

## ► Windows

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"In its size, its construction, its style of architecture and its windows. I personally believe the church should be on the National Historic Registry. It is of real significance to the history of architecture in America, as well as church history."

Few pre-Civil War churches in Illinois built of brick remain, Mr. Factor said.

Most were built of wood and have been torn down.

"Planning for the Augustana Lutheran Church began in 1865," he said. "The church is very old and very important to Swedish Americans. It is the beginning of the Swedish Lutheran Church in America."

The congregation recently approved spending about \$80,000 to restore them, church council chairman Wayne French said.

"The feeling of the congregation for a number of years has been that work needed to be done to the windows or we would lose them, because the paint was peeling and they needed new caulking as they were getting loose," he said.

"We are having a pledge drive and we are using some money from a trust fund to pay for the work," Mr. French said.

Building of the church was finished in 1870, church member and noted local historian Ron Peterson said. The windows were installed in 1891 and paid for by Ladies Aid and Young People's societies.

The windows originally cost \$552.15. Now they're valued at more than \$1 million, he said.

Church records of the windows are written in Swedish, so some of the details about them are difficult to find, Mr. Peterson said.

It takes "some detective work," Mr. Factor said, "but I enjoyed all of it."

The 26 windows each measure about 20 feet high and four feet wide, and ones in the tower are made of French crystal, "in a very light pastel color," Mr. Factor said. "That probably was the highest quality of glass found in America in 1867."

Windows in the sanctuary are in deep shades of reds, greens, blues and yellows, much unlike stained glass used in churches after the Civil War.

"What the congregation is doing is providing the protection to the stained-glass needs, he said. "That is wonderful because the windows and the church are a treasure."

So are their histories and mysteries.

