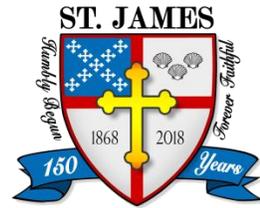


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Church Founded by Michigan's first female black landowner celebrates 150th Anniversary
Episcopal Church in Michigan celebrates 150 years of advocacy, diversity, and faith.

Grosse Ile – on Sunday, July 15 at 10AM, Saint James Episcopal Church in Grosse Ile will celebrate the fulfillment of the vision of [Lisette Denison Forth](#), our church founder and [Michigan Women's Hall of Fame inductee](#).

Born into slavery, Lisette escaped to Canada, sued for her freedom and became a pioneering woman of color, owning property, stocks, and even shares in a steamboat company. It is said she was the first Female Black Landowner in the State of Michigan and perhaps in the entire United States. In her will, she left her life savings of \$1500 to build an Episcopal Church where rich and poor alike could worship together. Today this congregation carries out her mission of unity, advocacy, diversity and faith.

"I am honored and humbled to be the rector during this joyous occasion," said The Rev. Phil Dinwiddie, Rector of St. James, "To this day, we structure our missions to support Lisette's vision for this community, which is really Christ's own mission and the mission of the Church. I hope and believe she would be very proud to see how far we've come."

Saint James Episcopal Church supports 22 local, national, and international benevolences, including *El Hogar De Amor Y Esperanza* in Honduras, *The Spirit of Hope Soup Kitchen* in Detroit, *CROP* hunger ministry, *The Grosse Ile Food Pantry*, *Jerusalem Peace Keepers*, *Alternatives for Girls*, and many more. St. James hosts two massive rummage sales a year to help the poor and needy have access to furniture, shoes and clothing at prices far lower than even Good Will or Salvation Army can provide.

The 150th Anniversary service will be held at the nationally recognized historic Carpenter Gothic style church, and will be followed by a catered brunch along the Detroit River. The bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan, [The Rt. Rev. Wendell N. Gibbs, Jr.](#) will be the presider at this celebration. The guest preacher at the celebration will be [The Rev. Shannon MacVean-Brown](#).

Photos and more information on the structure and history of the church are available at saintjamesgi.net or by contacting Rev. Dinwiddie.

For all inquiries regarding this event, please contact Rev. Phil Dinwiddie at 734-676-1727 or rector@saintjamesgi.net.

*[The Episcopal Church](#), was recently brought to the world stage by Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, whose sermon at the [2018 royal wedding of Prince Harry and Megan Markle](#) ignited hearts and minds around the globe. The Episcopal Church is a part of the [Anglican Communion](#) and has a [legacy of inclusion](#), **exemplifying God's love for every human being; regardless of sexual identity or orientation.***