

Entering the Passion:
Risky Love



***The
Passion***

FEBRUARY 21, 2021
ROYAL OAK FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

ANNOUNCEMENTS

February Missions Collection

This winter, we are working hard to keep people warm. In January, we collected over 200 blankets. In February, we are collecting underwear and long underwear in men's sizes, large and extra-large. If you would like to help with this mission, you can drop off your donations at the church office Monday-Thursday, 10-3, or you can make a financial contribution at rofum.org/giving, and we will do the shopping for you.

Lenten Book Study

Wednesdays February 24-March 24, 10:00-11:30 am or 7:00-8:30 pm

Join Pastor Jeff for this study on the deeper meaning of the days of Holy Week. Each class will begin with a talk from Pastor Jeff, and then the group will be split into smaller groups with discussion leaders. Studying this book through Lent will prepare us for a deeper understanding of the events of Holy Week so that we can experience it in a new way. [Click here to sign up.](#)

Pastor Chat

February 28, 12:30 pm

Pastor Chats are an opportunity for people who are new or visiting the church to ask any questions you may have about our church and community. If you are interested in participating in our virtual Pastor Chat on Zoom, you can call the church office or contact Bridget Nelson at bnelson@rofum.org to RSVP.

Men's Retreat

March 5 & 6

Calling all the men of the church! It's been too long since we were able to get together and be in fellowship with one another. Join Pastor Jeff online for this chance for men to connect with God and each other! No preparation necessary, just a Zoom-friendly device and some time to share with other men from your church family. [Click here to sign up.](#)

Drive-In Communion

March 7, 10:30 am

This Lenten season, we are offering as many opportunities as possible to come together safely in worship. Join us for music and communion in the church parking lot.

Week of Prayer

March 15-18

One of the hardest parts of this pandemic is being away from our sanctuary. Find a time this week to come in, spend some time in the sanctuary and pray for the people in your life, the people in our church, and our community and world. This can be for an individual or a household group. There will be music playing and a candle you can light. Join us in this special week of prayer and reconnecting with our most sacred space. [Click here to sign up.](#)

Enneagram Retreat

March 26 & 27

One of the most ancient spiritual ways of understanding human beings is the Enneagram. Whether you already know “your number” or not, come learn about this enlightening tool of self-discovery. We will be led by Laura Witkowski from the Michigan Conference staff, who has been trained in helping others grow through the Enneagram. [Click here to sign up.](#)

HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday

March 28

Watch our Palm Sunday worship services at 9 and 11 am or join us at 10:30 am on the church lawn to gather, wave our palms, and make a ruckus as we celebrate Jesus’ arrival in Jerusalem.

Holy Thursday

April 1

Watch our 7 pm online worship service or come to the church lawn at 7 pm for a hymn sing and partake in communion as we commemorate Jesus' last meal with his disciples.

Good Friday Worship

April 2

Join us at 12 pm on the church lawn for an impactful in-person Good Friday worship service remembering Jesus' final day.

7 Last Words Preached

April 2

Tune in at 12 pm to this collaborative worship experience with preachers and musicians from area churches lifting up Jesus' last words on the cross.

7 Last Words Poetry Slam

April 2

You don't want to miss this live-streamed event at 7 pm, where poets and musicians muse on Christ's last words. Unique, poignant, and compelling, the 7 Last Words Poetry Slam offers insights into Christ's humanity and divinity in his final moments.

Easter

April 4

Easter Sunday is finally here! Celebrate the resurrection with us for an in-person worship celebration on the church lawn at 10:30 am. Be sure to watch the Children's Easter Play at 8 am on our website and our Easter worship services at 9 and 11 am.

RECENT PRAYER CONCERNS

Prayers for our church family: Fred Bowden; Woody Siddall; Sue Minch; Christine Ryckman; Cecelia Tamm; Nate Grose; Bob Giles; Marilyn McCreedy; Neil Franks; Bruce Conrad; Carol Hardt; Jeff Harris; Joe & Jean Foster; Bill Howell; Peggy Waisanen; Ron & Marianne Peludat; Kristin Frey; Janice Martin; Todd Menig; Marian Kremer; Nancy Lorenz

Prayers for our extended family: Ronald Avesian; Nancy Lee Matson; Julie Leigh; Bill Mason; Paul Edward; Tim Bell; Darryl Warren; Steve Zemonian; Troy & Amber DuPrey; Sue Sugden; Lori Karoitt; Mary Ann Standing; Scott R; Laurella Perser; Paul Brown; Jim Brown; Tara Bouck; Sally Sou; John McClure; Mary Sleeman; 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: Betty Cairns

Sympathy to the Yates family for the death of Donna's aunt, Jean Avesian, February 18.

Sympathy to Joe Waisanen for the death of his wife, Peggy Waisanen, February 18.

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

NOTE FROM THE PREACHER

Dear Friends,

This week we began our Lent. Lent is a 40-day journey to Easter. Throughout Church history, Lent has been a season of preparation for the new life that awaits us in Christ. During Lent, we are invited to pay close attention to the life of Jesus. We listen more closely to his teachings. We pay extra attention to how he lived and with whom he spent his time. We focus on what was important to him in hopes of discovering why Jesus was willing to give up his life on the cross. And we open ourselves to Jesus' ongoing invitation, "Follow me."

Lent culminates in Holy Week, where, in a single week, we witness his triumphal entry into Jerusalem; his table-turning in the temple; his last meal with his friends; his betrayal, trial, and crucifixion; and finally arrive at the door of an empty tomb. This last week of Jesus' life has been called The Passion. In Greek, passion means to suffer. I think this definition of passion dovetails nicely with our contemporary understanding. We often talk about passion as an ardent, or enthusiastic, love of something or someone. We can be passionate about a team, a film or series, a cause, or a hobby. We can be passionate about people - family, partners, and friends. Passion is something to which we are devoted, focused on, and something for which we are willing to make a sacrifice of time, attention, and resources.

This year for Lent, we will be focusing on that last week of Jesus' life in order to better understand The Passion and the passions that were his motivation. In order to help us focus we will be using the book *Entering The Passion: A Beginners Guide to Holy Week* by Amy-Jill Levine. [Click here to get the book.](#) I will be offering a time of discussion and reflection on Wednesday at both 10 am and 7 pm. These conversations will happen over Zoom. I hope you will consider joining me as we get in touch with Jesus' passion for us and the world. [Click here to sign up.](#)

On a side note, a lot is happening at the church these days. Many conversations around staffing, priorities, mission, congregational care, and plans to offer more in-person experiences. Much like I did last fall, I will be communicating more on each of these issues in the weeks ahead. As always, we appreciate all your prayers and support. This is a special place, and you are very special people.

Thank you for being on this journey with us!

Grace and Peace,

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