

St. Aidan's, Alden

What are some significant moments in the history of your church that have shaped its identity today?

St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, renovated by parishioners from a condemned building, is the former site of the famous Alden Blackwater Baths. The historic site has been a place of restoration and healing for over one hundred years; a ministry St. Aidan's carries forward.

What makes your church unique in the region and the diocese?

We have a beautiful outdoor labyrinth. The labyrinth was built with leadership from St. Aidan's as a gift to the community in 2000. It sits between the church and the woods that are part of our three-acre property. Our labyrinth provides a site of prayerful reflection for those in the neighborhood and beyond. We have vibrant worship with contemporary music including guitars, drums, and tambourines.



What are the most vibrant ministries or strengths of your parish today?

St. Aidan's is home to the Alden-Marilla Food Pantry. Volunteers and clients are from this area. The pantry has served the greater Alden area for decades, and the pet pantry has served folks for over ten years. St. Aidan's is a core part of serving those in need in our area. All of this relies on strong lay leadership in our service to others and in our church.

Describe a moment in your community's life when you felt the presence of the Holy Spirit moving among you. What made that moment possible?

Numerous times, we have been visited by eagles right after making an important decision in the life of our church or our service ministries. Each time, the circling of eagles helped confirm the rightness of our decision. Several people have reported to us life transforming experiences through the programs and outreach of the St. Aidan's community. We feel the presence of the Holy Spirit in all these experiences.

How does your church engage with the local neighborhood, the civic life of your community, or diocesan and/or Episcopal Church-wide initiatives?

We are very active in the local community. In addition to our Food and Pet Pantries, we work with organizations like the Chamber of Commerce. One example is providing chili for the Chamber's Christmas in the Park event. Our annual porch and plant sale fundraisers are community events in this region of the diocese. We also provide space for local AA meetings.



What are the hopes and dreams of your congregation for its next chapter?

We hope to grow and thrive. We hope to continue to support the greater Alden area through our outreach to those in need in our community.