



Office for
Transition
Ministry

Ministry Portfolio

Full Portfolio (last updated Sep 11, 2021)

St. John's, Midland, Eastern Michigan

405 N Saginaw Rd, Midland, MI 48640, United States

Contact:

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge | Receiving Names until 11/14/21.

[mspencer@eastmich.org](mailto:m Spencer@eastmich.org)

| | | | |
|--|---|------------------------------------|---|
| Weekly Average Sunday Attendance (ASA) | Number of Weekend Worship Services | Number of Weekday Worship Services | Number of Other per Month Worship Services |
| 89 | 2 | 1 | |
| Current Annual Compensation | Cash Stipend | Housing / Rectory Detail | Utilities |
| | | | |
| SECA reimbursement | Compensation Available for New Position | Housing Available for | Pension Plan |
| | | | We're in compliance with CPF requirements. |
| Healthcare Options | Dental | Housing Equity Allowance in budget | Annual Equity Amount |
| Full family | Yes | Negotiable | |
| Vacation Weeks | Vacation Weeks Details | Continuing Education Weeks | Continuing Education Weeks Details |
| 4 | | 2 (standard) | |
| Continuing Education Funding in budget | Sabbatical Provision | Travel/Auto Account | Other Professional Account |
| \$1001-\$2000/year | Yes | | Yes |

Compensation appropriate to diocesan guidelines

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Describe a moment in your worshipping community's recent ministry which you recognize as one of success and fulfillment.

The congregation adapted its ministries very successfully to the limitations imposed by the pandemic. In fact, some of these changes are resulting in permanent improvements. For example: Investments in online worship service capability are enabling us to continue & expand streaming worship services not only for Sunday services but also for Wednesday noon liturgy and Daily Offices. Share-A-Meal-Service (SAMS) Pantry continued its food ministry even with the social distancing limitations. Committees, Bible Studies, fellowship groups met remotely to continue our ministries. We conducted virtual fellowship events such as game nights, a pancake supper, and home delivered Ash Wednesday packets, to maintain connections between parishioners. Yard signs were distributed to parishioners' homes stating "The Church lives here!" emphasizing that the church is not the building. The congregation is feeling positive that we have been able to sustain and improve ministries during this difficult period.

How are you preparing yourselves for the Church of the future?

We see many challenges ahead. We recognize that we are now a pastoral size church still operating in a program size paradigm. In the more near-term, the pandemic jump-started our move to an on-line presence. We are investing in technology/streaming capability but will need to adapt to more inclusion of an on-line community. Our congregation is aging and volunteers are declining; there's a need to increase active membership. We are building our youth/children's programs but simultaneously meeting the diverse needs of different generations is a challenge. We believe that more fully living into our Welcoming Statement will be key to our future. To be a welcoming church, we need to create and provide structured opportunities for newcomers to learn about the Episcopal Church as well as learn, at a fundamental level, what it means to be a follower of Jesus. We also see the need to improve communications both within SJEC, in the community, and use social media more effectively. We have started actions on many of these items and would welcome a Rector who can help us continue this work as well as identify the possibilities in the challenges to come.

Please provide words describing the gifts and skills essential to the future leaders of your worshipping community.

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Describe your liturgical style and practice for all types of worship services provided by your community.

St. John's Episcopal Church's (SJEC) style is best described as broad church; relaxed, accessible, and inviting. Services are spoken. On Sundays, the 8 a.m. service is quiet and contemplative, without music, following the Rite II liturgy. The 10 a.m. service includes music, follows the pattern of Enriching Our Worship 1 and is live-streamed on Facebook. A more contemplative Wednesday noon service includes Eucharist, follows the calendar of the Saints, and is live-streamed. All services include complete bulletins and verbal instructions. Daily Offices online include shared text. A Worship Committee is actively involved in planning for the changing liturgical year. Special annual services such as Blue Christmas, the Triduum, All Saints, etc. may include additional music and visual components to engage the whole person. Other services are offered in the community - Blessing of the Animals, Ashes to Go, Blessing of the Bikes, etc.

How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

We consider "others" to be those attending SJEC occasionally/never. While SJEC hosts the SAMS food pantry, about 2/3 of the nearly 60 volunteers are community members. In 2020 the Endowment Committee focused primarily on addressing local needs. Most of the 20 grants were given locally to nonprofit organizations, in support of flood relief, to address hunger & homelessness in Midland County, and to support inclusiveness and diversity in our community. Internationally, funds aided indigenous & displaced women and helped pastors in remote regions of Kenya reach their congregations. We reserve space for teens from the West Midland Family Center to participate in the Christian Appalachian Project with SJEC teens. Our choir includes students from Central Michigan University who supplement the voices of SJEC members. During the pandemic we had visible activities in our parking lot - a labyrinth in the parking lot, prayer ribbons tied to our front gate, opportunities to chalk the parking lot, etc. Streaming online services will also help broaden our reach and provide access to other services such as musical events, baptisms, weddings, funerals, etc.

As a worshipping community, how do you care for your spiritual, emotional and physical well-being?

Several Bible study groups meet weekly. Special studies occur during Lent/Advent. Participation is open to all. These are often the "go to" groups when members need support. Our Pastoral Care Committee coordinates contact with those experiencing difficulties. On an informal level, members are often caring for one another - providing transportation, friendship, connection. During streaming services, people include prayers in the Facebook comments as part of the Prayers of the People. This helped us know people's hearts and to offer timely supportive comments, cards etc. In 2017 some men started a monthly Men's Breakfast Group which continued to meet regularly via Zoom during the pandemic. In addition to fellowship, this group coordinates activities for the church e.g., the pancake supper, quarterly Sunday brunches, etc. During the summer our EpiscoPALS in Motion walk in a local park - providing exercise and fellowship. As we emerge from the pandemic, parish-wide fellowship events are being planned once again - a Fall kick-off community BBQ, game nights, etc.

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How do you engage in pastoral care for those beyond your worshipping community?

We provide pastoral care through our many outreach efforts. We aim to be in relationship with those we serve - providing not only "goods" but also connection and kindness. Our Samaritan Fund provides support typically in the form of utilities, rent, medical procedures, auto repair, etc. SAMS Pantry provides emergency food to those in need. Sharing gifts of comfort, the Love Knots quilt group and the Knit-Pickers respectively make homemade quilts and knitted/crocheted items which are donated to area hospitals, shelters, etc. We provide clothing and meals to Episcopal churches in Saginaw & Flint. Informally, our clergy and others have joined in ecumenical prayer response in times of crisis. In 2020, as the area was devastated by flooding, many parishioners worked to clean up and rehabilitate homes in the area. Recently SJEC has provided contemplative Blue Christmas services to the community during Advent. At Christmas we participate in a community wide "Sharing Tree" program sponsored by the Salvation Army. Through the Endowment Committee, St. John's provides support to area agencies who support others through their ministries.

Describe your worshipping community's involvement in either the wider Church or geographical region.

SJEC provides deputies to the General and Diocesan Conventions, parishioners and clergy serve on Diocesan committees. We host diocesan events and have supported several seminarians through our endowments. Members have participated in local formation provided by the Coppage-Gordon School for Ministry. Within the Anglican Communion we have supported efforts around the globe with both our endowment funds and time e.g. ministries in Uganda, the Dioceses of Southeast Mexico and the Dominican Republic respectively providing clean water and building a church. Since Advent 2015 members have collectively contributed to ERD and donations were matched with endowment funds. Locally, parishioners provide occasional meals and take-out containers to support the feeding ministry at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Saginaw. During the pandemic SJEC provided take-out containers enabling St. Paul's to continue their ministry of feeding their members and the community. Similarly, every 5th Sunday, we support the feeding ministry of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Flint. We also have a continual clothing drive to provide clothes to the homeless who are served by St. Andrew's.

Tell about a ministry that your worshipping community has initiated in the past five years. Who can be contacted about this?

In 2017, our Children's and Youth Ministry was struggling. Church leadership agreed that dedicated part-time resources were needed to rebuild the program. In 2018, a part-time Director of Children & Youth Ministries was hired and volunteers were recruited. A small but faithful youth group has formed to play and pray together every other week. They have also sponsored parish activities such as game nights. Recently they sponsored 2 evenings of intergenerational "Fun Around the Campfire" to provide kids of all ages with a taste of a summer camp experience. On Sundays, Godly Play is used for children through 5th grade. During the pandemic, this morphed into "Wondering with the Word" which was streamed just prior to the 10:00 service. This was so well received by the kids of all ages, that we are now considering how to incorporate this into our regular Sunday services. As a result of these efforts, we have recently attracted several young families and are committed to continuing to support this ministry.

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What is your practice of stewardship and how does it shape the life of your worshipping community?

We have not had a traditional “every member canvas” in many years. Typically, we have a stewardship committee that coordinates the fall giving program. This involves providing a theme and several special messages during Sunday services in October. We also focus on time & talent, in addition to treasure. We have a sizable endowment fund, which is both a blessing and provides challenges. Through these funds it is a blessing to provide assistance to the local and world-wide community, linking lives in the love of Christ. These endowments have also enabled us to maintain & improve facilities. However, the endowments can also discourage or hamper the congregation in giving financially to support ongoing operating expenses. Throughout the year, the congregation is very generous when responding to specific ministry needs with their time, talent, and treasure. We would welcome a rector who can help us further view stewardship as a year-round joyful opportunity to continue growing in our Christian faith and see the importance of giving even with the existence of healthy endowments.

What is your worshipping community's experience of conflict? And how have you addressed it?

We try to resolve issues through respectful conversation recognizing we may not agree but can continue to love and support each other. For example, in developing our Welcoming Statement, broad input was sought through small group discussions. Since 2018 the Vestry has held quarterly “Listening Sessions” focusing on a single purpose or question. Moderated by a Vestry member, the discussion & information was valuable input to our ongoing discernment process. A “Covenant for Conversation” guided each session. This led to more open, transparent communications addressing concerns proactively. These sessions were not held during the pandemic, but the Vestry is committed to reinstating this practice when possible. Vestry liaisons to various committees have also helped improve communications. However, there is always room for improvement. Occasionally issues arise with individual parishioners but some leave without trying to address concerns. Sometimes issues have been addressed privately and compassionately – often resulting in reconciliation but not always. Even in cases where parishioners have left, individual members often continue to maintain personal and supportive relationships.

What is your experience leading/addressing change in the church? When has it gone well? When has it gone poorly? And what did you learn?

When change has gone well, we’ve had transparent communication and leadership that was willing to listen and adapt. The development of the Welcoming Statement would be an example of a positive change experience. Also, change happens more readily when it's organic and led by someone committed to the change who is able to inspire others and develop consensus on the need for the change. The development of the Men’s Group and their active involvement is an example of a positive change in that a small group of men had the vision to make it happen. In the past, we have suffered when leaders/members try to do things on their own without engaging/involving others. We experienced some missteps with the Children's & Youth Ministry as a result of this. Selecting people with the skills, abilities, temperament for a job is key – even if it means waiting a bit longer to find the right person(s).



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Prior Incumbents

| Name | Position Title | Date Begun | Date Ended |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------|------------|
| The Rev. Kenneth Hitch | Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge | 2015-01 | 2021-01 |

| Name | Position Title | Date Begun | Date Ended |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------|------------|
| The Rev. Robert Skirving | Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge | 2004-01 | 2014-01 |

| Name | Position Title | Date Begun | Date Ended |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|------------|------------|
| The Rev. Bruce McNab | Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge | 1997-01 | 2003-01 |

| Church School | Number of Teachers/Leaders for Children School | Number of Students for Children School |
|---------------|--|--|
| | 3 | 10 |

| Number of Teachers/Leaders for Teen/Young Adults School | Number of Students for Teen/Young Adults School | Number of Teachers/Leaders for Adults School | Number of Students for Adults School |
|---|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| | | | |

| Day School | Number of Students for Day School | Number of Teachers for Day School | Number of Total Staff for Day School |
|------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | | | |



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Worshipping Community Web site: <http://www.sjec-midland.org/>

Media Links:

Online References:

> <https://www.facebook.com/sjecmidland>

Languages Significantly Represented:

English

Provide Worship or Classes in:

References

Bishop:

The Diocese of Eastern Michigan is currently exploring relationship with the Diocese of Western Michigan. We will elect a bishop provisional this year to lead both dioceses in conversation for the next two to four years. Please contact the Transition Minister for more information.
877-752-6020 mspencer@eastmich.org

Diocesan Transition Minister

The Rev. Canon Michael Spencer

Current Warden/Board Chair

Christopher Lauckner

989-631-2260

Previous Warden/Board Chair

Sara Philo

spara245@yahoo.com; 989-859-5394

Search Chair

Ellen McVey

jemcvey81@yahoo.com; 989-631-4169

Parish/Institution

Local Community Leader