



United Methodist Herald

December 2022/January 2023



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Cover photo: Photo estimated to be taken 1910-1920 of ice skating on the Cannon River. Before the current dam was in place there was a more gradual slope and slightly different elevation that made the river wider and slower flowing to its south. The slower flow allowed for a nice freeze in the winter which was conducive to a prime spot for skating, hockey and more! Photo has been colorized through modern technology.

December Worship

Advent Series: Hope in the Dark

December 4
Celebration of Holy Communion
Isaiah 11:1-10
Rev. Jerad Morey

December 11
Isaiah 35:1-10
Rev. Todd Campbell, Jr

December 18
Isaiah 7:10-16
Rev. Rachel McIver Morey

(See Advent and Christmas worship schedule page 2)

Special December Christmas Events and Christmas Eve Worship

Wednesday, November 30
Hanging of the Greens
6:30 pm

Wednesday, December 14
Children's Christmas Pageant
6:30 pm

Wednesday, December 21
Advent Service of Peace and Healing
4:00 pm, musical prelude 3:45 pm
Rev. Rachel McIver Morey and Rev. David Weeks

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

Saturday, December 24
3:00 pm Christmas Eve Worship
4:30 pm Christmas Eve Worship (nursery available, service livestreamed)
10:30 pm Christmas Eve Worship
Luke 2:1-20
Rev. Rachel McIver Morey

Sunday, December 25 - ON LINE PRE-RECORDED WORSHIP ONLY
northfieldumc.org
Rev. Rachel McIver Morey

No Super Wednesday December 21, 28 and January 4

January Worship

Kairos and Chronos: Divine Time Intersects with Human Time

January 1
Celebration of Holy Communion
Ecclesiastes 3:1-13
Rev. Todd Campbell, Jr.
PAJAMA SUNDAY
(come dressed in your favorite PJ's)

January 8
Matthew 2:1-12
Rev. Rachel McIver Morey

January 15
Matthew 3:13-17
Rev. Rachel McIver Morey

January 22
Matthew 4:12-23
Rev. Jerad Morey



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.

FINANCE UPDATE

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, by clicking on the GiveMN tab on the church website northfieldumc.org.
3. Drop a check in the offering basket during in person worship.
4. Mail a check to: Northfield United Methodist Church
1401 S. Maple St., Northfield, MN 55057

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.

General Fund October 2022 contributions \$24,348.66
General Fund October 2021 contributions \$23,534.66

General Fund YTD 2022 contributions \$273,855.06
General Fund YTD 2021 contributions \$289,855.06

As we come to the end of this calendar year, we have an invitation: how is God calling us to financially support ministry through the work of Northfield United Methodist Church? This is not a question to face with guilt or anxiety - it is a question to wrestle with in prayer. As you do so, and come to your answer, please fill out the card below and mail it to the church office, or email the same to us at info@northfieldumc.org.



Northfield United Methodist Church Worship. Compassion. Devotion. Justice. 2023 Estimate of Giving Return Form

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Northfield UMC General Operating Fund Estimate of giving for 2023:

\$ _____/monthly

OR

\$ _____/quarterly

OR

\$ _____/year

Thank you for your prayerful consideration of what God is calling you to do with what you have been given.

**Please cut along dotted line,
fill out and mail by December 15th
to the church office:
1401 S. Maple St.,
Northfield, MN 55057**

Note: If you are making a change to your current electronic deduction amount you will need to fill out a new authorization form with the church office.

Message from the Pastor

Earlier this year - January to be exact - Tim Goodwin wrote a blog post called "Living in an Unfinished World." That notion of "unfinished" struck me then, as now, as a wholly grace-filled and humane way to approach ourselves and the human project of community. It is the opposite of "prejudice" in a very literal sense, of prejudging someone or something as though they were complete as presented, good or bad. When working with children, youth, and students in general, this notion of "unfinished" adds the specific value of creating space for growth. This is in contrast to treating a child, youth, or student as a subject to be assessed and judged.

I write this during November, election month - a time of decision making and direction choosing. As a pastor, November frequently seems little more than a speedbump en route to the chaotic joy and spiritual depth of Advent. That is, except during election years. The ambient anxiety leading up to election day drains us and strains us, and makes the work of the church all the more necessary and difficult at the same time.

This year, I am making an intentional choice to pair my thinking and praying about decisions and leaders chosen in November

with the immediate follow-up of Advent. Our theme is "Hope in the Dark," borrowed from the writing of activist and essayist Rebecca Solnit. One of her throughlines as a writer is that despair, while tempting, is useless and gives permission to us to give into all our worst tendencies. Hope, by contrast, is quite practical as a posture toward the world and others. It demands engagement, energy, and attentiveness. It is a product of believing, deep in our souls, that we and the rest of the world around us remain unfinished.

God's work is not yet complete in us or around us. Advent's promise is that the divine goodness we see in human form in the person of Jesus is at work in the dark, finishing what God started in the gracious act of creation itself. As I write, I actually do not know what the election results are (I am out on sabbatical November 10-19, so I am writing to beat an early deadline!). I do know that December will bring the beauty of candles and music deployed in the service of the ancient story of God choosing to enter human life, and whether we like how the vote went or not, the work remains ahead of us to live the life of God in our own flesh.

You and I are unfinished. I am so grateful. This means we are also still in the classroom that is our world, with room to grow into who we have been created and called to be.

Advent Blessings, Pastor Rachel

NUMC Board

The governing body of the church is the NUMC Board. The members of the board are duly elected at an annual meeting, or "Charge Conference," open to all membership. Share any concerns with the NUMC Board here: info@northfieldumc.org

Co-Chairs: Kevin Dahle and Pierce Follansbee-Delong
Treasurer: John Stull
Secretary and Communications: Carolyn Seas
SPRC Liaison: Jody Friedow
Stewardship and Finance Liaison: Tim Goodwin

At-Large Members: Sara Newberg, Jessy Hoffer, Allie Lyman, Warren Winkelman, Bruce Benson, David Wolf, Bruce Dalgaard

Northfield UMC Leadership Board Wednesday October 26, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Bruce Benson, Carolyn Seas, John Stull, Warren Winkelman, Kevin Dahle, Allie Lyman, Sara Newberg, Jody Friedow, Tim Goodwin, Dave Wolf, Jessy Hoffer, Pastor Rachel McIver-Morey

Not Present: Pierce Follansbee-Delong, Bruce Dalgaard

Meeting Called to order: 5:40 pm by Kevin Dahle

NUMC Prayer

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made by John Stull to approve the September 2022 NUMC Board minutes. Sara Newberg seconded. Approved as read.

Board Missional Responsibilities:

UMC Mission Statement: To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Continued on page 5

(NUMC Leadership Board Minutes continued)

NUMC Mission Statement: We are called, nurtured, and sent out for this purpose: To glorify God by acts of or devotion, worship, compassion, and justice.

Standing Agenda items

Staff/parish relations: closed session (Jody)

Stewardship and finance (Rachel/John/Tim): treasurer report, YTD statements, budget, Northfield shares account, endowment disbursement, checking account signer designated.

John Stull presented the treasurer's report for September month end figures. The general fund has seen a decrease in giving. It may be due to some members changing their giving patterns to a quarterly or annual donation.

The balance in the CRB checking account is \$28,960.08, which is \$19,701.85 less than at the end of August. General fund income for the month was \$15,035.81, \$6,645.61 less than the same month last year, and almost exactly half of the previous months revenue. Monthly expenses were slightly greater than last year, including salaries for the Youth Director and musicians, offset by no salary for a Worship Arts Director. We did not pay apportionments in September. We finished the month \$13,377.11 in the red; YTD we are \$53,729.83 in the red, compared to \$79,215.57 in the black last year. Our financial condition has changed.

Physical Plant income was mostly from support from the General fund and ongoing contributions; expenses were less than last year for the same month, largely due to maintenance costs last year. For the month income was less than expense by \$1,153.78. Expenses in the near future include repairs to the south driveway, recently completed.

Endowment funds now total \$960,852.12 including the amount we owe ourselves, which is \$334,802.54. This is \$107,623.51 less than the first of the year due to market value losses. Given increased expenses and lagging income in the General Fund John recommends that we do a distribution from Endowments and also pay the apportionments.

Warren Winkelman made a motion to take the full 6% endowment disbursement at this time, Bruce Benson seconded – **motion approved.**

The Northfield Shares spending account has been closed out, and those funds will be used for the driveway repairs.

A discussion was held to delay the budget process for 2023, due to the apparent change in giving patterns. The problem is that enough change has made it difficult to estimate what giving numbers to expect in the last quarter of this year. This makes predicting next year's income even more speculative.

A motion was made by Tim Goodwin and seconded by Warren Winkelman to delay the budget process until January or February, after we close the current year. We would continue on the current budget, including salaries. We can make any changes to salaries when we come back to this work in January/February. - **Motion approved.**

A motion was made by John Stull and seconded by Allie Lyman to add Kevin Dahle as an authorized signer on the church checking account – **Motion approved.**

Facilities team: nothing to report

Signature ministry next steps:

- 1) **Wallflower/host homes – Sara/John/Tim** - Sara Newberg wrote an excellent article, about the wallflower program, for the October Herald. Tim Goodwin will speak to the congregation on October 30th, concerning this new mission outreach.
- 1) **Nursery/childcare - team needed** - Warren Winkelman volunteered to research the requirements needed for establishing a daycare facility in the church. This would be an expanded use of current 'nursery school' site, perhaps to include so-called '3rd shift' day care. Could outsource the space or investigate hiring a part-time day care director. Kevin Dahle also said he could help with contacting the school district's Early Childhood director.
- 2) **Family event - team needed** - Jessy Hoffer volunteered to look into organizing a family event.

Next Meeting

January 18, 2023, 5:30 pm.

The board will start looking at new by-laws for the restructured governance of the church, and also look at budget figures, if YTD figures are complete by then.

A motion was made by Allie Lyman to adjourn and seconded by Sara Newberg.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by
Carolyn Seas - Secretary

Super Wednesday Meal Update

After a year of a fully volunteer-led and operated kitchen on Wednesday nights, the Super Wednesday Meal team decided to try something new in the fall of 2022: working with a local caterer to do the main dishes, the team now has the more manageable task of attending to setup, sides, desserts, and cleanup. The team connected with Ruth's on Stafford in Dundas to try this new arrangement. Prior to the pandemic, we had the cooking services of Maria Estrada, and staffing issues for her catering service from the pandemic prevented her from joining us again in 2021. We remain grateful for her years of service with us, even as we have moved into this new way of feeding our community!

The history of this meal is two-fold in its two decades of existence: it has both been about building up the NUMC community itself-allowing for a mid-week opportunity for fellowship and food across many different ministry areas – and also as a means of outreach for neighbors in need of a hot meal. We have been blessed over the years to make new friends from the Laura Baker group homes who join us, as well as meeting other new friends and neighbors who have even joined us in Sunday worship after first coming on Wednesday evenings. It really is one of the beautiful commitments the church has made to this community, and we should rightly take pride that when we were first emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic last year, our Super Wednesday meal team committed to making sure folks had a place to eat on Wednesday nights – we were the first church in Northfield to re-open for community meals. The Spirit of God has truly been at work in this team, and we should bless their service with our gratitude!

Patterns of attendance on Wednesdays, much as for Sundays, has changed significantly; in the 2010-19 years, we would sometimes reach up to 200 or so on special evenings, and a typical Wednesday would be somewhere between 100-120 people. Post-COVID, we are gathering providing between 55-80 meals most nights. The reasons for this are varied – some folks are simply no longer comfortable gathering with large groups for health reasons; family ministries at our congregation and all churches have had to adapt to a post-COVID reality; and any number of other conditions that have changed in people's lives since March 2020. Perhaps your own patterns have changed, too; it's a good opportunity to reflect on what is different in your life now from spring of 2020. What has changed? What has returned? What do you miss? Is there anything you don't miss?

All that said, we wanted to provide the NUMC family with an update on how costs stack up in the closest apples-to-apples comparison possible. Additional notes: we are seeing less food waste (Team Compost is very excited by this!) and we continue to offer a child-friendly meal of chicken nuggets for kiddos not interested in the main dish.

1st month of meals in 2022 (3 meals)

Caterer invoice: \$1,885.48

Family Fare charge: \$83.60

Total cost: \$1,969.08

Final month of meals in 2020 (3 meals) prior to closing due to COVID-19:

Sam's Club & Family Fare Charge \$1,630.49

Cook salary: \$293.75

Dishwasher: \$117.30

Total cost: \$2,041.55

Although the meal is not a church fundraiser, it is a free will offering opportunity. Here are the receipts for the same time periods:

October 2022 income (3 meals) - \$679.00

March 2020 income (3 meals) - \$1,053.50

As we always have had, we have a line item for Super Wednesday meals in the NUMC budget; the receipts on Wednesday evenings have never covered the full cost, but it certainly does help. Many folks have shifted all their giving to online or annual arrangements, so we are watching these final two months of the year to see how that stacks up against our ministries across the life of the church, including Super Wednesdays; we see significantly less giving in the baskets on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings, and many more folks giving via mail and electronic funds transfers in larger sums.

As we pursue God's call on NUMC in this brave new world, we can and should continue to assess where the Spirit of God is calling us to put our time and energy and financial resources. This update is intended to communicate how this particular ministry is faring. The Super Wednesday meal team is always looking for new hands on deck, so if that's a ministry you want to come alongside, let us know in the church office and we'll connect you: info@northfieldumc.org.

Thanks for continuing to support this ministry!

Rev. Rachel and the Super Wednesday Meal Team

**December 14th
Don't miss the
Annual Christmas Pageant
Roast Beef Dinner!
5:30 pm**

Mark your calendars! Need any info on the ministries below?

email us at info@northfieldumc.org

Sundays:

Children's Church (5th grade and under)

Younger children are dismissed from the sanctuary at 10am to a worship service of their own, followed by fun and fellowship in the gym.

Sunday Youth Connect (6th-12th grade) 10:30am

Older youth are invited to their own time for fellowship and conversation in the high school room.

Wednesdays:

KC3 (K-5th grade) 3:30-5:30pm

Join the fun after school at NUMC! Time to play, time to pray, time to learn and lead - children from Spring Creek Elementary are walked across the street, and students from other schools in the Northfield School District can ride the "church bus."

(NOTE: because of busing, registration in advance is required for KC3. Register at northfieldumc.org).

Super Wednesday Meal - Free Will Donation, Fellowship Hall 5:30-6:30pm

Youth Fellowship (6th-12th grade) 6:30-8pm

Older youth will gather for fun and faith development in the high school room after the Super Wednesday meal.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: Christmas Pageant December 14th

We will begin preparation for the NUMC Christmas pageant on November 30th. Email us at info@northfieldumc.org to learn how to volunteer or how your child can participate!

Note: There will be no Super Wednesday December 21, 28, and January 4.

December 4, 10:30am - noon

Confirmands will participate in church at 9:30 and continue learning about being in relationship with God afterwards.

December 7 & 14, 3:30-5:30pm

Christmas Pageant Rehearsal

December 7, 6:30pm

Decorate Christmas cookies for neighbors in our community led by S.A.L.T

December 14, 6:30pm

Christmas Pageant. KC3 and Youth Group ends for the year.

December 25

WORSHIP ONLINE ONLY

No children's church, nursery supervision or youth connect.

January 1

PAJAMA SUNDAY - Come dressed in your favorite PJs.

No children's church, nursery supervision or youth connect.

January 4 - NO KC3 or Youth Group

January 8, 10:30am-noon

Confirmands will participate in church at 9:30 and then continue learning about how Jesus is in relationship with us.

continued on next page



FAMILY ministry

Continued...

January 11 - Super Wednesday Begins

KC3 3:30pm - 5:30pm

Youth Group 6:30pm - 8:00pm

January 15 (Martin Luther King Weekend)

No children's church, nursery supervision or youth connect.

January 21, 10am - 3pm

The Event 2023 (Grades 6-12)

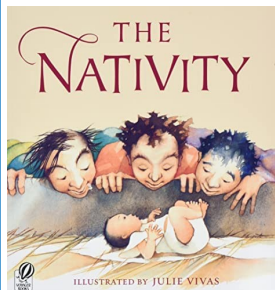
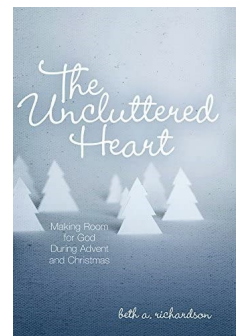
Half day of serving, learning, games, and hip-hop concert with other youth within our Minnesota UMC Conference.

Contact youth@northfieldumc.org to register



The Advent season, just begun for us, is an invitation to step away from what can be a frenzied time and consider how to celebrate the upcoming event. Call it Christmas.

The church's library selections can help you out. Note a few suggestions listed here. They are on the desk in the Library, or displayed on a table in Fellowship Hall.



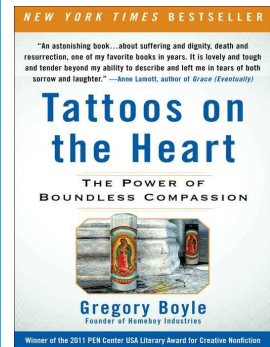
Let's begin with *The Uncluttered Heart, Making Room for God During Advent and Christmas*. Next, might be Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan's *The First Christmas*. Or introduce a young person to the classic, *Ahmahl and the Night Visitors*.

Nothing will be more endearing, for all ages, than the telling of the birth of the Christ child through the illustrations of Julie Vivas! Look for, *The Nativity*, with the unkempt young shepherds on the cover, peering down into the manger.



This Reading Season is not complete without reaching for *The Worst/Best Christmas Pageant Ever*. Underneath the humor is the true meaning of Christmas.

When January shows up on your 2023 calendar, those "cozy reads for cold nights" will be brought out. However, don't be surprised if resources on the serious issue of Climate Change, found in 2-pocket folders on the magazine rack, or the continued availability of books on racism, *Tattoos on the Heart* and *The Hate U Give*, are part of the Library's displays.



Speaking of January, the New Year is a good time to return those books checked out last year.

Charge Conference Minutes - 10:30 am Sunday, November 20, 2022

The charge conference was opened with motion by Bruce Dalgaard, second by Bill Thornton. Motion passed.

Three items were presented in print form: clergy compensation, facilities and trustees report, and retired clergy reports.

Merrell Thornton moved the approval and acceptance of all items, George Davis seconded. Motion passed.

Rev. Williams adjourned the meeting at 10:40am.

Submitted, Rev. Rachel McIver Morey

Dismantling Racism Team (DRT)

Are you struggling with what to do or how to talk about racism? The three-part adult forum series called “Walk Together: On the Journey to Racial Justice” ended with a [TEDx Talk](#) by Dr. Caprice Hollins, in which she provides the following suggestions:

What White People Can Do to Move Race Conversations Forward

- Deconstruct how you’ve been socialized and reconstruct a new way of being.
- Rather than seeing differences as negative or pretending not to notice them, recognize that it’s our differences that make America great.
- Become aware of your bias.
- Acknowledge your whiteness and the privileges it holds.
- Learn about the experiences of diverse groups and believe their stories.
- Learn to become comfortable with discomfort.
- Unpack institutional and systemic racism.
- Take action to advocate for change.

This list can serve as a long-range plan, or a road map for our individual journeys. Need a jumpstart? We suggest watching the movie *Till*, now out in theaters and based on the true story of Mamie Till-Mobley’s pursuit of justice for her son, Emmett, who was lynched in 1955. For those with Netflix, another option is the documentary called *Descendant*, which chronicles how descendants of enslaved Africans brought to Alabama in 1860 on the last slave ship seek justice and healing when the remains of the ship are discovered. For a full list of other movies, as well as books, podcasts and other resources curated by the DRT, visit the church website: <http://northfieldumc.org/anti-racism-resources>.



We can take a deep breath after the elections but our civic discipleship didn’t end there. We’ll soon need to go full-steam ahead in our work for justice.

The Minnesota State Legislature convenes on January 3rd and will be working diligently until it adjourns in late May. We, through ISAI AH-MN, are preparing to advocate for paid family and medical leave for all, 100% clean energy by 2040, automatic voter registration, restoring the vote to those who have served their time in prison and much, much more.

In a recent article “Midterms Are Over; Our Civic Discipleship Isn’t,” posted on the Sojourners magazine website, Sojo.net, November 17, 2022, Adam Russell Taylor, wrote:

“But while voting has ended, the need for sustained civic discipleship has not. After all, voting, while essential, is just the starting point when it comes to following the mission Jesus outlines in his initial sermon in Nazareth to “bring good news to the poor ... and proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor” (Luke 4:18-19). Civic discipleship recognizes that in our democracy — imperfect as it may be — fulfilling Jesus’ call to bring God’s reign of justice, righteousness, and inclusive love closer to earth requires that we are actively and at times courageously engaged in our politics. The marriage of our civic participation with being followers of Jesus is rooted in the conviction that our deep civic engagement is because of our faith, not despite it.”

December provides one learning opportunity, as you prepare to advocate more effectively. Join ISAI AH-MN Thursday, December 15th on Zoom from 6:00-7:30 pm for Race Class Gender Narrative training. This training will equip you with updated tools and skills to have conversations with neighbors, family members, and public officials alike. You’ll learn the research based and tested, most winning messaging framework to move people to the best versions of themselves, making more possible for all of us. Several NUMC members have taken this course and found it helpful. Register here: <https://faithinmn.org/trainings/>

In January, as the legislature begins to formulate legislative actions, we will be sending alerts to those in our congregation who are willing to be active for racial and economic equity through their conversations with friends and neighbors, by contacting legislators, by writing letters supporting a justice action that is under consideration and more. To receive calls to action, contact Evelyn Burry, 507-645-7481 or evelynburry@hotmail.com.

May the true meaning of Christmas be with us throughout the coming year.



Notes from the Parish Nurse

Getting Through the Holidays

As we prepare for the holidays, we are often overcome by the stresses of the season. This can be especially true if we are overwhelmed by sadness as we grieve the loss of a loved one. This list is meant to assist you with the many decisions that have to be made at this time of year. These are only suggestions; there are no right or wrong choices. Our faith allows us to trust that through God's healing touch, Christmases yet to come will once again be filled with hope. May God hold you in love and peace this holiday season. (Information shared by Nancy Ludescher, Parish Nurse)



Shopping:

- Shop as usual
- Give cash gifts
- Give gift certificates
- Shop through catalogs
- Ask a friend to help
- Shop early
- Make your gifts
- Give baked goods
- Give fruit baskets or flowers
- Ask for help wrapping gifts
- Do not exchange gifts now but perhaps later

Christmas Cards:

- Send out cards as usual
- Shorten your card list
- Include a handwritten Christmas letter
- Include a copied letter
- Elect to skip sending cards this year

Decorations:

- Decorate as usual
- Decorate on a smaller scale
- Ask for help decorating
- Make changes in types of decorations
- Display special decorations, ornaments etc., in memory of your loved one
- Eliminate a tree this year

Christmas Music:

- Enjoy as usual
- Avoid turning on the radio
- Listen to it, have a good cry, and allow yourself to feel sad or happy

Traditions:

- Keep the same traditions
- Attend holiday parties
- Don't attend holiday parties
- Go to an entirely new place
- Bake usual holiday cookies & candies
- Purchase cookies & candies
- Attend a religious service
- Call a friend to attend church with you
- Spend quiet time alone
- Visit the cemetery
- Open gifts a different day or time

Visiting the Cemetery

- Visit the grave of a loved one during the holidays
- Do not visit the grave site
- Decorate the grave site
- Do not decorate the grave site
- Leave flowers at the grave

Holiday Meals:

- Prepare the usual holiday meal
- Prepare an unusual holiday meal
- Go out for your meal
- Invite friends over
- Eat alone
- Change the time of the meal
- Change the location of the meal
- Ask for help

New Year's Eve and New Year's Day:

- Spend the day as usual
- Remove the holiday decorations early
- Go out of town
- Avoid New Year's parties
- Have a New Year's party
- Spend time with new friends
- Go to a movie
- Go to bed early
- Write in your journal your hopes for the New Year

*"Wait for the Lord; be strong, take
heart and wait for the Lord"
Psalm 27:14*

MICAH NEWS

Methodists Investing in Care and Action for the Holy Land - Based on Micah 6:8

“What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.” - Micah 6:8

MICAH members write about the birthplace of Jesus, Bethlehem, then and now



Bethlehem at the birth of Jesus was a besieged city. Today Bethlehem is again a besieged city surrounded from three sides by a 25 foot high concrete wall. So what if Jesus were to be born today in Bethlehem? If Jesus were to be born this year, he would not be born in Bethlehem. Mary and Joseph would not be allowed to enter from the Israeli Checkpoint and so too the Magi. The Shepherds would be stuck inside the walls, unable to leave their little town. - Rev. Mitri Raheb

Photo: A nativity scene showing Mary and Joseph visited by a Magi but the shepherd is blocked out by a wall.

Nativity and Creche displays: A World apart

Biblical scholars Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossman remind us that the nativity stories in their first century context, like Jesus's parables, are an invitation to see the world in a new way. For early Christians living under Roman domination the nativity stories are told as a choice between the kingdom of Rome and the kingdom of God. A choice that challenges a world of domination and imperial control with a new vision of community and life together as the people of God.

Nothing underscores the ongoing reality of the Christmas stories more than contemporary Bethlehem where Palestinian families are living under Israeli occupation with their day to day lives called into question. The living conditions facing Palestinians is a reminder, as is the case with the nativity stories, of what it means to struggle against a world in which fear and uncertainty mark one's daily existence. For Bethlehem to truly be a city of peace for all people, it needs to start with a recognition of the people of Palestine who are too often rendered invisible in our celebration of the Christmas season. - Bob Craig

Exciting news from Bethlehem Bible College, home of The Shepherd Society and Family Sponsorships

In January 2023 a group from Bethel University, St Paul MN will travel to Bethlehem Bible College in Bethlehem, Palestine to discuss a partnership between both institutions. The following prayers are requested for this venture. Please pray for:

- Wisdom for the MN group as they plan and travel.
- Health and safety of all who are committed to this trip, for ease of travel, for meetings with Bethlehem Bible College faculty, staff, and students and most of all for God's vision and purpose to be clear to all and that God's work will be our focus.

The purpose of the trip is to explore the potential for student and faculty exchanges, for study abroad programs for Bethel students, and especially for opportunities of learning and dialog around issues of peace, justice and reconciliation in an Israel/Palestine context that the US contingent to this trip can engage in, bring home and apply. - Darlene Cox

The first nativity scenes were live: real people depicting baby Jesus, Joseph, and Mary as well as a few live animals. Later statues were used; and now many homes use small figures in their creche- including the Wise Men and shepherds who would not have been in attendance at Jesus birth. What else might be different about our beloved nativity set we put up each Christmas? Consider the color of the people represented. Remember that Jesus was a Palestinian Jewish man and would not be the blue eyed blond we frequently see. It is possible to buy historically accurate nativity sets with clothing and coloring to the period making it more real. - Ann Richards

Nativity scenes: an intimate connection

It strikes me that the nativity scene, while not a cozy, comfortable environment, is a type of intimate setting of a familiar time: the birth of a child. It can be a very memorable experience and one we may want to share with those closest to us. Traditional nativities don't include the grandparents from Seattle or Aunt Krista from Colorado with her camera, as mine would if I made a family creche representing the birth of my sons. The traditional creche display is mainly animals and their keepers (who were just nearby), magi and angels, none of whom seem to be of any special prior relation to Mary and Joseph. My question this season is, who would you include in your family creche? Who are the ones that are close to you, that you want around this time of year? And in the tradition of nativity displays, who could you include that is just nearby? - Jesse Steed

Olive Oil for Sale

Palestinian organic, fair trade, extra virgin olive oil.

750 ml/25.4 oz. for \$25.00

Available in the church office.





United
Women
in Faith

New Year/New Vision Celebration! A Young Women's Group to Gather!

United Women in Faith November Meeting Dates:

December 5, 2022 – UWF Executive Board meets – 3:00 PM Fellowship Hall

December 12, 2022 - Esther Circle – 1:00 PM

Kildahl Park Pointe, 888 Cannon Valley Drive, Northfield, MN

Mugs and Muffins – March 2023 – 9:00 AM - Northfield UMC church library

Thank you to all that took part in World Thank Offering celebration month.

Congratulations to the winners of the UWF Silent Auction items. A fun time was had by all. Many of you gave generously toward the \$1,934 total. We have covered this year's budget and have a good start on the early part of 2023. Thank you to all that worked so hard in making this event a success. You are such an important part of God's plan here on earth. Every little bit of time and effort helps.

Alliance Stamp Ministry being supported by United Women in Faith of Northfield UMC

All types of cancelled postage stamps are accepted. Bring yours to the box in our Fellowship Hall. "Any type of used postage stamps, including torn or wrinkled stamps, can be used. Do not soak the stamps off the envelope. Carefully cut the postage stamps from the envelope, leaving 1/4 to 1/3 inch margin around the stamp. "United States stamps are divided into: common stamps, commemorative, love, Christmas, nonprofit, high value, airmail, off paper, and computer generated stamps. All foreign stamps are also welcomed.

UWF UMW Invitation to the Young Women of NUMC (a fluid set of ages around 30-55)

United Women in Faith invites all women of NUMC to join together for supporting women and children and youth today. Several of us enjoy a special fellowship with women who have like interests and expectations. The United Women in Faith of NUMC Executive Board would like to help younger women to form your own group centered around your needs and interests. I, Catherine, have talked to a couple of you who have expressed an interest in meeting at a time when you would be naturally gathered together.

UWF Website: "We believe love in action can change the world." (But maybe you are interested in influencing change in just your home and/or the community of Northfield or Minnesota.) **"We're a sisterhood acting in faith to tackle the hard work of the world (around us) without hesitation."**

Maybe you just need a chance to join in conversation with other women. The time can be filled and shaped as you need it to be. The United Women in Faith Board here at Northfield UMC invite you to join in a young women's group that could meet once a month during a time most convenient for you. Betsy Peterson has said she would be interested in such focused gatherings during this next year. Are there any of you interested in joining her and others in this endeavor?

There are ways you can help with mission here at church, in the community, the state and beyond. Mission sewing, Midwest Mission Distribution Center activities, Emma Norton Services events and others are some we can set up for an evening. TED Talks or United Women Faith Talks can be scheduled for viewing and discussing.

The time is yours and can be shaped as you need it to be shaped. Are you ready to meet the challenge? Are you ready to join Betsy and others, to do God's work?

Join us in January for a "New Year/New Vision Celebration". More specific information to follow.
Submitted by Catherine Williams, United Women in Faith of NUMC President

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Join us for fellowship and coffee in the Fellowship Hall following worship every Sunday!

For Sunday 9:30 am livestreamed worship service, visit our website: northfieldumc.org

HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS
The Church Office will be closed
December 24th - January 2nd
If you have a pastoral emergency please contact Pastor Rachel McIver Morey at 507-403-0071

SUPER WEDNESDAY MEAL MENU

For the weekly Super Wednesday meal menu visit our facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/NorthfieldUMC>
each week or call the church office at 507-645-5689.

No Super Wednesday December 21, 28 and January 4

Advent/Epiphany Coffee Hours

Target Starbucks

Every Thursday, 1:30-3:00 pm

December 1st - February 16

No coffee hours December 29th

No appointment necessary!

Card Making with Margie

Monday, December 19 & January 23

2:30-4:00 pm

In classroom #120

Cost: \$10 to cover supplies.

Join Margie Brockton for a fun time

of making greeting cards. She will have

all the supplies needed. Call 507-649-2324 to register.



Mugs and Muffins

Mugs and Muffins meets the Third Monday of the month, March through November. Our next meeting will be March 20th at 9 AM in the church library. We are continuing our study of the "Boys of the Bible Quilt Block Series." In March we will be studying Zechariah, John the Baptist, and Joseph the Dreamer.

New members and guests are always welcome.



NEW
Offering Envelopes



The 2023 Offering Envelopes are here!

Using your numbered offering envelopes helps the counters and the office correctly credit your contributions to you.

You can pick up your envelopes at the church. They can be found on a table outside the church office labeled with your name in alphabetical order. Please pick up your envelopes the next time you are at the church so you will have them to use starting in January.

If you do not find envelopes with your name or you are unable to pick up your envelopes in person and would like them mailed to you, please contact Sandy in the church office at 507-645-5689.

Don't Miss the **DEADLINE!**

February Herald Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the combined February issue of the Herald Newsletter is:

Noon on Monday January 23, 2023

Please submit your items for February in a digital format (word document) to northfieldumc@gmail.com.
Late submissions will not be accepted.



Aluminum Cans for Operation Backpack

Collect your aluminum cans and place in the container behind the church kitchen. All proceeds from the cans go towards Operation Backpack.

Mission Sewing Project

Mission Sewing donated 30 quilts to Operation Joy.

We want to thank everyone who helped sew diapers and receiving blankets for Midwest Mission Distribution Center. Once we get all the items back we will get them to Rochester then from there they will get picked up to go to the Midwest Mission Distribution Center in Illinois.

Mission Sewing does not meet in December. Our next meeting is Wednesday, January 25th, to tie quilts. We meet at 9AM in Room 120.



FiftyNorth

Where Active Adults Gather.

FiftyNorth is in need of volunteers!

The Used-A-Bit store needs volunteers who can work 2 to 4 hours per week in all aspects of the store operation—as cashiers, as fix-it folk, as people checking new donations in, and more.

All proceeds from the store go to support the operations of FiftyNorth. To volunteer contact store manager Dolores Kornkven at 507-645-1399.

Being Healthy Disciples

Through the ongoing COVID pandemic our church has been blessed by the amazing ministry of trustees, administrators, United Women of Faith, Parish Nurse, Care Ministry Team and others. Their leadership over the last two years have helped us to be together as disciples of Jesus Christ in safe and healthy ways. Some of the concrete steps they have taken include:

- Installing sanitizing stations throughout the church
- Connecting individuals to opportunities for full vaccination
- Sewing masks for children in the Northfield public schools
- Installing GUV (Germicidal Ultraviolet) lighting in our ducts to kill germs like COVID and better clean the air we breathe in spaces like the Sanctuary, Fellowship Hall, Reception Room, Choir Room and church offices

Additionally, the former Administrative Council matched our church masking policy to that of the Centers for Disease Control's county map, dynamically allowing us to be together at the intersection of least restriction and best protection. This policy is reflected by signs on the church's external doors:

- When Rice county's community level for COVID is green, indoor masking is not required
- When Rice county's community level for COVID is yellow, indoor masking is recommended for people who are at high risk for severe illness
- When Rice county's community level for COVID is red, indoor masking is required

You are also welcome to wear a mask in church at any time.

Finally, for those times when it makes the most sense to pray, learn, worship and experience community remotely, we have invested in technology to do so. The quality of the online worship experience continues to rise and the church maintains a Zoom account through which groups can arrange remote meetings, or a meeting where remote participants can participate more fully. This is also a useful option for teams with members who are not comfortable driving in the dark or in winter conditions. To schedule a Zoom meeting for your group contact Sandy at the church office.

We do not know what this season of sharing Christ's love will bring in our community or our world, but we know that we are better equipped to be healthy and effective disciples because of the prayers and actions of so many people here at Northfield United Methodist Church. Thank you!

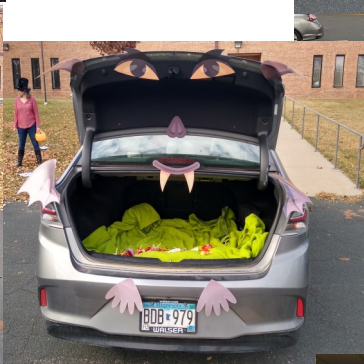
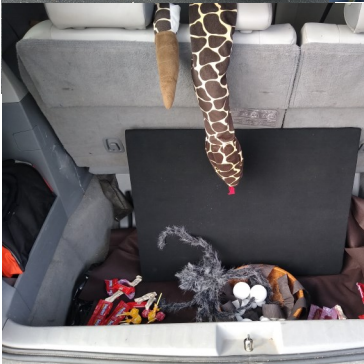
Because every picture has a story to tell...



A night of pumpkin carving led by SALT. Based on the amount of pumpkin guts we composted, everyone had a good time but the pumpkins!



More than 100 kids stopped by to trick or treat and play Halloween games on October 30th! Thanks to all who decorated their trunks and joined the fun.



KC3 kids serving by raking leaves for our neighbors.



Gregory offering a Bible lesson to KC3 kids.

John and Ella preparing to bless the food raised for the CAC food shelf.



NUMC Board meets to do the work of church governance and discerning who we are, who we are called to be, and who we are called to serve.

December

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
"Community Reservation" designates a room reservation for a non-church related community organization.	Church office hours Mon-Thurs 9am-4pm Fri. 9am-noon			1 12:00 Community Reservation 1:30-3:00 Advent coffee hours Target Starbucks	2 8:00 Men's Breakfast	3 8:30-11:00 Community Reservation
4 9:30 Worship with Communion 10:00 Children's Church 10:30 Youth Connect 10:30 Coffee in Fellowship Hall 10:30 Confirmation	5 3:00 UWF meeting 7:00 Community Reservation	6 9:00 Bible Study 7:00 Trustee Mtg.	7 9:00 Mission Sewing 11:30-1:00 Community Reservation Super Wednesday 3:30-5:30 KC3 3:30-5:30 Children's Christmas Pageant Rehearsal 5:30 Shared meal 6:30 Youth Fellowship Christmas Cookie Decorating 6:30 Handbell Choir 6:30-7:30 Open gym	8 10:30 Community Reservation 12:00 Community Reservation 1:30-3:00 Advent coffee hours Target Starbucks	9 8:00 Men's Breakfast	10 8:30-11:00 Community Reservation
11 9:30 Worship 10:00 Children's Church 10:30 Youth Connect 10:30 Coffee in Fellowship Hall 10:30 Adult Forum	12 9:30 Community Reservation 1:00 Esther Circle - Kildahl 7:00 Community Reservation	13 9:00 Bible Study	14 9:00 Mission Sewing 11:30-1:00 Community Reservation Super Wednesday 3:30-5:30 KC3 3:30-5:30 Children's Christmas Pageant Rehearsal 5:30 Handbell Choir 5:30 Shared meal 6:30 Children's Christmas Pageant	15 12:00 Community Reservation 1:30-3:00 Advent coffee hours Target Starbucks 7:00 Renewal via zoom	16 8:00 Men's Breakfast	17 8:30-11:00 Community Reservation
18 9:30 Worship 10:00 Children's Church 10:30 Youth Connect 10:30 Coffee in Fellowship Hall 10:30 Adult Forum	19 2:30 Card Making with Margie 7:00 Community Reservation	20 9:00 Bible Study 3:00 MICAH	21 9:00 Mission Sewing 11:30-1:00 Community Reservation NO SUPER WEDNESDAY 4:00 Advent Service of Peace & Healing	22 12:00 Community Reservation 1:30-3:00 Advent coffee hours Target Starbucks	23 8:00 Men's Breakfast	24 8:30-11:00 Community Reservation 3:00 Christmas Eve Worship 4:30 Christmas Eve Worship 10:30 Christmas Eve Worship
25 9:30 Online Pre-Recorded Worship only	26 Church Office Closed	27 Church Office Closed	28 11:30-1:00 Community Reservation NO SUPER WEDNESDAY Church Office Closed	29 Church Office Closed	30 8:00 Men's Breakfast Church Office Closed	31 8:30-11:00 Community Reservation

January

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1</p> <p>9:30 Worship with Communion - Pajama Sunday, wear your favorite PJ's to church!</p> <p>10:00 Children's Church</p> <p>10:30 Youth Connect</p> <p>10:30 Coffee in Fellowship Hall</p> <p>10:30 Adult Forum</p>	<p>2</p> <p>New Year's Holiday Church Office Closed</p>	<p>3</p> <p>9:00 Bible Study</p> <p>7:00 Facilities Team Meeting</p>	<p>4</p> <p>9:00 Mission Sewing</p> <p>11:30-1:00 Community Reservation</p> <p>NO SUPER WEDNESDAY</p>	<p>5</p> <p>12:00 Community Reservation</p> <p>1:30-3:00 Epiphany coffee hours Target Starbucks</p>	<p>6</p> <p>8:00 Men's Breakfast</p>	<p>7</p> <p>8:30-11:00 Community Reservation</p>
<p>8</p> <p>9:30 Worship</p> <p>10:00 Children's Church</p> <p>10:30 Youth Connect</p> <p>10:30 Confirmation</p> <p>10:30 Coffee in Fellowship Hall</p> <p>10:30 Adult Forum</p>	<p>9</p> <p>1:00 Esther Circle - Kildahl</p> <p>3:00 UWF meeting</p> <p>7:00 Community Reservation</p>	<p>10</p> <p>9:00 Bible Study</p>	<p>11</p> <p>9:00 Mission Sewing</p> <p>11:30-1:00 Community Reservation</p> <p>Super Wednesday</p> <p>3:30-5:30 KC3</p> <p>5:30 Shared meal</p> <p>6:30 Youth Fellowship</p> <p>6:30 Handbell Choir</p> <p>6:30-7:30 Open gym</p>	<p>12</p> <p>10:30 Community Reservation</p> <p>12:00 Community Reservation</p> <p>1:30-3:00 Epiphany coffee hours Target Starbucks</p>	<p>13</p> <p>8:00 Men's Breakfast</p>	<p>14</p> <p>8:30-11:00 Community Reservation</p>
<p>15</p> <p>9:30 Worship</p> <p>10:00 Children's Church</p> <p>10:30 Youth Connect</p> <p>10:30 Coffee in Fellowship Hall</p> <p>10:30 Adult Forum</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Martin Luther King Holiday Church Office Closed</p> <p>7:00 Community Reservation</p>	<p>17</p> <p>9:00 Bible Study</p> <p>3:00 MICAH</p>	<p>18</p> <p>9:00 Mission Sewing</p> <p>11:30-1:00 Community Reservation</p> <p>Super Wednesday</p> <p>3:30-5:30 KC3</p> <p>5:30 Shared meal</p> <p>6:30 Handbell Choir</p> <p>6:30-7:30 Open gym</p>	<p>19</p> <p>12:00 Community Reservation</p> <p>1:30-3:00 Epiphany coffee hours Target Starbucks</p> <p>7:00 Renewal via zoom</p>	<p>20</p> <p>8:00 Men's Breakfast</p>	<p>21</p> <p>8:30-11:00 Community Reservation</p>
<p>22</p> <p>9:30 Worship</p> <p>10:00 Children's Church</p> <p>10:30 Youth Connect</p> <p>10:30 Coffee in Fellowship Hall</p> <p>10:30 Adult Forum</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Noon - Herald Newsletter Deadline</p> <p>2:30 Card Making with Margie</p> <p>7:00 Community Reservation</p>	<p>24</p> <p>9:00 Bible Study</p>	<p>25</p> <p>9:00 Mission Sewing</p> <p>11:30-1:00 Community Reservation</p> <p>Super Wednesday</p> <p>3:30-5:30 KC3</p> <p>5:30 Shared meal</p> <p>6:30 Handbell Choir</p> <p>6:30-7:30 Open gym</p>	<p>26</p> <p>12:00 Community Reservation</p> <p>1:30-3:00 Epiphany coffee hours Target Starbucks</p>	<p>27</p> <p>8:00 Men's Breakfast</p>	<p>28</p> <p>8:30-11:00 Community Reservation</p>
<p>29</p> <p>9:30 Worship</p> <p>10:00 Children's Church</p> <p>10:30 Youth Connect</p> <p>10:30 Coffee in Fellowship Hall</p> <p>10:30 Adult Forum</p>	<p>30</p> <p>7:00 Community Reservation</p>	<p>31</p> <p>9:00 Bible Study</p>	<p>1</p> <p>9:00 Mission Sewing</p> <p>11:30-1:00 Community Reservation</p> <p>Super Wednesday</p> <p>3:30-5:30 KC3</p> <p>5:30 Shared meal</p> <p>5:30 NUMC Board</p> <p>6:30 Handbell Choir</p> <p>6:30-7:30 Open gym</p>	<p>2</p> <p>12:00 Community Reservation</p> <p>1:30-3:00 Epiphany coffee hours Target Starbucks</p>	<p>3</p> <p>8:00 Men's Breakfast</p>	<p>4</p> <p>8:30-11:00 Community Reservation</p>

**NORTHFIELD
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

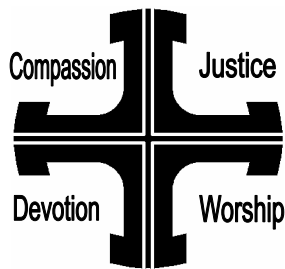
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Offering Christ

**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	Rev. Rachel McIver Morey Rev. Jerad Morey
Parish Nurse	Ruth Kruse
Office Administrator	Sandy Vesledahl
Child Care Provider	Kathryn Steed
Youth and Family Ministry	Rev. Todd Campbell Jr.
Children's Ministry	Gregory Ennis
Handbell Choir Director	Kathy Szydlo
Custodian	Arturo Rosas Avila
Information & Worship Technology Consultant	Jesse Steed
Treasurer	John Stull (Volunteer)

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