



THE EVANGEL

The official publication of St. John's Episcopal Church

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Dear People of St. John's and Friends,

Some of this message is a “repeat” of things I’ve said before – but it bears repeating.

June was a busy month...lots going on in the community as well as at St. John's. We started with the Day of Honoring, Healing, and Remembering with the tribe. Then came PRIDE Fest in Mt. Pleasant, the Juneteenth celebration at Island Park, Jess Hart's graduation from the Academy of Vocational Leadership, and finally our first PRIDE Communion in the parish hall, where 40 people came to celebrate Eucharist together!

St. John's... the parish – the church – is more than what happens within the walls of the church (or the parish hall). As we hear in this Sunday's Gospel passage (Luke 10:1-11, 16-20), Jesus sends us out – to carry his mission into the world. He commissions us to preach and heal – to bring the good news – to those outside our walls... and that means we need to be present in the community.

We go to graduation parties, we celebrate retirements and birthdays and anniversaries of folks in the parish, to let one another know that they matter to us – that we care for and celebrate with them. But if we are to be church, if we are serious about what we say – that everyone is our sister and brother – then we also need to be present to care for and celebrate others – in the community around us.

And that is why we go to PRIDE celebrations and Juneteenth festivals and days of Remembrance for our Indigenous siblings. We go to be present – to honor and celebrate and care for those we say are welcome in our St. John's house.

Our presence matters to people. Folks noticed that St. John’s had a presence at the Juneteenth celebration, at the PRIDE event in town, and at the day of Honoring, Healing and Remembering for the tribe. Our presence tells people that we care enough to be there – and that might be the encouragement they need to dare to believe they might really be welcome at St. John’s.

I wear my collar most of the time I’m in town. I never wore a “habit” in my earlier days, because I saw that as a way of being ‘set apart’ or special, and I did not want to communicate that message. But I wear my collar (and usually a St. John’s button) now as I’m out and about – to let people know that St. John’s is present and available. We fly the Episcopal Church Flag, the PRIDE flag, and a Red Dress* from the front of the rectory/office. Yesterday I had a wonderful conversation with someone for whom the Red Dress* was significant. Sometimes it’s the PRIDE flag or the Black Lives Matter sign.

St. John’s is the church – yes. But we can only fully be church when we extend ourselves and our welcome beyond our doors.

Remember that you are loved – and so is everyone else you will meet.

Sr. Diane+

*The Red Dress Project seeks to honor and raise awareness about missing and murdered indigenous people and began in 2010 after artist Jamie Black launched her continuing REDress art installation. In Mt. Pleasant, we celebrated the National Day of Remembrance for Missing and Murdered Indigenous People on May 5 – and we keep the Red Dress hanging as a sign that we continue to remember.

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New Assisting Bishop Rt. Rev. Anne Hodges-Copple



Dear friends in Christ,

On behalf of the Standing Committee, I am overjoyed to share that the Rt. Rev. Anne Hodges-Copple will be joining the staff of the Diocese of the Great Lakes as our Assisting Bishop beginning in mid-August.

Bishop Anne brings a wealth of experience, deep pastoral wisdom, and a joyful spirit of accompaniment to this role. She served faithfully for nine years as Bishop Suffragan of the Diocese of North Carolina, and while she has officially retired from full-time episcopal ministry, she continues to answer God's call to serve the Church. We are honored that she has said yes to joining us.

Bishop Anne will serve quarter time through April 2027, when we will consecrate our first Bishop Diocesan. Although she will not reside in Michigan, she will make regular trips to the diocese. She is already working closely with our staff to explore creative ways of being present with and accessible to across our communities on site and online.

This announcement is a long time coming! Since June 2024, your Standing Committee has been actively seeking an Assisting Bishop to offer pastoral and episcopal leadership during this time of transition. As you've heard me and others say many times before, we know that our systems and our people work best with a bishop walking alongside us. Our Interim Executive Officer, Alan James, is providing excellent administrative and structural leadership and we're thankful now that Bishop Anne will join us in a role focused on uniquely episcopal leadership.

We are confident that Bishop Anne is the right person to walk with us in this season. Much like an interim rector serves a parish in transition, she will tend to the spiritual and pastoral life of our diocese as we continue our search for the person God is calling to be our first Bishop Diocesan.

Bishop Anne is eager to get to know the people of the Great Lakes and to share in ministry with us. She brings a particular heart for connection, formation, and care. She has already expressed her commitment to being a pastoral and teaching presence throughout our diocese and looks forward to joining us at Diocesan Convention this October.

We'll be sharing more details about her schedule, availability, and ways to connect in the coming weeks. For now, please join me in giving thanks for this good news, and in prayer for Bishop Anne as she prepares to step into this role among us.

Warmly,
The Rev. Molly Bosscher
President, Standing Committee
Episcopal Diocese of the Great Lakes



Our Capybara "Georgie" got a picture in the Diocesan newsletters coverage of St. John's presence at PRIDE Fest! Here's what the Director of Communications had to say:

"On the road again this weekend! I started my journey in Mt. Pleasant at the city's first proper Pride Fest, which grew out of a few years of a pop-up Pride celebration. It was good to see the people of St. John's, Mt. Pleasant and meet their Pride Capybara with a goose on its head (because why not?!) which was a gift from a late parishioner's daughter who knew how important LGBTQ+ inclusion was to that community. I forget the Capybara's name (George, maybe?), but it definitely added extra joy to an already-joy-filled space!

The folx from St. John's are clearly a staple in the Mt. Pleasant Pride community. Sr. Diane took a few moments to share with me why being active in the LGBTQ+ community is important to St. John's. She said, "It's important to let people know that there is a church in town that accepts them for who they are and it lets our folks know there's a whole wide world out there where God is already present." As a bonus, I got to hear another performance from the Great Lakes Bay Pride Harmony Diversity Choir!"

-Rachel Rose-Ravellette, Director of Communications

Jess Hart's ordination to the transitional diaconate!



By the Grace of God and with the Consent of the People

The Right Reverend Bonnie A. Perry

will ordain

**Kathryn Anne Christian,
Stephanie Ann Cote,
Jennifer Lynn Frechette,
Jessica Ann Hart,
Julianne S Lark,
Catheryn Ann Stevens, &
Theresa Margaret Elizabeth Faix Williams**

To the Sacred Order of Deacons

**Saturday, July 12 | 2:30 p.m.
St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Grand Rapids
& Online**

Meeting in person

Present: Kojo Antwi, Clancy DeLong, Dan Eichinger, Lara Raisanen, Rev. Sr. Diane Stier, Jim Thurston

Absent: Liz Brockman, Kevin Davidson, Jerry May Guests: Ethan Kindle

Meeting called to order:

Opening Prayer by Stier

Administrative Business

- Motion to approve minutes from the 16 March 2025 meeting by DeLong; Thurston second. Motion passed unanimously.
- Vestry approves budgeted expenditure from computer & technology for a new Rectory computer, not to exceed \$850.
- Information: The generous special gifts to St. John's are specific to the music program but the donors placed no other restrictions.
- Ethan Kindle discussed growing St. John's choir; Vestry commented that a Thursday, 4:00 pm rehearsal is not workable for parishioners with 9-5 jobs.
- Vestry will place a call for volunteers (audit; counting receipts) into This Week and the Evangel. It was mentioned that counting after church on Sunday likely would be more convenient for a larger pool of volunteers.
- Eichinger, Raisanen, and Thurston agreed to be audit volunteers

Pastoral Report

- Continuing supper church through the summer
- In June, St. John's needs volunteers to attend PRIDE celebration (7th), Indigenous People's Day of Remembrance (6th), and Juneteenth (tbd)
- The Rev. Canon Nurya Love Parish (EDGL Canon for Beloved Community) asked Sr. Diane to participate on an Indigenous Boarding School reflection committee. She agreed to represent St. John's as a parish-at-hand where one of the Indigenous Boarding Schools was located.
- The Rev. Linnea Stiffler will be supply priest on 22 June 2025
- Jess Hart will be ordained a Transitional Deacon on 12 July and will preach at St. John's on 13 July.
- The Mountaintown Family Chorus will perform at the Isabella County Commission on Aging this Wednesday, 21 May 2025 at 7:00 pm.

Committee Reports

- A. Building and Grounds
 - 1. Motion to accept a contract with Grass Wackers, Inc. for an amount not to exceed \$2,400 for calendar year 2025 by Raisanen; Antwi second. Motion passed unanimously.
 - There was discussion on capping lawn care costs, which have increased with the need to procure new providers. Vestry discussed a reasonable allowance for GWI taking into account our separate contracted costs with Neat & Green.
 - The goal is to keep costs as low as possible but also to give the Junior Warden leeway to spend the required funds to keep the lawn and grounds well-maintained.
 - 2. A separate contract with Neat & Green for lawn treatment was approved previously.
- B. Worship - no report
- C. Human Resources - committee will meet within next month
- D. Administration & Finance
 - 1. Receipts are low - should be at 33% for the year; we are not quite there.
 - 2. Utilities budget is likely insufficient due to unexpected increased costs; Vestry must watch these line items closely.
 - 3. CD interest income is outperforming budget, due to both increased amounts held as well as particularly strong interest rates.
 - 4. DeLong will create a short-term CD for the special gift money.
 - 5. Kindle says sanctuary can be kept at 60F in winter and up to 70F in summer with no harm to the organ.
 - 6. St. John's is grateful to the anonymous donor who paid for the bat remediation.
 - 7. Motion by Raisanen; second by Thurston to accept treasurer's report. Motion passed unanimously.
- E. Christian Formation - no report
- F. Hospitality - no report
- G. Outreach - no report
- H. Senior Warden - no report

Old Business - (continued from Vestry's e-meeting 14 May 2025)

- Norma Bailey, from the Unitarian Universalist congregation, sent word to other local congregations that a presence at the Mount Pleasant School Board meeting on Monday, 19 May 2025 would be helpful as the School Board votes on a new sex education curriculum. Sr. Diane cannot attend. Christi Brookes volunteered to represent our parish. Motion by Thurston; second by DeLong. Motion passed unanimously.
 - The St. John's Vestry approves the letter written by Christi Brookes to the Mount Pleasant School Board for submission to their meeting record and minutes, and also approves her presenting on our behalf at the meeting.

New Business

- None

Closing prayer: Stier

Meeting adjourned:

Next meeting: 8 June 2025; 11:30 am

Respectfully submitted by Lara Raisanen, Clerk

May 2025 Financial Report

Below is a summary of operating fund activity through the end of May (41.67%).

Unrestricted operating fund receipts.....	\$ 78,711.79 (34.38% of budget)
Unrestricted operating fund expenditures.....	\$95,175.41 (39.83% of budget)
Operating fund receipts over (under) expenditures.....	\$ (16,463.62)

Through the first five months of 2025, income remains down. As we did in 2024, we adopted a budget with a deficit in 2025. The 2025 budgeted deficit is \$18,426.44. My main concern is through the first five months in 2024, we had some movement in covering the shortage. Unfortunately, that is not the case in 2025. This weight is not to be place on parishioners alone. We are in a tough economy right now. With the economic woes we are currently facing, it's difficult to cover a balanced budget, let alone a deficit budget.

Please verify that your estimated giving amount is up-to-date.

Cash Balances

Isabella Bank - Checking	32,851.40
Members First CU - Savings	5.00
Members First CU - CD 11-30-25	15,002.91
Members First CU - CD 07-22-26	87,525.65
Members First CU - CD 12-27-25	21,508.11
Endowment Fund	111,447.64

Total

268,340.71

Clancy



**Remember Our
Homebound Members**
Drop a card to our parish
members who are homebound.

Nancy Fulton
Comfort Care
1945 Churchill Blvd.
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

Emelia Parker
(Alex's House)
616 Boothbay Ct.
Beavercreek, OH 45430

Nancy Rivard
Comfort Care
1945 Churchill Blvd.
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

Martha Rarick
362 E. Baseline Rd.
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

Harry and Margaret Kuhn
1003 Mariette
Weidman, MI 48893

St. John's Prayer Group

If you wish to add or remove names
from the Prayer List, please call Sr.
Diane Stier, 989- 807-0215, the church
office, or email Pamela Dingman:
pamela.dingman@gmail.com.
Thank you.



Pastoral Care

Just a reminder: you should let the
parish office know if you are ill and
wish to receive a call from the Rector.



July Birthdays

Hazel Hart	07/04
Ann Marie Orren	07/08
Olivia Ohler	07/11
Karen Varanauskas	07/15
Jillian Davidson	07/16
Joyce Baugh	07/19
Claudette Shaffer	07/21
Bernice Cole	07/22
Sam Raisanen	07/24
Ford Dingman	07/25
Robert Cosan	07/28



July Anniversaries

David & Jennifer Dingman	07/11
Ralph Baber & Karen Varanauskas	07/15
Eric & Jessica Vinciguerra	07/15
Sam & Lara Raisanen	07/20
Clancy & Patricia DeLong	07/25

Weekly Schedule:

Sunday 10AM: Holy Communion: In Person or [Facebook](#)
or [YouTube](#)

Wednesday 10AM: [Church School by Zoom](#)

Wednesday 7PM: [Connections Conversations by Zoom](#)

Thursday 8PM: [Compline \(Night Prayer\) by Zoom](#)

Coffee Hour Schedule:

July 6	David & Jennifer Dingman
July 13	The Davidson Family
July 20	Ford & Pamela Dingman
July 27	VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Lay Ministers:

	Lectors	Prayers
July 6	Jennifer Dingman	Jennifer Dingman
July 13	Jim Thurston	Tom Cochrane
July 20	Mary Stewart Kiesgen	Nancy Hartshorne
July 27	Ulana Klymyshyn	Patricia Thurston

Greeters Schedule:

July 6	Clancy & Patricia DeLong
July 13	Tom & Mary Ellen Cochrane
July 20	The Eichinger Family
July 27	Ford & Pamela Dingman

July Calendar

Sundays: 07/06, 07/13, 07/20, 07/27

10am Holy Communion (In person, Facebook, & YouTube)

Mondays: 07/07, 07/14, 07/21, 07/28

Office Closed
6:30PM GA/

Tuesdays: 07/1, 07/08, 07/15, 07/22, 07/29

11am Tai Chi with Judy

Wednesdays: 07/02, 07/09, 07/16, 07/23, 07/30

10am Church School
via Zoom

7pm Weekly Connection via Zoom

Thursdays: 07/03, 07/10, 07/17, 07/24, 07/31

11am Tai Chi with Judy
8pm Compline via Zoom

Fridays: 07/04, 07/11, 07/18, 07/25

Nothing on these days
Office Closed



**Supper Church will be on
July 27th
at
4:00pm**

**beginning with a potluck dinner
followed by Eucharist in the Parish Hall**



July Newsletter

Happy July!

If you visited the Mt. Pleasant Pride Festival on June 7th, you got to see first hand how many people in mid-Michigan support our Pride Community (estimated over 600 in attendance!). I'd also like to highlight the Silent Auction Fundraiser we held this past weekend which was incredibly successful! A special thanks is owed to Liz Brockman and St. John's Episcopal Church in Mt. Pleasant for their hospitality. They were incredibly gracious and helpful all throughout the organizational process. I would also be remiss if I didn't profusely thank board members Liz H. and Erin for taking on this huge project, and the many other volunteers and board members who pitched in along the way to make it happen.

I strongly believe the work we're doing at MPPC is essential, and the importance of building community ties and personal connections remains at the forefront of my personal thoughts and actions as we move forward into the unknown. I'm honored to be trusted with the responsibility of guiding the Mt. Pleasant Pride Center forward in our mission to empower and uplift the Pride Community of Mid-Michigan. Let me know if there's a need you see in our Mid-Michigan community that MPPC might be able to fill. You can reach me directly by emailing ebay@mppridecenter.com.

You're always welcome to come check out the space, ask a question, or just hang out at the center whenever we're open. Hours are posted weekly on Facebook, Instagram, Reddit, Bluesky, and Tumblr (social links included at the bottom of the newsletter) as well as in the discord.

The Mt. Pleasant Pride Center is located at 201 S University Ave, Suite 106. It's easiest to find using the side door on the south side of the building, up the ramp. Ample parking is available on site.

Good News Garden

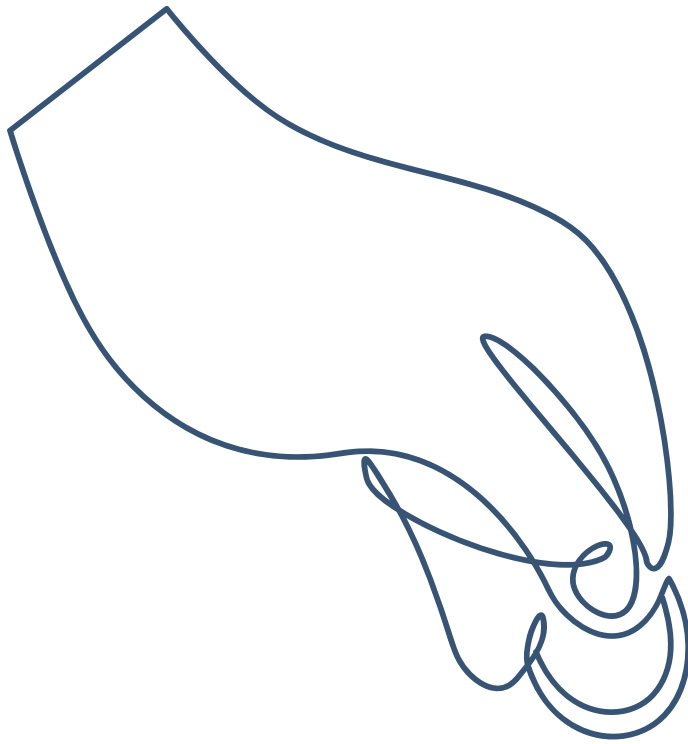


There will be a garden this year! We grow organic produce for the Soup Kitchen and Food Pantry. We worked with both organizations to know what to grow, when to deliver to them, and it is fun learning how they used the fresh vegetables. If you are interested in helping with the garden this year, please send Laura (lauralcochrane@gmail.com) a note.



The 2025 Altar Flower Calendar is posted in the Lantern across from the elevator. Please consider a Sunday that is a good date for you to honor or remember a loved one and sign up to provide altar flowers. Flowers are a wonderful addition to worship! You may use flowers from your garden or a store and arrange them yourself, or arrange with Elliot's or Norm's Florist to do arrangements and they will deliver to the church.

Thank you!



Different ways to give...

We now have four different ways to give back to the church. You can now drop off at the church, mail your offer to the church, or give through “Giving Tools.” Here are the details on how to give:

1. You can come to the Church office and drop it through the mail slot.
2. You can mail your offering to the Church, 206 W Maple, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858
3. You can give online by visiting the Giving Tools link on our website, or by scanning the QR code below.



Saint John's Episcopal Church
206 West Maple Street Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858
Phone: 989-773-7448
E-mail: saintjohnsmp@gmail.com
Website: www.stjohnsmtpleasantmi.com
Facebook: [St. John's Mount Pleasant](#)

St. John's Mission:

St. John's Episcopal Church, with God's help and in the Episcopal Church tradition, lives to proclaim the Gospel of Christ by ministering through worship, outreach, fellowship and education. We welcome all who enter our doors, and we support the diverse callings of each member as we seek to serve Christ in every person.

Rector:

The Rev. Sr. Diane Stier, 989-807-0215

Deacon Emeritus:

The Rev. Nancy Casey Fulton

Organist:

Ethan Kindle

Choirmaster:

Eric Vinciguerra

2025 Vestry Officers

Sr. Warden: Dan Eichinger

Jr. Warden: Jerry May

Treasurer: Clancy DeLong

Co-Treasurer: Lynne L'Hommedieu,

Vestry Clerk: Lara Raisanen

2025 Vestry Members

Clancy DeLong

Elizabeth Brockman

James Thurston

Kojo Antiwi

Kevin Davidson

Lara Raisanen