



Office for
Transition
Ministry

Ministry Portfolio

Full Portfolio (last updated May 17, 2025)

Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Michigan

4800 Woodward Ave, Detroit, MI 48201, United States

Contact:

Dean | Receiving Names until 07/08/25.

sshaefer@edomi.org

Weekly Average Sunday
Attendance (ASA)

154

Number of Weekend
Worship Services

6

Number of Weekday
Worship Services

7

Number of Other per Month
Worship Services

Current Annual
Compensation

Cash Stipend
\$110000

Housing / Rectory Detail

Utilities

SECA reimbursement
\$8415

Compensation Available for
New Position
\$118415

Housing Available for

Pension Plan

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

Healthcare Options
Full family

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
\$501-\$1000/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.

The Cathedral is open for full programming on Noel Night, the yearly winter festival for the Midtown neighborhood of Detroit. Our doors are open all evening and we present choral music, a guided tour of our pipe organ, and tours of the church to anyone who walks in, giving them a genuine Christian welcome full of warmth and beauty. In December of 2024 we hosted approximately 3000 visitors. It's a yearly opportunity for us to turn ourselves inside out to our community, and to show our neighbors who we are and what we are. We are always excited to meet our neighbors and be part of active programming in Detroit's Museum district, and we find deep fulfillment in offering hospitality to everyone who walks through the doors. Every Noel Night gives us a special opportunity in the midst of Advent to live our congregational values of outreach, community, and faithful practice.

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

We are using the search for our next dean to closely examine and understand our values as a worship community and how we can live into the strengths we already have. In addition to our service broadcasts via livestream, which broadens our reach outside of our geographic location, we are currently a destination parish for the metro area and would like to work more evangelism work in our immediate neighborhood. We plan to leverage some of the improvements put in place as part of our 200th anniversary celebration, including refurbished spaces for socializing and new sharable literature such as our self-guided tour booklet. Active recruitment for the Cathedral Choir School continues to bring new young people into our community by offering them a sterling music education and exposing them to scripture and liturgy. Far from panicking about any perceived decline in the Church's relevance, we understand that Christ is alive and therefore so is our community of faith.

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

hospitable, Genuine, empowering, Optimistic

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

The Cathedral is a moderately high church parish with a congregation that takes liturgy seriously and seeks to deepen our engagement with it. We use the Book of Common Prayer 1972 as our liturgical north star and are quite satisfied with this approach. Both Sunday Eucharists are typically Rite II, although Rite I may be used throughout the liturgical year, usually for specific seasons such as Lent or Advent. Choral evensong takes the Book of Common Prayer 1662 as its basis. We celebrate all feasts of our Lord and most major feasts either as they fall during the week or on Sundays with the permission of the bishop, as well as various optional observances that are customary to our community, such as the commemoration of Absalom Jones. Festal Eucharists include incense, bells, and choral settings of the Mass. The choir season runs from September through Trinity and our 11:00 Eucharists during this season are choral, as are two of our four monthly evensongs. We use the Hymnal 1982 and Lift Every Voice and Sing II as the basis for our hymnody, with other supplemental sources including newly commissioned hymns. The choir sings music spanning from the Middle Ages to new compositions.

How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

We celebrate that all people are called to ministry, and we encourage each other to discern our calls and gifts and how those can be put to use within our cathedral community. We offer many opportunities for people to participate in service to the parish and each other, including: acolytes, lectors, lay preachers, vergers, Eucharistic ministers, healing ministers, Eucharistic visitation, choir, altar guild, vestry, ushers, breakfast volunteers, and our Cathedral Crafters program, which makes knitwear to give away in our community. We have done ministry fairs in the past but currently do a fair amount of one-on-one recruiting. We have a robust newsletter, Living Stones, to share opportunities to serve. We are always open to new spirit-led ministries.

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

Much of our emotional care is liturgically focused. Attendance at weddings, baptism, and funerals is high and the choir often volunteers their time to sing weddings and funerals of congregants and their families. We frequently offer prayer vigil services after community and national tragedy and in times of anxiety, including after the mass shooting at Michigan State University in 2023. We prioritize quick and sensitive responses to events that we know affect the lives of our congregation and our wider community. We partner with the Wayne State University Medical School's Community Health Interdisciplinary Program (CHIP) to provide a free medical clinic using our facilities one Sunday morning each month. This partnership has been in place for a decade. We nurture our spiritual lives by offering a weekly Bible study led by the Dean, evening classes and catechesis instruction taught by lay leaders during Lent, and an opportunity to pray compline every day through our online, lay-led services.

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

Alcoholics Anonymous meets in our parish hall on Mondays, the Community Health Interdisciplinary Program free clinic provides immediate service free of charge to all in need one Sunday a month, and we host services for the broader community, often at the request of other neighborhood leaders. These include the Homeless Persons Memorial Service on the winter solstice, evensong for Trans Day of Visibility in March, and an ecumenical service for the unclaimed dead in partnership with the Wayne State University School of Mortuary Science. For nearly twenty years, we also served a hot breakfast for all on Sunday mornings between our early and late Eucharists. During the COVID-19 lockdowns when we could not be indoors this meal became a takeaway lunch served on Saturday. The breakfast drew about one hundred people per week on average from the surrounding neighborhood, most of whom were unhoused. This program is currently on hiatus and bringing it back is one of our top priorities at this time.

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

We are a deeply involved participant in the life of the Midtown neighborhood, which includes Detroit's cultural center of museums, theatres, and concert halls, as well as Wayne State University's main campus. We host the joint campus ministry program of the ELCA synod and Episcopal diocese at Wayne State, and we provide the use of our facility to the Wayne State University Community Health Interdisciplinary Program. We frequently open our space to the rest of the neighborhood, not only on Noel Night but during Open Cathedral hours on Fridays, which include our Music at Midday series of organ concerts which celebrates its 100th concert in May of 2025. Our congregants take active leadership roles in the diocese and our members are often elected as delegates to General Convention. Our choir sings guest evensong services at other parishes in the diocese and has toured internationally in Canada and the United Kingdom.

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

The Cathedral immediately set up online worship in March of 2020 to broadcast Morning Prayer on Sundays. Because we were unable to go into the cathedral at the time, the service was read by various participants from their homes, recorded, and made available on YouTube. Once clergy were able to return to the building, this became a YouTube livestream of Holy Eucharist with Prayer for Spiritual Communion, and people volunteered to learn how to operate the new video technology, which includes three cameras and a slide deck, in addition to an upgraded soundboard. Once we were able to make a full return to a regular service schedule with a full congregation, we continued to broadcast our services, and as of February 2025 we expect that in one week 80 people will watch Eucharist, 50 will watch choral evensong, and 35 will watch congregational evensong, which is sung but does not include the choir. On major feast days we expect 200 or more viewers. We see this as not only an essential part of our ministry to those beyond our walls, but as a logical next step in a proud history, as the cathedral was an early adopter of radio broadcast for its services.

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

We have an annual pledge drive with a theme chosen from scripture. The Stewardship Committee of the vestry invites people who have pledged in the previous year to speak during Sunday services and to write for our newsletter about why they pledge in order to encourage others. The vestry sends handwritten thank you notes to everyone who pledges. Our financial stewardship offers us an opportunity to grow, as past financial difficulties related to the financial crisis of 2007-09 have led to a culture of anxiety about money. We spend a great deal of time talking about stewardship in the context of people's time and talents and are generally more comfortable asking people to volunteer time than to pledge money.

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

The cathedral's breakfast ministry has been operating for over 20 years to provide a hot breakfast on Sunday mornings. In practice the program serves our parish's homeless neighbors. The ministry became a takeaway lunch when COVID prevented us from serving food indoors, and when Sunday sit-down service resumed, we saw a sharp rise in disruptive behavior, including theft and fire-setting, that we were not equipped to handle. In December of 2024 breakfast ministry leaders were in the process of exploring what to do when congregants, the vestry, found out via our newsletter that breakfast service would be halted in two weeks' time. It was not clear who had made the decision, and the news was not communicated clearly to the people who attended the breakfast. The interim dean and lay leaders have sat down to continue brainstorming what to do next, but communication between clergy, lay leadership, and the cathedral chapter is disjointed and nothing has been solved. The breakfast ministry is important to us as part of living the gospel and many congregants feel left out of the decision-making process. Addressing this conflict is ongoing.

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?

In preparation for our congregation's 200th anniversary in autumn of 2024, the celebration committee decided to prioritize renovating our community spaces to make them more inviting. A room that was being used as a junk closet is now a multi-use parlor that is utilized as a cry room, a coffee hour space, and a classroom. We have also upgraded the audio-visual technology in our parish hall. Around this time several volunteers took it upon themselves to organize an improved coffee hour by donating thrifted dishware, sourcing coffee from a local roaster, coordinating food service procedure with cathedral chapter staff, and recruiting parishioners to sign up to bring food. Those of us involved with that effort learned that leading change requires initiative and being able to keep track of communication with multiple stakeholders, including cathedral staff, chapter/building staff, and parishioners. The effort is greatly worth the reward, however, as coffee hour attendance has noticeably increased and compliments about the improved quality of coffee, tea, and food are regularly passed on to the coordinating volunteers.



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Prior Incumbents

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
Tim True	Interim	2024-09	

S. Scott Hunter	Dean	2007-04	2024-06
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Steve Bancroft	Dean	1995-06	2007-04
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There is a preschool that rents space in the Cathedral building, but is not affiliated with the congregation

Church School		Number of Teachers/Leaders for Children School	Number of Students for Children School
choir school		3	4

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
6	3	3	7

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: www.detroitcathedral.org

Media Links:

> <https://historicdetroit.org/buildings/cathedral-church-of-st-paul>
> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cathedral_Church_of_St._Paul_\(Detroit\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cathedral_Church_of_St._Paul_(Detroit))

Online References:

www.youtube.com/@CathedralChurchofStPaulDetroit
[instagram.com/stpaulsdetroit](https://www.instagram.com/stpaulsdetroit)

Languages Significantly Represented:

Provide Worship or Classes in:

References

Bishop:

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Bonnie A. Perry

e-mail: bishopperry@edomi.org phone: 313-832-4400

Diocesan Transition Minister

The Rev. Canon Susie Shaefer

e-mail: sshaefer@edomi.org phone: 313-833-4424

Current Warden/Board Chair

John LaDuke

[ladukejd at gmail.com](mailto:ladukejd@gmail.com)

Previous Warden/Board Chair

Mike Dagle

[m.dagle at gmail.com](mailto:m.dagle@gmail.com)

Search Chair

Emery Dumas

Email: [emeryja21 at hotmail.com](mailto:emeryja21@hotmail.com) Phone: 231-590-6720

Parish/Institution

Local Community Leader

Dr. Aline Saad

[ag9907 at wayne.edu](mailto:ag9907@wayne.edu)