



Rangeley Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
Rangeley, Maine

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An Open and Affirming Church
Second Sunday of Advent

December 7, 2025

10:00 AM

Meditation:

“One of the essential paradoxes of Advent: that while we wait for God, we are with God all along, that while we need to be reassured of God’s arrival, or the arrival of our homecoming, we are already at home.”

—Michelle Blake, author

ORDER OF WORSHIP

OUR GATHERING AND PRAISE

RINGING OF THE BELL

PRELUDE

“Imagine”

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Liturgist

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader & People

Leader: In this season of endless stress, with life more crowded than the stores,

People: God welcomes us to a feast of faithfulness, where we may sit in peace and gentleness.

Leader: In these times of rancorous rants and snide remarks,
with people too busy to offer words of compassion,

People: Jesus whispers of hope for broken hearts, sings carols of justice for all the outsiders.

Leader: In these days that urge us toward isolation, automation, and indifference and away those who could touch us with joy,

People: the Spirit embraces us with peace that comforts, and a love beyond our understanding.

The Lighting of the Advent Candles

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

People: We wait for peace where conflict rages, for gentleness where harshness prevails. We wait for swords to be reshaped into plows, for walls to crumble and bridges to rise. We wait... longing for the Prince

**of Peace, who stills our storms and
guides our feet.**

Reader Two: Today we light two candles, their light steady and sure against the dark. Hope burns beside peace, witnessing to God's enduring promises. The glow spreads wider each week, reminding us that peace is possible, and God's kingdom is drawing near.

People: O God of still waters and quiet strength, we confess how often our lives are restless. Our hearts race, our hands grasp, our voices quicken with fear. Yet you breathe calm into chaos; you steady our steps on uneven ground. Grant us your peace, O Christ, not as the world gives, but as you alone provide. Teach us to live as peacemakers, agents of your reconciling love. Come, Lord Jesus, and make peace our way.

(The candles of HOPE and PEACE are lit).

INVOCATION

*GATHERING HYMN #101 (NCH)

"Comfort, Comfort O My People"

CALL TO CONFESSION -

People: Goodness Incarnate, we must confess that we have not lived as your children. We muddy the clear waters of our baptism with the debris of our daily lives. We sit in our isolation, hungry, when we could be feasting with those we are told not to trust or care about. We wait for all our desires to be met, while you hope we would fill the lives of others with your grace and hope.

Forgive us, God of this holy season, and help us to be willing to draw near to others, so we might heal their brokenness, touch their loneliness, embrace their grief. Help us to love them as you did when you came to us so long ago, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior

Silent reflection on these words

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

THE WORD OF GOD

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 3:1-12

Liturgist

Isaiah 11:1-10

SERMON The Peace of Advent

*HYMN OF RESPONSE #108 (NCH)

"Isaiah the Prophet Has Written of Old"

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"

OFFERTORY

OFFERTORY MUSIC

“While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks”

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.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

In the United Church of Christ, we practice an open communion, which means all are welcomed to this table...God's table. You don't have to be a member of this church or any church to partake in the sharing of the bread and drink of the vine.

Invitation

May the Advent God give you hope.

May God grant you peace.

Let us lift our hearts to God who offers righteousness to all.

We open our hearts to the One who loves justice.

Children of God, rejoice in the One who call us to live in harmony with everyone.

Amen and Amen! We give our thanks to God!

Eucharistic Prayer

In those days when chaos reigned,
you spoke the Word
which caused snow to cap mountains;

as you breathed the Spirit
 which give life to sheep and shepherds;
as your steadfast love shaped
 all that is good and beautiful and good.
All this was intended for those clothed
in your image of grace and hope,
 but we insisted on putting on sin's coat,
 cinching death's belt around us.
But in that moment we least expected,
Jesus came, to baptize us with
the Holy Spirit's peace and hope.

**Holy, holy, holy are you, God who gives hope to all.
All creation gathers your harvest of peace.
Hosanna in the highest!**

**Blessed is the One who stands side-by-side
 with the most vulnerable.
Hosanna in the highest!**

As we inch closer to Bethlehem,
as we wait for the kingdom to draw near,
we sing of that mystery which comes as faith:

**This is the One who died,
blessing those who feared him;
this is the One who was raised,
the Spirit of resurrection resting on him;
this is the One who will come,
to give justice to everyone.**

The Consecration

Now in these days, as we gather
around the table gifted with
the bread and the cup,
may your Spirit of wisdom rest on us,
so we may recognize the vulnerable
and welcome their gifts in our lives;
may your Spirit of might rest upon us,
so we may stand up
to injustices around us;
may your Spirit of unity rest upon us,
so we may resist all people,
all words, which seek to divide us;
may your Spirit of compassion rest upon us,
so we may remember, and serve,
the hungry, the homeless, the lonely,
in this holiest of seasons.

Sharing the Bread and the Cup

The body of Christ, the living bread.
The blood of Christ, the saving cup.

COMMUNION MUSIC

“Let Us Break Bread Together”

Prayer of Thanksgiving

As God has welcomed us in these moments,
let us go to embrace each person we meet.
As Jesus has been our servant of hope and grace,

let us go to serve the most vulnerable around us.

As the Spirit of hope has filled us,

let us go to empty ourselves of joy and peace for all.

*CLOSING HYMN #609 (NCH)

"Now Is the Time Approaching"

*THE BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE AND EXTINGUISHING OF THE CANDLES

"Let There Be Peace on Earth"

Portions adapted from: Rev. Thom Shuman, Fran Pratt, Worship Ways

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

- Pastor Scott Hatfield, **Leading Communion Service**
- Cyndy Egan, **Liturgist**
- Joann Bean & Lucy Simonds, **Deacons of the Week**
- Lucy Simonds, **Zoomigo**
- Erin Smith, **Song Leader**
- Sarah Johnson, **bread for Communion**
- Women's Fellowship, **Coffee Hour**

~This Week:

- Finance Meeting, Dec 8, 3:15pm, East Room & Zoom
- Deacons' Meeting, Dec 8, 4pm, East Room & Zoom
- Mom & Baby Social Hour, Dec 11, 10am, Barn

~Next Week:

- Rev. Stan Wheeler providing Worship, Dec 14
- Mahjong in the Barn, Dec 15, 1-3pm, Barn
- Deacons' Meeting, Dec 15, 4pm, East Room & Zoom
- Mom & Baby Social Hour, Dec 18, 10am, Barn

<u>Pastoral Care Services</u>	Rev. Tony MacNaughton	207-864-3355
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<u>Song Leader</u>	Erin Perkins Smith	207-864-5346
<u>Council President:</u>	Cyndy Egan	207-864-2255
<u>Co-Chair of Deacons:</u>	Claire Chase Lucy Simonds	207-712-0490 207-462-2101
<u>Deacons of the week</u>	Lucy Simonds Joann Bean	207-864-5234 207-670-5000