

History of Church of the Resurrection

Church of the Resurrection

In March 1856, Bishop Mathias Loras, who was saying Mass in the home of James Lyons, organized St. Philomena Parish in the rural community of Asbury. Father Victor Badon served as the first pastor while also administering to the Catholics of the French Settlement (Five Points) in rural Center Township. A frame building on land donated by William Kelly served as the first church, with a rectory in a home donated by Mr. McFarland. A school established in 1871, taught by laywomen, was built on land donated by John Savage. The school closed after eight years when St. Anthony's School opened. As the population of the area grew, additions were made to the church building. After Father Badon left, the parish needs were met by priests of the archdiocese, especially St. Anthony's.

In 1920, a new church built of bricks from the former St. Anthony's Home for the Aged on Asbury Road replaced the frame building. A rectory was erected next to the church. A ball field on church grounds provided a home for the Asbury Phils and the Philomena Peaches of the Prairie League. A fire in 1935 partially destroyed the church building, but a remodeling campaign led by Father Dunn repaired the damage.

In 1959, the parish bought property from Fred Welter to the east of the church for a school. The first school building staffed by the Sisters of the Presentation and one lay teacher opened in 1961 for grades 1 – 6 with 147 students. The second school building allowed for grades 1 – 8 in the fall of 1964. A building connecting the two schools became a temporary church. The brick church was sold and became part of the Heritage Manor Nursing Home. The rectory was moved to its present location on Hales Mill Road. A rectory and convent were added to the north of the school. St. Philomena's became the Church of the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ in October, 1961, due to historical uncertainty surrounding St. Philomena and her removal from the roster of saints.

After twenty years, a new church building was desperately needed. A successful fundraising campaign allowed for its construction to begin in 1985. The congregation welcomed its completion in the spring of 1986 with its sixteen-foot-tall cross installed just in time for Easter Services. Archbishop Daniel Kucera dedicated the new structure on May 17, 1986. The temporary church was repurposed into a gymnasium for the school. The new church also had a rectory and offices. The convent became a day care center temporarily, and eventually it and the rectory were demolished.

A new school building designed by Origin Design of Dubuque opened in the fall of 2022 for preschool to fifth grade.

