

**The United Methodist Church at Absecon**

100 Pitney Rd // Absecon, NJ 08201

609.641.1265 // abseconumc.com  
abseconumc@comcast.net

**The Reverend David L. Ledford III, Pastor**

ReverendDaveLedford@gmail.com

**Priscilla Cunningham,  
Director of Music and Organist**



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# Making Room, Moving Parts, Master Plan

January 4, 2026

## Welcome

**Prelude** Once in Royal David's City

## Call to Worship

**Leader:** Come! Come from our sanctuary or from your home. Come at 11 AM on Sunday or any time during the week. Come whenever and wherever you are. Come! Worship is called in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit!

**People:** We have come here for the first time this year! We have come to start 2026 the right way; in God's house!

**Leader:** A new year is an opportunity for a new life, new things and new plans.

**People:** Help us to embrace the new plans God has for us this year!

## Hymn

## The First Noel

(all verses)

1. The first No - el the an - gel did say was to cer-tain poor  
 2. They look - ed up and saw a star shin-ing in the  
 3. And by the light of that same star three Wise Men  
 4. This star drew nigh to the north-west, o'er Beth - le -  
 5. Then en - tered in those Wise Men three, full rev - erent -

shep-herds in fields as they lay; in fields where they lay  
 east, be - yond them far; and to the earth it  
 came from coun - try far; to seek for a king was  
 hem it took its rest; and there it did both  
 ly up - on the knee, and of - fered there, in

keep-ing their sheep, on a cold win-ter's night that was so deep.  
 gave great light, and so it con - tin-ued both day and night.  
 their in - tent, and to fol-low the star wher - ev - er it went.  
 stop and stay, right o - ver the place where Je - sus lay.  
 his pres-ence, their gold and myrrh and frank - in - cense.

*Refrain*

No - el, No - el, No - el, No - el, born is the King of Is - ra - el.

## Opening Prayer

Good morning, Creator of all things! As we start this year, we ask that you help us clear a path in our hearts. Smooth out the rough spots and level the mountains of stress or worry we've carried in with us. Let your presence be so clear and bright today that everyone here can feel it.

We also hear your call to dream bigger. Help us to 'widen our tents'—to open our lives and this community even further. Give us the courage to stretch out, to grow, and to move forward with the confidence that we are always supported by your steady love. Amen.

## Pastoral Prayer

### The Lord's Prayer

#### Hymn

#### Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

1., 2., 3. Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice; give ye heed to what we say: News, news! voice; now ye hear of end - less bliss: News, news! voice; now ye need not fear the grave: News, news!

Je - sus Christ is born to - day! Ox and ass be - Je - sus Christ was born for this! He hath o - pened Je - sus Christ was born to save! Calls you one and

Senior Choir

Worship the Light

David Catherwood

## Young Disciples Chatting with Lisa

Scripture Lesson

Isaiah 40:3-5

A voice cries out:  
 "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord;  
     make straight in the desert a highway for our God.  
 Every valley shall be lifted up,  
     and every mountain and hill be made low;  
 the uneven ground shall become level,  
     and the rough places a plain.  
 Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,  
     and all flesh shall see it together,  
 for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

Isaiah 54:2-4

Enlarge the site of your tent,  
     and let the curtains of your habitations be stretched out;  
 do not hold back; lengthen your cords  
     and strengthen your stakes.  
 For you will spread out to the right and to the left,  
     and your descendants will possess nations  
 and will settle desolate towns.  
 Do not fear, for you will not be ashamed;  
     do not be discouraged, for you will not suffer disgrace,

for you will forget the shame of your youth,  
and the disgrace of your widowhood you will remember no more.

Leader: The Word of God for the people of God  
People: **Thanks be to God**

**Message** **Making Room, Moving Parts, Master Plan** Lisa Whitaker

**Offering Ourselves and Our Gifts to God**

**Offertory** **We Three Kings** John J. Hopkins

**Doxology** Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost: Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

**Hymn** **We Three Kings** *(all verses)*

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

tra - verse a - far, field and foun - tain, moor and moun - tain,  
crown him a - gain, King for - ev - er, ceas - ing nev - er,  
De - i - ty nigh; prayer and prais - ing, voic - es rais - ing,  
gath - er - ing gloom; sor - rowing, sigh - ing, bleed - ing, dy - ing,  
sac - ri - fice: Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia,

fol - low - ing yon - der star.  
 o - ver us all to reign.  
 wor - ship - ing God on high.  
 sealed in the stone-cold tomb.  
 sounds through the earth and skies.

O star of

won - der, 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.

**Benediction****Postlude**

Agnincourt Hymn

John Dunstable