BE THE Light

ADVENT 2025

Sunday, December 7, 2025 11:00AM

ROYAL OAK FIRST: A UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Prelude	"Earth Song" Frank Tichelli	Michael Rosas
Call to Worship		Allison Plaxton
Opening Hymn #216**	"Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"	
Welcome & Invitation to Mission		Jeff Nelson & Nicole Wilson
Lighting of the Advent Wreath	"Christ, Be Our Light" (verse 2 and refrain)	The Moro Family
Time of Prayer		
Introduction to the Liturgy of the Word		
Old Testament Reading*	Isaiah 11:1-10	
Psalm Response	Psalm 72	
Epistle Reading*	Romans 15:4-13	
Invitation to Offering		
Musical Offering	"Greensleeves" (arr. Peter Crisafulli)	Kimi Matsumoto, flute
Doxology	"Advent & Christmas Doxology (What Child is This?)"	
Gospel Procession		
Gospel Reading*	Matthew 3:1-12	
Message	"The Peaceable Kin-dom"	Michael Rosas
Sacrament of Holy Communion		
Communion Hymn #626**	"Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"	
Closing Hymn #203**	"Hail to the Lord's Anointed"	
Benediction		
Postlude	"Sortie sur «Venez divin Messie»" (César Franck)	

**New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition*
***United Methodist Hymnal*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LAST DAY TO ORDER!

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA SALE

We are excited to offer the choice of purchasing a poinsettia or contributing to UMCOR in honor or memory of a loved one.

SCAN ME

The poinsettias will decorate the Sanctuary on Sunday, December 21 and at our Christmas Eve services. The names of the donors and those to be honored or memorialized will be printed in the Sunday, December 21 Bulletin.

If you wish to participate, fill out the form below and drop off at the Connections Table or scan the QR code before ***Sunday, December 7.***

Payment must accompany this order form (checks payable to Royal Oak First United Methodist Church)

___Enclosed is $18.00 for a 1 stem red poinsettia

___Enclosed is $33.00 for a 2 stem red poinsettia

___I will pick up my plant(s) following the 9:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service.

___Enclosed is my donation of $_____ for UMCOR in place of a poinsettia.

This will be a memorial to _____
(Please Print)

OR in honor of _____
(Please Print)

Given by _____
(Please Print)

Phone # _____

ANNOUNCEMENTS

JOIN US THIS AFTERNOON FOR "FEAST OF CAROLS" CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Today at 3:00 p.m., join us for the 71st annual "Feast of Carols" Christmas Concert: "Jesus, Joseph, and Mary: a Holy Family." The concert features the ensembles of Royal Oak First including our Sanctus Choir, Carillon Ringers, Children's Choirs, Youth Choir, and House and Youth Bands, in addition to guest instrumentalists. **After the concert, join us for cookies and punch in the gathering space organized by the Music Guild.**

CHILDREN'S STORYTIME WITH PASTOR JEFF

Every Sunday in Advent (11/30, 12/7, 12/14, 12/21) at 7:30 p.m., join Pastor Jeff on Facebook Live for a cozy bedtime story. Each week he'll share a seasonal tale to help children—and all of us—enter more deeply into the spirit of Advent. Tune in and enjoy a few fun moments together as we prepare our hearts for Christmas.

CHRISTMAS SWEATER SUNDAY

Sunday, December 14 at 9:00 & 11:00 a.m. Wear your favorite Christmas sweater - "ugly" or not! Come and spread the joy of the season with your best Christmas get-up!

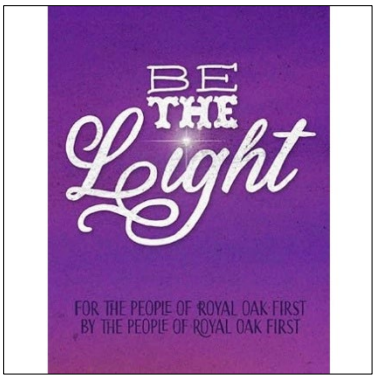
ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE

If you are mourning the loss of a loved one, dealing with an illness, navigating financial struggles or simply not feeling the spirit of Christmas; this service on Sunday, December 21 at 7:00 p.m. is a quiet, prayerful moment acknowledging the difficulties of the season.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

On Sunday, December 21 at our 11:00 a.m. service, the children of Royal Oak First will present the story of the first Christmas, in a pageant written by Pastor Jeff Nelson entitled "Keeping It Real-A Christmas Pageant." Music will be provided by the Children's Choirs of Royal Oak First.



ADVENT DEVOTIONAL BOOK

Scan Me

This Advent season, we invite you to enjoy *Be the Light*—a collection of 26 authentic stories from 26 real people; your neighbors, your friends, and your fellow worshippers here at Royal Oak First. Each page offers a glimpse into what Christmas means to them and how the light of love shines brightly in the lives of those around you. From reflections shared by our youngest disciples to the sage wisdom of our senior saints, you'll discover that God is very much alive and at work in every chapter of the lives within our church family. Scan the QR code to purchase your copy. Read one story each day and let their experiences resonate with your own. Let their light inspire and encourage you. Because let's be honest—nothing says Advent quite like the warmth of community.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FAMILY SHELTER MEALS (DINNER HELP)

The Royal Oak First Missions Team is partnering with "Kids Empowered: On the Move" to provide meals at a new family shelter this winter in Pontiac. **Our church is sponsoring meals one week each month throughout the winter. We need help prepping the food on Sundays, heating the food at church each evening, transporting it to the shelter, and serving the meal OR** if you are someone who likes to cook for a crowd (50 people) and want to plan a whole meal, please sign up for either by scanning the QR code.

SCAN ME

ADVENT MISSION PROJECT

For this year's Advent Mission Project, we will be **collecting children's Christmas gifts for area families who are struggling financially**. We have two different ways to do this:

If you are feeling especially generous, reach out to Karla at **missions@rofum.org** and you can **adopt a whole family of children** through the Metro Detroit Youth Club, based in Royal Oak. You will be asked to purchase two gifts and a stocking stuffer for each child in the family. Families range in size, so you can request the size of family you are able to support, ranging from 1-6 children.

Alternatively, you can **bring in fun, unwrapped gifts of your choice**. Check out the "giving tree" on the Connections Table for ideas if you need them. Shop for your items and return them to the Missions collection bin (located by the Welcome Desk) by December 14. These gifts will help stock the Cass Community Social Services Christmas Store where nearly 300 families in Detroit will "shop" for their kids' Christmas gifts.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ARTHUR JEMISON'S OFF-PAPER PARTY

SCAN ME

Our friend and church member Arthur Jemison is celebrating a milestone and our church family is all invited to the party. We are partnering with "The Freedom Dreamers" ministry to help celebrate Arthur Jemison getting off parole in an Off-Paper Party Saturday, December 13 in our fellowship hall from noon - 3:00 pm. Please scan the QR code for more details and to sign up to contribute food and/or to attend.

LAST 2025 TRANSFORMATIVE RETREAT WITH PASTOR JEFF IS ON DECEMBER 20!

SCAN ME

Join us for the final 2025 transformative retreat with Pastor Jeff. The retreat is designed to help you pause, reflect, and open your heart to encountering Christ in new ways, while offering a sacred space for prayer, conversation, and spiritual renewal. The retreat on December 20 is "Come to the Manger." To sign up, please scan the QR code.

GROWTH LAB SERIES

Scan Me

What if choosing peace was a practical skill you could develop? Jesus calls us to be peacemakers, but in a divided world, how do we actually live that out? Join us for five sessions (Saturday mornings, January 10-February 7, 9:30-11:30 a.m., led by Nicole Wilson) exploring concrete tools to respond with curiosity instead of judgment. We'll practice asking better questions in difficult conversations, understand how our positions developed, and strengthen connections even when we disagree. Whether navigating family tensions, workplace conflicts, or simply wanting to grow in Christlike love, this workshop offers a space to practice new patterns together. Scan the QR code to sign up.

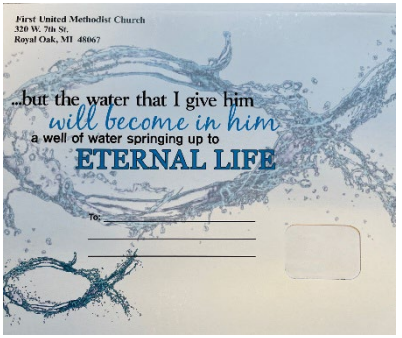
ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHURCH OFFICE HOLIDAY HOURS

The church office will be closed on Thursday, December 25, 2025**, and** Thursday, January 1, 2026**,** in observance of the Christmas and New Year holidays. If you need assistance during this time, please feel free to leave a voicemail or send an email, and our team will respond when the office reopens. We wish you and your loved ones a blessed Christmas season and a joyful start to the New Year!

ONLY ONE WORSHIP SERVICE AT 10AM ON DECEMBER 28 AND JANUARY 4

We will have only one service at 10:00 a.m. on both Sunday, December 28 and Sunday, January 4. There will also be no Sunday School on either of those days. The nursery will be open. We will return to two services (9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.) on Sunday, January 11.



2026 OFFERING ENVELOPES ARE HERE!

2026 Royal Oak First offering envelopes are now available for you to pick up after service at the Welcome Desk! If you are unable to pick up your envelopes, we'll begin mailing them out after January 12. Contact Karen Calhoun at kcalhoun@rofum.org or 248.541.4100 if you have any questions.

STAFF DIRECTORY

NAME	TITLE	EMAIL	PHONE
Jeff Nelson	Lead Pastor	jnelson@rofum.org	248.541.4100 x 1216
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Natalia Tovarez	Nursery Coordinator	ntovarez@rofum.org	248.541.4100
Lori Newton	Evening Receptionist	lnewton@rofum.org	248.541.4100
George Bard	Custodian	office@rofum.org	248.541.4100
Ben Graham	Weekend/Evening Custodian	office@rofum.org	248.541.4100

BE THE Light

Christmas Eve Worship Experiences

Wednesday, December 24, 2025

4:00 p.m.

Family Service

Our children and youth will lead us in a service with lots of music and a shorter message for all ages. All are welcome to join this family and kid friendly worship, complete with glow sticks! The Nursery will be open. We will be in the Sanctuary and livestreaming the service on YouTube and Facebook.

7:00 p.m.

Blue Jean Christmas Service

Come as you are and worship with us as we celebrate the birth of Jesus. We will also have a service of candlelight as part of our worship. Our House Band will be leading us. The Nursery will be open. We will be in the Sanctuary and livestreaming the service on YouTube and Facebook.

9:00 p.m.

Traditional Service

Traditional Christmas Eve worship service featuring Sanctus Choir, organ, and a woodwind quartet. A service of candlelight will conclude our worship. We will be in the Sanctuary and livestreaming the service on YouTube and Facebook.

11:00 p.m.

Outside Service

Join us outside on our front lawn for a simple, yet Holy worship experience in the dark of night as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus. A service of candlelight will be included.

PRAYERS & CELEBRATIONS

Prayers for Our Church Family:

Mark Thatcher • Zackary Landry • Phil Button • DJ Hinman • Tom Soboleski • Arthur Jemison • Carrie Morse • Bernice Sayers • Al Pollard • Patti Peterson • Keith Messing • Joyce Negrich • Janice Marsh • LeeAnn Witherspoon • Karen Porter • Megan Mckenzie-Grimm • Mary Lou Graeber • Phyllis Hassberger • Kathy MacFarlane • Ann Anderson • Dennis Allen • Bill Courtney •

Prayers for Our Extended Family:

Sarah Hughes • Carol • Joan • Carolyn Aucchio • Gina Novak • Holly Hempstead • Susie Wilkinson • Reefe Renforth • Raedea Wagner • Joe Bridge • Bernice Graham • Elma Holloway • Amanda Lewandowski • Bruce Snyder • Ron & Denise Bell Haines • Karen Cunningham •

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 PREACHER

Dear Friends,

Today we celebrate the Second Sunday of Advent. I am struck by the visions of peace in today's scripture, not just the peace between peoples and nations, but also the peace of our physical earth home. The healing of the earth from our misuse of its resources, the pollution, and destruction we have wreaked upon it.

For the past week I've had the song "Earth Song" as an earworm. And I'd like to share the text with you as a prayer for this Advent day of peace:

> Sing. Be. Live. See.
> This dark stormy hour, the wind, it stirs.
> The scorched earth cries out in vain:
> O war and power, you blind and blur.
> The torn heart cries out in pain.
> But music and singing have been my refuge,
> And music and singing shall be my light.
> A light of song, shining strong: Alleluia! Alleluia!
> Through darkness, pain, and strife
> I'll sing, I'll be, I'll live, I'll see…
> Peace. *Peace.* *- Frank Ticheli*

May your Advent and Christmas season be filled with hope, peace, joy and love as we await the birth of a Savior, who was, is, and ever shall be: peace.

Yours in Christ,
Michael Rosas