

United Methodist Herald

November 2020

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Need to contact the church office?

During this pandemic time there is no in person staffing of the church office however Sandy has been and will continue to work out of her home taking care of all the normal church office business! If you need to reach Sandy or the church office for any reason you can email northfieldumc@gmail.com

or call

507-649-4899.

Sandy will continue to monitor the church email and this phone number from her home during the regular church office business hours

Monday-Thursday 8 am - 4 pm, and Fridays 8 am - noon.

November Worship

November 1

All Saints Celebration

Deuteronomy 34

Rev. Rachel McIver Morey

November 8

I Corinthians 12:12-26

Rev. Rachel McIver Morey

November 15

District Superintendent Rev. Cynthia Williams

November 22

Psalm 100

Rev. Rachel McIver Morey

November 29

1st Sunday of Advent—Hanging of the Greens

Romans 12

Rev. Rachel McIver Morey

Simultaneous Worship Watch Parties at 9:30am!

Join your church family either on Facebook (account needed) or at Church.Online (no account needed) for worship! Check in via comments or the chat function so we know you are with us.

Zoom Coffee Hour!

At 10:15 am we will host a Zoom coffee hour for anyone interested in online fellowship after worship - email the church office for the Zoom link
info@northfieldumc.org.



NUMC WELCOME STATEMENT

We affirm that all people are created in the image of God and, as beloved children of God, all are worthy of God's love and grace, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, family status, race, ethnicity, physical or mental ability, socio-economic status, or age. We unreservedly support and affirm the full inclusion of persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities in all facets of ministry at Northfield UMC, including ordination and marriage. Following Christ's example, we open our hearts, minds, and doors to welcome all who come to us in God's grace.

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE UPDATE

"Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."
(1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

So give thanks in all circumstances? Even in the midst of a pandemic? It may be hard to feel thankful right now but the virus that keeps us away from our church building can serve to remind us that the church is so much more than a building and is even now continuing its ministries.

So what are we grateful for and can give thanks for?

- The technology that allows us to stay informed and connected - even when we are encouraged to maintain social distance.
- Medical science and the researchers who are working around the clock to find a vaccine.
- Medical personnel, doctors, nurses and first responders who are on the front lines risking their own health to care for those who are affected.
- School administrators and teachers who are working to continue the education of our youth as seamlessly as possible.
- Custodial, maintenance and cleaning staff who work endless hours to disinfect and sanitize buildings.
- Our clergy who continue to provide for our spiritual nourishment.
 - The return to health of all those who have become ill, their caretakers, and medical providers.
 - Essential workers who labor, sometimes even risking their own health, so others can have what they need.

While we are grateful for all of those who are working to ensure our health and safety, we may still feel overwhelmed and that there is nothing we can do to help. But, in reality, there are many ways to use the gifts given to us by our generous God and come to the aid of others. We can:

- Assist our neighbors, especially the elderly and most vulnerable, by shopping for them and taking care of their errands when they cannot.
- Remember to wash our hands for at least twenty seconds.
- Wear face masks to protect others should we be asymptomatic.
- Maintain physical distance when around others.
- Stay home if we don't feel well or if we are instructed to do so.
- Financially support our church so it can continue its ministries.

Do you recognize something here? Aren't these the things we are called to do all the time as responsible members of society and NUMC?

May God help us during these challenging times to continue to use our gifts responsibly to face not only this pandemic, but all the challenges in our lives.

General Fund September 2020 contributions \$22,626.66
General Fund September 2019 contributions \$25,351.47

General Fund YTD 2020 contributions \$270,939.35
General Fund YTD 2019 contributions \$276,655.69

How to make tithes and offerings

You can make your tithes and offerings a few different ways:

1. Make automatic donations from your bank account.
Contact northfieldumc@gmail.com for a form.
2. Donate online using a credit card, click on the GiveMN tab on the church website northfieldumc.org.
3. Mail a check to: Northfield United Methodist Church
1401 S. Maple St.
Northfield, MN 55057
The church mail is checked daily.

Enjoy the Convenience of Electronic Giving!

Electronic giving offers convenience for individual congregation members and provides much needed donation consistency for our congregation. Please consider electronic giving. Authorization forms are available on our website northfieldumc.org or by emailing northfieldumc@gmail.com.

Message from the Pastor

As our facilities folks work on the best plan for our HVAC system virus mitigation, I thought it would be a good time to revisit why we are doing what we are doing as a church: namely keeping our facility closed while our ministry marches on. The Wall Street Journal, New York Times, and our own Minnesota Star Tribune have reported at length about how easily the virus is spread via informal gathering of people who know each other, and the Minnesota Department of Health Commissioner Jan Malcolm said bluntly in a September 1 interview, "These informal gatherings have proved to be a weak spot in our collective statewide response to the pandemic." This makes sense: our guard comes down, social distancing feels weird, and the whole project of pandemic mitigation feels overblown. Churches and all the small groups for ministry and mission that we are composed of are exactly the kind of places that we feel safest and the precautions seem most unreasonable.

As I write, infection rates are worse than they were when the initial shutdown came in March. This is disheartening, and it is okay to feel saddened by the fact that we are not farther down the road toward a recovery of health and economic vigor. I have had more and more heartbreaking conversations with many of you, and I have prayed with you for friends and family members who have dealt with serious infection, and -in some cases - death. Some of you have already walked through infection yourselves and are living with serious after effects - others have tested positive and had no symptoms at all. COVID-19 remains a threat even if we are tired of dealing with it - and many of us are so very tired of dealing with it.

In the book of Psalms, we have a tradition of lament - several psalmists go on at length about the suffering they

experience. Psalm 22 is famously quoted by Jesus as he died: "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?". Lament has its place, both personally and as a community. In a year of pandemic, protest, politics, and poisoned public discourse, lament is a crucial tool in the Christian's toolkit for walking through valleys of the shadow of death - it gives voices to the real lived experience of human pain and loss. Don't shy away from it.

But - and this is crucial - lament is not the final word. Our faith speaks of a God of resurrection, new life, new possibilities, and order out of chaos. Lament names the pain; the spirit of the living God brings healing and hope. The final word in the book of Psalms is "Hallelujah" - praise the Lord! We will yet praise God, friends. I will close with these words from the prophet Jeremiah to the people living in exile: "Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it. You will find rest for your souls." Keep walking. Rest for all our souls lies ahead of us.

Blessings,
Pastor Rachel

NOTE: ELECTION DAY NOVEMBER 3rd

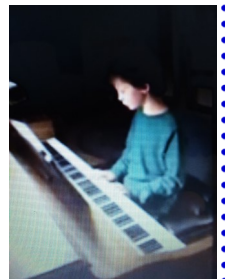
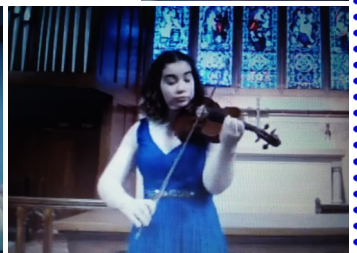
Northfield UMC will serve - as it has for generations now - as a polling place for the general election. This might seem strange: we have closed our doors to our own activities, why open them for this? The Administrative Council decided to approve this use of the building because if we did not open our doors as a polling place, the city would have had to combine two or more polling places together - which would have forced even more people into close proximity. This is one instance where by opening our doors we create a safer environment in these strange times. Pastor Rachel will be serving as an election judge at our site in part to help ensure safe use of the building under COVID-19 protocols, and we are grateful to the City of Northfield for their understanding of our current restrictions on building usage.

Thanks for the music!

Thank you to everyone who has contributed videos and recordings to be included in our online worship services. We miss singing and playing together, but we are still able to worship with music when people make and send in recordings. If you or your family members have music to play and are able to record yourself, please consider sending in a piece to be a part of worship videos.

If you would like to add your voice to the NUMC E Choir, send an email and I will add you to our choir list. You'll receive a recording, lyrics, and a score to use as you sing along. After you record your voice, it will be mixed with others to create a "choir" for all of the congregation to sing with as we watch the online service.

Make a joyful noise!
Wendy Smith
wendynumc@aol.com



FAMILY ministry

Children's Ministry

Children's Ministries may be online due to Covid-19 but I am excited to announce that it is in full swing!

Sunday school has started with weekly video posts on the Facebook page and on the church website northfieldumc.org. These posts include a Bible passage with some education and a discussion about the passage. In each post there are also a variety of activities for things to do at home. There are materials that go along with these lessons and if you have not picked up your materials please email me and I can get them to you (my email is listed at the end of this article). I do encourage you to watch the videos even if you do not have your materials, there is still plenty to learn and do from home without the packet but I would love for everyone to have one, so please email me.



Kids Creating, Community in Christ (KC3) has also started up. We are meeting every Wednesday at 6:30 PM on Zoom. This has been an exciting time of fellowship to get together chat, study the Bible and talk about its application to our lives. We always incorporate some fun activities like games and music as well. If you have any questions please email me.

I am also excited to let everyone know about our virtual Christmas pageant. This year we will divide up the scenes and have each household work on a smaller section of the script. We will eventually compile them into a virtual Christmas pageant that we can all watch from our living rooms. Who knows, maybe your family dog will play the part of the donkey that carries Mary, alongside Joseph, to Bethlehem! We really hope you can sign up for this! Please email me or Pastor Rachel by November 8th.

Due to the pandemic it, has certainly been a strange beginning but it has also been a fun and exciting start for Sunday school and KC3. I am looking forward to all the ministry opportunities this year and for creative ways to keep the Word of God active at the Northfield United Methodist Church!

God's Blessings,
Gregory Ennis
gregorym.ennis@gmail.com

Notes on confirmation

10th Grade confirmation class still meeting; service this Spring

November is typically when we hold a confirmation worship service - you might recall last year's in the Fellowship Hall when we didn't have access to the sanctuary. It is a time when youth decide whether to own their faith and their membership in this part of the body of Christ and we are led in worship by some of the youngest disciples. This year's 10th graders, who would have been confirmed this month in an online service, have decided that the service that feels fresh and authentic to them would be one that takes place in -person. Therefore they have decided to postpone their confirmation until a time when we might be able to be together in person, possibly in an outdoor service this Spring. In a testament to their faith experience, they have also opted to continue meeting until that service takes place.

9th Graders started meeting early; flexible format

Likewise our 9th graders, who typically have their first confirmation meeting in November, have already met twice in order to imagine what confirmation could look like when we prioritize love of neighbor and keeping everyone safe. In order to get some in-person time in there have been a pair of outdoor Sunday afternoon meetings to build some familiarity and fellowship. The group will continue meeting on the first Sunday of the month - outdoor when it makes sense, in person when it is safe, and online when it fits.

Other Youth Events

Other events for youth, including our high-school led SALT projects and social Faith on Fire gatherings, are also still being scheduled. Make sure to read your "NUMConnection" email on Wednesdays and your "Worship at NUMC" email on Sundays to stay up-to-date on the wheres and whens of these events. If you do not receive these emails, write to Pastor Jerad at jmorey@northfieldumc.org to be added to the list.



Notes from the Parish Nurse

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a part of our lives for almost eight months! It has affected how we eat, sleep, work, exercise, attend school, worship, entertain, shop, and celebrate holidays. People are experiencing weariness, stress, restlessness, and loneliness. "...the pandemic has had a major psychological impact, causing people to lose a sense of safety, predictability, control, freedom, and security." (Mayo Clinic)

Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations. One's response can be influenced by one's background, social support system, financial situation, health, or emotional background. People who may respond more strongly to the stress of the pandemic are people with underlying medical or mental health conditions, frontline workers, caregivers, children, and teens. Individuals who have lost a job, are anxious about finances, are homeless, or have a substance use disorder may also react more strongly in a stressful situation. And finally, "people who are socially isolated from others, including people who live alone, and people in rural or frontier areas," may also react differently to stress. (MN Department of Health)

"Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, we are now facing a 'loneliness epidemic' exaggerated by the isolation required by the COVID-19 pandemic." (NAMI) This leads to increased stress and anxiety which can have a major impact on mental health. Some of these feelings can be diminished by keeping a regular schedule, eating healthy meals, exercising, maintaining a support network, and getting enough sleep. Stress is a normal reaction to the demands of life, but the COVID-19 pandemic may push one beyond one's ability to cope. When angry or frustrated, stop before acting out, go to another room, walk around the block, or take deep breaths until cooled down. "Avoid using alcohol and drugs as a way of dealing with fear, anxiety, boredom, and social isolation." (WHO) If feelings of helplessness, sadness, or hopelessness persist be sure to get help from a physician, pastor, or therapist. Don't try to "go it alone."

There are healthy ways to deal with loneliness that is caused by isolation.

- Deal with emotions in positive ways by journaling, playing or listening to music, enjoying a hobby, praying, meditating, or exercising.
- Implement strength and coping skills you have used in the past to weather tough transitions.
- Build a support system, strengthen relationships, and connect with others. This can be done by sharing phone conversations, texting, emailing, video chatting, writing letters, or using social media.
- Enjoy virtual activities with friends or family. Share learning about crafts, watch the same virtual concert, read the same book or watch the same movie and talk about it.
- Take a walk in your neighborhood and think about and feel a connection with your neighbors, keep your mind stimulated by what you hear and see.
- Take a break from listening to upsetting news on radio, TV, or social media. Instead, concentrate on stories that give you hope.
- If you are unable to leave your home, stay connected by hearing voices of friends through video chats and phone calls. Pray for others, write letters, sit by your front window and observe the comings and goings of your neighborhood.

"During the COVID-19 pandemic, you may experience anxiety, fear, sadness, loneliness. And mental health disorders, including anxiety and depression, can worsen." (Mayo Clinic) Listed below are some phone numbers for helplines.

Mental Health MN Helpline 1-800-862-1799

National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-7233, or Text "LOVEIS" to 22522

National Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration 1-800-985-5990, or Text "TalkWithUs" to 66746

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255, or www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Veterans' Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255, or Text 8388255



Election deadlines just ahead:

Nov. 2 – Last day to vote early in person

Nov. 3 – Election day at your polling place

Absentee ballots postmarked Nov 3 or earlier and received by Nov 10 will be counted.

On Nov. 4, ISIAIH pivots to work with the state legislature to “Make Minnesota Better Off Together.” Our work shaping the elections has created the conditions to make a full people- and planet-centered agenda possible in the state legislature.

ISIAIH – Southern MN will gather for a virtual summit to celebrate our leadership, get re-grounded in current political dynamics, and strategize to move our agenda through the state legislative session. Join others in preparing for this work. Choose one of these Dates: Sunday, November 15th, 1– 4 pm or Saturday, November 21st, 10 am - 1 pm. To register for the **SMN Post-Election Summit** or if you have questions, contact Evelyn Burry, NUMC - ISIAIH Team Leader (507-645-7481, evelynburry@hotmail.com)

We Can Do Better: Continuing the Conversation on Race

Words matter. In the gospel of John, we learn that Jesus is the "word made flesh" come to living among us (John 1). We know that words can shape, build up, and offer grace—we also know that words can wound, tear down, and bring judgment. Many of us know the heart-breaking moment of saying something that we can't take back, or hearing something that completely changes how we see someone.

NUMC has committed, alongside many partners in Northfield, to working toward an antiracist future for our church and community. The Anti-Racism Team (ART) has been meeting regularly to continue the discernment process around next steps in this journey of becoming antiracist. But what does antiracist really mean? We thought some definitions would be helpful at this point in the process.

- Racism: A marriage of racist policies and racist ideas that produces and normalizes racial inequities.
- Antiracism: The work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life.

The source of these definitions is the book, *How to Be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi (Random House, 2019). Kendi asserts that there is no neutral ground—that our ideas, policies, and actions result in either racial inequity or equity.

Robin DiAngelo also provides helpful definitions of racism in the video, “Deconstructing White Privilege,” which we watched together and discussed in October. If you missed that conversation, you can view the 20-minute video on your own at <https://r-squared.squarespace.com/library/vital-conversations-racism-dr-robin-diangelo/>.

Words matter because they do take on flesh and dwell among us, both in individual actions we take and in collective decisions we make. What word takes on flesh in your own life? How is God calling you to work toward a world in which a racist past does not determine our future? It took the work of generations to bring us to this moment in history—it will take time to undo the harm that has been done. The good news is that our God's faithfulness endures to all generations (Psalm 100). God is still speaking, and the Word of God yet lives in the flesh among us, calling us to embody words of healing and hope.

**Charge Conference
November 17th, 7pm**

**Our annual charge conference
(think "annual meeting")
will be on November 17th at 7pm.
All members are welcome to join via zoom.
Contact northfieldumc@gmail.com
for the zoom link.**

Can you help? Request from Sibley School

The school nurse at Sibley Elementary across the street has indicated a need for boys' snowpants and underwear. Interested in helping? Contact info@northfieldumc.org.

Thank you!

Greetings!
We are reaching out to thank you for your generosity and service to our students and staff at Northfield Public Schools. The masks you are making for us are so very much appreciated! Thank you!
Anita Aase
Northfield Public Schools



United Methodist Women (UMW)

All Ladies of Northfield UMC and friends!

You are again invited to attend the November 9, 2020 zoom meeting of Esther Circle at 1:00 PM. The program will start at 1:30 PM. Scott Wopata from the Community Action Center (CAC), is the featured speaker.

We as United Methodist Women of Northfield UMC have a strong desire to support our community through education, volunteer hours, and donations. We have been highlighting the needs of the Northfield community. On November 9 we hear from Scott Wopata, Executive Director of the Community Action Center (CAC).

Scott says, *“The CAC is doing important work providing food to hungry families – not only through the food shelf in Northfield but also through outreach efforts at Greenvale School on the northwest side. We can volunteer, normalize asking for help, and/or donate.”*

The CAC’s Christmas program, “Share the Joy” is one NUMC members have been involved in. “The goal this year is to provide a joyful holiday experience to all children of Northfield. Due to COVID 19, monetary donations will be used to purchase gift cards which gives families the opportunity to select gifts their children will enjoy the most.”

Excerpts from a letter from Scott, says: *During this incredibly difficult time, CAC has had to reflect on the distinction between focus and distraction. What is central to our mission? What is an opportunity to support families? It is vital to the health and well-being of our community that we share in understanding CAC’s true focus. We exist and create programs and opportunities that reflect **community needs** and empower **community solutions**. We see this clarity in our mission: to promote a healthy, caring, and just community.*

CAC is uncompromising in its commitment to community solutions. We remain focused on gratitude and empowering a community to build an infrastructure of compassion. CAC is committed to empowering local leaders to champion efforts in their own communities. Nothing has ever been so close to our lifeblood and our mission. Join us, take action, and shape the compassionate nature of your community when you’re needed most.

Scott Wopata, Executive Director, Community Action Center

MICAH NEWS

(Methodists Investing in Care and Action for the Holy Land)

A Cry for Hope <https://www.cryforhope.org>

This is an urgent call to churches from Palestinian Christians, who in 2009 called on us with a word of faith, hope, and love from the heart of Palestinian suffering, to ask us to help alleviate this suffering.

We are now in a time of “historic and systematic deprivation of the rights of the Palestinian people, and the use of the Bible by many to justify and support this oppression,” according to United Methodists for Kairos Response. Palestinian people are being robbed of their land, water resources, freedom of movement, liberty to protest, and their aspirations to live in freedom in their homeland.

A prayer from the Palestine Christian Sabeel weekly prayers (10-22-2020):

“Oh Lord, our hearts break as we hear this month that the Israeli government is annexing more land in the occupied West bank for [2166 new] settler homes. We pray that governments and lawmakers around the world will speak out against this illegal annexation.”

November 29 is the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. In 1977 The UN General Assembly called for this day to be observed annually. It marks the anniversary of resolution 181 in 1947 which advocated for the partition of Palestine into two states: one Arab and one Jewish. The ethnic cleansing of Palestine began after this point and continues today.

**NORTHFIELD
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

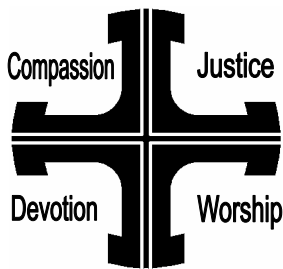
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Offering Christ

**E - NEWSLETTER
SIGN UP**



Northfield United Methodist Church offers an electronic option for our monthly newsletter. By having our newsletter available electronically, we will save costs on paper, postage and copier usage. The newsletter will still be available to those who want to receive a hard copy in the mail.

For those that sign up, you will receive an e-mail directing you to a link to view the newsletter. If you have more than one member in the household that would like to receive this e-mail, please list them also.

Please cut out this form, fill in the information and place it in the basket in the church office or place it in the offering plate on Sunday mornings.

Please print clearly! Thank you!

Name _____

E-mail Address _____

Name _____

E-mail Address _____

Our Church Staff

Pastors	Rachel McIver Morey Jerad Morey
Parish Nurse	Ruth Kruse
Office Administrator	Sandy Vesledahl
Children's Ministry Coordinator	Gregory Ennis
Worship & Music	Wendy Smith
Child Care Provider	Kathryn Steed
Organists /Accompanists	Bob Henstein Donna Paulsen
Handbell Choir Director	Kathy Szydlo
Projection Coordinator	Molly Peterson
Custodian	Arturo Rosas Avila
Treasurer	John Stull (Volunteer)
Web Site	Jesse Steed (Volunteer)

Retired Clergy: Wayne Abdella, Carl Caskey,
Richard Collman, Jeanne Martin, Dick Waters,
Mary Keen, Gordon Orde