

GRACE — GOES — FIRST

LOVED
BEFORE WE
RESPOND



Sunday, September 20, 2026
11:00 AM Worship

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Prelude	“Chorale Prelude on LOBE DEN HERREN” (Larry Visser)	
Call to Worship		Allison Plaxton
Opening Hymn #170**	“O How I Love Jesus”	
Welcome/Invitation to Mission		Jeff Nelson
Time of Prayer		
Making Christ’s Love Real		Jennifer Tripoli
Invitation to Offering		
Musical Offering	“Come, Thou Fount” (Craig Courtney)	Sanctus Choir
Doxology #95**	“Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”	
Scripture Reading*	Luke 19:1-10	
Message	“Grace Goes First”	Jeff Nelson
Closing Hymn #156**	“I Love to Tell the Story”	
Benediction		
Postlude		

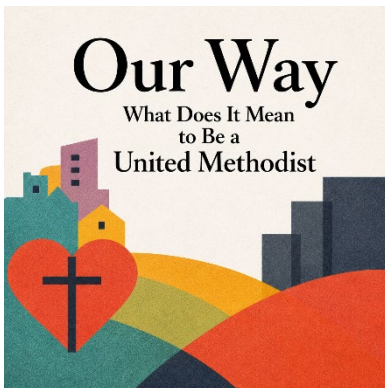
**New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition*
***United Methodist Hymnal*

OUR WAY

About This Sermon Series

Why do you come to church? Most of us answer that question differently, although there are usually some common threads. At Royal Oak First, one thread is often about experiencing the grace and love of God before anything else. In this series, we want to explore “Our Way,” we want to give vocabulary and history to why we teach that grace goes first. We want to explore what it means to be loved before anything is expected of us, and to see how Jesus is the divine example of love and grace. We want to remember that communion and baptism are means of experiencing grace so that we can be God’s love made public. And we want to learn together what it means to stay, even when staying is hard.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



THERE'S STILL TIME TO JOIN!

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A UNITED METHODIST?

Our six-week small groups begin this week, and **there are still spots available!** Join us as we explore how our United Methodist history shapes us as people who are covered in grace, formed in love, and sent to serve. Find a group that works for you and sign up today! Books are available on Amazon (\$10 print / \$7.50 Kindle).



Moms at Pubs

(MAP)



MOMS AT PUBS (MAP)

Thursday, September 24 | 7:00 p.m.

Rock & Brews (208 W. 5th St., Royal Oak)

Moms at Pubs is a relaxed, welcoming space for moms to connect, share a meal, and enjoy meaningful conversation. We meet monthly at restaurants around Royal Oak, no agenda, just good food and great company. To receive monthly reminders and locations, email Pastor Jennifer Tripoli at jtripoli@rofum.org.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



COMING HOME TO YOURSELF: AN ENNEAGRAM JOURNEY

Saturdays, beginning September 26 | 10:00-11:30 a.m.

This six-week group explores how the Enneagram can help us better understand ourselves and reconnect with our inner experience. Through reflection, discussion, and contemplative practices, we'll focus on self-understanding, self-compassion, and self-trust as we seek greater freedom, wholeness, and connection to God.

Cost: \$60 per person. Scan the QR code to sign up.



NEW HERE? LET'S CHAT!

Sunday, September 27 | 10:15 a.m.

New to Royal Oak First and wondering what's next? Pastor Chat is a relaxed opportunity to meet the pastor, ask questions, learn more about our church, and discover ways to get connected. No registration needed—just come as you are. We'd love to meet 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 1,000 pairs of socks or underwear to NOAH this year, in addition giving 1,000 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 the items in the white bin near the Welcome Desk by the Lafayette entrance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



HALLOWEEN CANDY NEEDED FOR SPOOKTACULAR!

Royal Oak Spooktacular is on Sunday, October 18 from 2:00-5:00 p.m. and we will be hosting a trick or treating stop on our corner! We need donations of Halloween candy to pass out to all the kids! Donations can be brought to church office Mon-Thu from 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. or on Sundays.

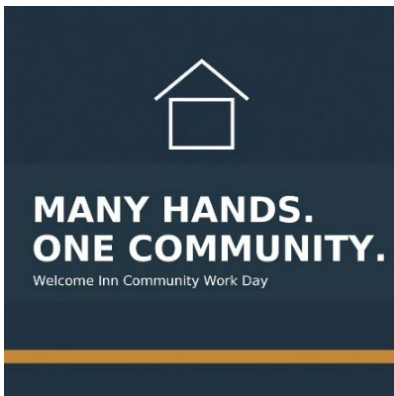


BIG BOY NIGHT

Tuesday, October 13 | 4:00-8:00 p.m.

Troy Big Boy (200 W. Maple, Troy)

The Music Guild invites you to Big Boy Night on Tuesday, October 13 from 4:00-8:00 p.m. at the Troy Big Boy (200 W. Maple). Present a card at checkout and 15% of your purchase will support our Youth Summer Camp! Cards are available at the Connections Table. Enjoy dinner, fellowship, and door prizes while supporting our youth!



WELCOME INN COMMUNITY WORK DAY

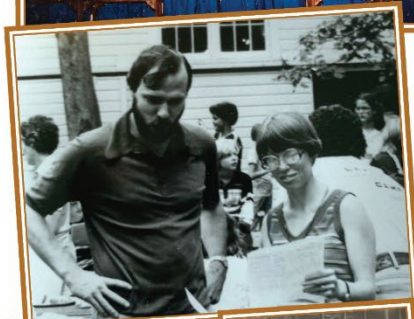
Hosted by the South Oakland Faith Alliance in partnership with the Welcome Inn

Saturday, October 17 | 8:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Welcome Inn, 1717 W. 13 Mile, Royal Oak

Join us as we prepare the Welcome Inn for the important work ahead! Help organize, clean, sort supplies, and prepare guest spaces. You can also help by donating needed supplies, including paper products, cleaning supplies, bottled water, and individually packaged snacks. Bring donations on Saturday, October 17 or order directly from the Amazon Wish List. Scan the QR codes to sign up or shop the Wish List.





*Different times.
Same song.
Forever friends.*



Royal Oak First Choir + Reunion Weekend

ROYAL OAK FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

OCTOBER 16 – 18, 2026

Royal Oak First United Methodist Church is hosting a reunion of choir members the weekend of October 16 – 18, 2026.

This reunion is for the current members of the Sanctus Choir, and all former choir members, Music Directors, Choir Camp Deans and Counselors and their guests.



FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16

5:00 – 8:00 P.M.

Welcome Reception – featuring fellowship, memories shared and pictures of past choir performances and choir camps.

Pizza and Salad will be served.



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17

1:00 – 3:30 P.M. Gathering at the church.

Tours of the renovated church building will be available, and fellowship, memories and pictures shared.

3:30 – 5:30 P.M. Choir Practice.

We will rehearse the three songs that will be sung during the 11:00 a.m. Worship Service, including:

- "In Remembrance of Me/You Shall Know the Truth" (from *Celebrate Life*).
- "What a Fellowship (Leaning on the Everlasting Arms)".
- "Amen".

6:00 – 8:00 P.M. Dinner



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18

10:30 A.M. Arrive at the church

11:00 A.M. Worship Service

12:00 P.M. Coffee Hour Reception

Registration

Register for any or all of these events by scanning the QR code.



SCAN ME



FOR ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE EMAIL choirreunion2026@gmail.com

PRAYERS & CELEBRATIONS

Prayers for Our Church Family:

Liz Malama • Don Seidler • Noah Ryckman • Barb Simmons • Linda Anderson •
Lee Gnegy • Mike Dabney • Kathy Border • Margie Carrington • Myra Pollard •
Carrie Morse • Lee Hoffmann • Megan Grimm • Elizabeth Kincannon •
Phyllis Hassberger • Pam Payne • Ann Anderson • Michele & Bob Prud'homme •
Jerry Elliott • Kay Nowaczok • Mark Thatcher • Kathy MacFarlane •

Prayers for Our Extended Family:

Dianne Stobbe • Tom & Liz Milan • Lee Potter • Jean Murphy • James Cudejko •
Noah Armstrong • Russhele Dohnal • Patricia Guarino • Mike Sopheia •
Sue & Harold Williams • Latha Ravi • Angie Grose • Ashley Mink • Allyson Jones •
Kathy Latham • Tom & Ann Thompson • Bud & Debbie Tucker • Russ Dore' •
John Barber, Jr. • Doug Zorn • William McMahon • Effie Lambros • Ron Gilmour •
Pamela & Richard Rush • Tracy Zawaski • Donna Bartley • Judy Gombert •
Kerry Doty • Huntley Thatcher Reed • Faye Rogers • Julie Rogers • Ken Rogers •
Marietta Cunningham • Sharon Conners • Jen Moore • Megan Colett •
Christina Buchanan • Craig Brooks • Jim • Beverly Bazzell • Carol Marshall •
Ron & Betsy Fisch •

Prayers for Our Extended Family:

The Bratberg family on the death of Steve's father, Merlin Bratberg on September 14, 2026
Diana Shornak on the death of her brother, Harold Baker on September 14, 2026

*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,

There are moments in the life of a church when it becomes important to say out loud who we are. Not because we are anxious, but because clarity matters.

And because there are a lot of people, inside and outside the church, carrying versions of Christianity that have become heavy, fearful, harsh, or thin. And that is not the way we have received the gospel. The Methodist way, at its best, begins somewhere different. Grace goes first.

That is not a slogan for us. That is the ground under our feet. It means we believe God is already moving toward people before they know how to move toward God. It means belonging is not the reward for getting your life together. It means Jesus Christ reveals the heart of God not as condemnation, but as mercy that tells the truth and stays near. It means the font and the table are not religious extras, but the places where we remember who we are. It means holiness is not private superiority, but love made visible. It means when the way forward is unclear, we trust the Spirit enough to stay in the room and listen together.

That way of life matters right now. It matters because people are tired, and fear is loud. It matters because cruelty has become casual, and the world is constantly teaching us how to sort, dismiss, harden, and move on. It matters because too many people think Christianity is mostly about drawing sharper lines and protecting smaller circles.

We need another way. Or maybe better said, we need to remember the way we have been given. That is why we are doing *Our Way*.

I am inviting you to join a group or read the book, because this series is a chance to name what has formed us, and what we believe can still form people now. It is for longtime Methodists who have lived inside this grace-first tradition without always having language for it. And it is for newer people who have found something here that feels different and want to know why. It is a chance to say, clearly and confidently, that this grace-first way is not vague, watered down, or somehow less Christian. It is deeply Christian. It is rooted in Jesus. It is shaped by the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. And it is a way of life worth claiming.

I want us to claim it. Not timidly. Not apologetically. Not like we are borrowing it.

I want us to claim it because the world needs communities where grace goes first. Communities where people can stop bracing. Communities where no one is disposable. Communities where love becomes real.

That is the work and the witness. That is Our Way.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Jeff Nelson