

St. Luke's Episcopal Church

Springbrook, WI 54875

Beginning in 1910 church services were held in the Congregational Church unless there was a fifth Sunday in the month. In that case, the service was held at the home of Mrs. Murphy. A mid-week celebration of the Holy Eucharist was held at the Chase home.

The congregation continued to raise money for the building of their own church; and in the spring of 1916, the building was begun. Father Chase donated the land on which the church was built, and Mrs. Chase designed the building. The congregation had raised about \$1,050 through work and gifts and borrowed the sum of \$1,000. The total cost of the building was \$2,186. The stone for the building was obtained from a local gravel pit, and much of the wood came from property that was once owned by the Savage and Edgerton families.

The first service in the new building was held on Easter Sunday, 1917. The date was April 8.

Over the next 20 years many improvements were made in the church building. In 1920 a bell was purchased from the Public School Board and placed in a tower erected with resources provided by the St. Luke's Women's Guild. This tower was rebuilt during the early 1950s, but the same bell remains today.

The first vital chapter in the life of St. Luke's Church was closed in 1938 when Father Chase resigned as priest because of ill health. He died at his home February 15, 1939. Rev. John Tredrea succeeded Father Chase as priest. In 1940, under the direction of Father Tredrea, a cross for the altar was purchased as a memorial to Father Chase. It was also noted that electric lights were installed in the church that year. The balance after disbursements for the year 1940 was reported to be \$2.33.

Rev. Roy Bennett succeeded Father Tredrea in 1941. He remained until August of 1945. From that time until January of 1947, there was no resident priest in the area; but the services of the church were continued. On January 18, 1948, the Rev. Richard C. Warder became Priest in Charge of St. Luke's along with St. Alban's in Spooner, and the Church of the Ascension in Hayward.

Father Warder was an Englishman, having been ordained in Canada, and provided true missionary work in the wilds of Ontario founding missions and spreading the Gospel to the towns north of Lake Superior. His book, *Northern Exposure*, provides a fascinating picture of his ministry to Canada. His second book, *The Happy Warrior*, was not published until after his death. Father Warder's years at Springbrook will long be remembered. He made a lasting impression on the entire area.

The undercroft of St. Luke's Church was opened on November 30, 1952. This was made possible by a gift of \$1,200 from the National Council of Church and from the

proceeds of the 1951 Advent Offering of the children of the Diocese of Eau Claire. In this work, a new furnace was installed and many hours of work were donated in the excavation and construction.

Because of ill health, Father Warder gave up the responsibility for St. Luke's Church in June 1957, taking charge of Spooner and Shell Lake only. He died in 1964 and was buried in the cemetery behind St. Luke's Church. Since he left serving St. Luke's, fourteen other priests have served our church.

The Sunday School was begun in 1910 by Jane and Anna Chase, the children of Father and Mrs. Chase. Classes were held in the newly built church after services and sometimes held in the small area of the basement. After the undercroft was completed, Sunday School classes were held there. In 1947 it was recorded that there were thirty students and four teachers. Currently there are no Sunday School classes being held at St. Luke's.

The little cobblestone chapel beside the road at Springbrook represents the hard work of devoted and faithful people who were not satisfied to live in a community without their own church. They all had a part in the building of the church and its maintenance throughout the years; therefore, it is very personal to all who have been involved.

It would be impossible to list or mention all the members and friends of St. Luke's Church over the years. The church registers are full of baptisms, confirmations, and marriages. Many people have faithfully served St. Luke's with works of love and gifts. Many have served on boards and organizations. Today one of the members of St. Luke's is serving on the Standing Committee of the Diocese.

Approximately 20 to 25 persons call St. Luke's their home parish. We have a vestry that manages a budget of \$25,000 to \$30,000. Larry Neste is our senior warden; Dave Zimbrick is the junior warden. Other vestry members are Ron Neste, Merrelyn Dawson, and Nancy Lester. Jean Neste serves as treasurer. Diane Neste is historian and in charge of the Memorial Fund. She is also the church organist. We continue to give \$2,000 in outreach each year. Some of our members do outreach in the community through other organizations.

In 2020 the Northern Highlands Benefice was created, and St. Luke's was part of that venture. This has broadened the opportunities our members have for study groups and special days' services. We have two representatives on the Benefice Board. Our normal weekly service is held at 8:30 on Sunday morning.