

Speed Union Church

Speed, Missouri

9:00 a.m. Worship Service
10:00 a.m. Sunday School

Township:	T-47-N	Organized:	1891
Range:	R-17-W	Disbanded:	No
Section:	8	Active:	Yes
Map:	Click Here	Updated:	July 19, 2005

Cemetery: There is no cemetery associated with this church.

Area: Speed, Missouri

Records: The location of the church records is unknown at present.

History:

Speed Union Church From "Memorabilia of Cooper County", 1990

The Speed Union Church was founded in 1891 on grounds donated by the Joe L. Stephens' heirs, with the stipulations that the grounds be used for a Union Church. If such use of the ground was ever ceased, the land was to revert back to the Stephens family.

Money for the original structure, which still stands, was raised through donations, subscriptions and social events. Among those who helped to organize it were: Mr. and Mrs. Charles Harness, Mr. and Mrs. C.N. Dills, R.W. Watson, Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Sternmous, Mr. and Mrs. Emily Roe, Mr. and Mrs. Dave Wendleton and Tom Parrish.

Having remained faithful to the terms of the Stephens contract, the Speed Union Church has housed as many as seven different religious denominations, reflecting the unity that was sought by the founding fathers.

It was not always possible to have preaching services on Sunday because most of the ministers had regular appointments for that day. Therefore, services were often held on Saturday night.

A fine Sunday School was organized and Tom Parrish was elected as the first superintendent. Miss Sussie Harness was organist. The first trustees were R.W. Watson, Charles Harness, O.N. Dills and Billy Bull.

The Sunday School enrollment increased so rapidly that the building was not large enough so a Sunday school room with a basement was built on in 1918.

Until 1962 no one could actually have membership in the church since the by-laws of the church, were not set up to receive membership. On June 3, 1962, a meeting was held by the people who had attended this church, and new by-laws were adopted so that anyone complying with the rules of the new by-laws could be received in membership. Part of the by-laws of the church state that new converts be given the right to choose the form of baptism to be administered before membership is attainable. Holy Communion services are to be open to all that choose to enter into the service. Teaching or preaching to promote any special denomination other than unity is prohibited.

In 1986 another room was built and also a bathroom was added to the original structure.

In 1911 the members of the church purchased the Old Cooper County Courthouse bell for \$100. The bell was mounted on a 25 foot tower and was 40 inches in diameter and made of an alloy containing one-tenth silver which gave it its beautiful sounding quality.

The bell that was once used for summonses, announcements, and even executions was put to a better use. It reminded and still reminds people of the community that worship time has come and that there is a religious activity about to take place.

At the present time there six denominations that worship together: Lutheran, Baptist, Methodist, Catholic, Christian, and Presbyterian. Trustees on the board at the present time are; Carl Jobe, Larry Thurman, Danny Draffen and Martin Draffen.

Church and Sunday School services are held each Sunday with church services at 9:00 A.M. and Sunday School at 10:00; everyone is welcome to come and worship any time.

by Bernice Draffen

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