

I'll Be
Home
for
Christmas



DECEMBER 20, 2020
ROYAL OAK FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
rofum.org • 248-541-4100

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Prelude	<i>Ding Dong Merrily On High</i> Debi Szeliga	
Pastor's Welcome		
Song	Oh What a Glorious Night	
Invitation to Mission		
Special Music	O Come All Ye Faithful Sanctus Members	
Lighting of the Advent Wreath		The Mikell Family
Service of Lessons and Carols		
Scripture	John 1:1-5, 14a Sandy Davis	*CEB
Response	<i>In the Beginning</i> Hannah Richardson	
Offering Our Gifts and Tithes		
Musical Offering	O Holy Night Doug Clark	
Scripture	Isaiah 9:6-7	CEB
Response	<i>Christmas Medley</i> Carillon Ringer	
Scripture	Luke 2:1-7	CEB
Response	<i>Messiah</i> Laura Potter	
Scripture	Matthew 1:18-23	CEB
Response	Emmanuel Tim Schoennher	
Scripture	Luke 2:8-20 The Gross Family	CEB
Message		Jeff Nelson
Song	Angels We Have Heard On High Sanctus Members	
Closing Song	Silent Night	* Common English Bible
Benediction		

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

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 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: Joe McGee; Janice Martin; Brad & Judy Ather; Colin Walbridge; Krista Conyers; The Richardson Family; Jayden Bryant; Marianne Peck; Todd Menig; Joyce Hollingsworth; Lee & Shirley Gnegy; Marian Kremer; Inge Wichers; Betty Lawson; Nancy Lorenz

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: Gwen Ross

For the complete Prayer List, please contact our Pastoral Care Team at prayers@rofum.org.

NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Friends,

It is Christmas Eve eve. And like so many other things this year, tonight is different than it has ever been before. In years past, the day before Christmas was busy checking things off our to-do lists, making last-minute adjustments to worship services, making the final deliveries of Poinsettias or care packages. All of the activity in years past was in preparation for a Christmas Eve that would have multiple services, listening to beautiful music, greeting hundreds of worshipers, and ending each moment in the gentle glow of candlelight and Silent Night.

It is different this year. All the work for worship has been recorded. There is calmness today that feels right. Today I am able to sit in the quiet and let my soul just catch up. Today has been a chance to reflect on what is this thing we call Christmas.

Remember that Jesus was born into a world that was messy. The political landscape was heated. The ethnic and racial divisions were steep. Far too many lived on the edge of poverty. It is into this world that Jesus is born without much fanfare. He quietly entered into the mess of our world (And just to make sure the message was clear, he was born in a stable surrounded by livestock and shepherds.).

Strip everything away, and this is the message of Christmas:
God is in the mess.

That message is especially powerful this year. It has been a messy year for me, for our church, and for our world. If God didn't like messes, then God would run away from all of this in a hurry. So Christmas reminds us right when we need it most - God enters our real world and our real lives.

Thank God for that...

So on this Christmas Eve eve let me just say to our family and friends of Royal Oak First, thank you for sticking together in the midst of the messiest of years. Thank you for keeping the faith and finding ways to love and serve each other and our community.

Thanks for reminding me that the real meaning of Christmas is not just found in pomp and ceremony but is found in the blessed mess called community. You have made Christ real to me.

God bless us - everyone!



These are the ways we can be together both virtually and in-person on both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Christmas Eve

10:00 am: Children's Pageant will debut on our website at rofum.org/pageant

4:00 pm - 6:00 pm: Live Nativity at Royal Oak First on the lawn

5:30 pm: Prayer and Communion at the Live Nativity

7:00 pm: Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols on our website at rofum.org/live

8:00 pm: Christmas Pageant Replay on our website at rofum.org/pageant

9:00 pm and 11:00 pm: Christmas Eve Candlelight Vigil. Short service outside the church.

Christmas Day

11:00 am: The Hymns of the Season Concert. Our own Mary Nahhat offers a wonderful concert of Christmas hymns and the stories behind the songs on our website at rofum.org/concert