



Office for  
Transition  
Ministry

# Ministry Portfolio

*Full Portfolio (last updated Dec 13, 2023)*

**St. Paul's, St. Joseph & St. Augustine's, Benton Harbor, Western Michigan**  
14141 Lincoln Avenue, St. Joseph, MI 49085, United States

Contact:

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge | Receiving Names until 01/31/24.

[tlittle@edwm.org](mailto:tlittle@edwm.org)

Weekly Average Sunday Attendance (ASA)	Number of Weekend Worship Services	Number of Weekday Worship Services	Number of Other per Month Worship Services
<b>34</b>	<b>1</b>		
Current Annual Compensation	Cash Stipend	Housing / Rectory Detail	Utilities
<b>\$48000</b>			
SECA reimbursement	Compensation Available for New Position	Housing Available for	Pension Plan
	<b>\$74590</b>		
Healthcare Options Clergy+1	Dental	Housing Equity Allowance in budget	Annual Equity Amount
	<b>Yes</b>		
Vacation Weeks	Vacation Weeks Details	Continuing Education Weeks	Continuing Education Weeks Details
	<b>4</b>	<b>2 (standard)</b>	
Continuing Education Funding in budget	Sabbatical Provision	Travel/Auto Account	Other Professional Account
<b>up to/including \$500/year</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>

*Current compensation is for retired Interim. New compensation and Heathcare are negotiable.*

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

Several years ago, St. Augustine's decided as a parish to fulfill a goal of being more physically accessible. We undertook a capital campaign and were able to add an elevator, an accessible restroom, and accessible parking. And in December 2021, St. Augustine's and many friends from throughout the community, including St. Paul's dedicated a small home, a project that the Children's Chapel initiated. Upon completion, it was gifted to our local Habitat for Humanity chapter for one of their rental clients. Both of these projects were undertaken to bring more of Christ's love into our community; the one by allowing more inclusive physical access to the facility and the other to provide shelter for a neighbor in need. In June of 2023, St. Paul's sponsored a booth and participated at Pridefest in Benton Harbor. We were joined by members of St. Augustine's and Church of the Mediator. We visited with attendees, sharing the Good News of God's love for every human being. We provided handouts about our local parishes and discussed the Episcopal Church's full support and inclusion of the LGBTQ+ community. We evangelized to all we came in contact with. It was a glorious day.

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

We believe that the Holy Spirit is at work in our parishes and we strive to listen faithfully to how God is calling us to minister in our communities. While the pandemic disrupted settled patterns within our parishes, we emerged from it feeling hopeful about new possibilities. At St. Paul's, our Interim Rector has challenged us to consider "Who is our neighbor?" and "How can we serve our community?" We are collaborating with each other and other Episcopal parishes in new ways, worshipping and ministering together. Our outreach committee is vibrant and always exploring how we can be the hands and feet of Christ in our community. We are actively participating in the two year College for Congregational Development. We are open and willing to learn. At St. Augustine's, we are engaged in the College for Congregational Development program with our friends at St. Paul's. We have developed a process for live-streaming services that allows those unable to attend in person to worship. We have begun to collaborate more with our sister parishes to build relationships between congregations, including sharing Holy Week and Christmas service schedules.

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

Action driven faith filled outreach; enthusiasm for becoming the church for the future; advocate for social justice; teacher/preacher who deepens our faith

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

At St. Paul's, our style of worship flows easily between traditional and more contemporary Episcopal practices, using Rite II and Enriching our Worship. We utilize Eucharistic Prayers A, B, C, and D, and have begun using more gender-neutral language in our prayers. Everyone is welcome in our worship and at the Eucharistic Table. At St. Augustine's, most parishioners would likely describe our liturgical style as lower church. We treasure the liturgy and use Rite II but at times include prayers from other sources. Our hymns are selected from the Hymnal or Lift Every Voice and Sing. We welcome all to the Lord's Table at communion. At the end of each service, whether the Eucharist or Morning Prayer, many in attendance gather together to lay hands on one another and offer prayers of thanksgiving, traveling mercies, or healing.

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How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

Both parishes have a rich tradition of lay participation. We encourage all who feel called to serve, to do so. Parishioners serve as Eucharistic Ministers and Visitors, Worship Leaders, Lectors, Acolytes, and Greeters. Children serve as Acolytes and Lectors as well. Week by week the Altar Guild and Flower Guild prepare the sanctuary for services. Each member, regardless of age, is encouraged to discern how they are called to serve the parish or broader community. The children's vision led St. Augustine's to build our first "Tiny House for Big Change" here in Benton Harbor. Parishioners of all ages from both St. Augustine's and St. Paul's volunteer at the Neighborhood Food Pantry and keep it running twice monthly. Folks from both parishes are part of Berrien Partners, a group that has applied to sponsor a refugee family. The group has recently been approved by Welcome Corps and is waiting to be matched with a family. St. Paul's and St. Augustine's are among the partnering parishes that will help with tangible needs of the refugee family and St. Augustine's will serve as fiduciary. Members of both parishes are on teams preparing to meet the many needs of a family.

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

At St. Paul's, we care deeply for one another and enjoy spending time together. We host weekly coffee hours, monthly luncheons, and weekly book discussion groups. We nurture our spiritual well-being through parish-wide study, including The Church Cracked Open, The Way of Love, and Sacred Ground. We pray weekly during worship for those with birthdays, anniversaries, and those in need of healing. We make phone calls and visits to members who are not able to attend services, and we send Eucharistic Visitors every week following our Sunday service. Our Chapter of the Daughters of the King prays for those in need on a daily basis. At St. Augustine's, the words most often used to describe the parish are family and community. The mainstay of our life together is our communal worship. Praying for and with one another, through the liturgy and in other ways, whether for celebration or a need for healing, binds us together and provides spiritual nurture. Weekly coffee hours, monthly Book Club meetings and Ladies Lunches, and periodic parish celebrations, give many more opportunities for fellowship. Communication within the parish allows for us to meet other needs that may arise.

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

St. Augustine's maintains a Food Pantry that serves hundreds of our friends and neighbors each month. Our community garden is a part of this ministry, providing fresh produce to the Food Pantry when it's in season. We maintain an immigrant assistance ministry that provides support for local families in need. We also serve at The Soup Kitchen regularly. And we are in the fundraising phase of our second Tiny House project, in order to build a small home for a local veteran. At St. Paul's, we have a long history of ministry and outreach in our community. Members and friends of St. Paul's serve monthly at the Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen, collaborate with Interfaith Action of Southwest Michigan to collect items annually for area harvesters and migrant workers, and collect school supplies for students at our neighborhood elementary school. Our parish finances a Rector's Discretionary fund that is used to meet emergent needs within the community.

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

St. Paul's currently has members serving on the Standing Committee and the Diocesan Council. We are also participating in the College for Congregational Development. Our parish has an active chapter of the Daughters of the King, and we have an intern and candidate for the priesthood who is serving under the supervision of our Interim Rector. We partner with Interfaith Action of Southwest Michigan, an ecumenical organization that supports migrant affairs, reduction of gun violence, and support of the LGBTQ+ population. St. Augustine's is involved with Interfaith Action and is recognized as an LGBTQ+ welcoming congregation as well as an anti-racist congregation. Over the past several years, we have worked to engage in and nurture relationships with our sister Episcopal churches in the area, most significantly with St. Paul's, but also with Church of the Mediator, Harbert. The service schedule for Holy Week and the Christmas season reflect this with services offered alternately at each parish to encourage parishioners to worship at both churches.

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

The young people of St. Augustine's envisioned a big project in 2018: building a tiny house for a neighbor in need. Fundraising was supported by both youth and adults and contributions came from all over the community, including our sister Episcopal Churches. In December of 2021, our very first "Tiny House for Big Change" was blessed. It was then gifted to our local chapter of Habitat for Humanity to be maintained as a very low cost rental home for one of their clients. It is now home to a gentleman who had been unable to find reliable, affordable housing. Fundraising is underway for our second Tiny House. Cara Gillespie is the coordinator of the Tiny House project. St. Paul's has recently formed a partnership with our neighborhood elementary school. Parish members donated 35 sets of school supplies for the 2023 - 2024 school year, with a goal of ensuring that each student had a full set of supplies on the first day of school, reducing the financial burden on teachers and families. Diane Davidson, our outreach ministry coordinator, can be contacted regarding this project.

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

At St. Paul's, we think about stewardship as a way of life and recognize that stewardship is much more than just financial support. We host a formal stewardship campaign each Fall and invite parishioners to share personal stories about why they give and how it makes a difference in their spiritual life. Our vestry is conscientious regarding its role as stewards of the parish's financial resources, and operates from a mindset of abundance, not scarcity. At St. Augustine's we believe stewardship is an extension of a Blessed Community and strive to take care of the things entrusted to us. Most recently this meant finding a way to fix our roof without incurring debt. at other times, this has meant sharing with one another what St. Augustine's means to us personally as a kick-off to a formal giving campaign. In all ways, it is about maintaining loving relationships with our siblings in Christ and thoughtfully tending to physical things entrusted to our care.

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

At St. Paul's, we recognize that conflict and disagreement are inevitable in any community. While it can be uncomfortable, we understand the importance of addressing conflict rather than side-stepping it. We aim to truly listen to one another, ask for forgiveness when necessary, and approach all of these conversations with Christ-like love. At St. Augustine's, we struggled with the procedure to safely reopen in the presence of Covid. This created a conflict between the Sr. Warden and our priest. The Sr. Warden resigned as a result. However, through a process of thoughtful listening to all sides, we eventually worked our way through the process to safely reopen.

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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?

St. Augustine's experimented with a variety of on-line service formats. Some allowed participation from people at home but were equipment and expertise intensive. Eventually, we settled on a live-stream format that does not allow for interactive participation but is easier to set up and manage. We have chosen to continue to offer this although we have been back to in-person worship for some time. We view this as a way to break down barriers that may keep some people from worshipping and one way that we can move beyond the ways things have always been done and instead to move into a more contemporary mode of "doing church". At St. Paul's, under the guidance of our Interim Rector, we have been transforming the way we approach leadership and ministry. Rather than relying solely on clergy to direct our work, we have empowered our vestry and our members to lead. While this was a "paradigm shift" for many, it has been successful. Less successful was our attempt at live-streaming our services during the pandemic. Both of these experiences have taught us the importance of keeping an open mind in the face of resistance, and working together to find solutions.



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### Prior Incumbents

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
The Rev. Diane Pike	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	2018-12	2021-12

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
The Rev. Pam Sten	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	2007-10	2012-07

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
The Rev. DeLiza Spangler	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	1995-09	2005-11

*Previous Incumbents for St. Augustine's: The Rev. Cynthia Caruso - Dec. 2020 - Nov. 2022 The Rev. Barbara Wilson - Sept. 2015 - Jan. 2019 The Rev. Dan Scheid - Jun. 2006 - Apr. 2015*

Church School	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Children School	Number of Students for Children School
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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
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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.stpaulsjoe.org](http://www.stpaulsjoe.org) and [www.staugustinebh.com](http://www.staugustinebh.com)

Media Links:

Online References:

> <https://www.facebook.com/StPaulStJoe/>  
> <https://www.facebook.com/StAugustinesEpiscopalChurchBentonHarborMi/>

Languages Significantly Represented:

**English**

Provide Worship or Classes in:

**English**

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### References

Bishop:

[sadams@eastmich.org](mailto:sadams@eastmich.org) 616-319-2006

**The Rt. Rev. Skip Adams  
(Assisting Bishop)**

Diocesan Transition Minister

[tlittle@edwm.org](mailto:tlittle@edwm.org) 810-300-9177

**The Rev. Canon Tracie  
Little**

Current Warden/Board Chair

[bebanghart222@gmail.com](mailto:bebanghart222@gmail.com) 269-277-3066

**Bruce Banghart (St.  
Augustine's)**

Previous Warden/Board Chair

[mjm8789@yahoo.com](mailto:mjm8789@yahoo.com) 269-470-8789

**Current at St. Paul's - Mary  
Malesky**

Search Chair

[cmgillespie75@gmail.com](mailto:cmgillespie75@gmail.com) 269-325-1847 [RebekahYoder@gmail.com](mailto:RebekahYoder@gmail.com)  
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**Stephen Leonard (St.  
Augustine's) and Rebekah  
Westerbeek (St. Paul's) and  
Catherine Thomas (St.  
Paul's)**

Local Community Leader