

Heritage Value

United Baptist Church, Mahone Bay, is valued for its age, its role in the history and religious life of the community, as an example of ecclesiastical Gothic Revival architecture, and as a community landmark.

Baptists in Mahone Bay were originally a branch of the Baptist congregation founded at Northwest in 1809. For many years services were held in private homes and later in the Union and Harmony Meeting House, built 1833-1834. The Union and Harmony Meeting House served Presbyterians, Lutherans, Methodists and Baptists and was managed by trustees representing each group. Four decades later, as the local economy prospered and population grew, the Baptists needed their own church. In 1874, Kenney, Haley and Company of Yarmouth, NS, began construction of the new Baptist Meeting House on this property. The building was dedicated in March 1875 featuring a sermon delivered by Rev. Edward Manning Saunders, the eminent Maritime Baptist historian. An article in the "Christian Messenger" reported the church to be a "very fine edifice" and praised the "frescoing and designs in painting by W.R. Wentzell of Bridgewater." The first resident pastor was Rev. A.E. Ingram.

Now known as United Baptist Church, Mahone Bay, the building is an excellent example of the spiritual expression that can be achieved by Gothic Revival construction. Its slender spire, visible for miles, gleams white against the sky. Every feature, from the narrow peaked windows to the small corner spires, lifts the eye skyward.

United Baptist Church, Mahone Bay remains in regular use. Dedicated volunteers maintain the building and grounds. The congregation collaborates with other churches in Mahone Bay to hold four ecumenical services annually, and to share resources and outreach projects such as the Food Bank. It also exchanges space with Trinity United Church during the ministers' summer breaks.

Character-Defining Elements

The character-defining elements of United Baptist Church, Mahone Bay, relate to all the details of Gothic Revival ecclesiastical architecture including:

- post and beam construction
- steeply pitched roof
- slender steeple
- narrow Gothic arched windows
- burnished yellow glazing in upper sections of Gothic windows
- narrow three-bay front façade
- central front door with transom;
- three-arched window above main entry
- label moldings around top and upper sides of windows
- fretwork on fascia at roof lines
- corner boards and pilasters topped with small slender spires
- shingle cladding painted white;
- interior features such as box pews, woodwork of black ash, chestnut and teak, label moldings, and original oil wall sconces