



Rangeley Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
Rangeley, Maine

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An Open and Affirming Church
The First Sunday of Advent

Mediation:

“The Lord is coming, always coming. When you have ears to hear and eyes to see, you will recognize him at any moment of your life. Life is Advent; life is recognizing the coming of the Lord.”

-Henri Nouwen

November 30, 2025

10:00 AM

ORDER OF WORSHIP

OUR GATHERING AND PRAISE

RINGING OF THE BELL

PRELUDE

“Light of the World”

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Liturgist

The Lighting of the Advent Candle of Hope Millie & Les

Reader One: Children of God, what are we waiting for?

People: We wait for dawn when night feels endless.
We wait for the breaking of chains that bind.
We wait with prophets whose words still
echo, with ancestors who held hope close in
exile, with weary souls who dare to believe
again. We wait, not with empty hands, but
with open hearts, trusting the One whose
promise is faithful still.

Reader Two: Today we light one candle, fragile and small,
yet enough to pierce the heavy dark. This
flame is a witness that hope is alive, though
hidden, though quiet, though not yet full. We
set our faces toward the light, learning to see
what God is already doing, bearing together
the sign of things to come.

People: We call this candle Hope. Its glow whispers
that despair is not the end. Its warmth
reminds us that God is near. Its spark stirs
courage as we wait.
(The candle of HOPE is lit).

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Keep awake. Be ready. For the Son of Man is
coming.

People: Thanks be to God! We will worship and
prepare.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION (Unison)

Savior God, guide us by your Word and Spirit that we might hear your truth, heed your call and be prepared for Christ's coming this Christmas. Amen.

***GATHERING HYMN #117 (NCH)**

"Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates"

CALL TO CONFESSION

Rev. Wheeler

Let us honestly examine our lives and our hearts before Christ comes. Let us turn to God in prayer to confess our sins.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Unison)

Prince of Peace, the wars and rumors of wars betray our addiction to violence, our destructive and dehumanizing ways. We deserve your judgment and condemnation. Yet, you remain faithful, a steadfast source of peace amid our warring madness. Holy God, turn us from evil. Return us to Christ and his path of peace. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. It is in the name of Christ that we pray. Amen.

Silent reflection on these words

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

We learn in Paul's letter to the Corinthians that "Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation. The old life has gone; a new life has begun." Know that you are forgiven and be at peace. Amen.

THE WORD OF GOD

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 2:1-5

Romans 13:11-14

Matthew 24:36-44

Liturgist

Liturgist

SERMON The Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

*HYMN OF RESPONSE #122 (NCH)

“Come, O Long-Expected Jesus”

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: Tony MacNaughton, Sheila Raymond, Mark Whiteside, Marlene Knowles’ daughter-in-law Shannon Linder, Crystal Haley, Susan & Jack Tourtillotte, Maxie & AJ Elmes and their baby, Granger, Carol & Dan Perkins, Bill & Mary Richards, Kathy & Jim Wilcox, Heidi Ross, Tim & Sarah Johnson, Sue Downes and those serving in the Peace Corp: and finally, we pray for all those whose lives are impacted by natural disasters, violence, war, and those suffering from personal life challenges 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

"All things in heaven and earth belong to God, who is coming in glory to reveal a new creation." Let us present our tithes and offerings to the Lord.

OFFERTORY MUSIC

"Just As I Am"

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)

Take these gifts we offer today, O God, and use them to the fulfillment of Christ's ministry. May these gifts help to free the captives, heal the sick, comfort the lonely, feed the

hungry, heal the wounded. As Christ's hands and feet, use us too, in service to building your beloved community. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN #110 (PH)

"Oh Come, Oh Come, Emmanuel"

*CHARGE and BENECTION

We do not leave this sanctuary and leave God behind. God's call to prepare our hearts, our minds, our communities and our world for the coming Christ is clear. May this call be ever before us; guiding us, inspiring us, enabling us to be Christ's body — his hands, his feet, his heart — in this, God's world. May the grace, hope, peace and love of God our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, be with us all, now and forever. Amen.

POSTLUDE AND EXTINGUISHING OF THE CANDLES

"You Raise Me Up."

Today's liturgy (with the exception of the Advent Candle Liturgy) is adapted from The Presbyterian Outlook, written by Teri McDowell Ott.

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

- Rev. Stan Wheeler **for leading worship service**
- Les & Millie Hoekstra, **Liturgists**
- Linda Caspar, **Deacon of the Week**

- Lucy Simonds, **Zoomigo**
- Women's Fellowship, **Coffee Hour**
- Erin Smith, **Music Leader**

~This Week:

- Mahjong in the Barn, Dec 1, 1-3pm, Barn
- Mom & Baby Social Hour, Dec 4, 10am, Barn

~Next Week:

- Finance Meeting, Dec 8, 3:15pm, East Rm & Zoom
- Council Meeting, Dec 8, 4:00pm, East Rm & Zoom
- Mom & Baby Social Hour, Dec 11, 10am, Barn

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