

Home by Another Way



JANUARY 3, 2021
ROYAL OAK FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
rofum.org • 248-541-4100

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Prelude *March of the Three Kings*
 Jennifer Semivan

Pastor's Welcome

Song We Three Kings
 Katrina Van Maanen

Invitation to Mission

Celebration of New Members

Time of Prayer

Offering Our Gifts and Tithes

Musical Offering *Home by Another Way* James Taylor
 Tim Schoennher

Scripture Matthew 2:1-12 *CEB
 The Moody Family

Message Home by Another Way Jeff Nelson

Closing Song *Great Are You Lord*
 House Band

Benediction

* Common English Bible

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Epiphany Concert

January 3, 1:00 pm, at rofum.org/concert

We are pleased to invite you to a special Epiphany concert by our very own Neal Harris. This virtual performance is sure to bring joy to the new year.

Winter Small Groups

We are offering a set of 4-week small groups, beginning the week of January 10! There are a variety of topics and times to choose from, and all are welcome. Visit rofum.org/SmallGroups to find a way to stay connected to our church family this winter.

Reflecting on a New Year with Pastor Jeff

January 8, 7:00-9:00 pm & January 9, 9:30-11:30 am on Zoom

Join Pastor Jeff for some time to center ourselves for the new year. We will have time to pray, reflect, and discuss some ways to set ourselves up for a good 2021. [Click here](#) or contact Bridget Nelson at bnelson@rofum.org to sign up.

January Missions Collection

Many of our lunch guests sleep out in the cold, and one of the most common questions we get asked each winter is if we have any blankets. Help us stock up on new warm blankets to help keep our lunch guests safe this winter. Drop off donations of new blankets Monday-Thursday, 10:00-3:00 all month.

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 vital 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. Full Personal Protective Equipment will be provided by the 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.

RECENT PRAYER CONCERNS

Prayers for our church family: Joyce Nelson; 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: Neil; Paul Brown; Jim Brown; Jim Castellani; 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: Carl & Shirley Shafer

Sympathy to Brad Ather for the death of his wife, Judy Ather, December 27.

Sympathy to Adrianna Marino for the death of her grandfather, Tom McCabe, December 27.

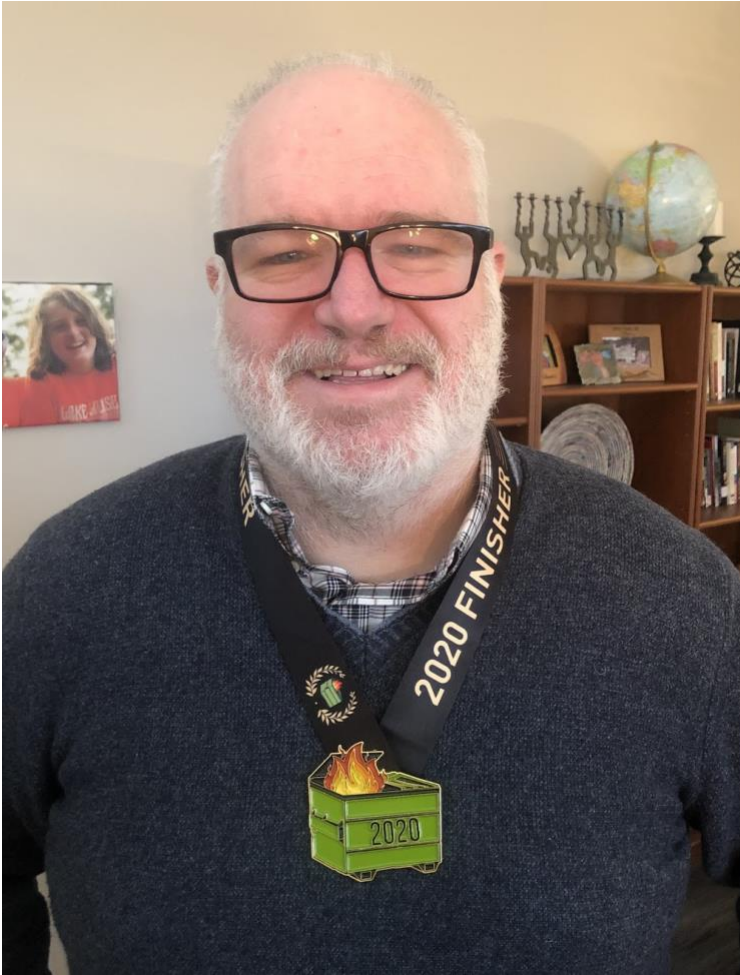
For the complete Prayer List, please contact our
Pastoral Care Team at prayers@rofum.org.

NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

*“Do not wait until the conditions are perfect to begin.
Beginning makes the conditions perfect.”*

~ Alan Cohen

Dear Friends,



I am writing you this note in what I call the “in between time”. For me, the “in between time” is the days between Christmas and the New Year. It is the week where I seem to have a foot in two different places - one foot still firmly planted in the old, familiar story of Christmas, of Holiday lights, decorated trees, gift-giving, and the eternal promise of God with us. The other foot, however, wants to pull me into the New Year, a fresh planner where possibilities seem endless and new beginnings seem ripe. The “in between time” has me looking back and looking ahead all at the same time.

If I can be honest with you, I have never wanted a year to come to an

end quicker than this year. I imagine I am not alone in this thought. 2020 has brought many struggles for me personally, professionally, and communally. I know it has for you as well. As a church, we have been through many changes and challenges together. I spent much of this past year waiting for the conditions of the pandemic to lift so that we could get back to “normal.”

However, in my prayers and time alone with God these past days, I have felt the gentle nudge of the Holy Spirit encouraging me, encouraging *us*, to move into this year with confidence. I am encouraged to re-envision the ways we can continue to be the church, grow in our relationship with God and with each other, and continue to serve as a beacon of hope for the community

around us. In these “in between times”, I have felt God whispering to me, “Don’t wait any longer. Take my hand. Trust me. Let’s go!”

And so we begin this weekend by receiving nine new members into the church. We couldn’t wait for the conditions to be perfect, so we found a new, virtual way to receive them, and you will get to meet them in worship. And we couldn’t wait for the conditions to be perfect to gather for spiritual growth and connections, so we are offering online retreats and classes. Please join us as we allow God to guide us into this new season. [Click here](#) to sign up for my retreat this Friday and Saturday January 8 & 9, and [click here](#) to sign up for a four-week small group beginning the week of January 10. If 2020 has reminded us of anything, it is that we need to be connected to each other in a caring community. So join us as we vision how we might reorganize our community so that everyone is truly known, loved, and cared for. I can honestly say that I am energized about the possibilities that God is laying before us in this New Year.

My sister-in-law gave us a pretty neat Christmas gift. It was a medal. It had a dumpster on fire with 2020 imprinted on the front (an accurate depiction of what many experienced this past year). It was a recognition that we made it through; we finished the year. Sure there is more race to run, but we made it this far! So congratulations for keeping the faith, for staying the course, for running the race. I am glad to be doing this with you, and I look forward to the possibilities that God has in store as we run the next leg together.

Happy New Year!

Grace and Peace,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Pastor Jeff". Below the signature is a simple line drawing of a smiley face with two dots for eyes and a curved line for a mouth.