RICHFIELD
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

March 22, 2026 at 9:30 am
Fifth Sunday in Lent

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

ENTRANCE

Prelude — "Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord" by Stephen Schwartz — Victor Zupanc

Welcome — Rev. Nate Melcher

Call to Worship* — Doris Townsend

Hope in sacrifice. Although there is fear and trembling, forgiveness is assured.

Death is never the end with our story,
for God is faithful, even amid despair.

Amid sorrow, we seek the hope Jesus brings.

We come with heavy hearts, yet we hold on to the hope of Jesus.

Through Jesus, light prevails.

Stand in faith. Stand in life.

Gathering Hymn* "Lord of the Dance" UM Hymnal 261
vs. 1, 3, and 5

1. **I danced in the morning when the world was begun,**
and I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun,
and I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth.
At Bethlehem I had my birth.

Refrain:
Dance, then, wherever you may be;
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he.
And I'll lead you all wherever you may be,
and I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.

3. **I danced on the sabbath when I cured the lame,**
the holy people said it was a shame;
they whipped and they stripped and they hung me high;
and they left me there on a cross to die. (Refrain)

5. **They cut me down and I leapt up high,**
I am the life that'll never, never die;
I'll live in you if you'll live in me;
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he. (Refrain)

Centering Prayer

In moments of shadow, when betrayal and fear seem to triumph, Jesus still speaks peace. Not just the absence of conflict, but the presence of love, even when it's hard. We receive and share this peace with the commitment to be bearers of love and light. Holy God, break through the shadows and guide us to pass your radical life-giving peace to others. Hear us now in our Breakthrough Prayer…

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.

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 "I Feel the Earth Move" by Carole King

Celebrating Our Conflux Moments

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

Scripture in Context

Gospel Reading Matthew 27:27-44

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spat on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall, but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

Then two rebels were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." In the same way the authorities also were mocking him, saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to, for he said, 'I am God's Son.' " The rebels who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way.

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

Sermon "Jesus Suffers" Rev. Nate Melcher
"Windows of Opportunity" Worship Series 5 of 8

Responsive Hymn "'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus" v. 4 UM Hymnal 462

4. **I'm so glad I learned to trust thee,**
precious Jesus, Savior, friend;
and I know that thou art with me,
wilt be with me to the end.

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!

Prayers of the People

LORD in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

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.

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 "Hosanna! Hosanna!" by Cathy Townley

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*

God of the Crucified Jesus, we are struck by the brutal reality that Jesus knowingly, willingly, and obediently gave up his earthly life on a cross. He offered the ultimate sacrifice at Golgotha, the Place of the Skull for our redemption. We now humbly give our financial resources. These monetary gifts are a mere gesture of sacrifice in comparison to Jesus' sacrifice. Yet, we give in the name of the peace Jesus brings the world. Amen.

SENDING FORTH

Sending Hymn* "Breathe on Me, Breath of God" UM Hymnal 420
verses 1, 2, 4

1. **Breathe on me, Breath of God,**
   fill me with life anew,
   that I may love what thou dost love,
   and do what thou wouldst do.

2. **Breathe on me, Breath of God,**
   until my heart is pure,
   until with thee I will one will,
   to do and to endure.

4. **Breathe on me, Breath of God,**
   so shall I never die,
   but live with thee the perfect life
   of thine eternity.

Benediction*

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

Postlude "Keep Me In Your Heart for a While"
by Warren Zevon

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 22, 2026

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

Children's Easter Party—You Can Help! Contact Becca at bwhitaker@richfieldumc.org

This Saturday, March 28, 10:00 am—12:00 pm
The Easter Party is 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.

Next Sunday, March 29
Palm Sunday Worship Service at 9:30 am, In-Person, Online, and by Phone

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.

Thursday, April 2 — Maundy Thursday

7:00 pm worship service at Portland Avenue UMC
8000 Portland Ave, Bloomington, MN 55420, In-Person Only
We are teaming-up with neighbor churches, Hillcrest UMC and Portland UMC, for Maundy Thursday worship service. Come for a bit of food, join in the sacrament of Holy Communion, and engage in music with fellow area United Methodists. Your RSVP is requested but not required *and* it will help the three churches plan the menu and be prepared. Sign-up in the Commons or contact the church.

April 3 — Good Friday

6:30 pm worship service
5:30 pm Soup Supper ($5/person, $20/household cap)
Fellowship Hall (Soup Supper and Holy Communion), then Sanctuary (Service)
Enjoy a warm cup of soup, bread, and sides on a peaceful evening filled with church members and neighbors. Serve one another in the sacrament of Holy Communion at your tables, then journey to the foot of the cross in the Sanctuary through scripture and song. RSVPs help us plan well, thanks. Sign-up in the Commons or contact the church.

Sunday, April 5
Easter Sunday, 9:30 am (arrive early for the Prelude!)

He is risen, indeed! Come and worship with joy and hope to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus in our lives! Give to the Easter special offering that benefits Minnesota FoodShare. Invite your friends and family for a morning featuring amazing music, a confetti-filled Time with Children, and lively preaching to inspire you to live in the hope of resurrection.

Time for LIFE: Learning, Inspiration, and Fellowship Together

Program: Fascinating Loons, with well-known naturalist, Stan Tekiela
Date: Tuesday, April 7
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, April 5
We are excited to welcome back one of our favorite Time for LIFE speakers, Stan Tekiela. Stan is an award-winning author, naturalist, and wildlife photographer, and we will have the opportunity to hear his program, *Fascinating Loons!* This is Stan's sixth time back to RUMC, but his first time presenting his program on fascinating loons. Join us as we learn all about this iconic waterbird!

Ongoing and Open

1st Mondays, 1:30 pm | Women Who Read
To join by Zoom, email Fern wfalbertson@gmail.com. Next meeting April 6, 2026. The book to read and discuss 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.

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:30 am-1:30 pm| Open Gym: Winter Prayer Walks in the 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!
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, Donis (Burt) Andrews (sister of Shari Burt), Marilyn Dodge, Pat Noonan, Christopher, brother of Michele Wegscheid, Eric, nephew of Lori Claussen, Lynne Clarke, and Ron Doncavage.
We pray for those who seek comfort: Paula Milani, Dorothy DeFreese, and Rev. Lynn Borgeson's brother, Dale.
We pray for those who grieve:

- Michele Wegscheid in the death of her mother, Betty.
- The family and friends of June Berglund who died on February 28. A memorial service will be held on Sunday, May 3, 2026.

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 22, 2026
9:30 am In-Person Worship Service
(+Live streamed & archived)
9:40 Am Children's Sunday School
10:45 am Confirmation Class

Monday, March 23, 2026

Tuesday, March 24, 2026
9:30 am Women's Bible Study
10:30 am-1:30 pm Open Gym: Walking

Wednesday, March 25, 2026
9:00 am Men's Bible Study
7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal
9:00 pm Night Owl Bible Study

Thursday, March 26, 2026
10:30 am-1:30 pm Open Gym: Walking

Friday, March 27, 2026
4:30 pm CFC Family Open Gym

Saturday, March 28, 2026
8:30 am Men's Group
10:00 am Community Easter Party
10:30 am Saturday Covenant Group

Sunday, March 29, 2026
Palm Sunday
9:30 am In-Person Worship Service
(+Live streamed & archived)

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, Sonja Gustafson, Pat Noonan, Linda Schmidt, Becca Whitaker
Music Staff: Sonja Gustafson, Victor Zupanc
Musicians Today: Donna Furst, Greg Locke, Rev. Nate Melcher, Victor Zupanc
Liturgist today: Doris Townsend
Tech Crew today: Rev. Bill Johnson, Juan Nieves Lebrón, Bea Melcher, Steve Warner

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 22 is Mary Martha Butler.

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Richfield UMC gathers on Dakota land. More at richfieldumc.org/land.