

St Lukes (Ypsilanti)

TYPE	DIOCESE	NAME
Congregation	Michigan	

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

ROLE SUMMARY/DESCRIPTION

St. Luke’s Ypsilanti is eager to hire a full-time rector who will continue our tradition of meaningful and inclusive worship that strengthens us to do good in the world. The ideal candidate is a first-rate priest who collaborates with the laity in leading a dignified religious service grounded in the Episcopal liturgy of the Book of Common Prayer. Such a person will celebrate the Eucharist every Sunday as well as lead a healing service each Wednesday. The rector should be able to combine a Biblical, historical perspective with human-focused storytelling in sermons. This person should be ready to provide pastoral care, while empowering the congregation to do the same. We also seek a priest who will expand our outreach and involvement in a community that includes a diverse population of college students, long-time residents, and marginalized individuals. St. Luke’s is engaged with several ministries in Ypsilanti, including providing a winter warming shelter for our homeless neighbors. Our new rector will support these current outreach efforts and help the church expand its outreach efforts in the community. The ideal rector will also help us to preserve our historic buildings. St. Luke’s will celebrate its bicentennial in 2030, and we seek a leader who can lead our congregation into its third century of service to Christ in Ypsilanti. Above all, we seek someone who can join in our heartfelt rallying cry: All Are Welcome Here!

CURRENT STATUS	RECEIVING NAMES FROM	TO
Receiving names	06/25/2026	08/21/2026

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 current your current Office of Transition Ministries Portfolio OR Vocation Hub Profile

The Transition Minister does an initial screening of all candidates prior to forwarding applications to the discernment committee.

CANDIDATE NARRATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

5. What has been your experience leading change in the Church?, 13. What is a ministry risk you've taken, and what came of it?, 16. In what ways are you engaged in your wider Church or local community?

POSITION PROFILE

CONTACT

NAME	The Rev. Canon Susie Shaefer
ROLE	Canon for Transitions & Formation
ORGANIZATION	Episcopal Diocese of Michigan
PHONE NUMBER	3138334424
EMAIL ADDRESS	sshaefer@edomi.org

POSITION DETAILS

ORDERS OF MINISTRY	DEACON (TRANSITIONAL), PRIEST	GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION	MIDWEST
WORK ENVIRONMENT	IN PERSON	MINISTRY SETTING	URBAN

PAROCHIAL REPORT DATA	
AVG. SUNDAY ATT.	ANNUAL BUDGET
52	241857

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW NARRATIVE

Over the past six years (2019-25), St. Luke’s ran a surplus for four years and a deficit for two. Overall, we had a surplus of \$92,000. Much of that is due to receiving a special curacy grant from the diocese. Without that, the surplus was closer to \$18,000. Our budget is bolstered by income from renters. In a typical year, approximately 13% of St. Luke’s income came from tenants. We have a small endowment that we can tap in a financially sustainable way as needed. We also hold two certificates of deposit and have a healthy bank balance. In 2024 and 2025, 57-58% of our income came from pledges and general donations, and 46-48% went to salaries.

FINANCIAL RESOURCE TYPE PDF

STIPEND, HOUSING, AND BENEFITS

COMPENSATION/SALARY DETAIL

RANGE \$50,001 - \$75,000

DETAILS

Total direct compensation is \$66,276 - inclusive of SECA reimbursement. Salary is \$61,566, with SECA reimbursement of \$4710. We are open to negotiation and flexible options for the right candidate.

POSITION PROFILE

HOUSING/RECTORY TYPE

TYPE OF HOUSING PROVIDED Cash Stipend

DETAILS

Housing allowance is designated by the priest, as part of the stated salary.

SECA REIMBURSEMENT DETAIL

REIMBURSEMENT OFFERED Half

DETAILS

SECA is reimbursed at half, as indicated above

MEDICAL & PENSION BENEFITS DETAIL

PENSION PLAN

In compliance with CPF requirements

HEALTHCARE OPTIONS

Full family

DETAILS

Information on diocesan health care plans can be found at <https://www.edomi.org/church-admin/hr/>

Please note that the diocese is phasing out the PPO 100 and PPO90 plans over the next few years.

VACATION, CONTINUING EDUCATION, AND OTHER BENEFITS

VACATION & LEAVE DETAILS

One month of 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 \$1,000 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 Leave will accrue at the rate of 2 weeks per year of service in this church for Sabbatical Leave, to be available after the fifth year, not to accumulate after the seventh year. Sabbatical arrangements shall be made in full consultation with the Vestry/Bishop's Committee, to ensure benefits for the congregation as well as the priest.

TRAVEL/AUTO ACCOUNT DETAILS

Reimbursement for professional use of a personal automobile on a "per mile" basis according to the current IRS business rate. Reimbursement does not include commuting between home and office. Travel expenses will be reimbursed, with proper receipts or other documentation.

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. This contact number shall be published to ensure the clergy member's ready accessibility in case of emergencies. Parish Office Expense (telephone, postage, office equipment, supplies, etc.) will be reimbursed, with proper receipts or other documentation.

POSITION PROFILE

OTHER BENEFITS OR COMMENTS

Our recent priest was newly ordained and therefore we were eligible for a curacy grant, which we received. We were approved because we are a highly collaborative and supportive group of individuals who provide fertile ground for a young priest to flourish. We offer that same support for any priest joining our congregation.

DIOCESAN COMPENSATION INFORMATION (IF APPLICABLE)

FORMAT WebPage <https://www.edomi.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/2026-Clergy-Compensation-Policy-Rev1.pdf>

MINISTRY CONTEXT AND DESIRED SKILLS

WHAT ARE YOUR COMMUNITY'S HOPES FOR THIS POSITION?

St. Luke's Episcopal Church seeks a full-time rector to lead it into its third century of service to Jesus Christ in Ypsilanti. Since its founding in 1830, St. Luke's has relied on a priest to lead the congregation in divine worship in accordance with the Book of Common Prayer. We seek a worship leader who can maintain our liturgical tradition as well as promote services that are inclusive and open to all. St. Luke's is blessed with a historic sanctuary and buildings that have been lovingly preserved by its members since 1858. As the structures have aged, however, concerns have arisen about the physical accessibility of the buildings. We seek a rector who can find new ways (and income) to sustain our historic structures and make them more adaptable to the physical needs of our congregation. St. Luke's has long been connected with Eastern Michigan University whose students, staff, and faculty are a vital part of the congregation, and we seek a leader who can improve this connection. Ypsilanti is rich with racial diversity, and people of color have always been a vital part of St. Luke's. More recently, the church has welcomed LGBTQ+ individuals and has hosted an annual Pride service. We seek a rector who can maintain this ministry of inclusion and make room for all to worship here. A sizable portion of Ypsilanti lives below the poverty line, and St. Luke's has prioritized serving its marginalized neighbors through ministries such as serving meals at Hope Clinic and collecting backpacks for local elementary students. In 2023, St. Luke's opened its doors to the homeless by operating a winter warming shelter, and the church currently seeks to add a daytime shelter. Although the Shelter Association of Washtenaw County (SAWC) manages the shelter, St. Luke's seeks a leader who can liaise with SAWC staff, monitor the building, and connect parishioners to this ministry. Families and children are also a vital part of the congregation, and St. Luke's hosts an active Sunday School. The Pastoral Care Team maintains contact with the homebound and ill. We seek a rector who can provide pastoral care to all members of St. Luke's from infants to the elderly; someone who can sustain the church's historic vibrancy and promote its vitality as we look to the future.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Property/Real Estate, Collaborative Leadership, Congregational Development, Leadership Development, Strategic Planning

MINISTRY SKILLS

Campus Ministry, Children & Family Formation, Church Growth, Community Building, Interfaith Cooperation, LGBTQIA+ Ministries, Pastoral Care, Preaching, Stewardship, Worship & Liturgy

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?

St. Luke’s primary mission and focus is the worship of the Lord and living the teachings of Jesus Christ through a ministry of service. Christians have gathered in Ypsilanti to perform the liturgy of the Episcopal Church since 1830, and over the last two centuries, the priests and parishioners of St. Luke’s have provided a home for this worship to continue. We maintain a historic sanctuary and buildings near the center of the city, and this places the church in close proximity to a large university, downtown businesses, and several residential neighborhoods. The character of the congregation has changed dramatically over the years. Families and children remain a vital part of the church, but truly all are welcome here. In recent years, St. Luke’s has become more racially diverse while the role of women in leadership has expanded dramatically. LGBTQ+ individuals make up an important part of the church, and St. Luke’s celebrates their inclusion. The character of the neighborhood has changed as well, especially as the number of people in Ypsilanti living below the poverty line has grown. St. Luke’s has adjusted its mission to include the marginalized through its various ministries including providing a winter warming shelter.

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?

The context for St. Luke’s ministry is determined by its location. Although this is the only Episcopal church in Ypsilanti, we attract worshippers from across the region who are drawn by our traditional yet inclusive liturgy as well as our friendly congregation. St. Luke’s is also deeply committed to serving its community. Twenty-five percent of Ypsilanti residents live below the poverty line, and we serve these marginalized individuals through various ministries such as the CROP Hunger Walk and Pull Over Prevention. St. Luke’s also provides accommodations for the unhoused, opening its Great Hall in the winter months as a warming shelter. We strive to find new ways to minister to those in need, and the church is actively pursuing the addition of a daytime shelter. St. Luke’s serves other needy populations as well. Each year, the church organizes a backpack drive and winter apparel collection for students at local elementary schools. We also gather donations for Swoop’s Food Pantry which provides sustenance to food-insecure students at Eastern Michigan University. We seek to strengthen our commitment to these vulnerable populations. St. Luke’s also serves the broader community regardless of need. For more than a decade, the church has provided valuable, low-cost office space for non-profit organizations in the community such as counselors and social workers. In recent years, another religious congregation rented space at St. Luke’s in a way that was collaborative and beneficial to both congregations. The sanctuary was opened to local artists as part of Ypsilanti First Fridays. These efforts have ensured that St. Luke’s remains vital to Ypsilanti. We seek to continue this connection to our community and to find new ways that St. Luke’s can demonstrate the Christian credo in its work.

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.

The congregational leadership culture at St. Luke's is collaborative and mutually supportive. The rector stands at the center of everything that goes on in the church; this person is assisted by a small staff of employees and many committed volunteers. The rector is primarily responsible for determining the liturgy, although decisions are made in consultation with the musical director, altar guild, and others. The vestry plays a vital role in the management of the church and its finances. The vestry meets monthly, and recently, has taken over making announcements at Sunday services to familiarize parishioners with the church's lay leadership. Several permanent and ad hoc committees sustain the life of the congregation. The Parish Life Committee plans events such as the annual Ice Cream Social, chili cookoff, Mardi Gras celebration, while the Building and Grounds Committee keeps the church structure in working operation. The committees work in concert with the rector and keep the congregation regularly informed of their work. The laity also helps the priest in ministering to parishioners in need. The Prayer Chain meets quarterly and maintains an active list of persons who are prayed for every week during worship services. Due to the recent departure of our rector, a Pastoral Care Team has been formed to maintain contact with church members in need, while the Liturgy and Worship Team has been formed to ensure regular divine services in the absence of a priest.

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.

Grounded and compelling worship is the reason people find their way to St. Luke's, and it is one of the main reasons why they stay. The worship at St. Luke's is traditional yet flexible. We follow the 1979 Book of Common Prayer, sampling from Rite I and Rite II, and employing a variety of prayers. At times, we supplement this with other prayers and hymns to fully embrace the diversity of our congregation. Worship at St. Luke's is joyous and participatory. We seek to involve as many people as possible as lectors, acolytes, and singers. Although most congregants remain in the pews, we all lift our voices to praise the Lord. St. Luke's offers a weekly celebration of the Eucharist every Sunday at 10am, and in 2025, we added a Wednesday midday service of prayers and healing. St. Luke's is interested in finding new ways to enhance the worship experience. Although the sanctuary is not currently set up for remote interactions, we are interested in utilizing technology to make the worship service available to more people. At times, the worship experience spreads out of the sanctuary. In Lent 2026, the rector and more than a dozen members met for weekly soup suppers as they discussed *The Screwtape Letters* by C. S. Lewis. There is interest in expanding this type of spiritual inquiry through adult formation classes and/or Bible studies. Music is a vital part of St. Luke's Sunday services, which is offered by our small but faithful choir and by the music director. We have both an organ and grand piano in the sanctuary. We typically use the 1982 Hymnal, and less frequently, *Lift Every Voice and Sing II*.

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.

St. Luke's genuinely believes that all are welcome here—really! Ypsilanti is a community rich with racial diversity, and people of color have been a vital part of our church at least since 1857 when Odawa leader Andrew Blackbird was confirmed at St. Luke's. Today, African Americans, Latina/os, and Asian Americans are present at the weekly worship service as are those from outside of the U.S., including several worshippers from Africa. More recently, the church has welcomed LGBTQ+ individuals in the pews and the pulpit. The tragedy of the 2016 Pulse nightclub shooting led St. Luke's to host a community service to remember those killed. Since 2023, we have hosted an annual Pride service and have participated in Ypsilanti Pride festivities. Inclusion at St. Luke's can also be found in the importance of women to the congregation. For more than twenty years, St. Luke's had a female rector while women have served as Senior Warden for most of the last decade. A diversity of ages and abilities is also central to who St. Luke's is. Children are active in the worship service and fill up the nursery and Sunday School, while parishioners as old as ninety-five regularly attend worship services. We make space for all individuals regardless of need or ability. One of our members is an elderly veteran who regularly attends service despite the church's accessibility challenges.

MINISTRY MEDIA AND LINKS

St. Luke's homepage with <https://stlukesypsi.org/>
information about the chu

St. Luke's Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/stlukesypsi/>
with photos and informati

NARRATIVES

2. Describe a recent ministry experiment or innovation in your congregation/diocese.

What did you try, why did you try it, and what did you learn - whether it "worked" or not?

The addition of the winter warming shelter was the most significant innovation at St. Luke's in recent years. In Fall 2022, the Ypsilanti City Council approached several parishioners to see if the church could provide overnight accommodations for unhoused members of the community. This led to discussions between the interim rector, lay leaders, and the Shelter Association of Washtenaw County (SAWC) to work out the details. Senior lay leaders believed that the mission of serving a needy population should be pursued and presented a proposal to vestry. The idea of a shelter was not without controversy as it meant giving up a vital fellowship space and inviting in people who might damage the buildings. In response, the vestry presented its proposal to the congregation and asked for a churchwide vote to support the initiative. The congregation voted overwhelmingly in favor of providing the facilities, and after the diocese approved the proposal, the city council voted unanimously to approve a contract between the City of Ypsilanti, St. Luke's, and SAWC. The winter warming shelter opened at St. Luke's in February 2023, and it has provided a place for twenty-five people to sleep five nights a week each winter since. Each year, the vestry reviews the arrangement to ensure that the conditions of the contract are being honored. Three years later, the church is proud of the shelter, and congregants have become more involved in serving those in need. The shelter has also brought new members to St. Luke's; people who want to support this Christian mission for those in need. The success of the winter warming shelter has also led the church to consider adding a daytime shelter. Once again, this innovation has proceeded along orderly lines, beginning with discussions among the priest, lay leaders, and the city. The idea of having less access to our Great Hall has raised concerns among the congregation, but once again, St. Luke's is proceeding deliberately. The church has held several meetings to listen to parishioners' opinions about expanding the shelter and an online poll distributed to collect additional input. Seventy-five percent of respondents support moving ahead with a daytime shelter, and the vestry is currently working on the details to make this a reality in the new future.

5. How does your congregation/diocese sustain its spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being?

Ministry is deeply meaningful and often demanding. Share how your community nurtures its collective health and sense of call.

The people of St. Luke's are at various stages in their spiritual journey and their own relationship with God and Jesus Christ. All are free to take their journey in their own way and at their own pace. It is a treat to listen to individual stories during stewardship season when members talk about why they give back to St. Luke's. This is when we all get a glimpse of the power of the Spirit to change people's lives and motivate them to action. It is inspiring to learn how this church has helped them on their journey. The friendly and supportive nature of St. Luke's does much to sustain its members. Members of the Prayer Chain meet quarterly, and they respond to known needs in a variety of ways. In the past, the rector has taken primary responsibility for caring for home-bound members of the congregation. Recently, however, a Pastoral Care Team has been formed to maintain contact with church members in need. A weekly coffee hour after church provides an opportunity for individuals to gather outside the worship service. We have a variety of congregational events throughout the year, including a monthly poetry group. In Lent 2026, several parishioners met for weekly soup suppers as they discussed *The Screwtape Letters* by C. S. Lewis.

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.

Every autumn, we host a Stewardship Campaign to ask people to pledge what they anticipate giving for the coming year. The vestry in concert with the treasurer oversees this effort, typically selecting a few members to lead the campaign. We often have members speak to the congregation during the service about why they give, and we make a strong effort to include the voices of those not heard in the past. Their stories of how their faith intersects with their financial gifts to the church are inspiring. One year, members talked about our ministries in the community, and another year, we talked about where the money goes. A letter is also sent to everyone in the congregation each year, with a form that prompts us to indicate non-financial ways we can give back to the church and the community. Usually, the Stewardship Campaign concludes with a chili cookoff in mid-October as we celebrate our patronal feast day. St. Luke's has also participated in a variety of fundraising activities such as providing parking spaces during city events and a silent auction. Moreover, our members steward the church and its grounds with clean-up and planting days. And we have been having more mid-year updates about the budget. We also steward the community through our various ministries of community outreach, and St. Luke's prioritizes its commitment to the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan by paying its apportionment. Stewardship also means showing appreciation for the gifts of time, talent, and treasure that our parishioners freely give to St. Luke's and to the community. We have been making an effort to thank people for their stewardship with thank you notes and with recognition during Sunday service.

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.

St. Luke's is a healthy congregation that deals well with navigating challenges and change. Between 1957 and 2022, this church had only three rectors. While this created a culture of stability, it also encouraged complacency. The arrival of an interim rector in 2022, and then a new rector in 2023 (who departed three years later), forced St. Luke's to consider new ways of living the Word. The laity has taken on greater responsibility in the worship service and pastoral care. New leaders have also brought fresh ideas to St. Luke's, and the parish has responded favorably to these changes. St. Luke's has become more forward facing with ministries like the winter warming shelter, but also in worship. During COVID, the church introduced "Ashes to Go," and this has remained a popular part of our Ash Wednesday services. New leaders have also strengthened the connections between St. Luke's and the other houses of worship in downtown Ypsilanti. Since 2023, St. Luke's has participated in interfaith services with the Lutheran, United Methodist, and Presbyterian congregations several times a year. St. Luke's has become a regular presence in the summer Pride Festival in downtown Ypsilanti. In addition, we host a Pride dinner and service that is open to the community. Most recently, St. Luke's has responded to those who are suffering due to their undocumented status. On Palm Sunday 2026, our rector and members joined Episcopalian clergy and laity from across the diocese to walk the Stations of the Cross in nearby Frog Island Park as a way of remembering those who have been removed from their communities.

12. What are your current strategic priorities or plans for the future?

Share about any existing strategic plans, visioning processes, or future priorities your community is pursuing. How do these goals reflect your mission and the needs of the people you serve? What hopes or aspirations are guiding your ministry in this season?

As St. Luke's looks forward to its bicentennial in 2030, we are eager to put the church and its structure on a sound footing. Although the church operates with a balanced budget and maintains a small endowment, we are dependent on revenue from pledges, donations, and rental income to stay in operation. Attention to long-term investment is necessary to shore up the church's financial situation. Similarly, the church buildings are a source of pride for the congregation and the community, but they are aging in a way that challenges the financial support of the parish. Several members of the congregation regularly tend to the buildings including one member who provides tens of thousands of dollars' worth of repairs for free. Looking ahead, a capital campaign is necessary to raise funds and to apply for grants to further stabilize the building. A committee has been formed to look into fundraising, but we will need the leadership of a new rector to make this a reality.

13. How does your congregation/diocese incorporate accessibility and inclusion in your shared life?

Share how your community strives to create welcoming, inclusive spaces for people of all abilities, backgrounds, and experiences.

Although St. Luke's strongly believes that all are welcome here, physical accessibility remains a challenge. While the only part of the church that is reachable to those with mobility issues is the sanctuary, we have devoted considerable time and energy over the past decade to making the church ADA compliant. In 2018, a study was commissioned to investigate installing an elevator, although the total cost (\$750,000) was far beyond what the church could afford. A second plan to install a ramp was also deemed too pricey (\$250,000), so instead, the church installed a wheelchair lift for \$50,000. The lift, certified in March 2019, has been a welcome addition but also a letdown because it falls short of the goal of making the whole building accessible to worshippers and renters. Accessibility remains a topic of discussion for our congregation and leadership. Although the financial challenge of an elevator remains daunting, perhaps the church might experiment with filming worship services and broadcasting these through its website. To make Sunday mornings more inclusive, we have added improved microphones to make sure that all people can hear all parts of the service. We seek to be a church that is accessible and inclusive of all, and we welcome creative solutions to this challenge.