



RICHFIELD

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

December 31, 2023 at 9:30 am  
First Sunday after Christmas



**Bold = in unison**

**\* Rise in body or spirit**

## ENTRANCE

Prelude

**"I Wonder as I Wander"**  
Chancel Bell Choir

arr. Cathy Moglebust

Welcome Rev. Nate Melcher

Lighting Our Conflux Candles

*You are invited to safely light a candle or lamp to celebrate  
the moments this week when your life's journey met God's heart.*

## The LORD's Prayer

Bea Melcher

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.

## Gathering Hymn

“Once in Royal David's City”  
v. 1 Solo, v. 2 Chancel Choir, vs. 3-4 All

UM Hymnal 250

3. Jesus is our childhood's pattern;  
day by day, like us he grew;  
he was little, weak, and helpless,  
tears and smiles like us he knew;  
and he feeleth for our sadness,  
and he shareth in our gladness.
4. And our eyes at last shall see him,  
through his own redeeming love;  
for that child so dear and gentle  
is our Lord in heaven above;  
and he leads his children on  
to the place where he is gone.

## Time with Children

### Sharing the Peace

May the peace of God be with you.  
**And also with you.**

*Please greet your neighbor with mutual signs of peace.*

# PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

Scripture in Context

Scripture Reading

Luke 3:7-22

Gertie Melcher

John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore, bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor,’ for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”

And the crowds asked him, “What, then, should we do?” In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none, and whoever has food must do likewise.” Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.” Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.”

As the people were filled with expectation and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, “I baptize you with water, but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

So with many other exhortations he proclaimed the good news to the people. But Herod the ruler, who had been rebuked by him because of Herodias, his brother’s wife, and because of all the evil things that Herod had done, added to them all by shutting up John in prison.

Now when all the people were baptized and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”

The Word of God for the people of God.  
**Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

“You Say You Want a Resolution?!”

Rev. Nate Melcher

# THANKSGIVING

## Sharing Our Gifts

*Your gift in-person, by mail or phone, or online at [richfieldumc.org/give](http://richfieldumc.org/give) supports the ministry, outreach, and operations of your church.  
Thank you for your extravagant generosity.*

## Prayer of Gratitude / Breakthrough Prayer

**Loving God of all,  
renew our hearts and minds.**

**Reveal your wildest dreams,  
break through to each of us.**

**Unite us in your vision,  
equip us for your work.**

**Transform us by your song,  
create our harmony.**

**May we embrace your future,  
and be your loving church. Amen.**

*Please join your church in praying the Breakthrough Prayer daily at 8:35.*

## SENDING FORTH

Sending Hymn     “Climb to the Top of the Highest Mountain”     Carolyn Jennings  
Chancel Choir

## Benediction\*

...And until we meet again,  
**let us live in faith, justice, and joy! Amen.**

## Postlude

Christmas Time Is Here  
Victor Zupanc

by Vince Guaraldi

**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.**

# RICHFIELD UMC NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Next Sunday, January 7**

## **Epiphany Worship Series: “Intro to Jesus” January 7-February 11, 2024**

The Gospel of Mark begins with a bang and never lets up! From his baptism to calling the disciples, from teaching and healing to the cross and resurrection, the story of Jesus is for all people. 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

## **Campus Closed**

The church campus is closed through Jan. 1. The campus reopens January 2, 2024.

## **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)**

## **Pizza with the Pastor / New Member Class**

**Sunday, January 14, 10:45 am-12:00 pm, Fellowship Hall**

Please RSVP to Pastor Nate at [nmelcher@richfieldumc.org](mailto:nmelcher@richfieldumc.org) or 612-861-6086

Learn about becoming a church member and RSVP for “Pizza with the Pastor.” We’ll get to know each other over lunch and talk about church ministries and membership vows. New members are scheduled to join on January 28. Can’t make that date, yet you’re interested? RSVP, anyway!

## **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.

## **Coffee with the Pastor—9:00 am-12:00 pm, most Tuesdays**

**Sign up:** [calendly.com/natemelcher](https://calendly.com/natemelcher) Pastor Nate is meeting with church members like you to check-in, connect, and pray. Sign up with the calendar link or call the office. Meet at Starbucks (54th and Lyndale). Your drink is on Pastor Nate!

## **Q&A Live Online with Prof. Amy-Jill Levine**

**Monday, January 22, 7:30 pm-8:30 pm**

[Zoom](#) Meeting ID: 819 9039 0338 / Passcode: 5835 or call: (312) 626-6799

Prof. Amy-Jill Levine joins us for a Q&A session about her book, *The Gospel of Mark* as we enter the new year. We are excited to have one of the most prominent scholars of Jesus with us and you’re encouraged to bring a question, bring a friend, and bring excitement to this unique opportunity to engage an amazing author!

## Ongoing and Open

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

October 9 (note: 2nd Monday) - A Tree Grows in Brooklyn by Betty Smith

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.

## **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** - 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.

## **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.

## This Week's Calendar

The church office/Campus is open Tues.-Thurs., 8am-4pm.  
The Church Library is open when the campus is open.

### Sunday, December 31, 2023

9:30 am Online-Only Worship Service  
*Please do not come to campus  
this Sunday; instead, experience  
worship online or by phone.  
Thank you, and have a blessed  
New Year's Eve and Day.*

### Monday, January 01, 2024

*Happy New Year—Campus Closed*

### Tuesday, January 02, 2024

7:00 pm SPRC Meeting

### Wednesday, January 03, 2024

9:00 am Wednesday Bible Study  
6:00 pm Film Theology  
6:30 pm Chancel Bell Choir Rehearsal  
7:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

### Thursday, January 04, 2024

### Friday, January 05, 2024

### Saturday, January 06, 2024

8:30 am Men's Group  
10:30 am Saturday Covenant Group

### Sunday, January 07, 2024

9:00 am Gospel of Mark Class  
9:30 am Worship Service  
(+Live streamed & archived)

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

Ministers: All Members of the Congregation

Musicians: Tanner VanderKrabben, Victor Zupanc, Chancel Bells, Chancel Choir

Liturgists: Gertie, Bea, and Rev. Nate Melcher

Tech: Ann Johnson, Rev. Bill Johnson, Rev. Nate Melcher, TY Moore, Dale Olson,  
Rhonda Olson, Steve Warner, 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 31 is Kate Currie.

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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).