RICHFIELD
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

March 1, 2026 at 9:30 am
Second Sunday in Lent

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

ENTRANCE

Prelude "Wondrous Love" Todd Kendall — Sonja Gustafson

Welcome — Rev. Nate Melcher

Call to Worship*

People of God, Jesus has invited us here.
We gather to praise God, who brings justice and righteousness to all.
We gather to give thanks to God for hope and peace.
Blessed be the Lord, who has done marvelous things.
Let us praise God together!

Gathering Hymn* "Blessed Jesus, at Thy Word" UM Hymnal 596

1. **Blessed Jesus, at thy word we are gathered all to hear thee;**
   let our hearts and souls be stirred now to seek and love and fear thee,
   by thy teachings sweet and holy, drawn from earth to love thee solely.
2. **All our knowledge, sense, and sight lie in deepest darkness shrouded,**
   till thy spirit breaks our night with the beams of truth unclouded.
   Thou alone to God canst win us; thou must work all good within us.
3. **Glorious Lord, thyself impart! Light of light, from God proceeding,**
   open thou our ears and heart; help us by thy spirit's pleading;
   hear the cry thy people raises; hear, and bless our prayers and praises.

Prayer of Confession

Merciful God, there are days when we lose our way. We forget, or simply don't trust, your vision of peace. We ignore the cries of those seeking justice. We fail to bear good fruit in our lives. Forgive us. Remind us that we are yours. Teach us how to make peace with ourselves and our neighbors. 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 when your life's journey met God's heart.

Celebration Music "The Hands That First Held Mary's Child" Chancel Choir
Dan Forrest

Celebrating Our Conflux Moments

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

Scripture in Context

Gospel Reading Matthew 3:1-17 Sarah Callahan

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
'Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight.' "

Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him, and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, and do not presume 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.

"I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw God's Spirit descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from the heavens said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."

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

Sermon "Jesus Baptized" Rev. Nate Melcher
"Windows of Opportunity" Worship Series 2 of 8

Responsive Hymn "'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus" v. 1 UM Hymnal 462

1. **'Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus, and to take him at his word;**
just to rest upon his promise, and to know, "Thus saith the Lord."

Jesus, Jesus, how I trust him! How I've proved him o'er and o'er!
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus! O for grace to trust him more!

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 he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna, **hosanna,**
in the highest, **in 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 "Let Us Break Bread Together" UM Hymnal 625

1. **Let us break bread together on our knees, (on our knees)**
   let us break bread together on our knees. (on our knees)
   When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
   O Lord, have mercy on me. (on me)
2. **Let us drink wine together on our knees, (on our knees)**
   let us drink wine together on our knees. (on our knees)
   When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
   O Lord, have mercy on me. (on me)
3. **Let us praise God together on our knees, (on our knees)**
   let us praise God together on our knees. (on our knees)
   When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
   O Lord, have mercy on me. (on me)
4. **Let us praise God together on our knees, (on our knees)**
   let us praise God together on our knees, (on our knees)
   When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
   O Lord, have mercy if you please. (if you please)

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* "Here I Am, Lord" UM Hymnal 593

1. **I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry,**
   All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save.
   I, who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright.
   Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?

   Refrain:
   Here I am, Lord. Is it I Lord?
   I have heard you calling in the night.
   I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
   I will hold your people in my heart.

2. **I, the Lord of the snow and rain, I have borne my people' pain.**
   I have wept for love of them. They turn away.
   I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love alone
   I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send? (Refrain)

3. **I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame,**
   I will set a feast for them, My hand will save.
   Finest bread I will provide till their hearts be satisfied
   I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send? (Refrain)

Benediction*

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

Postlude "Deo gracias"
Setting by John Eggert

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, March 1, 2026

Pub Theology
Next gathering this evening, March 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.

Time for LIFE: Learning, Inspiration, and Fellowship Together

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: $10.00, 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"! Come hear these toe-tapping favorites.

Next Sunday, March 8

Sunday School (Grades K-6) 2nd & 4th Sundays during worship time. After the Time with Children, children may go to Sunday School or stay in the sanctuary to worship.

Confirmation Class at 10:45 am in the Grace Room

Sunday, March 15

Your Next Faithful Steps: Lunch For New People
Sunday, March 15, 10:45 am-11:45 am, Grace Room
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.

Children's Easter Party—You Can Help!

Saturday, March 28, 10:00 am—12:00 pm
Easter is just around the corner, and with Easter comes our Easter party. Please join us on March 28th for a morning of fun and games. We will have craft activities like our "stained glass" egg cut outs, games like Bunny Bowling and a Cake Walk with fun Easter prizes. We will also have an Easter story time to finish off the activities. All of this fun wouldn't be possible without all of our amazing volunteers, if you would like to learn more or sign up to volunteer during the event, please contact Becca at bwhitaker@richfieldumc.org.

Palm Sunday, March 29, 9:30 am, Sanctuary, In-Person and Online

Arrive early to receive a palm branch to wave during the gathering hymn processional. Come for spectacular music reflecting Jesus's triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Following the stained glass windows, the sermon on March 29 (Palm Sunday) will focus on the crucifixion and the sermon on March 15 will focus on the palm-filled story.

Ongoing and Open

1st Mondays, 1:30 pm | Women Who Read
To join by Zoom, email Fern wfalbertson@gmail.com. Next meeting March 2, 2026. The book to read and discuss is Sipsworth by Simon Van Booy. The April meeting is on April 6. The book to read for April is The Book of Lost Names by Kristin Harmel. If you are a woman who enjoys good books and thoughtful discussion, then consider joining fellow readers for Women Who Read.

Tues. & Thurs., 10:30 am-1:30 pm | Open Gym: Winter Prayer Walks, Fellowship Hall

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!
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), Marilyn Dodge, Pat Noonan, Betty, mother of Michele Wegscheid, and Eric, nephew of Lori Claussen.

We pray for those who seek comfort: Paula Milani, Dorothy DeFreese, and Rev. Lynn Borgeson's brother, Dale.

We pray for those who grieve:

- Mary Kay Petersen in the death of her sister, Nancy.
- Pat Robertson and family in the death of her husband, Jerry. A celebration of life will be held at 11 am on 3/14/26 at The Waters on 50th, 3500 W. 50th St, Mpls.

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, March 1, 2026
9:30 am In-Person Worship Service (+Live streamed & archived)
7:00 pm Pub Theology

Monday, March 2, 2026
1:30 pm Women Who Read

Tuesday, March 3, 2026
9:30 am Women's Bible Study
10:30 am-1:30 pm Open Gym: Walking
1:00 pm Time for LIFE
7:00 pm Staff Parish Relations Committee Meeting

Wednesday, March 4, 2026
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, March 5, 2026
10:30 am-1:30 pm Open Gym: Walking

Friday, March 6, 2026
4:30 pm CFC Family Open Gym

Saturday, March 7, 2026
8:30 am Men's Group
10:30 am Saturday Covenant Group

Sunday, March 8, 2026
9:30 am In-Person Worship Service (+Live streamed & archived)
9:40 am Children's 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, Victor Zupanc
Today's Musicians: Chancel Choir, Brad Gardner, Sonja Gustafson
Liturgists today: Sarah Callahan, Fern Albertson
Tech Crew today: Linda Blomsness, Rev. Bill Johnson, 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 March 1 is Jerry Schilling.

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