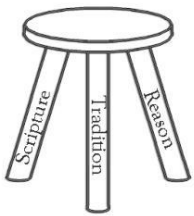


THE EPISTLE

JUNE 2026



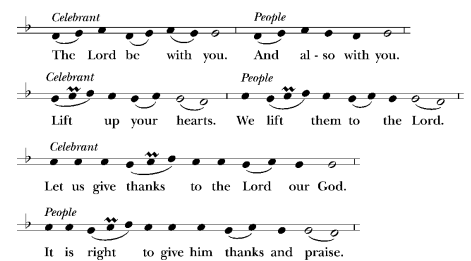
Tradition...tradition! It's more than our holiday practices and an earworm from Fiddler on the Roof; it's a way to know God. In the Anglican tradition, we sometimes talk about these ways of knowing God and understanding our lives of faith as a "three-legged stool" made up of Scripture, Tradition, and Reason. Scripture grounds us, tradition connects us to generations of Christians who have gone before us, and reason helps us engage both faithfully in our own time and place.

This summer we're leaning into a broader experience of our tradition in a couple of senses.

One change is that we'll be trying on the approved-for-use "expansive language" version of our Eucharistic Prayer A. According to the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music, "Expansive language seeks to tell as much truth about God as we can, utilizing the full range of language available to us. It does not displace traditional language for God, but uses additional metaphors. Of course, no human language can contain God. Even so, our theologies of creation, Incarnation, and Resurrection affirm that the material world, including language, is a means to understand God in a more faithful way."

That sounds wonderful, and it is. I will also note that for those of you who know our liturgies well, some of these adjustments are quite small and easy to stumble over if you are not paying attention. I actually think that is one of the gifts of expansive language: when only a word or phrase changes, our attention is naturally drawn there. We are invited to pause and consider why we use the language we do, what images of God it evokes, and what other truths about God might be revealed through different metaphors and expressions.

Another way we'll be broadening our experience of tradition is through chant: I'll be chanting a couple of sections of the Eucharistic Prayer at the 10am service. Chant is an ancient practice, and liturgical chant has been part of Christian worship nearly since its beginning. It can still help us hear familiar prayers with fresh attention and create space for deeper reflection. Chanted services have not been a regular part of worship at St. John's for some time, but I believe incorporating more chanted elements into the service offers another way to experience reverence and the embodied nature of worship.



Setting: Copyright © Church Publishing Inc.

I will also admit that this is a vulnerable experience for me. While I've largely overcome stage fright around speaking, chanting is another ball game! I ask for your patience and grace as I practice alongside all of you.

My hope is that by the end of the summer, we will all be a little more comfortable with these practices than we are today. More importantly, I hope they help us encounter God in new ways while remaining rooted in the rich traditions that continue to shape our life together.

Thank you for your willingness to explore, learn, and worship together.



May Worship Service Links



[Fifth Sunday of Easter](#)
[May 3, 2026](#)



[Sixth Sunday of Easter](#)
[May 10, 2026](#)



[Seventh Sunday of Easter](#)
[May 17, 2026](#)



[Day of Pentecost](#)
[May 24, 2026](#)



[Trinity Sunday](#)
[May 31, 2026](#)

Older services can be found here:
<https://tinyurl.com/sjeclivestream>

WE APPRECIATE YOUR ONGOING SUPPORT!

St. John's depends on the generosity of our friends and members. Pledges and gifts to St. John's can either be made by check and sent via US Mail to 405 N. Saginaw Rd., Midland, MI 48640, or by visiting tinyurl.com/Give2SJEC. This link will take you to a screen where you will enter the amount of your donation and designate a specific purpose or fund. Enter your email address as well, and you'll receive an electronic receipt.



You can also access electronic giving from the upper right-hand corner of our [webpage](#)... or by pointing your phone's camera at this QR code.



If you have any questions about your continued financial support of St John's, please call the church office and your call will be directed to the appropriate staff person. Thank you for your generosity!



the feast

bite-sized

ORDINARY TIME | JUNE 3, 2026

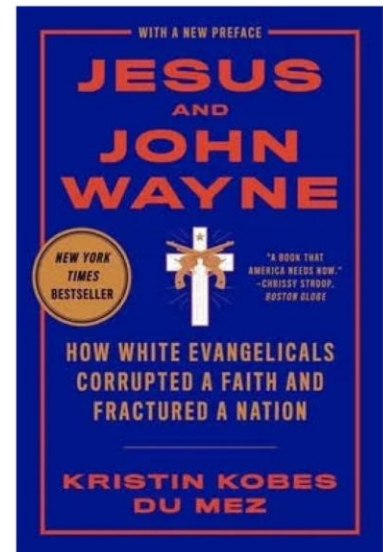
great lakes book club



The Great Lakes Book Club is back this Pentecost season with a new six-week study, and everyone is welcome to join! The book for this study is *Jesus and John Wayne* by Kristin Kobes Du Mez, a historian and a Christian who spent years researching how a particular vision of Christian manhood took shape in America over the twentieth century. The questions she raises

about power, gender, and the images of Jesus that shaped American Christianity are worth sitting with honestly, in community, and across difference.

The online book club will meet on Thursdays at 3 p.m. on Circle Live, beginning on June 4. Even if you miss the first session, you can still be part of this communal formation experience! Scan the QR code or visit greatlakesepiscopal.circlce.so/c/great-lakes-book-club/ to learn more and register!



inquirer's orientation



The Commission on Ministry is pleased to offer this in-depth session for inquirers seriously considering holy orders. This orientation, which will be led by COM co-chairs will take place on **Zoom** on **June 28 at 1:30 p.m.** and must be attended by both the Inquirer and their Sponsoring Priest. This orientation satisfies Step 3 of the "Process for Discerning a Call to Ordained Ministry" in the COM manual.

Inquirers and Sponsoring Priests must pre-register to receive a unique link at greatlakesepiscopal.org/june28-com or by scanning the QR code.

patricia m. drew deacon scholarship fund



We are proud to introduce The Patricia M. Drew Deacon Scholarship Fund to support vocational formation. To honor Patricia "Pat" Drew's legacy of service, this scholarship is reserved for those in the Diocese of the Great Lakes who are actively discerning a call to the diaconate or formally participating in diaconal formation programs.

Scan the QR code or visit patdrewdeaconscholarship.gvtls.com to give to this fund and support the formation of deacons in our diocese.



Scan to keep up to date on events and announcements at our online home for people, parishes, and ministries, greatlakesepiscopal.circle.so



[CLICK HERE to read the most recent full version of THE FEAST ONLINE.](#)



Midland Daily News
Yesterday at 8:00 AM

St. John's Episcopal Church in Midland held its first Pride Sunday service, highlighting LGBTQ+ inclusion, acceptance and belonging.

[Click here to read the article on the MDN website.](#)



Members of the congregation accept communion during the St. John's Episcopal Church's Pride Sunday service, June 7.

Lilly Kujawski/Midland Daily News



Snacks and beverages are set up for members of the congregation following the St. John's Episcopal Church's Pride Sunday service, June 7.

Lilly Kujawski/Midland Daily News

love is Love



The Rev. Alissa Anderson and daughter pause for a photo while greeting members of the congregation following the St. John's Episcopal Church's Pride Sunday service, June 7.

Lilly Kujawski/Midland Daily News



Snacks and beverages are set up for members of the congregation following the St. John's Episcopal Church's Pride Sunday service, June 7.



Members of the congregation greet each other during the St. John's Episcopal Church's Pride Sunday service, June 7.



Members of the congregation stand during the St. John's Episcopal Church's Pride Sunday service, June 7.



Members of the church choir sing during the St. John's Episcopal Church's Pride Sunday service, June 7.

Lilly Kujawski/Midland Daily News

JUNE

Parking at St. John's in June



St. John's is once again partnering with the Dow Championship, providing part of our parking lot & lawn for their use. This will impact parking the first part of June. Sunday services & other regularly occurring meetings & gatherings will continue as usual. As in the past, parishioners & others who regularly use our facilities are issued window clings for their vehicles allowing for parking in the St. John's lot during this time. If you don't have one already, stop by the office during in-person office hours (9-3, Mon-Thurs; 9-12, Fri) to pick one up. Please join us in welcoming those visiting our community this month, & all those gathered for this LPGA event.



Great Lakes Bay Pride Festival, Saturday, June 27 - Smiling volunteers for three 3-hour shifts, willing to say "hi" to young and old, working our St. John's display table and giving away materials. We will also need a "take-down person" to coordinate getting all



the table stuff back to Denée. Location: Jolt Credit Union Event Park, 300 Johnson St., Saginaw, MI 48607. Point your smartphone camera at the QR code or [CLICK HERE](#) to sign up.

Come, See, Be – God has been stirring something in my heart for overlooked people in our community. I find myself wondering what it might look like for St. John's to share God's love for our neighbors in a new way. I am hoping to gather like-minded people to pray, listen and discern together what God might be calling us to do. If you feel a pull toward building relationships with the forgotten, I would love to hear from you. **Please call Chris Schuster at 989-339-4118.**



Community

G₂ A₁ M₃ E₁

N₁ I₁ G₂ H₄ T₁

June **Game Nights** are Friday, June 12 and 26, in Williams Hall. Play our games or bring your favorites! Bring your friends or join in with us! All ages welcome!

June 5, 2026

Spreading love at **Pride Night at the Great Lakes Loons** game!



August 3 to 6 – 2 to 5 PM

Get ready for a great week of fun this Summer! You are invited to join us on an epic quest to discover God's Kingdom. Experience games, music, crafts, and more during this week of adventure. Point your smartphone camera at the QR code or [CLICK HERE](#) to register as a volunteer and/or to register a child.



May Children and Youth



EYE Youth group had a good month of May. We celebrated our youth that will be graduating, blessed our graduates, and enjoyed more *Identity* lessons from our current curriculum. May 10th, we honored our graduate who graduated from high school, Angelo Ribot. Good luck to Angelo on your next journey, you will do amazing! We look forward to seeing all the returning youth group members as well as our new to middle school graduates too.



We wrapped up the year with an outing for our youth group. We went as our tradition has become to an escape room and ice cream at Cottage Creamery. It may have been a tough escape room, but we managed to “escape” with a few extra minutes to help us out. We had regular youth group participants as well as a couple of 5th graders that will be moving up to youth group in the fall. It was a great opportunity for them all to get to know each other before their year of fun begins in the fall.

Sunday School was left in the trusted hands of several this May. Alicia led some fun Godly Play stories. Pentecost was a fun filled day of a Godly Play lesson and changing of the Altar. This allowed our children’s group to understand what our Altar Guild does to prepare the church each week for communion and service.

Many board games, kinetic sand fun, painting, crafts, and coloring were done. Memorial Day weekend we had a fun day with a Godly Play story and many adults to help engage the children in different activities.

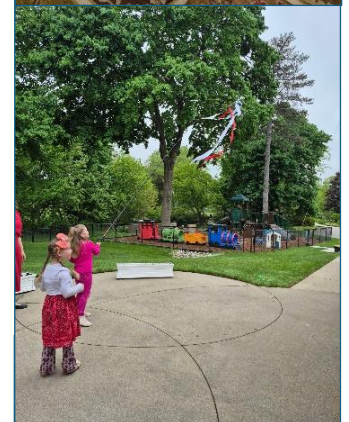


We had several elementary graduates in May. Congratulations to Anna Albright, Abby Garlinghouse, Nathan Germain, and Patrick Schrock on your achievements. We hope to see our elementary graduates in EYE Youth group in the fall.

We finished our year on May 31st with children enjoying a day of fun with our amazing staff Ms. Jenni & Ms. Leah.

Starting June 7th, we will begin a more relaxed Sunday school and childcare routine for the summer. We will still provide childcare

throughout the summer, so bring your kids for some fun activities during church and some fun lessons thrown in there too. Outside time on the playground is a must!





THANK YOU! 😊

Girl Scout Troop 50593 wants to extend a thank you to Mo. Alissa for coming to two of our troop meetings to help the girls grow in their faith. They worked through a PRAY program God & Me curriculum. Mo Alissa did a wonderful job engaging the girls and working with them on the course work. She enjoyed their enthusiastic spirits.

A huge shout out to Alicia Watt, Jenni Stoll, Leah Oard, Ellen McVey, and John Marcou for keeping Sunday school running in May. It wouldn't have all happened without your help! Many may have noticed my absence during Sundays in May. I have been spending most of that time on the sidelines of Nathan's travel baseball games or backstage for Abby's dance recitals and competitions. Thank you all for supporting my family needs as well as the church needs, I truly appreciate all of you! — Linda Germain

Library News

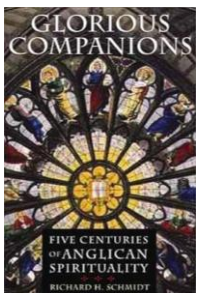
by Marnie Bash

Women Journeying Together has spent the Easter season looking at early Christian writings that are not a part of the Bible; it has been interesting and informative, and it has inspired the books out on the Feature Shelves this month. There have been many writers on spiritual topics and on Christian beliefs and practices through the past 2000 years. I have pulled out many of them for you to peruse during May and June.

The writings this month are in a variety of forms. There are a few that are the complete work of an author, but most of them are collections of excerpts from famous works that include an introduction to the writer, excerpts of their work, and often reflection questions for the reader.

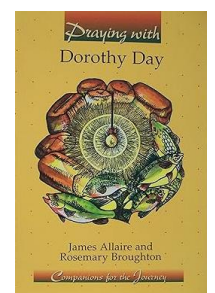
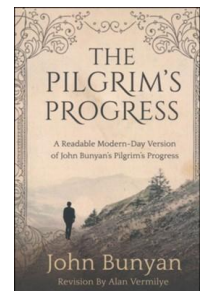
Complete works include Eusebius' *The History of the Church* (to the 400's AD), *Pilgrim's Progress* (in modern English) by John Bunyan, *The Complete English Works of George Herbert* (mostly poetry, but also includes *The Country Parson*), *The Way of a Pilgrim*, and *The Complete Works of E.M. Bounds on Prayer*.

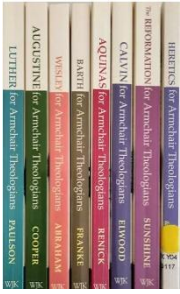
The compilations of writers come in many forms. Two books I especially like are Richard H. Schmidt's *God Seekers* (2000 years of Christian writing) and *Glorious Companions*, which



focuses mainly on Anglican/Episcopal writers since the Reformation. For each inclusion he writes first about the writer and then provides short outtakes from several of their works. A quick and easy introduction to some of the finest Christian writings through the ages. Other compilations include *The Early Christians in their Own Words* by Eberhard Arnold, and *Spiritual Classics* and *Devotional Classics*, both from Richard Foster; these books include study and reflective questions along with excerpts from each author's work.

The "Praying with" series of books each feature one saint to focus on. The book begins with a short biography followed by individual chapters that relate something specific about the saint, a piece of their writing, and then questions for reflection; these make very nice short devotionals to work with over a couple of weeks. I have put out several, but there are many more in the library itself, if this series appeals to you. Ones out include *Praying with Elizabeth Seaton*, *Dorothy Day*, *Thomas Merton*, *Martin Luther*, *Francis de Sales*, and *Vincent de Paul*.

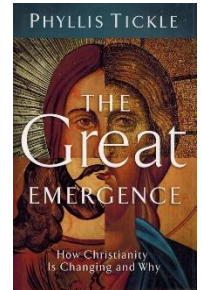




Another interesting series is the “Armchair Theologians” series. These books tell the story of theologians across the ages, explaining the background against which they are writing, and giving us some understanding of what the theologians are trying to get across to the public; the books also include some lovely cartoons. Out on the shelves are *Augustine for Armchair Theologians*, *Aquinas, the Reformation* (several theologians in this one), *Karl Barth*, and *Bonhoeffer*. If you’re familiar with the names and would like to know a bit about who they were and what they thought, this is a good series that won’t take you too deep yet make their thought understandable.

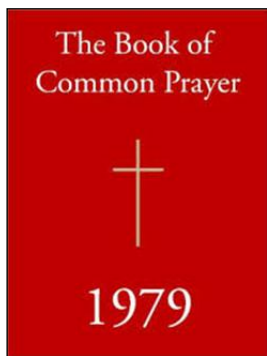
Finally, there are some “stand alone” books that relate to some of the topics covered by the various writers. *Great Harry* (about Henry VIII) and *First Elizabeth*, both by Carolly Erickson, are biographies of two people who greatly influenced our Anglican/Episcopal heritage. And Phyllis Tickle takes an overview look of Christianity in her books, *The Great Emergence* and *Emergence Christianity*. Fascinating stuff!

I hope you will enjoy yourself over the next couple of months, learning about how we got here, 2000 years after Jesus’ resurrection, and enjoying the possibilities offered in the various books.



BCP Spotlight

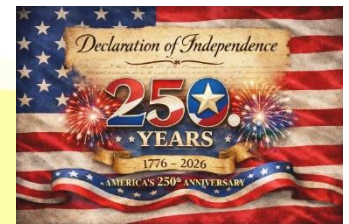
by Ellen Mc Vey



*O Lord our Governor, bless the leaders of our land, that we may be a people at peace among ourselves and a blessing to other nations of the earth. **Lord, keep this nation under your care.*** – The first petition in the prayer For Sound Government, p. 821.

Having just observed Memorial Day and with the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence fast approaching, I thought it would be timely to point out prayers in the BCP that are related to our shared national life:

- The Collects:
 - P. 242: Collect for Independence Day
 - P. 258: Collect “For the Nation”
- Prayers and Thanksgivings
 - P. 820–823: Prayers for National Life. This is a collection of prayers including For our Country, For the President...and all in Civil Authority, For Congress or a State Legislature, For Courts of Justice, For Sound Government, For Local Government, For an Election, For those in the Armed Forces of our Country, and For those who suffer for the sake of Conscience.
 - P. 838-839: Thanksgivings for National Life. This includes a prayer “For the Nation” and “For Heroic Service”.



There are also related Lectionary and Daily Office readings:

- P. 923 & 998: Independence Day
- P. 930: For the Nation

Here’s a link to the online BCP if you’d like to check out these resources: [The Online Book of Common Prayer](#). If you’d like to have a gently used hard copy BCP (free), please let me know.

Also, fyi, our 1982 Hymnal has a section of “National Songs” – p. 716-720.



Church History in Three Minutes (or Less)

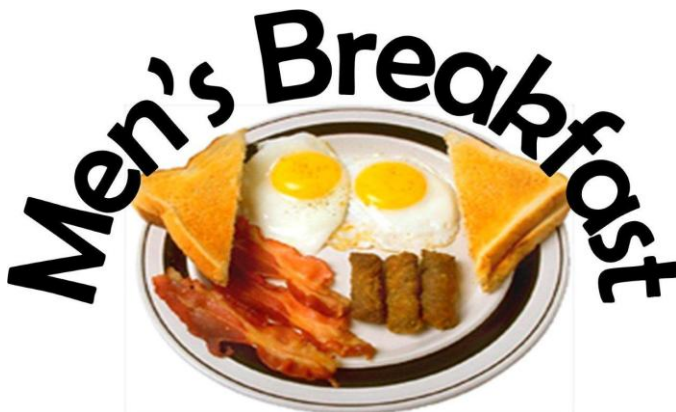
by Eric Carlson

Physically and liturgically, Episcopal churches are quite similar to Catholic ones. But one very obvious difference, a direct consequence of the Reformation, is the absence in many (such as St. John's) of statues, paintings, or stained-glass windows representing God and saints. This is due to the legacy of 16th-century interpretation of Exodus 20: 4-5: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them..."



In the late-8th century, Christian leaders resolved a long-running, raucous debate over images by concluding that the Bible banned only a specific type: images that were *worshipped*. John of Damascus argued that God had created the human form of Jesus to be an image of God to help us *understand* God. This provided a lawful model for images: they were not gods to be worshipped, but aids for Christians to draw closer to God. Saints' images were reminders of people who were close to God and who provided examples for us. In a time before widespread literacy and access to the Bible, images were (in the words of Pope Gregory I) "books of the unlearned." By the 16th century, this teaching had been warped and people commonly attributed powers to images and placed faith in them, rather than in God; seeking miracles and manipulating nature by praying to images became more important than faith and morality.

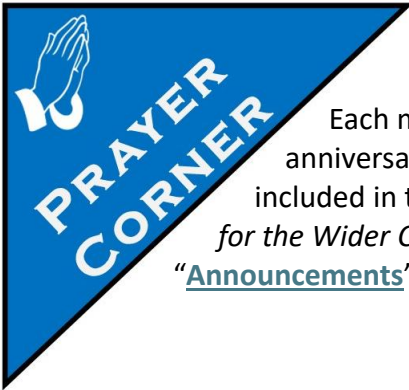
Martin Luther believed that this problem could be addressed by education about the right use of images, but more aggressive reformers argued that people were weak and would inevitably misuse images; the only safe path was to remove them entirely, much as it's better for the parents of small children to lock away sharp knives rather than rely on teaching children not to touch them. This was the path taken legally in the English Reformation. Statues were easy to remove, but images in windows often remained because parishes couldn't afford to replace the glass. The most common images were painted directly onto interior walls, which were whitewashed and painted over with texts like the Ten Commandments. As new Anglican/Episcopal churches were built in later years, plain windows and walls became common. Where there are images, they are now usually illustrations of Biblical episodes.



Monday, July 6, 8:00 AM

Join us at the Big Boy Restaurant, 1513 S. Saginaw Rd., for our monthly **Men's Breakfast**. Once in the restaurant, walk through the big room to the smaller room located at the southeast end of the restaurant to find our table.

JOIN US for food and fellowship!!



Each month the *Prayer Corner* includes the church's prayer list as well as the anniversaries and birthdays for the month. The prayer list is updated weekly and included in the Sunday morning worship service bulletins, along with the *Daily Prayers for the Wider Church*. The most recent version can be found at any time by clicking the "[Announcements](#)" link on the SJEC web page:

<https://www.sjec-midland.org/>

Please keep the following people in your prayers...



Cathy Chang & Juan Lopez, Char Bakeman, Henry Youngquist, Chris, Yvonne (Denée Koonce's mom), Charlene Adams, Julie, Vicki Leigeb, Shelby, Eric Carlson, Dave Whisler, Bob Estabrook, Guy & Tony (Geoff Newhouse's brothers), Tellie, EllaRose, Jayden & Elaine, and Betty & Bud Schartow & family.

Give thanks with those celebrating June Birthdays...

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 – Liz Davis | 18 – Gordon Thompson |
| 2 – Preston Jones | 19 – Denny Morden |
| 7 – Charlotte Jacqmain | 21 – Roger Bryant |
| 8 – Jessica Davis | Dave Schafer |
| Nykkoa Lurie | Susie Staloch |
| 9 – Zacary Scott | 23 – Emmet Engwis |
| 11 – Craig Vandermuellen | 25 – Melanie Massey |
| 13 – Tom Webb | 26 – Ann Wright |
| 16 – Stephen Jacqmain | 27 – Gail Hoffman |
| 17 – Rachelle Miller | 28 – Deborah Randall |
| Logan Stoll | 30 – August Anderson |
| 18 – Sangeeta Mukhopadhyay | |

989-631-2260 / office@siec-midland.org

- To add someone to the prayer list
- Request receipt of the weekly Worship++ email
- Request receipt of the monthly Epistle
- To update your membership directory info

Give thanks with those celebrating June Anniversaries...

- 10 – John & Jan Marcou
- 16 – Mike & Susie Staloch
- 17 – Roger & Deanna Bryant
- 18 – Basil & Margaret Clark
Ralph & Sue Rye
- 19 – Mike & Cathy Strong
- 22 – Jim & Charlotte Bakeman
Fred & Alice Stoll
- 23 – Ernest & Linda Carter
- 24 – Lee & HJ Smith
- 26 – Bruce & Judy Ellis



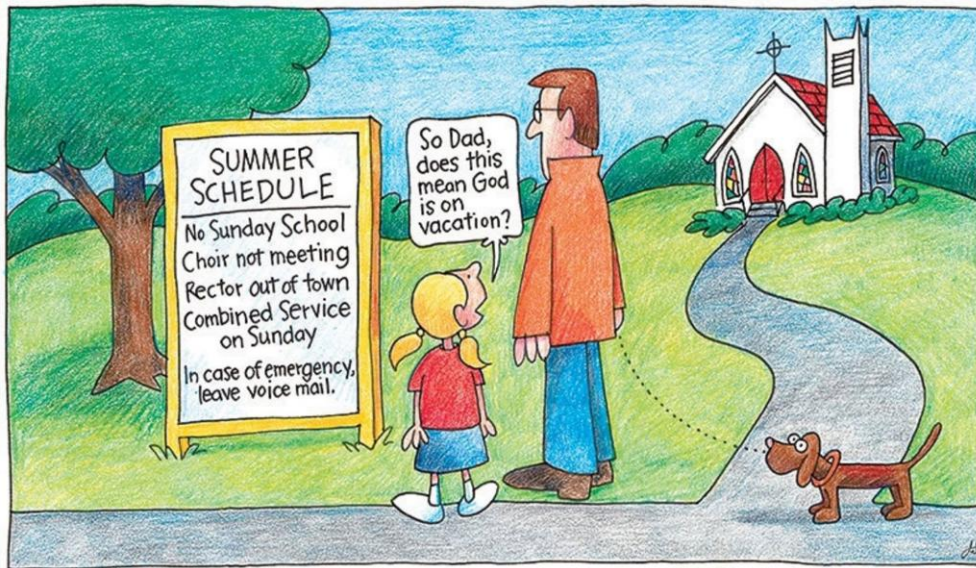
Members of the congregation who have received Pastoral Care training are available all year for friendly visits. Members who are in the hospital, nursing homes, or homebound may request a visit from our team to receive communion, a comforting prayer shawl or a pocket cross.

Team members include:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| The Very Rev. Alissa Anderson and parishioners | |
| Chris Esquivel | Chris Schuster |
| Jan Marcou | Fred Schuster |
| Pat Roush | Michelle Spencer |
| Dave Schafer | |



Call the parish office (989-631-2260) with a pastoral care request. In the case of a pastoral emergency outside office hours, please contact **The Very Rev. Alissa Anderson** at 616-540-9102 (cell).



How to Connect with Mother Alissa

Schedule a time via Calendly

[CLICK HERE](#)



**Drop in Coffee Shop Office Hours
Thurs., 9-11 AM.**

During the month of June, you'll find her at Live Oak Eastside (2405 Abbott Rd.)



HEAD OF THE CHURCH – JESUS CHRIST
MINISTERS – ALL OUR MEMBERS

To get in touch with any Clergy, Staff Member or Member of the Vestry, call or email the parish office:

(989) 631-2260

office@sjec-midland.org

OUR VESTRY – OUR ELECTED LEADERS

Clergy

The Very Rev. Alissa G. Anderson*Rector*

Staff

Dr. Amon Eady *Director of Music*
 Travis Fader *Director of Operations & Organist/Pianist*
 Linda Germain..... *Children & Youth Director*
 Colleen O'Dell *Bookkeeper*
 Ellen Woodard..... *Administrative Assistant*
 Nick Lowthian..... *Sexton*
 Vickie Densmore *Janitor*

Class of 2027

Eric Heglin, *Clerk*
 Fred Schuster, *Co-Warden*

Class of 2029

Nykkoa Lurie
 Mike Spencer

Class of 2028

John Adams
 Doug Germain
 Ann Wright, *Co-Warden*

WEEKLY OPPORTUNITIES AT ST. JOHN'S

Sunday

8:00am Holy EucharistSanctuary
 9:00am Fellowship Hour Williams Hall
 10:00am Holy Eucharist Sanctuary & YouTube
 11:00am Fellowship Hour Williams Hall
 11:30am Handbell Choir Rehearsal..... Bell Zone
 5:00pm NA.....McNab Room

Monday (Parish Office open 9am-3pm)

12:00pm AA.....McNab Room
 6:00pm Popup Bible Study.....Library

Tuesday (Parish Office open 9am-3pm)

10:00am Samaritan Fund ClientsLibrary
 1:00pm Knitpickers.....Williams Hall



Wednesday (Parish Office open 9am-3pm)

10:30am Women's Bible Study.....Library
 12:00pm Holy Eucharist.. Chapel (use office entrance)
 1:00pm AA.....McNab Room
 5:30pm Tai Chi in the GardenCourtyard

Thursday (Parish Office open 9am-3pm)

9:00am Alissa's Drop-in Coffee Office Hrs. Live Oak
 10:00am Love Knots (2nd/4th)Williams Hall

Friday (Parish Office open 9am-noon)

12:00pm AA.....McNab Room
 6:00pm Community Game Night (2nd & 4th) ..Wms Hall

Saturday

12:00pm AA.....McNab Room
 7:00pm NA.....McNab Room

The 10:00 am worship service is livestreamed on YouTube. At the time of the service, go to: <https://www.youtube.com/@st.johnsepiscopalchurchmid8944/streams>. A live service will have a prominent "LIVE" badge on the video thumbnail or title indicating the video is currently being streamed live. Previous services can also be viewed here at any time.



We joyfully gather to pray, worship, learn and serve as we seek to follow Jesus, and invite all to join us on a sacred journey of hope and transformation.

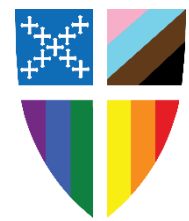
The next edition of **The Epistle** will be published in early July. The final deadline for submissions is Monday, July 6. Please consider submitting stories of your group's activities, or news of coming events and activities.

If you are not currently receiving an email notice to tell you that **The Epistle** has been published on our website, and you would like to receive one, please email office@sjec-midland.org.

If you prefer a printed copy of The Epistle, they are available in the church office, the narthex and each entrance into the church building.



St. John's Episcopal Church
 405 N. Saginaw Road Midland, MI 48640
 (989) 631-2260 office@sjec-midland.org
www.sjec-midland.org



Rector – The Very Rev. Alissa G. Anderson

facebook

www.facebook.com/sjecmidland



www.instagram.com/sjecmidlandmich