

Parish Profile



Trinity Episcopal Church

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Lexington, Michigan 48450

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A Welcoming Place to Know, Love, and Serve God

Greetings!

Hello to our **prospective priest-in-charge** from Trinity Episcopal Church.

The search committee and vestry of Trinity Episcopal Church in Lexington, Michigan, have created this profile to provide an **overview**



of our parish and an introduction to our **picturesque Lake Huron community**. In these pages, we offer a description

of who we are, what is important to us, and where we want to go.

By forming a trinity of their own, three words best express **our character**: faith, worship, and outreach. Our **faith** draws us to Trinity to share fellowship, concern for one another, and warmth. Our **worship** keeps us connected to God and our Lord Jesus Christ. **Outreach** shows us the meaning of commitment to those closest to us, to believers everywhere, and to our planetary island home.

We have taken several **important steps** to prepare Trinity for you. We conducted a survey of our parish to better understand our makeup. We appointed a search committee made up of hand-raisers from the parish as well as vestry members. We continue to hold all-parish meetings to keep our members informed. Plus, we are providing this **profile**.

One exceptional gift we bring to our new priest-in-charge is participation in a **first-ever curacy program**. Formulated with the Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Michigan, as our priest-in-charge, you will be mentored for three years by veteran clergy from our area. In addition, Trinity receives financial assistance from the diocese – as a small parish, this is a huge gift! We are honored to have been selected for this leadership role. We bring strong history to the work – our two most recent rectors have been emerging seminary graduates. In both instances, Trinity benefited from their gifts and enthusiasm. At the same time, we believe we offered a nurturing environment that helped them develop their leadership styles and grow in their faith. We pledge to do the same now.



In these pages, please find a **discussion** of Trinity and what we offer.

- **Our Expectations and Vision of the Future**
- **Our History and Setting**
- **Our Ministry and Facilities**
- **Our Demographics and Stewardship**
- **Join Us!**

This is an exciting (and admittedly, somewhat anxious) time for us. Still, we are confident that your guidance will help us be a stronger parish, and that we will provide you and your family with a wonderful opportunity to deepen your calling.

Thanks for your consideration. We love our parish and you will too.
The Search Committee, Vestry and Members of Trinity Church

Our Expectations and Vision of the Future!

Clearly, we at Trinity have a number of **hopes and dreams** for our next priest-in-charge. The parish survey we conducted as part of search process revealed characteristics that are important to us. Here's what we're seeking.

Worship Skills

- Bring joy to our services
- Welcome visitors and new members
- Preach inspiring sermons
- Incorporate contemporary and traditional elements in our worship
- Encourage acceptance of differences in the parish, our region, and everywhere
- Be part of the larger community of faith in Lexington and environs



Pastoral Skills

- Show compassion and assistance for members, families, relatives, and all people dealing with life issues, including crisis, addiction, and more
- Visit those with illness and disability, within the parish and beyond
- Be responsive to the ever-changing needs and priorities of the parish, the community, and the world
- Support and grow Christian education for all age groups
- Encourage active participation in parish life
- Attract new members, especially among youth and younger demographics
- Welcome diversity in all forms
- Provide administrative and stewardship skills

Personal Qualities

- Be enthusiastic and energetic
- Demonstrate faith in daily living
- Follow through on commitments
- Show accessibility and presence in the parish and beyond
- Have a sense of humor
- Bring open-mindedness to today and the future

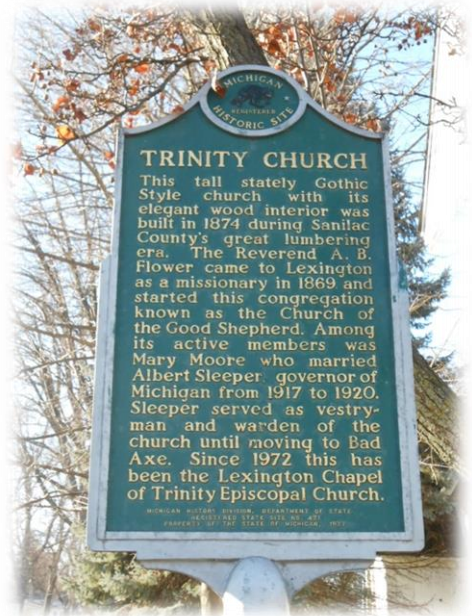


We know that the business of being a priest-in-charge at Trinity or any other parish comes with many expectations, needs, wishes, and lots of work. We have been very fortunate in having committed, passionate, understanding rectors over the course of many years, and we want the same going forward.

Our Strengths and Opportunities

Trinity has a portfolio of **impressive advantages** that we bring to our next leader. Our goal is to expand on these pillars in the years ahead.

- Trinity Episcopal Church has been a cornerstone of the village of Lexington and vicinity since our **founding in 1874**. While we recognize that we cannot and do not live in the past, we revere our origins, value our history, and consider this legacy a foundation of our personality.
- Our congregation is a **community**, in the best sense of that word. We do not simply come together each Sunday for worship. We look after one another every day, caring, praying, uplifting, showing love, fellowship, faith, concern, and joy.
- **Repair and upkeep** of our **historic facilities** are a priority. Within the last several years, we have undertaken major innovations, including repaving our parking lot, insulating our basement area, shingling our roof, installing a new heating unit, adding new carpeting, and painting Shipley and St. Anne's Halls. Typically, these items are not in our budget. Fortunately, parishioners have stepped up with additional contributions because we prize our physical plant.
- The **music ministry** is fundamental to our parish and has been since our founding 140 years ago. A volunteer choir sings at most Eucharistic services, as well as performing throughout the community. We add guitar, organ and piano performances to most worship events.
- We are part of the **tight knit community of Lexington** and the surrounding region. We are a small, semi-rural village at the base of the Thumb of Michigan (more about that shortly,) with all the positives (and occasional contradictions) that implies. Familiar faces are everywhere. Neighbors are not strangers. Police/fire/rescue/first responders are people who live in the community. This is a strong connection and part of the fabric of Trinity.



- As a worshipping community, Trinity draws from beyond our immediate setting. Parishioners willingly drive **30 miles and more** (see below) to be part of the Trinity community of faith and caring.



- The area **Croswell-Lexington school district** is consistently one of the top performers in Michigan. Facilities are conveniently located and modern. Staff members live in the community and are dedicated to the education and growth of our children. This is a powerful incentive for families considering locating in our area.

At the same time, Trinity presents **opportunities** that must be addressed.

- Like many Episcopal parishes, we are an **aging** congregation. While we do attract and involve a number of younger members and families, the prevailing trend is beyond 55 years of age. The upside is that some of these members are comfortable financially and able to contribute substantially to our budget and upkeep.

- Despite many attractions, Lexington and surrounding areas have a **defined population base** which is unlikely to expand dramatically. Given attractive surroundings, an active community and cultural life, affordable cost of living, and excellent community services, new arrivals attract considerable attention, with area churches actively competing for their participation, loyalty, membership, and financial support.
- We are susceptible to **ups and downturns in the economy**, which affect our congregation and member capacity to give financially. Because of our restricted population base, recovery may take longer to be felt.
- As a resort area with a sizeable retiree contingent, we have a number of **snowbirds** who travel to warmer climates for portions of the year. Many continue to support Trinity financially, even from a distance, although contributions can be sporadic, and we very much miss the presence of these friends on a weekly basis.

Part of the challenge ahead of us and our new leader is figuring out how to work with these realities and turn them to our advantage.



Our History and Setting

Trinity Episcopal Church was **founded in 1874** as The Church of the Good Shepard. We are located one block south of the intersection of Main Street (M-25) and Peck Road (M-90) in the village of Lexington, Michigan, which was incorporated in 1846. We are proud to say that Trinity has been welcoming parishioners without interruption for 140 years. Our soaring steeple is clearly visible, announcing our presence, and extending our welcome for miles around.

Everyone who comes to Trinity mentions the **warmth and welcome** they feel immediately upon entering our church. This fellowship and friendliness encourages visitors to return – in fact, we consider it a major recruiting tool.

Trinity Today

The attributes of Trinity are many and appealing. Our fellowship of 170 members crosses age groups from newborns to elders in their 90s. On a typical Sunday, our community consists of 55 to 75 worshippers.

- We are an **accepting** parish, respecting differing viewpoints, peoples, politics, faiths, and cultures.
- While we present a **traditional liturgy** based on the seasons of the church year, we are **enthusiastic, open-minded, and eager** to try new things.
- We look for **sermons** that challenge us and remind us of what's important in life, although humor and topical references are welcome and encouraged.
- Bible **study**, prayer groups, and special worship events are essential to our nature and parish life.
- Parishioners come from **backgrounds** beyond Episcopalian and a variety of faiths – Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist, Baptist, Congregational, Pilgrim Holiness, New Church, Salvation Army. People stay at Trinity because they find meaning, family, and warmth.
- Participation in **Project Blessing** is indicative of our role in the community. This food pantry is located on our premises and provides an important service to those in need throughout the area.



- We encourage the **use of our facilities** for activities beyond worship and welcome participants of all persuasions. For example: guitar lessons and yoga classes led by parishioners are free to anyone who wants to come. A Girl Scout troop gathers bi-weekly. A grief support group has been part of our outreach. The monthly concert and open-mike session sponsored by the Blue Water Folk Society draws us many as 150 attendees.
- Our church and parishioners play a **pivotal role** in Lexington, Croswell, Port Sanilac, Peck, Sandusky, Sanilac County, St. Clair County, and surrounding areas. Many members hold positions of political leadership. Others are teachers influencing the development of our young people. We volunteer in support of non-profit agencies of many kinds, locally, nationally, and around the world. We are committed to spreading concern and compassion far beyond our doors.

Though we are a modest parish, our **vision is big**. Our goal is to continually grow as we remain a cornerstone of the community, just as we have been since 1876.

Lexington and Beyond

As we indicated, Trinity Episcopal Church is located in downtown Lexington, Michigan. Per the 2010 census, official population of the village is 1,178. But our reach is not limited to Lexington. We are an influential presence throughout the lower Thumb community. For those unfamiliar with the geography of Michigan, our **Thumb region** is the northern part of southeast Michigan, and yes, the area looks like a thumb.



Situated on the shores of **beautiful Lake Huron**, Lexington offers many family-friendly amenities, including a large waterfront park and lovely city marina. Billed as the **First Resort North**, we are within easy driving distance of the Detroit metropolitan area and surrounding communities. This makes us a favored destination on weekends and throughout the entire year. For more information, photos, and schedules of events, check out www.lexingtonmichigan.org, www.cros-lexchamber.org, and www.mighigan.org/city/lexington.

We have **much to attract** visitors and residents. Our vibrant **cultural life** includes the annual fine arts and crafts shows, weekly music in the park concerts during the summer season (free!), the Independence Day celebration and gala fireworks display. Thumbfest is a premier folk music festival, drawing attendees and



performers from long distances. The Bach Festival each September features international talent and is unprecedented for a town of our size. Add the spring fishing tournament, swinging bridge festival in nearby Crosswell, the Barn Theater, farmers market, local library, Civil War re-enactment, antique automobile

rally, garden walk, Christmas horse parade and more – this is a place that prides itself on activity and civic involvement. Every season is busy and fun.

Shopping and dining are unique adventures – from Wimpy Burgers, located just steps from Lexington’s only stoplight, to the Windjammer restaurant overlooking our lovely Lake Huron marina. The Cadillac House and Steises Restaurant offer family-friendly menus. The Lexington Winery and Brewery is a colorful addition to the local scene.



The **economic base** combines tourism and agriculture. Cost of living is low and attractive housing plentiful. Not surprisingly, our area attracts those looking for a slower pace plus many retirees.

Just 20 minutes south is **Port Huron**, which expands on area services. Excellent health care is readily available. Big box shopping such as Wal-Mart, Meijer, Kmart, Home Depot, and Lowe’s is plentiful, along with Starbucks, Barnes & Noble, Birchwood Mall, and more. Major restaurant chains are complemented with interesting local eateries and breweries. Dominating everything – **Lake Huron**, one of nature’s most **spectacular gifts**.

Our Facilities and Ministry

The **physical plant** at Trinity evolved over many decades; today, we encompass several interconnected elements.



The focal point is our **beautiful sanctuary**, which was constructed shortly after our 1874 founding. At that time, Lexington and vicinity were a center of the logging industry, which helped fund our parish. Amazing workmanship and wood furnishings are evident everywhere; these are original, cherished, and well-cared for.

Above the west side of the sanctuary overlooking the altar are three lovely stained glass windows. These are mirrored by three additional windows at the opposite end above the organ.

Adjacent to the sanctuary is St. Anne's Hall. The seating area is used by small groups for meetings, such as the prayer shawl ministry and the ecumenical men's group. The church office and guild room are also in this part of the building.

ShIPLEY Hall is at the north entrance. We host our post-service coffee hour there, as well numerous church and community activities. The elevated stage is perfect for the monthly Saturday night coffee house sponsored by the Blue Water Folk Society.



The fact that Shipley Hall exists at all is indicative of the **extraordinary commitment** we have to this place. Several decades ago, Lucy Shipley, who was well into her 80s and the oldest member of the church at that time, rose during service to her full five-foot height and announced she was adding \$5.00 per week to her pledge. The monies were to be strictly channeled to building a much-needed addition. Although on a fixed income, Miss Lucy challenged others to join her in contributing what they could. Five years later, in 1986, we dedicated the new north wing. Shipley Hall is the centerpiece, along with a spacious kitchen. While we were busy raising funds and constructing, we expanded the design to include a large rector's office, library/meeting room, nursery/play area, and choir room on the upper level. The downstairs portion houses the Project Blessing food pantry, children's church room, and a small theater outfitted with antique seats.

Our Services

Trinity offers the traditional Liturgy, with Sunday worship at 10:00 a.m. year-round, plus an early bird 8:00 a.m. service during summer months. Typically, we practice the **Rite II order** from the Book of Common Prayer and observe the seasons of the church year.



Since the departure of Father Rick Schark in August 2013 for another opportunity, supply clergy leads us in the Holy Eucharist. When an ordained priest is not available, parishioners joyously conduct Morning Prayer.

At Trinity we are **never stuffy**. We laugh openly and applaud enthusiastically during services. Attire is casual and seasonal – the point is to gather in the fellowship of the Lord.

We take great pride in being **open to people from all walks of life**. This acceptance is recognized and appreciated by all who attend worship as well as those who find themselves at one of our many activities throughout the year.

- Until we found ourselves without a full-time rector, we held **mid-week Eucharist** and periodic healing services. We anticipate these will resume with the calling of our new priest-in-charge. Several times in recent years, a blessing of the animals has also been on the agenda.
- The **music ministry** is an important part of the Sunday ritual. Our small but mighty choir is led by a talented musical professional (thankfully, he's a longtime parishioner), supplemented by the musical talents of pianists, organists, and guitarists (all volunteers). Parishioners enjoy singing and join in heartily, making sure our message is lifted on high.



- **Children's church** takes place each Sunday as an organized, structured program for our young people. Led by dedicated volunteers, this effort is important to helping our young members with their spiritual growth.
- Our children participate in a **community choir** sponsored jointly by several

area churches. This “great noise” as they call themselves performs periodically at Trinity and for other congregations.

- **Coffee hour** follows each service so members can gather in a relaxed setting and strengthen our bonds.
- For a week each summer, Trinity joins with other area denominations to hold **Vacation Bible School**.

We **keep in touch** with members via email, Facebook, and our website. An email blast announces weekly services and upcoming activities; we also use that medium to transmit prayer requests and news of our people.

The sign on the curb outside faces Main Street and lets passersby know we are active, busy, and welcoming their presence. We place notices in area newspapers, promotional brochures, and marketing materials to spread the word.

Our Active Ministry

We like to stay busy at Trinity, and that's reflected in our **roster** of activities and fund-raisers.

- The **men's group** meets on Saturday morning to share fellowship and discuss matters both faith-oriented and secular in nature.
- **Bible study** convenes on Wednesday mornings. Initially led by the rector, we have carried on without that presence because many of our members find the group of great value and inspiration.



- The **prayer shawl ministry** meets on alternate weeks, knitting and crocheting shawls and lap robes for those in need of comfort at Trinity and beyond. Great fellowship goes along with the creativity.
- The **Episcopal Women's Group** convenes quarterly to enjoy friendship and consider matters great and small.
- Episcopal **prayer pals** are women who get together from time to time to share a meal and to join in prayer.
- **Lenten** and **Advent studies** are directed by the priest-in-charge following a soup/supper fellowship.

Beyond our immediate area, Trinity is an enthusiastic participant in the **Cheyenne River Episcopal Mission**, which is made up of nine congregations. Each summer, several parishioners



travel at their own expense to the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation in South

Dakota. Missioners assist with building and repairs to facilities, participate in Vacation Bible Camp, and lend able assistance in every way possible.



As for **fundraisers**, Trinity holds many throughout the year. These are essential as a means of supplementing pledge income and expanding our ministries.

- The annual **attic sale** offers shopping for all kinds of interesting treasures.
- The **quilt show** is an alternate-year display of beautiful hand-made pieces. One fortunate raffle ticket holder wins a quilt to take home and enjoy.
- For the Shrove Tuesday **pancake supper**, our men take over the kitchen and cook up a feast.
- The **pasty sale** is a much-anticipated, twice-yearly event. Members make and bake hundreds of pasties from scratch. The word is out far beyond our walls about these tasty treats, and the event is always a sellout. For those unfamiliar with the concept, pasties are large, vegetable and meat-filled pastries native to Michigan's Upper Peninsula. We're very generous in our portions, and each pasty makes a meal and more.



- Our Independence Day **cookie sale** is held in conjunction with the colorful Lexington parade. Revelers come from miles around to cheer the floats, listen to the bands, and buy up our home-baked goodies. The celebration culminates in a gala fireworks display over the harbor.

- The **holiday bazaar** is a combined cookie and Christmas-past sale. Candles, lights, glassware, ornaments, and more are attractively displayed and available for purchase. Parishioners and local vendors are invited to set up tables and sell their crafts.



- Gratitude boxes** are small take-home containers for parishioners to deposit loose change and count their blessings. Blessings are abundant because we bring in a surprising amount of money this way.

As a small parish, we are always looking for opportunities to **broaden the financial base**. Expanding our membership is certainly part of that equation, and we are looking to our new priest-in-charge for inspiration. We are reaching out to members who may have lapsed and working to bring them back. We talk up the many benefits of Trinity to friends, coworkers, and acquaintances, inviting them to accompany us to services and activities. Although we are solvent and typically finish each year (barely) in the black, we are well aware of financial reality and actively seek to secure our financial underpinnings.

We anticipate that our new spiritual leader will immediately join in and help guide the many activities that are part of our common life – on Sunday and every day.

Our Demographics and Stewardship

As part of the search process, Trinity conducted a [parish survey](#) in October 2013. The goal was to develop a better understanding of our church. Participation was voluntary; approximately 50% of surveys were turned in.

Demographics indicate the following.

AGE		INCOME		RETIRED
1-16	8	0-20K	1	Totally or mostly retired – 30
17-24	1	21-39K	19	Working full- or part-time – 17
25-35	5	40-55K	4	
35-45	1	56-65K	5	SNOWBIRDS
46-55	1	66-79K	5	5 families
56-65	15	80-94K	1	
66-70	18	100+K	1	
71-79	23			
80-90	4			
90+	2			

The annual audit required by the diocese showed a total parish membership in 2013 of 170 people across all age groups. Attendance at Sunday services averages between 55 and 75 worshippers.

Financial highlights confirm that while Trinity is solvent, adequate funding remains an ongoing concern. We continue to analyze all possible revenue-generating activities and assets in order to better identify opportunities.

We are completely transparent about our operations, which includes a comprehensive annual audit that is shared with the diocese.

A complete package will be presented to prospective priests-in-charge when timing is appropriate. Be assured, we are in a position to provide an adequate living to whomever we call. Financial assistance provided by the diocese for the curacy program is a boost, giving us time to expand finances on our own.

Here's a **fiscal overview** of the past three years.

	2011	2012	2013
INCOME			
Pledges	98,198.00	100,870.00	93,943.00
Other	5,772.11	26,327.26	19,943.00
Special Giving	24,044.49	0	0
	128,014.60	127,197.86	113,300.47
EXPENSES			
Salary/housing*	48,574.08	50,031.36	34,354.88
Other	81,362.44	77,868.30	69,092.17
NET	(1,921.92)	(701.80)	(9,853.42)

*Salary/housing for 2013 are for 8 months since we do not presently have a rector or priest-in-charge.

Join Us!

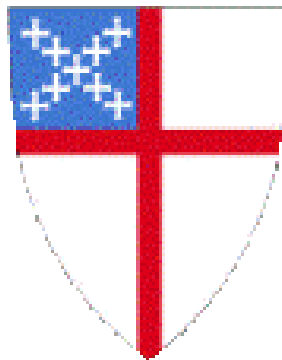
Thank you for looking at this profile of Trinity Episcopal Church.

We **love our parish** and are excited about bringing a new priest-in-charge to our congregation. We offer many advantages for **spiritual growth and development**. Plus, Lexington and environs are a **great place to live and work**.

We invite you to give serious consideration to **making Trinity your new church calling**. Our search committee and vestry are committed to giving thoughtful consideration to every candidate because we know how important finding an optimum match is to your future and ours. Clearly, this is a challenging time for you as you make life-changing decisions. At Trinity, we're ready to get beyond this period of transition and move into the next exciting era of our parish. The vision that guides all of us is coming together as people of faith.

Our **thoughts and prayers** are with you as you shape your future. We pray for God's blessing on Trinity as well.

May the peace of the Lord be always with you!



Trinity Episcopal Church

Lexington, Michigan



A Welcoming Place to Know, Love and Serve God