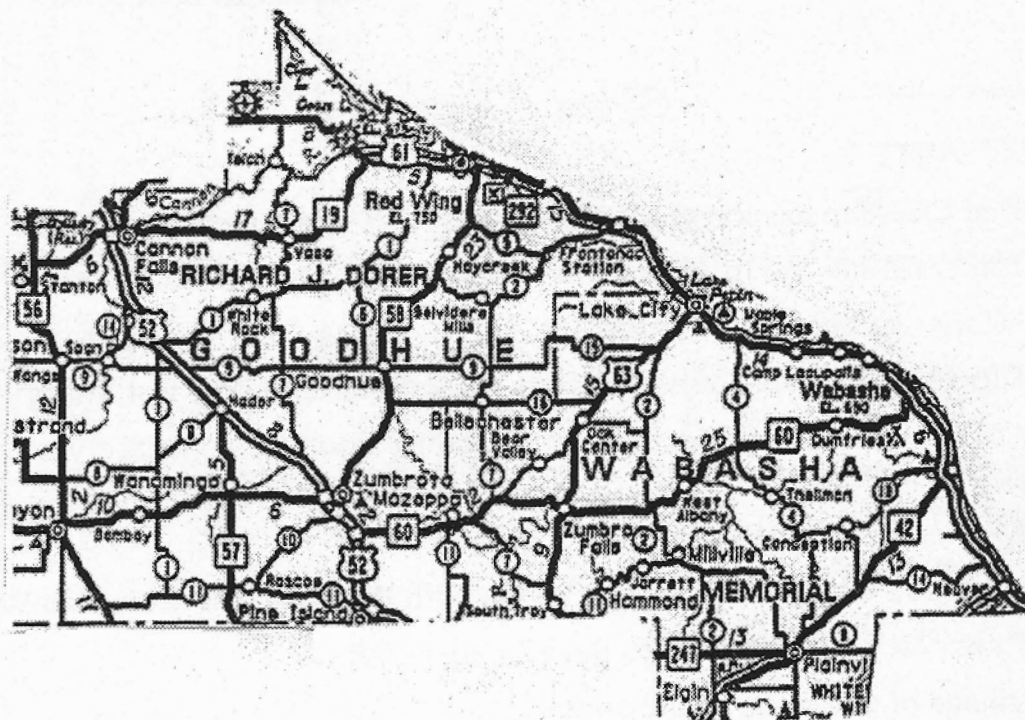


When settlers and explorers came to North America missionaries followed to bring the word of God. As early as 1727, a Christian mission was established at Fort Beauharnois to care for the needs of the soldiers, native Americans and traders. This was near the site of the Villa Maria in Frontenac.

When Bishop Mathias Loras of the Diocese of Dubuque, Iowa, visited St. Paul and the surrounding area in 1839, he saw a need for more priests to serve the new immigrants who had settled in the area. In 1840 Father Lucien Galtier was sent as the first assigned pastor in Minnesota. He held services in homes and at Fort Snelling where a small log cabin chapel was built in 1841. The area at this time was still part of the Diocese of Milwaukee.

In 1850 the Diocese of Saint Paul was founded and extended from Canada to Iowa and from Lake Superior to the Missouri River. Father Joseph Cretin became the first Bishop. Bishop Cretin served this area until he died in 1857 and was replaced by Bishop Thomas Grace. It was Bishop Grace who placed Father Felix Tissot to administer to all of the Catholics in Goodhue and Wabasha Counties. His home parish was Saint Felix in Wabasha where he built a church in 1858. From this location he served the Catholics in twenty five locations and built churches in Lake City, Highland, Oakwood, Red Wing, Bellchester, Belle Creek, Cherry Grove and Pine Island.



At one time Catholics in the Goodhue area were a part of a parish that included all of Goodhue and Wabasha County.

We can only imagine how difficult it must have been to serve such a large area in this period with no automobiles, no trains and no telephones. The pastor had no way of letting his parishioners know when he was coming. He tried to reach each parish once a month, but weather often prevented him from reaching his destination. St. Columbkille's 125th anniversary book notes "How the word got passed around when Father arrived, we do not know, but one can only imagine that every household has someone keeping a close watch on the trail the priest would be likely to pass on foot or on horseback?"

In 1865 Father C.J. Knauf became pastor of an area that comprised all of Goodhue County. His main parish was at Red Wing and he had mission parishes in Bellechester, Frontenac, Cherry Grove, Mazeppa, Belle Creek, Roscoe, and a station in Wisconsin. In 1872 Father Stariha, who succeeded Father Knauf, was given three assistants to help him care for the increasing number of Catholics in the five mission parishes. Having a priest as close as Red Wing who had fewer settlements to care for certainly made the priest more accessible to the people of the Goodhue area.

Thirteen years later in 1878 Father Roy was assigned to St. Columbkille. The first church at St. Columbkille was built in 1860, but the parish was not incorporated until Father Roy was assigned in 1878. This made a priest more available when needed. It also meant less travel time. Catholics would still have to brave the cold in horse and buggy but did not have to travel as far to get to Sunday Mass. Father Roy had mission parishes at Cannon Falls and Cherry Grove where stone churches were built. He also visited Zumbrota once a month. Cannon Falls remained a mission until 1905. Cherry Grove became a mission of Pine Island in 1893.

Time Line

- 1727 First Christian mission was established at Fort Beauharnis near Frontenac
- 1840 Father Galtier the 1st pastor in Minnesota was stationed at St. Paul
- 1849 Minnesota became a territory
- 1850 Diocese of St. Paul Founded—Bishop Cretin became the first Bishop
- 1858 Catholic Church of Goodhue and Wabasha Counties organized with main church in Wabasha
- 1858 Minnesota became a state
- 1865 Goodhue County became one parish with the main church in Red Wing
- 1878 Father W.T. Roy assigned to Belle Creek Parish
- 1897 Village of Goodhue incorporated

By Laws Establish a Board of Directors

The By Laws of Holy Trinity Parish were adopted on November 19, 1903. The By Laws provided for a Board of Directors which was quite different from our present day Church Council. There were five members on the Board of Directors. The Archbishop served as the president of the Board, the pastor was the vice president. The trustees were not elected by the parish, but by a ballot cast by these three ex officio members of the Board. The Board met four times a year.

The Board of Directors could elect two or more responsible men to assist the Board. These men were called an advisory council and were consulted on all official business, but they had no vote. The pastor and the trustees determined what each parishioner's assessment would be. Sometimes an advisory council was created to help the Board in this task.

The treasurer could pay out money only if he had a receipt signed by the president or vice president and countersigned by the secretary. The Board of Directors could contract debts only up to \$300.00. Any amount over \$300.00 needed the signature of the Bishop and the Vicar General. We could not find when this ended, but there were still vouchers signed in 1962. The treasurer's account was approved by the Board of Directors once a year and a financial statement was published for the congregation on the third Sunday of January. This included the individual contributions of each member of the parish.

Father Predergast Helps Organize Holy Trinity



Father J.H. Predergast became the pastor of St. Columbkil in Belle Creek in 1898. In 1903 he assisted the Catholics in Goodhue to establish their own church. Father Predergast became the pastor of Holy Trinity also which was a mission of St. Columbkil. As pastor he helped establish the Catholic Order of Foresters which is still in existence today. He was also very interested in the Total Abstinence Society which was organized at Belle Creek.

When Father Predergast was transferred in April of 1912, the two churches gave a farewell party for him with vocal and instrumental numbers. Mr. M.J. Barry gave the farewell speech for the parish. Father F.T. McDermott from Cannon Falls gave the farewell address. Father was given a purse of \$345 as evidence of the high regard his parishes had for him.

Setting Parish Boundaries

The boundaries of Holy Trinity Parish were drawn in 1903 and reaffirmed in a letter from Bishop John R. Roach in 1978.

To the North The town line of Belvidere west to

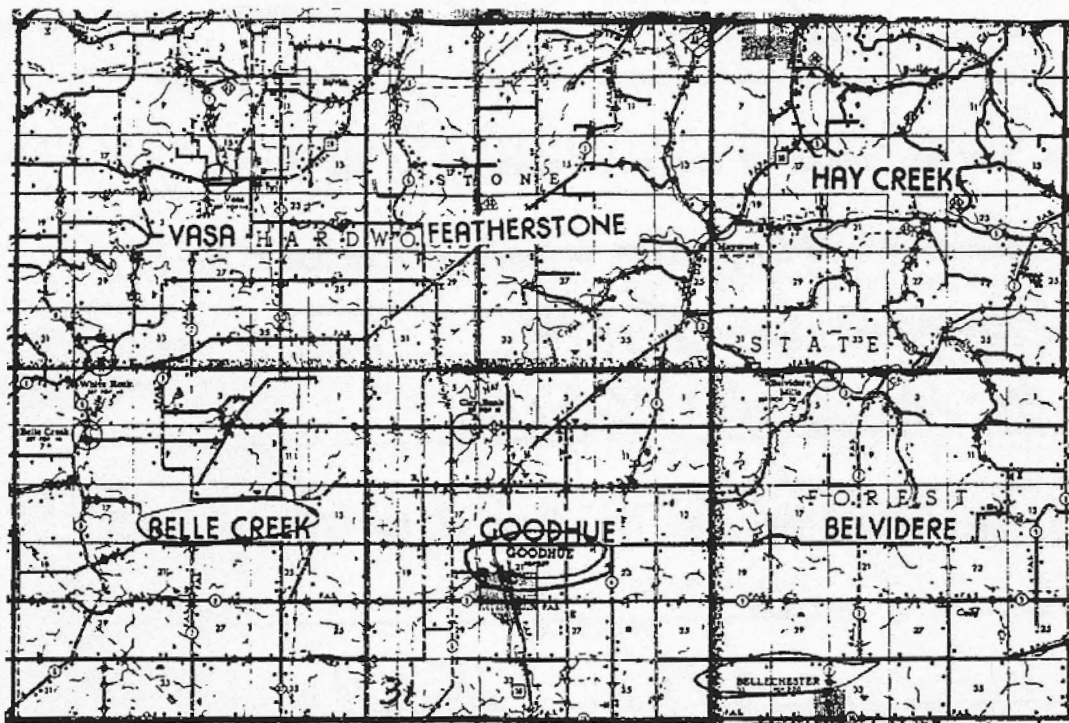
To the West The Belle Creek Parish line, then south on that line to the East Corner of Section 31 (Goodhue) to

To the South The Goodhue town line, then east on that line to

To the East The Belvidere line, then north back to the town line

In order to establish the line on the west we need to go back to the Belle Creek Parish boundary. The Bishop lists the eastern boundary of Saint Columbkil like this:

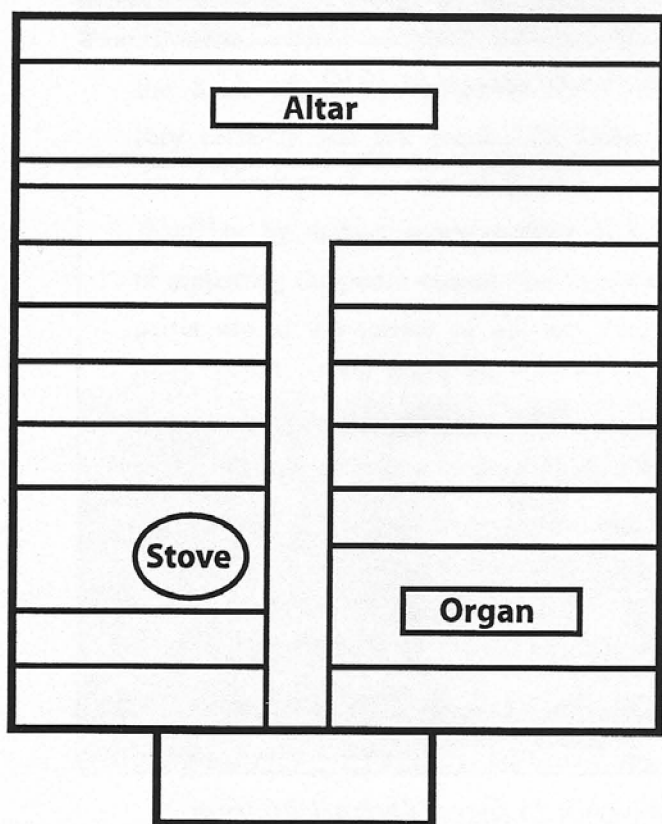
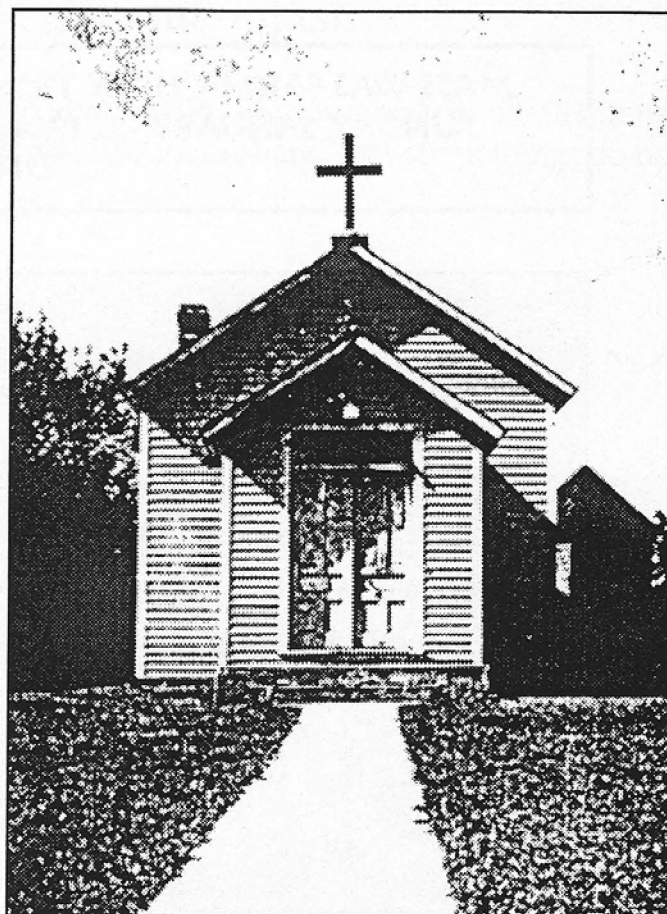
“(old) Highway 58, to the Claybank Road, then east to section 23 Featherstone, Then north to the Colvill Highway.” Old highway 58 is now County Road 6 which would be the western boundary of our parish.



The First Church

No one in the parish today remembers when the first church was used or where it came from but many current parishioners did attend Mass in the old church. When asked to describe it, the one word that seems to come to mind is—small

Some say the old church was moved in to the location where it sat. Some even admit to hearing rumors that it was a chicken coup before it became a church. The minutes of the Board of Directors meeting on October 4, 1905 state that “Mr. T.W. Lally reported that a vacant building on the Davis property just purchased was being fitted up for a temporary chapel to serve the needs of the people until a church could be erected.” The church which was intended to be temporary in 1906 was used as the parish church until the new church was built in 1956.

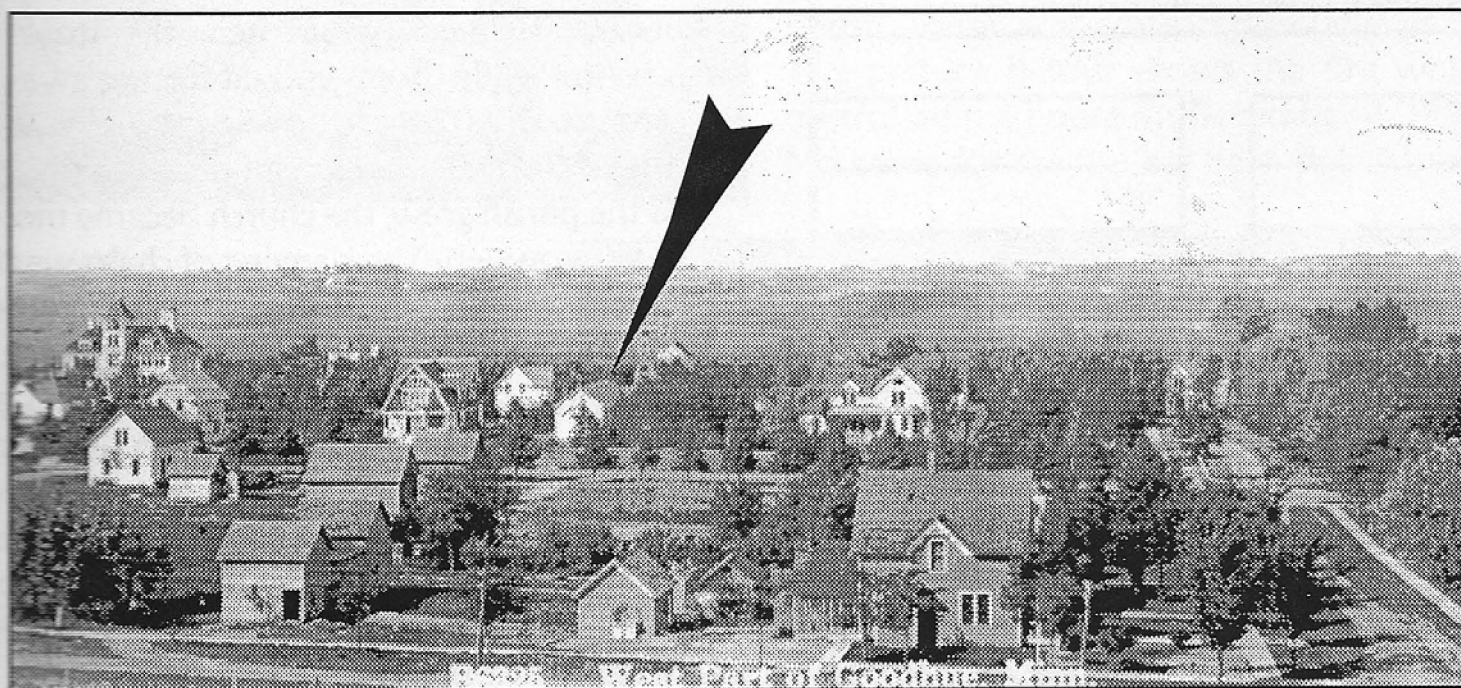


The church had about ten pews on each side. A curtain portioned off a confessional in the front of the church to the left of the altar. A large stove sat between the 1st and 2nd row of pews. Those who sat near the stove were roasting while those who sat further away were often cold. An organ took up space on the other side of the church between the 2nd and 3rd pew. As the parish grew, the church became more and more crowded. The clanging of chairs was heard at every service. One parishioner told me that LuVerne Diercks who lived in the next block said he always wondered how the Catholics got so many people in that little church. It seems the only improvement made over the years was a door in the back of the church. No doubt this was a request of the fire marshall. The door was five feet above the ground and no one seems to remember if the steps were ever put in.

**MASS WAS SAID IN HOLY TRINITY PARISH FOR THE FIRST TIME ON
SUNDAY, JANUARY 21, 1906, WITH FATHER J.H. PRENDERGAST
OFFICIATING.**



Church of Holy Trinity as shown on a postcard in 1910.



Picture showing church behind house. The church faced Second Avenue.

When we look back we may wonder why it took the parish two and one half years from June 13, 1903, to January 21, 1906, for the parish to get a church and have the first Mass in Goodhue. If we look back to the history of Goodhue at this time, it becomes easier to understand why the parish did not grow quickly. First of all these were turbulent times in Goodhue. The town was divided on the liquor question. A murder on September 4, 1905, made the community realize it had to take action against the lawlessness that was so prevalent. This was a town without streets, sidewalks, telephones, or a water system. Supplying these needs was a priority. After the big fire in 1895 which destroyed an elevator and five businesses downtown, the town bought a steam engine. After the Rosener Blacksmith burned in 1901 and the McHugh Harness Shop in 1903 the town voted 52-8 to install a water system. Louis Meyer and Charles Parkin purchased the Goodhue Telephone Company in 1904 which was in competition with the Miller Line. The school built in 1898 was too small and people were divided on the need for an addition. The addition was finally approved 26-16 in 1906.

Many of the men in the new parish had a business of their own which needed their attention. So while the parishioners were working on establishing Holy Trinity Catholic Church, they were also working on building streets and sidewalks, installing street lights and a telephone system, equipping and training a fire department, building a water system, establishing law and order and expanding a crowded school. The population of Goodhue in the 1900 census was 241 so everyone had to participate in many areas of the growing community. When we look at the history of Holy Trinity against the historical background of the community, we can truly appreciate the work of the early members of the parish.

Time Line

June 13, 1903 Articles of Incorporation

Nov. 18, 1903 ... By laws adopted

Dec. 1, 1904 One lot purchased from John Davis

May 14, 1905 Board of Directors agreed to purchase 5 lots of John Davis property

May 21, 1905 Meeting at Helen Kelly's for considering the church question

May 25, 1905 ... Land purchase is registered

Oct. 4, 1905 Vacant building on property is made into a chapel

Jan. 21, 1906 First Mass at Holy Trinity

In 1956 a new church was built on the lot purchased 50 years ago. The new church cost \$65,784.47 and had a seating capacity of 280. Volunteer labor from the parish held the cost of the church to a minimum.

The financial report issued just before the church was built listed the following assets:

Savings account No. 1030	\$5,229.13
Savings account No. 12275	\$5,427.80
Bank certificates	\$3,530.00
Total securities	\$14,187.19

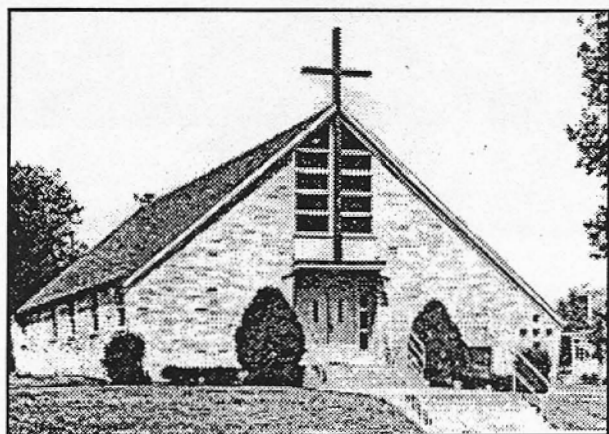
On February 9, 1955, a meeting was called to discuss expenditures of the new church. The Diocese approved a maximum of \$60,000 to construct a new church and gave permission to borrow \$41,000 for a new church. The council had asked the Catholic Aid for a loan but were refused for lack of security. The pastor suggested obtaining a loan from Keenan and Clarry. Disagreement arose when Bill Mans suggested that the board first contact Mr. Bing Crosby and Mr. Ignatius O Schonessy to see if they might be willing to make a sizable gift toward the new church. The pastor agreed that there was no harm in inquiry with them, but believed the possibility of that was scarce. No decision was reached. Another meeting was called on February 16 and a contract for \$41,000 was signed with Keenan and Clarry. In 1966 the balance of the loan was \$22,000. The loan was paid off about 1985.



The New Church was Dedicated May 27, 1956

The Feast of the Holy Trinity

The Most Reverend James Byrne Auxiliary Bishop of the St. Paul Diocese officiated at the Mass, dedication and blessing. He was assisted by Rev. Anthony Louis from Bellechester and Rev. Michael O'Connor, the son of Michael O'Connor, who was then at Saint Columbas Parish in St. Paul. Father Agdus S. Karels was the pastor at Holy Trinity when the church was built. The Mass was followed by a silver tea from 2 to 5.



BUILDING COMMITTEE FOR THE NEW HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

Father Agdus S. Karels, chair
Dennis Heaney
Tom O'Reilly
William Mans
James P. Ryan
Leonard Lodermeier
Peter Hart

Changes to the Church Building Through the Years

- 1956 Sanctuary carpeted by Mr. and Mrs. Donald Ramboldt
- 1961 On October 23, 1961, the bishop wrote a proxy permitting the parish to spend \$1927.00 to purchase a schulmerich "Campanile" three bell Carillon. This sum was to be paid for from funds donated for this purpose. The Carillon fund was started in 1958 with a \$500.00 donation from Mans and Benda.
- 1965 The sanctuary was changed and the office and storage room on each side of the alter were made smaller so that pews could be put up in front. The communion rail was removed.
- 1980 Dividers were added in the church basement at a cost of \$5190.00. They were installed by John Matthees Construction.
- 1982 Ceiling fans — two fans and installation paid for by Lodermeier Implement and Lodermeier farms.
- 1983 Sanctuary carpet purchased by Mr. & Mrs. Willard Holm.
- 1986 Stained glass windows purchased from Conway Universal Studies. Each family paid \$1,400.00 and purchased windows in memory of a Family member.
- 1987 Electric lights replace candles in the vigil light stand.
- 1991 The entire church sanctuary was carpeted.
- 1992 Handicapped ramp added to the church. Work was done by Wayne Gadiant
- 1996 New furnaces were put in the basement for the upstairs and downstairs.
- 2001 A storage shed was built behind the church to store lawn equipment.
- 2001 A central air conditioner was installed in the church.