

Saint Peter's Parish, New Haven

The New Haven area Catholics decided to build a church in the 1870 that would unite the Irish to the north and the Germans to the south and west. In the spring of 1877 the Irish and Germans began to build a church on five acres of land purchased from James McCarthy for \$100. Named for Saint Peter the Apostle, the A-frame church was completed in October 1877.

Although it was the third church to be built in Mitchell County, it was the first parish to have a resident pastor. Father James T. Saunders was appointed in July 1877. Father Thomas A. Barry came to New Haven in November 1895. An extension was built on the church at that time and the rectory was enlarged and improved.

When Archbishop John J. Keane confirmed a class in New Haven in 1902 he urged the parish to build a school. That fall the cornerstone of Saint Mary's Academy was laid. The academy opened on January 3, 1903, with Sisters of Mercy from Cedar Rapids in charge. In 1943 the School Sisters of Notre Dame from Mankato, Minnesota replaced the Mercy Sisters.

Father John Gregory began his nine-year pastorate in New Haven in 1976. During this time the cemetery Crucifixion Altar was restored and flags were placed on either side of the altar. The old school was demolished in 1979. Because of the condition of the bell tower, the bell was moved to its present site on the northeast side of the church building.

Father John W. Carpender accepted his appointment to St. Peter's in 1985. This was the first year for St. Peter's to be without a resident pastor. Father Carpender lived in Riceville. Father John Moser was pastor from 1993 until 2000. He made improvements on the basement walls and helped the parish usher in the Great Jubilee Year 2000.

Father Ray Atwood was appointed to St. Peter's in July 2000. St. Peter's celebrated its 125th Anniversary in 2002. The year culminated with a Mass and banquet on Oct. 12, 2002. There were parish missions in 2008 and 2010. In addition, the parish participated in litanies, novenas, devotions and Eucharistic Holy Hours for priestly and religious vocations.