

January 4, 2026

Williston-Immanuel United Church
Portland, Maine



Welcome***Gathering Song** “Jesus, Jesus, Oh What a Wonderful Child”**Words to Ponder**

“It is not that the facts don’t matter. It is just that they don’t matter as much as the stories do, and stories can be true whether they happen or not. You do not have to do archaeology to find out if they are genuine or spend years in the library combing ancient texts. There is another way home. You just listen to the story.”

-Barbara Brown Taylor, from her sermon, “Home by Another Way”
in her book, Home by Another Way

Music for Centering

“We Three Kings”

Arr. Mayo

Opening Words

Lisa Darak-Druck

The Magi waited and watched, knowing something wondrous would be happening.

We waited for the birth of Jesus; now something wondrous is about to take root.

The darkness that invaded all lives was banished by the light of that star.

The darkness that surrounds us is gone!

Let us celebrate the bright shining of God's love in our lives.

Let us become those who will bring the light of God's love to others. AMEN.

Let us pray together:

God of Promise and mysterious Light, be with us this day as we journey in our faith; to meet your Gift. Give us courage and hope along our way, as

your light will continue to glow brightly in our path, leading us to service and discipleship in Jesus' Name. AMEN.

***Hymn**

“We Three Kings”

The God Box

Viki Green

Invitation to the Offering

Lisa Darak-Druck

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, from Whom All Blessings Flow”

Praise God from whom all blessings flow

Praise God, all creatures here below

Praise God above, you heavenly host

Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***Offertory Prayer**

Scripture

Matthew 2:1-12

Message

“Home by Another Way”

Rev. Jani Darak-Druck

Word in Music

“Many Are The Lightbeams”

Communion

Communal Prayer

Lord of living light, we hear the story of the Magi and tie it together with our warm Christmas celebration. It feels comfortable to us. Break those bonds of comfort and help us to realize the risk of witness and discipleship for those who follow your light. Shine brightly in us and through us. Forgive the blindness we so often offer to you. Give us vision of what you would have us be and do in the Light of Your Love.

(Moment of Silence for personal confessions)

Words of Assurance

Light has come to you. Your light has come and it has erased the darkness. Now we can walk and work in the light. You are loved by God and called to God's service. AMEN.

Blessing and Receiving of the Elements

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer (translated from Aramaic directly into English)

**O cosmic Birther of all radiance and vibration,
soften the ground of our being and carve out a space within us
where your Presence can abide.**

**Fill us with your creativity so that we may be empowered
to bear the fruit of your mission.**

Let each of our actions bear fruit in accordance with our desire.

**Endow us with the wisdom to produce and share what each being needs to
grow and flourish.**

**Untie the tangled threads of destiny that bind us,
as we release others from the entanglement of past mistakes.**

**Do not let us be seduced by that which would divert us from our true
purpose but illuminate the opportunities of the present moment.**

**For you are the ground and the fruitful vision, the birth, power, and
fulfillment, as all is gathered and made whole once again. And So It Is!**

Prayer Response

“Amen, Amen”

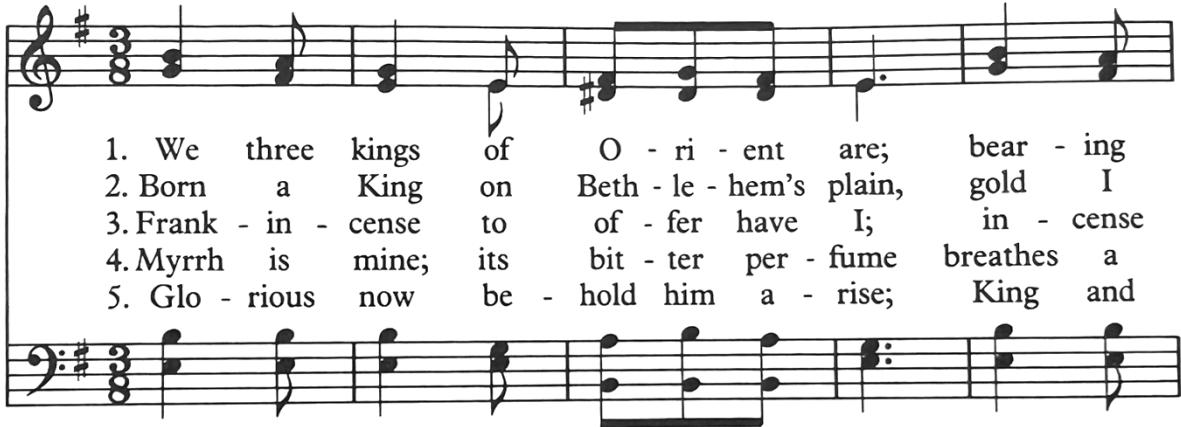
A-men, a-men, a-men, a-men, a-men.

Announcements

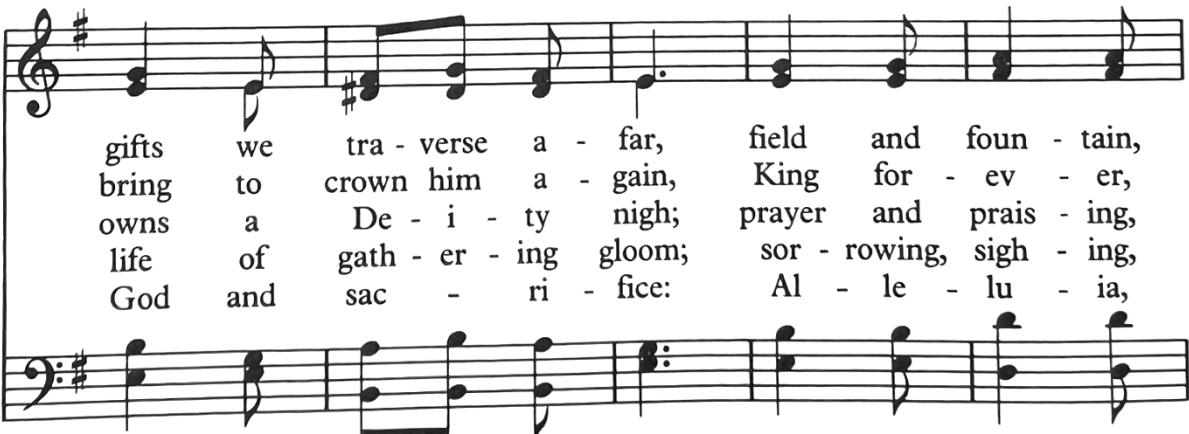
Sung Benediction**“Blest Be The Tie that Binds”**

You are invited to join in a circle to sing this song.

**Blest be the tie that binds
our hearts in Christian love;
the fellowship of kindred minds
is like to that above.**

254**We Three Kings**

1. We three kings of O - ri - ent are; bear - ing
2. Born a King on Beth - le - hem's plain, gold I
3. Frank - in - cense to of - fer have I; in - cense
4. Myrrh is mine; its bit - ter per - fume breathes a
5. Glo - rious now be - hold him a - rise; King and



gifts we tra - verse a - far, field and foun - tain,
bring to crown him a - gain, King for - ev - er,
owns a De - i - ty nigh; prayer and prais - ing,
life of gath - er - ing gloom; sor - rowing, sigh - ing,
God and sac - ri - fice: Al - le - lu - ia,

Moor and moun - tain, fol - low - ing yon - der star.
ceas - ing nev - er, o - ver us all to reign.
voic - es rais - ing, wor-ship - ing God on high.
bleed - ing, dy - ing, sealed in the stone - cold tomb.
Al - le - lu - ia, sounds through the earth and skies.

Refrain

O star of wonder, star of light, star with roy - al beau - ty bright,
west - ward lead - ing, still pro - ceed - ing, guide us to thy per - fect light.

Many Are the Lightbeams

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Cyprian of Carthage, "De unitate ecclesiae," 252 C.E.

Swedish paraphr. by Anders Frostenson (b. 1906)

Transl. David Lewis, 1983

John 8:12; 9:5; 15:1-5; 1 Cor. 12:4-27; Gal. 3:28

Unison

1 Man - y are the light-beams from the one light. Our one
 2 Man - y are the branch-es of the one tree. Our one
 3 Man - y are the gifts given, love is all one. Love's the
 4 Man - y ways to serve God, the Spir - it is one; ser - vant
 5 Man - y are the mem - bers, the bod - y is one; mem - bers

light is Je - sus. Man - y are the light-beams
 tree is Je - sus. Man - y are the branch-es
 gift of Je - sus. Man - y are the gifts given,
 spir - it of Je - sus. Man - y ways to serve God, the
 all of Je - sus. Man - y are the mem - bers, the

from the one light; we are one in Christ.
 of the one tree; we are one in Christ.
 love is all one; we are one in Christ.
 Spir - it is one; we are one in Christ.
 bod - y is one; we are one in Christ.

The text upon which this hymn is based is by a bishop of the early church, Cyprian of Carthage. It was paraphrased from his 252 C.E. work, "De unitate ecclesiae" (Of church unity). He was martyred in Carthage c. 258.

Tune: LIGHTBEAMS Irr.
 Olle Widstrand (b. 1906)
 Arr. Darryl Nixon, 1987

This Is a Day of New Beginnings

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Unison

1. This is a day of new begin - nings,
 2. For by the life and death of Je - sus,
 3. Then let us, with the Spir - it's dar - ing,
 4. Christ is a - live, and goes be - fore us
 *5. In faith we'll gath - er round the ta - ble

time to re - mem - ber and move on,
 God's might - y Spir - it, now as then,
 step from the past and leave be - hind
 to show and share what love can do.
 to taste and share what love can do.

time to be - lieve what love is bring - ing,
 can make for us a world of dif - ference,
 our dis - ap - point - ment, guilt, and griev - ing,
 This is a day of new be - gin - nings;
 This is a day of new be - gin - nings;

lay - ing to rest the pain that's gone.
 as faith and hope are born a - gain.
 seek - ing new paths, and sure to find.
 our God is mak - ing all things new.
 our God is mak - ing all things new.

*Alternate text for Holy Communion

WORDS: Brian Wren, 1978; alt. 1987 (Rev. 21:5)
 MUSIC: Carlton R. Young, 1984

BEGINNINGS
 98.98

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CHURCH STAFF

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

Office phone: 207.775.2301

Coming Up

Rev. Reba away December 28-January 14

**Annual meeting January 25
After worship**

Music license: CCLI #312373

New Here?

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**