



**CHURCH OF THE
TRANSFIGURATION**

PARISH PROFILE

**12219 S 86th Avenue
Palos Park, IL 60464
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<https://transfigpalos.org/>**





***“A community praising God,
growing in Christ, and Joyfully
serving others.”***

As we prepare to celebrate our **75th anniversary in 2025**, we can't wait to see what the future holds for our parish and how you can be a part of it!

Members of our parish share stories of being welcomed into our

faith community. They feel seen, recognized, and heard. Many find a church whose values embrace a community passionate in outreach and companionship. Some have been here since childhood or young adulthood. Others are new to our parish with growing families. Our expansive membership comes from many areas serving Chicago's greater Southland.

We cherish our identity as progressive and diverse. We're also aware that diversity is ever evolving. Studying anti-racism and welcoming LGBTQ+ members, as well as making our church more accessible, are important priorities for us. We are serious about our faith and our love for the time we spend together. We have many thoughts on the perfect music, dynamic preaching, and the personal meaningfulness of liturgy. We embrace our differences through healthy discussion because we know fellowship is the foundation of our church. Sunday coffee hour is our favorite time to unwind from a busy week and engage with each other. Many consider it ministry in itself. As Episcopalians, we break bread together, in communion and informal gatherings. We love to have fun!

Our History

Transfiguration owes its existence to a group of Episcopalian dreamers. On Palm Sunday in 1950, the first service was held. The original church building was completed in 1954, and the mission achieved parish status in 1957.



A new sanctuary was added in 1963. A Roderer tracker pipe organ was added to the choir loft. The church's symbol, a uniquely designed cross was placed behind the altar. The Palos Park Episcopal Day Care and Learning Center was started in 1984. In 1990 an expanded fellowship hall and additional space for our Learning Center was added.

We are honored to have also had the first serving female priest in the diocese, the Rev. Janet Mackintosh. We continue our relationship with our companion diocese in S.E. Mexico, partnering with La Transfiguracion, in Nuevo Progreso, Mexico.

Our amazing Palos Park Episcopal Daycare

After 40 years, our Day Care and Learning Center remains thriving, with approximately 75 students staffed by a full-time Director and 13 staff members. This is a substantial operation supported through our Parish by an all-volunteer Day Care Board and an active parents' group. The Center offers field trips, special events, developmentally appropriate curriculum with a focus on language, art, and music; nutritious lunches and snacks; children's portfolios to demonstrate growth and learning development; and an expansive playground. We also provide scholarships and accept state aid for eligible students.



Previous rectors have enjoyed time with the children and had a strong relationship with the Center staff. The Day Care is a ministry in support of our future and discussion continues about ways parish members can better show our support and appreciation. We also strive to build our Parish community through the families that attend the learning center. We are fortunate that a few families have found a home both in the Center and the Transfiguration community.



Our weekly Sunday service is a 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist with choir and hymns. The service is live streamed on our Church Facebook page.

We are blessed to have a Deacon and several volunteers who serve at the altar, ushers, Eucharistic ministers, Altar Guild members, lay readers and greeters. Our choir is a close-knit group that provides exceptional music, led by a paid Music Director and a volunteer Choir Director. Throughout the liturgical year, we also offer special weekday services and events: Lenten Soup and Rosary, Holy Week services, pet blessing, blessing of the backpacks for students and teachers, a Thanksgiving Eucharist, and The Longest Night Service.

Transfiguration also offers a variety of opportunities for learning and spiritual development for all.

Nursery service is offered during church for our children with two nursery attendants. A “cozy corner” in the foyer is provided for little ones and their parents to take a break during the service. Joyful Beginnings is a program designed to explore Bible stories in fun ways and is offered to children kindergarten through grade 5. Children in grades 6-8 are offered a discussion class that focuses on the life and teachings of Jesus. We include our Confirmation curriculum as needed and our senior high school students traditionally form a youth group that further strengthens their relationship with a loving God. Interested adults meet for a 9:00 a.m. book study group on Sundays prior to worship.



We host occasional Sunday morning adult forums and have held some “quiet day” events on Saturdays. Bible Study on weeknights every other week has been a staple. A dedicated group meets on Tuesdays from 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. for an hour of silent prayer. Transfiguration has its own chapter of the Daughters of the King that meets regularly. Our Catechist developed Spiritual Explorer Program with learning modules about aspects of faith and spirituality.



Outreach is a critical piece of our identity. Over the years, we have noticed generous giving of both time and treasure as a shared value. Our collections for a wide variety of causes routinely exceed expectations. Active collections include supporting active service members, veterans, and their families, donating to homeless shelters, food pantries, crisis centers, and local schools in need.

Every year, our Alternative Christmas Gift Market offers the chance to donate to eight different charitable organizations. Our prayer blanket ministry comforts the sick and grieving as well as celebrating baptisms and special events. Handheld wooden comfort crosses are crafted by parishioners and given freely to any who need them.

The ReVive Christmas Baskets and a *Giving Tree* are loved yearly traditions. *Beds Plus* is a group that meets on Sunday mornings to make lunches for a local transitional housing ministry. Parishioners cook and serve meals periodically for Ronald McDonald House. Our newest ministry is sponsoring four Venezuelan families as they find their home here in our community. We provide a welcoming location for external outreach groups such as Alcoholic Anonymous and Families Anonymous as well.

We care for each other and for our church. Our Vestry is a dedicated group of volunteers, led by two Wardens. We have a Children and Youth Ministry, Parish Life, Green Team, Buildings and Grounds, and a Memorial Garden Committee.

Transfiguration's paid staff positions include our Rector, Parish Administrator, Music Director, Director of Children and Youth Ministries, Treasurer, and Sexton.



Our Building and Grounds

Covering 2.3 acres, our grounds reflect the natural beauty of the Palos Park area. Our church building is three levels. Our ground level holds the main church, foyer, fellowship hall, renovated kitchen, and 3 Daycare classrooms. Upstairs are 3 additional classrooms, including a



recently renovated STEM classroom. The lower level includes a small Chapel, Conference Room, office suite and storage space.

We are proactive in updates and repairs and strategic in long-range planning for potential capital improvements. A major Altar Guild Sacristy renovation was completed in May 2023. Other recent improvements include re-paving/lining of our 2 parking lots, new signage, and renovating the outdoor patio area. There is a spacious gated playground.

The 3-bedroom/2-bathroom rectory is detached from the church but on the parish grounds. Improvements and updates to the rectory have been made as needed and are addressed in immediacy in service to our rector.

The parish grounds include a variety of trees, flora and fauna and are maintained by a groundskeeper and volunteers on the church's Green Team. They offer places for quiet contemplation, mediation or simply a peaceful walk. Our Memorial Garden was created in 2000. Parishioners' cremains may be dedicated and buried, or bricks purchased in celebration. Additionally, there is a pollinator garden established as part of a Girl Scout project further reflecting the church's mission of stewardship in this beautiful natural area.



Our Next Rector

We can't wait to meet you, our next rector!

Every rector has brought something special to our parish and we know the new rector will further help us grow, change, and cultivate the continued traditions that define us. We are a friendly group and seek a rector who is committed to relatability; approachable, honest, a great listener, patient, and compassionate. Energy and a sense of humor are also important.

Within the rector skillset, **preaching is a top priority for our parish.** We value preaching that is engaging, inspirational, and uplifting. We seek messages that connect our faith to relevant issues to help us understand how to navigate this world as Christians. We seek a rector who is a leader willing to develop our own leadership.

Our next rector will need the administrative skills to operate daily parish functions and advise a fulltime day care center. Pastoral care skills are also crucial in service to all ages and demographics.

Specific focuses we hope to share with our next rector:

Progressive thinking: We seek a rector who understands our commitment to equity and inclusion and is aware that they will be representing us as a congregation by demonstrating these values.

Adult Education/Faith Formation/Community Outreach: We seek a rector who supports us in these initiatives but also inspires and participates in expanding our ministry and visibility to serve the larger community around us.

Day Care and Learning Center: We seek a rector who appreciates the presence of children in our buildings all week long!

Liturgical Service: We seek a rector with innovation in both liturgy and music as with a commitment to inclusion of children and families in our services.

Parish Life: We seek a rector who heartily welcomes visitors and potential members and is committed to follow up. Most of all, we hope our next rector enjoys the vibrancy of our community and engages in our lives.

Opportunities, Strengths, and Change

The Church of the Transfiguration is blessed with church buildings and grounds in excellent condition, parish financial stability, and a dedicated membership enthusiastic in growing our church and deepening our faith.

We are aware our membership is growing older and attendance on Sundays is smaller, particularly since the Pandemic. We would love to see our church full on Sundays and opportunities to extend us outwardly.

Many express the wish for a greater diversity of new members, whatever their age and family situation. Our Day Care and Learning Center has a great reputation in the Southland community. We welcome the chance to bring these families into our church.

Discussion is ongoing about ways to reach out and invite more people to join us. We have formed the Transfiguration Recruitment Committee to act on our suggestions.

Strengthening connections in the community is a priority for us.



BASIC REVENUE / EXPENSE INFORMATION	
<u>2023 REVENUE SOURCES</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Pledge Income	\$232,000
Non-Pledge Income	\$7,000
Interest Income	\$5,000
Investment Income	\$16,000
Daycare Transfer	\$60,000
Other Income	\$28,000
TOTAL INCOME	\$348,000
<u>2023 EXPENSES</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Staff	\$191,000
Property	\$43,000
Outreach	\$10,000
Diocesan Pledge	\$28,000
Other Expense	\$51,000
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$323,000

CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS	
Reported as of 2/15/24	
<u>AGE DISTRIBUTION</u>	<u>COUNT</u>
Children (ages 0 - 12)	14
Youth (ages 13 - 17)	5
Young adults (ages 18 - 34)	17
Middle adults (ages 35 - 64)	42
Senior adults (ages 65 +)	76
TOTAL	154
<u>RACIAL/ETHNIC CATEGORIES</u>	<u>COUNT</u>
Asian	2
Black or African American	1
Hispanic	2
White	146
Multiracial	4
TOTAL	154
<u>ACTIVE MEMBERS YEAR-END COMPARISON</u>	
Total year-end 2022	155
Increases during 2023	+ 7
Decreases during 2023	- 8
Total year-end 2023	154
<u>COMMUNICANTS IN GOOD STANDING</u>	
Adult communicants (age 16+)	135
Youth communicants (< age 16)	19
TOTAL	154



A Peek at Palos Park

The Palos Park motto is “**COMMITTED TO OUR COMMUNITY**”, well-aligned with the Church of the Transfiguration's mission.



Surrounded on 3 sides by natural Cook County Forest Preserves that include forested ravines, freshwater springs and farmland created by glaciation. The surrounding nature heightens our awareness and appreciation of the beauty and wonder of God's creation inviting us to be excellent stewards of the environment.

Palos Park is a crossroads for numerous communities, including Palos Hills, Palos Heights, and Orland Park. Annual events, civic programming, athletic clubs, theatre, and an endless list of food and culture, place Palos Park at the heart of Chicago's southland. A well-loved Ice Cream Shop, the Plush Horse, is right across the street from our church.



Transfiguration's Palos Park location provides immediate access to the Metra train line, offering an easy commute to Chicago's downtown loop and all the city has to offer. The surrounding natural area provides many opportunities for outdoor recreation, hiking, biking, fishing, horseback riding, birdwatching, camping, and virtually every outdoor experience imaginable.

There are several faith communities with diverse ethnic groups and denominations within the community and surrounding areas. Similarly, there are many educational institutions, public and private, from pre-school to higher learning. Trinity College and Moraine Valley Community College are located nearby.





Episcopal Diocese of Chicago

The Episcopal Diocese of Chicago is geographically and culturally expansive. The diocese spans about half the area of Illinois, stretching from Lake Michigan to the Mississippi River, from the Wisconsin border nearly to St. Louis. Our 119 congregations are found in the city of Chicago, in the suburbs of Chicagoland, other Illinois cities like Peoria, Aurora, and Rockford, and many rural settings across the state.

The Episcopal Diocese of Chicago encompasses congregational vitality initiatives such as The College for Congregational Development, established Episcopal college ministries throughout the state, and a strong commitment to social witness, as expressed through the work of Episcopal Charities and Community Services, the social outreach arm of the diocese.

Our diocese is led by The Rt. Rev. Paula E. Clark, thirteenth Bishop of Chicago.

Interested candidates are asked to complete the diocese's Clergy Information Form for Transitions found on the diocesan website. Questions about the application process should be directed to The Reverend J. Sierra Reyes, Canon for Ministry. Sierra can be reached at jsreyes@episcopalchicago.org.

Welcoming Applicants

Clergy Openings - Episcopal Diocese of Chicago (episcopalchicago.org)

