



The Stories We Tell



Parables of Jesus

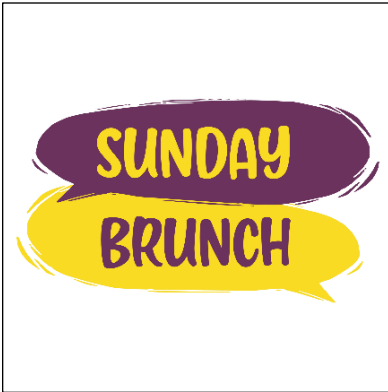


Sunday, April 6, 2025
9AM Service

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Gathering Music	“The Chicken” Jaco Pastorius	House Band
Greeting		Griffin Anspach
Song	“This Is Our God”	
Welcome & Invitation to Mission		Jeff Nelson & Jennifer Tripoli
Confession & Assurance of Pardon		
Musical Response	“Kyrie Eleison” (Mass of Light)	
Time of Prayer		Nicole Wilson
Invitation to Offering		
Musical Offering	“Song of the Cross” Susan HooKong-Taylor & Ana da Costa	Analisa Thomas, Julia Westenberg, Michael Rosas
Doxology	“Give Thanks”	
Gospel Processional	“Glory to You, O Word of God”	
Scripture Reading*	Matthew 20:1-6	
Sermon Song	“Here I Am, Lord”	Bridget Nelson
Message	“The Laborers in the Vineyard: A Partnership Story”	Jeff Nelson
Sacrament of Holy Communion		
Communion Song	“The Table”	
Benediction		
Departing Music		

ANNOUNCEMENTS



PALM SUNDAY BRUNCH

Sunday, April 13, after 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services

The Abide Men's Fellowship is sponsoring a Sunday Brunch after both services on Palm Sunday. There is no cost for the brunch and reservations are not necessary. We hope you will join us!

CONFIRMATION YOUTH BAKE SALE!

We have had 13 middle school students gathering this year to learn about their faith and to grow in Christian love in preparation for their Confirmation. **On Sunday, April 13 after both the 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services, some of them are sponsoring a bake sale** where all of the proceeds will go to fund their Kingdom Projects that will support various non-profits in the metro area.



"LIVE IT OUT"

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL (VBS)

June 23-26, 2025 6:00-8:00PM

Come join us as at Vacation Bible School this summer where we will explore what it means to love like Jesus, by showing kindness and forgiveness, praying for and serving others. We'll learn how to "Live It Out" by showing Jesus' love in everything we do! The adventure awaits! Cost is as follows: \$20 for the first child in a family; \$10 per additional child; \$50 maximum per family. There are opportunities to volunteer as well as donate supplies if you are interested. Any questions, please contact Tori Kozan at tkozan511@gmail.com. NOTE: Due to ordering restrictions, any registrations submitted after May 11 will not receive a t-shirt. Scan the QR code to sign up and to volunteer.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

HANDS OF MERCY



Lenten Essentials Collection

HANDS OF MERCY – LENTEN ESSENTIALS COLLECTION

Throughout the Lenten season, we will be joining together to provide gifts of mercy for our neighbors in need. We are asking you to bring in a grocery bag filled with personal hygiene items (toothpaste, bar soap, shampoo & conditioner) to stock the Outreach on 7th (OO7) Essentials Pantry. These are items that everyone needs, but are not covered through assistance programs, and OO7 shares with anyone who asks. Full size items, but not jumbo/bulk bottles, are preferred. Thank you for being Hands of Mercy this Lenten Season!

LENT

Sandwich & Lunch Assembly from Home



LENT SANDWICH & LUNCH ASSEMBLY FROM HOME

Are you looking for a one-time service opportunity this Lent? We've designed an opportunity for many households to sponsor another NOAH at Central lunch together. You can sign up to **make 30 sandwiches or 30 lunches at your home to be delivered to church on Sunday, April 13. Additionally, we are hoping to send 3-5 volunteers to help serve the meal on Tuesday, April 15.** Please scan the QR code for more information and to sign up!



EGG MY HOUSE



STILL TIME FOR “EGG MY HOUSE”!

Make Easter morning “egg-stra” special for your kids with a yard full of candy and toy-filled eggs delivered by Royal Oak First! Purchase twenty-four (24) eggs for \$25 or double the fun with forty-eight (48) eggs for \$50. All proceeds support the Youth Mission Trip. Order by scanning the QR code before Sunday, April 13.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Easter Egg Fillers Collection



EASTER EGG FILLERS COLLECTION

The kids and youth of Royal Oak First are collecting donations of individually wrapped pieces of candy, toys/trinkets, and plastic eggs for their annual 'Egg My House' fundraiser through Sunday, April 13. A collection bin is at the Connections Table. If you prefer to shop from home and have it delivered, simply scan the QR code to order from our Amazon Wish List.



TRANSFORMATIVE RETREATS

We invite you to step away from the busyness of life and immerse yourself in these retreats, held every third Saturday from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Our retreats are intentional spaces designed to cultivate a deeper relationship with the divine, offering you the opportunity to recharge your spirit and discover the profound peace that comes from being in God's presence.

****April 19th: Listening for God's Resurrecting Voice****

****May 17th: A Morning with the Mystics****

Scan the QR code to sign up for a retreat.



Transformative Retreats

with Pastor Jeff Nelson

Clothing Closet Needs



CLOTHING CLOSET NEEDS

The Outreach on 7th's Clothing Closet really needs donations of **backpacks (any condition)** and **men's shoes sizes 10 & 10.5**. Please drop off at the church office, Monday-Thursday between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.



PALM SUNDAY *Sunday, April 13, 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services -- IN PERSON & ONLINE*

Join us as we celebrate Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem with palms to wave and joy to spread. We will be led by our House Band and the Sanctus Choir at both services. In addition, the Pre-K/K and Lower Elementary Choirs will be singing at the 9:00 a.m. service and the Upper Elementary Choir will be singing at the 11:00 a.m. service. Any children that are here can participate in a Palm Parade at both services. The Abide Men's Fellowship is sponsoring a **SUNDAY BRUNCH** after both services as well. There is no cost for the brunch and reservations are not necessary. There will also be a **YOUTH GROUP BAKE SALE** for you to purchase yummy treats to support the Confirmation class Kingdom Projects.

MAUNDY-THURSDAY *Thursday, April 17, 7:00 p.m. service -- IN PERSON & ONLINE*

We will have a simple Soup Supper at 6:00 p.m., and then join us for a worship experience at 7:00 p.m. where we will remember the Last Supper. There will be a homily by Pastor Jeff, communion, and music led by the Sanctus Choir.

GOOD FRIDAY *Friday, April 18, noon service -- IN PERSON & ONLINE*

Join us for a traditional and impactful Good Friday worship service remembering Jesus' final day with music led by the Sanctus Choir. This is a service of deep reflection. Come to the foot of the cross and experience the Passion of Jesus.

7 LAST WORDS POETRY/MUSIC SLAM *Friday, April 18, 7:00 p.m. -- IN PERSON & ONLINE*

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

EASTER SUNDAY *Sunday, April 20, 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services -- IN PERSON & ONLINE*

Christ is risen! Alleluia! Join us for a morning of worship and celebration featuring our House Band at the 9:00 a.m. worship service, and the Sanctus Choir accompanied by the BrassWorks brass quartet at the 11:00 a.m. worship service.

PRAYERS & CELEBRATIONS

Prayers for Our Church Family:

Jerry Elliott • LeeAnn Witherspoon • Grace Perkins • Judy Bryan • Ann Cline •
Jane Sledd • Ren Renforth • Mark Thatcher • Woody Siddall • Ann Anderson •
Tom Landry • Mary Lou Graeber • Bill & Allison Hempstead •
The Thurman Family • Landon & Sawyer Cattran • Tim Murphy •

Prayers for Our Extended Family:

Reese • RaeDena • Robert Baker • Bernie Stubitsch • Pat Timmons •
Michael Elliott • Beth Copeland • Karen Cunningham • Michael Retaskie •
Jeff Callihan • Lance Wilburn • Ellen Delangy • Carol Marshall •

*If you would like to add someone to the Prayer List,
please contact Danielle Moody at prayers@rofum.org.*



TIME OF PRAYER

All are welcome to the Time of Prayer on Tuesdays at 11:00 a.m. at church. We review the church prayer list, spend time in silence and pray together in the Sanctuary. This is wonderful opportunity to uplift your personal prayer requests.

LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

“Joy is the simplest form of gratitude.” – Karl Barth

“This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.” – Psalm 118:24

“I hope you had the time of your life...” – Green Day

“Every day can be a celebration—party hats optional!” – Sam Nelson

Dear Beloved Community,

Greetings from the Holiday Inn in downtown Cleveland! I'm currently on a spring break adventure with my youngest son, Sam. We're embarking on a road trip to four cities over six nights to catch some NBA games. Milwaukee, Chicago, Indianapolis, and now Cleveland—what a slam dunk of a week!

NBA basketball is our love language. It all began during the early days of the COVID quarantine when we became hooked on playing 2K video games on the Xbox. Who knew that hitting virtual buzzer-beaters would become our thing? Since then, we've been tracking stats and standings like true fans. This road trip has been a dream come true, and as we soak in the excitement, I can't help but reflect that just a year from now, Sam will be graduating and starting a new chapter in his life. I'm truly grateful for this time together.

Lent is a time for us to create space for the Kingdom of God's love to grow in our lives. I never imagined that an NBA road trip would become part of my Lenten practice, but here I am, with just one day left, feeling humble and grateful for the life God has blessed me with. I cherish the simple joy of being with my child, witnessing the remarkable person he's becoming, and dreaming of future adventures that await him. So yes, this NBA road trip has turned out to be a surprisingly meaningful way to deepen my Lenten experience!

It's clear that we will face some tough days ahead. Social and economic uncertainties loom large. The work for peace, justice, and inclusion is more important than ever. But here's the thing—we also need to make space for joy! It's often in those joyful moments that God meets us in the most amazing ways. It is this joy that will give us the strength “to keep on keeping on!”

So glad to be on the journey together. See you this weekend!

Grace and Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Jeff". Below the signature is a simple line drawing of a smiley face with a wide, open mouth and two dots for eyes.

Pastor Jeff Nelson