

**The Congregational Church of Rupert
1786 Meeting House
January 18, 2026**



Everyone is Welcome Here

Mission of the Congregational Church of Rupert

The mission of CCR is to seek to follow Jesus' teachings in his Sermon on the Mount, and to practice the words of Micah by living justly, by being kind and compassionate while walking with God in all humility.

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Organist

Parish Nurse

signifies you should stand if you are able, **bold signifies congregation speaks in unison.*

Prelude

Jeff Linebeck

Welcome to the Historic 1786 Rupert Meeting House:

Call to Worship

We come before God today in this little sanctuary. Our week has brought us times of concern and worry and also moments of gratitude and love. We have sighed. We have smiled. Some of us have cried. Some of us have laughed. And now we are here. Ready. Waiting. Open. Prepare our hearts Lord that we may receive whatever gifts you may wish to offer your loved ones today.

Moment of Silent Preparation

***Hymn #3 (Pilgrim Hymnal Red/Blue) God Himself is With Us**

Moment of Quiet Reflection

Psalm 40 (Read responsively) Message Translation by Eugene Peterson

1-3 I waited and waited and waited for God

At last he looked; finally he listened.

**He lifted me out of the ditch,
pulled me from deep mud.**

**He stood me up on a solid rock
to make sure I wouldn't slip.
He taught me how to sing the latest God-song,
a praise-song to our God.**

More and more people are seeing this: they enter the mystery, abandoning themselves to God.⁴⁻⁵ Blessed are you who give yourselves over to God, turn your backs on the world's "sure thing," ignore what the world worships; The world's a huge stockpile of God-wonders and God-thoughts.

Nothing and no one compares to you! I start talking about you, telling what I know, and quickly run out of words. Neither numbers nor words account for you. ⁶ Doing something for you, bringing something to you—that's not what you're after. Being religious, acting pious— that's not what you're asking for. You've opened my ears so I can listen.

⁷⁻⁸ So I answered, "I'm coming. I read in your letter what you wrote about me, And I'm coming to the party you're throwing for me." That's when God's Word entered my life, became part of my very being.

⁹⁻¹⁰ I've preached you to the whole congregation, I've kept back nothing, God—you know that. I didn't keep the news of your ways a secret, didn't keep it to myself. I told it all, how dependable you are, how thorough. I didn't hold back pieces of love and truth For myself alone. I told it all, let the congregation know the whole story.

**¹¹ Now God, don't hold out on us, don't hold back your passion.
Your love and truth are all that keeps us together.**

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer (In your mercy. Lord, hear our prayer)

Please keep the following in Prayer: Wanda, Elizabeth, John, Carolyn B., Loretta R., Diane L., Tracy and family, Don L., Chris Steel, Jack Westrate, Jessica, Jamie, Oliver, John Jahanian, Ed B., Alex and Setsu Carter, Andy and Ginny, Yacov Afiley, Jeanne DeYcaza, Andris Berry and Family on safe travels. Those suffering with cancer and other diseases. Those who have lost loved ones in 2025. Those who are traveling. We thank God for hearing our prayers and for granting us and those for whom we pray peace. Amen

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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, Forever and ever. Amen.

Offertory

Doxology: Praise God from whom all blessings flow, Praise God all creatures here below, Praise God above, Ye Heavenly Host, Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen

(Tune: Old Hundredth from "Genevan Psalter", 1551)

Dedication

Scripture

Isaiah 49: 1-7 The Message **A Light for the Nations**

49 ¹⁻³ Listen, far-flung islands, pay attention, faraway people:

God put me to work from the day I was born. The moment I entered the world he named me. (*The Lord called me before I was born; while I was in my mother's womb he named me.*)

He gave me speech that would cut and penetrate He kept his hand on me to protect me. He made me his straight arrow and hid me in his quiver. He said to me, "You're my dear servant, Israel, through whom I'll shine." ⁴ But I said, "I've worked for nothing. I've nothing to show for a life of hard work. Nevertheless, I'll let God have the last word.

I'll let him pronounce his verdict." ⁵⁻⁶ "And now," God says, this God who took me in hand from the moment of birth to be his servant, To bring Jacob back home to him, to set a reunion for Israel— What an honor for me in God's eyes!

That God should be my strength! He says, "But that's not a big enough job for my servant— just to recover the tribes of Jacob, merely to round up the strays of Israel. I'm setting you up as a light for the nations so that my salvation becomes global!" ⁷ God, Redeemer of Israel, The Holy of Israel, says to the despised one, kicked around by the nations, slave labor to the ruling class:

"Kings will see, get to their feet—the princes, too— and then fall on their faces in homage. Because of God, who has faithfully kept his word, The Holy of Israel, who has chosen you."

John 1:29-42 The Message **The God-Revealer**

²⁹⁻³¹ The very next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and yelled out, "Here he is, God's Passover Lamb! He forgives the sins of the world! This is the man I've been talking about, 'the One who comes after me but is really ahead of me.' I knew nothing about who he was—only this: that my task has been to get Israel ready to recognize him as the God-Revealer. That is why I came here baptizing with water, giving you a good bath and scrubbing sins from your life so you can get a fresh start with God." ³²⁻³⁴ John clinched his witness with this: "I watched the Spirit, like a dove flying down out of the sky, making himself at home in him. I repeat, I know nothing about him except this: The One who authorized me to baptize with water told me, 'The One on whom you see the Spirit come down and stay, this One will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' That's exactly what I saw happen, and I'm telling you, there's no question about it: This is the Son of God."

³⁵⁻³⁶ The next day John was back at his post with two disciples, who were watching. He looked up, saw Jesus walking nearby, and said, "Here he is, God's Passover Lamb." ³⁷⁻³⁸ The two disciples heard him and went after Jesus. Jesus looked over his shoulder and said to them, "What are you after?" They said, "Rabbi" (which means "Teacher"), "where are you staying?"³⁹ He replied, "Come along and see for yourself." They came, saw where he was living, and ended up staying with him for the day. It was late afternoon when this happened. ⁴⁰⁻⁴² Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard John's witness and followed Jesus. The first thing he did after finding where Jesus lived was find his own brother, Simon, telling him, "We've found the Messiah" (that is, "Christ"). He immediately led him to Jesus.

Hymn # 164 (NCH - Black) Arise, Your Light has Come

Homily

Seeking and...

Rev. Dr. Steve Berry

Hymn: Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness (tune: Nettleton)

1. Praise the One who break the darkness with a liberating light.
Praise the One who frees the prisoners turning blindness into sight.
Praise the One who preached the Gospel healing every dread disease.
Calming storms and feeding thousands with the very bread of peace.

2. Praise the One who blessed the children with a strong yet gentle word.
Praise the One who drove out demons with a piercing two-edged sword.

Praise the one who brings cool water to the desert's burning sand.
From this well comes living water quenching thirst in every land.

3. Praise the one true love incarnate:
Christ who suffered in our place.
Jesus died and rose for many that we may know God by grace.
Let us sing for joy and gladness seeing what our God has done.
Praise the one redeeming glory,
praise the One who makes us one.

Benediction

Postlude: (It is our custom to remain seated during the Postlude)

Jeff Linebeck



News/Calendar

◀ Please bring nonperishable food to church to be donated to the CCR Sharing Shelf ▶

News

All are Welcome

- ◆ Check rupertchurch.org for dates/times of upcoming events ◆
- ◆ Including Farm, Educational and Music events ◆

Alcoholics Anonymous Every Thursday 7pm
On hiatus until April

Calendar

January

19 Martin Luther King, Jr Day

February

2 Groundhog Day

10 2nd Tuesday Lunch & Abundant Harvest Sharing Shelf 11:00 am -1:00 pm

14 Valentines' Day

16 Presidents' Day

21 SOUTHWEST ASSOCIATION A WINTER GATHERING OF OUR CHURCHES

9:00 AM—2:00 PM at AT The First Congregational Church Of Manchester

Theme: "The Being and Doing of Church for Troubled Times"

The newly formed Church subcommittee of SWACOM is sponsoring this year's winter meeting with a focus on ways the churches of the association can better serve and resource each other. **Lunch will be provided**

Would you like to make a gift to the 1786 Meeting House?

Scan the QR Code or enter the website address below to be taken to a website where you can make a donation to help keep Vermont's oldest continuously operating Congregational Church in going into the 21st Century and/or help us meet our renovation goals. **Thank you!**



https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=YLMN3FCHGXP2Y&source=qr

Check out - Things Hidden: The Life and Legacy of Rene Girard

www.youtube.com@thingshiddenmovie . Steve Berry is the Associate Producer. There is also a conversation with director Sam Sorich, Steve Berry and host Jamie Gage produced at GNAT television.

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