



## **Brief History of St. Cecilia's:**

First Catholic Settlers- Germany, France, Belgium, Luxembourg

**1837:** Father John Neumann arrived in Sheldon, saying Mass in Peter George's home, establishing a mission.

**1838:** Fr. Neumann convinced the people of Sheldon to build a church. A log church was built on Bartz Rd. (Approx. 1.2 miles south of the current church) by the South Cemetery- possibly where the large cross and Fr.'s Kock and Fr. Weber are buried. Fr. Neumann turned the first spade of soil. The church eventually became too small.

**1848:** 2<sup>nd</sup> church was built approximately near the current site. First resident pastor was assigned. This church was called St. Cecilia's because it was said the people loved music, and she was the Parton saint of music. This church eventually became too small.

**1885:** The present rectory was built, replacing a smaller rectory built in 1849.

**1889:** Foundation and cornerstone were laid for present church. The stones came from the properties of Nicholas George, Hensie George, and Peter Kehl. Stones for the side of church came from a quarry at John F. Almeter farm.

**Sunday, January 31, 1892:** First service held in present church. Much of the material and labor was donated, so the cost of church was \$13,000.

**1904:** School and convent were completed. The present garage between the school and rectory served as the school until the school was completed.

**1910:** Church was consecrated- free from debt.

**1915:** Two sheds were built to shelter the many horses stabled around the church on Sundays and Holy Days. Rings to tie horses still exist on the 2<sup>nd</sup> shed walls.

**1926:** Church Vestibule was added on, it was said because of loud talking in the church.

**1931-1943:** Church was renovated- Stations of the Cross recessed; church painted, and other changes.

**1971:** School closed

**1974:** Renovation started in the first shed, converted to Weber Hall.

**1996:** Between Christmas and New Years, on the right-side altar a center piece with a candle caught fire, burning the rug, part of the altar, the Infant of Prague and St. Joseph Statue was blackened and needed to be cleaned. Miraculously, the fire put itself out.

**1998:** New shrine area, garden, and statue of St. John Neumann unveiled and blessed.

**2007:** St. John Neumann Parish Community was created as Cecila's parish in Sheldon was merged with the parishes of St. Patrick's in Java Center, St. Mary's in Strykersville, and St. Nicholas in North Java.

**2024:** St. Cecilia's continues to be under St. John Neumann Parish, now adding the parishes of SS Joachim & Anne (St. Vincent de Paul in Attica, St. Joseph's in Varysburg), Immaculate Heart of Mary (Sacred Heart of Jesus in Bennington and Our Lady of Good Counsel in Darien Center) to the parishes merged in 2007.

### **Other Information**

- To the right and left of the Altar are pictures of St. Peter and St. Paul
- Stained glass windows and painting tell a story
- The following Apostles are represented above the windows. There are symbols represented by a depiction about them, either a special attribute or perhaps the way they died. Their names are written in Latin.
  - St. Peter-Keys to the kingdom given to him.
  - St. Paul-Defender of the Faith beheaded
  - St. Andrew- Fisherman, died on X shaped cross
  - St. James (Minor) Bishop of Jerusalem, cousin of Jesus
  - St. John- There was an attempt to poison him, but serpent crawled out of chalice, wrote gospel, son of Zebedee
  - St. Thomas- martyred by spear, profession a builder
  - St. James (Major)- Beheaded by the sword, symbols pilgrimage, shell- Son of Zebedee
  - St. Phillip- Patriarchal cross with spear, loaves of bread distributed by miracle
  - Bartholomew- aka Nathaniel, teacher of law, beheaded.
  - Matthew- Scroll & pen, author of gospel, died by spear
  - Simon-Book represents zeal for law of God, death sawed in half.
  - Judas Thaddeus- Cousin of Jesus, boat traveling to preach, martyred
- Latin meanings found in Church
  - GLORIS IN EXCELSIS- Glory to God in the Highest
  - LAUDATE DOMINUM OMNES GENTES- Let all men praise God