

Profile of St. Albans Episcopal Church Spooner, Wisconsin



History

This history was compiled in the year of our Lord, 1983. Since most official church records were lost or destroyed in 1932, this history is drawn from minutes of the St Alban's Guild's official records since 1932 and the oral contributions of many church members.

When Spooner and surrounding areas were settled in the mid to late 1800's there were Christians of Episcopal upbringing and new church members who yearned to worship in the services of the Episcopal Church. We know that Reverend A.B. Peabody, early missionary to northwest Wisconsin camps, held services in and around Spooner in the 1880s and 90s. On March 9th, 1900 a group of women organized St Alban's Guild in order to support a priest and assist in building an Episcopal church in Spooner.

At this time Reverend James Trimbell was supply priest and was paid \$3.00 per service with church rental of the community schools set at 50 cents per service. The Guild and other church members worked hard to raise money to build the congregation. The foundation of the church was laid in July 1903 at the cost of \$125.00. A small addition, probably what is the small chapel now, was added in August 1903. A small furnace, cost of \$35.00, was placed in the church in

1904. Then the large contribution of Bishop I. L. Nicholson in Milwaukee (this area of the state then in the Diocese of Wisconsin) plus \$650 in Guild raised funds completed the construction of the church. With new pews (\$57.00), an organ, pulpit and altar, St Alban's Church was dedicated in April 1904. The church underwent major remodeling in 1949 with rededication of the church by Bishop Horstick on June 22, 1950. The same altar has served the church throughout its history. The bell of St. Alban's was the fire bell from the original Spooner City Hall and was given to the church in 1936.

The Guild Hall was built in 1924 at an approximate cost of \$4,000. This great hall has served countless celebrations, somber gatherings and events of the church and the Spooner community. Many church members remember church sponsored dances for young people and even basketball in the hall. The Guild Hall was remodeled in 1952 and 1974.

The first rectory was purchased in the late 20's from Mr. William Sinclair for \$3,000. The site of that rectory in the current site of the Dahl Funeral Home. The current rectory was built in 1965 on land donated by Mrs. Warder following the death of Vicar Reverend Richard Warder.

The essence of St. Alban's is its faithful members. Many individuals and families have worked hard to bring Christ to people through this Episcopal Church in Spooner. St. Alban's of Spooner will continue to meet the challenges of tomorrow as it has fulfilled the needs and dreams of so many in the past.

Our Church Today

Our Vestry consists of 5 members and a treasurer (Jan Baars)

SR. Warden: Dan Durand Jr. Warden: Ron (Roscoe) Bowers

Members: Ron Clare, Linda Hempel (Minutes recorder) and Jay Baars



Full Time Organist – Cathy Johnson



Quote from our organist:

“Music is the highest form of praise we can give to Lord. Each Sunday I try to combine traditional and contemporary music into each worship service. It gives me great joy to be a part of this”

Altar Guild – Deb and Dan Durand sometimes with help from other parishioners take care of our altar. Karen Fehr comes in after the service and takes care of washing the “holy dishes”



Women’s Guild – There is a Women’s Guild with Karen Fehr as president. The women’s guild has not been active since the pandemic but would be available upon request. It is a helpful group of ladies that is available for church functions. Historically the Women’s Guild has raised and provided funds for needs at the rectory or church that are not funded by other sources.

Outreach- Each Christmas our congregation sponsors a family for gifts and food.

St Alban's also donates to relief in Haiti. The Haiti Partnership as it is now called is operated out of the Diocese of Milwaukee and became a partnership with a small area called Jeanette in 1982. The church and school were started by Pere (Father) La Fontant and the Bishop White from the diocese of Milwaukee. The school started with the children sitting under trees in the shade. The school evolved slowly but surely, and in 2018 the first High School graduation took place with 13 graduates. Because of economics the school now is a K-6th grade school. There is a health clinic on the grounds with a Dr present nearly every week for several days.

At the present time the use of our rectory is being donated to the Salvation Army to be used to house a homeless family.

A Blessing Box is being constructed to be placed outside our church. Parishioners will be responsible for keeping it stocked with nonperishables foods as needed.

Each spring we sponsor a higher education scholarship for a needy Spooner High School Graduate.

Membership

Our Congregation consists of 35 members. At the present time our congregation consists of older members. No younger members at the present time but congregation would love to welcome a younger generation. We would be accepting of everyone, accepting of differences as well as likenesses. We are a welcoming group. We are great church family who are willing to help not only our church family with any need but would offer help to community people in need.

Financial

Our membership takes great pride in our church building, rectory and grounds. Everything is very well maintained. Improvements have been made as needed. Financially we are in good standing with no outstanding debt.

Our Church Hall

In recent years this great hall was used for a means to clothe and feed the community. It can hold up to 60+ people. Clothes were collected and the public was invited in to a "free" garage sale to take whatever they needed for their family. For 13 years up until the start of the pandemic St. Albans with cooperation from St. Lukes was holding a once-a-month free community dinner called Alban's table. Alban's table was started by parishioners Carol Meacham and Deb Durand. Pancakes were served at the first dinner. Approximately 30 people attended that meal. More than 200 people at times were served. According to Carol "It was a need to see people, a need to talk to people"



We are a close-knit congregation who enjoys fellowship with each other each Sunday after the morning service. We are a congregation who under strong leadership and the words of the gospel want to spread the love of Christ to all people. Celebrating the differences in people as well as their likeness. Welcoming all.

Our Memorial Garden and Church Grounds

Located on the South Side of our church hall the memorial garden is dedicated to our deceased parishioners. The garden was formerly a vegetable garden that provided some of the vegetables for Alban's Table and for parishioners. In the fall of 2020, it was made into a memorial garden with perennials and bulbs donated, planted and cared for by volunteers. The parish grounds are also maintained by volunteers.



Our Rectory

The rectory is a three bedroom, two bath home located behind church.



Our Town and County

St. Alban' Episcopal Church is located in Northwest Wisconsin in the County of Washburn in the City of Spooner. Population of Spooner is 2,477. Climate is classified as Continental Moist (Cold winters and warm summers) Winter average daily minimum is 4.5 degrees and summer average daily maximum are 79.3 degrees.

Washburn County is home to a national park. The Namekagan River is part of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway and is a free national park to explore. Washburn County boasts more than 950 lakes and more than 150,00 acres for its residents and visitors to explore. The Spooner area has America's only moving bed and breakfast dinner train, the Wisconsin Great Northern Railroad. Washburn county offers over 30 miles of horseback riding trails and two horse-friendly campgrounds and well over 100 miles of ATV trails and the ATV scenic Tours which offers a scenic ride along nearly 40 points of interest.

Spooner is bustling with Civic Groups: Lions Club, Veterans Posts and Educational Clubs to name a few. Spooner also has many specialty clubs including writers, music, quilting, knitting, gardening and camera clubs to name a few.

Spooner Schools

The district covers approximately 550 square miles and includes three schools: a Pre-K-4 elementary school, a 5-8 middle school and the 9-12 high school. The district also has an early-childhood program.

A new state of the art high school opened in 2009, complete with an auditorium, technology updates, modern classrooms and athletic facilities. The middle school was remodeled in 2009 to include new fine arts areas, technology facilities and entrances. Additional improvements and additions were approved in a 2020 referendum and construction began in 2021.

Extracurricular opportunities in the high school include drama, musical, forensics, band, choir, Spanish Club, FFA Newspaper, Spirit Club and Expert Engineers to name a few. Middle school has Student Council, Destination Imagination, Summer Jam, Hunt Hill Audubon Sanctuary outing, Music, Choir and End of the year track meet. Spooner Rails sports is in Heart O'North conference and includes, track, baseball, softball, gold, basketball, hockey, cross country, football, volleyball, wrestling, and soccer.

Spooner High School has earned the prestigious bronze rating from the "US News and World Report" multiple times as one of the top schools in the United States. Spooner Area School District also has comprehensive community education, after schools and summer school programs.

Health and Well Being in Spooner

Spooner has its own hospital. Spooner Health is a licensed 25-bed critical access hospital offering a full range of inpatient and outpatient services. Spooner Health is licensed by the state and is a member of Wisconsin Hospital Association. Spooner also has an Essentia Health Clinic. Essentia Health – Spooner Clinic offers family practice, full laboratory, drug testing and screening, cancer care, heart care and more. Essentia's mission is to make a health difference in people's lives. Spooner is also home to Maple Ridge Care Center which is a 75- bed skilled nursing facility that offers long-term care, short-term, rehabilitative, respite and end-of-life care. Spooner and the county have many resources available to its residents through the Washburn County Health and Human Services Department.

Recreation and Relaxation in Spooner

Recreational opportunities abound in the area. Enjoy The Children's Trout Pond, Spooner Civic Center, Go-Karts, Golf Courses, Ice Skating, Leisure Lake Youth Camp, Mini-golf, Parks, Skateboard parks, tennis courts and ATV/UTV, Bicycle, Hiking, Horse, Skiing, and Snowmobiling

trails. Canoeing opportunities are plentiful especially along the famous Namekagan River, The Yellow River and parts of the Totogatic River.

Wisconsin Great Northern Railroads restored train runs excursions between the railroad passenger depot and the regional visitors center north of Spooner. Among the special trips there is a Bed and Breakfast, a wine and cheese and a pizza excursion.

Shopping in Spooner and the Area

Spooner has many little shops on historic main street. All of your basic shopping needs can be met locally including, hardware, auto, gasoline, groceries, etc. If you prefer shopping in a larger city, Duluth, MN and Eau Claire, WI are just an hour drive away and of course the famous Mall of America is just a two-hour drive from Spooner.

The Arts in the Area

Several venues in the area are used for musical, theatrical or other presentations. Performing arts centers include: Area churches, Erika Quam Memorial Theater in Shell Lake, Pavilion Shell Lake Lakeside outdoor covered performing arts stage, Richards Auditorium Northwood school, Shell Lake Arts Center, Shell Lake School performance center and the Spooner High School Auditorium.

The Potters Shed offers youths and adults the opportunity to decorate pottery, create raku, or craft a wooden sign. No artistic skill is necessary. The Potters Shed also presents weekly outdoor concerts throughout the summer.