



Williston Federated Church

December 14, 2025

Open and Affirming, Reconciling Pledge

We, the Williston Federated Church, declare ourselves to be an Open and Affirming, Reconciling congregation. With God's grace, we seek to be a congregation that includes all persons, embracing differences of sexual orientation, gender, marital status, age, mental and physical ability as well as racial, ethnic, or social-economic background. We welcome all to share in the life and leadership, ministry and fellowship, worship sacraments, responsibilities, and blessings of participation in our congregation. (Adopted by the Williston Federated Church congregation in 2006.)

*And Mary said, 'My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he
has looked with favor on the lowliness of his
servant. Surely, from now on all generations
will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has
done great things for me, and holy is his name.'*

Luke 1:46-55 (NRSV)

Pastor – Reverend Paul Eyer phone: 802-878-5792 email: pastoreyer@gmail.com

Pastoral (seminarian) Intern – Dr. Jill Irvine

Emeritus Associate Pastor – Charlie Magill

Co Lay Leaders – Ashley Dubois and Donna Sue Hain

Church Office Administrator – Pamela Osborne

Music Director – Adam Hall

Organist – Carolyn Pillsbury

Choir Accompanist – Suiong Wong

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Church Office: (802) 878-5792

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United Church of Christ and United Methodist Church
Federated in 1899



Welcome To All Who Worship Here!

December 14, 2025, at 9:30 a.m.

Third Sunday of Advent

Childcare is available downstairs for our youngest children.

Hearing assistance devices are available—please ask an usher for assistance.

A fellowship time follows worship—please join us downstairs in Fellowship Hall.

Mission Statement

Our church is an inclusive community which enthusiastically welcomes and gathers all people to share the wonder of God's love. Together we seek to find fullness of life through Jesus' teachings, to reach out into the world to live lovingly and justly as followers of Christ, and to respond actively to human needs. (Adopted by the Williston Federated Church congregation in 2024.)

Call to Worship	One: We come to glorify God, to rejoice in the One who saves us. All: God comes, so we might believe, so we might be blessed. One: Our hearts leap for joy! For God is coming to us in a child. All: God comes for those who hunger for hope, for those who thirst for grace. One: Holy is the One who comes in God's name, who fulfills every promise of God. All: God comes to walk with those who follow in faith, to bring peace to a shattered world.	Ashley Dubois, Lay Leader, and congregation
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Introit/ Processional	"Come Thou Long-Expected Jesus"	Senior Choir Adam Hall, conducting, and Suiong Wong, piano
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Welcome/ Greetings		Pastor Paul Eyer
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Lighting the Advent Candles	<p>One: Come, O Holy One, breaker of chains and renewer of life! Open our eyes to your presence in all the earth.</p> <p><i>(Three Advent candles are lit.)</i></p> <p>All: May the glow of these candles—and the words of a Mediterranean teenager named Mary—stir us to proclaim gladly the signs of your love: the liberation of those oppressed, the healing of those frail and broken, and springs of water in all the parched places. Amen.</p>	Ben and Brittany Escorpizo (and children Mathias, Pippa, and Oakley) and congregation
Words of Peace		Pastor Paul Eyer
Lighting the Peace Candle/ Sharing the Peace/Passing of the Peace	<p>One: The peace of Christ be with you.</p> <p>All: And also with you.</p>	Pastor Paul Eyer and congregation
Opening Hymn	<p>“My Soul Gives Glory to My God”</p> <p>UMC (Red) Hymnal #198 (sing all verses)</p> <p>(Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-740093. All rights reserved)</p>	Congregation and Suiong Wong, piano
Prayer for Today	<p>One: O God, through Christ, those whose voices are silenced hear the whispers of angels on hillsides and in shelters.</p> <p>All: Through Christ, those who are knocked over lead the way into your kingdom; Through your Spirit, those who wander in</p>	Dr. Jill Irvine and congregation

**shadows are clasped tight in your
love. Amen.**

Anthem	“Mary Sat a-Rockin’” By Greg Gilpin	Senior Choir, conducted by Adam Hall, Suiong Wong, piano
Time with Children of all ages		Pastor Paul
Scripture	Luke 1:46-55	Shelley Marshall
Prayer of Illumination (adapted from Psalm 19:14)	All: May the words of my mouth and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, our strength and our redeemer.	Pastor Paul Eyer and congregation
Sermon	“Reversal”	Pastor Paul Eyer
Celebrations/ Prayer Requests/ Prayers of the People	Prayer requests may be sent to: WFCPrayer44@gmail.com Private prayer requests may be sent to: pastoreyer@gmail.com	Pastor Paul Eyer
Silent Reflection		

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.	Pastor Paul Eyer and congregation
Offering Offertory Hymn	"I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light" UMC (red) Hymnal #206 (sing all verses) (Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-740093. All rights reserved)	Suiong Wong, piano
Doxology	UMC Hymnal #94 (Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-740093. All rights reserved)	Congregation and Suiong Wong, piano
Prayer of Dedication (unison)	All: O God, we pray that with our gifts, as well as our lives, we will tell of those who are given voice, those who are put back on their feet, those who show us the way, and those who offer us grace and hope. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.	Dr. Jill Irvine and congregation
Life/Mission of the Church		Pastor Paul Eyer

Closing Hymn	“The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy” Songbook #129 (sing verses 1 and 2) (Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-740093. All rights reserved)	Congregation and Suiong Wong, piano
Benediction/ Blessing		Pastor Paul Eyer
Postlude		Suiong Wong, piano

Liturgical Resources

The **Call to Worship** was adapted from adapted from “Liturgy w/communion for December 23, 2018 (Advent 4-C) from Lectionary Liturgies by Thom Shuman found at <https://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/2018/12/liturgy-with-communion-for-december-23.html>

The **Prayer for Today** and **Prayer of Dedication** were adapted from “Liturgy w/communion for December 11, 2016 (Advent 3 - A)” from Lectionary Liturgies by Thom Shuman, found at <https://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/2016/12/liturgy-wcommunion-for-december-11-2016.html>

Ushers: Donna Goodheart and Brian Goodwin

Greeter(s): Carol Pierce

Coffee Hour: Ruth Magill

Online Greeter: Jackie Lingelbach

Online Prayer Coordinator: Ashley Dubois



To give online, use the QR code above.

This Week and Beyond at Williston Federated Church

The Giving Tree – FINAL DAY TODAY

Christmas is a joyous time of year for most of us, but for many in our community who are financially challenged, it can be exceedingly stressful. We at Williston Federated Church have the opportunity to make this a happier holiday by providing gifts to children from Allen Brook and Williston Central Schools. We invite you to participate in The Giving Tree by purchasing a gift card or cards that the families may use to select the “perfect” Santa gift, e.g. a toy, a game or art

supplies, AND winter clothing items for their child(ren). This provides a level of autonomy and dignity to folks to be able to actually pick out the gifts for their children, which they may not be able to do otherwise.

The Giving Tree will be set up as usual in the hallway outside the sanctuary with \$25 gift tags attached. Please take one or more tags and purchase a gift card or cards from the store indicated on the back. There is no sign-up necessary. We trust that if you remove a tag, that you will purchase a gift card and return it. Please place your gift card(s) in an envelope and drop it in the decorated box next to the Giving Tree outside the sanctuary. All gifts should be returned to church by TODAY and then will be delivered to school on Monday, December 15th. A white dove will be hung on the tree for each gift received. Thank you so much for your abundant generosity. Your gifts will bring much joy to many children in our community. If you have any questions or need help selecting a tag or returning the gift to church, please contact Chris Burns-DiBiasio, cburnsdibiasio@gmail.com, 419-230-4417 or Sue Hook, hooksuzanne4@gmail.com, 201-694-7890. And a very Merry Christmas and happy holiday to you.

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**Christmas Poinsettias**

It's time to place your orders for poinsettias that will adorn the church on Christmas Eve. Follow [this link](https://forms.gle/FauX3vdaxP5VseC79) (<https://forms.gle/FauX3vdaxP5VseC79>) for the order form. Questions? Contact Ashley [ashley0705@gmail.com](mailto:ashley0705@gmail.com)

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Special Offering on Christmas Eve

The special offering collected both the 5:30pm and 7:30pm services on Christmas Eve will be equally divided between support for the vital ministries of Williston Federated Church and the important work carried out by Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity. The mission of Habitat for Humanity is to demonstrate the love and teachings of Jesus Christ. Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity is the affiliate that works with local families and community volunteers to build and sell affordable homes in Northwest Vermont. The service area includes Chittenden, Franklin, Grand Isle, and Lamoille Counties. Habitat homebuyers help build their own homes alongside volunteers and pay an affordable mortgage. Through the affiliate’s efforts, over 120 families have achieved the strength, stability, and independence needed to build a better life for themselves and their children. Gifts can be made with cash, check or an online giving form at <https://onrealm.org/WFC/-/form/give/Christmas>. For convenience, you can use the QR code by pointing your phone’s camera at it and follow prompts to open the link in a browser.

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Williston Federated Church  
Christmas Eve Special Offering

**Williston Community Tree Lighting – Thank you!**

Thank you to everyone who helped make the Williston Community Tree Lighting a success this year. We had a great turn out from the community and collected 70 cold weather accessories for the Williston Community Food Shelf.

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Friends in Need

Many of you have expressed concerns for our Afghan and Congolese friends, given recent pronouncements, policies, and proposals from the federal administration regarding refugees and immigrants. At the moment, there remains considerable uncertainty about what policies will go into effect, and how USCIS (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services) and ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) will respond locally. Our desire is to help ensure the safety and well-being of these our fellow Vermonters.

Local organizations such as Afghan Alliance and national organizations which advocate for newcomers suggest that public support for immigrants is important and effective. Thus we encourage you to make your voice heard in the public square on these important issues.

Here at the church, we have been in direct contact with the families we know well, and have a team of members providing support to them and keeping informed of policy changes that may affect these families. If you would like further information or have questions, please contact Carol or Bruce Wyatt.

Jesus calls us to welcome the stranger, and we have done so and will continue to do so at Williston Federated Church. So we encourage your prayers and your actions in support of our newcomer friends.

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**Winter Arrangement**

Donna Feller has put a winter flower arrangement on the altar in this Advent season in memory of her mother, Emma May Schmidt.

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New Ministry for Widows or Widowers

We are hosting our 2nd Widow/Widowers Support Group Ministry Monthly Meeting monthly from 11-1 in the Choir Room. Please come and join us. The next date is December 14 so you can mark your calendar. We look forward to seeing you. Ministry Leaders: Kathy Quesnel, Carol Burbank and Ursula White

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## **Christmas Pageant – Save the date!**

This year's Christmas pageant, "Christmas Store Window," will be presented on December 21st. Rehearsal schedules and casting details will be shared soon. We look forward to celebrating the season together through this special story of light and hope.

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Is Choir Calling Your Name?

Do you like to sing? Adult choir rehearsal takes place each Thursday at 6:45pm in the church sanctuary. The children's choir (Kindergarten through 8th grade) rehearses at 9am each Sunday in Fellowship Hall. Let us make a joyful noise to the Lord!

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## **Women's Book Club**

The Women's Book Club will meet on December 17 at 2 pm at Jane Stickney's home at 32 Hickory Hill Rd to discuss 'Queens of Crime' by Marie Benedict. Our January books are two books by Claire Keegan. 'Foster' and 'Small Things Like These' Our book for February is 'Home Front' by Kristin Hannah. Lois Mason [loismason418@gmail.com](mailto:loismason418@gmail.com).

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Sunday School Coordinator Needed

The church is looking for a Sunday School Coordinator who would plan and supervise Sunday School for children aged four years through eighth grade.

Principal duties would include:

- Recruit, train and support Sunday school teaching volunteers
- Provide outreach to children who have attended WFC in the past two years
- Assist with teaching Sunday school when needed
- Welcome new families and supervise Sunday school registration
- Assist the Education committee with special programs, such as fall kickoff, Christmas pageant, Mardi Gras brunch and various mission programs
- Attend monthly meetings of the Education committee
- May also include facilitating parent discussions group and coordinating summer vacation bible school

For more information, contact Brian Goodwin at 802-238-4180 or by email at Goodwinjsd@gmail.com

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## **Hear Ye! Hear Ye!**

For those who would like to hear the worship service better, we encourage you to sit in one of the first four pews. You are not alone!

There are also two hearing devices to use. Please ask an usher for assistance.

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Prayer cards

Prayer Cards are available to write prayer requests. (You may find them in the pew rack in front of you.) You are invited to place your completed prayer cards in the Prayer Box (crafted by Chris Stewart) that is now positioned on a table in the Gallery area (the space between the stairs and the hallway to the sanctuary. Additional prayer cards can be found on that table as well.) Written prayers entered in the Prayer Box will be lifted to God in prayer by Pastor Paul throughout the week.

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### **A Note about the Time with Children**

We are delighted to welcome children into our worship service! And we have a special time during the service aimed especially at the youngest among us—and the young at heart! We welcome children to participate in the “Time with Children ” in any of the following ways: remain seated in the pew with their family; gather on the first pew; or sit on the chancel steps. Remember that the worship service is being live streamed to social media. So, if you would prefer that your child not appear in this video on our church’s Facebook page, you can keep the children with you in the pew or have them sit on the first pew with their back to the camera. If you have no objection to your child appearing in this live streamed video feed, then all of the options are open to you.

And then following the Time with Children, the younger set can head off to join members of the Education Committee who will engage with the children for a time of crafts and learning. It is a joy to welcome children in our midst!

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Fellowship Time After Worship

Each Sunday after the worship service, all are invited to the Fellowship Hall (downstairs) for coffee and light refreshments. This is a wonderful opportunity for informal conversation and building community.

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### **Morning Centering Prayer Group**

The Centering Prayer Group meets on Fridays on Zoom, opening at 9:45. The meeting begins at 10am and includes 20 minutes of silent prayer, reading of the Gospel Bible passage of the day and centering on a particular part of the passage and sharing personal impressions about the passage. For zoom link or questions contact Donna Fellingner at 802-355-1700 or [donnafellnergvt@gmail.com](mailto:donnafellnergvt@gmail.com).

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Monday Women's Bible Study

The Women's Bible Study chooses books of the Bible to discuss, and we have a great time listening to each other as we try to discern God's word. We meet in person and by ZOOM every Monday afternoon from 1:30-2:30. If you'd like to join us, have questions, wish you knew more about the Bible, please contact Sally Metro at ssmetro9@gmail.com. All are welcome!

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## **Men's Social Breakfast**

All the men of the church are invited to breakfast and chat the last Wednesday of every month. Breakfast starts at 8:00 am; cooking at 7:30 am. Come for one or both. Charlie Magill, [cmagillvt@aol.com](mailto:cmagillvt@aol.com).

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Friday Men's Bible Study

Men gather weekly to discuss and try to understand God's Word and how it effects our lives. Join the group in the Fellowship Hall every Friday morning at 7:00 am. The sessions are also on Zoom.

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## **Longevity Gathering**

For those who want to live a long, healthy, and happy life, you are invited to be part of the conversation! Helena Katz is leading a "Longevity Gathering" that meets in the choir room the first Sunday of the month following worship. The gathering gets started at 11:00am so that people have a chance to enjoy fellowship and refreshments in Fellowship Hall. Please also see the Longevity Gatherings page on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@LongevityGatherings> Please subscribe to our channel. (NOTE: The choir room is located past the gallery space just beyond the hallway that connects with the sanctuary here on the upper level of the church.)

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Dismas House

Every third Tuesday of the month volunteers from Williston Federated Church provide a meal to the residents and staff at Dismas House in Burlington. We'd like to thank November's volunteers, Carol and Bruce Wyatt, Sara Moran, and Sue Hook for sharing food with Dismas, and we continue to welcome offers for future months. You can find the sign-up sheet posted on the bulletin board. One volunteer does not need to be responsible for the entire meal, teamwork is always possible! Volunteers can join those at Dismas for the meal, or they can drop the meal off, whatever works best. Thank you to everyone for supporting this very meaningful outreach! Please reach out to Lizzy Pope at lizzypope@gmail.com with questions.

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**Opportunities For Service**

Are you feeling energetic? Need to get some more steps in? Do you feel the desire to serve this church, but can't make another long-term commitment? Are you new to the church or just returning from being away? Or are you only going to be in the area for a short time? Whatever your motivation, we'll take it!!! We are working on a new way to communicate opportunities for folks to serve this church and our community. They are "Opportunities to Serve". Not on a committee or a board but as a person who appreciates this church and wants to give back, by doing some small bit of work, sharing a talent or ability, or simply lending a hand when another member has a bit of labor that needs doing. There will be a bulletin board at the bottom of the stairs as you exit after worship towards coffee hour or out the door by Fellowship Hall. On it will be written opportunities to serve the church. If you find one there that fits your abilities and your calendar, take it with you. Make contact with the person whose name is on the card and make a plan for how you will fulfill this opportunity. How good it feels to help out!

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Greenworks Ministry – Green Tip for the Week

One way to reduce your carbon footprint during the 2025 Christmas celebrations is to shop locally for gifts and decorations. While it's easy and convenient to order online, buying from local stores eliminates greenhouse gas emissions and pollution associated with transportation. Local products generally require less packaging, too.

2025

Christmas Worship Schedule



Please join us for the Children's

Christmas Pageant Sunday at 9:30am December 21 (in person and live-streamed at facebook.com/WillistonFederatedChurch)



Wednesday, December 17 at 6:30pm -- Longest Night Service

in the Williston Federated Church sanctuary (in person and live-streamed)
You are invited to a special service designed for those who find the holidays to be a difficult time. Our church cares about you. This brief service offers ample opportunity for quiet worship and reflection.



Wednesday, December 24 at 5pm -- Family-Friendly Christmas Eve service

in the Williston Federated Church sanctuary (in person and live-streamed)
This family-focused service is designed with the younger ones (and those "young at heart") in mind. Interactive elements to engage the kids will be interspersed amid Christmas carols in this service for all ages.



Wednesday, December 24 at 7:30m -- Candlelight Christmas Eve service

in the Williston Federated Church sanctuary (in person and live-streamed).
Beautiful music, beloved Christmas carols, and candlelight combine to make this service special. After the 7:30 worship service on Christmas Eve, stop by Fellowship Hall to greet friends and enjoy cookies and punch. Donations of cookies are appreciated. They may be placed on the table in Fellowship Hall.



Wednesday, December 24 at 11pm --

Community Christmas Eve service

in the Old Brick Church (in person only)



Sunday, December 28 "Worship Around the Breakfast Table"

Join us on December 28th for an informal worship and breakfast in Fellowship Hall. This wonderful event will combine a breakfast with an informal worship service that will include prayer, Christmas carols, and conversation. If you wish, you are welcome to bring a dish to share. There will be a sign up on the bulletin board to help with planning.