

The History of St. Mary's Episcopal Church Dousman, WI

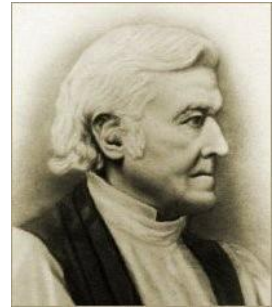


Chapel of Santa Maria - The First St. Mary's

In the fall of 1836, thirteen years before Wisconsin became a state, Elisha and Belinda Edgerton arrived in Dousman in a farm wagon drawn by oxen. Highway 18 was then a narrow dirt trail.

Attracted by the spring on the land now occupied by the Masonic Home, Elisha cleared the land and built his log cabin and substantial farm buildings of which some were local limestone. These hardy pioneers from New England were devout Episcopalians and Belinda persuaded Elisha to fit out the top floor of the carriage house as a chapel. She called it St. Maria's and there the congregation of the present St. Mary's originated. Students and faculty from Nashotah mission walked eight miles each way to conduct services. The carriage house shown at left still stands west of the present church across from the Masonic Home.

In 1869 Henry C. Williams and his wife Dianna, then owners of the Edgerton property donated land on the corner of the main roads, now Highways 67 and 18, to the Episcopal Diocese of Wisconsin with the stipulation that on it be built "a good and substantial stone building" for the local congregation. The cornerstone was laid in 1870 by Bishop Jackson Kemper, the great missionary bishop to the Northwest.



The Rt. Rev. Jackson Kemper, D.D.
First Bishop of Wisconsin 1854-70

The bell tower and narthex shown below were added to the south entrance in 1912 when the sacristy was added to the north entrance. The parish hall was completed in 1979. Interior innovations to the church include the redwood ceiling constructed in the early 1900's, the stained glass windows behind the altar designed and built Conrad Pickel Studios in 1973, the window south of the altar depicting St. Mary also by Conrad Pickel in 1977, and the windows in the west wall designed by Gabriel Cartwright and constructed by Robert Uchner in 1992. The organ was purchased in 1984 from a Franciscan Monastery in Ft. Wayne, Indiana.



building for worship. We continue to welcome people of all faith traditions to join us in experiencing the worship, fellowship, and world-wide community outreach experience that is St. Mary's.

At St. Mary's we understand that service to others and fellowship with one another is central to spiritual growth. St. Mary's works because we all care about each other and nurture the setting of this little church as "a jewel in the lake country."

Please join us for services at either 8 AM or 10 AM Sundays.

