



Office for
Transition
Ministry

Ministry Portfolio

Full Portfolio (last updated Apr 28, 2021)

St. Clare of Assisi Episcopal Church, Michigan

2309 Packard Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104, United States

Contact:

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge | Receiving Names until 06/11/21.

eekevag@edomi.org

Weekly Average Sunday Attendance (ASA)	Number of Weekend Worship Services	Number of Weekday Worship Services	Number of Other per Month Worship Services
113	2	1	2
Current Annual Compensation	Cash Stipend	Housing / Rectory Detail	Utilities
\$75000			
SECA reimbursement	Compensation Available for New Position	Housing Available for	Pension Plan
	\$75000		We're in compliance with CPF requirements.
Healthcare Options	Dental	Housing Equity Allowance in budget	Annual Equity Amount
Full family	Yes		
Vacation Weeks	Vacation Weeks Details	Continuing Education Weeks	Continuing Education Weeks Details
One month, including 5 Sundays (standard)		2 (standard)	
Continuing Education Funding in budget	Sabbatical Provision	Travel/Auto Account	Other Professional Account
\$1001-\$2000/year	Yes	Yes	

Housing allowance is part of salary

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

In 2014 St. Clare's first held an event that has continued annually ever since: our Christmas Eve Community Lunch and Worship Service. We invite community members from local shelters, our food pantry patrons, and area soup kitchen guests to a lunch held in their honor on Christmas Eve. This event means so much to our members and helps us focus on the true spirit of Christmas. St. Clarians contribute funds and volunteer time, and we always have enough of both. Members bring their kids and have made it a part of their holiday tradition. We prepare food, make desserts, decorate the social hall, and serve as hosts to our special guests. We provide each guest with a small gift when they arrive and seat them at festively adorned tables. Church members sit at each table to make guests feel welcome. We've hosted 70-125 people at this event each year. Following lunch, guests are invited to share in a worship service where we sing familiar Christmas songs. Not everyone in the congregation attends the service, but those who do find it both meaningful and joyful. We provide transportation to and from the church for those who need it. It is the highlight of our Christmas Season.

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

After some upheaval in 2016-2017, St. Clare's conducted a Congregational Assessment Tool survey, and the results both revealed our strengths and showed us a path forward. It showed us that our congregants have a sense of optimism and we care for each other. We have energy and live our mission: to "Worship with Joy; Grow in Faith; Act for Justice." According to the survey, we want to grow as a congregation because ours is a story of service, and we want to pass on and continue that story. St. Clare's is a transformational church, but that condition is fragile. We wish to strengthen this area. A resourceful rector who understands and appreciates strong lay leadership would be the best fit. We are an aging congregation, but we have a "Magi Culture," meaning we search for growth. Our adaptability is an asset, and we can adapt to meet the needs of those we wish to attract. Our congregation is intellectual and progressive, so we like an intelligent sermon, but more important for us is pastoral care and a collaborative spirit that allows St. Clare's and its people to grow and thrive, joyfully, faithfully, and intellectually.

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

compassionate, Inclusive; Joyful, faith-filled; Welcoming, hospitable; Inspiring, well-read

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

Liturgy at St. Clare's is rooted in the classic Anglican order of worship, utilizing the BCP and other approved prayer books. Laity participate as readers, Vergers and Eucharistic Ministers; children and youth are acolytes, readers, and occasionally speakers. Our liturgical style is "eclectic and well-rounded." Congregational laying on of hands to bless people, whether moving away or in observance of important life events, is a key tradition, as is passing the peace in a friendly, exuberant fashion. Superb choral and instrumental music complements the liturgy. During the pandemic we transitioned to worshiping via Zoom. Online services average 60 households per week; on Ash Wednesday we offered socially distanced "Bags of Ashes." And in summertime, we conducted several outdoor, in-person services for limited numbers of people. Other liturgical high points: Palm Sunday, Good Friday (Stations of the Cross procession), Easter Vigil (New Fire kindling), the Easter dawn service, Pentecost, and Christmas Eve. For 40+ years Temple Beth Emeth congregants have joined ours for an Erev Thanksgiving service, with a joint choir and the priest and rabbi trading preaching duties.

How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

St. Clare's shares our building and grounds with Temple Beth Emeth, a Reform Jewish congregation. Since 1976, our two congregations have jointly administered the building and grounds through the Genesis partnership, including cooperating in the design & construction of a new sanctuary in 1992-94. We have also engaged in joint projects, notably the Back Door Food Pantry, hosting the Rotating Shelter, periodic mitzvah days, joint choir performances, and the annual Erev Thanksgiving service. Muslim community members also join in the BDFP ministry, and the church's practice of living, working, and worshiping harmoniously has helped to grow this operating partnership across faith lines as we work together to feed our neighbors. When the newly-formed Blue Ocean Faith church needed worship space, it was an easy choice to welcome this progressive ministry to use the social hall for Sunday services. Together with the Temple we participate in and host the county's Interfaith Roundtable children's choir concert, and many other projects, small and large, that look for the places where we can come together with people of other faiths to love and serve our neighbors.

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

(Names withheld for the sake of privacy) We show up in good times and bad, such as when we went to the courthouse wearing our Sunday best on a warm Wednesday afternoon in February. We carried flowers and gifts through the metal detectors, past the people engaged in tense conversations along the walls. Rounding the corner at the end of the hall, we found a revelry reminiscent of the Peace during our worship. St. Clarians filled every seat and aisle in the gallery; the judge said his courtroom had never been so full of love. We were there to witness the end of the beginning of a long journey we were walking with K. and G., and their soon-to-be daughter. C. arrived in their care as an infant when she needed a safe home. Together they attended church on Sundays and Story Song on Tuesdays, where we watched her grow over weeks, months, and years. We prayed for her biological parents alongside them as they struggled with the uncertainty of foster care. When C. returned to her biological family, we wept with them; when she was reunited with K. and G., we rejoiced. Finally, there at the courthouse as the adoption became official, we all sang the Doxology.

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

People know St. Clare's by the Cross and Star of David that face the street; beyond, a Sukkah stands for 7 days next to the St. Francis Chapel. Entering the main building you hear the sounds of a praise band from the tenant church that uses our space, rotating shelter guests speaking quietly as they bed down for the night, murmurs of food pantry guests making food selections or in consultation with social work volunteers, and children's laughter from our day care tenant's nursery. A closet stores wine for pick up, sold at the annual auction fundraiser to help support a medical/school mission in Haiti. Twelve step programs quietly meet behind closed doors. The kitchen, a hive of activity, emits enticing smells of the meal TBE members and church parishioners make for our joint day of service volunteers, to be shared after return from community volunteer sites; or of the meal our parish will serve, amidst exuberance and joy, to our Christmas Eve guests from the Delonis Shelter, the Food Pantry, and the neighborhood. Our building is a message to the world and a tool of our ministry; it serves and shelters the community; it is our home from which we go into the world in peace to serve.

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

For 15 years, St. Clare's has invested time, money, and skills in the Haiti Outreach Mission (HOM), a non-profit made up of churches and volunteer medical professionals who work with St. Pierre Episcopal Church in Mirebalais, Haiti. Doctors, dentists, and others from our church travel to Haiti periodically to set up a clinic for two weeks. People come from all around and wait for weeks to receive medical attention. One St. Clarian performed cataract surgery and provided glasses to those in need. The priest for St. Pierre Episcopal Church travels to other villages, so St. Clare's bought a generator for his portable sound system. St. Clare's provided computer and library support to the St. Pierre orphanage and school. Our children saw what we did for HOM, and raised funds to provide pencils and pencil sharpeners for the school. We have hosted a Haiti Gala with Caribbean food and Calypso music; a fall carnival; and, most successfully, wine auctions. We sell cases with a markup from wholesale that becomes the HOM donation. This auction appeals to people both within and outside our church. Proceeds fund most of our HOM efforts, with some left over for local outreach.

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

As though the pandemic were not enough, the killing of George Floyd was devastating. No longer could we look at race-based killings without wondering what we could do to change things. To combat a sense of powerlessness, St. Clarians started Sacred Ground circles, a film- and reading-based dialogue series on race and faith. It is a long-term commitment to racial healing, reconciliation, and justice. Focusing on different people of color each week, this program requires commitment and deep reflection about institutional racism in our society, and how we might work toward more unity, solidarity, and eventual healing. What sets Sacred Ground apart is its grounding in the Christian faith. Neither liberal nor conservative, the focus doesn't aim to "convert" participants to a singular point of view, but to learn from those with different points of view. St. Clare's formed 4 groups, totaling 37 people. Those who take part find their thoughts on racism in America deepen and change through honest, soul-searching conversations. Our newfound knowledge is a foundation for future action. We have continued this ministry by starting a new iteration of discussion circles. Contact: Ann Putallaz

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

As St. Clare's we take the responsibility of stewardship quite literally. While the term is often understood as the act of monetary pledging, we wholeheartedly subscribe to the tradition of the 3 T's: Talent, Time, & Treasure. We depend on all the 'T's' to support, sustain, and carry out our mission, not only in pledge season but continuing through the year. St. Clare's is blessed with a multi-aged pool of gifted staff, musicians, teachers, managers, artists, and worker bees who willingly share their talents. Our mix of generations cooperate harmoniously, for example when the entire congregation collaborated in designing and creating beautiful quilted banners for our sanctuary that celebrate our mission statement, "Worship with Joy, Grow in Faith, Act for Justice." While we support and encourage proportional giving, and more money is always welcome, we historically set and balance our budget yearly. Additionally, we have access to a variety of endowment funds for special or unexpected projects. We also sponsor a variety of fundraising events throughout the year that support our numerous ministries and local community outreach programs.

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

Like any close relationship, our partnership with Temple Beth Emeth, called Genesis, is not without conflict. Genesis is a separate legal entity responsible for managing our shared physical space and is governed by a Board comprised of members from each congregation. Sometimes needs and priorities of one congregation conflict with those of the other. Six years ago, simmering problems came to a head and we asked to reevaluate the arrangement and clarify each entity's responsibilities. The Temple's need for space far exceeded that of St. Clare's, and St. Clare's staff was feeling disrespected by the Genesis staff. To work through our conflict, the Boards of the three entities agreed to a joint retreat moderated by an outside facilitator. He helped us air grievances in a respectful way and craft a plan for negotiating how we would use the space in the future. One outcome was to schedule regular tri-Board meetings to discuss any future tension or conflict that might arise; this arrangement continues. We concluded this time with a celebration of the 40th anniversary of the partnership, including sharing a meal together and a brief program highlighting moments from our shared history.

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?

Recent years have brought substantial changes to our congregation. The well-loved director of children's ministry departed, and some were unhappy about the circumstances of her departure. We were called upon to continue worshipping alongside those with whom we strongly disagreed and to build a new model of children's ministry. By focusing on the work of the church, the congregation was able to ease those troubled by the staffing change and move forward, together. However, things became more difficult when our beloved associate rector also had administrative and personal conflicts with our longtime rector, leading to her departure as well. We attempted a conflict-management system through the Lombard Process. Unfortunately, the process possibly hurt as much as it helped and did not provide enough opportunity for healing. The rector eventually left. We lost members during this time, but those who remain are committed to keeping the work of the church going. We were reminded through these changes that we are at our best when we come together around God's table and our shared desire to worship with joy, grow in faith, and act for justice.



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Prior Incumbents

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
Maryjane Peck	Interim	2019-06	

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
James Rhodenhiser	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	2003-09	2019-01

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
Bry Dennison	Interim	2002-06	2003-08

Church School	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Children School	Number of Students for Children School
	5	19

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
1	10	2	20

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.saintclareschurch.org

Media Links:

Online References:

> https://www.facebook.com/groups/153783431410191/?multi_pe

Languages Significantly Represented:

> <https://www.genesis2.org/>
Provide Worship or Classes in:

English

References

Bishop: 313-832-4400 bishopperry@edomi.org

**The Rt.Rev.Dr.Bonnie A
Perry**

Diocesan Transition Minister 630-258-8882 eekevag@edomi.org

The Rev.Ellen Ekevag

Current Warden/Board Chair 734-645-1808 lklimach@comcast.net

Linda Klimach

Previous Warden/Board Chair

Search Chair

Parish/Institution

Local Community Leader

Debbie Dingell (US Representative); Yousef Rabhi (Michigan Representative); Jeff Irwin (Michigan Senate); Chris Taylor (Ann Arbor Mayor); Julie Grand (City Council); Travis Radina (City Council) Debbiedingell.house.gov; voterabhi@gmail.com; senjirwin@senate.michigan.gov; mayor_christopher_taylor@mail.vresp.com; @votegrand/Twitter;



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Contact:

Worshipping Community Web site:

Media Links:

Online References:

Languages Significantly Represented:

Provide Worship or Classes in:

References

Bishop:

Diocesan Transition Minister

Current Warden/Board Chair

Previous Warden/Board Chair

Knut Hill

734-657-1498 knuthill@gmail.com

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Parish/Institution

Local Community Leader