



# ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

May, 2026

309 S. Jackson St. ~ Jackson, MI 49203  
[www.stpaulsjxn.org](http://www.stpaulsjxn.org)

# BE YOU. BE LOVED. BELONG.

St. Paul's Episcopal Church strives to be an inclusive, sustainable, and vibrant church that is a beacon of love and hope in our community and in the changing world. We gather together to receive the Eucharist at two Sunday morning services and then scatter to partner with God in service to Jackson and the world. We are currently seeking a priest who will empower the initiatives of our parishioners and actively engage with the parish and our neighbors as we seek to embody God's loving vision for our community.

As stewards of over 180 years of history and ministry in Jackson, MI, we honor the rich tradition of the Episcopal Liturgy while embracing new ideas and alternative service styles. All are welcome to join us in worship at St. Paul's Church and to participate fully in our ministries. No exceptions—God loves you, so you belong. As God welcomes you, we welcome you.

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Children are embraced as members of our parish and are full participants in worship and outreach. We have a youth member of our vestry, who offers a unique perspective on mission and ministry from our teens. During Sunday service, you will notice our youth serving as acolytes, LEMs, crucifers, readers, and technical crew.

We are located in the heart of downtown Jackson and actively partner with programs that serve the most vulnerable populations. The work of our Mission and Outreach ministry is central to our identity as members of St. Paul's and there are many ways you can serve alongside us.

Our invitation is for you to join us for worship and to serve the community. Our hope is that you will find yourself at home in a space that seeks and promotes love, healing, and fulfillment.

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# WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US

On Sunday morning, St. Paul's Church is buzzing with activity. The first of two Eucharists begins at 8:00 a.m. with a spoken mass (most frequently Rite II). At its conclusion, the building continues to fill with more preparations. The choir rehearses and warms up with the director and our organist.

Church School rooms open at 9:15 a.m. for our morning programs. First, youth and children meet all together to share their experiences from the past week and pray. Then we separate according to age. In the teen class, active discussion often centers around a curriculum like Rite 13 or books (e.g., Stamped from the Beginning) to help our young people deepen their faith within their own changing contexts. In the class for younger children, we place emphasis on biblical stories. Crafts and other activities help to reinforce their learning. We are committed to investing in the church of the future!

At the same time, a group of 15-20 adults meets for Adult Forum in the small dining room. This weekly forum gathers curious minds of varied perspectives from the parish to engage with ideas from lectionary readings, books, video presentations, and personal experiences. We study a variety of contemporary topics that connect with our Christian faith. For example, we've recently focused on the oft-hidden involvement of the institutional church in the American slave trade. The goal is not just education, but also transformation. The class has hosted community conversations on race and racism. Adult Forum provides a safe space to share opinions, questions, and experiences. And of course, we make sure there is plenty of coffee.



*Baptismal Font*



*Choir rehearsal*

Around 10:15, the hallways fill with people coming and going as they make their way to the sanctuary for 10:30 a.m. Eucharistic Service. The choir and members of the processional gather in the narthex and circle together as our priest invites God to be present with us in worship today. As the final tintinnabulation of our bell tolls, our magnificent organist awakens our pipe organ and fills the nave with song. In fact, our music ministry as a whole has recently come back to life, following the difficult season of Covid-19. We have a new choir director and a vibrant choir that sings everything from modern anthems to traditional plainsong. Special music may include our handbell choir and other instrumentalists. Although we typically have high worship with sung Eucharist, with occasional incense, we may also have a jazz mass now and then.

St. Paul's parishioners are active in worship. From the altar guild and ushers to our "tech team" and acolytes, we enjoy intergenerational participation. We empower our members to serve and lead in many roles – not just as acolytes but also as LEMs, readers, and intercessors.

Our parishioners worship as they are comfortable. While some genuflect and kneel, others prefer not. In this diversity of preferences, we come unified to encounter and celebrate Christ's presence together as we receive Holy Eucharist. During this communion, some families light prayer candles beneath our beautiful icon of the Annunciation. On the second Sunday of the month, we hold a "Noisy Offering." Parishioners bring coins forward in tin cans, shaking them all the way up the aisle and dumping them into large metal buckets. It's hard to tell who enjoys this offering more, as it brings out the youngster in every member. The proceeds from the offering go to a rotation of local non-profit organizations.



When service is over, most people move into Holy Spirit Hall for hospitality hour. This long-favored period is where newcomers are welcomed and friends meet for fellowship over coffee and light snacks. Young people may commandeer a table or two to play board games.

Every Wednesday, an enthusiastic group gathers to join in Bible Study. This lay-led group dives deeply into the heart of Scripture, striving to merge the nuances of the biblical text with the horizons of both the ancient world and our own contemporary society. Immediately following Bible Study, we also offer an intimate Eucharist and Healing Service that is open to all.

# CELEBRATING CHRIST THROUGH SERVICE

## *Our Mission....*

Our mission at St. Paul's is celebrating Christ's presence in a changing world. We are called to serve our Jackson community and the global community. This work is primarily organized by our Mercy & Justice Ministry, which is central to life in the parish of St. Paul's.

By partnering with established non-profit organizations that have existing programs and are doing truly impactful work, we are able to do more than we would if we tried to do it on our own.



*Jackson Interfaith Shelter*

One of the strategic partnerships we have developed is with The Jackson Interfaith Shelter. Over the years, our partnership has changed, depending on the shelter's needs. We provided an overnight warming center in St. Paul's Holy Spirit Hall for individuals to find refuge from the bitter winter cold.

We have also collected clothing, bedding, food, and personal hygiene products for the Interfaith clientele, and some of our youth have even started a ministry to make fleece blankets for residents.



*Mama Tu-tu in front of her Bright Walls Portrait*

*In support of Mama Tu-tu's needs, we have coordinated collections of clothing, personal care products, food, financial aid, and "back to school" supplies. Most recently, we provided 30 Easter Baskets for her annual neighborhood celebration.*

We are also developing relationships with local voices who know their community far better than we do. One of these partnerships is with Wanda Beavers, who is better known in the community as "Momma Tu-Tu." Everyone has a place at Momma Tu-Tu's! She dedicates her life to caring for her neighbors, whether they are experiencing homelessness, financial need, or basic supplies for school. Her wisdom, insight, and knowledge of the Jackson community has been crucial in shaping our growing vision of how we can walk alongside our local neighbors. In 2021, the city of Jackson recognized Momma's presence and giving spirit by painting a beautiful mural of her profile on the back of a local downtown building.

During the summer, St. Paul's hosts the annual six-week "Get REAL" program. Get REAL is a project developed and sponsored by the City of Jackson's Health Department. This program helps youth connect and mature by focusing on positive youth development, mentorship, community service, and fun.

In the past we have also partnered with our neighbor the local YMCA for several community projects such as "Trunk or Treat."

We are always looking for opportunities in which we can make a positive impact within our community. Teaching our children the importance of giving and ministry is a critical part of our mission.



*Get REAL Lake Michigan Trip*

## Fellowship and Community

### Women of St. Paul's Episcopal Church (ECW)

provides spiritual renewal through speakers, music, field trips, and outreach for all the women of St. Paul's Episcopal Church and their friends. ECW is involved in projects to assist Mercy & Justice. They also serve the children of the church and plan the annual St. Nicholas Party. The group meets regularly throughout the year.

**Koinonia Groups** are small groups of 6-12 parishioners who meet together monthly in each other's homes for fellowship and food. Because of their small size, it is possible to get to know the other members of a group faster and more intimately than is possible when contact is limited to church events. Koinonia Groups are organized for a one-year period and all groups are reorganized into new groups each May. New members are always welcome year-round, and new groups form whenever the need arises. New members of St. Paul's are encouraged to join a Koinonia Group and build those friendships.

**Good Brews** meets every Wednesday night at a local brewery in town. Attendance varies from 4-5 people to as high as 11-12 people. Topics of discussion are spontaneous but have varied from the existence of God to our call as Christians to be involved in schools and public life.

## Service During Worship

- ♦ **Acolytes** assist the priest at the altar and during processions.
- ♦ The **Adult Choir** leads hymns and presents special music.
- ♦ The **Bell Choir** has recently been reinstated and plays during the prelude and for special services.
- ♦ **Eucharistic Ministers (LEM)** assist the priest in serving Communion during service.
- ♦ **Eucharistic Visitors (EVs)** are specially trained laypersons who serve Communion to those who are unable to be present in worship.
- ♦ **Lectors** read Scripture and prayers during Sunday service.
- ♦ **Ushers & Greeters** are responsible for welcoming attendants, giving programs, passing offertory plates, and inviting rows to receive Communion or a blessing.





*Episcopal Church Women*

## Lay Committees

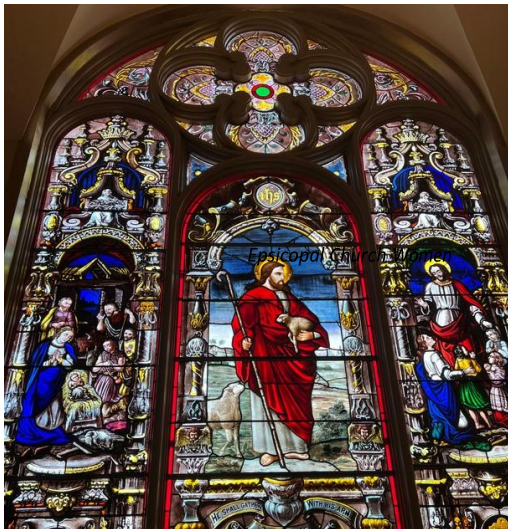
- **Altar Guild** is divided into four teams, each of which works one week each month to set the altar for regular services in addition to any special services, such as weddings or funerals. After the service, it is the job of the on-duty team to clear the altar and wash and care for the sacred vessels.
- **Buildings and Grounds (B&G)** is responsible for overseeing the maintenance of our facilities.
- Church School Committee is responsible for Church School and its curriculum, activities of youth, and planning and executing Vacation Bible School and the Epiphany Pageant.
- **Finance & Endowment Committees** meets quarterly to review the finances of the church and make recommendations to the Vestry. They also compile an annual budget for the Vestry to approve each year. The Treasurer is the chair of the Finance committee, with the Rector and Sr. Warden serving as ex-officio members.
- **Hospitality & Kitchen Committees** create a welcoming space for our members and our guests, especially during our weekly coffee hour. They also prepare welcome bags for first time visitors to St. Paul's.
- **Human Resource Committee** ensures that we are both embracing our values in our relationship with our employees and following best practices in creating a healthy and harmonious environment for our staff.
- **Mercy & Justice** is a core piece of the identity of St. Paul's. This group plans and organizes opportunities for parishioners to serve. Stressing the importance of "don't reinvent the wheel," M&J builds partnerships with established nonprofit organizations and groups who have existing programs. They also cultivate relationships with neighbors who have important insight into the needs of the community. The committee plans the work and reaches out to the parish for volunteers and financial support.
- **Vestry** is the governing body of the church and makes administrative decisions. Comprising the church rector and congregational representatives, the Vestry consists of nine members, a youth representative (sometimes), and an alternate. Three members are elected each January at the annual Parish Meeting to serve a three-year term. The alternate is elected to a one-year term.

# OUR BUILDING AND GROUNDS



St. Paul's Episcopal Church has occupied the same block in downtown Jackson since the church was chartered in 1839. That site today is occupied by a historic sanctuary, a 1965 office and education wing, and a 20-year-old multipurpose area wing known as Holy Spirit Hall. We are flanked by the County Courthouse, the Jackson YMCA, the city police department, banks, and other churches. At the same time, we are also within two blocks of the Interfaith Shelter and a food bank that serves the community. Our location gives us a unique position as a center that can bridge two parts of the same community.

The original church building was replaced in 1853 with the Romanesque style Sanctuary that remains today. The sanctuary has been remodeled many times over the years, with the addition of a chapel in the 1920s and many beautiful stained glass windows, including an authentic Tiffany window, that has been added over a century and a half. Our memorial garden is carefully tended year-round and features beautiful blooms in the spring and summer. This sacred space witnesses life and rebirth each Easter when the parish children search through the blossoms for Easter eggs.



In 2019, we removed three pews to accommodate special needs within our community. One area is designed for people with disabilities to ensure they have adequate room for their chairs or other assistive devices. A second area, near the front of the sanctuary, is designed for parents with older children, allowing extra space for movement and for worship. Our favorite area is near the back of the church with rocking chairs, quiet toys, and books for families with younger children. As we look for ways to welcome all people to worship with us, these spaces are one small way we show our care.



The education wing comprises two stories with five classrooms and our parish archives on the upper floor, as well as a library on the ground level that houses not only Christian books but the archives of St. Paul's as well. The first floor also boasts a fully-equipped nursery, a small dining room, and a beautiful commercial kitchen.



In 2006, we built a new fellowship wing, Holy Spirit Hall, to replace a crumbling, 107-year-old building. Holy Spirit Hall features a large community room with a fully licensed, commercially-sized kitchen that allows us to provide meals for the parish and the community and host diocesan events. Throughout the year after Sunday service, it witnesses seasonal visitations by Saints Nicholas and Patrick, baptismal parties, special anniversary and birthday celebrations, Easter Breakfasts, Harvest Dinners, the Shrove Tuesday Community Pancake Supper, and the parish's Annual Meeting. This facility allows us to provide not only support but physical space as well to groups in our community. It also includes a small dining room with a wireless-capable TV that is used for meetings.

For the past eight years we have partnered with Big Guy Catering, a company that uses our kitchen facilities and provides those in the building with tantalizing smells. They also supply food for our Sunday coffee hour and meals for various parish events. In order to increase our own use of our kitchen and partner with nonprofit organizations in the community, we are phasing out this partnership during the summer of 2026.



## ***Leadership Transitions***

In the summer of 2022 our then-rector Sarah Hurlbert was called to be the Dean of All Souls' Cathedral in Asheville, NC. On All Saints Day in 2022 we welcomed Father Jadon Hartsuff to be our interim rector, and a year later we called him to stay indefinitely. Having grown up at St. Paul's, with family ties here stretching back five generations, we were comfortable with one another from the start. During these years we have navigated a variety of ups and downs, including the sudden death of a beloved member of staff. We have also been blessed by the raising and receiving of generous new pledges and endowed funding that has allowed us to go from a budget deficit to a sustained budget surplus and complete a variety of capital projects, including roofs, tuckpointing, updates to our organ and memorial garden, and the purchase of a beautiful rectory.

Father Jadon has also served as a chaplain in the Navy Reserve over these years. In May, 2026, he was called to active duty, commencing this summer. While we are proud to send him off for these duties with our full support and blessing, we also are very sad to see him go. He has been a blessing to us and is leaving us stronger than he found us in a variety of ways. Ironically, because it is so clear to us that God has opened this door for him, we have confidence that God is likewise opening a new door for St. Paul's too.

## ***What We Seek in a Leader***

Saint Paul's Church is a beautiful place of potential and possibility. We have a deep passion for justice and community transformation, a longing to see the loving realm of God unfold in our community. As a parish with many seasoned members, we also have a growing understanding of our own limitations and needs. We are currently seeking a priest who will come alongside us, extending our passions, deepening our formation for faithful action, compassionately pastoring our community, and empowering our parishioners as we strive to use our gifts.

For two decades we've worked to make outreach to our community a primary focus. Recently, we have entered a place of listening, learning, and responding, especially in the area of racial justice. We are cultivating partnerships with individuals and social organizations who know our community and its needs well. This collaborative approach to mission and ministry greatly expands our potential relationships with our neighbors, while also recognizing and honoring our own limitations. We also realize that our downtown location and extensive facilities provide us with unique opportunities to serve Jackson. We are looking for a rector who both shares our commitment to social transformation and racial justice and who will help us discern how we can participate in God's ongoing transformation of our community.

For many years at St. Paul's, pastoral care and Christian formation were informally driven by the efforts of key individuals. With our last rector, this shifted significantly, especially with regards to pastoral care. Today, we recognize that we are an aging parish and that many of our members are in need of more direct pastoral care. We are looking for a rector with a gift for being present with people, listening deeply to their stories, hopes, and fears and caring for them in moments of spiritual and physical need.



### Traits and skills we are seeking in a rector:

- Laity empowering
- Pastoral and compassionate
- Gifted Teacher
- Engaged with parish and community
- Committed to Christ
- Willing to listen empathetically and embrace differing opinions
- Loves all people
- Good-humored
- Seeks consensus and unity in Christ
- Celebrates the Eucharist with passion
- Creative and enthusiastic

## *The Greater Jackson Community*

Jackson is located at the crossroads of two major highways and a railroad. Our railroad station has the distinction of being the oldest, continuously operating rail station in America. Built in 1873, trains have stopped in Jackson every day since that point.

The downtown area has experienced a resurgence over the last several years, actively increasing the business presence and adding new housing complexes. One of the most visible signs of the renewal, though, was through street art. Bright Walls was a three-year grant project, which invited artists from around the world to paint seventy-five murals on exterior walls of our local buildings. The project has transformed the Jackson landscape, brightening and revitalizing our downtown area.

Jackson has all the charm of a small city. We are home to many lakes, parks, and golf courses. Recreation is readily available, including a biking/running section of Michigan's Iron Belle Trail system. We have a city symphony and orchestra, museums, community theatre production companies, and art studios—Jackson is a proud artistic community. Jackson is in a prime location in southern Michigan. We are only a 35-mile drive to Lansing, Ann Arbor, and Battle Creek. For even more adventure, we are just a slightly longer drive from Motown, the Windy City, or four of the five Great Lakes.

These are some highlights of the Jackson community—

- Multiple public and nonprofit parks and walking trails
- Symphony, theatre, local museums, and arts community
- Four micro-breweries, four wineries, and great local restaurants
- Festivals throughout summer, including a Blues Festival, a Hot Air Balloon Festival, and the Southside Summer Festival ([www.experiencejackson.com](http://www.experiencejackson.com))
- Vibrant county library system with connection to the statewide library catalog
- Bright Walls Murals in our downtown area
- Newly renovated YMCA (next door to us); indoor and outdoor pickle ball courts!



*Our beautiful 5-bedroom rectory is 5 minutes from church and in one of Jackson's lovely historic neighborhoods.*

*We look forward to welcoming our next leader!*