

THE EPISTLE

JULY 2026

If you've worshipped at (or passed by) St. John's recently, you've likely noticed that the large west bank of sanctuary windows has been replaced, swapping the original single-pane glass and wood frames for windows that are safer, more energy efficient, and better suited to serve our parish for years to come. This was a significant undertaking, and I'm deeply grateful that St. John's had the financial resources to complete it. Thank you all for the faithful stewardship that makes caring for this building possible. I'd also like to give a special shout-out to Nick Lowthian and Midland Glass for their excellent work.

As I've been observing and admiring the windows, I've found myself thinking about a few things this project might have to teach us:

Repair is a Sign of Love

We repair the things we hope to keep, from plates to relationships. We sometimes think of the need for repair as an admission that something has failed or broken, but it's more about saying, "This matters enough that we're willing to care for it." Relationship researchers have made a similar observation: healthy families and healthy marriages aren't free from conflict; they're marked by a willingness to repair after it. We apologize, reconnect, and begin again. Healthy relationships and sound buildings don't stay strong by accident, but are made strong by the ongoing work of love and repair.

Tradition Doesn't Mean Nothing Changes

Our windows are new, and have some significant differences from the old, but they were designed to fit the same footprint, and look remarkably similar. While we wanted to update our building to provide better safety and energy efficiency, we also took care to preserve the architectural character of this beautiful mid-century church. Faith can work that way as well. The Church treasures what has been handed down to us, and we consider tradition one of the ways God is revealed to us. But preserving a tradition doesn't always mean preserving every material detail. Sometimes caring for what is essential means allowing other things to change.

Windows Help Us See

One thing I love about St. John's is the way our architecture facilitates the connection between our worship and the world. As we pray, we can watch leaves change, snow fall, flowers bloom, and neighbors walk or drive by. Our work at church is twofold: to worship the living God and to be transformed more and more into God's likeness so we can bring God's love into the world. Every Sunday we ask God to help us see more clearly: to notice where our neighbors are hurting, where hope is taking root, and where Christ is already at work.

As with any building project, this work will eventually fade into the background, and these windows will simply become part of the place we call home. My hope, though, is that every so often they might prompt us to remember that God is always at work repairing, preserving, and revealing. And perhaps they might also remind us to look for those same signs of grace in the ordinary moments of our own lives. Thanks be to God for a parish that cares well for what has been entrusted to it, and for the privilege of sharing this beautiful space as we continue to worship God and serve our neighbors together.





June Worship Service Links



[2nd Sunday after Pentecost](#)
[June 7, 2026](#)



[3rd Sunday after Pentecost](#)
[June 14, 2026](#)



[4th Sunday after Pentecost](#)
[June 21, 2026](#)



[5th Sunday after Pentecost](#)
[June 28, 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/Give2SJE. 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.

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
linking lives in the love of Christ

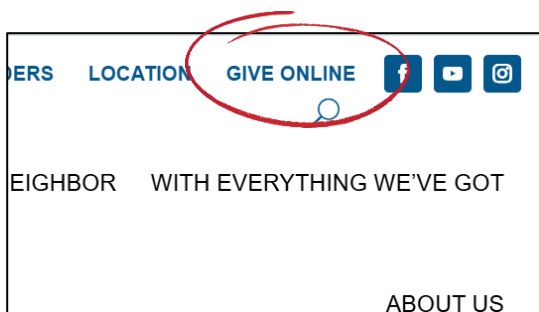
Welcome to St John's Episcopal Church

Giving Details

Give to optional memo + add more

E-mail Address

ACS Technologies [Privacy Policy](#) [Terms of Use](#)



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

JULY 3-22, 2026

a foundation of steadfast love

first call to convention issued, registration, nominations, resolutions are open



THE 3rd CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF THE GREAT LAKES
October 23-24, 2026 | Muskegon, Michigan



up, sharing our gifts with one another as the earliest Christians did so well. All the latest convention information including links to register, submit nominations for diocesan offices and governing body membership, submit resolutions, reserve a ministry table, and reserve hotel rooms at our diocesan rates are all available on our convention webpage, greatlakesepiscopal.org/convention-iii.

The first call to our 2026 diocesan convention has been issued. As we come together for our third convention, we will celebrate the successes of the last year, tell the stories of steadfast love worked out in our local communities, and look to find ways to build each other

july townhall: narrative budgets with TENS

We will be gathering on Wednesday, July 1 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. to learn about how narrative budgets and storytelling help connect your members to your mission. By reframing our line-item budgets using the language and lens of ministry, we can draw the line between money and meaning and help every member know that every dollar they give, every hour of service they provide, and every way that they share their gifts goes directly to mission and ministry. We'll also take this time together to review a few annual campaign basics and prepare for the season to come. Register at the QR code or visit greatlakesepiscopal.org/july26-townhall.



lay preaching & pastoral care training

Training for people who wish to be licensed lay preachers or licensed lay pastoral care providers is administered through the Academy for Vocational Leadership. The deadline to apply for the 2026-2027 cohorts of these programs, both of which begin in September, is August 15. Access the applications and get more information at the links or QR codes below.



greatlakesepiscopal.org/laypastoralcare



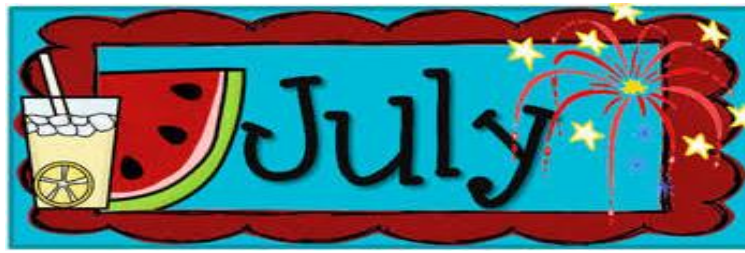
greatlakesepiscopal.org/laypreaching



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.](#)



During the week of July 13–19, Mo. Alissa and Linda Germain will be serving at Camp Chickagami, and Ellen Woodard will be learning and ringing at the Handbell Musicians of America National Seminar. As a result, our office will be operating with a skeleton crew that week, so we appreciate your patience with any delays or challenges. If you have something that specifically needs Alissa, Ellen, or Linda and it is not time-sensitive, we encourage you to wait until after July 20. Thank you for your understanding, and please keep those of us camping and ringing in your prayers!



The Episcopal Diocese of the Great Lake's branch of the College for Congregational Development (CCD), an Episcopal Church program focused on parish development, will be meeting at St. John's July 19-24. Because such a substantial footprint of our building will be in use, many regular activities are in a different location or even canceled, so please check the calendar or contact the office for meeting locations.

Community



July **Game Nights** are Friday, July 10 and 24, in Williams Hall. Play our games or bring your favorites! Bring your friends or join in with us! All ages welcome!

Altar Flowers



The Altar Guild invites friends and parishioners to donate weekly altar flowers and asks that you consider contributing. Choose a Sunday with special meaning, noting that NO flowers are placed on the altar during the season of Lent. Requested donation is \$45 and forms are available in the Narthex or from the parish office.

August 3 to 6 – 2 to 5 PM

Games, music, crafts, and more!! Point your smartphone camera at the QR code or [CLICK HERE](#) to register.

→ **WE NEED YOU** ←

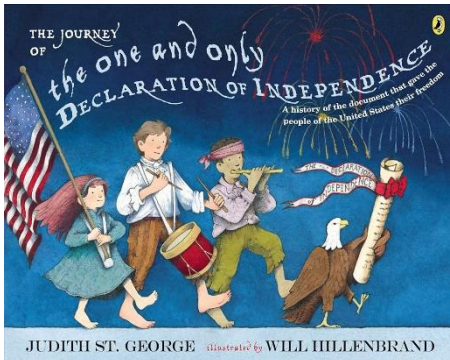
Help ensure the success of VBS. You can also register to be a volunteer at the same QR code and link.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Library News

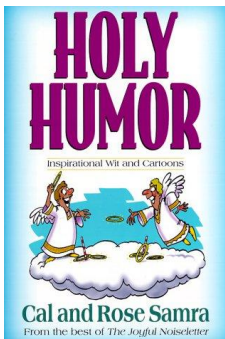
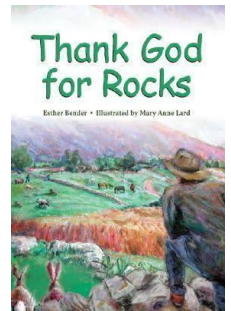
by Marnie Bash

School is out, summer has arrived, the USA is celebrating its 250th birthday, and, hopefully, we have a bit of time to relax and enjoy. And so, the books featured this month are all a bit on the “lighter” side – poetry and parables, humor, and – for the children – a few books about our country.



On the children’s shelves you’ll find *The Journey of the One and Only Declaration of Independence* by Judith St George, and two stories about the Star-Spangled Banner. There are two books by Liz Cheney, *A Is for Abigail* – an alphabetical list of American women, beginning with Abigail Adams – plus *America, a Patriotic Primer*. And Marth Zschock tells us about 3 cities important to our American story – *Journey Around Boston from A to Z*, *Journey Around Philadelphia*, and *Journey Around Washington DC*. Enjoy these colorful and fun books with your children and help them learn more about our wonderful country.

For the parents there is poetry – *Guide My Feet* by Marion Wright Edelman, *I’ll Make Me a World* by James Weldon Johnson, *Rest Your Dreams on a Little Twig* by Joyce Rupp, and *Journey through Heartsongs* by Mattie Stepanek. Parables include Esther Bender’s *Thank God for Rocks*, and *The Quiltmaker’s Gift* by Jeff Brumbeau. There is also *Hope for the Flowers* by Trina Paulus. As always, there is more poetry and more parables back in the library, and I’ve just purchased a book of Wendell Berry’s poetry which should be out in William’s Hall by the end of the month.



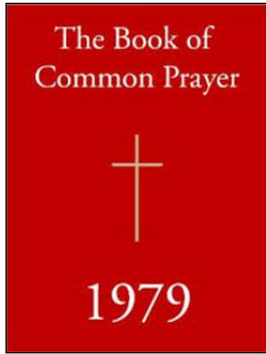
And...there’s humor! If you enjoy the cartoons by Jay Sidbotham on the calendar in the office behind Ellen’s desk, you’ll be sure to enjoy his books, *Old Testament from A-Z* and *New Testament from A-Z*; they’re fun as well as giving us things to think about. If you’re looking for a good story to share at campouts/barbeques, and/or family gatherings, see *Holy Humor* or *More Holy Humor* by Cal and Rose Samra; lots of good stories there that can be shared with all audiences. Tim Schenck, the founder of Lent Madness, now gives us *Father Tim’s Church Survival Guide*. And Karol Jackowski gives us *Ten Fun Things to Do Before You Die*.

Enjoy your summer! Put aside your electronics and just relax with a good book for a bit. You’ll find lots to enjoy here and more back in the library. Happy reading.



BCP Spotlight

by Ellen Mc Vey



Prayers for Social Justice

During a recent worship service Mo. Alissa prayed the Collect for Social Justice. This prayer can be found in the BCP in the section titled “The Collects: Contemporary”.

The BCP contains another prayer for Social Justice in the section called “Prayers and Thanksgivings” under the heading of “Prayers for the Social Order”. Both the collect and the prayer are powerful and beautiful.



Collect for Social Justice

Note: The original of this prayer was included in the 1928 prayer book. The version in our 1979 BCP is only slightly revised from the original.

21. For Social Justice (BCP, p. 260)

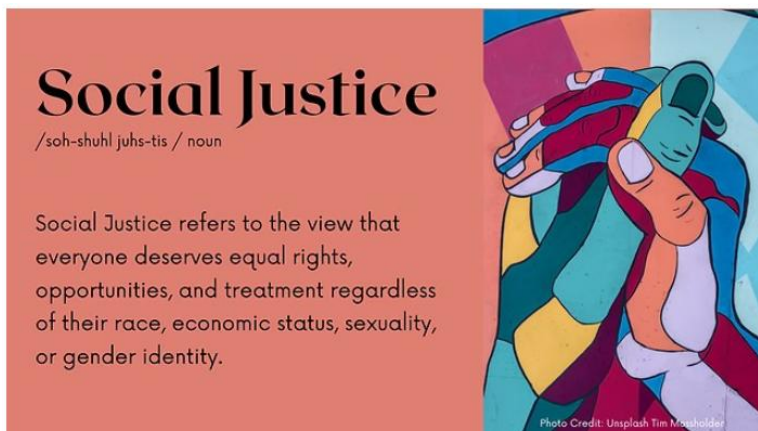
Almighty God, who created us in your image: Grant us grace fearlessly to contend against evil and to make no peace with oppression; and, that we may reverently use our freedom, help us to employ it in the maintenance of justice in our communities and among the nations, to the glory of your holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Prayer for Social Justice

Note: This prayer was written by an unknown author and is new to the 1979 BCP.

27. For Social Justice (BCP, p. 823)

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart [and especially the hearts of the people of this land], that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

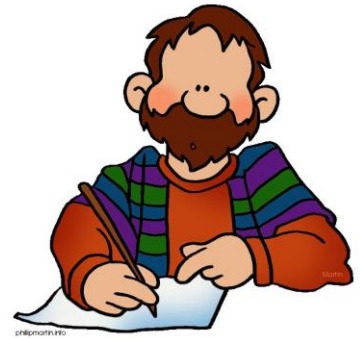


Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart, that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Church History in Three Minutes (or Less)

by Eric Carlson

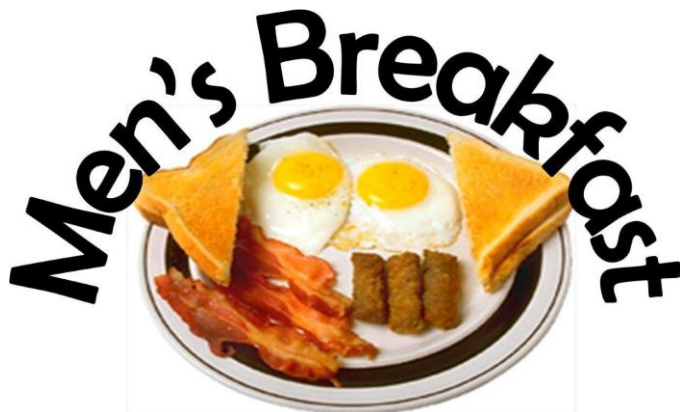
It's summer, which means we're using the "contemporary" Lord's Prayer, one of two options in *The Book of Common Prayer* (BCP). The words of the "traditional" version (with different punctuation) have appeared in every American BCP since the first in 1789, and they are nearly identical to those in the 1662 English BCP. The "contemporary" version was published in 1975 by the ecumenical International Consultation on English Texts (ICET). Historically, the words used for the Lord's Prayer have always been unsettled. There is no definitive original text.



There are two Gospel versions (Matthew 6, Luke 11)—both originally Greek renderings of words Jesus spoke in Aramaic. The earliest Greek manuscripts and the official Latin translation (c. 400 AD) don't include the doxology ("For thine is the kingdom" etc.). William Tyndale's unauthorized 1526 English translation, based on later Greek manuscripts, did and that became standard. Here's Matt. 6: 9-13 from the first authorized English bible (1539): "Oure father which art in heaven, hallowed by thy name. Lett thy kyngdome come. Thy will be fulfilled, as well in earth, as it is in heaven. Geve us this daye oure daylye bread. And forgeve us our dettes, as we forgeve oure detters. And leade us not into temptacyon: but delyver us from evyll. For thyne is the kyngdome and the power, and the glorye for ever. Amen."

For centuries, everyone in England (even the illiterate) had to memorize the Lord's Prayer in Latin. In 1536, Henry VIII ordered that it be learned in English. Since his English bible did not appear for three more years, people used a variety of available translations. In 1549, the first English BCP introduced another translation, which became the most familiar: "Oure father whiche arte in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy wyll be done in earth as it is in heaven. Geve us this daye oure dayly bread. And forgeve us oure trespasses, as we forgeve them that trespassed agaynst us. And leade us not into temptation. But deliver us from evell. Amen." While bibles included the doxology, it wasn't added to the BCP until 1662. The BCP always used "trespasses" instead of the biblical "debts." In short, there never has been one definitive wording. Our beloved traditional version was itself once a controversial innovation. In 1549, Parliament authorized and required its use as part of a new English worship service, and 4000 people died in a bloody uprising against it in southwestern England!

Monday, August 3, 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, Bob Estabrook, Guy & Tony (Geoff Newhouse's brothers), Tellie, EllaRose, Jayden & Elaine, Betty & Bud Schartow & family, Justin & family, Tom, and Ed.

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 July Birthdays...

1 – Josh Anderson	18 – Connor Dasbach
Kyle Mesler	19 – Basil Clark
3 – Judith Monto	21 – Mary Jo Hudson
7 – Roy Kretz	Ralph Rye
8 – Stephanie Kurin	24 – Grace Robinson
10 – Ella Plishka	Cathy Strong
12 – Chad Garlinghouse	25 – Aaron Koonce
Jen Gruhzit	Gordon Roush
Bud Schartow	Zach Young
Fred Schuster	27 – Tracey Kempzell
14 – Adam Philo	Jason Wright
Jim Stefanski	30 – Sheila Mesler
15 – Abigail Garlinghouse	31 – Lisa Miller

Give thanks with those celebrating July Anniversaries...

- 6 – Craig & Liah Vandermuellen
- 9 – Dana & Lisa Pressnall
- 12 – Andy & Karen Roberts
- Greg & Patty Zettle
- 15 – Dave & Karen Whisler
- 20 – Bill & Jenny Kent
- 30 – Dave & Tracey Kempzell
- Zach Young & Sangeeta Mukhopadhyay



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

Jan Marcou

Pat Roush

Dave Schafer

Chris Schuster

Fred Schuster

Michelle Spencer



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).



ACT Uganda - We're excited to share a new way you can support ACT. It's called [RoundUp.org](https://roundup.org). Here's how it works: **Every time you make a purchase using your VISA or Mastercard, your total is rounded up to the nearest dollar, and the spare change goes to support ACT.** Grab a coffee, groceries, gas — it all adds up to meaningful, ongoing support. You get to set the upper limit, with a minimum donation of \$10 per month. Learn more and get started at: [Round Up for ACT Uganda](https://roundup.org). Once on their website, go to the non-profit search field and enter: Agape Community Transformation. It takes about 30 seconds to set up, and then it runs quietly in the background. **Small change. Real impact.** Contact Sue Waechter at sue.waechter@actuganda.org if you have any questions. Thank you!



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
July, 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

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 StudyLibrary

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, August 3. 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
linking lives in the love of Christ

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



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