RICHFIELD
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

January 4, 2026 at 9:30 am
Second Sunday after Christmas / Epiphany

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

ENTRANCE

Prelude "Bright and Glorious is the Sky" "Brightest and Best"
arr. Cassler Sonja Gustafson

Welcome Rev. Nate Melcher

Call to Worship*

God looks for faith.
Will God find it?
God looks for care for the poor.
Will we provide it?
God looks for love.
Will God find it in us?

Gathering Hymn* "How Firm a Foundation" UM Hymnal 529
verses 1, 2, 5

1. **How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,**
   is laid for your faith in his excellent word!
   What more can he say than to you he hath said,
   to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?

2. **"Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed,**
   for I am thy God and will still give thee aid;
   I'll strengthen and help thee, and cause thee to stand
   upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.

5. **"The soul that on Jesus still leans for repose,**
   I will not, I will not desert to its foes;
   that soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
   I'll never, no, never, no, never forsake."

Prayer of Confession

God of heaven and earth, be with us in our need. Though we often go astray, we seek your love and mercy. Be our Shepherd and guide our ways, for we are lost and afraid and weary of wandering. We long to be welcomed home in your gracious mercy. Hear us now in our silent confessions to you…

Silent Prayer

Words of Assurance

Time with Children Becca Whitaker

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 where your life's journey met God's heart.

Celebration Music "Winter Winds"
by Sonja Gustafson

Celebrating Our Conflux Moments

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

Scripture in Context

Gospel Reading Luke 15:1-10 Kate Currie

All the tax collectors and sinners were gathering around Jesus to listen to him. The Pharisees and legal experts were grumbling, saying, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."

Jesus told them this parable: "Suppose someone among you had one hundred sheep and lost one of them. Wouldn't he leave the other ninety-nine in the pasture and search for the lost one until he finds it? And when he finds it, he is thrilled and places it on his shoulders. When he arrives home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Celebrate with me because I've found my lost sheep.' In the same way, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who changes both heart and life than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need to change their hearts and lives.

"Or what woman, if she owns ten silver coins and loses one of them, won't light a lamp and sweep the house, searching her home carefully until she finds it? When she finds it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Celebrate with me because I've found my lost coin.' In the same way, I tell you, joy breaks out in the presence of God's angels over one sinner who changes both heart and life."

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

Sermon "What Is Lost, What Is Found" Rev. Nate Melcher
"Disturbing!" Worship Series 1 of 4

Responsive Hymn "God Will Take Care of You" vs. 1 UM Hymnal 130

1. **Be not dismayed whate'er betide,**
God will take care of you;
beneath God's wings of love abide,
God will take care of you.

God will take care of you,
through every day, o'er all the way;
God will take care of you,
God will take care of you.

THANKSGIVING

Faith, Justice, and Joy as the Church

Sacrament of Holy Communion UM Hymnal p. 18, setting B

The LORD be with you. **And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the LORD.**
Let us give thanks to the LORD our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, **Holy, holy, holy Lord,**
God of power and might. **God of power and might.**
Heaven and earth are full of your glory,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory,
Hosanna in the highest. **Hosanna in the highest**.
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna, **hosanna,**
in the highest, i**n the highest.**

...proclaiming the mystery of faith:

Christ has died, **Christ has died,**
Christ is risen, **Christ is risen,**
Christ will come again! **Christ will come again.**
All honor and glory is your, almighty God, now and for ever.

Amen, amen **Amen, amen**
amen **amen.**

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 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.

Receiving the Sacrament

There is no barrier between you and the table.
All who seek the grace of Jesus are welcome.

Music During Communion "God Will Take Care of You"
arr. Harold DeCou

"I Love to Tell the Story"
arr. Lee Rogers

Prayer After Receiving the Sacrament

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* "This Little Light of Mine"

1. **This little light of mine, I'm goin'a let it shine,**
   this little light of mine, I'm goin'a let it shine;
   this little light of mine, I'm goin'a let it shine,
   let it shine, let it shine, let it shine. (let it shine)

2. **Everywhere I go, I'm goin'a let it shine,**
   everywhere I go, I'm goin'a let it shine;
   everywhere I go, I'm goin'a let it shine,
   let it shine, let it shine, let it shine. (let it shine)

Benediction*

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

Postlude "Go Tell It on the Mountain"
setting by Wilbur Held

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, January 4, 2026

Souper Bowl of Caring: Soup Drive Begins (January 4—February 8)
Begin 2026 with this perennial tradition. Please bring your donations of cans of soup and other shelf-stable goods to benefit our longstanding partner, VEAP Food Shelf.

Lunch For New People | Sunday, January 4, 10:45 am-11:45 am, Fellowship Hall
Please RSVP to Pastor Nate, nmelcher@richfieldumc.org or 612-861-6086
You came to worship and met someone new over coffee. You participated in an event, Bible study, or donation drive. Now you want to grow in your faith, community connections, and service to God and neighbor. RSVP for a pizza lunch with new faces and longtime members to make connections, deepen your faith, and consider becoming a member. We'd love to get to know you more.

Pub Theology | January 4, February 1, First Sundays at 7:00 pm-8:00 pm
Pizza Lucé (800 W 66th St, Richfield) Led by Pastor Nate, Pub Theology is a drop-in discussion about faith, God, and life over a tasty beverage.

Night Owl Bible Study | Wednesdays at 9:00 pm, resumes January 7

Online-Only by Zoom Meeting ID: 819 9039 0338 / Passcode: 5835 or call: (312) 626-6799
This welcoming, drop-in group returns to read and discuss scripture readings for worship with other night owls. No experience necessary, open to church members and neighbors from the community.

Open Gym: Winter Prayer Walks | 10:30 am-1:30 pm, Tuesdays and Thursdays Fellowship Hall, ongoing | No Open Gym on Thursday, January 29

While winter bids us to hunker down and get cozy, we know the importance of staying physically active. Church members like you and your friends can combine a low-impact cardio workout with peaceful prayer in the warm welcome of Fellowship Hall. Turn on music or a podcast on your headphones, read the prayer and poetry wall posters, and enjoy light exercise in the comfort and privacy of your church building. It takes 34.5 laps to walk a mile – how many steps will you take?

Town Hall: Operations Budget | Sunday, January 18 at 10:35 am in the Sanctuary

The Finance Team plans to publish their 2026 operations budget on January 15 at richfieldumc.org/statements. Members are encouraged to read it before voting about it at the church conference on Jan. 25 and/or ask questions at the town hall on Jan. 18.

Workshop: Writing and Leading Prayers for Worship | 7:30-8:30 pm on Jan. 19 and 26

Online-Only by Zoom Meeting ID: 819 9039 0338 / Passcode: 5835 or call: (312) 626-6799
Join your church's roster of worship liturgists. Discover various forms of prayer, learn how to craft Prayers of the People, and practice public speaking together. Pastor Nate leads this workshop relying on his experience as a college English instructor and improv coach to help you write and lead liturgy with poise and confidence. All experience levels welcome in this non-judgmental atmosphere.

Church Conference on January 25

This is a Conference following worship at 10:45 am in the Fellowship Hall. We'll receive reports and vote on the 2026 operations budget. Church members have voice and vote.

All-Ages Craft Night | Friday, January 30, 6:30 pm-9:00 pm

You're invited to this drop-in night of crafts and community open to church members and neighbors. Bring your own craft project or select a service project-focused craft. Whether your art is knitting, sewing, crochet, cardmaking, or coloring, this is a good night to stay warm and cozy with friends, hot chocolate, and the comfort of crafts!

Ongoing and Open

1st Mondays, 1:30 pm | Women Who Read
To join by Zoom, email Fern wfalbertson@gmail.com. Next meeting January 6, 2026. At this gathering, participants will make recommendations and the reading list for 2026 will be created. 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 | *Resumes January 7*
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 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, Donis (Burt) Andrews (sister of Shari Burt), Pat Eder, Marilyn Dodge, Pat Noonan, Betty, mother of Michele Wegscheid, and Eric, nephew of Lori Claussen.
We pray for those who seek comfort: Paula Milani and Lynne Alexander
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. A memorial service will be held at Richfield UMC on Friday, January 16, 2026 at 10:00 am with visitation the hour prior to the service.

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, January 04, 2026
"Souper Bowl" Soup Collection Begins
9:30 am In-Person Worship Service
(+Live streamed & archived)
10:45 am Lunch for New People
7:00 pm Pub Theology

Monday, January 05, 2026
12:30 pm Women Who Read

Tuesday, January 06, 2026
9:30 am Women's Bible Study
10:30 am-1:30 pm Open Gym: Walking
7:00 pm Staff Parish Relations Committee

Wednesday, January 07, 2026
9:00 am Men's Bible Study
6:15 pm Youth Group
9:00 pm Night Owl Bible Study

Thursday, January 08, 2026
10:30 am-1:30 pm Open Gym: Walking

Friday, January 09, 2026
6:30 pm All-Ages Game Night

Saturday, January 10, 2026
8:30 am Men's Group
10:30 am Saturday Covenant Group

Sunday, January 11, 2026
9:30 am Worship Service
(+Live streamed & archived)
9:40 am Sunday School
10:45 am Confirmation Class

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, Victor Zupanc
Liturgists today: Sarah Callahan, Doris Townsend, Sandy Nelson
Tech Crew today: Rev. Bill Johnson, TY Moore, Juan Nieves Lebrón

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 January 4 is Gretta Thorson.

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Stay informed, be involved, and get invitational.
Richfield UMC gathers on Dakota land. More at richfieldumc.org/land.