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TICKETS ARE STILL AVAILABLE FOR THE DETROIT HISTORICAL SOCIETY’S HISTORIC HOUSES OF WORSHIP TOUR ON MONDAY, MARCH 5

DETROIT – A limited number of tickets are still available for the Detroit Historical Society’s Historic Houses of Worship tour on **Monday, March 5**. The tour will feature the following Dearborn houses of worship: **St. Alphonsus Roman Catholic**, **Christ Episcopal Church**, **Islamic Center of America**, and **Sacred Heart Roman Catholic**.

**St. Alphonsus Roman Catholic** was originally formed by German-speaking families from Westphalia-Rhineland that settled in the area of Warren and Schaeffer between 1825 and 1845. The Esper family donated four acres of land for the construction of a church in 1852. Later, a brick church was erected at the same corner in 1874. In 1930, a third church was dedicated, built to accommodate the growing membership. Architect Arthur des Rosiers designed the church, as well as the 1925 convent, in the Neo-Gothic style. The church is built in the form of a cross, the ceiling arches are crowned with Tudor-style wooden beams, and the floor is laid with Pewabic tiles. Paintings of Alfred Wrobbel can be found throughout the church, and the altar is 38 feet of Roman stone and Italian marble. Noteworthy features also include the stained-glass windows and a music window that pictures great patrons of religious music.

**Christ Episcopal Church** was formed when 10 men professing an attachment to the Protestant Episcopal Church signed the Articles of Agreement, agreeing to organize a new parish in 1866. In 1869, parish leaders contracted architect Edward Walshe to build a simple brick, Gothic structure. For many years, the parish struggled with funds and was often on the verge of closure. After World War II, Henry Ford offered the parish its current site at Cherry Hill and Military. Giffles and Vallet Inc. planned for a Gothic stone building that was later made a Colonial brick building due to a lack of funding. Many of the church fixtures were donated by the Bryant family (parents of Mrs. Henry Ford). In 1949, the first services were held in the
The **Islamic Center of America** is one of the oldest Islamic institutions in the United States. In the 1940s, the growing Detroit Muslim population set out to find a religious leader for their community. Imam Mohammed Jawas Chirri accepted their offer and became the leader of the Islamic Center Foundation Society in 1954. He began building Michigan’s first mosque with contributions and loans from President Nasser of Egypt and the community. In 1963, the mosque was opened to the public and families from the Islamic Center began to move to the area. By 1967, more space was needed, and plans for a new structure were made. In 2005, the massive Shiite mosque opened with an Iraqi imam. Sunnis and all other faiths are also invited to worship in the 1,000-person capacity building. The mosque is a steel and masonry block structure with a veneer of Arriscraft stone and Indiana limestone, with two 110-foot minarets flanking three domes.

**Sacred Heart Roman Catholic** was originally founded in 1836 when the pastor of Detroit’s Most Holy Trinity Church traveled the muddy Chicago Road (Michigan Avenue) to celebrate Mass in the homes of Irish Catholic pioneers in the community known as Dearbornville. This was the beginning of Sacred Heart Parish, Dearborn. Efforts for a real church began in 1840, and St. John’s was completed by 1848 as a result of the urging of Fr. John Farnum. In 1874, the church was moved to Mason Street and renamed Sacred Heart in 1875. Around 1916, the parish moved to the corner of Michigan and Military, where decades of renovations would take place. In 1937, the church was finally dedicated for the parish’s 100th birthday. It took two more decades until fixtures such as the stained-glass windows would be finished.

This 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, lunch at one of the churches, and a comfortable motorcoach, is $40 for Detroit Historical Society members and $50 for guests. Telephone reservations can be accepted with Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express 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 2012 tour series, call (313) 833-1801 or visit [www.detroithistorical.org](http://www.detroithistorical.org).

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