



Office for  
Transition  
Ministry

# Ministry Portfolio

*Full Portfolio (last updated Aug 23, 2024)*

## St. Mark's, Coldwater, Western Michigan

27 E. Chicago Street, Coldwater, MI 49036, United States

Contact:

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge | Receiving Names until 12/31/24.

[tlittle@edwm.org](mailto:tlittle@edwm.org)

Weekly Average Sunday  
Attendance (ASA)

**62**

Number of Weekend  
Worship Services

**1**

Number of Weekday  
Worship Services

Number of Other per Month  
Worship Services

Current Annual  
Compensation

**\$57000**

Cash Stipend

Housing / Rectory Detail

Utilities

SECA reimbursement

Compensation Available for  
New Position

**\$73000**

Housing Available for

Pension Plan

**We're in compliance with  
CPF requirements.**

Healthcare Options

**Clergy+1**

Dental

**Yes**

Housing Equity Allowance in  
budget

Annual Equity Amount

Vacation Weeks

**One month, including 5  
Sundays (standard)**

Vacation Weeks Details

Continuing Education Weeks

**2 (standard)**

Continuing Education Weeks  
Details

Continuing Education  
Funding in budget

**up to/including  
\$500/year**

Sabbatical Provision

**Yes**

Travel/Auto Account

**Yes**

Other Professional Account

**Yes**

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

175th anniversary celebration a great success. Assembled choir of 20+, incl. previous choir members and former rector. Our bishop was present for his first visit. Youth of the parish provided liturgical dance. Full house for catered banquet which was provided to our people free of charge, including many former parishioners and community members. Commemorative items produced for sale (t-shirts, water bottles, stickers, tote bags) with logo designed especially for the occasion raised the funds to support the free meal. Our "Warming Fence" supplies hats, scarves, and mittens during the cold months. Community members also add items to the fence. We participate with the next-door-neighbors, United Methodist Church, in providing a meal for the Mary & Martha Diner. A most recent success and fulfillment has been our worship experience during transition, without a priest. We try to schedule a supply priest twice a month, using our lay leaders to lead the Pro Anaphora on the other Sundays. This has been very well received by our parishioners, and in fact, our numbers are sometimes higher on lay-led Sundays, and parishioners have told us they value our strong lay leadership.

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

We are committed to continue streaming our services to reach a wider audience. Acquainting ourselves with the needs of both younger families and senior citizens. We are seeking a rector who will help to train and join our members in providing better pastoral care.

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

Pastoral care; flexibility; dedication to the work/energy; strong preaching; warm, kind, friendly, engaging, being a participant

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

One Sunday service at 10 am, with choir in all but the summer. Service length usually right at one hour. Traditional, but innovative. Flexible. We use BCP A, B, C, sometimes D; New Zealand, Celtic, and EOW. Using at least 7 alternative hymnals Hymnal 1982; Enriching our Music; Wonder, Love & Praise; Voices Found; My Heart Sings Out; Lift Every Voice and Sing; Songs for Celebration; etc. We print a full-service booklet for each service, including hymns. Way of the Cross in Lent, followed by a soup supper, and sometimes an adult ed. Forum. We probably fall somewhere in the middle between High and Low church, with many members having come from other denominations. We have no dress code, and parishioners vary widely in style of dress. On the last Sunday of 2023, we hosted our Presbyterian neighbors in a lay-led Service of Lessons and Carols for Peace and Justice, with readers from each of our churches. It was very well received.

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How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

We utilize Eucharistic Ministers at the altar, Eucharistic Visitors to take communion out to shut-ins, Ushers, Altar Guild, we have an active NA group that meets twice a week in our building, and an active Shawl Ministry. Parishioners are involved with the rector in planning worship. A dozen or more volunteers prepare food and serve/visit at the Mary & Martha Diner, several parishioners run the camera to livestream all Sunday worship and some special services. Prior to Covid, we used youth as acolytes, but have not resumed that. Two Eucharistic Ministers function also as acolytes. Opportunities are always presented for others to be trained and utilized for various liturgical ministries, as well as service ministries, such as our involvement with the Mary & Martha Diner, and Family Promise. We utilize Facebook, with both a public page and a parish-only page for communication about a variety of topics.

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

We recently provided CPR training, free of charge, to our parishioners, including how to use our AED device. In the past, we did a Grief Support Group, a recent Adult Formation program studied the book "Waking Up White", which took place over several months with great attendance (30+) and great discussion. Sunday coffee hours provide much emotional support. We are blessed with parishioners willing to plan and lead Adult Formation sessions during Advent and Lent. We are known for "caring for each other". We provide meals for people recovering from surgery. We visit and send cards to those who are ill or homebound. And our prayer shawl ministry provides comforting shawls - more than 1100 since we began in 2003. We maintain a very active email Prayerline.

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

For many years, St. Mark's parishioners have been active with our community's homeless shelter program, providing beds, meals, and fellowship. As participants in the Mary & Martha Diner, our members provide conversation and support, in addition to meals.

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

Several of our parishioners are or have been involved with the Diocese, serving on Standing Committee, Worship Committee, Finance Committee, Treasurer, Commission on Ministry, Convention Planning, and as Delegates. In addition, one member has attended 5 General Conventions as a Deputy, Alternate, or Staff Member. We have participated in several Bishop Consecrations, and one member has served as a member of the Transition Team for two Bishops, and as Chair of the Consecration Committee for one Bishop. St. Mark's is well-respected in the diocese, for generosity in tithing from large gifts and bequests (we were given a farm!), and involvement in Diocesan activities. We participated in the Trinity Institute's anti-racism program via video and invited the community. Many came! We provide a home for a community chorus, who loves to sing in our acoustically excellent sanctuary, and who gives concerts seasonally.

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

We began a project called "The Warming Fence", providing scarves, hats, and mittens on the fence surrounding our Memorial Garden. Many members and some additional community members have knit or crocheted items for the fence, which quickly disappear as they fill the needs of the community. This is particularly useful because our church is right downtown, on a major street. Contact the church office.

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

We have experienced a non-aggressive financial stewardship program – a letter with a pledge form, expressing the need to provide the parish with people to do the work needed to keep it vibrant, and the funds to be able to have a full-time rector. We also address stewardship in our newsletter and Sunday booklets. When we have had a special need, such as a leak from outside of our building that was coming through a large section of wall in the parish hall, we were able to secure a grant from the Bishop Whittemore Foundation for half of the \$18,000 cost of repair, and we asked the congregation if they wished to make a contribution to the portion of the cost that we were responsible for. They came through with that amount very quickly.

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

Covid caused us many changes. Be humble - consider needs of others. Not all supported safe practices, a few left. Many watch live-streamed services instead. Children playing in church during service, on Sunday with no Sunday School program. Very loud/disruptive, some parents ignoring the children, causing a couple - just returned after 3 yrs away, to leave in anger at Offertory. Parents advised that they need to monitor their children's play, and all of the noisy toys now removed - only books, coloring books, and soft toys now available. Biggest issue: communication to parents was poor, causing several to be very upset. A misunderstanding that needed the Sr. Warden to step in and provide better explanation. Emphasized for us that communication is critical. Needs a plan developed for good communication. Rector decided to take sabbatical 6 months prior to announced retirement, we tried to assist and encourage him to apply for a grant. Unwilling to do so. Vestry felt need to use the accumulated 'sabbatical' funds in the budget to provide supply priests to care for our parish during his time away. Continued his full salary and benefits. No funding for the sabbatical.

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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?

One example of this is related to the answer above. The leader of the children's Sunday School program thought it would be good to gather the children in the parish hall prior to the service and take them up to their classroom. Parents saw this as the Vestry saying they didn't want the children in church. Again, it was poor communication that caused this misunderstanding. Another example of change was the decision to utilize our trained lay leaders to lead the Pro Anaphora on Sundays when we were not able to have a supply priest. It has been very well accepted, and the skills and abilities of our lay leaders are very much appreciated and valued. Initially, we worried that people would not come to church if they knew that we didn't have a priest that Sunday. In fact, that may have happened initially, but now many lay-led Sundays have even a little better attendance than priest-led Sundays.



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### Prior Incumbents

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
Frederick Schark	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	2013-09	2023-04

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
Stephen Bartlett	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	1999-10	2012-09

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
Kenneth Sherfick	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	1984-09	1998-06

*Our Adult Formation has been mostly seasonal (Advent and Lent) after Rector stopped offering Bible Study and Round Table Discussions. These sessions are led by parishioners. Recent one had more than 30 participants. Attendance for Children's Sunday School varies from 2-10 on any given Sunday.*

Church School		Number of Teachers/Leaders for Children School	Number of Students for Children School
Lion's Roar		4	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
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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: [Stmarkscoldwater.com](http://Stmarkscoldwater.com)

Media Links:

Online References:  
[Facebook](#)

Languages Significantly Represented:  
**English**

Provide Worship or Classes in:  
**English**

*We are 2nd largest Muslim community in Michigan, primarily from Yemen. Originally brought to work in now non-existent foundry, many now employed at hospital, police dept., large tomato greenhouse, and hog processing plant also employing Hispanic and Haitian workers.*

### References

Bishop:	sadams@edwm.org 616-319-2006
The Rt. Rev. Gladstone "Skip" Adams, Assisting Bishop	
Diocesan Transition Minister	tlittle@edwm.org 810-300-9177
The Rev. Canon Tracie Little	
Current Warden/Board Chair Anne Davidson	outwardsigns@gmail.com 269-589-5953
Previous Warden/Board Chair David Croal	
Search Chair Anne Davidson	outwardsigns@gmail.com 269-589-5953
Parish/Institution Anne Davidson	outwardsigns@gmail.com 269-589-5953
Local Community Leader	