



Rangeley Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
Rangeley, Maine

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An Open and Affirming Church
Fifth Sunday in Lent

March 17 2024

10:00 AM

Meditation: *“We must be ready to allow ourselves to be interrupted by God.”*

— Dietrich Bonhoeffer

ORDER OF WORSHIP

OUR GATHERING AND PRAISE

RINGING OF THE BELL

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Liturgist

PRELUDE *“Bridge Over Troubled Water”*

Paul Simon/Arr. Dietmar Steinhauer

INVOCATION

Gracious God, we stand in awe of your goodness and mercy today, and we invite you to be present amongst us by the power of your Holy Spirit. Lord, we declare that we love you and thank you that you have made the way of love known through your son Jesus Christ. Reveal this great love

to us all today as we gather to worship. Lead us by your Spirit to praise you. May our hearts overflow with thanksgiving and our mouths proclaim your everlasting greatness. In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.

CALL TO WORSHIP Psalm 51 **Liturgist**

Leader: Have mercy on us, O God, according to your steadfast love;

People: According to your abundant mercy, blot out our transgressions.

Leader: You desire truth in our deepest selves, so teach our hearts wisdom.

People: Let us hear your joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.

Leader: Create in us clean hearts, O God; put new and right spirits within us.

People: Sustain in us willing spirits and restore us to the joy of your salvation. Let us worship God!

*GATHERING HYMN #223 (NCH)

“What Wondrous Love Is This”

CALL TO CONFESSION

Rev. Stan

“The days are surely coming,” says the Lord, “When I will make a new covenant with my people. I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest.”

Friends, we are God’s people. Yet even as we strive to

know our God and walk in God's paths, we fall short. Trusting in God as a merciful covenant partner, let us confess our sin together:

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

(Unison)

Living Christ, with whom we journey to the cross, we confess that we are always looking for an easier way. We long for the fullness of life with you, but we are slow to abandon the comforts of the life we know. We seek the fruit of new life, but we are not willing to die to ourselves. You call us to life in community, but we stubbornly cling to "me and mine." Yet you offer the grace of life abundant, even and especially when our best efforts fall short. Transform us, renew us, and free us from our attachment to what was, so that you might bring us into the glory of what will be. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Silent Confession

WORDS OF HOPE AND ASSURANCE

Liturgist

Liturgist: Friends, hear the good news! We worship a God who forgives our iniquities and remembers our sins no more. Proclaim the good news with me:

People: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Thanks be to God! Amen.

SERVICE OF THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

(Unison)

God of living water, pour out your Spirit and nourish your

Word within us, that in its time, that Word may bear much fruit. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Hebrews 5: 5-10

Liturgist

John 12: 20-33

SERMON “Sir, We Would See Jesus”

***HYMN OF RESPONSE #286 (NCH)**

“Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness”

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: *Donald Knowles, Priscilla St. Louis, Kit & Linda Caspar, Forrest Stephens, Kris Nozal, Anne Crump, Jeff & Carol Ellinwood, Bobby & Leeanna Wilbur, Tim & Sarah Johnson, Erin Smith’s parents Carol & Dan Perkins, Patrick Egan, and we pray for all those who guide and lead us in worship.*

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

INVITATION

OFFERTORY

By the grace of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit, our lives have borne much fruit.

Let us now return thanks where it is due and offer the fruits of our labor back to the Lord. Let us receive the morning offering.

OFFERTORY MUSIC *“O Sacred Head”*

Hans Leo Hassler/Arr. Anthony Giamanco

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, it is our joy to return the gifts of our lives to you. May our offering this morning forever bring glory to your name, and may we continue to work tirelessly for the well-being of your whole creation. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN #433 (NCH)

"In the Bulb There Is a Flower"

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE AND EXTINGUISHING OF THE CANDLES

" St. Patrick's Day"

Traditional Irish Jig

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

- Rev. Stan Wheeler, **Leading Worship Service**
- Bob Silvia, **Liturgist**
- Linda Caspar, **Deacon of the Week**
- Lucy Simonds, **Zoomigo**
- Sarah & Tim Johnson, **Coffee Hour**

~This Week:

- Deacon Meeting, Mar 18, 3:00pm, East Rm & Zoom
- Piano Lessons w/ Erin, Mar 18, 19, 20 & 22
Sanctuary, Mar 21, 3-5pm, East Room
- Women's Winter Social, Mar 22, 10-12pm, Barn

~Next Week:

- Palm Sunday, Joint Worship with Church of the Good Shepherd
- Piano Lessons w/ Erin, Mar 25, 26, 27, 29, Sanctuary,
Mar 28, 3-5pm, East Room

Special Holy Week Bible Study

We will be holding an ecumenical Bible Study on Friday, 3/22 at 6:00PM in the East Room. This one-night study will be led by Fr. Thom Rock, Rector at Good Shepherd church here in Rangeley. Fr. Thom will spend a bit of time comparing and contrasting the treatment of Palm Sunday and the Passion narrative across the various gospel accounts. The majority of the session will then turn to the treatment of Palm Sunday in art. Fr. Thom will be using multimedia to share this with us. Note that this will be a joint study with the membership of Good Shepherd -- both attending together in our facility. We've been working to include them in our activities, and us in theirs, to live in the unity that we are called to practice. This will be both a stimulating learning opportunity as well as a good warm up for....

Palm / Passion Sunday Worship Service

We will hold a joint worship service with Good Shepherd on Palm Sunday, 3/24. Note that this service will start at a different time than usual, 9:30AM and held at the Good Shepherd church. We will join together to ponder Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and the events of Holy Week. Fr. Thom Rock and Pastor Scott Hatfield will jointly conduct the service. Sue will be providing the music. Communion will be offered. A link to Good Shepherd's streaming option will be made available beforehand so that our remote participants can also join. We hope that many of you will join in these events during this season.

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