



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.

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)
6. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be all glory given.
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: (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.

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

Nick Dewey and John Kluchka
Cole and Noah Dewey

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.

Carol

“Rejoice and Be Merry”
Chancel Choir

J. Alban Hinton

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 bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

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

1. Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born King;
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;
with th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new born King!"
2. Christ, by highest heaven adored; Christ, the everlasting Lord;
late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail th' incarnate Deity,
pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born King!"
3. Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new born King!"

Sharing the Story

Luke 2:15-20

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

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

Refrain: Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

2. Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly song? (Refrain)
3. Come to Bethlehem and see Christ whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee, Christ the Lord, the newborn King. (Refrain)
4. See him in a manger laid, whom the choirs of angels praise;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, while our hearts in love we raise. (Refrain)

Sermon	"The Christmas Brunch"	Rev. Nate Melcher
Carol	"The Birthday of a King" Chancel Choir	W.H. Neidlinger

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

Offertory	"O Holy Night" Tanner VanderKrabben	Adolphe Adam
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Doxology*	"Angels We Have Heard on High (refrain)" <i>You are invited to ring a bell during the refrain.</i>
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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	<i>Please tip your unlit candle to the lit flame of your neighbor, please use caution.</i>
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Hymn	"Silent Night" vs. 1, 3-4	UMH No. 239
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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

"Joy to the World" from *A Nativity Suite*

by W. Held

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

Sunday School resumes on 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, to get connected.

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

Contact Molly Reko, mollyreko@comcast.net, to get connected.

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

Contact Kent Johnson, kentjmn@gmail.com, to get connected.

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

Contact Kent Johnson, 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: Sonja Gustafson, Tanner VanderKrabben, Chancel Choir

Instrumentalists: Carolyn Liptak, Galina Dzordevic, Ginny Bement, Abigail Proehl

Liturgists: Nick Dewey, John Kluchka, Cole Dewey, Noah Dewey, Rev. Hope Hutchison, The Johnson Family, 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.
- “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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Stay informed, be involved, and get invitational

Richfield UMC gathers on Dakota land. More at richfieldumc.org/land.