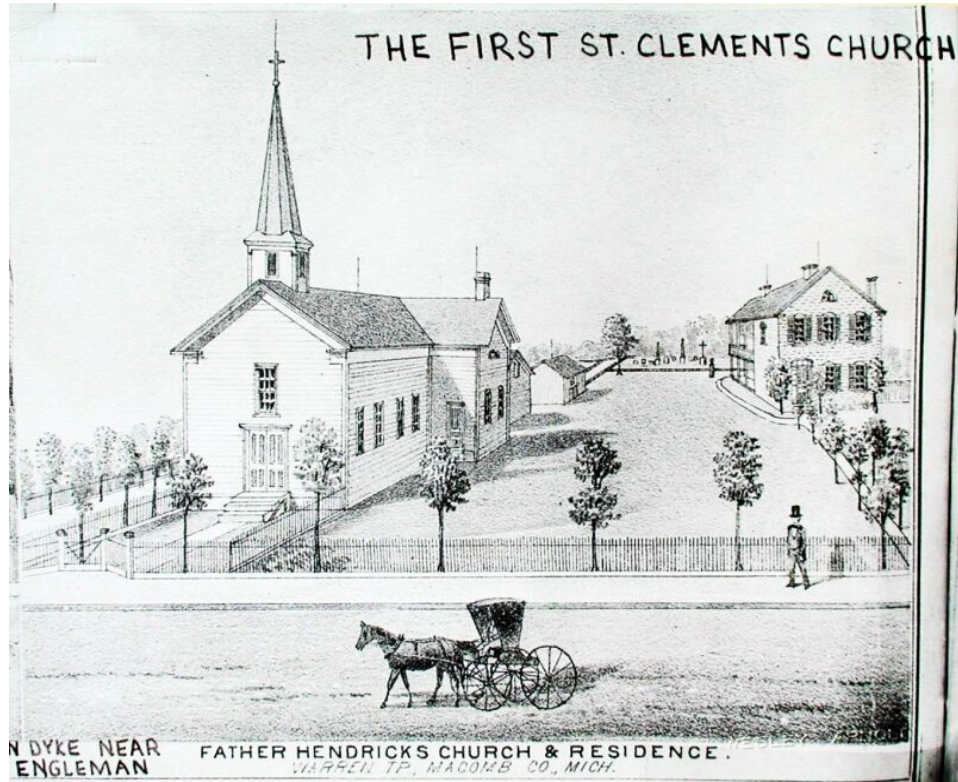
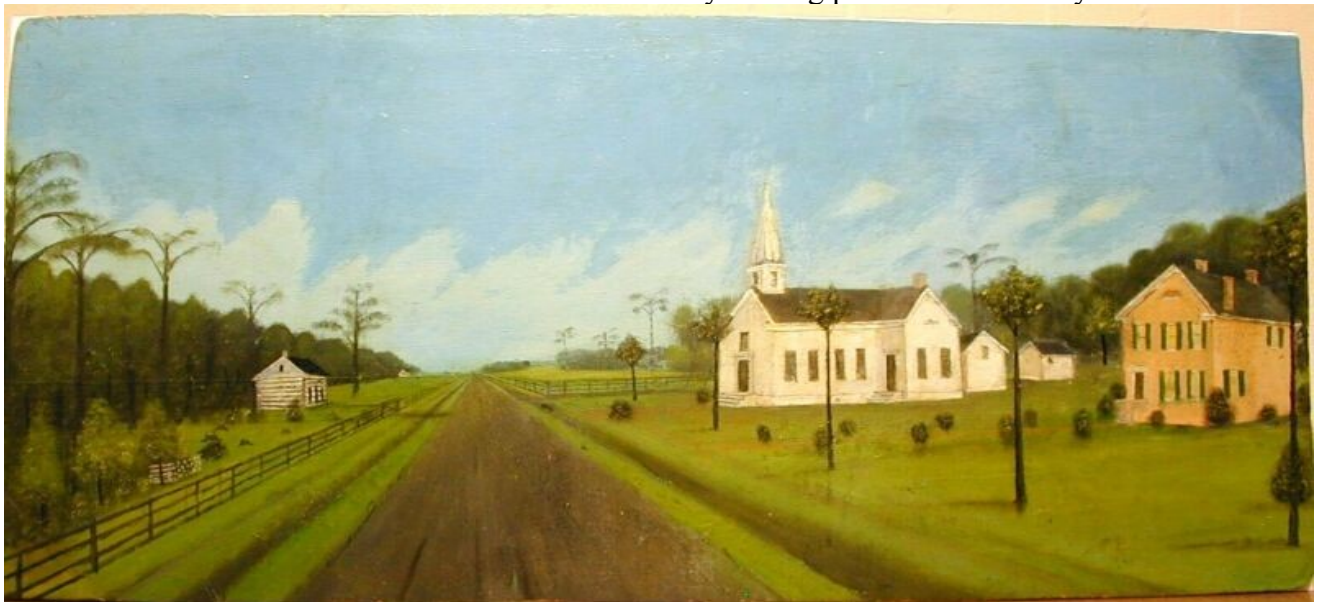


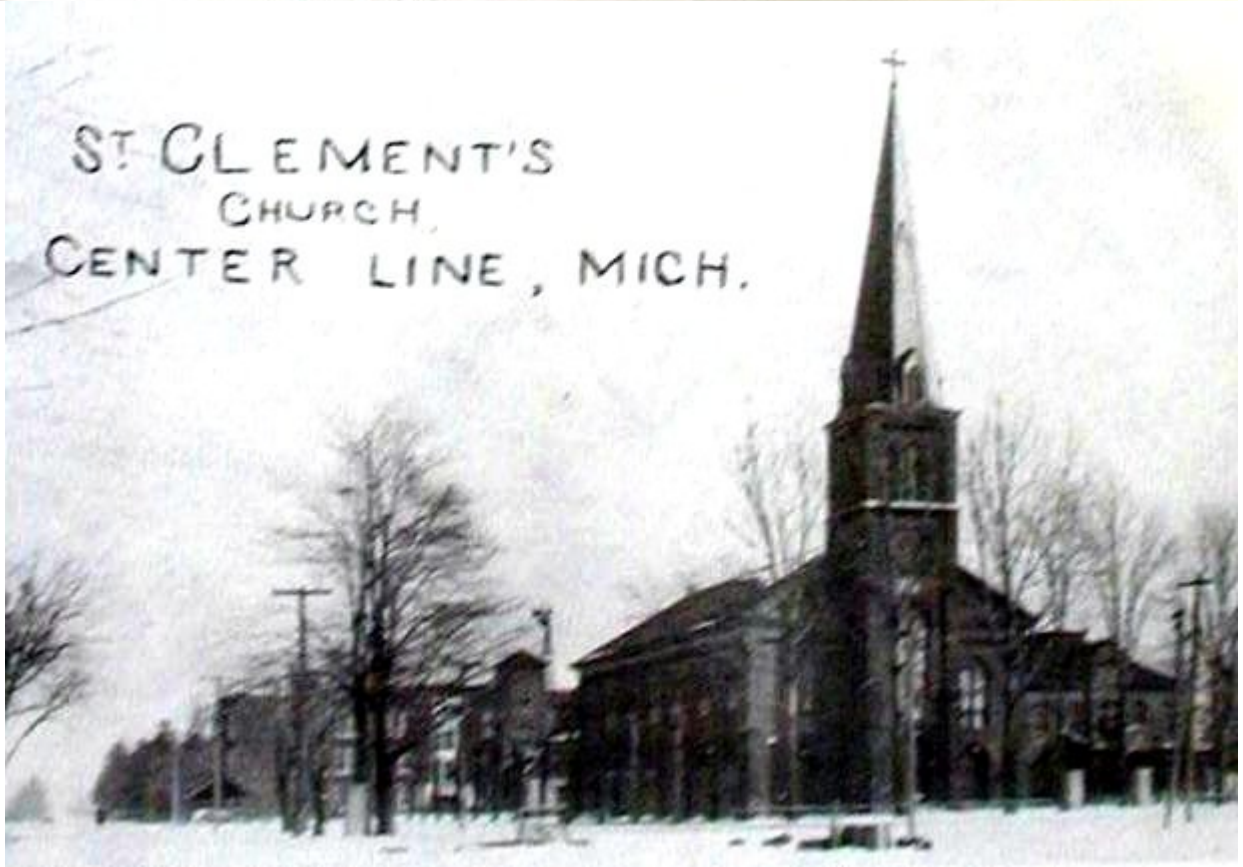
St Clement Church and School

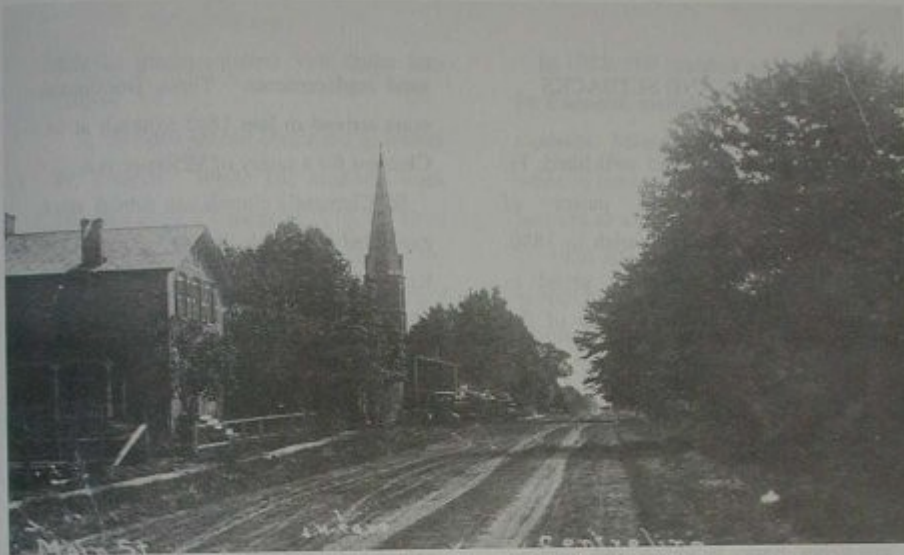
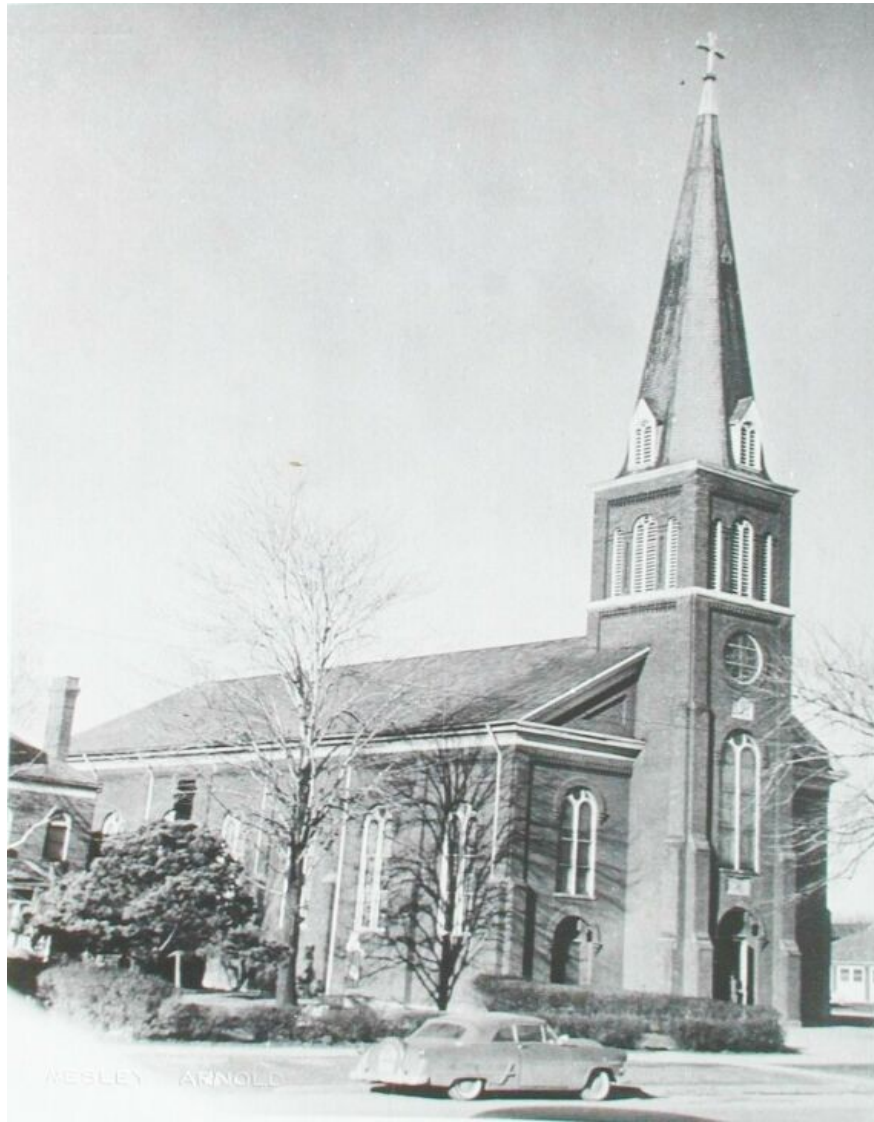


This was formed in 1853 and was serviced by visiting priests. See History below.









Main Street, (Van Dyke) Center Line. Steeple of the new church built in 1880 can be seen.



St. Clement

In 1854 the first St. Clement church was built on Van Dyke. Before this little wooden church was built on Church Road (now Engleman) and the "centre line", residents had made long rides to St. Mary's in downtown Detroit or Assumption on Gratiot at Six Mile Road. In bad weather the roads were almost impassible. The wagons had no heaters in winter. The community known as Kunrod's corners was centered around State Road (now Sherwood) and Ten Mile Road which was a dirt or mud path. The local citizens who were mostly immigrants from Germany, Ireland, France and Belgium, decided that then wanted a church in the nearby area. The St Clement Parish was established around 1853 and met in local homes. An actual church building was not constructed until four years later. The local people decided that they wanted a church to be built on the west side of the "Centre Line". This was the center road of Warren Township (now Van Dyke). They felt that they would not be able to get to church in the spring and fall when the roads turned to mud seas, especially over by Kunrod's corners as this was the lowest area near by the creek. Also more residents lived nearer to the East side location. Peter Rotarius donated two acres of his land on the land on the west side of the "Centre line". Next to him was Johann Weingartz who donated an acre. Later Mathias and Josepf Miller donated two acres of land they had been given as payment for work they had done for Joseph Cramer. The community voted to establish on the East side of the centre line. Additional properties were donated and several parcels of land were raffled and the money used to buy six acres of the Cramer-Clemens farm. The parish may have been named St Clement after Mr. Clemens. The parish boundaries were from Woodward to Lake St Clair and from Eight Mile to Fourteen Mile Roads. In 1854 a simple wood frame church building was built. In 1857 a one-room school was erected. The parish was served by visiting priests until 1858 when Father Henry Meuffels became the first resident priest. In 1868 an addition was put on to the wood frame church.

In trying to read the pastors writing as I worked on this history, I was told that they went to a different school of handwriting. I don't know about that but they sure sometimes got careless about good penmanship. When all of the letters look like undotted i's than something is wrong. Plus I had to buy two Latin books to figure out the meanings as the records are in Latin. Father William Hendrickx became the pastor in 1868. He spoke several languages. By 1870 the first wooden church had become too crowded and was enlarged. A New pipe organ was also installed.

On May 10 1871 the cemetery was relaid out. During Fr Hendrick's time (1871) the school building was enlarged and Housing dwellings for the teachers and organist were built. According to a Macomb Daily news article "Fr Hendrick proposed on Jan 6 1880 the building of a new church. "The proposal was received with great enthusiasm and the corner stone was laid on July 5, 1880....The church was dedicated Nov 6, 1881." (Macomb Daily Pagent of Progress)

In 1880 a new brick St Clement was built based on the plans for the Sacred heart Church in Detroit. Its dimensions were 136 feet by 54 with five entrances and fifteen stained glass windows. It cost \$18,000. The corner stone laid out on July 5 had a mistake. The stone mason got carried away and had 1888 on it. But careful reworking covered that up until years later. That was a very well made church. Construction started in September and the church was dedicated on Nov 6, 1881. The building was 136 feet long and 54 feet wide at a cost of \$18,000. It had 15 stained glass windows and a number of paintings, chaste frescoes. It was one of the most beautiful churches in the area. It had 5 entrances. At the time it was the highest structure in Warren. According to a Macomb Daily article dated April 1, 1967 George Freidhoff an immigrant from Bavaria and his uncle John Freidhoff helped to construct the church. A Mrs. Freidhoff reported that Lambert Peters, his brother Antoine Peters, and son-in-law Peter Guion worked as plasterers and bricklayers on the church. Lambert Peters also did the beautiful frescos, cove ceilings and arches. Some of the organists were Miss Cecelia Wirth, Miss Catherine Miller, and Mrs. Frank Kaltz. Sextons were Ben and Joseph Grobble and Adam Burkhesier. Mrs. Freidhoff stated that people drove their buggies for miles to visit the beautiful church and that

some of the early church members were the families of: Antonie and Henry Peters, Alex and Noah Groesbeck, William Henry Halmich, Alfred Peters, John, and George Friedhoff, Anthony Wolf, Peter Kaltz, Peter Burg, Mathias Miller, George Springer, Andrew Rinke, John Grobbel, Michael Kuchey, Bernard Hoste, John Campbell, George Baumgardner, Robert Dalton, Joseph Metter, Simon Leonard, Henry Vaer Hoven, John and Willian DeGrandchamp, George Gill, John Elliot, Joseph Rivard, John Hafferley, Louis Schoenherr, William Jackson, Frank Rivard, August VeLyne, Daniel Jackson, Reinhold Hessel, John Buechel, Joseph Altermatt, August LaMael, Robert Rasch, Chris Ruhlman, William Theut, John Theut and Heronomus Engleman.

Later the frame church was removed in order to build a new brick school with two classrooms and an auditorium.

In 1890 the new Pastor Father Kramer convinced three sisters of Providence of St Mary's of the Woods, Vigo County Indiana to come here to teach.

Nuns served as teachers and were not paid. On several occasions they asked the pastor for help as they did not have food or the means to buy clothes. They were not very happy about the answers they got from him. Of course the church was fairly poor.

They were replaced in 1892 by the Sisters of St. Dominic from Racine, Wisconsin. In 1896 an upper story was added to the small schoolhouse and was quickly turned into a hall where school children put on plays and held recitals.

The Official St Clement's history states that picnics were held across from the church in Engleman grove and that a platform was built for dancing and a German Band played music.

By the year 1916, 182 students were enrolled at St. Clement School. That number rose to 600 students by 1920. The pressing need for a new and larger school led to the construction of a two-story, 16 room brick and concrete school. It had a high school and auditorium with a 1,000 seat capacity. The first high school graduating class, in 1926, consisted of one person Ester Delia Schnoblen (Smith). In 1952 Father Timothy Murray became pastor of St. Clement and ground was broken for a new school to accommodate 1,300 students. In 1960 work was begun on the present modern church with 65 foot-high vaulted ceiling, gables forming a cross, hundreds of panes of stained glass and seating capacity for 1,600. It also has a 130 foot bell tower.



