

FONTS OF THE FAITHFUL

Islamic Center of East Lansing

ISLAMIC MOSQUE
East Lansing MI



The Islamic Center of East Lansing serves the greater Lansing and Michigan State University communities. The center holds many religious services for practicing Muslims, including 5 daily prayers, Friday congregational prayers, marriage ceremonies, and even funerals. The center also includes a school for young Muslim children and has a food pantry to serve those with food insecurity.

The front of the Center serves as a sign, with 'The Islamic Center of East Lansing' across the wall in bold, black letters. The name is in all caps and is a transitional sans serif typeface. These choices were likely made to increase legibility of the name when driving or walking past the building. The top row that reads 'The Islamic Center' has a slightly larger text size when compared to the bottom row that reads 'Of East Lansing'. This creates a hierarchy that places more emphasis on the fact that it is an Islamic Mosque than the location being in Lansing.



Above the entrance doors, a sign hangs that includes a verse from the Quran, also in both Arabic and English. The verse chosen shows that the Center is a place of learning and worshiping Allah.



Following the name in English, is the words 'Islamic Center' in Arabic. The Arabic typeface is similar to the English one, using large black letters with a slight variation in stroke widths. This Arabic typeface can be classified as Layyen, with a more fluid and handwritten style. The Arabic and English typefaces are chosen to pair well together, while also meeting the need of being readable in both languages.



A decorative menorah can be seen on the side of the Temple. A menorah is a traditional Jewish candelabra with seven candles. It symbolizes the light of God as well as the seven days of creation. Attached to the top of the menorah are Hebrew letters that translate to Beit El, or House of God. Although not as blocky as the letters on the Temple's sign, the Hebrew letters here still more square and formal. Yet, they have enough natural curves to flow from the menorah candles.

Temple Beth-El

JEWISH SYNAGOGUE

Midland MI

In this sign for the temple, the name is in all caps and in a geometric sans serif typeface. The letters are extremely sharp and blocky. The arms on some of the letters, like T and E, include an angled edge, adding a unique element to the typeface.

The sharpness seen on the letter M reflects the sharp points on the six-sided star, the Star of David, on either side of the name.

Temple Beth-El is a Jewish synagogue in the Midland community. It offers a gather location for Jewish individuals in the Midland area. Although there is not much information about what events take place at Temple Beth-El specifically, a typical synagogue holds prayer services, a ceremony on Shabbat, events for Jewish holidays, and celebrations like Bar Mitzvahs and weddings.



St. Mary

CATHOLIC PARISH

Mount Pleasant MI



Inside the parish, stained glass windows line two of the walls. The text on the windows are made up of small bits of glass pieced together to form the letters. Small serifs can be seen on the letters. This window includes the words 'praise' and 'sing' as well instruments, highlighting the Christian belief in using music as a form of worship.



St Mary parish in Mount Pleasant is on the campus of Central Michigan University (CMU). It is a Catholic parish for CMU students and the surrounding area. Mass is held multiple nights a week, along with confessions, adoration, Bible studies, and other Catholic religious practices. Like all Catholic churches, it is built on the foundational teachings of the Roman Catholic church, which they believe to be the founded by an apostle of Jesus from the first century.

The typography used throughout the church is used to express and reinforce the beliefs held by the religion. The use of transitional and serif types helps to highlight the history and traditional aspects of the church.



The signs for St Mary use a decorative transitional typeface, with bracketed serifs and a strong contrast between thick and thin strokes. The typeface features a stronger than average stroke weight contrast and ball terminals, adding interest to the letters.

Community Church

NON-DENOMINATIONAL CHURCH
Mount Pleasant MI



Community Church is a non-denominational church, meaning it is independent from the doctrines and religious government of denominations like Baptist, Methodist, or Catholicism. Its focus is on Sunday morning church services and small gatherings like Bible studies. In contrast to Catholicism which has been a popular religion for many centuries, non-denominational Christianity is a much more recent sect of Christianity.

The typeface used by Community Church is a very contemporary sans serif. This choice of typeface relates to the contemporary beliefs and worship practices of the church. When comparing to St Mary Catholic Church, it can be seen to be as an equal reflection of the church's history and identity.

The typography used inside of the church welcomes members and plays a more functional role than an artistic role. It is simple and in black and white, adding a very modern effect.



'Seen, Known, and Loved' is the church's tagline, inviting people in and telling them how they will feel attending the church.



The typeface chosen for the Community Kids sign pairs with the typeface used for the other signage, both having thick sans serif letters. However, the sign for the children's ministry has a level of playfulness, with imperfect proportions, tilted letters, and even a diamond used to dot the letter 'i'.



A rock in the garden also functions as a sign, with 'Tu Vien Quan Am' in red and 'Meditation Center' in blue below. The Vietnamese type here is much more flowy and calligraphic script.



This shrine dedicated to Quan Am, or Guanyin, the goddess of mercy showcases a statue of Quan Am, flowers, gold dragons, and windchimes. Vietnamese text at the top of the shrine identifies Quan Am as the statue, which Chinese lettering down the sides are from important Buddhist texts, the Heart Sutra and Lotus Sutra.

Quan Am Tu Vien is a Vietnamese Buddhist temple and garden located just outside of Lansing. Buddhism as a religion focuses on the individual's understanding of the world and Buddha's teachings. The space allows for followers of Buddhism to come meditate, pray, and deepen their understanding, surrounded by Buddha statues, ponds, and plants. The temple also provides resources to Buddha's teachings and other important Buddhist texts on their website.



'Tu Vien' means monastery or temple in Vietnamese, making the name of the garden Quan Am Temple. Quan Am is a goddess of mercy, also known as Guanyin, in Buddhism. The typeface chosen has large, bubbly serifs that adds character to the sign. This Vietnamese name is in bright red, a color that symbolizes luck and prosperity in Asian cultures. It is larger and has a more distinct style, making it the focus of the hierarchy created in the sign. Beneath it, in blue, is 'Buddhist Meditation Center' in English, allowing for non-Vietnamese visitors to understand what the garden is. Blue is often a color associated with peace, so it is a fitting choice for the text.

Quan Am Temple
BUDDHIST CENTER
Holt MI

