

Makin' it Real



Sunday,
September 21,
2025

9AM
service

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Gathering Music	“I Still Haven’t Found” What I’m Looking For/Stand By Me”	House Band
Greeting		Griffin Anspach
Song	“Battle Belongs”	
Song	“Goodness of God”	
Welcome & Invitation to Mission		Jeff Nelson & Jennifer Tripoli
Finance Moment		Chris Orletski
Baptism		Benny Bagian Son of Peggy and Brian Bagian
Musical Response	“Gather at the Water”	Julia Westenberg Maria Moro, Michael Rosas
Time of Prayer		Nicole Wilson
Scripture Reading*	John 1:29-32, 35-50	
Invitation to Offering		
Musical Offering	“Both Sides Now” Joni Mitchell	Kiersten Ciccone
Doxology	“Give Thanks”	
Scripture Reading*	Matthew 11:25-30	
Message	“What Are You Looking For?”	Jeff Nelson
Song	“Any More”	
Benediction		
Departing Music		

**New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Moms at Pubs

(MAP)



MOMS AT PUBS (MAP) THIS THURSDAY!

Calling all moms—of all stages of life! Whether your babies are 10 days old, 15 months old, or fully grown, you're invited to join us for Moms at Pubs. **We meet on the 4th Thursday of each month to share conversation, enjoy a meal, and relax over a drink together. Our next meet up will be Thursday, September 25 at 7:00 p.m. at 5th Avenue (215 W. Fifth St, Royal Oak).** Come connect, laugh, and unwind with other moms who understand the joys (and challenges!) of motherhood. If you would like to be added to the monthly email blast, please contact Pastor Jennifer at jtripoli@rofum.org.



“MAKIN’ IT REAL: EMBRACING CONNECTIONS IN CHRIST” SMALL GROUPS

All are welcome to join a small group as we read "Makin' it Real: Embracing Connections in Christ" written by our own Pastor Jeff Nelson. Small groups are a great way to meet new people you go to church with and grow in your faith at the same time! This book will match up with the Sunday sermons this fall. **Groups will start the week of September 21.** Scan the QR code for more details, link to purchase the book and to sign up!



SCAN ME

Big Boy Night is Back!

Tuesday, October 14, 4-8pm



BIG BOY NIGHT-TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14

Join us for an evening of fellowship and support for our Music Guild's summer Choir Camp! On **Tuesday, October 14, from 4:00-8:00 p.m.**, the Troy Big Boy (200 W. Maple, Troy) will donate **15% of all sales** to our cause when you present a card from the Connections Table at checkout. There will also be wonderful **door prizes donated by our members**—you won't want to miss it! Come enjoy a good meal, connect with friends, and help make Choir Camp possible for our youth.

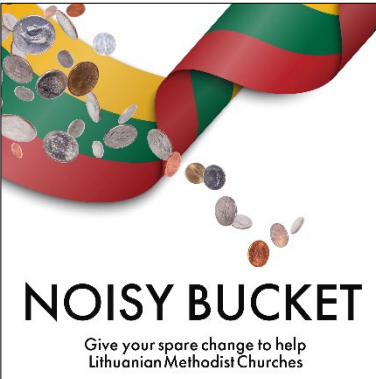
ANNOUNCEMENTS

NOAH Sandwich Assembly (from home)



NOAH SANDWICH ASSEMBLY FROM HOME

Would you like to spend additional time this Fall in service? We've designed an opportunity for many households to sponsor another NOAH at Central lunch together. You can sign up to make 30 sandwiches at your home to be delivered to church on Sunday, October 19. Additionally, we are collecting individual size bags of chips to donate with the sandwiches. Please scan the QR code for more information and to sign up!



NOISY BUCKET

Bring in your spare change in on Sunday, September 28 at either service and we will collect it for our efforts to support the United Methodist churches in Lithuania. Don't miss out on making the bucket noisy!



OUTREACH ON 7TH WISH LIST

Outreach on 7th could use the following items.

- Men's shoes sizes 9-10
- Sleeping bags
- Plastic grocery bags
- Sweatshirt hoodies

Drop off items at church Monday-Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



2025 CHURCH CONFERENCE

Please mark Sunday, October 5 at 3:00 p.m. on your calendar for our Annual Church Conference on Zoom. We will be joined by our District Superintendent, Rev. Dr. Darryl E. Totty, to conduct our business meeting, elect our leadership for the next year and be informed of what is happening in the wider connection of the United Methodist Church. This is an important meeting and will give you a chance to help shape the direction of our congregation. **This meeting will be held on Zoom only and a link will be sent out to everyone on our church email list closer to the date.**



ROYAL OAK FIRST MISSIONS SURVEY

Please take a couple minutes to scan the QR code and fill out our Missions survey.

This information will help guide our Missions Team as we make decisions that impact future missions programming and partnerships at Royal Oak First. **Please complete by**

September 30th. Paper copies are available at the Connections Table. Reach out to Karla Goetz with any questions at missions@rofum.org. Thank you!



SOCK IT TO ME SEPTEMBER (UNDERWEAR TOO!)

Our friends at NOAH at Central give out over 10,000 pairs of socks annually as part of their work supporting the homeless of Detroit. It is our goal to contribute 1000 pairs of socks or underwear to NOAH this year, in addition giving 1000 pairs to Outreach on 7th. **Please bring a package of NEW MEN'S CREW SOCKS or NEW MENS UNDERWEAR to church during the month of September.** Please drop off socks and underwear in the white bin near the Welcome Desk by the Lafayette entrance. Sock-It-To-Me!

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PRIDE & ALLY ADULT SOCIAL GROUP

Royal Oak First is restarting our **Pride & Ally Social Group**, open to anyone looking for community, connection, and fun. We'll meet on the **first Monday of each month, beginning October 6th from 6:30-8:00 p.m. at church.**

This is a safe and affirming space for all—whether you identify as LGBTQIA+ or as a supportive ally. Come as you are, bring a friend, and join us in building a vibrant and inclusive community.

Then join us for our **first social outing on Sunday, October 12 right after the 11am service at Pronto!** (right next door to the church) for brunch and conversation. Everyone will pay for their own meal and beverages, but we'll all sit together and enjoy great food and fellowship. Families are welcome! **Please RSVP by October 6 so we can give the restaurant an accurate head count at prideandally@rofum.org.**



TRANSFORMATIVE RETREATS WITH PASTOR JEFF: “ENCOUNTERING CHRIST”

Are you longing for a deeper connection with Jesus? Join us for a series of **monthly Saturday morning retreats**, led by Pastor Jeff, designed to help you pause, reflect, and open your heart to encountering Christ in new ways. Each retreat offers a sacred space for prayer, conversation, and spiritual renewal. From **9:30-11:30 a.m. once a month on Saturdays beginning September 27.** Come as you are. Bring a friend. Let's make space for Christ together. Get the full schedule and sign up by scanning the QR code.



PRAYERS & CELEBRATIONS

Prayers for Our Church Family:

Dennis Allen • Leonard Benyas • Don Matson • Janie Castle • Joel Palmer •
Ann Cline • Bill Courtney • Phyllis Hassberger • Ann Anderson •
Rita Nicholas • Karen Porter • Brian Harris • Jan Albert • Marian Kremer •
Michele Prud'homme • Mary Lou Graeber • John Marsh •
Laurie O'Donnell • Megan Mckenzie-Grimm • Kathy MacFarlane •
Kristen Turkington • Sue Buxton •

Prayers for Our Extended Family:

Bob Payne • Penny Carolin • Ann Marie Rogers • Dorothy Follette • Carol •
Karen Cunningham • Joan • Missy Winter • Brett Thatcher • Rich Zielinski •
Joyce Barber • Deb Ingraham • Sharon Connors • Lori Mason •
Jessica Boyer • The Everst Family • Cara & Kevin Smith • Halen Alexander •

Sympathies to:

The Calhoun family on the death of Karen's aunt, Joan Thompson on
September 16, 2025

The family and friends of Nancy Sydanmaa on her death on September 14,
2025

The family and friends of Don Anderson on his death on September 7, 2025

Congratulations to:

Jessica and Matt Blum on the birth of their daughter, Maggie Ellen on
September 16, 2025

*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

Dear Beloved Community,

I hope this message finds you well.

As I write, I still feel the weight of the challenges we face together. The rise of authoritarianism, the targeting of vulnerable communities, and the heartbreaking conflicts in Europe and the Middle East often leave me heavy-hearted.

Yet, I experienced a delightful surprise this past week; I reconnected with my old friend Paul, who has been living in New Zealand for two years. He's deep into a PhD in philosophy, identifying himself as a "public philosopher." When I asked him about his work, he said, "I really help people think about the everyday ways we build meaning, connection, and moral courage." The question at the center of his work is, "What makes life good, really?"

We shared breakfast on Saturday sitting outside Pronto. (A pastor and a philosopher walk into a breakfast joint...sounds like the start of a good joke!) Paul shared how wonderful it is to be back "home," reminiscing about the joy of sitting in the stands at Tiger Stadium, the warmth of attending a friend's wedding, and the sweetness of being present for his grandchild's baptism. He also reflected on the bittersweet visit he had with a dear friend undergoing chemotherapy treatments, wondering if this might be their last time together this side of heaven. I left breakfast thinking everyone should have a "public philosopher" to help them through the noise.

Paul shares his writings on a platform called Substack, which I had to ask my kids to help me navigate! I found one of his recent pieces about his trip home, beautifully capturing the essence of our conversation—the moments we often overlook. He closed with a thought that resonated deeply:

"If we don't pause to honor what is good, really—then all our fighting, all our traveling, all our striving doesn't add up to much...The work of truth and resistance matters. But so does the wedding toast, the ballgame cheer, the hospital bedside, and the shared act of making stories. What makes life good, really, is showing up for all of it."

Amen to that!

This is the balance we seek at Royal Oak First. We are a community that fights for what matters while savoring the beauty of the moment right in front of us.

We want to help each other discover, "What makes life good, really?"

Thank you for being on this journey with me—your presence, love, and compassion make a difference.

Your presence matters. It really does!

Grace and Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Jeff". The signature is stylized, with the "P" and "J" being large and looped, and "Pastor" and "Jeff" written in a cursive script.

Pastor Jeff Nelson