

St Johns (Royal Oak)

TYPE	DIOCESE	NAME
Congregation	Michigan	St. John's Royal Oak

TYPES OF WORK	POSITION TITLE/ROLE
Full Time	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge

ROLE SUMMARY/DESCRIPTION

We are seeking a Rector in charge of a progressive, radically welcoming program-sized church. We seek a priest who is a strong, experienced leader who inspires others, has strong administrative skills, and delegates effectively. Our Rector should convey a compassionate and spiritual pastoral presence, be solidly grounded in Gospel values and able to effectively communicate their faith to a progressive and inclusive congregation and community. The priest we choose to walk along with us is one whose sermons are spiritual, engaging, and relevant to everyday life.

The ideal spiritual leader will have a proven track record of growing a congregation, increasing financial stewardship, strengthening parishioner involvement and lay leadership, maintaining, and strengthening ministries, and increasing community engagement.

CURRENT STATUS	RECEIVING NAMES FROM	TO
Receiving names	04/30/2026	05/15/2026

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Please email the following application materials to the Rev. Canon Susie Shaefer (sshaefer@edomi.org):

- A letter of interest addressed to the discernment committee and vestry
- A current resume
- A pdf of your current Office of Transition Ministries Portfolio OR Vocation Hub Profile

CANDIDATE NARRATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

1. How do you approach pastoral care in your ministry?, 2. How are you preparing yourself for the Church of the future?, 10. What theological convictions shape your ministry?

CONTACT

NAME	The Rev. Canon Susie Shaefer
ROLE	Canon for Transitions & Formation
ORGANIZATION	Episcopal Diocese of Michigan
PHONE NUMBER	313-833-4424
EMAIL ADDRESS	sshaefer@edomi.org

POSITION DETAILS

ORDERS OF MINISTRY

Priest

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Midwest

WORK ENVIRONMENT

In Person

MINISTRY SETTING

Mixed Setting

PAROCHIAL REPORT DATA

<u>AVG. SUNDAY ATT.</u>	<u>ANNUAL BUDGET</u>
166	617425

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW NARRATIVE

The finances at St. John's are solid. We hold approximately \$500,000 in long-term investments, and our only debt is a \$250,000 building loan with the diocese. Our budget for 2026 is \$537,412. Financial oversight is further strengthened by an active volunteer finance committee.

Over the past several years, the parish has demonstrated strong financial stewardship. We have sustained budget surpluses, successfully completed a capital campaign in 2019 exceeding \$1,000,000, grown pledge income by 23% between 2021 and 2025, secured funding for targeted improvements such as our new digital sign, and hosted a fundraising concert last fall that raised over \$30,000. Pledge income did decline during our rector transition; however, we anticipate a return to prior levels as leadership is restored. Pledge income accounts for 70% of our budget, with an additional 20% derived from rental income. Rental revenue includes a third-party daycare center, use of our commercial kitchen, space provided to Open Hands Food Pantry and proceeds from a church-owned thrift shop.

While the parish is currently meeting its financial obligations, our budget is not quite large enough to comfortably support our current reality and our aspirations for growth. Non-clergy staffing is entirely part-time and sustaining two clergy members has only been possible because the curate position was 50% funded by the diocese. The ongoing maintenance of our large and beautiful century-old building also provides budget challenges.

Looking ahead, growing pledge revenue must be a strategic priority. Currently, pledge giving has not kept pace with membership growth and does not reflect the true capacity and generosity of this parish. Additionally, planned giving has been underemphasized in recent years and represents a significant opportunity. We are confident that a more intentional and structured stewardship approach that inspires generosity can meaningfully increase giving levels.

FINANCIAL RESOURCE TYPE None

POSITION PROFILE

STIPEND, HOUSING, AND BENEFITS

COMPENSATION/SALARY DETAIL

RANGE \$75,001 - \$100,000

DETAILS

Direct compensation is budgeted for \$100K:

Cash Salary: \$92,894

SECA reimbursement: \$8,106

Total direct compensation: \$100,000

HOUSING/RECTORY TYPE

TYPE OF HOUSING PROVIDED Cash Stipend

DETAILS

A rectory is not provided, and a housing allowance is part of the above stated salary.

SECA REIMBURSEMENT DETAIL

REIMBURSEMENT OFFERED Half

DETAILS

SECA reimbursement: \$8,106

MEDICAL & PENSION BENEFITS DETAIL

PENSION PLAN

In compliance with CPF requirements

HEALTHCARE OPTIONS

Full family

DETAILS

St. John's provides full health care and dental coverage for clergy, spouse, and family. More information on benefits in the Diocese of Michigan can be found at www.edomi.org/hr

VACATION, CONTINUING EDUCATION, AND OTHER BENEFITS

VACATION & LEAVE DETAILS

One-month annual vacation, which shall include five Sundays, to be taken so as not to interfere with worship for major occasions. National holidays, at the discretion of the Rector, to be taken so as not to interfere with worship for major occasions.

CONTINUING EDUCATION DETAILS

Two weeks per year annually for professional development or continuing education. An allowance of at least \$1,500 per year, to be reviewed annually and paid on behalf of the Rector toward expenses incurred in relation to professional development.

SABBATICAL PROVISION DETAILS

Sabbatical provision is one month every three-year period. Salary is maintained in a reserve fund annually.

POSITION PROFILE

TRAVEL/AUTO ACCOUNT DETAILS

Reimbursement for professional use of a personal automobile on a "per mile" basis according to the current IRS business rate.

EQUIPMENT/PHONE DETAILS

The cost of a cell phone will be reimbursed at a rate of \$100 or 75% of the bill, whichever is less by the congregation for professional and pastoral use.

OTHER BENEFITS OR COMMENTS

Our budget also includes \$600 for the clergy discretionary fund each year.

DIOCESAN COMPENSATION INFORMATION (IF APPLICABLE)

FORMAT WebPage <https://www.edomi.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/2025-Clergy-Compensation-Policy-Revision-March-2025>

MINISTRY CONTEXT AND DESIRED SKILLS

WHAT ARE YOUR COMMUNITY'S HOPES FOR THIS POSITION?

St. John's has worked hard over the last decade to grow into a transitional-sized church with a zealously guarded role as a teaching congregation, We wish to continue this tradition. Our CAT survey confirmed that we are an extraordinarily strong parish with a Magi culture, high in energy and in satisfaction. We value faith as a journey of discovery and understanding. We also value intellectual curiosity and open discourse. While we begin with a solid foundation, this transition period provided us with the opportunity to reflect on our successes and shortcomings, examine our strengths and weaknesses, and determine what it will take to continue our progress through a series of focus groups with our members.

Our congregation prioritized the following:

We desire a compassionate and spiritual pastoral presence whose sermons are engaging and relate scripture to the struggles we face as a nation, a community, and in our everyday lives. He or she will be skilled at conveying the mission and inspiring the congregation to do that work that Jesus is asking of us.

Our morale and energy are high, giving us the opportunity to continue to grow our congregation with an emphasis on attracting families with children. We highly value our relationships with our fellow parishioners but seek more opportunities for enhancing existing ones and forming new ones.

Our ministries are highly functional, but we need to prepare them for the future through broader lay participation and increasing outward focus on the community. Our staffing levels and competency, while fulfilling our basic needs, are not fully commensurate with the needs of a program-sized church.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Collaborative Leadership, Congregational Development, Personnel/Staff Development, Servant Leadership, Strategic Planning

MINISTRY SKILLS

Adult Formation, Children & Family Formation, Church Growth, Community Building, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Pastoral Care, Prayer & Spirituality, Preaching, Stewardship, Worship & Liturgy

POSITION PROFILE

LANGUAGES SPOKEN

English

LANGUAGES WRITTEN

English

LANGUAGES REQUIRED TO LEAD WORSHIP

English

1. What is your organization's mission and focus?

Describe your core mission and ministry priorities. What values guide your work, and what is your community or organization striving to embody in this season of ministry?

We believe that God has called us together in this place for a meaningful purpose: to worship, to learn, and to serve in love.

Our mission statement reads in part “...Being God’s stewards, we seek: ...to celebrate the diversity of all God’s people; to communicate within and outside our immediate church family; to be mindful of our role as caretakers of ourselves, our community, and all God’s creation; to provide a nurturing and caring environment for all; to take action to carry out God’s challenges; and to welcome all persons...”

We believe faith is alive when in action, and through our ministries we aim to continually achieve our mission. We are radically welcoming to all, and our relationships with one another and God are paramount. We prioritize fellowship, pastoral care, children and family programs, formation, and spiritually engaging and relevant worship services. These and many other ministries invite people into meaningful relationships and service.

We are equally committed to community outreach. Examples include our Faith in Justice ministry, our Open Hands Food Pantry, New To You resale shop, and our support for community groups and small businesses via facilities rental.

Looking forward, our foremost priority is to grow our congregation in ways that strengthen and secure our future including a renewed emphasis on Stewardship. To achieve these objectives, we need a robust strategic plan and a leader who can motivate and inspire our congregation to achieve these goals.

2. How would you describe your ministry context?

Share about the setting and community you serve. What are the unique characteristics of your context - such as urban, rural, or suburban dynamics; multi-faith or multicultural environments; community partnerships; or social and cultural factors that shape your ministry?

St. John's is a growing congregation of all ages, located in the heart of Royal Oak, a vibrant suburb in the greater Detroit metropolitan area. Our parish is known for being radically welcoming, inclusive, and accepting of all. We deeply believe and communicate to all who attend that "we are better because you are here." Accordingly, we attract members from all over the metropolitan area. There is a powerful sense of community at St. John's, so we value our relationships with each other and the broader community and structure our ministries accordingly.

Metro Detroit's progressive values and commitment to inclusion align closely with St. John's own mission of justice and welcome. We actively engage in and support community and other programs through our own social justice ministries. Despite being one of the wealthiest counties in Michigan, there is a growing population struggling with affordability and food insecurity. Our Open Hands Food Pantry is one of the largest in the county and served over 16,000 clients in 2024, and our New To You resale shop provides access to affordable clothing and household items. We also engage the broader community through the use of our building with many 12-step programs and kitchen rentals.

3. How would you describe your congregational/diocesan leadership culture?

Reflect on how your community approaches leadership - what styles and qualities you value in clergy, how leadership is shared between clergy and laity, and how you navigate change and challenges.

St. John's leadership culture is rooted in shared ministry, prayer, collaboration, and trust. Leadership is highly relational and consensus-oriented, with many ministries led by lay members and decision-making emerging through shared discernment. Voices are valued, and participation is encouraged across the congregation, reflecting a culture that empowers individuals to take initiative, share their gifts, and contribute meaningfully.

Leadership often develops through interests and availability rather than formal recruitment or structured leadership pathways. Many ministries typically operate through informal communication and relational networks rather than clearly documented processes or procedures. Succession planning is not consistently in place, and leadership transitions tend to occur organically rather than through intentional planning or defined terms of service.

4. How would you describe your congregational/diocesan liturgical styles and practice?

Share how worship is shaped in your community - what influences your liturgical life, how you balance tradition and innovation, and how liturgy reflects your theology and context.

St. John's embraces diverse liturgical styles that are rooted in the rich Rite II tradition of the BCP. We often incorporate elements from Enriching Our Worship, the New Zealand Prayer Book, and other contemporary sources. The combination of traditional and modern elements blends the familiar and the creative, making our worship experience reverent, spiritual, and joyful.

We come together for three services each week. Our 8am Sunday service offers a quiet and contemplative atmosphere, with a silent procession and a reflective tone. The 10:15am Sunday service includes lively congregational singing, led by our chancel choir, accompanied by piano or organ. We are blessed to have a dedicated music director on staff and regular paid section leaders. The Altar Guild works committedly, tending to the sacred space. During our Sunday services, we share God's table with all, offering Open Communion. On Thursday mornings, a group of faithful people gather in our chapel for a healing service. This service, led by lay congregants, provides us with a space to pray for one another, our broader community, and the world.

We are exceptionally inspired by the use of music, art, symbolism, and drama throughout the year. These creative elements help us experience our bonds to the Creator, Christ, and Spirit in new ways, and they open our hearts to hear Her messages more clearly. Seasonal offerings, including special liturgies during Advent, Lent, and Holy Week, deepen our connection to God. Dramatic presentations are particularly emphasized during the Easter Vigil and Christmas Pageant, which bring our faith stories to life.

As a Magi congregation, St. John's parishioners long for meaningful and inspiring sermons that serve as a primary connection point for both members and visitors. We look for insight about God's message in our everyday lives and in response to events in our wider communities. We seek to explore and discern our faith through a preacher's engaging storytelling, teaching, and calls to action as God's hands and feet in the world.

Lay participation is central to our worship. Parishioners of all ages serve as lectors, intercessors, acolytes, healing ministers, and Eucharistic ministers. The Tech Team helps us stream our services to those who are near and far. Through all our worship, we invite all people to experience God's transformative love and to carry that love into the world.

5. How does your congregation/diocese approach cultural identity and inclusion?

Reflect on how your community engages diverse cultural identities, fosters belonging, and responds to the needs of a diverse or evolving population.

At St John's we joyfully acknowledge and celebrate our diversity with celebrations in worship and fellowship events, encouraging activism in the larger community, and personal relationships. Our welcome statement is a true representation of the atmosphere and priorities of the parish: Welcome! We are St. John's, a parish that invites you to enter the open doors of our community and warmly embraces you when you do. At St. John's, our history has taught us that accepting and embracing true diversity is challenging. As a result, we have come to claim a firm, undying commitment to inclusion. So here is our invitation to you: regardless of your cultural background, ethnicity, gender, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or heterosexual identity, economic status, physical or cognitive ability - you will not be labeled, singled out, or excluded here. You will be welcomed, affirmed, embraced, and celebrated!

MINISTRY MEDIA AND LINKS

St. John's Website	https://www.stjohnsroyaloak.org/
St. John's on YouTube	https://m.youtube.com/@st.johnsepiscopalchurchroy1350
St. John's Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/share/1CRAKdHXga/?mibextid=wwXlfr

NARRATIVES

6. In what ways is your congregation/diocese engaged in the wider Church or local community?

Whether through diocesan leadership, ecumenical partnerships, civic involvement, or community organizing, describe how your congregation serves beyond its own walls.

Our Faith in Justice Committee meets monthly and is active around social justice. Several members of St. John’s have served on greater community committees such as Women Confronting Racism, and the Royal Oak Human Rights Commission. Church members have participated in pilgrimages to historic civil rights areas in Birmingham and Montgomery, Alabama. A few years ago, our Sacred Ground group held 10 sessions dealing with local and national history not taught in school.

Volunteers from both the parish and community help at our New to You (NTY) resale shop. NTY has evolved into a support group, providing friendship, emotional support, and a sense of purpose for our volunteers. It also introduces our church to the greater community and provides important and needed services around affordable clothing and household items and environmental benefits.

Importantly, St. John’s is a teaching congregation. The size of our congregation and our ministries are well-suited to mentoring curates, and this ministry is highly embraced by our congregation.

7. How does your congregation/diocese approach pastoral care?

Reflect on how your community walks with one another and with neighbors through life's joys and challenges - what guides your approach?

Our community deeply values our relationships, and we support one another. The Lay Pastoral Care Team leads compassion and care within our community. Collaborating closely with clergy, they receive weekly updates on those who are experiencing illness, loss, undergoing surgery or in need of emotional support. The group makes calls, sends cards, provides meals, and visits parishioners offering prayer and presence to those in need.

We have an active card ministry that systematically sends birthday, anniversary, condolence, and other cards to all parishioners. Through these ministries, the love experienced in our worship extends beyond our walls.

8. How is your congregation/diocese preparing for the Church of the future?

Ministry is always evolving. Share how your congregation is growing, adapting, or learning to meet the changing needs of the Church and the world.

St. John’s is laser focused on becoming increasingly more open, affirming, and welcoming. We are also increasing our focus on non-secular activities and ministries, all based in Jesus’ teachings. We are actively engaged in social justice programs, educating and engaging the broader community on the issues of today and those that affect our collective future. Examples include conversations on race, 20’s-30’s group, participation in the local commission on human rights, multi-denomination forums, and community gun buyback programs. Our congregation is fully behind these efforts.

9. What does stewardship mean to your congregation/diocese, and how do you practice it?

Describe how your community approaches generosity, resource management, and financial discipleship.

Our annual stewardship campaign focuses on financial needs and emphasizes active and ongoing participation in our ministries. Financially, we work to educate parishioners on the importance of their pledge to our budget planning process, maintaining our spiritual home, and supporting our ministries. A focus on volunteerism continues throughout the year.

The large size and age of our building, servicing a diocesan loan and the need to appropriately staff for our program-sized church present financial challenges. While we are financially sound overall, expanding the number of pledge commitments, and enhancing our fundraising and planned-giving programs are all areas for growth.

10. How has your congregation/diocese experienced and addressed conflict?

Conflict is part of communal life. Tell us about a time your congregation faced it and how you responded - what did you learn?

Three years ago, some Vestry members advocated for the elimination of contested Vestry elections. This proposal served to split the Vestry, with groups taking strong but opposing positions. Discussions and disagreements were often heated but remained respectful. Frank discussions were held hearing out all sides on the motivations and objectives of their positions. Backed by historical research and benchmarking studies, the conversation extended to a comprehensive review of the entire candidate selection and voting processes. In the end, an entirely new process was proposed that kept contested elections and addressed the concerns of the opposition. This experience taught members the value of listening to the concerns of others and the importance of compromise in a large, dynamic parish such as ours.

11. What has been your congregation's/diocese's experience leading or navigating change?

Ministry often requires change. Reflect on a time your community embraced or navigated change - when it went well, when it didn't, and what it taught you about shared leadership.

Four years ago, we launched the first Capital Campaign in over two decades. The CC committee identified projects addressing the most urgent needs of our large physical plant and to better live our Welcome Statement. The projects resulted in highly significant modifications to the appearance, layout, and usage of our building.

The proposals met with resistance from those who felt other projects should take priority, or the changes were not necessary or even counterproductive. A series of meetings presented the rationale for the proposals, listened to objections, and addressed concerns.

The campaign and a subsequent appeal to cover unanticipated expenses were extraordinarily successful. The lesson, once again, reinforced the need to take the time and ensure all voices are heard.