



**December 24, 2023 at 9:30 am  
Christmas Eve**



**Bold = in unison**

## **ENTRANCE**

**\* Rise in body or spirit**

Prelude

**"Dark Night of the Soul"**  
Dick Hensold and Victor Zupanc

by Lorena McKennitt

Welcome

Rev. Nate Melcher

Lighting of the Advent Wreath IV

The Johnson Family  
Rev. Kent, Sue, Elizabeth, Ben

As the season of Advent bids us to proclaim in Faith,  
**The LORD of covenant draws near.**

Gloria in excelsis Deo, in steadfast love for all generations.  
Glory in the highest to God, in faithfulness firm as forever.  
**The LORD draws near.**

On this fourth Sunday of Advent, we light the Candle of Faith.  
We declare our devotion to God, and God establishes a holy vision.  
**May the God of Faith establish holy vision throughout the world. Amen.**

Gathering Hymn\*

**"What Child Is This"**

UM Hymnal 219

- 1. What child is this who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, while shepherds watch are keeping?**

Refrain:

**This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.**

- 2. Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here the silent Word is pleading. (Refrain)**
- 3. So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh, come, peasant, king, to own him;  
the King of kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone him. (Refrain)**

## Christmas Prayer

Rev. Hope Hutchison

Glorious God, in the beauty of holiness, we await the coming of your Son. A people who walked in the shadow have seen a great light. Through the seed of David and nurtured in the womb of Mary, you sent a glorious hope to break forth upon the horizon. The light of truth pierces all that is untrue. The light of justice breaks through the clouds of injustice. The light of mercy outshines the shadow of despair. In the stillness we await your Light, Holy God - that Light is Jesus: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Creator, the Prince of Peace! Come, Lord Jesus, come. We have made room for you. Hear us as we pray your prayer...

## The LORD's Prayer

Our God, 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, and the power, and the glory,  
forever. Amen.

## Hymn\*

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"  
vs. 1 and 3

UM Hymnal 234

1. O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem.  
Come and behold him, born the King of angels;

### Refrain:

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

3. Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;  
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!  
Glory to God, all glory in the highest; (Refrain)

## Time with Children

### Sharing the Story

Luke 2:1-7

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be

registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room.

## Lighting of the Christ Candle

The Locke Family  
Toni, Greg, Gavin, Kira

As the arrival of Christmas bids us to exalt the Christ,  
**The LORD is here.**

Gloria in excelsis Deo, Glory in the highest to God,  
with clouds and lightning comes the heavens.  
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Glory in the highest to God,  
with fire and light dawns righteousness.  
**The LORD is here.**

For Christmas, we light the Christ Candle.  
We rejoice with God, and God is the holy guard.  
**May Jesus the Christ guard throughout the world. Let us rejoice! Amen.**

## Hymn\*

“‘Twas in the Moon of Wintertime”  
verses 1-3

UM Hymnal 244

1. **‘Twas in the moon of wintertime, when all the birds had fled,  
that mighty Gitchi Manitou sent angel choirs instead;  
before their light the stars grew dim,  
and wondering hunters heard the hymn:**

Refrain:

**Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria.**

2. **Within a lodge of broken bark the tender babe was found;  
a ragged robe of rabbit skin enwrapped his beauty round;  
but as the hunter braves drew nigh,  
the angel song rang loud and high: (Refrain)**
3. **The earliest moon of wintertime is not so round and fair  
as was the ring of glory on the helpless infant there.  
The chiefs from far before him knelt  
with gifts of fox and beaver pelt. (Refrain)**

## Sharing the Story

Luke 2:8-14

Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for see, I am

“Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

1. Angels we have heard on high sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
and the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.

**Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!**

## Sharing the Story Luke 2:15-20

Hymn\* “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” UM Hymnal 240  
verses 1 and 2

Sermon                      “The Christmas Brunch”                      Rev. Nate Melcher

Faith, Justice, and Joy as the Church

## Sharing Our Gifts

*This year's special Christmas Eve offering supports the Minnesota Council of Churches refugee services, the Detroit Black Farmer Land Fund, and the ministries of Richfield UMC.*

*Make your special gift in-person, by mail or phone,  
or online: [richfieldumc.org/give](http://richfieldumc.org/give).*

*Thank you for your extravagant generosity in the spirit of Christmas.*

Solo

“He Is Born”

Dick Hensold and Victor Zupanc

Doxology\*

“Angels We Have Heard on High (refrain)”  
ring bells, 1x through

Refrain:

Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

## Prayer of Gratitude

Holy One, as we celebrate the birth of the Christ Child, we seek to honor you with these monetary gifts. We know that everything in this world is a gift from you, O God, so we humbly return a generous portion of these gifts to you. We pray that these gifts may help this church to change people's lives and to spread your message of salvation. In the name of the Babe lying in the manger, we pray. Amen.

Sharing the Light

*Please tip your unlit candle  
to the lit flame of your neighbor, please use caution.*

Solo

“The Friendly Beasts/Sing We Now of Christmas”

Dick Hensold and Victor Zupanc

Hymn

“Silent Night”  
vs. 1, 3, 4

UM Hymnal 239

1. Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright  
round yon virgin mother and child. Holy infant, so tender and mild,  
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.
3. Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light;  
radiant beams from thy holy face  
with the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, the Lord, at thy birth.
4. Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light;  
with the angels let us sing, Alleluia to our King;  
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!

## Benediction

Sing to the Lord a new song! Sing to the Lord all the earth.

**Declare God's glory among the nations;  
declare God's wonderful works among all peoples.**

The Lord is great and greatly to be praised. The Lord who created heaven and earth.

**Declare God's glory among the nations;  
declare God's wondrous works among all peoples.**

Bring gifts to the God of gods; enter God's courtyard with exultations.

**Declare God's glory among the nations;  
declare God's wondrous works among all peoples.**

The Lord rules with fairness and equity. Even the trees of the earth rejoice at God's judgment.

**Hallelujah! The Lord establishes justice. Hallelujah!  
The LORD has brought justice for all!**

And until we meet again...

**...let us live in faith, justice, and joy! Amen.**

## Postlude

"Go Tell It On the Mountain"

## Merry Christmas!

**Worship is over. Service begins.  
Go forth as Richfield United Methodist Church.**

**Hello, guests!** Welcome to worship as Richfield UMC. It's a big step to come to a new church and we're glad you're here. If you have questions, please ask any church member, and we hope you have a good experience.

### Families with Young Children are always welcome in worship!

Here are some options to help your family have a good experience when worshipping.

**The Nook** - A space connected to the Sanctuary perfect for having a quiet or wiggly moment in a sensory friendly environment.

**Art Cart** - Children can use items from the cart while worshipping in the Nook or can fill a bag with items to take into the sanctuary during worship

**Time with Children** - Children of all ages are invited to experience a message just for them at the front of the sanctuary. Parent/guardians are welcome to join too.

**Sunday School resumes January 14-** Following the Time with Children, children may go to Sunday School or stay in the sanctuary to worship. Children meet Sunday school teachers in the Nook. Sunday school is held in the Fellowship Hall or outside (weather-dependent). There is no Sunday School on the 1st Sunday of the month.

**Nursing Mothers** - You may nurse wherever you like. There is also a reserved Nursing Room available near the Library area.

# RICHFIELD UMC NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Today, Christmas Eve Worship | Sunday, Dec. 24

Be sure to pick-up your free copy of Prof. Amy-Jill Levine's book, The Gospel of Mark in preparation of the all-church reading challenge coming in January. The details of the challenge are available in the e-heartline and in the January/February Heartline newsletter.

## Campus Closed

The church campus is closed Dec. 25-Jan. 1. The campus reopens January 2, 2024.

## Next Sunday, December 31, Worship at 9:30 am

**Only Online and by Phone (888) 650-5835** (no in-person worship that day)

Worship on New Year's Eve from the comfort of your home with hand-selected music and liturgy for the season. Please do not come to campus that Sunday. Thank you, and have a blessed New Year's Eve and Day.

## Epiphany Worship Series: "Intro to Jesus" January 7-February 11, 2024

This series is inspired by the latest book from Amy-Jill Levine, *The Gospel of Mark*, where she takes a deep dive into several key moments of the story of Jesus. Be part of a churchwide challenge to read the entire Gospel of Mark. See the articles in the Heartline newsletter for information on what to read, how to get Prof. Levine's book, four video-based discussion classes, and Prof. Levine's guest appearance. **Reading for January 7: Mark 1-4 and pages 1-26: The Good News Begins**

## Film Theology—First Wednesdays at 6:00 pm-7:00 pm

Hybrid: Grace Room and [Zoom](#) Meeting ID: 819 9039 0338/Passcode: 5835 or call: (312) 626-6799 Go watch the latest hit movies in the theater, then come together to discuss them over a bowl of popcorn! Pastor Nate guides our discussion. **The next date & movie is January 3 —*Migration* (release date Dec. 22)**

## Pub Theology, First Sundays at 7:00 pm-8:00pm (in-person only)

**Protagonist Kitchen and Bar**, 6601 Lyndale Ave. S., (ramp parking)

**Next Gathering: January 14** (*Note: 2nd Sunday this month*)

Be part of this informal atmosphere to talk about faith questions big and small. Conversation led by Pastor Nate.

## Ongoing and Open

### **1st Mondays, 1:30 pm | Women Who Read**

At the January 8, 2024, meeting (note second Monday) the women of the group recommend books to each other that they would like to read, and in that process, the group develops their book choices for the following year.

Contact Fern Albertson, [wfalbertson@gmail.com](mailto:wfalbertson@gmail.com), to get connected.

### **Tuesdays, 9:30 am | Women's Bible Study**

Contact Molly Reko, [mollyreko@comcast.net](mailto:mollyreko@comcast.net), to get connected.

### **Wednesdays, 9:00 am | Men's Bible Study**

Contact Kent Johnson, [kentjmn@gmail.com](mailto:kentjmn@gmail.com), to get connected.

### **Saturdays, 8:30 am | Men's Support Group**

Contact Kent Johnson, [kentjmn@gmail.com](mailto:kentjmn@gmail.com), to get connected.

## **An Everyday Prayer Life Is for Everyone**

**May we devote time and energy to God and neighbor and pray every day for:**

- Open minds and hearts for “conflux moments.”
- People in need of a loving church home.
- Our church’s journey toward vitality.

**Our prayers are a beautiful expression of care and solidarity for each other.**

We pray in celebration.

We pray with gratitude.

We pray for those who are ill: Paula Milani, Marylee Fithian, Joyce Walls, Laurel Lien, Agnes Danzl, Lee Weiser and Richard, Jim Vetsch, Don Morrow, Ann Johnson, Pat Norton, Kate Currie, Mitzi Taylor, David Doty, Sharon Gardner, Nancy Zwickey, sister of Susan (SK) Johnson, Pat Robertson, and Robert McCoy.

We pray for those who seek comfort: Herb Doty, Jane Parry.

We pray for those who grieve: Bev Crandall's sister, Janet Nelson, on the passing of her husband, Robert Nelson.

We pray for our neighbors and for all in the RUMC community.

Please call the church office to be included in any of the prayers of our church.

**We thank those who help make this worship a ministry of grace:**

Ministers: All Members of the Congregation

Musicians: Dick Hensold, Greg Locke, Rev. Nate Melcher, Victor Zupanc

Liturgists: Rev. Hope Hutchison, The Johnson and Locke Families, Rev. Nate Melcher

Tech: Rev. Bill Johnson, Pat Eder, Michele Wegscheid

Please let the church office know if you or someone from the church is hospitalized or immediately pre or post hospitalization. The pastoral care team is available to extend care and provide support in times of need. The Parish Minister for the week of December 24 is Jerry Schilling.

### **Permissions and Acknowledgements:**

- Copyright and license agreements can impact our ability to always present expansive language for God and inclusive language for humankind. All are invited to sing or pray the words on their heart. For more, visit [richfieldumc.org/worship](http://richfieldumc.org/worship).
- “Lighting the Advent Wreath” by Rev. Nate Melcher
- “Christmas Prayer” and “Benediction” by Bishop LaTrelle Easterling. Bennett, Tanya Linn, ed. *The Abingdon Preaching Annual 2020*. © 2019 Abingdon Press, Nashville, TN. Used by permission. 147-148.
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### **Richfield United Methodist Church**

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Richfield UMC gathers on Dakota land. More at [richfieldumc.org/land](http://richfieldumc.org/land).