



Fox Point files

by Douglas H. Frazer

Fox Point Houses of Worship



Little White Church

OVER THE YEARS, Fox Point has been home to a diverse group of churches and synagogues. In 1852, early Dutch immigrants formed the Reformed Church of Bethlehem (the Holland Church) located at what is now the southwestern corner of Doctors Park adjacent to Fox Lane. It shared the same rough hewn log cabin with the Lake School. The village still maintains the historic Dutch Cemetery adjacent to the site. In about 1867, the congregation built a new church on the east side of Lake Drive at about Dean Road.

The Rev. Gerard Brandt set up a second Dutch Church in 1854. It was located on the northwest corner of Navajo and Dean Roads. A twelve-family Lutheran congregation acquired the church in 1866. This was the beginning of St. John's Lutheran Church. St John's purchased nearby property in 1870 and built a new structure on the east side of North Port Washington Road just south of Bradley Road. On September 26, 1888, at a cost of \$2,100, the congregation dedicated a new structure at that location that was known by all as the "Little White Church."

In 1929, St. John's Church built its present structure at 7800 North Port Washington Road (now Glendale). St. John's Cemetery remains in Fox Point. It is just north of the Nic Ehr Landscape Co.-Legacies Ltd. and contains about 150 graves – some dating back to the 1870s.

The Little White Church continued to serve the community long after the permanent St. John's Church was built. Edward A. Bacon (the owner of the Bacon estate – the main house of which is now owned by Douglas and Kristin Fellows) bought the structure in 1930 for \$300 and moved it a few blocks south to the Dunwood School site. Sometimes known as the Fox Point meeting house, the Little White Church became the site of many fashionable weddings. It also hosted other fledgling congregations including St. Christopher's Episcopal Church, Lake Drive Baptist Church, and St. Eugene Catholic Church. Sadly, without a permanent sponsor or funding source, the church was demolished in 1959.

The population of the Northshore, including Fox Point, grew quickly after the Second World War and new congregations rose up to meet the need. Fox Point Lutheran Church formed in 1947, moving into its new building at 7510 N. Santa Monica Boulevard in 1951. The Milwaukee Council of Churches, recognizing the need for a Protestant

church in fast-growing Fox Point that would welcome members from varied backgrounds and denominations, was an important catalyst for the organization of the North Shore Congregational Church. It dedicated its building at 7330 N. Santa Monica Boulevard in 1955.

Congregation Shalom formed in 1951 and in 1955 broke ground for the synagogue at 7630 N. Santa Monica Boulevard. Congregation Sinai organized in 1955. It dedicated its synagogue at 8220 N. Port Washington Road in 1962.

Interestingly, Rev. Peter Dietz, the pastor of Santa Monica Catholic Church in Whitefish Bay, anticipated with remarkable foresight the expansion of the Church mission immediately to the north. He planned for the new St. Eugene parish 30 years prior to its existence. In the late 1920s, Rev. Dietz orchestrated the purchase of eight acres of the old Van Den Huevel farm on the northeast corner of Port Washington Road and Calumet Road. The parish remained a vision until 1957. In 1959, the new congregation dedicated St. Eugene Catholic Church at 7600 N. Port Washington Road.

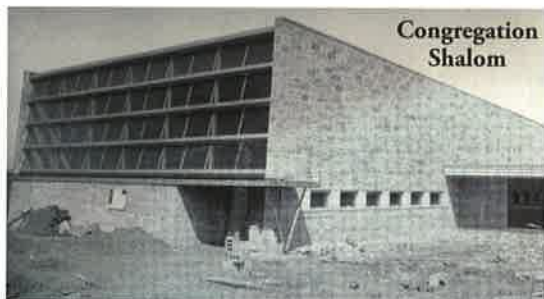
Fox Point has hosted temporary facilities for several other congregations just starting out. Starting in 1983, the Chabad of Fox Point met in the basement of Rabbi Dovid Rapoport's house at 7811 N. Fairchild Road. (Chabad is a Hebrew acronym for the three intellectual faculties of chachmah-wisdom; binah-comprehension; and da'at-knowledge.) In 1987, the congregation moved to 2233 W. Mequon Road and has flourished as Congregation Agudas Achim Chabad-Peltz Center for Jewish Life.

The Shul (shul means synagogue in Yiddish), led by Rabbi Shmaya Shmotkin, called its space in the Audubon Court, at the corner of North Port Washington and Brown Deer Roads, home for about eight years until its recent move to larger quarters at the site of the former Pandl's Restaurant in Bayside at 8825 N. Lake Drive. It, too, is flourishing.

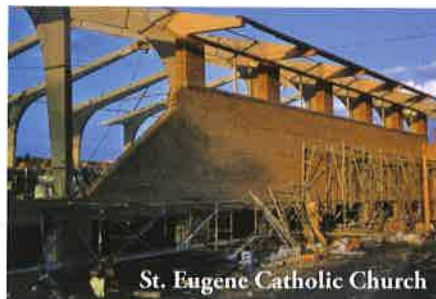
Divine Providence, it seems, shines upon our village.

Coming up: Fox Point's houses of worship today.

Douglas H. Frazer is a trustee on the Fox Point Village board. The views expressed are his own and not necessarily those of the village, the village board, other village board members, or Neighborhood Communications, LLC.



Congregation Shalom



St. Eugene Catholic Church



First Lutheran Church



Old Dutch Cemetery



Sinai Temple



A Community Church
PROJECTED TO BE BUILT
NORTH SHORE CHURCH
CONGREGATION
Presbyterian-Synodical-United Methodist
New Building at intersection of Lake Drive and
Lakeshore Blvd. 1994