

Heartline

Keeping in touch with the heart of the Richfield United Methodist Church faith community.

2026

January / February



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SOUPER BOWL OF CARING SOUP DRIVE 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. Pick up items on your next grocery shopping trip or bring them from home (please check the “best by” date!), and/or give funds toward this latest drive. We’ll bless all donations we receive on Team Colors Sunday, February 8. See page 5 for more information on Team Colors Sunday.



LENT BEGINS

ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP SERVICE FEBRUARY 18 7:00 PM

Begin your journey to Lent with a special worship service at 7:00 pm in the Sanctuary. Featuring the imposition of ashes, music from Chancel Choir, and spiritual practice stations led by Confirmation students, you are invited to turn your heart and mind toward Jesus and deepen your discipleship.

As we progress through the season, the worship series, “Windows of Opportunity” is inspired by the stained-glass windows of the Sanctuary. This series explores key moments in the life of Jesus, showing us that Jesus is constantly offering opportunities to follow him.

NATE NOTE



Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus, born for all of God's people - and all means all.

We recently had a "secret shopper" in worship. While I've not yet received her official report, she told me she experienced your church as very welcoming. That's good to hear! Thank you to all who make new people feel welcome. Can we take it to the next level of recommendation and hospitality?

When a pastor says, "Invite a friend to worship," we know that some smile and nod yet may internally think, "Invite someone?! I don't think so." Invitations can feel invasive, as it puts you and them on the spot. It can feel awkward. Nobody wants to feel awkward. However, we *love* recommending.

A friend shares that they plan to travel to somewhere you've already visited, so you recommend your favorite night spots in the area. Your family is looking for a new restaurant for a family reunion, so you recommend a great place with a private dining room and affordable, delicious menu. You read an insightful article online, so you share it with your friends and recommend they read it, too.

And that's just with the people who we know. We read reviews before we buy something, we check references before we hire someone, we watch reviews of shows before we give the show one minute of our time. And these are all from strangers. If we seek recommendations from strangers, think of the impact of recommendations from people we know and trust. You don't even have to say "I recommend" to recommend something.

"My family goes to Richfield UMC. The kids love the Sunday School."

"I sing in the choir at Richfield UMC. It's like a community in a community."

"I started worshiping at Richfield UMC this fall and I've felt welcomed since day one."

The way we talk about the things that matter to us, including our church, is an invitation to others. When you recommend your church, you help to grow your church.

New people who come to worship in-person have likely checked out the website for the latest update

and worshiped online to get the vibe. Then, they pull into our refinished parking lot and through the big wooden doors to be greeted by smiling faces. They're welcomed during Sharing of the Peace, and are given another "hello" while getting a cup of coffee. What's next?

That's where we move from welcoming to hospitality. "Good morning" is a good start, what's next? Make it a personal welcome. They're wearing a Vikings shirt? Say, "Good morning, skol Vikes!" They have kids with them? Try, "Good morning, your children are welcome in worship or Sunday School, would you like to meet our kid ministry staff?" They look a little lost? "Good morning, I was going to get myself a coffee, may I get you a cup?" Learn a detail or two. "You like to read? We have a reading group, let me introduce you to someone." "You like crafts? We have a crafting night coming up. I don't know the details, but we can find someone who does." Connection is crucial.

If you forget their name? Just say, "Help me with your name." People want to be helpful. They know you're trying. Don't be embarrassed: say it again for the 9th time. It's better than ignoring them!

We are a church who is active in our faith, loving in our hearts, and welcoming in our attitudes. With your commitment of prayer, presence, gifts, service, and witness, we are poised to make 2026 a big year to be God's church. I am proud to be your pastor, and may you have a blessed new year!

In Christ,
Rev. Nate Melcher

COFFEE WITH THE PASTOR

Sign up: calendly.com/natemelcher

Pastor Nate is meeting with church members like you to catch-up, reconnect, and pray. Sign up with the calendar link (if you cannot go online, please call the office) for a meeting at the church campus throughout the fall and winter. Let's have a great cup of coffee and connect!

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?

YOUR NEXT FAITHFUL STEPS: 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.

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. Church members are encouraged to read it before voting about it at the church conference on January 25 and/or ask questions at the town hall on January 18.

CHURCH CONFERENCE ON JANUARY 25

This is a Church Conference following worship at 10:45 am to receive reports and vote on the 2026 operations budget. The meeting is in Fellowship Hall. 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!

WORKSHOP: WRITING AND LEADING PRAYERS FOR WORSHIP

7:30 pm-8:30 pm on January 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.



PUB THEOLOGY

January 4, February 1

First Sundays at 7:00 pm-8:00 pm (in-person only)

Pizza Lucé (800 W 66th St, Richfield, MN 55423)

Pub Theology is a drop-in discussion about faith, God, and life over a tasty beverage. Be part of the informal atmosphere and talk with people of many generations about faith questions big and small. Arrive early to order, stay for spirited conversation. More information: richfieldumc.org/pubtheology

WINDOWS: A ONE-YEAR WORSHIP SERIES, SEPTEMBER 2025 - MAY 2026

In 2025-2026, Richfield United Methodist Church begins a one-year worship series: **WINDOWS**. A window is a quiet paradox. It isn't a wall, yet defines boundary. It isn't a door, yet allows passage. Between the here and there, between stillness and movement, we find ourselves at God's threshold.

The **WINDOWS** worship series is framed by 7 miniseries that explore the seasons of our lives. We will open up to God's creative spark, reflect on how the teachings of Jesus can change the world, and keep shadow at bay so the light of the Holy Spirit can shine bright. All are welcome to grow in love of God and neighbor, reach new people, and heal a broken world through worship, prayer, spiritual practices, media and book studies, and gatherings big and small with friends new and old.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Windows on the World | Delight as Jesus expands God's love through the Beatitudes. |
| I Once Was Lost | Weigh the many angles of the prism of grace and forgiveness. |
| Never Better Than at Christmas | Allow the lessons of past, present, and future to warm your heart. |
| Disturbing | Live a life that reflects the love of God to everyone you meet. |
| Open Hearts, Minds, Doors | Feel the Holy Spirit at work through a variety of experiences. |
| Windows of Opportunity | Journey through key moments in the life of Jesus leading to Easter. |
| Scandal! | Hear some of the most-challenging stories by Jesus in a new way. |

Worship services feature a variety of Spirit-filled music, inclusive and justice-centered liturgy, meaningful interactive moments, and preaching that connects scripture with everyday life. You are invited to come and be part of a caring community on Sundays at 9:30 am in-person, online at youtube.com/richfieldumc, or by phone at 888-650-5835. Learn more: richfieldumc.org/worship.

Let us worship the God who loves all people. All are welcome, and all means all.

EPIPHANY WORSHIP SERIES: "DISTURBING"

January 4-25, 2026

Jesus is a healer, a preacher, and a teacher - and he does it all as a storyteller. His parables, or stories with a lesson on human ethics and God's love, are meant to challenge our comfort level and call us to reexamine our lives. In this series, we deep dive into some of these ancient parables to seek their meaning for our lives today. Sermons are inspired by scripture, the Social Principles of The United Methodist Church, and the first four chapters of the book *Short Stories by Jesus* by Amy-Jill Levine; we will return to the last five chapters in Eastertide.

Save the Date: Author and scholar Amy-Jill Levine returns for an online Q&A session with church members to discuss her book on Monday, May 4 at 7:30 pm. Invite a friend!



WINTER WORSHIP SERIES: "OPEN HEARTS, OPEN MINDS, OPEN DOORS"

February 1-15, 2026

We can live closed off to the possibility of the profound... or we can be open to what God desires to reveal. By opening our hearts to the holy, opening our minds to potential, and opening the door to new life, we might find God's Spirit is always gifting us something new. This series features a variety of guest preachers and musicians to help us expand our scope of new experiences for how others experience God.



LENT WORSHIP SERIES: "WINDOWS OF OPPORTUNITY"

February 22 - April 12, 2026

The season of Lent is when we deepen our faith on purpose by trying on new spiritual practices and refreshing our reading of scripture. Inspired by the stained-glass windows of the Sanctuary, this series explores key moments in the life of Jesus. From his birth to his teachings, from his death to his resurrection, these eight key moments show us that Jesus is constantly offering opportunities to follow him. And yes, we'll have a fresh set of bookmarks of the windows available.



DECEMBER 28 IS CEREAL SUNDAY

Come for a music-filled worship service followed by cereal in the Commons. We'll have milk and a variety of cereals or bring one to share. Kids: wear your pajamas to worship! All are welcome to bring an unopened box of cereal to donate to VEAP Food Shelf.



SAVE THE DATE FOR SPECIAL UPCOMING SUNDAYS AND WORSHIP SERVICES

December 28 - Cereal Sunday
January 25 - Church Conference
February 8 - Team Colors Sunday
February 18 - Ash Wednesday at 7 pm
March 29 - Milestones & Miracles
April 2 - Maundy Thursday
April 3 - Good Friday
April 5 - Easter Sunday

TEAM COLORS SUNDAY IS FEBRUARY 8

February 8 is the "Big Game," and everyone is encouraged to wear their favorite team colors to worship that day. Whether it's a football team t-shirt or a hockey jersey, your current school colors or your alma mater, we'll have a vibrant, colorful Sunday gathering to worshipping God with a little fun. This also coincides with the last day of the SOUPER Bowl Drive of Caring for VEAP and we will have a special blessing in worship.

ASH WEDNESDAY IS FEBRUARY 18

Begin your journey to Lent with a special worship service at 7:00 pm in the Sanctuary. Featuring the imposition of ashes, music from Chancel Choir, and spiritual practice stations led by Confirmation students, you are invited to turn your heart and mind toward Jesus and deepen your discipleship.

SPECIAL GUEST MUSICIAN JANUARY 18

On Sunday January 18, to celebrate MLK Day, Victor has invited T Mychael Rambo to come and sing at the morning service. T Mychael is a well known and sought after performer in the Twin Cities and beyond. He has sung for us in the past and he is excited to come back. T Mychael has a deep soul with a big heart and an incredible voice. Don't miss this opportunity.

ONGOING OPEN GROUPS

Women Who Read (WWR) | 1st Mondays of the Month | 1:30-3:00 pm, online by Zoom

To join by Zoom, email Fern at wfalbertson@gmail.com

If you are a woman who enjoys good books and thoughtful discussion, then consider joining fellow readers for Women Who Read. The next meeting is on January 6, 2026. At this gathering, participants will make recommendations and the reading list for 2026 will be created.

Women's Bible Study | Tuesdays, 9:30-11:00 am | Online by Zoom or phone

Please contact our Zoom Coordinator, Molly, at mollyreko@comcast.net or 612-270-4700, or leader, Rev. Ruth Phelps at 952-929-1595.

There is plenty of food for thought in scripture, for as old as the scriptures are, they are alive with truth for these days.

Men's Bible Study | Wednesdays at 9:00 am-10:00 am | Hybrid: Grace Room and [Zoom](#)

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

Read and discuss scripture for upcoming sermons. Meet in-person and get a cup of coffee or come online. For the latest updates, contact Pastor Nate to be on the email list for frequent participants.

FROM THE PARISH NURSE

Time for LIFE: Learning, Inspiration, and Fellowship Together

FEBRUARY

Program: Does Valentine's Day Have Anything to do with Religion? with speaker, Dr. Bruce Forbes

Date: Tuesday, February 3

Time: Program from 1:00 - 2:00 pm, with a delicious dessert to follow!

Cost: \$5.00, payable the day of the event

RSVP: Sign up in the Commons or call the church office by Sunday, February 1

Valentine's Day is celebrated as a day of love every year on February 14th. Who was St. Valentine? Isn't the day mainly a creation of Hallmark? Does it really have anything to do with religion? Dr. Bruce Forbes, our guest speaker, will offer a presentation along with visual images, about the history of Valentine's Day. Forbes has a special interest in the history of holidays and is the author of several books, including *America's Favorite Holidays; Candid Histories*, featuring a chapter about Valentine's Day. This book has been reviewed as "lucid and lighthearted" and has "candid" in the book title because these histories include many surprises.

Forbes is a Professor Emeritus of Religious Studies from Morningside University, Sioux City, Iowa, a United Methodist related school, where he taught for forty years. Combining his interests in the history of Christianity and the analysis of popular culture, his recent focus has been about the holidays and offering an enlightening and entertaining perspective on how they got to be how they are today. Forbes is also an ordained United Methodist minister and is a frequent speaker at colleges, workshops, civic groups, and churches throughout the Upper Midwest.

MARCH

Program: "The Biggest Crowd-Pleasing Records" with Radio DJ, Mike Henry

Date: Tuesday, March 3

Time: Program from 1:00 - 2:00 pm, with a delicious dessert to follow!

Cost: \$5.00, payable the day of the event

RSVP: Sign up in the Commons or call the church office by Sunday, March 1

We are excited to welcome back Mike Henry, a former radio DJ, to share his newest program with us, "The Biggest Crowd-Pleasing Records"! Read how Mike describes this enjoyable program: "Since I retired and started doing one-hour programs for senior groups in 2018, I have done more than 350 programs with audiences totaling about 12,000 attendees. During every program I look out into the audience while the music is playing, watching how folks are reacting to that particular record. If they are singing along, tapping fingers or toes, I can get a pretty good read on how much they are enjoying that record. In my 8 other programs, there are 773 record clips, and I've played them enough times that I know which of those records are the most popular with senior audiences. This program showcases the biggest of those crowd-pleasers."

Mike got his start in radio when he worked his way through college at Oklahoma State as a rock and roll disc jockey in the mid-1960s. After college, he was a Navy officer in Vietnam, and then had a 41 year career in banking, before retiring in 2017. Since then, Mike has been visiting senior groups around the state recreating his old DJ role from college and reminiscing with clips from the original hit records we enjoyed when we were growing up.

Join us for some good entertainment and a tasty treat!

Time for LIFE: Save the Dates

Tuesday, April 7. Program from 1:00 - 2:00 pm; Loons: The Iconic Waterbirds, with renown naturalist, Stan Tekiela

Tuesday, May 5. Spring Luncheon and Program from 12 Noon - 2:00 pm; details to follow.



Dear RUMC Community:

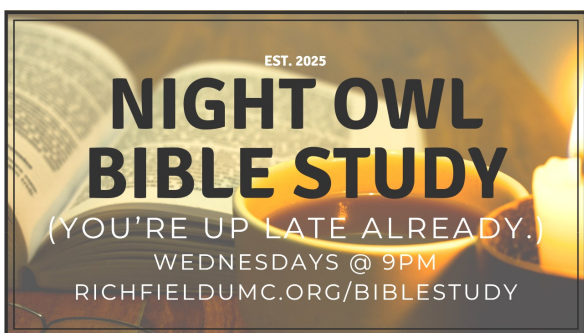
I wanted to take a moment to say **THANK YOU** for the tremendous opportunity of spending this fall with the RUMC Chancel Choir as interim director. This is a marvelous group of talented musicians and a receptive and responsive congregation! I'm grateful beyond words to have shared this journey over the past several months...including our time together earlier in the year.



When Pastor Nate first presented the idea to 're-join' the choir for the fall / Advent season, Chris and I gave thoughtful consideration and responded with an enthusiastic YES...with the stated intent of remaining through the end of 2025. It's now time to move on to new adventures!

This is a community steeped in creative resources, and I'm confident its commitment to the ministry of music will only continue to grow. It has been an honor to serve in this role, and to have been some small part of its exciting future. Chris and I both look forward to following your journeys in the months and years ahead!

Keep a song in your heart...always,
Dave



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.



United Women in Faith

THANK YOU FROM UWF

A huge thank you to everyone who participated, donated or shopped at the Craft Fair. Your support of UWF and local businesses is greatly appreciated.

Thank you to everyone who donated cookies, purchased cookies and helped with the bake sale. A special thank you to the confirmation youth who helped bake cookies on Saturday and helped with the sale on Sunday.

THANK YOU: 172 DAYS OF PRAYER MOVEMENT

Everything we do begins in prayer. Thank you for praying daily for your church for nearly half the year. Your care and commitment to our mission and ministries matter. Blessings to you!

THANK YOU: "OUR LAST EARTHLY STEPS" WORKSHOPS

Death is a natural part of life. As a church, we value pondering the ends of our lives and preparing now to help our loved ones later. 90+ people went on the field trip to Gill Brothers Funeral Service and participated in workshops on grief, funeral planning, and learning about Oak Hill Cemetery. Thank you for being a part of these sensitive, yet important, life topics.

KEEP YOURSELF AND YOUR CHURCH HEALTHY IN FLU SEASON

Please do your part for public safety. Wash your hands, get your flu shot and COVID-19 vaccine, and please stay home if you're sick. Anyone is welcome to wear a face mask on campus. Thank you for looking out for your health and the health of others.

CARING FOR CHILDREN Early Learning Center



The New Year is the perfect time for fresh starts and new beginnings. This season is also a wonderful opportunity to set new goals and create positive changes in our lives. With winter in full swing, we can warm our hearts with acts of kindness and togetherness. Our CFC community ended 2025 together, by sharing stories and treats, viewing a collection of the children’s photos and a visit with St. Nick. We wish you and your families the very best in 2026.

Kathy Newbauer
Caring for Children Director



Pre-K making cranberry sculptures



Toddler’s indoor “snowball” fun



Making Christmas ornaments



Preschool playing outside

MUSIC SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY AT RICHFIELD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH THE CHESTER E. AND MARION D. GROTH SCHOLARSHIP



The Chester E. and Marion D. Groth Scholarship program awards annual post-secondary scholarships for qualified students desiring to earn a degree and pursue a career in Music Performance, Music Education, or Music Therapy.

To be eligible to receive this scholarship, an applicant must:

- Be a graduating high school senior from a Minnesota high school;
- Be entering college as a Freshman;
- Be a United States citizen or actively applying for citizenship;
- Have an overall GPA of at least 3.0 (“B” average);
- Have at least two years of formal training in some aspect of music

Applications must be received in the church office no later than Sunday, February 15, 2026. Students chosen to be finalists will present or perform a 5-10 minute program on Sunday, March 15, 2026.

For more information and an application form, visit richfieldumc.org/scholarships. Questions? Contact the church office at (612) 861-6086.

BLESSINGS FOR THE CRISIS NURSERY

For many years, Richfield UMC has participated with other congregations in providing one worship service at Lake Harriet Bandshell during the summer months. In 2025 the total in loose offerings for all the “Celebrating Summer Sundays” services combined is \$14,490.81.

This allowed a gift of \$11,000 to the Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery with the remainder kept in the bandshell account to pay for the Minneapolis Park Board’s permit fees and incidentals. Thank you for participating in this wonderful summer tradition and outreach!

Youth & Children



Becca Whitaker
CYF Ministries Coordinator
bwhitaker@richfieldumc.org

This past year has been a blast for the Sunday School and Youth Group families! I want to start with thanking all our volunteers: Betty Klint, Rachel Whitaker, Sue (Kent) Johnson, Gail Johnson and Sarah Callahan for all the help they provide in making our Sunday School and Youth programming happen. We started with reading the Whirl Story Bible in Sunday School and doing more crafts to learn the lessons. In Youth Group we added more meetings to have more fellowship time, with one of our last meetings talking about the activities they would like to see more of this spring.

The youth and children had a lot of fun stretching their creative muscles for the pageant, the Youth Group is making plans for another skit in the coming months.

The **confirmation class** has been learning the social principles of the United Methodist Church and doing video discussions. We will kick off the year with mentors and conversations this January.

This January join in a **Craft / Service Project Night** open to the congregation on January 30. There will be a **Youth Group lock-in** following this All-Ages Craft Service Project time. If your youth is interested in participating in the lock-in, please email me at bwhitaker@richfieldumc.org to sign up.



Lastly, we would like to invite everyone to join us for **sledding at Kenny Park** after confirmation class on 01/25! We would meet around 11:30 am to have fun in the snow. Please email me at bwhitaker@richfieldumc.org if you would be interested in joining us or have any questions. All are welcome to attend, children 15 and under will need a guardian present.

Calendar:

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| Wednesday 01/07 | Youth Group 6:30pm-7:30pm in the Grace Room |
| Sunday 01/11 | Sunday School after Time With Children in the Little Lunch Room
Confirmation 10:45am in the Grace Room |
| Wednesday 01/21 | Youth Group 6:30pm-7:30pm in the Grace Room |
| Sunday 01/25 | Sunday School after Time With Children in the Little Lunch Room
Confirmation 10:45am in the Grace Room
Sledding at Kenny Park after confirmation (around 11:30am) |
| Friday 01/30 | All Ages Craft Service Project 6:30pm-9:00pm with youth group lock-in after |
| Wednesday 02/04 | Youth Group 6:30pm-7:30pm in the Grace Room |
| Sunday 02/08 | Sunday School after Time With Children in the Little Lunch Room
Confirmation 10:45am in the Grace Room |
| Wednesday 02/18 | Youth Group meets in Grace Room to help with Ash Wednesday Service, meeting time to be announced |
| Sunday 02/22 | Sunday School After Time With Children in the Little Lunch Room
Confirmation 10:45am in the Grace Room |

HAPPY JANUARY & FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

January

Rexi Warner	1	Dorthea Doty	17
Devin Teal	3	Beverly Borneman	19
Lynn Borgeson	4	Win Neuger	19
Brooke Nelson	6	Shana Hoffer	19
Alex Restemayer	7	Nakia Neal	19
Bob Mills	10	Anne Ruona	24
Promise Williams	10	Isaiah Crandall	24
Christie Neuger	14	Swen Crandall	24
Mariah Norberg	14	Phyllis Olson	26
Jerry Schilling	15	Vicki Sells	29
Gavin Locke	15	Phyllis Killam	30
Ann Johnson	16	Dorothy Holland	31
Kenzie Lambert	16		

February

Ron Doncavage	2	Aubrey Nelson	17
Daniella Callahan	3	Steve Warner	19
Lyra Thorne	4	John Watne	20
Lorraine Coroni	5	Betty Friesen	23
Bill Johnson	6	Chase Bruns	23
Lois Schatschneider	7	Remi Gaertner	24
Lori Claussen	7	Sandra Williams	25
Jennifer Teal	9	Dorothy DeFreese	26
Sharon Gardner	13	Juan Nieves Lebrón	28
Bea Melcher	17		

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.

We pray in celebration.

We pray with gratitude.

We pray for those who grieve:

- Susan (SK) Johnson and her family on the death of her sister, Nancy.
- 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.

RUMC LIBRARY NEWS

Various (but not random) Notes:

- It's winter and we are well-stocked with puzzles. Help yourself!
- Children's books have been in a rolling cart where they are less easily categorized and displayed. We will be sorting and moving some of these to shelves. Keep watch.
- Helpful and do-able environmental care tips for daily living are on a small round table by the CFC office windows. They are produced by a national United Methodist Creation Care team. Check them out! Go to: umcreationjustice.org for more information, practices, and policy suggestions.
- In November we had a series of post-worship learning times related to grief and funeral planning. For those of us who are tending to these experiences and matters, the library has resources to help. Especially, there are grief-related books in the self-help section and funeral/memorial service planning material (prayers, litanies, hymns) on the worship area shelving.
- Then, unless you have something specific in mind, let your library time and searching begin with the Theme Table and the books displayed on the tops of shelves. In general, I try to place newer books in these places on subjects that indicate the variety of topics in the library. Feel free to check these books out (with a puzzle).
- And, as you sort out life during and after the holidays, and you have a book or three that you have had checked for a while. Please return it to the large drawer of the kiosk next to the Heritage Room doors. This allows others also to enjoy the resources of our church.

Thank you - Wayne Albertson

AWARD FROM SUN NEWSPAPERS READERS Best Choir/ Music Program - Richfield

Richfield United Methodist Church is a 2026 Readers' Choice Award winner. The readers of SUN Newspapers have recognized RUMC as a local favorite for Best Choir/ Music Program.

A special section celebrating all 2026 winners will be published in the January 29 & 30 editions of the SUN Newspapers. Richfield United Methodist Church will be recognized as a winner in this section.

CHURCH AND SOCIETY

THANK YOU: AGATE HOUSING POP-UP FOOD DRIVE

When Agate Housing called, Richfield UMC answered! Thank you to everyone who participated in the 48-hour pop-up food drive for Agate Housing & Services residents who lost their SNAP benefits this fall. We brought dozens of full bags of groceries to Agate's newest property, Valiance Shelter and Apartment Homes. Be proud that we are a church who is dedicated, nimble, and compassionate.

THANK YOU: WARMING TREE

Your generosity in December was incredible. You decorated the Warming Tree with your donated hats, scarves, mittens, and gloves to make a truly beautiful tree at Christmastime. Your child-size donations went to local schools for kids who lose their winter items or show up without them, and your adult-size donations went to residents in housing programs with Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative. It has been a long time since we've had this ministry; thank you for making it special.

THANK YOU: CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERING MISSION RECIPIENT

The Church and Society Team selected local nonprofit Small Sums as our mission partner Christmas Eve offering recipient. Small Sums outfits individuals experiencing housing instability with the required work items needed to start and keep a job - from clothes to shoes and boots, from tools to transportation. Your generosity helps neighbors gain stability with dignity, thank you.



WOVEN SLEEPING MATS MINISTRY

Our ministry of upcycling plastic shopping bags by weaving them into sleeping mats for people who are displaced from their homes is seeing a lot of participation. Thank you.

Here is how you can take part:

WEAVE - the loom is on a table in the corner of the commons area. Whenever you are at the church you are welcome to weave a row or two or ten!

- Each "stitch" includes 2 long strands (warps).
- When starting a new row, include the metal rod (it keeps the width even).
- Pull your knots firm/tight so that the knot can be tucked in.
- Use the potato mashers to pull each row tight against the previous rows.

BAG PREP - the loops used for the weaving are cut from plastic shopping bags. The preparation can be done at church, or you can take home a bunch of bags and bring back loops.

- Separate bags/loops by color
- You can cut one bag at a time or several bags at once, depending on your preference
- Smooth the bag flat
- Cut across the bag about an inch from the bottom (removing the bottom seam)
- Cut across the bag about an inch below the handles
- Cut across the remaining rectangle in half to create two loops (about 4"-6" wide)

BAGS - it takes several hundred bags to create a single mat. Keep bringing them in.

- Clean bags from Target, Walmart, Cub, Dollar Store, pretty much any average weight shopping bag, will work.
- Colored bags add interest.
- We cannot use produce bags (too lightweight), newspaper bags (wrong shape) or very heavy bags.

WORK TIMES - join the fun as we set times to come by and spend some time on the project.

- Sundays before and after worship
- New: Wednesdays 6:30-8 pm, starting September 3
- Work independently anytime the church is open; Tuesdays to Thursdays from 9 - 3.

Questions - contact Gail Johnson 612-250-1736



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Unite us in your vision,
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Transform us by your song,
create our harmony.

May we embrace your future
and be your loving church.

Amen.