



Williston Federated Church

January 11, 2026

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.)



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

44 North Williston Road, Williston, Vermont 05495

Church Office: (802) 878-5792

E-mail address: WillistonFederatedChurch@gmail.com Website: www.steeple.org



United Church of Christ and United Methodist Church
Federated in 1899



Welcome To All Who Worship Here!

January 11, 2026 at 9:30 a.m.

Childcare is available downstairs in the nursery for children up to age three.

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	Leader: Come, you who are weary, you who have been bruised by life, you whose flame has flickered in the winds of the world.	Ashley Dubois, Co-lay Leader and congregation
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All: We come, longing to be renewed.

Leader: The Holy One invites us to stretch our hearts toward courage, our hands toward compassion, our lives toward gentle justice.

All: We open ourselves to be stretched into new life.

Leader: A voice from heaven says to us, as it said to Jesus: You are my beloved. This Spirit rests upon us, too.

All: We are God's Beloved, called to bring gentle justice.

Leader: Come, let us remember who we are.

All: Let us worship God with joy.

Prelude

Suiong Wong,
piano

Welcome/
Greetings

Words of
Peace

Pastor Paul Eyer

Lighting the
Peace
Candle/
Sharing the
Peace/
Passing of
the Peace

One: The peace of Christ be with you
All: And also with you.

Pastor Paul Eyer
and congregation

Opening
Hymn

“Spirit of God” Songbook #121
(sing refrain, followed by all five verses—
without the refrain—and then close with the
refrain)
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Suiong Wong,
piano, and
congregation

Prayer for
Today

One: In the beginning, O God, you whispered
for light to glow in the chaos.
**All: In words of blessing, you spoke justice
into all the places of hopelessness.**
One: Into the deep water of our lives, God of
Imagination, you sang grace.
**All: We pray that you will continue to pour
the Spirit's peace and passion into our lives.**
One: God in Community, Holy in One, silence
those whispers which tell us that we are not
enough.
**All: Cleanse us of our dusty worries and send
us out as servants of the Beloved—**

Dr. Jill Irvine and
congregation

**carrying the good news, setting people free,
shining your light into the corners of the
world. Amen.**

Special
Music

Time with
Children of
All Ages

Pastor Paul Eyer

Scripture

Isaiah 42:1-9

Jan Demers

Matthew 3:13-17

Prayer of
Illumination

**“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

“A Light to the Nations”

Pastor Paul Eyer

Celebrations
/Prayer
Requests

Prayer requests may be sent to:
WFCPrayer44@gmail.com or if you are online,
place them in the chat

Private prayer requests may be sent to:
pastoreyer@gmail.com

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**

Pastor Paul Eyer
and congregation

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.

Call to
Offering

Dr. Jill Irvine

Offering
Offertory

Suiong Wong,
piano, and
congregation

Doxology

UMC Hymnal #94
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Suiong Wong,
piano and
congregation

Prayer of
Dedication
(unison)

All: O God, receive these gifts and carry them into the world. May they set people free. May they help to open closed eyes and to release clenched fists. May these gifts help to proclaim faith instead of fear and to share peace instead of platitudes. This we pray in the name of the Beloved. Amen.

Dr. Jill Irvine and
congregation

Life/Mission
of the
Church

Pastor Paul Eyer

Closing Hymn	“We Walk by Faith” Songbook #157 (sing verses 1, 3, and 4) (Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-740093. All rights reserved)	Suiong Wong, piano and congregation
Benediction/ Blessing		Pastor Paul Eyer
Postlude		Suiong Wong, piano
Liturgical Resources	<p>The Call to Worship is adapted from “Stretched Them Out: Service Prayers for The Baptism of Christ/Epiphany 1A” written by Rev. Michael Anthony Howard who serves as Minister of Faith in Action for Living Water Association, Ohio NorthEast, found at https://www.ucc.org/worship-way/baptism-of-christ-a-january-11/</p> <p>The Prayer for Today and Prayer of Dedication were adapted from “Liturgy w/communion for January 11, 2026 (Baptism of the Lord - A)” from <u>Lectionary Liturgies</u> by Rev. Thom Shuman found at https://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/</p>	
	<p><i>Ushers: Don Thurston and Lizzy Pope Greeter: Shelley Marshall</i></p> <p><i>Coffee Hour: Louise Kyle</i></p> <p><i>Online Greeter: Jackie Lingelbach</i></p>	<p><i>Online Prayer Coordinator: Ashley Dubois</i></p>

This Week and Beyond at Williston Federated Church

Winter Arrangement

Donna Fellinger 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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### **Church Degreening TODAY!**

The Music and Worship Committee will be “degreening” the church AFTER coffee hour today, Sunday, January 11. We would welcome a few helping hands. Thank you for your assistance.

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Membership Informational Meeting Sunday, January 25 After Worship

If you are new to the church community, or have been worshipping with us for years, and are interested in joining the church, there will be an informational meeting January 25 11:00-12:00 in the Sitting Room.

You will learn about the history of the church and our connection to the UMC & the UCC. Representatives from the various committees will be present to share a bit about the work of their committee. Being a full member of the church is not a requirement for participation in all aspects of worship, serving on committees, providing outreach and service to others. It is an opportunity to make a public statement of Christian witness.

New members will be received on a date TBD. If you have questions, speak to Pastor Paul or Carol Bouchard, Membership Committee Chair. To assist with planning please RSVP to Carol.

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## **New Ministry for Widows or Widowers**

As of January 11, 2026, the WFC Widow/Widower Support Group Monthly Meetings will be held the 2nd Sunday of each month at 11:00 AM in the WFC "Sitting Room" just past Pastor Paul's Office. This is a caring and empathetic group that supports each other through active listening, compassion, and understanding.

Ministry Leaders: Kathy Quesnel, Carol Burbank and Ursula White

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Valentine Cookie Extravaganza

WFC would like to express our heartfelt thanks, on behalf of the church, to the following community servants: staff at WCS, ABS & CVU as well as our local police, fire & rescue, Town Clerk, USPS, CSWD, medical practices and others, for their continued service to our community during the past year as well as our Mace House friends..

Please sign up on the bulletin board to make and deliver cookies or sign up online using this [link](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C4CAEAE2EA2F9C70-cookie#/):
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C4CAEAE2EA2F9C70-cookie#/>

Cookies may be delivered at your convenience leading up to Feb.14th. If you live outside of Williston, please consider delivering cookies to an organization in your city or town. Thank you note cards, to include with the cookies, can be found on the bulletin board or feel free to write your own note. If possible, and with the recipient's permission, please take a photo when you deliver the cookies. For more information, contact [Carol Bouchard](mailto:Carol.Bouchard@wfcwilliston.org).

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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 8<sup>th</sup> 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 Jan 21 to discuss two books by Claire Keegan, 'Foster' and 'Small Things Like These'. On Feb 18: 'Home Front' by Kristin Hannah. On Mar 18: 'Good Dirt' by Charmaine Wilkerson. On Apr 15: 'The Book Club for Troublesome Women' by Marie Bostwick. On May 20: 'The Marriage Portrait' by Maggie O'Farrell. All women are welcome.

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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](mailto: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 Fellinger at 802-355-1700 or donnafellinervt@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 by ZOOM ONLY every Monday afternoon from 1:30-2:30. If you'd like to join us, have questions, or wish you knew more about the Bible, please contact Sally Metro at [ssmetro9@gmail.com](mailto: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.

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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](mailto: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**

### **AVOID FOOD WASTE**

An estimated 31 percent of the world's food supply ends up in landfills each year. There are many reasons for this disturbing fact. One is that consumers throw out edible food because they misunderstand food labels.

- “Best If Used By/Before”: This is a suggestion regarding when the taste and quality of food are at their peak. It has nothing to do with food safety.
- “Use By”: This is the suggested date by when you should eat the food, but it has nothing to do with food safety, except when used on infant formula.
- “Sell By”: This is a label aimed at retailers, not consumers. Approximately one third of a product's shelf life remains after the “sell by” date for the consumer to use at home.
- “Freeze By”: This indicates when a product should be frozen to maintain its peak quality. It has nothing to do with food safety.

According to the USDA Food Safety and Inspection service, with the exception of infant formula, food properly stored and handled should be safe until spoilage is evident.

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Trustee and Greenworks Ministry Update

Trustees, and Greenworks Ministry tackled a number of energy efficiency projects, on two church buildings, in 2025.

1. Our Mace house, which we rent to low-income families, has qualified for free weatherization from Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO). They will do an energy audit of the home, and then upgrade insulation, and other systems that qualify. They hope to get to us by spring or summer of 2026!

2. We are working with Vermont Gas and Cx Associates on efficiency recommendations for the church building. VGS did a walk-through energy audit and gave us DIY projects. Then VGS arranged for Cx to do a blower test energy audit on Dec. 29th. We will receive a report with recommendations on how we can save energy/lower costs/reduce greenhouse gasses. VGS paid for half of the cost and we applied for a grant to cover the other half of the energy audit cost.

3. Two Air Source Heat pumps were installed in Fellowship Hall Dec. 26th. They are now providing heat, and in summer will cool Fellowship Hall and the Kitchen area. We received the 30% point of sale rebates by purchasing this equipment in early December. (These rebates ended Dec. 31, 2025). We are applying for State of Vt., Federal, and Vt Interfaith Power and Light grants to further reduce the cost to the church.

Many thanks for the support from all the Trustees, and Greenworks ministry team, and to those who are putting in extra time on these projects: Dan Clark, Rebecca and Joseph Dubois, Martin Hain, Joan Ebbeson, Cliff Hook, Kim Hornung-Marcy, Carmyn Stanko, Susan and Tony Lamb, Bruce Wyatt.

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### **A compelling conversation that we need right now**

A nation broken by injustice. A society riven by division. Sound familiar? This was the world that confronted Howard Thurman, a great African American pastor and theologian of the twentieth century. Howard Thurman's writings proved deeply relevant to the Civil Rights movement and remain remarkably relevant today.

In the coming weeks, we, too, can benefit from the abundant wisdom offered by this significant spiritual leader. Beginning Thursday, January 29, our pastoral (seminarian) intern Dr. Jill Irvine will lead an adult study series focused upon the life and thought of Howard Thurman. Our window into his work will be a more recent book authored by Lerita Coleman Brown entitled *What Makes You Come Alive, A Spiritual Walk with Howard Thurman*. The Christian Education Committee is procuring a fixed number of these books to be available for those participating in the study. (The books are available in hardback only, so if you can contribute ten dollars or more to help defer the expense of the book incurred by the committee, that would be welcome.)

The schedule will be as follows:

Thursday, January 29 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, February 5 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, February 12 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, February 19 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, March 5 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

NOTE: There will be **no** session on Thursday, February 26. (And for the duration of this study series, the "responding to racism" conversation will occur in the context of these Howard Thurman-focused sessions. The usual "responding to racism" conversations will resume on their regular schedule on March 12.)

These sessions will take place in Fellowship Hall—and will be made available online via Zoom. A light meal of soup and bread will be provided for those attending in-person (courtesy of the Christian Education Committee).

Please RSVP to Pam at the church office ([WillistonFederatedChurch@gmail.com](mailto:WillistonFederatedChurch@gmail.com) or 802-878-5792) to indicate your interest in attending.