

United Methodist Herald

December 2025/January 2026



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December Worship

December 7, 2025

Celebration of Holy Communion

Isaiah 11:1-10, Matthew 3:1-12

Pastor Donna Dempewolf

December 14, 2025

Isaiah 35:1-10, Matthew 11:2-11, Luke 1:47-55

Pastor Donna Dempewolf

December 21, 2025

Isaiah 7:10-16, Matthew 1:18-25

Pastor Donna Dempewolf

(See Advent and Christmas Eve worship schedule on page 2)

December 28, 2025

Isaiah 63:1-9, Matthew 2:13-23

Pastor Donna Dempewolf

(See January worship schedule on page 2)



Special December Christmas Events and Christmas Eve Worship

Wednesday, December 3 - 6:30 pm
Hanging of the Greens

Wednesday, December 17 - 6:30 pm
Children's Christmas Pageant

Sunday, December 21 - 4:00 pm, musical prelude 3:45 pm
Service of the Longest Night
Northfield United Methodist Church
Pastor Donna Dempewolf and Pastor David Weeks

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

Wednesday, December 24
4:30 pm Christmas Eve Worship (service livestreamed)
10:00 pm Christmas Eve Worship
Pastor Donna Dempewolf

January Worship

January 4, 2026
Celebration of Holy Communion
Isaiah 63:1-9, Matthew 2:13-23
Pastor Donna Dempewolf

January 11, 2026
Isaiah 42:1-9, Matthew 3:13-17
Pastor Donna Dempewolf

January 18, 2026
Matthew 5:1-12
Pastor Donna Dempewolf

January 25, 2026
Pastor Gordon Orde



Message from the Pastor

The Road to Emmanuel

As you enter the sanctuary, look around and notice the blues. The paraments, the four candles in a wreath, and the star artwork across the chancel. Blue is the color of Advent: it's the color of dawn, just before light breaks in; it's the color of hope that we can't quite see.

This Advent we'll travel **The Road to Emmanuel**. Isaiah and Matthew will be our traveling companions—Isaiah with his big, aching hope for a world made new, and Matthew with his steady reminders to stay awake to what God is doing in our midst.

Isaiah envisions a world made new:

- **Swords hammered into plowshares** (Isaiah 2)
- **A shoot coming out of an old stump** (Isaiah 11)
- **Deserts bursting into bloom** (Isaiah 35)
- **A young woman bearing a child—Emmanuel—God with us** (Isaiah 7)

Matthew, in contrast, asks, "Are you awake enough to notice what God is doing right now?"

Advent is counter-cultural. It comes when the pace of life accelerates, when our calendars fill, when the world shouts: do more, buy more, stuff will make you happy. Into that speeding highway, Advent whispers something simpler: slow down, make a little space for hope.

This blue season nudges us to ask: What needs to be cleared out? Where might God be making room for something new to grow?

Wendy Wright, in her book, *The Vigil*, writes that belief isn't about agreeing with ideas. It's about letting something sink "into the marrow of your bones and form the structure of your life." This is the promise of Advent—letting Emmanuel reshape us from the inside out.

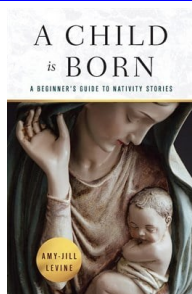
And for many, this season isn't always joyous. Grief, exhaustion, loneliness, change, and even the pressure of the holidays can feel heavy. Our **Longest Night Service on December 21** offers a place to breathe, to pray, and to rest in God's presence.

As we travel the **Road to Emmanuel** together, my hope is that we'll find a bit more room for wonder—and a deeper awareness that God is drawing near our actual lives.

Come, Emmanuel.

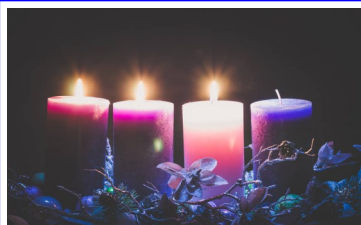
Come, make a home in us.

Donna



Advent study with Bishop Lanette: 'A Child is Born'

In this study, United Methodists across the Dakotas and Minnesota are invited to read "A Child is Born" by Amy-Jill Levine. Dive into the narratives of Isaac, Ishmael, Moses, and Samuel to reveal how they foreshadow and enrich the timeless Christmas story. Levine shows readers how Scripture's earlier birth stories anticipate the story of Jesus's birth and how His birth resonates and gives new meaning to those earlier stories. Discussions will be held via Zoom on Monday evenings, December 1-22. To register <https://www.minnesotaumc.org/eventdetail/19297133?month=12&year=2025&day=1&display=m>



Service of the Longest Night

**Sunday
December 21**

Sometimes called a "Blue Christmas" worship service, this annual event will take place at Northfield United Methodist Church at 4:00 pm. It is sponsored by the United Methodist Church and St. Peter's Church. Pastors David Weeks and Donna Dempewolf will preside.

The musical prelude will begin at 3:45 pm with Rev. Richard Coleman and friends. All persons are invited to experience this solace before Christmas.



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.

Northfield United Methodist Church Mission Statement

We are companions in Christ,
called, nurtured, and sent out
for this purpose: to glorify God
by acts of
worship, devotion,
compassion, and justice.



Northfield United Methodist Church
Worship. Devotion. Compassion. Justice.

Open our hearts, O God, to your presence already at work in our lives. Break through any barrier in our hearts separating us from you and others. By your Spirit, show us possibilities beyond what we can imagine for ourselves and our church. Make us ready; our hands are yours. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Looking Back, Looking Ahead: Reflections from Our Strategic Visioning Session

by Kevin Dahle, NUMC Leadership Board Co-Chair

On October 21, nearly twenty members of our congregation gathered for an evening of conversation, reflection, and hopeful imagination. Guided by facilitator Bill Lewis, our "Strategic Positioning and Visioning Session" invited us to consider who we have been as a church, who we are today, and who God is calling us to become. It was a night grounded in honesty, gratitude, and the shared desire to strengthen our ministry for the years ahead.

Where We've Been

Our reflections on the *past* highlighted a church with strong "DNA"—a community shaped by learning, music, mission, and intergenerational connection. Many of us named Super Wednesdays, mission trips, adult forums, and hands-on service as core expressions of who we are. These traditions and systems—our "heartbeat" and our "mechanisms"—have formed natural points of connection and vitality.

Where We Are Today

In naming the *present*, we affirmed that Northfield United Methodist Church remains grounded, welcoming, and missionally oriented. Our community continues to embody kindness, stability, and faithful service. At the same time, we face realities familiar to many churches today: an aging congregation, fluctuating attendance (especially among young families), reduced visibility of some ministries, and volunteer fatigue. These four "anchors," as Bill described them, are not obstacles to fear but truths to acknowledge as we discern the road ahead.

Where We Believe God is Leading Us

When we turned our attention to the *future*, the room filled with hope and possibility. Participants imagined creative ways to grow membership "of all ages and stages," deepen intergenerational ministry, expand building use, and continue our commitments to outreach, creation care, and community presence. We discussed new forms of worship, reenergizing volunteer engagement, and stabilizing leadership through key staff positions.

Four themes rose to the top as emerging priorities for the coming years:

Sustainability, Engagement, Innovation, and Connection.

Together, they form a framework for ministry that honors our traditions while encouraging bold, Spirit-led experimentation.

On November 17, Pastor Donna, Pam Franz, Kevin Merkle, and I met again with Bill to consider next steps. The full Board will gather on November 24 to reflect on the full summary and look toward shaping a plan for early 2026.

As Bill summarized so well: *We are a church with established DNA and enduring traditions, not done yet, and not limited by ourselves. God has big plans for us—and together, we will discern and claim our place in the mission field.*

More to come as this work unfolds.

All the ways you can donate funds to NUMC!

How to make tithes and offerings

You can make your tithes and offerings several ways:

1. Drop your offering in the offering basket during worship
2. Donate online using a credit/debit card by clicking on the Donate tab on the church website northfieldumc.org
3. Donate with a credit/debit card via "Text to Give" to 844-946-1577
4. Automatic Electronic Giving monthly
5. Mail a check to: NUMC - 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. Authorization forms are available on our website northfieldumc.org, in the church office or by emailing northfieldumc@gmail.com.

FINANCE UPDATE

General Fund YTD 2025 contributions \$237,517.74
General Fund YTD 2024 contributions \$248,513.66
General Fund YTD Budget 2025 \$270,833.34

General Fund October 2025 contributions \$25,763.95
General Fund October 2024 contributions \$18,957.66

Treasurer's Report for October 2025

General Fund

The CRB checking account balance at the end of October was \$32,862.12 compared to the September balance of \$42,152.10; shows a decrease of \$9,289.98. Apportionments have only been paid through June due to a low balance in the checkbook; total owed for July, August, September and October is \$16,426.00. The plan is to pay all apportionments by year end.

Monthly Offering Income for October was \$25,763.95. YTD Actual Offering Income was \$237,517.74 which is \$33,315.60 less than YTD Budget of \$270,833.34. Other Income Totals of \$3,126.09 for October came from Interest Income, Super Wednesday Meal Proceeds and Regular Facility Usage. General Fund Income Total for October was \$28,890.04. Thus, General Fund YTD Actual Income was \$256,438.24; \$43,195.10 less than the YTD Budget of \$299,633.34.

Monthly Expenses for October totaled \$35,656.91. YTD Actual Expense Totals were \$350,405.46; \$32,810.71 less than the YTD Budget of \$383,216.17. YTD expenses exceed income by \$93,967.22 which is \$10,384.39, more than the YTD Budget shortfall of \$83,582.83.

Physical Plant

Monthly income (Support from General Fund) for September was \$10,646.53. YTD Actual Income was \$162,796.28; \$112,597.31 from General Fund Support for Physical Plant, \$4,875.00 from continuing contributions to the Building Fund, \$981.79 from Other Building Contributions, and \$49,217.18 from the Building Maintenance Endowment fund.

YTD Actual Expenses were \$141,811.42 which leaves a positive balance of \$25,859.86. Total YTD insurance costs are \$28,816.44. Significant insurance payments totaling \$16,606.51 were paid in June; \$11,399.08 to Lamb Insurance Services for annual excess wind and hail coverage and \$5,207.43 to Church Mutual for initial 3 months of church and parsonage coverage. The material and outside labor cost of the cabinet upgrades to the parsonage kitchen, dining room and main floor bathroom during February and March totaled \$15,326.80; donated labor totaled 300 hours.

Endowment Funds

At the beginning of January 2025, the total value of the four endowment funds was \$742,577.34. In February \$199,046.17 from the Jim Finholt Estate was deposited into the Undesignated Fund. In February \$18,000 was withdrawn from the Building Maintenance Fund to help pay planned expenses associated with the cabinet upgrades at the parsonage. In May \$11,000.00 was withdrawn from the Building Maintenance Fund to help pay for annual gap (excess wind and hail) insurance. In May, 3% of the April balances in the Sather Mission, Building Maintenance and Undesignated Funds, a total of \$24,885.79, was withdrawn. In September, 3% of the August balances in those same three funds, a total of \$25,889.50, was also withdrawn. The YTD Balance at the end of October (including market value fluctuations, fees and withdrawals) was \$964,221.61 which shows a monthly gain of \$8,424.61 and a YTD gain of \$221,644.27.

Pilot Program on Climate, “Hope for Creation”, Launches November 30th

From Tim Goodwin & Clay Oglesbee, for the Creation Care Group

Creation is not a property, which we can rule over at will....Creation is a gift, it is a wonderful gift that God has given us, so that we care for it and we use it for the benefit of all, always with great respect and gratitude. –Pope Francis

On Sunday, November 30, the first Sunday of Advent, our congregation's commitment to a year-long period of studying, praying and acting on climate concerns will “go public”. It follows our four-week series on climate concerns offered in the spring of 2025. With the support of the Church Council, Pastor Donna Dempewolf and many of our members, the Northfield United Methodist Church, the church has begun participating in a pilot-program on climate change, called Hope for Creation. As Eco-Theologian Timothy Eberhart describes this effort:

Hope for Creation is a 15- month earth-based curriculum that empowers and connects congregations to partner with the communities of which they are members – social and ecological – for the mutual thriving of all. Grounded in theological, spiritual, and practical ecological wisdoms, this curricular journey aligns with seasonal and liturgical cycles and supports congregations as they discern their particular visions for regenerative mission and ministry.

Supported by a \$1.25 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc., the Hope for Creation curriculum is offered at no cost to participating congregations as part of the Midwest Bioregional Hub initiative of Garrett's Center for Ecological Regeneration.

This emphasis will involve coordinating **Sunday worship** with the curriculum at times, and including weekly, special invitations to climate action, acts of compassion and justice, and spiritual practice encouragement notes, themes or emphasis, provided by the Creation Care Group, and other teams and committees.

In addition, the **adult faith formation classes and devotions** will offer five series of four-to-six week classes on spirituality, climate, and climate action. There will be one series each for Advent/Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Eastertide and Pentecost at 10:30 AM on Sundays during the academic year. We will use Hope for Creation curriculum along with supplemental materials. You will find the plan for adult faith formation schedule elsewhere in this newsletter, as well as find it available at the church as a separate flyer.

Coordinating this teaching and reflection, we have now developed a **Creation Care Group (CCG)**. Currently, the working group is composed of Tim Goodwin, Kevin and Amy Allin, George Davis, Alan Anderson, Richard DeBeau, Clay Oglesbee and Rev. Donna Dempewolf. They are training as facilitators for the Hope for Creation curriculum, planning classes and other ministry initiatives. If you are also interested, please talk with Clay about this by calling or texting, 507-251-9283.

By the completion of the curriculum, the Creation Care Group will work with church members and leadership **to develop a Creation Care vision and begin one or more climate-related ministries**. Climate action will be a priority outcome from our congregation in collaboration with Rev. Dr. Timothy Eberhart's pilot program for several United Methodist churches in the Upper Midwest Region, as well as other groups in our own community. Please join in this deeply important initiative as we together care for Creation.



NUMC Adult Faith Formation Schedule 2025 – 26

The 2025–2026 NUMC Faith Formation schedule focuses on the Hope for Creation pilot project involving several upper Midwest UM congregations in shared study, prayer, and design of climate action ministries. Other classes focus on Missions and Justice initiatives.

Advent and Christmas

Hope for Creation 1: Sleepers Wake

11/30: Creation and What's Going On

12/07: Incarnation: To Be Fully Human on the Way to Jesus

12/14: Place-Based Discipleship: Finding our Place

12/21: Cosmic Spirituality: Doing Hopeful Things, but mostly Caroling Together (Richard Collman)

facilitator: Clay Oglesbee

Compassion

Devotion

Epiphany

Missions

1/04: Habitat for Humanity
Lynn Gryc & David Wolf

Hope for Creation 2: Discovering Your Place in Creation

1/11 – 2/01: 4-Week Series
Lead by Tim Goodwin

To Be Determined

2/08 & 2/15:

Lent

Hope for Creation 3: Pray, Fast and Act: A Journey Toward Ecological Conversion

2/22 – 3/15: 4-Week Series

Lead by the Creation Care Team

Missions

3/22: Haiti Partnership

Lead by Mary Twitchell & Pat Toschak

3/29: Operation Classroom Ministries

Lead by Lorie McBride

Justice

Worship

Easter tide

Hope for Creation 4: Resurrection and "Greening" with Readings from Hildegard of Bingen

4/12 – 5/03: 4-Week Series

Lead by Almut Furchert

FAMILY ministry

Children's Ministry

Children's Church (Pre-K–5th) — Sundays during 9:30 am worship

Children begin worship in the sanctuary with their families and are dismissed around **9:40 am** for Children's Church—a kid-sized time of worship, learning, and play. We are using *Will to Dream for Children*, a creative and engaging curriculum in the Advent and Christmas season. **No Children's Church December 28 (Christmas break)**

Super Wednesdays (current grades K–5) 3:30-5:30 pm - Our midweek program for kids features **fun, faith, and a food-snack**, engaging for children and adults, alike, in each season of the year. **No Super Wednesday December 24 and 31**

Transportation: After-school **busing from Bridgewater, Greenvale, and the Middle School; escort from Spring Creek.** Free.

Register for busing: northfieldumc.org/bus-registration

For more info contact: ddempewolf@northfieldumc.org

Mark your calendar's for these dates!

December 3 - Christmas Cookie Decorating, 6:00-6:30 pm

December 3 - Hanging of the Greens, 6:30 pm

December 3 & 10 - Christmas Pageant Rehearsal

December 7, 14 & 21 - We will have families light the Advent Candles during worship

December 17 - Children's Christmas Pageant, 6:30 pm



Youth Ministry

Northfield UMC Youth Group (current grades 6-12)

NUMC Youth Group includes time for fun and recreation, community building games and activities, a mini-lesson to help our young people connect to God in everyday moments, and time for supporting and celebrating each other through our highs and lows. Youth Group is Wednesdays from 6:30-8pm unless otherwise noted. Join your NUMC family from 5:30-6:30pm for the weekly Super Wednesday Supper!

Mark your calendar's for these dates!

Confirmation: More information will be coming in late December for current 9th, 10th, and 11th graders about Confirmation. Please check your email for updates. Parents, grandparents, and guardians can contact Kristen at the youth email if they have a youth interested in Confirmation: youth@northfieldumc.org

December Youth Group: During December we will be exploring the themes of Advent: Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love through games, activities, discussion, and outreach, including a fun filled "Santa's cart" outing.

Wednesday, December 3: Hanging of the Greens, 6:30pm

Youth are needed for reading parts and to help with the hanging of the greens. Please email or text Kristen for more info and to sign up: 507-676-3600. Youth will meet at 6pm for a short practice prior to the service. Youth Group will meet immediately after the service.

Wednesday, December 17: Children's Christmas Pageant

Youth readers and assistants needed to help, plus the annual youth camels! Please contact Kristen if you can help.

Youth Christmas Party: Please check the weekly Youth Email for updates on date and time. There will be games, white elephant gift exchange, and fun holiday cheer!

December 24 and 31: No Youth Group

January 2026 Youth Group

January 7: "Light" themed Movie Night from 6:15-8:15pm to celebrate Epiphany

January 14: Great Bible and other Famous Stories Trivia

Please see Youth Email for additional January dates and themes.





Notes from the Parish Nurse

This month I would like to share some information about Parish Nursing (Faith Community Nursing) and Care Ministry at Northfield United Methodist Church.

A parish nurse is a licensed registered nurse who has had at least two years of experience and has completed a parish nurse foundations course. This nursing specialty addresses health issues with the faith of the client and the client's family in mind. There is an intentional care of the spirit of those to whom the parish nurse gives assistance. Parish nurses act as health advisors and educators, as advocates and resource persons, and as integrators of the faith/health relationship. We help empower others to take responsibility for their own health. This ministry is *not* a substitute for pastoral care, medical care, community health nursing, and social agencies, but rather works in a partnership with these services. The focus of this ministry is on promoting (w)holistic Christian health rather than "hands on" physical care.

At Northfield United Methodist Church, the Care Ministry Team is made up of Pastor Donna Dempewolf, Parish Nurse Ruth Kruse, and five trained volunteers: Reggie Fineran, Jody Friedow, Clare Mather, Marge Randolph, and Ruth Sommers. We meet bi-weekly to identify individuals and families who have physical, emotional, or spiritual needs. Prayers and presence are offered during times of transition, crisis or celebration. All information received is held in confidence. It is not shared with others. Care Ministry Team members are not at liberty to answer questions about someone's well-being, unless they have been given permission to do so by that individual.

We ask you to keep in mind that, because of strict confidentiality, Care Ministry Team members are not able to talk freely about much of the work we do. We walk alongside our church family members in many ways, depending on their circumstances and the involvement of family and friends. Care Ministry Team members and Pastor Donna make in-person visits, remain in communication as necessary and desired, and facilitate the meeting of other needs where possible. We know that many of you in the congregation also provide loving and compassionate care to others, quietly behind the scenes and in many different ways. We are grateful to you for your ministry of care and good works.

The Pastor, Parish Nurse, and Care Ministry Team members cannot visit folks in hospitals and care centers if their presence at a particular facility is not known. We rely on an individual or his or her family member to inform us of a hospitalization or a move to assisted living or a care center. If you have information to share about yourself or a loved one, or would care to have a visit by the Pastor or a Care Ministry Team member, please call the church office at 507-645-5689 and leave a message for Pastor Donna Dempewolf or Parish Nurse Ruth Kruse.

Jesus the Great Physician said, *"I have come that you might have life in all its fullness."* He has commissioned the church on earth to reach out in love and to be His hands and feet on earth. Our church is a place where many elements of health and healing can be discussed, and a place where we can be nurtured and supported on our life journey.



Rice County Toys for Tots Collection

Northfield United Methodist Church is a Rice County Toys for Tots donation site! Donate a new toy to help bring holiday joy to less fortunate children living in Rice County. Toys are distributed to children between the ages of 6 months to 14 years.

What: New, unwrapped toy(s)

When: Collecting through Wednesday, December 10

Where: Boxes will be located in the NUMC narthex and south entrance.



170 Years of Gratitude and Giving

When we sent out a last-minute invitation to celebrate our 170th anniversary with a special offering, we had no idea what to expect. What a joy to see how generously this congregation responded — nearly \$8,000 raised to bless others and strengthen our ministries! Half of these gifts are supporting local and global United Methodist partners who extend Northfield UMC's love beyond our walls.

Local: The Key, Community Action Center, Habitat for Humanity.

Global: UMCOR, OC Ministries, Haiti Partnership.

The other half is nurturing our own ministry teams as they grow disciples across generations — children, youth, and adult faith formation.

Our newly formed Mission Team helped recommend where these funds would make the most difference. Their discernment is one more sign that our congregation is learning to listen together for God's leading — through new teams, new voices, and shared trust. If you'd like to join this team, please contact Pastor Donna (ddempewolf@northfieldumc.org).

Thank you for making this anniversary not only a milestone, but a movement — a reminder that generosity and gratitude are at the heart of who we are.

**Thank
you!**

NUMC,

Thank you for your donation to the Northfield Union of Youth! Your generosity has helped give power and voice to area youth by creating a caring and enriching community.

Grateful, Kelli Podracky, Director



"But those who hope in the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles." Isaiah 40:31

Hope is not a feeling we wait for, hope is our practice. In this time of unprecedented actions that harm the poor, the elderly, and the stranger, Isaiah has been active.

Locally, with the League of Women Voters Isaiah co-sponsored a public forum on the impact of cuts to Medicaid. The hospital, long-term care facilities, Laura Baker and county services told of the challenges these cuts will have.

Isaiah supported the ecumenical candlelight prayer vigil that was held after the violent arrest by ICE of one of our community members. It was a holy time.

The southern MN rural initiative of Isaiah is joining the state-wide LIGHT in the STORM training event Dec. 13th. Please join us as we strategize an agenda that will protect our neighbors and families and ensure that Minnesota continues to be a state where families across race, place and religions can thrive.

I'm always available for any questions or inquiries as to how you might get involved. - Mary Lynn Oglesbee



Congratulations Donna Paulsen!

Congratulations to Donna Paulsen who retired her organ shoes!

We celebrated Donna's faithful music ministry on Sunday, November 23, her final Sunday as our organist.

It was a special service with an organ/piano duet, bells, choirs, and Donna's favorite liturgical hymns.

Thank you Donna for your many years of organ playing at NUMC!



Welcome Izel Thoele Children & Youth Intern

We're delighted to welcome **Izel Thoele**, our new Children & Youth Intern.

Izel will be assisting and leading on Wednesday nights. She's a sophomore at St. Olaf, originally from Oakland, California, and will be working closely with Pastor Donna and Kristen Twitchell.

We're grateful for the gifts and energy she brings to our ministries.



Mugs and Muffins

Mugs and Muffins is taking the winter months off. Mugs and Muffins will meet on March 16th to continue a study of "Women of the Bible" quilt blocks. The women we will be studying in March are Bathsheba, Esther, Naomi, and Judith. We meet the church library at 9 AM. New members and visitors are always welcome.



Mission Sewing Project

Mission Sewing is starting to work on our goals for 2026. The whole group meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month. We will not meet in December. We are always looking for more people to help meet our goals. Our next meetings to tie quilts will be on January 28th. We meet at 9AM in Room 120.



IT Tech Corner by Jesse Steed

Merry Christmas from IT Tech Corner!

It is time to share some Christmas memories. According to family legend, when I was a baby, I asked Santa Claus for a Radio Shack computer. It could be that is what my dad coincidentally wanted to get, but however it happened, we ended up with [this great computer](#) with a floppy disk and cartridge drive. The computer lived on a proper computer desk in the dining/living room where everyone could see it and there was even room to pull up chairs around it for spectating.

I spent many hours playing on the computer as a small child, whether it was one of the seven games we had on floppy disk or cartridge like Jumpman, Big Top, or Mouser, or a special game I invented called "numbers" where I would type numbers and look at the patterns they made on the screen. Somewhere around 300 it would get less interesting as the screen was filling up and by 1000 it was really becoming challenging to type new numbers very quickly.

Christmas for me as a kid was a time when new technology would show up and broaden the mind. New games, new consoles, new devices. And there was time to explore them with friends and family. As we progressed over the years through Super Nintendo and N64, I still enjoyed the Odyssey, and my favorite game, Showdown in 2100 AD, if I could convince someone to control the other player so I had target practice.

Technology and gaming systems had a sense of community, in my memory, at least in the ability for others to watch if not play along. Fast forward to today - It's awesome that we have the ability to have high definition images on such small screens like tablets and phones, but this presents different problems and can be a barrier to subtle human interaction and shared experience. While technology nowadays is more and more personal and at times isolating, I hope that we all find ways to have shared experiences around our new video games that Santa brings us for Christmas.

Super Wednesday Community Meals

Serving 5:30-6:15 pm , Wednesdays during the program year.

December Menu

December 3 - Chicken Alfredo, Vegetable, Green Salad, Bread, Ice Cream and Treats.

December 10 - Pork Tenderloin, Green Rice, Green Salad, Bread, Ice Cream and Treats.

December 17 - Pot Roast, Potatoes, Carrots, Green Salad, Jello, Dinner Roll, Ice Cream and Christmas Cookies.

No Super Wednesday December 24th and 31st.

January Menu

January 7 - Chicken Wild Rice or Tomato Soup, Egg Salad Sandwiches, Club Sandwiches, Cottage Cheese, Apple Sauce, Peaches, Ice Cream Sundaes.

January 14 - Spaghetti and Meatballs, Broccoli, Caesar Salad, Garlic Bread, Ice Cream and Treats.

January 21 - Swedish Meatballs, Mashed Potatoes, Vegetable, Green Salad, Bread, Ice Cream and Treats.

January 28 - Breakfast Burrito, Chips and Salsa, Fruit Platter, Green Salad, Ice Cream and Treats.



**Methodists
Investing in
Care and
Action for the
HolyLand**

“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



Olive Oil for Sale

Palestinian organic, fair trade,
extra virgin olive oil.

750 ml/25.4 oz. for \$30.00

Thanks to Joan Deming, Bob Goonin, Ashraf Ashkar, and Marie Gery for being our guest presenters during November Adult Faith Formation. Our deepest thanks for sharing heartfelt personal stories of encounters with challenging realities facing marginalized peoples under Apartheid Israel and on the southern border of the USA.

MICAH will offer holiday gift items for sale this advent season. Look for opportunities to purchase handmade items from Palestine/Israel in the months ahead. In case you might be interested in a 2026 Colors from Palestine calendar: please visit: <https://resistanceart.com/gallery>

MICAH is once again hosting nativity displays in the church narthex. Please contact us if you have a nativity you are willing to lend to the displays during the holiday season.

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/nqswMzBVgFz1ZTBZ9> (and attached to this email)
micah@northfieldumc.org.



United Methodists in UMKR respond to Israeli campaign targeting U.S. Christians with anti-Palestinian messages

November 3, 2025 – United Methodists for Kairos Response (UMKR), the United Methodist grassroots movement for Palestinian rights and liberation, learned last month of an Israeli propaganda campaign that will target Christians in certain U.S. states. Using technology known as geofencing, they plan to identify members of certain congregations and the student and faculty of Christian colleges, to regularly expose them to propaganda filled with anti-Palestinian racist tropes and distortions of scripture. Read the [full article here](#).

Learn more about Kairos Response on their website <https://www.kairosresponse.org/>

Join the [MICAH email list](#) to get updates like these.

Photo gallery of attached images:

MICAH members join the community in public display of advocacy for Palestinians - October 2025





United
Women
in Faith

**We believe love in action
can change the World!**

United Women in Faith - Meeting Dates

December 1, 2025 – UWF Executive Board meeting – 10:00 AM in Room 120

December 8, 2025 - Esther Circle – 1:00 PM at Kildahl, 888 Cannon Valley Drive

January 5, 2026 - UWF Executive Board Meeting - 10:00 AM in room 120

January 12, 2026 - Esther Circle - 1:00 PM at Kildahl, 888 Cannon Valley Drive

No meetings until March 2026 - Mugs and Muffins

National Website www.UWFaith.org

New Minnesota Website www.uwfaithmn.com

Bake and Craft Sale: Thank you to all the bakers and crafters who shared their creations. The bake sale and donations came to \$456; and the crafts sold for \$412 for a total of \$868. We met our goal of \$700 for the students' Wednesday bus. It was heartwarming to see so many supporting our children.

UWFaith Reading Program 2026: Our new books for 2026 will be added to the mobile cart in mid-December. Anyone is welcome to borrow a book but PLEASE sign it out in the 3 ring binder and sign it back in when you return it. The following summaries offer a wide variety of new books to interest you.

Grace Can Lead Us Home: A Christian Call to End Homelessness. Drawing on years of experience in homelessness services, minister and advocate Kevin Nye presents an intimate look at a people often on the margins of life.

Trash: A Poor White Journey. In this sweeping debut, Monroe writes indelibly about and for the poor White people: about unlearning the American dream, untangling from White supremacy, and working for liberation alongside other poor folks.

Sanctuary. In this near-future dystopian novel set in 2032 America, a young girl and her brother must escape a xenophobic government to find sanctuary. When Deportation Forces raid their town, they are forced to flee across the country to her tia Luna in California, a sanctuary state that is currently being walled off from the rest of the country.

The Book of Hope: A Survival Guide for Trying Times. Looking at the headlines—the worsening climate crisis, a global pandemic, loss of biodiversity, political upheaval—it can be hard to feel optimistic. And yet hope has never been more desperately needed.

Social Justice for the Sensitive Soul: How to Change the World in Quiet Ways. Social justice work is often associated with raised voices and raised fists. The author expands the possibilities of how affirming the particular gifts and talents that sensitive souls offer to a hurting world.

The Personal Librarian. Named a Best Book of the Year by NPR and a Good Morning America Book Club Pick, this historical novel explores the life of J.P. Morgan's personal librarian, Belle da Costa Greene, a Black American forced to hide her true identity and pass as White.

The Women. This is the story of one woman gone to war, but it shines a light on all women who put themselves in harm's way and whose sacrifice and commitment to their country have too often been forgotten.

Everyday Ubuntu: Living Better Together, The African Way. In Everyday Ubuntu, Mungi Ngomane, granddaughter of Nobel Peace Prize-winner Archbishop Desmond Tutu, helps readers understand Ubuntu. Ubuntu is a Southern African philosophy that celebrates the universal human bond.

Good Enough: 40ish Devotionals for a Life of Imperfection. These compassionate, intelligent, and wry Christian daily reflections help readers learn to live with imperfection in a culture of self-help that promotes endless progress.

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



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.

2026 Offering Envelopes

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

The 2026 offering envelopes will be available for pickup towards the middle of December. Watch for them on the table outside the church office.

If you have not had numbered envelopes in the past and would like to receive some please contact Sandy in the church office at 507-645-5689.



Church Office Hours
Mon.- Thurs.,
8:00 am - 4:00 pm
Friday
8:00 am - noon

The Church office will be closed
December 24 through January 1
and January 19 (Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday)

Year End Giving Statements

The annual giving statements for 2025 will be mailed in January 2026.

If you would like a statement sent to you in the month of December to review before the end of the year please contact the church office at northfieldumc@gmail.com and a statement will be either mailed or emailed to you.

Everyone will receive a final 2025 giving statement in January 2026.

Card Making with Margie

Monday, December 15, 2025
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.

Don't Miss the
DEADLINE!

February Herald Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the February issue will be:

Noon on Wednesday, January 21st

Please submit your items for the newsletter in a digital format (word document) to northfieldumc@gmail.com.



Thanks to those who volunteered to deliver Meals on Wheels from November 3-8. Your willingness to help with this task was appreciated.

Those who received the meals thank you too!

Dennis and Marge Randolph
NUMC coordinators for Meals on Wheels

Because every picture has a story to tell...



Thank you to all who decorated their trunks for Truck or Treat! We had 15 cars and lots of kids!



Super Wednesday Youth and Kid activities and Sunday morning Adult Faith Formation!



Pastor Donna and Pastor Inger Advocacy for Welcoming the Stranger.



A vigil was held in Northfield on Sunday, November 16 in solidarity with a local man who was detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents on November 11. More than 200 community members gathered at Bridge Square for the candlelight vigil, which was organized by local faith communities.

Ever wonder who untangles the ball of Christmas lights each year before decorating the sanctuary? Mary Lynn Oglesbee had the task this year. Thanks Mary Lynn!



CAC Food shelf Week of Abundance baking items collection at NUMC.

December

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 10:00 UWF mtg. 4:00-9:00 Community Reservation 7:00 Community Reservation	2 9:00 Bible Study	3 9:00 Mission Sewing 12:00-1:00 Community Reservation 3:30-5:30 Faith, Food & Fun (snack) 5:30-6:15 Shared Meal 6:15 Choir 6:30 Handbell Choir 6:30 Youth Fellowship 6:30 Hanging of the Greens	4 11:30 Community Reservation 12:00 Community Reservation	5 8:00 Men's Breakfast	6 9:30-11:00 Community Reservation
7 9:30 Worship with Communion 9:40 Children's Church 10:30 Coffee in Fellowship Hall 10:30 Faith Formation 4:00 Community Reservation	8 10:00 MICAH mtg 11:00 Community Reservation 1:00 Esther Circle - Kildahl 6:30 Community Reservation 7:00 Community Reservation	9 9:00 Bible Study 5:30 Community Reservation	10 9:00 Mission Sewing 12:00-1:00 Community Reservation 3:30-5:30 Faith, Food & Fun (snack) 5:30-6:15 Shared Meal 6:00 Choir 6:30 Handbell Choir 6:30 Youth Fellowship	11 10:30 Community Reservation 12:00 Community Reservation	12 8:00 Men's Breakfast	13 9:30-11:00 Community Reservation
14 9:30 Worship 9:40 Children's Church 10:30 Coffee in Fellowship Hall 10:30 Faith Formation 6:30 Community Reservation	15 9:00 Mugs and Muffins 2:30 Card Making with Margie 5:30 Community Reservation 7:00 Community Reservation	16 9:00 Bible Study 7:00 Facilities Mtg.	17 9:00 Mission Sewing 12:00-1:00 Community Reservation 3:30-5:30 Faith, Food & Fun (snack) 5:30-6:15 Shared Meal 6:15 Choir 6:30 Handbell Choir 6:30 Youth Fellowship 6:30 Children's Christmas Pageant	18 12:00 Community Reservation 7:00 Renewal via zoom	19 8:00 Men's Breakfast	20 9:30-11:00 Community Reservation
21 9:30 Worship 9:40 Children's Church 10:30 Coffee in Fellowship Hall 10:30 Faith Formation 4:00 Service of Longest Night - NUMC	22 7:00 Community Reservation	23 9:00 Bible Study	24 12:00-1:00 Community Reservation Christmas Eve Office closed No Super Wednesday 4:30 pm Candlelight Service (livestreamed) 10:00 pm Candlelight Service	25 Christmas Day Office closed	26 8:00 Men's Breakfast Office closed	27 9:30-11:00 Community Reservation
28 9:30 Worship No Children's Church 10:30 Coffee in Fellowship Hall 10:30 Faith Formation	29 7:00 Community Reservation Office closed	30 9:00 Bible Study Office closed	31 12:00-1:00 Community Reservation No Super Wednesday Office closed			

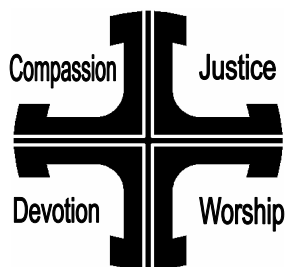
January

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 New Year's Day Holiday Office Closed	2 8:00 Men's Breakfast	3 9:30-11:00 Community Reservation
4 9:30 Worship with Communion 9:40 Children's Church 10:30 Coffee in Fellowship Hall 10:30 Faith Formation 4:00 Community Reservation	5 10:00 UWF mtg. 7:00 Community Reservation	6 9:00 Bible Study	7 9:00 Mission Sewing 12:00-1:00 Community Reservation 3:30-5:30 Faith, Food & Fun (snack) 5:30-6:15 Shared Meal 6:15 Choir 6:30 Handbell Choir 6:30 Youth Fellowship	8 10:30 Community Reservation 12:00 Community Reservation	9 8:00 Men's Breakfast	10 9:30-11:00 Community Reservation
11 9:30 Worship 9:40 Children's Church 10:30 Coffee in Fellowship Hall 10:30 Faith Formation 6:30 Community Reservation	12 10:00 MICAH Mtg. 1:00 Esther Circle - Kildahl 7:00 Community Reservation	13 9:00 Bible Study	14 9:00 Mission Sewing 12:00-1:00 Community Reservation 3:30-5:30 Faith, Food & Fun (snack) 5:30-6:15 Shared Meal 6:15 Choir 6:30 Handbell Choir 6:30 Youth Fellowship	15 12:00 Community Reservation 7:00 Renewal via zoom	16 8:00 Men's Breakfast	17 9:30-11:00 Community Reservation
18 9:30 Worship 9:40 Children's Church 10:30 Coffee in Fellowship Hall 10:30 Faith Formation	19 Martin Luther King Jr Birthday Office closed	20 9:00 Bible Study 7:00 Facilities Mtg.	21 9:00 Mission Sewing 12:00-1:00 Community Reservation 3:30-5:30 Faith, Food & Fun (snack) 5:30-6:15 Shared Meal 6:15 Choir 6:30 Handbell Choir 6:30 Youth Fellowship	22 12:00 Community Reservation	23 8:00 Men's Breakfast	24 9:30-11:00 Community Reservation
25 9:30 Worship 9:40 Children's Church 10:30 Coffee in Fellowship Hall 10:30 Faith Formation	26 7:00 Community Reservation	27 9:00 Bible Study	28 9:00 Mission Sewing 12:00-1:00 Community Reservation 3:30-5:30 Faith, Food & Fun (snack) 5:30-6:15 Shared Meal 6:15 Choir 6:30 Handbell Choir 6:30 Youth Fellowship	29 12:00 Community Reservation	30 8:00 Men's Breakfast	31 9:30-11:00 Community Reservation

**NORTHFIELD
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

1401 South Maple Street
Northfield, MN 55057

Phone: (507) 645-5689
Email: northfieldumc@gmail.com
Website: www.northfieldumc.org



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**E - NEWSLETTER
SIGN UP**

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

Pastor	Donna Dempewolf
Parish Nurse	Ruth Kruse
Interim Children's Director	Donna Dempewolf
Child Care Provider	Kathryn Steed
Interim Youth Director	Kristen Twitchell
Children and Youth Intern	Izel Thoele
NUMC Band	Dave Miller
Handbell Choir Director	Kathy Szydlo
Adult Choir	Deborah Rae Miller
Organists	Joanne Rodland
Office Administrator	Sandy Vesledahl
Custodian	Arturo Rosas Avila
Information & Worship Technology Consultant	Jesse Steed
Treasurer	David Wolf (Volunteer)

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