

Sunday, November 29, 2026 9:00AM

ROYAL OAK FIRST: A UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Gathering Music	“Christmas Time is Here” (Vince Guaraldi)	House Band
Call to Worship		Edward Eickhoff
Opening Song	“What A God”	
Invitation to Community		Jeff Nelson
Extreme Weather Update		Jennifer Tripoli
Time of Prayer		Nicole Wilson
Making Christ’s Love Real		
Invitation to Offering		
Musical Offering	“Savior of the World” (The Vigil Project)	Jonathon Parker & Maria Moro
Doxology	“Give Thanks”	
Lighting of the Advent Wreath		The Raphale Family
Scripture Reading*	Mark 13:24-37	
Message	“Make Room for Longing”	Jeff Nelson
Closing Song	“Make Room”	
Benediction		
Departing Music		

**New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition*

ANNOUNCEMENTS



ADVENT MISSION PROJECT

For this year's Advent Mission Project, we will be collecting Christmas gifts for children in area families who are struggling financially.

There are two special giving opportunities to participate in, each supporting a different organization.

Adopt a Family — Metro Detroit Youth Club

The Metro Detroit Youth Club's Adopt-a-Family program is underway! Please remember to **drop off your gifts at the church's main office between December 8-10**. All gifts should be unwrapped, with each family's gifts grouped together in bags or boxes clearly labeled with the assigned family number.



Giving Tree — Cass Community Social Services

You can also help bring Christmas joy to children in Detroit by participating in our Giving Tree! Simply select one or two tags from the tree on the Connections Table in the Gathering Space, purchase the suggested gifts, and **return them unwrapped to the church collection bin near the Welcome Desk by December 8.**

You are also welcome to donate any fun, unwrapped toy of your choice—the Giving Tree tags are simply there to provide ideas. These gifts will help stock the Cass Community Social Services Christmas Store, where nearly 300 Detroit families will "shop" for Christmas gifts for their children. Thank you for your generosity and for helping make Christmas special!

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CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA SALE

Sign up by Sunday, November 29

We invite you to purchase a poinsettia or contribute to UMCOR in honor or memory of a loved one. Poinsettias will decorate the Sanctuary on Sunday, December 20 and Christmas Eve. Donors and those honored or remembered will be listed in the December 20 Bulletin. To participate, complete the form below and return it to the Connections Table OR scan the QR code by **Sunday, November 29.** Payment must accompany this order form.

___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 _____

OR in honor of _____

Given by _____

Phone_____

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CHILDREN'S STORYTIME WITH PASTOR JEFF

Every Sunday in Advent beg. 11/29 | 7:30 p.m.

Starting November 29 at 7:30 p.m., join Pastor Jeff on Facebook Live every Sunday evening in Advent (11/29, 12/6, 12/13, 12/20) for a reading of a story that will get you in the spirit of the season.



ADVENT DEVOTIONALS ON FACEBOOK LIVE

Wednesdays, December 2, 9, 16, and 23 | Noon

Take a little break from the holiday hustle and bustle to pause, reflect, and reconnect with the true meaning of the season! Join us Wednesdays at noon on Facebook Live for about 20 minutes of inspiration, reflection, and connection as we journey through Advent together. Join us from wherever you are. Everyone is welcome!



FEAST OF CAROLS

Sunday, December 6 | 3:00 p.m.

Join us for the 72nd annual "Feast of Carols" Christmas Concert: The Brightest Night, featuring 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. Be sure to take in the sounds of Christmas at Royal Oak First for an afternoon of glorious music. After the concert, join us for cookies and punch in the gathering space organized by the Music Guild.

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SPREAD THE CHEER THIS CHRISTMAS!

Saturday, December 5 | 10:00-11:00 a.m.

Help us make sure everyone in our church family feels remembered and loved this Christmas!

Christmas Cards:

Purchase or create Christmas cards and mail them before Christmas. Your card may be the only one someone receives this season!

Christmas Cookies & Treats:

Bake or purchase two dozen cookies or holiday treats and bring them to church on December 5. Together, we'll package goodies for members of our congregation who could use some extra love.

Deliveries & Fellowship:

Volunteer to deliver treats and spend a little time visiting with recipients. Your company is just as meaningful as the goodies!

Kids and adults alike can help make Christ's love real this Christmas. **Scan the QR code to sign up and spread some Christmas joy!**



MEN'S WINTER GEAR COLLECTION

Our Outreach on 7th clothing closet is currently in need of: Long Underwear (sizes adult medium to 2XL); Winter Hats (skull caps); Winter Gloves; Hand Warmers. These winter essentials help us provide practical support and a warm welcome to our Outreach on 7th guests. **Donations may be dropped off at the Clothing Closet on the lower level, just down the stairs from the 7th Street entrance.**

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ADVENT TRANSFORMATION RETREAT WITH PASTOR JEFF

Saturday, December 12 | 9:30-11:30 a.m. | in the Parlor

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This Advent we are inviting you to Make Room and join us for a Transformation Retreat. This Saturday morning we will take time to get to know one another and acknowledge the things we have to set down in order to make room, and we will spend time with Joseph's story. We will explore Joseph's willingness to say yes to making room and living a life he had not planned. We hope you will join us for this time of community building and spiritual reflection.



SANTA IS COMING TO ROYAL OAK FIRST

Sunday, December 13 | 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Santa is making a special stop at Royal Oak First this Christmas season! Mark your calendars and plan to stop by for a little holiday cheer and a chance to visit with Santa. More details to come, but for now, save the date! We hope to see you there!



CHRISTMAS SWEATER SUNDAY

Sunday, December 13 | 9:00 a.m.-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!

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CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Sunday, December 20 | 11:00 a.m.

Join us for our annual Children's Christmas Pageant during the 11:00 a.m. worship service on Sunday, December 20! We are looking for volunteers to help behind the scenes with costumes and props on Wednesdays, December 9 and 16, and on the day of the pageant. We are also looking for volunteers to help refresh some of our costumes this year. If you would like to be part of bringing this special Christmas tradition to life, please contact Danielle Moody at dmoody@rofum.org.



LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE

Monday, December 21 | 7:00 p.m.

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 is a quiet, prayerful moment acknowledging the difficulties of the season.



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

4:00 p.m.—Family Service

Our children and youth will lead this family-friendly service featuring music, a short message for all ages, and glow sticks!

7:00 p.m.—Blue Jean Service

Come as you are and celebrate the birth of Jesus with music led by our House Band and candlelight worship.

9:00 p.m.—Traditional Service

Celebrate Christmas Eve with Sanctus Choir, organ, and a brass quartet, concluding with candlelight worship.

11:00 p.m.—Outdoor Service

Join us on the front lawn for a simple, yet holy, candlelight worship experience under the night sky.

The 4:00, 7:00, and 9:00 p.m. services will be held in the Sanctuary and livestreamed on YouTube and Facebook. The Nursery will be open during the 4:00 and 7:00 p.m. services.

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YEAR END GIVING

Thank you for your generosity throughout 2026! Your gifts make it possible for Royal Oak First to continue making Christ's love real in our church and throughout our community. As we approach the end of the year, we invite you to consider two ways to help us finish the year strong:

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- If you made a financial commitment for 2026 and are able to complete it, now is a great time to do so.
- Prayerfully consider making an additional year-end gift.

Every gift, no matter the size, makes a difference and helps sustain our ministries. You can give online at rofum.org or use the QR code to give. Thank you for the many ways you continue to be a blessing to others!



WRAPPING PAPER DONATIONS NEEDED!

Have extra wrapping paper from last year or bought more than you need this Christmas? We'd love to put it to good use wrapping gifts for our Outreach on 7th guests! No need to buy anything new—just donate what you won't be using. It's a win-win: you clear out the extras, and we spread a little Christmas joy! **Donations will be collected through December 13. Drop off in collections bin by Welcome Desk.**



GIVING TUESDAY

Tuesday, December 1

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Following Thanksgiving, Black Friday and Cyber Monday, Giving Tuesday is a global day dedicated to generosity and making a difference in the lives of others. This Giving Tuesday, we invite you to make a special gift to Royal Oak First. Your generosity helps sustain our ministries, serve our neighbors, nurture our children and youth, and create a welcoming community where everyone belongs. Together, we can continue Making Christ's Love Real. Every gift, no matter the size, makes a difference!

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SHOP ON SUNDAY CHURCH STORE

Show your Royal Oak First spirit wherever you go! Our Shop on Sunday church store offers a variety of clothing and household items featuring Royal Oak First designs. Whether you're shopping for yourself or looking for a gift, there's something for everyone! Watch for the store to pop up in the Gathering Space about once a month**. And shop online anytime!**

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RBI PRODUCE COLLECTION

Thank you for your continued support in providing fresh produce monthly to the families served through Redford Brightmoor Initiative's Free Store! We are in need of shopping volunteers for the upcoming months. Scan the QR code to sign up.

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SNACKS NEEDED FOR THE COFFEE BAR

Would you like to make everyone who comes to Sunday service happy? Bring sweet or savory snacks, (store bought or homemade) for the Coffee Bar on Sundays. If so, please sign up to bring 3 dozen snacks (no nuts of any kind, please!) for the Coffee Bar on Sundays. The smiling faces and happy bellies will be all the joy you need for the day for sure! Scan the QR code or stop by the Connections Table to sign up.

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PRAYERS & CELEBRATIONS

Prayers for Our Church Family:

Don Matson • Peyton Valentine • Jenny Cattran • Lee Ross • Janie Castle • Gerson Vasquez • Carolyn Kubacki • Joan Johnson • Tom Janes • Tim Murphy • Lori Vickers • Phil Button • Mark Thatcher • Liz Malama • Linda Anderson • Lee Gnegy • Mike Dabney • Margie Carrington • Myra Pollard • Carrie Morse • Lee Hoffmann • Megan Mckenzie-Grimm • Elizabeth Kincannon • Phyllis Hassberger • Ann Anderson • Michele & Bob Prud'homme • Jerry Elliott • Kay Nowaczok • Kathy MacFarlane

Prayers for Our Extended Family:

Sue Bradley • John Barber Jr. • Olivia Matlachin • Holly Hempstead • Karen Cunningham • Brent Routkowski • Russ and Judy Dore' • Amy Fausone • Cindy Mulvahill • Bill Mahaffy & Family • The Klipfel Family • Linda Frank • Donna Bartley • Rachel Hopkins • Lee Potter • Jean Murphy • James Cudejko • Noah Armstrong • Russhele Dohnal • Patricia Guarino • Mike Sopheia • Sue & Harold Williams • Latha Ravi • Angie Grose • Ashley Mink • Kathy Latham • Doug Zorn • Ron Gilmour • Tracy Zawaski • Kerry Doty

Congratulations to:

Crystal Clark on her 100th birthday on November 30, 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

Happy New Year!

I know, I know. We haven't even made it to December, and I'm already wishing you a Happy New Year! But this Sunday is the first Sunday of Advent, the beginning of a new year in the life of the church. And I love that. Just as we're finishing up the Thanksgiving leftovers, the church invites us to begin again. What a wonderful moment to look back with gratitude. Goodness, what a full year we've shared at Royal Oak First!

I think about the children and families finding friendship, belonging, and growing in faith through Holy COW. I think about the kindness and dignity offered through Outreach on 7th, including our new shower and laundry ministries. And I think about the remarkable community-wide effort to open the Welcome Inn, where our neighbors will soon have a warm, safe place to rest.

What fills me with wonder isn't how much we've accomplished, it's what happens when we make room for one another. Friendships grow. Dignity is restored. People discover they belong. And when we give ourselves to something bigger than our own church, we discover just how much love there is to share. And now we enter Advent with a simple invitation: **Make Room.**

Make room to notice the goodness around us. Make room for hope in an uncertain world. Make room for our neighbors, especially those who haven't always found a place to belong. And make room for ourselves, with whatever joy, grief, or longing we carry into this season.

Speaking of joy, I've decided on two rather ridiculous Advent adventures. I'm going to try to wear a different wonderfully awful Christmas sweater every day. Why own them if you aren't going to enjoy them? And I'm going to try to watch a Christmas movie every day, sharing a few thoughts along the way. And you best believe my Christmas movie journey will end on Christmas Eve, sometime after midnight, when the services are finished, the candles have burned down, the wax has dripped onto the pews, and everyone has gone home. I'll settle onto my couch and watch *Die Hard*. Because make no mistake, *Die Hard* is a Christmas movie.

I hope you'll find your own ways to make room for joy this season. A favorite song, a familiar tradition, a little quiet, a good laugh, or time with someone you love. There is plenty that weighs on our hearts. We don't have to miss the goodness along the way. Through it all, I hope you know how deeply you are loved. There is room for you here just as you are.

Happy Advent. Happy New Year! God loves you, and there's nothing you can do about it.

Pastor Jeff Nelson