

I'll Be  
Home  
for  
Christmas



DECEMBER 13, 2020  
ROYAL OAK FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
rofum.org • 248-541-4100

# ORDER OF WORSHIP

Prelude

*O Come All Ye Faithful/Once in Royal David's City*  
The Harris Family

Pastor's Welcome

Hymn #211          O Come, O Come, Emmanuel          \*UMH

Invitation to Mission

Baby's First Christmas Celebration

Lighting of the Advent Wreath          The Wright Family

Time of Prayer

Offering Our Gifts and Tithes

Musical Offering

"But Who May Abide" from *Messiah*  
Jason Storms

Doxology #95          UMH

Scripture

Luke 2:8-20  
The Haight Family

\*\*CEB

Message

You Are Not Alone

Jeff Nelson

Closing Song

*Home*  
Erica Plesco

Benediction

\* United Methodist Hymnal

\*\* Common English Bible

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## **Advent is here!**

Our theme is, "I'll be Home for Christmas." Together we will bring the reality of Christ into our homes. [Click here to view our schedule](#) of offerings and events. Please find ways to connect with us during this season.

## **Live Nativity**

**December 20 & 24, 4:00-6:00 pm**

Come see the nativity scene come to life on the church lawn. This is a wonderful chance to safely gather with our church family and witness the joy of the season. Masks and social distancing are required.

## **The Longest Night Online Worship**

**December 21, 7:00 pm, via Zoom**

Join us for our Longest Night online worship meant to help us embrace the silence of the moment on the longest night of the year. [Click here to sign up](#) to attend the service.

## **December Missions Collection**

We are excited to invite you into our congregation-wide Christmas collection of winter hats, gloves, and hand warmers for our lunch program and our partner at the NOAH Project, one of Detroit's frontline ministries with people experiencing homelessness. You can drop these items off on Monday through Friday 10 am - 3 pm at the church, at the Live Nativity on December 20, or you can make a donation to the "Hats, Gloves, and Hand Warmers" fund at [rofum.org/giving](https://rofum.org/giving).

## **Lunch Program Clothing Ministry**

In addition to providing lunches, we also provide clothing and hygiene products to those experiencing hunger and homelessness in our community. If you would like to be part of this important ministry, contact Carolyn Gabler at 248-342-3112. We are also accepting donations of men's winter clothing, boots, coats, long johns, etc. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, we are not able to accept other donations at this time.

## **WAVE Project Mobile Showers**

The WAVE Project brings mobile showers to people experiencing homelessness in our community and they bring those showers to Royal Oak First each Sunday. If you would like to be a part of the team that helps provide this ministry, contact Mike Monte at [mmonte@rofum.org](mailto:mmonte@rofum.org). Full Personal Protective Equipment will be provided by WAVE Project, including masks, gloves, face shields, hand sanitizer, and plexiglass barriers. Volunteers will help with setup and breakdown, asking COVID-19 screening questions and taking temperatures, and cleaning an assigned area.

## **CHRISTMAS EVE SCHEDULE**

### **Christmas Pageant**

**10:00 am & 8:00 pm**

Watch our children tell the Christmas story in a new way, streaming at 10:00 am and 8:00 pm.

### **Live Nativity**

**4:00-6:00 pm**

Come see the nativity scene come to life on the church lawn. Masks and social distancing are required.

### **Christmas Eve Worship**

**7:00 pm**

Join us at [rofum.org/live](https://rofum.org/live) for an online Christmas Eve experience.

### **Candlelight Prayer Service**

**9:00 & 11:00 pm**

Join us on the church lawn for a short candlelight service to celebrate Christ's birth. Masks and social distancing are required.

## RECENT PRAYER CONCERNS

**Prayers for our church family:** Ginny Borts; The Richardson Family; Jayden Bryant; Marianne Peck; Todd Menig; Joyce Hollingsworth; Lee & Shirley Gnegy; Marian Kremer; Inge Wichers; Betty Lawson; Nancy Lorenz; Krista Conyers

**Prayers for our extended family:** Tara Bouck; Sally Sou; Anni Richardson; John McClure; Mary Sleeman; Joe & Dionne Chzanowski; Kelly & Charley Connolly; Lorraine Murdoch; Paul Edward; Richard Gifford; Cheryl & Jimmy Clark; Anthonne Tracy; Mary Jo Cady; Teresa Baker; Kathy Kearns; Lorraine Bowden; Essential workers and health care providers fighting COVID-19

**Senior Spotlight:** Karen Parke

**Sympathy** to Rebecca Turcotte for the death of her grandmother, Mary Sawallich, December 4.

**Sympathy** to the family and friends of former member Christena Judd for her death, December 6.

For the complete Prayer List, please contact our  
Pastoral Care Team at [prayers@rofum.org](mailto:prayers@rofum.org).

## NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Friends,

*“One of the essential paradoxes of Advent: that while we wait for God, we are with God all along, that while we need to be reassured of God’s arrival, or the arrival of our homecoming, we are already at home.” ~ Michelle Blake*

I have been trying to get “in the mood” for Christmas. Like I said last week, this year is making that harder. If I am honest, I just miss you. Many of you I haven’t seen in almost a year. That is a long time to go without seeing people you love and appreciate.

So yes, I miss the music and the fully decorated church. But mostly, I just miss you. You are the ones that have made Christ feel real to me. Your hugs.

Your handshakes. Your smiles. Your voices. Your words of encouragement. I am missing them all right now. I imagine you are missing them too.

That is why I found Michelle Blake's quote so comforting. She nails the paradox of this moment and this season. "While we wait for God, we are with God all along." That is what Advent is all about - waiting for something we already possess. While we wait for God, God waits with us.

So while I cannot wait for us to be together, I have come to realize that we are together while we are apart. I cannot tell you how much strength I get from knowing that you are keeping the faith and holding on to hope along with me. This week the box filled with hats, gloves, and hand warmers for those experiencing homelessness, reminding me that we are still in this together. Also, this week over 400 mailing labels were picked up, ensuring that most everyone from our church gets a Christmas card from someone from their church, reminding me that we are in this together. And through this entire last month, dozens of special year-end gifts have come in, helping us navigate a strange financial year and reminding me that we are in this together. You are still the ones who make Christ love real - even when we are apart, we are still together.

At the close of the service this Sunday, I have asked our friend Erica Plesco to sing a special song. It is the song Home from the musical The Whiz, and while it is not necessarily a Christmas song, it captures for me what it means to be home this season.

When I think of home  
I think of a place where there's love overflowing  
I wish I was home  
I wish I was back there with the things I been knowing...  
And I've learned  
That we must look inside our hearts to find  
A world full of love  
Like yours  
Like mine  
  
Like home...

All I have to do to find you this Christmas is look into my heart. It is where love resides.

It is always our home.

“See” you in church this Sunday. Remember while we are apart - we truly are still together.

Grace and Peace,



## Things to remember:

**"Hope is Not Canceled" Yard Signs are available at the tower entrance.**

Let's use our yards and windows to offer an uplifting message for our community. You can pick one up or call the office at 248-541-4100 and we will make sure one is delivered to your home.

## Live Nativity

Next Sunday from 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm, come by the church to see Mary and Joseph, the shepherds, and the wise men. There will definitely be some angels.

## Christmas Eve

10:00 am Children's Pageant Debut. Streaming all day from our Website, YouTube, and Facebook page.

4:00 pm - 6:00 pm Live Nativity. 5:30 Prayer Service with candlelight and communion.

7:00 pm Christmas Service on our Website and Facebook pages.

8:00 pm Children's Pageant Rerun. Just in case you missed the first time or want to see it again!

9:00 pm and 11:00 pm Candlelight Prayer Service outside on the lawn.

