



ST. ELIZABETH PARISH

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE PARISH

July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In these chaotic times in which we find ourselves, I am comforted and strengthened by the variety and number of those who spend their time, talent, and treasure helping their fellow parishioners and our greater community.

The future of our parish – our future together – looks bright.

This past year at St. Elizabeth has been filled with uncommon joy as we celebrated the ordination of Father Joshua Bauer, our very own seminarian and a lifelong member of our parish community.

Father Josh's first Mass at St. Elizabeth was packed with parishioners and friends and the celebration spilled over into the parish center where we hosted a reception in Josh's honor.

Our parish family loves to gather together, whether it's the monthly Knights Breakfast, an ice cream social, Soup with the Saints, movie nights, or the Young Adult Dinners, and we are seeing our numbers grow as we break bread and spend time together. In September, I was overwhelmed by the large number of parishioners and friends who came out to celebrate my 50 years as a priest (now 51 from this May!). Your love and support, especially over the last year in the loss of my brother Don, means more than I can say. And to be part of the ordination of Father Josh Bauer, whom I baptized 26 years ago, made this truly a spectacular year.

Other highlights of the year include a successful Pet Blessing, a well-attended Roast Beef Dinner, and the annual Mass of Remembrance, where we honored our parishioners who died over the last year. This Mass continues to bring comfort to all of those who have lost loved ones.

We continue to grow our relationship with our sister parishes, Holy Family in Adrian and Light of Christ in Deerfield/Blissfield. In September, our fellow parishioners joined us for a rousing afternoon of Bingo.

Our third annual Valentine's Day Dinner, cooked and served by our Youth Group under the direction of Chef Jeff Monahan, was a huge success. Everyone in attendance enjoyed a delicious prime rib dinner and drinks to celebrate each other.

Our youth group and religious education programs continue to flourish under the direction of DRE/CYM Heather Marsh. We had 15 children making their First Communion/Reconciliation and 10 confirmed and sealed in the Holy Spirit. We also had 21 baptisms, one marriage, and 30 funerals in addition to welcoming 12 newcomers into full communion with the Church.

Please know I am eternally grateful for each and every one of you and all you have done over the last year and in every year. I appreciate all of you.

I hope you take time to read through this annual report and take note of our financial status as well as our parish ministries' updates. Please know I am eternally grateful for each and every one of you and all you have done over the last year and in every year. I appreciate all of you.

May the blessing of Almighty God be upon you all as we start our 79th year as a parish and may He hold us all safely in the palm of His hand.

Fr. Don

Clergy



Fr. Dan Wheeler

Fr. Dan has faithfully served as a priest for 51 years and has served our parish for 38 years; we sincerely thank Fr. Dan for his service, leadership, and unwavering commitment to our parish and the Catholic Church.



Fr. Peter Clark

Fr. Peter Clark, is the Senior Priest in Residence at St. Dominic Oratory. We thank him for his assistance in ministering to our parish.



Deacon David
Hammer



Deacon Ray
Pizana



Deacon Jim
Nicholson

St. Elizabeth Parish is blessed to have the ministry of Deacons David Hammer, Jim Nicholson, and Ray Pizana, who continue to exemplify Christ in how they live and serve our parish.

Stephen Ministry

The Stephen Ministry at St. Elizabeth Parish continues to be a vibrant and impactful ministry dedicated to bringing Christ's healing presence to those experiencing life's difficulties. Through compassionate, confidential, one-to-one Christian care, our Stephen Ministers walk alongside individuals who are experiencing grief, illness, loss, loneliness, family challenges, major life transitions, and other struggles.

Stephen Ministry is founded on the principle that while God is the curegiver, Stephen Ministers are the caregivers. Through regular visits, prayer, listening, encouragement, and emotional support, Stephen Ministers provide a caring relationship that reflects Christ's love and compassion.

Today, St. Elizabeth's Stephen Ministry is supported by 25 active Stephen Ministers and 4 Stephen Leaders who faithfully serve our parish community. Throughout the past year, these dedicated volunteers provided more than 1,300 hours of Christian care to 26 care receivers, offering support and companionship during some of life's most difficult seasons.

Our ministry continues to grow and thrive. Since being established from the ground up at St. Elizabeth Parish in 2018, Stephen Ministry has become an important part of our parish's pastoral care outreach. Over the years, we have

Trained 46 Stephen Ministers

Trained 7 Stephen Leaders

Delivered more than 200 hours of care remotely and safely during the COVID-19 pandemic

Provided more than 7,200 hours of Christian Care

Served 232 care receivers

The strength of our ministry is sustained through ongoing training, supervision, and spiritual growth. Stephen Ministers gather twice each month for two-hour meetings that provide peer supervision, continuing education, prayer, and support. These gatherings ensure that our caregivers remain equipped, encouraged, and prepared to provide the highest quality Christian care possible.

The continued success of Stephen Ministry at St. Elizabeth Parish is a testament to the dedication of our Stephen Ministers, the support of our parish leadership, and God's faithfulness in guiding this ministry. We are grateful for the opportunity to serve our parish family and help ensure that no one has to face life's challenges alone.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to our mission of providing confidential, Christ-centered care and extending God's love to those who are hurting. We thank our parish community for its continued prayers and support of this vital ministry.

"Bear one another's burdens, and so you will fulfill the law of Christ."

Galatians 6:2

Faith Formation & Education	Student	Catechist
Religious Education – Pre-K	6	1
Religious Education – Elementary School	49	6
Youth Ministry – Middle School	40	4
Youth Ministry – High School	10	2
Young Adults	20	-
OCIA	12	4
Adult Bible Studies	30	2
Marriage Preparation	1	1
Baptism Preparation	21	1

Ministry of Sacraments	Sacraments
Profession of Faith & Adult Sacraments – Coordinated through the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA) and	4
Baptisms – Coordinated through the Baptism Preparation Program and Pastoral Ministry	21
First Reconciliation & First Holy Communion – Coordinated through the Sacramental Preparation as part of the Faith Formation Program	15
Confirmation – Coordinated through Confirmation Prep during Faith Formation and OCIA	25
Marriage – Coordinated through the Marriage Preparation Program and Pastoral Ministry	1
Funerals/Memorial Services of the Deceased – Coordinated through Pastoral Ministry	30

From Father Joshua Bauer

Getting to be a deacon for the last year was a very fun experience. I especially like all the little moments that come along with it. During infant baptisms, I got in the habit of asking parents to hold their kids "as horizontally as possible so I don't get water in their eyes" in the middle of the rite. I got to welcome and console grieving families as I committed the remains of their beloved dead to their final repose. I got to preach, and I always got to hunt a couple people down and ask what worked in the homily, what was really helpful, and what was really fluff.



I was welcomed into so many families' homes and got to meet them and their children. I got to bless their houses and rosaries, get their kids to smile, and eat dinner with the parents. Being a deacon was such a great foretaste of my priestly life: now I can baptize within the Mass, now I bring healing along the graveside and in the confessional, and now when I bless houses... well that one hasn't changed so much!

As I finished my classes at seminary (which, mercifully, were more practical at the end! It is easier, when you are eight years into philosophy and theology, to pay attention in the class where you practice confessions instead of reading a bunch!). I was ever more excited to start the rest of my journey. I think you have gotten a sense of how that has gone for me: the overwhelming joy of it all. But this last year has been such a grace in how it was such a final preparation for me, both finishing my studies and preparing my heart to spend its time and energy in ministry, not in class.

I am eternally grateful for my time in seminary. I couldn't be a good priest without it! I am also so grateful to all of you who have kept me uplifted in your prayers all this time.

Know I am praying for you all, and as always, God bless,

Father Joshua Bauer

Verso L'Alto! (To the Heights!)

How Our Parish Helps Those in Need



Throughout the year St Elizabeth parishioners have supported those in need. The 2026 Diocesan Appeal parishioner contributions of \$58,026 exceeded the parish goal by 27%. As you know these funds are used to support a number of diocesan-wide charitable organizations, many of which are in our local area.

Additional Diocesan Collections for Evangelization, Missions, Retired Religious, and Catholic Social Teaching totaled \$10,901 contributed by our parishioners.

St Elizabeth Parish Helping Hands ministry donated \$10,094 to help those in need within our parish, while the Migrant Ministry helped with food, clothing, and personal items for those temporarily working nearby farms.

The Parish supported the Kentucky Mission trip for youth and adult volunteers to once again travel to Morehead, Kentucky, to build wheelchair ramps, landscaping and cleanup. Your support of nearly \$10,000 helped fund this volunteer effort to help the needy.

Parish volunteers throughout the year have prepared and served meals once (or more) each month to Share the Warmth facility in Adrian. All food costs are covered by parish donations.

The installation of the Blessing Box on our parish grounds three years ago has been a true blessing for those in need in our local community. St Elizabeth parishioners continue to donate food items and funds to support this anonymous free food pantry.



Thank you for your constant support and generosity. Your financial gifts provide the means for the church to thrive and serve our community. May God bless each of you as you help continue the mission of the Church.

Fr. Dan

Offertory Contribution Methods

The collection basket remains the most popular method for our parishioners to donate to supporting the church. However, the online contribution did have increased participation during the past year. Online Giving makes it easy for you to support the parish, eliminating the need to write checks, find the right envelope, and remember to bring it to Mass. If you would like to learn more about Online Giving, call the parish office.

During the 2025 - 2026 fiscal year, approximately 41% of the Sunday Offertory came from our Online Giving program. There are a total of 146 families participating in Online Giving. If you would like to enroll, visit www.stelizabethstdominic.org/paris-life/online-giving, click on the link to Our Sunday Visitor, and follow the prompts to register an account.

Several of our retired parishioners are taking advantage of the IRS guidelines regarding charitable contributions from Individual Retirement Accounts. If you have an annual Required Minimum Distribution from your IRA, you can speak with your financial advisor or your tax preparer to learn how to make a tax exempt donation to St. Elizabeth Parish.



St. Elizabeth Parish Mission Statement

“We, the family of St. Elizabeth Parish, dedicated followers of Jesus Christ, guided by the Holy Spirit and transformed by the celebration of the Eucharist and God’s Word, reach out to all God’s people through charity, prayer, fellowship and service.”

Parish Revenue & Expenses – St. Elizabeth Parish

Revenue

Sunday & Holy Day Contributions	
Regular Weekly Collections	\$613,738
Designated Contributions	88,608
Fundraising	
Roast Beef Dinner and Raffle - net proceeds	\$26,965
Other Revenue	
Interest, Bequests, Publications, Other Collections	\$64,646
Faith Formation	
Tuition	\$4,095
Contributions	\$9,344
Total Revenue	<u>\$807,396</u>

Expenses

Assessments	
Diocesan, Priest Retirement, School Assessments	\$87,720
Church Employee Benefits	
Social Security, Disability, Health Insurance, Retirement	\$29,984
Pastoral & Secretarial Services Salaries	
Pastor, Secretary, Musicians, & Visiting Priests Stipends	\$135,957
Christian Service, Parish Life & Worship	
Hospitality, Ministries, Social Events, Funerals, Supplies, Liturgical Roles, Music Ministry, Clergy Training & Education	\$41,753
Church Plant Operations	
Maintenance Salaries/Supplies, Contracted Services, Repairs/Utilities	\$236,629
Administration	
Office Supplies, Printing, Phone, Equipment, Postage, Etc.	\$93,497
Faith Formation	
Salaries, Benefits, Supplies, Instructional Materials	\$127,416
Total Expenses	<u>\$752,956</u>

Parish Net Revenue

Parish Revenue	\$807,396
Parish Expense	\$752,956
Net Revenue	<u>\$54,440*</u>

*Net Revenue amount is the Restricted Saints and Scholars received from the Diocese which will be used for improved audio-visual equipment for the Faith Formation program; and the signed and committed contract to replace two rooftop HVAC units on the parish center.

Explanation of Values - St. Elizabeth Parish

- The offertory for the year increased over the previous year. Designated contributions increased as the parish received revenue from the Diocese for a portion of the Saints and Scholars Campaign donated by our parishioners.
- The major expenditures for the year were primarily related again to maintenance of the buildings and grounds and the addition of a parish music director. The costs for Insurance and general supplies continue to increase as we are all experiencing with our family budgets.
- The positive Net Revenue for the year is composed of some Restricted Funds from the Saints and Scholars Campaign which will be used to support the parish Faith Formation program and contracted funds to replace two HVAC units in the parish center.
- St Elizabeth Parish personnel along with the Financial Council monitors all expenses on a regular basis to ensure that we are good stewards of parish finances.

Youth Ministry

When I look at our youth programs the first thing that comes to mind is servanthood discipleship. Our students are stepping up and living out their faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior by answering His call to serve one another. In June we took nine students and six adults to Kentucky on our annual mission trip. That's 15 people who gave up a week of their summer – many needing to take time off work – to help those in need. Each day we prayed together in the morning and evening, with the teens reading aloud from Scripture. Days were spent outside as we completed two beautiful ramps. The first ramp was more than 30' and required some demolition and landscaping beforehand. Our second ramp was in a tight space and had a tricky curve, but turned out great! In addition, we spent half a day doing some yard cleanup at the church and cleaned headstones at the cemetery across the street. Looking back at these projects, our crew can be proud of the work they did.

July brought our VBS program. With 26 little ones, 16 teens/young adults and five adults, it was our biggest group yet. The Parish Center was bursting with life as Catherine Noël taught songs and dances to worship our Lord, Jesus Christ. Nicholle Labadie led our students deeper into our chosen Bible stories, as she explored what was happening and helped everyone to see what it might have been like for those who were part of the stories. Danielle Walker helped our kids express their creativity as they wove mats (like the one the paralytic may have been lowered through the roof on), created welcome signs, and so much more. Elle & Camryn Nowak led the game station, allowing our kids to learn the lessons from Scripture in unique and active ways. Our small group leaders created bonds with the younger kids, modeling servanthood and discipleship. Two of our small group leaders came back after graduation, choosing to take time off work to help. What an excellent example of what it means to serve!

After years without a Core Team, we once again have student leaders who are helping to shape the Youth Ministry program at St. Elizabeth. Macallan Cumming, Tobias Mueller, and Elle Maurer took on the challenge and did an excellent job planning and leading the Christmas Lock-in. We are looking forward to the year ahead and they are bursting with ideas and energy. We hope to add more members to the team and take on additional projects in the coming year.

Scripture was our main focus in Youth Group as students looked at the Gospel for the coming week, asked questions, learned background information, and connected the story to their own lives. In addition, friendships were built as we welcomed new students and existing friendships were deepened as returning students were reunited. Along with Scripture study we spent time playing games, praying in Eucharistic Adoration, tackling an Escape Room, and performing service activities. As always, one of the kids' favorite service projects is decorating the cookies for our homebound parishioners.

Our Faith Formation program continues to grow as new families join our parish. We continue to nurture the Fruits of the Spirit in our students through our incentive program, where students are rewarded when they display any of the fruits. We have seen a rise in service to others and our students love sharing ways they are serving and loving others outside of church. Our Confirmation students complete no less than six service projects in their two years of prep and are encouraged to find the service God is calling them to – service which brings them joy and uses their God-given strengths, as well as the skills they've honed.

I pray we all are encouraged by the example of the youth, and give of ourselves for the betterment of our world and to glorify God.

With love and appreciation for your prayers and support,

Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves, each looking out not for his own interests, but everyone for those of others. Philippians 2:3-4



Knights of Columbus Council 9937

St. Elizabeth's Knights of Columbus Council 9937 had another exemplary year of service and almsgiving. From monthly breakfasts, to annual fundraisers and sponsored social events, the men of Council 9937 continue to be a driving force behind innumerable events and initiatives here at St. Elizabeth that simply would not be possible without their dedication and love for the Lord. Last year, they launched their very own website, kofc9937.org, where parishioners can stay up-to-date on their latest events, fundraising, almsgiving, and most importantly, where able men can learn how to join them in their work and become a council member. Vivat Jesus!

Key Parish Updates

In the last year, we've accomplished quite a number of things as a parish to enrich, encourage, and assist our community, as well as monthly Eucharistic Adoration to strengthen our spiritual lives.

The big story for this past year was the ordination of Father Joshua Bauer, a lifelong member of our parish community. Father Josh was baptized by Father Dan in 2000 as an infant, the youngest child of Eric and Kim Bauer. He set his sights on the priesthood at an early age and many recall his early years as an altar server, bearing the crucifix up the center aisle for Mass.

Father Josh was ordained June 6 by Bishop Earl Boyea at St. Mary's in Lansing and on June 7, he celebrated his Thanksgiving Mass here, followed by a reception in the parish center. More than 400 attended the Mass and an estimated 250 were on hand for the reception. Father Josh now is parochial vicar at St. Francis of Assisi parish in Ann Arbor.

Father Dan was honored at a special belated reception in September to mark the 50th anniversary of his ordination where he welcomed many past and present parishioners, as well as a host of friends and relatives. He celebrated 51 years in May! Because of the anniversary event for Father Dan, we elected to forgo the annual parish picnic, instead offering a fall Bingo Night for our parish and our sister parishes, Holy Family and Light of Christ.

Vacation Bible School, monthly Movie Nights, Financial Peace University classes, and the annual Pet Blessing proved successful.

The 71st Annual Roast Beef Dinner was a success with 1,356 dinners served. We launched a special dinner takeout "Drive Thru," which proved to be a hit. Also in October, our Trunk or Treat event was a draw for families.

The November Mass of Remembrance honored our parishioners who died in the last year, with family members gathering for a reception hosted by Helping Hands. The Euchre Tournaments were a success and proved an excellent fundraiser for the Kentucky Youth Mission Trip.

Speaking of our Knights, Council 9937's monthly breakfasts, St. Patrick's Day Dinner, Flower Sale and Scholarship Awards, plus Family Bowling Night, continued to be popular among our parishioners. The "Youth of the Month" continued to be a significant component of the "Family of the Month" recognition.

In January, the parish hosted a special Thank You Dinner for parish volunteers, which was very well-attended.

February saw the return of our popular Valentine's Day Dinner served by members of the Youth Group under the direction of Chef Jeff Monahan. The Valentine's dinner continued to be a draw for parishioners and friends, and a good fundraiser for the Youth Group as they waited on tables and helped in the kitchen.

Our weekly therapist from Catholic Charities continues to appeal to parishioners seeking support, while our parishioners continue to be generous with their time, talent, and treasure with Share the Warmth.

Rosary Altar Society

St. Elizabeth's Rosary Altar Society was established in 1913, and its members today continue a century-old tradition of caring for the altar. They launder and replace altar cloths and purchase hosts for Mass. More importantly, their goal is to promote the spiritual growth of all women in the parish.

Funding for the RAS comes through the sale of raffle tickets for quilts, and items made by members, which are raffled off at the annual Roast Beef Dinner.

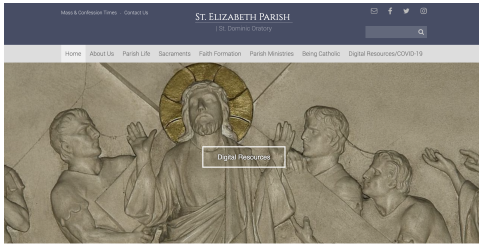
The RAS meets monthly to share fellowship, praise, and to honor the Blessed Virgin Mary through their works. This ministry recites the Scriptural Rosary as a means to help others in the parish who are in need. Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of every month (except July, August, January and February).

Helping Hands Ministry

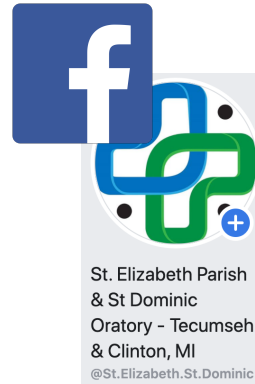
The Helping Hands Ministry has had an incredibly impactful and productive year, tirelessly working to support parishioners in times of financial emergency, while expanding its outreach to serve even more members of our community. This year, the ministry's care included (1) the homebound by delivering Communion, (2) those grieving the loss of loved ones by delivering plants as a symbol of care and remembrance, (3) participants in Faith Formation through tuition subsidies, and (4) many others through sponsored parish events like the Mass of Remembrance, Senior Luncheons, Ice Cream Socials, and Share the Warmth.

The Helping Hands Ministry continues to embody the spirit of generosity and compassion, serving as a cornerstone of support for our parish family. We are deeply grateful to everyone who contributes to this vital ministry—your efforts truly make a difference in the lives of so many!

St. Elizabeth Parish Media



To download our app, visit myparishapp.com



Our website is the best place to learn more about parish life, ministries, sacraments, upcoming events, Catholic media and news, and more. Download the myParish app on any smart phone or join our Facebook page to see the Mass schedule and to receive reminders about upcoming events and cancellations. Formed includes Catholic-based media, such as movies, documentaries, audio talks, study programs, and audio books.

St. Elizabeth Parish Council

The Parish Council acts as a focal point of unity and a channel of communication and cooperation, planning for future growth and coordinating the efforts and activities of the parish in the service of our mission. The Parish Council consults with the pastor, and this consultation is derived from prayerful and thoughtful preparation and joining together in the Holy Spirit. The Parish Council maintains a vision of the Church that reflects the people of God acting as a community focused on evangelizing the people of God.

The St. Elizabeth Parish Council is comprised of Stan Ames (Chair), Mary Kirby, Robyn Francis, Jeff Monahan, Liz Phelan, Heather Marsh, Lynn Hughes, Vince Labadie, Jaclyn Harris, Deacon Ray Pizana, Deacon David Hammer, and Fr. Daniel Wheeler.

St. Elizabeth Parish Financial Council

The Financial Council at St. Elizabeth Parish assists Fr. Dan in the financial matters of the parish, advising him on making decisions regarding spending funds for the benefit of parishioners. They serve as a consulting body for parish expenditures and (as needed) in any financial matter requiring the approval of the bishop. The Financial Council prepares an annual budget, promotes awareness of personal responsibility among parishioners regarding good stewardship, and presents an annual report to the parish of our financial status.

The St. Elizabeth Parish Financial Council is comprised of John Ellis (Chair), Chris Ameel, Brian Cytlak, John Kuenzer, Evan Kirby, Drew Lesko, Becky Warner, and Fr. Daniel Wheeler.

Ministries and Organizations

We thank all of you who serve our parish, our community, and our Lord through the following ministries. We invite all parishioners to consider where God is calling them to serve. *Lord, where do You want me to serve You?*

Altar Servers	SOS Bible Study	Faith Formation
Parish Prayer Warriors	Youth Ministry	Music Ministry
OCIA/OCIC	Helping Hands	Adult Bible Studies
Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion	Stephen Ministry	Funeral Ministry
Sacramental Preparation	Migrant Ministry	Parish Council
Rosary Altar Society	Men's Discipleship Group	Knights of Columbus
Building/Grounds: Maintenance & Repairs	Young Adult Fellowship	Homebound Ministries