

**February 22, 2026**  
**FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT**  
Williston-Immanuel United Church  
Portland, Maine



**Welcome**

Rev. Reba Delzell

**\*Gathering Song**

“Breathe, Listen, and Notice”

Paul Vasile

**Words to ponder****Music for Centering**

“What Wondrous Love is This”

arr John Carter

**Opening Words**

Brenda Moulton

Here in this place, we can ask big questions.

**Who is my neighbor? How can I help?**

**What do I have to learn?**

**Where is God in it all?**

Here in this place, we can ask big questions.

**So may we listen. May we learn.**

**May we stay curious, and may we look for God.**

This is our invitation to lean in. Let us worship our holy God by opening our hearts to the spiritual practice of confession.

**Call to Confession**

Brenda Moulton

Our faith tells us to love our neighbor as we love ourselves, but you and I know that is often easier said than done. Fortunately for us, prayer can be a tool for transformation. When we are honest before God and each other, we open the door to growth and change. So join me in the prayer of confession. Join me now, so that tomorrow, we will be even better at loving our neighbors as ourselves. Let us pray:

*Continued*

## **Prayer of confession**

**Holy God, you have told us to love our neighbors as ourselves, but we get tripped up on logistics. We want to know: who is our neighbor? Do we have to love the stranger? Must we have compassion for our enemy? Forgive our human tendency to create exceptions in the face of love. Rewire our hearts so that we might see the face of a neighbor in every stranger we pass. With hope we pray, amen.**

## **Words of forgiveness**

Family of faith,

When we set limits on love,

**God loves extravagantly.**

When we forget that we are neighbors,

**God claims us as God's own.**

When we judge, hold back, or harm,

**God surrounds us with grace.**

There is nothing we can do or leave undone  
that could separate us from the love of God.

**This is the good news of the gospel. Thanks be to God! Amen.**

**\*Hymn**

“O God, How We have Wandered”

Kevin Nichols

**The God Box**

Rev. Reba Delzell

**Scripture**

Luke 10:25-37 (The Parable of the Good Samaritan) Brenda Moulton

**Word in Music**

“And No Bird Sang”

Douglas Wagner

**Calm was the wind and dark was the sky, when our Lord came to die  
Lone, on the cross for our sins did He hang, and no bird sang  
Women and men with Anguish and fear, then to His cross drew near  
Hushed then to feel the bitter pang, no bird sang  
Kyrie Eleison, Lord have mercy, God’s will be done  
Kyrie Eleison  
No bird sang in the sky, when Christ did come to die.**

**Message**

*Stranger & Neighbor*

Rev. Reba Delzell

**Prayers of the People**

**The Lord's Prayer**    *(Please use any name for God you prefer for the 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, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into  
temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power,  
and the glory, forever. Amen.**

**Prayer Response**

“Jesus, Remember Me”

Taize Community

**Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.  
Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.**

**Invitation to the Offering**

Brenda Moulton

*Want to give electronically? See the back page. If you are new here and have filled out a "Wanna Do Some Good" form, please place it in the offertory plate so that we might donate \$5 to our special offering. If you give a cash donation, please use an envelope and designate where your offering should go.*

**\*Doxology**

**Praise God through out these forty days.**

**Praise Christ, our Lord, whom God did raise.**

**And praise the Spirit who imparts**

**God's love in Christ into our hearts.**

**Amen.**

**\*Offertory Prayer**

**\*Hymn**

“I Saw a Stranger”

Anna Strickland

**Benediction**

**Postlude** “Deep River” (an homage to the late Rev. Jesse Jackson arr. Larry Shackley

## O God, How We Have Wandered

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Kevin Nichols, 1980, alt.

Luke 15:11-32; 2 Cor. 5:16-20

1 O God, how we have wan - dered and hid - den from your face;  
 2 And now at length dis - cern - ing the e - vil that we do,  
 3 O God of all the liv - ing, both ban - ished and re - stored,

In fool - ish - ness have squan - dered your leg - a - cy of grace.  
 By faith we are re - turn - ing with hope and trust in you.  
 Com - pas - sion - ate, for - giv - ing, our peace and hope as - sured.

But how, in ex - ile dwell - ing, we turn with fear and shame,  
 In haste you come to meet us, and home re - joic - ing bring,  
 Grant now that our trans - gress - ing, our faith - less - ness may cease.

As dis - tant but com - pell - ing, you call us each by name.  
 In glad - ness there to greet us with calf and robe and ring.  
 Stretch out your hand in bless - ing, in par - don, and in peace.

*The tune for this contemporary text appears five times in J. S. Bach's St. Matthew Passion, and first appeared as a hymn setting in the early 1800s. It has an ecumenical history reaching back many centuries. Originally it was a German love song.*

Tune: PASSION CHORALE 7.6.7.6.D.  
 (HERZLICH TUT MICH VERLANGEN)  
 Melody by Hans Leo Hassler, 1601  
 Harm. J. S. Bach, 1729  
 For another harmonization, see 179



# I Saw a Stranger

KINGSFOLD 8.6.8.6 D

Words by Anna Strickland, 2024

Music: English traditional, arranged by Ralph Vaughn Williams, 1906

I saw a stran - ger on the road in need of help and  
 I laid there des - perate by the road in need of help and  
 In our em - brace the mem - o - ry re - turned from E - den's

care No clues to their i - den - ti - ty, just  
 care As one by one they passed me by, too  
 dust Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, my

6  
 hu - man flesh laid bare A thought had flut - tered  
 bu - sy or too scared Then one ap - proached and  
 kin whom I can trust The ar - ti - fi - cial

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through my mind: "Is this one of my own?" My tri - bal mind  
 my first thought was "Do they mean me harm?" To my sur - prise  
 walls we build a - round the tribes we claim Make us for - get

made me for - get that they're bone of my bone  
 they met my eyes and held me in their arms  
 the gos - pel truth: "Be - lo - ved" is your name

## New Here?

## CHURCH STAFF

Fill out our "Wanna do some good?" form in the pew rack and place it in the offering plate. We will donate \$5 in your name to our Special Offering this month and get you on our mailing list. Or you can simply text **WIUC** to **84576** to receive our **All Church Email (ACE)**.

**Who are we?** Williston-Immanuel United Church is an inclusive Christian community that promotes faith, fellowship, social justice and love, compassionately reaching out to our broader community, celebrating our diversity, and affirming everyone's spiritual journey.

***Acceptance without conditions,  
 affirmation without discrimination***

these are the goals of Williston-Immanuel United Church.

***For more info about us,***

***go to [www.wiuc.org](http://www.wiuc.org)***

Rev. Reba Delzell, *Pastor*  
 Denise Calkins, *Director of Music & Pianist*  
 Kate McDade, *Church Administrator*  
 Renée Michaud, *Custodian*  
 Breelyn McClernand, *Childcare*

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Music license: CCLI #312373