunday in Lent

March 23, 2025

10:00 AM

Meditation:

Be grateful for every second of every day that you get to spend with the people you love. Life is so very precious.

-- Author unknown

ORDER OF WORSHIP

OUR GATHERING AND PRAISE

RINGING OF THE BELL

PRELUDE

"I Saw a Tree By the Riverside"

Ken Medema

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Liturgist

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: O God, you are my God, I seek you, my soul
thirsts for you;

People: **My flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary
land where there is no water.**

Leader: So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary,
beholding your power and glory.

**People: Because your steadfast love is better than life,
my lips will praise you.**

Leader: So I will bless you as long as I live;

People: I will lift up my hands and call on your name.

INVOCATION (Unison)

**O Holy God, like Isaiah the prophet, we stand in awe of
Your glory, feeling small and polluted by our sin, and the
sin of our society. Even so, You touch us with Your
burning presence, and we are made clean and whole.**

**Gracious God, continue to build this household of faith
into what You want us to be. Lead us to do as You will.
Strengthen us for the work of the Kingdom, a worship and
a service which is ours today as well as tomorrow.**

**O Blessed Trinity, fill this place and these people with
Your presence. For yours is the Power, and the Salvation,
and the Creation, now and always. Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN *“Come Away From Rush and Hurry”*

Tune: NETTLETON/Words: Dr. Marva Dawn

Come away from rush and hurry
to the stillness of God’s peace;
from our vain ambition’s worry,
come to Christ and find release.
Come away from noise and clamor,
life’s demands and frenzied pace;
come to join the people gathered
here to seek and find God’s face.

In the pastures of God's goodness
we lie down to rest our soul.
From the waters of his mercy
we drink deeply, are made whole.
At the table of his presence
all his saints are richly fed.
With the oil of his anointing
into service we are led.

Come, then, children, with your burdens –
life's confusions, fears, and pain.
Leave them at the cross of Jesus;
take instead his kingdom's reign.
Bring your thirsts, for he will quench them –
he alone will satisfy.
All our longings find attainment
when to self we gladly die.

CALL TO CONFESSION

Rev. Wheeler

The prophet Isaiah instructs us to seek and to call upon the Lord. The prophet pleads with the wicked to forsake their ways, with the unrighteous to forsake their thoughts. The prophet invites them to return to the Lord that he may have mercy on them and assures them that our God will abundantly pardon. Let us seek God, let us call upon the Lord, knowing that we will be received with mercy and abundant forgiveness.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION: (Unison)

Merciful God, we confess that we have been quick to judge others and slow to make changes in our own lives.

We confess that we have focused on others' shortcomings instead of reforming our own. Turn us, O Lord, from these ways that lead to perishing. Lead us, O Lord, in your ways that lead to abundant life. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Silent reflection on these words

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

God speaks through the prophet Isaiah: my thoughts are not your thoughts nor are your ways my ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways. Let us find peace in God's ways of mercy and grace knowing that we are forgiven. Amen.

SERVICE OF THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Isaiah 55:1-9

Liturgist

Luke 13:1-9

SERMON *Maybe We're Asking the Wrong Question*

HYMN OF RESPONSE #586 (NCH)

"Come To Tend God's Garden"

SERVICE OF PRAYER

PRAYER FOR ALL GOD'S 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. Zenna Inness, Meredith Loudon & Sharon Muench, Linda Caspar's brother-in-law, Conrad Guerra and nephew, William Lane; and Paula Hatfield's father, Paul Behrman. We pray for Carol & Dan Perkins; Bill & Mary Richards, Gerry Adams & Diane Schnellhammer, Kathy & Jim Wilcox, Heidi Ross, Tim & Sarah Johnson, Janice Bredeau, Georgie Gimbel and Patrick Egan. We pray for all those whose lives are impacted by natural disasters, gun violence, conflict, and war around the world and here at home.

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 (debts, sins, trespasses) as we forgive those who (sin, 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 and ever. AMEN.

CHORAL AMEN #812 (NCH)

"Threefold Amen"

SERVICE OF GIVING

CALL FOR THE OFFERING

Life is a gift to be received with gratitude and a task to be pursued with courage. God has given each of us and all of us a variety of gifts and we are grateful. As an act of worship, let us commit to returning those gifts to God and God's service.

OFFERTORY MUSIC

"When Jesus Wept"

William Billings/Arr. W. Ringham

DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God above ye heavenly host;
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION (Unison)**

Gracious God, you give to us out of your abundance. For the material gifts and the spiritual gifts you give us, we thank you. We dedicate these gifts of time and talents and tithes to you and ask that you continue to lead us as we use these gifts to join your work in this community. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, your Son and our Savior. Amen

CLOSING HYMN #189 (NCH)

"Down at the Cross"

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE AND EXTINGUISHING OF THE CANDLES

"Vivace, from Sonata in F Major"

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767)

~Special thanks to all who contributed their time, talents and gifts for today's service:

- Rev. Stan Wheeler, **Leading Worship Service**
- Don Miller, **Liturgist**
- Claire Chase, **Deacon of the Week**

- Lucy Simonds, **Zoomigo**
- Tim & Sarah, **Coffee Hour**

~This Week:

- Handbell Choir Rehearsals, March 24, 8-9:30am
- Moms & Babies Social, March 26, 9am, Barn
- Piano/Voice Lessons w/ Erin, March 25, 26 & 28
- Winter Women's Social, March 28, 10- 12pm, Barn

~Next Week:

- Worship Service w/ Rev. Tony MacNaughton, March 30
- Handbell Choir Rehearsals, March 31, 8-9:30am
- Piano/Voice Lessons w/ Erin, April 1, 2 & 4
- Moms & Babies Social, April 2, 9am, Barn

<u>Pastoral Care Services:</u>	Rev. Tony MacNaughton	207-864-3355
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<u>Deacon of the week:</u>	Claire Chase	207-712-0490