

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Bob Sadler
Director of Public Relations
(313) 833-7937 or
(313) 819-5761 (cell)
bobsadler@detroithistorical.org

**TICKETS ARE STILL AVAILABLE FOR THE DETROIT HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S
NEXT HISTORIC HOUSES OF WORSHIP TOUR ON MONDAY, MAY 3**

DETROIT - Tickets are now on sale for the Detroit Historical Society's Historic Houses of Worship tour on **Monday, May 3**. The tour will feature the following houses of worship: **St. Francis D'Assisi, St. Hedwig, Sts. Peter & Paul Orthodox Cathedral, Messiah and St. Gabriel.**

St. Francis D'Assisi was established in 1889 in the Junction-Buchanan area by a group of Polish immigrants and with the help of St. Casimir's pastor. The present church, designed by Kastle and Hunter, was constructed in 1905. This Italian Renaissance style building features ornate Corinthian columns that grace the facade and hold up a triumphal arch with trumpeting angels that frame the west window and entrance. The stained glass windows cut into the vaulted ceiling were made at Detroit Stained Glass Works. On June 4, 1928, the church was consecrated, one of only three in the Archdiocese of Detroit.

St. Hedwig was established in 1903 to accommodate the growing number of southern Polish immigrants settling in southwest Detroit. The first floor of the original church contained classrooms and quarters for the teaching Sisters. The second floor housed the church, and the "parish hall" was in the basement. As Polish immigration continued, the need for a larger church grew. In 1911, local architect Harry J. Rill designed a new church known as the "Lower Church," which was used until sufficient funds were available to complete the edifice in November 1916. The current building, made of red brick, features twin towers with a pedimented façade between them and a three-arched entrance in white stone.

St. Peter - St. Paul Orthodox Cathedral was founded in 1907 by several immigrant Eastern European families from southwest Detroit who wanted to establish an Orthodox church in their neighborhood. By November of that same year, services were being held in Michigan's first Orthodox church. In 1947, a new parish edifice was constructed. Nicholas Zadorojny, a well-known Russian Orthodox iconographer, spent six years "writing" the icons of the newly constructed walls of the church. Services at the parish, the oldest Orthodox parish in Michigan,

are primarily conducted in English, however, five to ten percent of the Divine Liturgy is sung in the Old Church Slavonic.

Messiah Church was established in 1897 by a group of ten German immigrants. The church was later incorporated under the name “The German Evangelical Congregation of the Messiah.” The cornerstone of the present building was laid in 1902. In 1922, the church discontinued German Services entirely. In 1942, Reverend Ivan Miller accepted the call as the church’s new pastor and took an outspoken stand on welcoming racial integration into the church.

St. Gabriel Roman Catholic, the 50th parish in the Archdiocese of Detroit, was founded in 1915 by Franciscan priest Father Peter Esper. The first building, referred to as the “garage church,” was constructed of cement block. A new church was built in 1919 to accommodate the growing parish population, but was removed in 1926. The New Church, which began in 1953, features never before duplicated statues, stained glass windows with soft textures and tints and a large mosaic of the Crucifixion that contains more than one million tiles.

Stay tuned for the **June 2010** Grosse Ile historic houses of worship tour on **Monday, June 7** from **9:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.** featuring:

- **St. James Episcopal Church** – This church constructed in 1867 and designed by renowned Detroit architect Gordon W. Lloyd, was built with funds from the estate of Elisabeth Denison Forth, a former slave.
- **St. Joseph** - This Gothic style church, established in 1849, is one of the oldest parishes in the Archdiocese of Detroit and in the Downriver area.
- **St. Francis Xavier** – This California Mission design style church, originally established in 1822, was built in 1953 on West Jefferson and Outer Drive.
- **Sacred Heart-Ste. Anne Chapel - St. Anne** was originally established in 1869. A permanent church, built in 1914 on East River, was renamed **Sacred Heart** later rebuilt in 1961 on Park Lane.

Each tour leaves the Detroit Historical Museum parking lot (Kirby at Woodward) at 10 a.m. and returns at 4 p.m. The price, which includes the guided tour, bus transportation, and lunch at one of the churches, is \$30 for Detroit Historical Society members and \$40 for guests. Telephone reservations can be accepted with Visa, MasterCard or Discover Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. No tickets will be sold on the date of the tour. For

reservations or more information on the 2010 tour series, call **(313) 833-1801** or visit www.detroithistorical.org.

#