

Area AR - Sacred Heart Parish Complex

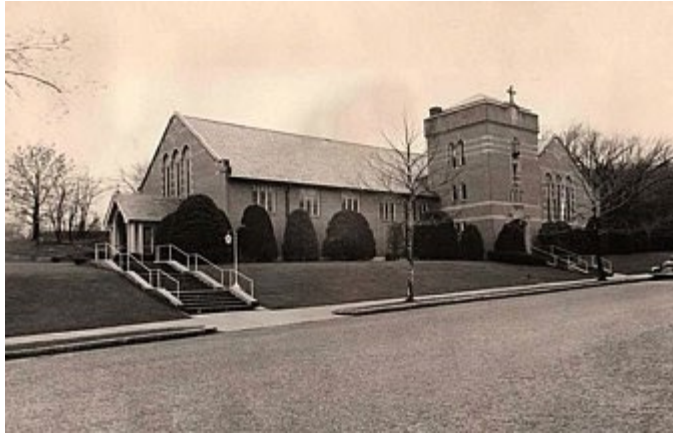
The Sacred Heart Parish began in the early 1920s as a mission church of St. Brigid's, the first Catholic parish in Lexington. At the time, the Italian Catholics of East Lexington, primarily farmers, wanted their own parish. Initially Mass was held in the East Village Hall, where the East Lexington Fire Station now stands. Ground was broken for a church at the corner of Follen Road and Pleasant Street in the summer of 1929. The site chosen was the place where on April 19, 1775 the British took hold of Benjamin Wellington, the first armed man taken captive in the American Revolution. The church was opened with a midnight Mass on Christmas Eve 1929.



The designer of the brick Gothic Revival church was prominent Boston architect Edward T.P. Graham. Actual construction presented numerous challenges including the costs associated with ledge removal and tough economic times. The Great Depression began a mere two months after ground was broken. The interior remained unfinished for many years and by the 1940s the walls of the church had started buckling under the weight of the roof. These problems were remedied by the firm of Whelan & Westman who designed a cloister arch to take the weight off the roof. At the same time the choir loft was moved to the rear of the building. The church was finally completed in 1948.



A new parish center was opened in 1957, designed by the firm of Whelan & Westman. In 1961 the church acquired the c.1920 house at 21 Follen Road and it was made into a rectory.



c.1945 photo of Church



Sacred Heart Church today