



Rangeley Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
Rangeley, Maine

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An Open and Affirming Church
First Sunday in Lent

Mediation:

As we begin our Lenten Journey, how might we examine our faith with new interpretations and understandings of scripture rooted in liberation and flourishing for all? In today's worship all are invited to set intentions for their Lenten journey embracing stories and scripture in new ways. May it be so.

February 22, 2026

10:00 AM

ORDER OF WORSHIP

OUR GATHERING AND PRAISE

RINGING OF THE BELL

PRELUDE

"Put a Little Love in Your Heart"

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Liturgist

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Then the Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness.

Assembly: Come, beloveds, into the wilderness of our heartbreaking and troubled days.

Leader: In the midst of our hunger for comfort, provoked by lies of scarcity,

Assembly: **this Lent journey promises bread and abundance.**

Leader: In the midst of our longing for safety, enticed by promises of security,

Assembly: **this Lent journey promises angels and costly solidarity.**

Leader: In the midst of our clinging to power, lured by the ease of complicity,

Assembly: **this Lent journey promises prayer and turning around.**

Leader: The Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness.

Assembly: **Come, beloveds, to worship, venturing deeper and deeper into the wilderness of our broken and beautiful world.**

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

In the wilderness and the wandering and the weariness, lead us, Holy Spirit. In the hungering and the holding and the humbling, accompany us, Holy Spirit. In the tempting and the testing and the turning, move us, Holy Spirit. In the resisting and the refusing and the recognizing, guide us, Holy Spirit. Ground in us, as we ground in you. Breathe with us, as we breathe with you. Turn with us, as we turn toward you. As the new way emerges, we pray. Amen.

*GATHERING HYMN #4 (NCH)

“Joyful, Joyful We Adore You”

CALL TO CONFESSION

Leader: For the ways our faith has told unChristian stories of Christian nationalism, and the ways they shape us,

Assembly: God, have mercy.

Leader: For the ways our scriptures have told unjust stories of white supremacy, and the ways we perpetuate them,

Assembly: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: For the ways our traditions have told unloving stories of transphobia and stranger-fear, and the ways we have embodied them,

Assembly: God, have mercy.

Leader: Compel us to learn and tell the truths of our Christian lineages.

Assembly: Turn us around, Holy One. Amen.

WORDS OF HOPE AND ASSURANCE

Leader: Let your soul receive this rest. God’s story of love surpasses even the most powerful human distortions.

Assembly: Praise God who forgives us and frees us continually inviting us to take up our role in the unfolding story of redemption and new life.

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION (Unison)

God of the covenant, in the glory of the cross your Son embraced the power of death and broke its hold over your people. In this time of repentance, draw all people to yourself, that we who confess Jesus as Lord may put aside the deeds of death and accept the life of your kingdom. Amen.

Silent reflection on these words

THE WORD OF GOD

SCRIPTURE

First Reading	<i>Genesis 2:15-17, 3.1-7</i>	Liturgist
Second Reading	<i>Romans 5.12-19</i>	Worship Leader
Gospel	<i>Matthew 4.1-11</i>	Worship Leader

SERMON

*HYMN OF RESPONSE #207 (NCH)

"Just as I Am"

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: Evelyn Franson & family on the passing of Ray, Don & Susie Welch, Linda Wendelken, Corinne Morton, Tony

MacNaughton, Cyndy Egan's parents David & Dianne Scammon, Sheila Raymond, 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

INVITATION

Worship Leader

The season of Lent invites us to take stock of and deepen our spiritual practices. How might God be inviting you to deepen your spiritual practice of generosity in this season? Let us offer whatever gifts we have to resist the tempter's

lies of scarcity and turn toward abundant life and flourishing for all.

OFFERTORY

OFFERTORY MUSIC

“Grant Us Wisdom to Perceive You”

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 (Assembly)**

Jesus resisted the tempter’s lies of scarcity by remembering we do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God. What are some of the nourishing words to which we can dedicate our offerings? Words such as peace, healing, shelter, safety, inclusion and love. To these sacred stories, in this holy work, these blessed words, we dedicate ourselves and our offerings. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN #472 (NCH)**

“Precious Lord, Take My Hand”

BENEDICTION

Worship Leader

In the midst of our hunger for comfort, provoked by lies of scarcity, may this Lent journey bless us with bread and

abundance. In the midst of our longing for safety, enticed by promises of security, may this Lent journey bless us with angels and costly solidarity. In the midst of our clinging to power, lured by the ease of complicity, may this Lent journey bless us with prayer and turning around. Amen.

POSTLUDE AND EXTINGUISHING OF THE CANDLES

"Love Like This"

(Please be seated during the Postlude)

*Please stand if you are able.

(Worship Outline based on *'Led by the Spirit...Backed by the Word: Service Prayers for the Lent 1A'* written by Dr. Sharon R. Fennema.)

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

- Pastor Rick Dorian for **leading worship service**
- Rick Baker, **Liturgist**
- Linda Caspar, **Deacon of the Week**
- Claire Chase, **Zoomigo**
- Tim & Sarah, **Coffee Hour**
- Erin Smith, **Music Leader**

~This Week:

- Women's Winter Social, February 27, 10-12pm, Barn

~Next Week:

- Pastor Scott Hatfield leading Worship Service, March 1
- Mahjong in the Barn, March 2, 1-3pm, Barn

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