RICHFIELD
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

December 14, 2025 at 9:30 am
Third Sunday of Advent

Bold = in unison *** Rise in body and/or spirit**

ENTRANCE

Prelude "Christmas Time Is Here" by Vince Guaraldi — Victor Zupanc

Welcome — Rev. Nate Melcher

Call to Advent "Light the Advent Candle" vs. 3 — TFWS Hymnal 2090

3. **Light the Advent candle, three: Think of heavenly harmony;**
   Angels singing "Peace on Earth" at the blessed Savior's birth.
   Candle, candle, *bright your ray*, *shining on this winter day*;
   Candle, candle, *bright your ray*, *sending din and doubt away*.

Lighting the Advent Wreath III The Candle of Joy — Rachel and Zach Freeman
Nora, Everleigh

We gather in the season of Advent, a season of Joy.

God who made heaven and earth and keeps faith forever,
champion justice, uplift the forgotten, bring freedom to all.
In the tempest storm and wind, your message remains clear.
We rejoice in this journey to seek the holy around us.
Tidings of comfort and joy fill the winter air.

On this third Sunday of Advent, we light the Candle of Joy.
The Lord is here forever, known for all generations!
May Joy light up this world. Amen.

Gathering Hymn* "Angels from the Realms of Glory" UM Hymnal 220
vs. 1-3

1. **Angels from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;**
   ye who sang creation's story now proclaim Messiah's birth:

Refrain:
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king.

2. **Shepherds, in the field abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,**
   God with us is now residing; yonder shines the infant light: [Refrain]
3. **Sages, leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar;**
   seek the great Desire of nations; ye have seen his natal star: [Refrain]

Sharing the Peace

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

Please greet your neighbor here - & online - with mutual signs of peace.

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.

Celebration Music "Simple Season" Victor Zupanc
by Barbara McAfee

Celebrating Our Conflux Moments

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

Christmas Pageant "An Advent Carol" by Becca Whitaker

Gospel Reading Luke 1:26b-33, 46-50

God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a city in Galilee, to a virgin who was engaged to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David's house. The virgin's name was Mary. When the angel came to her, he said, "Rejoice, favored one! The Lord is with you!" She was confused by these words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. The angel said, "Don't be afraid, Mary. God is honoring you. Look! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and he will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of David his father. He will rule over Jacob's house forever, and there will be no end to his kingdom."

Mary said,
"With all my heart I glorify the Lord!
In the depths of who I am I rejoice in God my savior.
He has looked with favor on the low status of his servant.

Look! From now on, everyone will consider me highly favored
because the mighty one has done great things for me.
Holy is his name.
He shows mercy to everyone,
from one generation to the next,
who honors him as God.

Stave I "A Candle of Hope"

Carol "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" vs.1 UM Hymnal 211

1. **O come, o come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,**
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Gospel Reading Luke 2:1-7

In those days Caesar Augustus declared that everyone throughout the empire should be enrolled in the tax lists. This first enrollment occurred when Quirinius governed Syria. Everyone went to their own cities to be enrolled. Since Joseph belonged to David's house and family line, he went up from the city of Nazareth in Galilee to David's city, called Bethlehem, in Judea. He went to be enrolled together with Mary, who was promised to him in marriage and who was pregnant. While they were there, the time came for Mary to have her baby. She gave birth to her firstborn child, a son, wrapped him snugly, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the guestroom.

Stave II "A Candle of Peace"

Carol "O Little Town of Bethlehem" vs. 1 UM Hymnal 230

1. **O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie;**
above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

Gospel Reading Luke 2:8-14

Nearby shepherds were living in the fields, guarding their sheep at night. The Lord's angel stood before them, the Lord's glory shone around them, and they were terrified.
The angel said, "Don't be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you—wonderful, joyous news for all people. Your savior is born today in David's city. He is Christ the Lord. This is a sign for you: you will find a newborn baby wrapped snugly and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great assembly of the heavenly forces was with the angel praising God. They said, "Glory to God in heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors."

Stave III "A Candle of Joy"

Carol "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" vs. 1 UM Hymnal 240

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!"

Scripture Reading Isaiah 9:2-3, 6-7

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light.
On those living in a pitch-dark land, light has dawned.
You have made the nation great; you have increased its joy.
They rejoiced before you as with joy at the harvest,
as those who divide plunder rejoice.

A child is born to us, a son is given to us,
and authority will be on his shoulders.
He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.
There will be vast authority and endless peace
for David's throne and for his kingdom, establishing and sustaining it
with justice and righteousness now and forever.
The zeal of the Lord of heavenly forces will do this.

Stave IV "A Candle of Love"

Anthem "Away in a Manger" UM Hymnal 217
vs.1-2 Children's Choir; vs. 3 Congregation please sing

3. **Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask thee to stay**
   close by me forever, and love me, I pray;
   bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
   and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

Stave V "A Candle for Christmas"

Christmas Proclamation* "Joy to the World" UM Hymnal 246
v. 1-2

1. **Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;**
   let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing,
   and heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.
2. **Joy to the world, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ;**
   while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
   repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
   repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

Time with Adults "A Present to Treasure" Rev. Nate Melcher
"Never Better Than at Christmas" Worship Series 3 of 4

Faith, Justice, and Joy as the Church

Sharing Our Gifts

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

Offertory "Awake to the Day" by Ed Bolduc

THANKSGIVING

Doxology* UM Hymnal 94

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God, the source of all our gifts!
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Prayer of Gratitude / 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.

SENDING FORTH

Sending Hymn* "Come Thou Long Expected Jesus" UM Hymnal 196

1. **Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;**
   from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.
   Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;
   dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.
2. **Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King,**
   born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.
   By thine own eternal spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
   by thine all sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.

Benediction*

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

Postlude "Give Thanks" by Henry Smith

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

Today, Sunday, December 14

In worship we'll hear the Christmas story told through the Children's Christmas Pageant and it's Christmas Sweater Sunday, wear your favorite Christmas sweater to worship.

UWF Bake Sale, 10:30 am
Stock up on holiday treats. Choose from a variety of cookies, breads, and other tasty treats. Cookies are .50 cents each and other items are priced as marked. We accept cash, checks and Venmo. We are also accepting donations of baked goods which can be dropped off at church Sat. Dec. 13, 10am to 2pm or before church on that Sunday. Walker Jewelry will also be there. Questions: contact Toni, toni@ggrreegg.com

Advent Movie Matinees: "A Christmas Carol"
Today's movie: *The Muppet Christmas Carol* (Michael Caine, 1992, 1 hour, 25 min).

The Metropolitan Men's Choir Concert, this afternoon at 3:00 pm
Come for a new tradition as the Metropolitan Men's Choir has their premiere concert at Richfield UMC. Filed with holiday favorites, new musical pieces, and reverent music for the season, you and your friends will delight with these powerful voices. A freewill offering is split between the choir and church. More info: metropolitanmenschoir.org

Next Sunday, December 21

Lessons & Carols worship service led by the Chancel Choir, string quartet, organ, & piano.

Milestones & Miracles, Dec. 21
Once a quarter in worship, you're invited to share what you celebrate with your church. Whether it's your birthday, anniversary, a new job, retirement, or other significant milestone or miracle, this is a time to celebrate the joy God brings in our everyday lives together.

Christmas Cookie Party, Dec. 21
Join in holiday cheer after worship. Bring a batch of cookies to share if you like.

A Service of Hope and Healing, Dec. 21 at 3:00 pm
The Christmas season can bring complex emotions of grief, loss, and other challenges. It's okay to feel our feelings. Come as you are for a Service of Hope and Healing filled with music, poetry, prayer, and ritual. Prepare your heart for the light of Christ with candlelight, and God's blessings to you.

Wednesday, December 24

Christmas Eve Worship Service, 4:00 pm
Christmas Eve service features Time with Children, prayer and preaching, music by organ, choir, strings, "Silent Night" sung by candlelight, and our wonderful stained glass windows all lit up. Mark your calendar and invite your friends and family.

The Warming Tree

When weather gets cold, hearts heat up! Through Dec. 28, the Warming Tree is ready for your donations of clean and gently-used or brand-new winter accessories:

- Winter Hats (purchased or handmade)
- Scarves (purchased or handmade)
- Waterproof Mittens (store-purchased)
- Waterproof Gloves (store-purchased)

Child-size donations will go to local schools. Adult-size donations will go to residents in housing programs with Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative. Find the tree in the Commons.

Ongoing and Open

1st Mondays, 1:30 pm | Women Who Read
To join by Zoom, email Fern wfalbertson@gmail.com. Next meeting December 1, 2025. The book to read and discuss for Dec. 1 is The Guncle by Steven Rowley. If you are a woman who enjoys good books and thoughtful discussion, then consider joining fellow readers for Women Who Read.

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.

Night Owl Bible Study | Wednesdays at 9:00 pm
Online-Only by Zoom Meeting ID: 819 9039 0338 / Passcode: 5835 or call: (312) 626-6799. Busy days? Up late at night? This is the Bible study for you. Open to all.

Saturdays, 8:30 am | Men's Support Group
Contact Kent Johnson, 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 worshiping in the Sanctuary:

The Nook - A space connected to the Sanctuary perfect for having a quiet or wiggly moment.

Art Cart - Children can fill a bag with items in The Nook to bring with them to worship with their families in the pews.

Time with Children - Children of all ages are invited to experience a message just for them. Parent/guardians are welcome to join their children too.

Sunday School - **(Grades K-6)** Second and fourth Sundays during worship time 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.

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:

- People in need of a loving church home.
- Our church's journey toward vitality.
- The babies and toddlers who are cared for each weekday by CFC (Caring For Children, the early learning ministry at the church) and their families.

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

We pray in celebration and gratitude.

We pray for those who seek healing: Laurel Lien, Agnes Danzl, Jim Vetsch, John Darling, Shar Salisbury, Bob Mills, Lynne Alexander, Donis (Burt) Andrews (sister of Shari Burt), Pat Eder, Marilyn Dodge, Pat Noonan, Betty, mother of Michele Wegscheid, Eric, nephew of Lori Claussen, DeAnna Wichman, and Hilde Drutman, granddaughter of Sandy Nelson.

We pray for those who seek comfort: Paula Milani

We pray for those who seek strength and wisdom: Pat Robertson.

We pray for those who grieve

- The friends and family, especially Dayle, of David Couillard who died on December 4.
- The family and friends of Ron Larson who died on December 6.

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 14, 2025
Children's Pageant & Christmas Sweater Day
9:30 am In-Person Worship Service
(+Live streamed & archived)
10:30 am UWF Bake Sale
10:45 am Advent Movie Matinee:
A Christmas Carol
3:00 pm Metropolitan Men's Choir Concert

Monday, December 15, 2025

Tuesday, December 16, 2025
9:30 am Women's Bible Study

Wednesday, December 17, 2025
9:00 am Men's Bible Study
6:15 pm Youth Group
7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal
9:00 pm Night Owl Bible Study

Thursday, December 18, 2025

Friday, December 19, 2025
3:15 pm CFC Family Christmas
Party & Santa Visit

Saturday, December 20 2025
8:30 am Men's Group
10:30 am Saturday Covenant Group

Sunday, December 21 30, 2025
Lessons and Carols
9:30 am In-Person Worship Service
(+Live streamed & archived)
10:30 am Christmas Cookie Party
3:00 pm Service of Hope and Healing

We thank those who help make this worship a ministry of grace:
Ministers: All Members of the Congregation
Staff: Rev. Nate Melcher, Kay Bergeland, Kathy Gertsema, Pat Noonan, Linda Schmidt, Becca Whitaker
Music Staff: Sonja Gustafson, David Nyberg, Victor Zupanc
Christmas Pageant: Daniella Callahan (Usher), Everleigh Freeman (The Infant), Nora Freeman (Hope Candle), Vienna Hoffer (Narrator), Bea Melcher (Peace), Gertie Melcher (Scrooge), Annalie Mueller (Peace Candle), Buerkley Owens (Joy), London Owens (Marley/Hope), Cordelia and Thaddeus Seelam (Joy Candle), Henrietta Zadrozny (Love Candle)
Tech Crew today: Linda Blomsness, Rev. Bill Johnson, Juan Nieves Lebrón, TY Moore

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 14 is Merry Rendahl.

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