

## A Brief History

### Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration 1905

The first service in Transfiguration's history and the first marriage ceremony were held September 10, 1890. By 1893 regular Sunday services occurred at the Pines Hotel. In 1901 the mission progressed to a groundbreaking ceremony for a church to be constructed. During the 1903-1905 years of construction, by Wilford Fox and crew of Cheboygan, there are several diary reports of attendance and collections, most of whom were members of either the Bulkley or the Ziegler families. Throughout the 1904-1905 summer seasons, as construction progressed, the Cheboygan Democrat tracked the "long expected chapel windows" being created by Friedrich & Wolfram in Detroit.

The church officially opened for services conducted by the Reverends Bulkley & Ziegler on its namesake Holy Day, August 7, 1905. The Democrat reported "...Holy Communion, Sunday School, morning song, three baptisms and evening song with a Sermon by Rev. Mr. Wylie of Iowa City made a gala day." The direct line of Zieglers is evident today with the residents in the Pines who are the great great grand daughters of Paul Ziegler.

Endowments appear early in church records and are in place today (with special contributions of the Hoover Family), helping to improve, maintain, and sustain Transfiguration. Early parishioners supplied the stained glass

side windows; today's parishioners supported skillful restoration by Phyllis Brown, of the West End. The Rose Window above the entrance was designed and the center portrait painted by Eustace Ziegler, bringing it across the lake and inserting it "taxed the efforts of everyone" in 1906. A 1913 news clipping kept in the Register reported the parish had "\$200 in hand" to purchase a bell and erect a tower. A lectern "built by soldiers" from the fort came from Mackinac Island's Trinity Church, which also later donated its gas lamps when that island gained electricity. Other early gifts arrived from other congregations.

The history of the window above the altar is elusive. The Register briefly notes it as (a donation?) from the Mariner's Church of Detroit, a parish served by Paul Ziegler. Other sources are sure it was made from bottoms of

bottles collected from a tavern (in the Upper Peninsula or Cheboygan or downstate), thus its "bottle window" name. In 1906, the pews arrived. The current altar, lectern and pulpit were designed by Shirley Owens and constructed by Luke Gibbons from island wood at the bequest of the Morrison and Hoover families. The old pump organ was electrified in 1970

and memorialized Shirley Morgan Poole, the church's first regular organist. The present organ was installed in 2003, acquired by funds from the once active Women's Guild and from Miriam Hoover and Michael Leppen to commemorate the Guild, and Island musicians George Anson and Walter Lynn. (Other organists included Bunker Clark, Melissa McLaury, Greg Peccon, Jean Westcott and Howard Ziegler, and Marje Williams serving.)

Structural elements have histories too. The first steeple, designed by Chicago architects in 1936, was donated by Mrs. Frank Hoover in memory of her husband. Deteriorating irreversibly, it was replaced by a copper version in 2000, erected by Pines resident Richard Card's Port Huron Company. Two other highly visible additions developed in the 1960's. One complex set was necessary to keep Transfiguration standing, the much earlier installation of interior turnbuckles proving insufficient. Gene Babcock and the parish necessarily had to be creative engineers with materials both affordable and attainable. Hence, outside in addition to cables extending from the back of the church into the woods, are the flying buttresses. Inside are long 2x10's at the level of the eaves, and panels of stress-managing plywood in a zigzag ceiling support system and in the diagonal design covering back and front walls.

During the past 14 years, the vestry, under the devoted leadership of Donald Card and Miriam Hoover, have done much to refurbish not only the church with paint, siding, windows, steeple, walkways, ramps,

plumbing, floors and pews, but have also refurbished and renovated the Vicarage and the Hoover Community Building, next door to the church. Historical buildings must constantly be improved and updated to keep them relevant while maintaining their charm.

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