

Our Bell

The original St. Alban's Church in Marshfield stood on the corner of East Third and South Maple Streets. The original two lots were purchased in 1897 for \$850.

Built in 1898 and consecrated by Bishop Weller on December 18, 1900, the "modern Gothic-style" church was designed by the Rev. Fr. Braunscombe and built by T. F. Vannedom of Marshfield. The cost was \$3,000.

According to the bell itself, it was cast by the Hy Stuckstede B F Co. of St. Louis, Missouri in 1891. But it did not come directly here. Details concerning the bell entered in our parish records of the late 1920s indicated, "Thru the kindness of Bishop Weller, Fr. Franklin's (Phillips Brooks Franklin, Vicar 1928 – 31) bid for the Montpelier Church's bell was granted."

The "Montpelier Church" (Kewaunee County, Wisconsin) was the former Roman Catholic congregation of St. Anna's, which in 1913 applied to Bishop Weller to be received into the Anglican Communion. The Bohemian population of St. Anne's Episcopal Mission Church was served by Episcopal priests until around 1929, when it was closed and the property sold.

An excerpt from a letter dated July 3rd, 1930, from the Rev. Lucius D. Hopkins, Vicar, St. Paul's Church, Big Suamico, to then Bishop Sturtevant indicates: "The following are the minute of the June 2nd [meeting] re Montpelier, vis.: 'The Bishop reported to the Board [probably the Executive Board] the condition of the Church property at Montpelier – that much of the furniture had been removed; that the bell was to be taken by St. Alban's, Marshfield . . . "

Further in our records, "The bell was shipped after some delay and installed on June 16, 1930 and used for [the] first time that day when Angelus was rung . . . having been blessed the previous Sunday (Trinity Sunday, June 15)." After that, "the Sexton rang the Angelus three times daily and the bell was also used frequently as the Sanctus bell."

Following groundbreaking ceremonies for the present church on April 29, 1962, the bell and cross were removed from the steeple of the old church by the city on November

28, 1962. The Rt. Rev. W. H. Brady, Bishop of Fond Du Lac, then deconsecrated the old church in a private ceremony.

Thanks to God's blessings and the generosity of numerous donors, our beloved bell now has a beautiful, permanent resting place in our North entrance.