The Church of the Land marks the spot where Pope John Paul II brought his message of the importance of agriculture and land stewardship to the Midwest. The Church of the Land is re-created in the Carpenter Gothic style of architecture that was typical of small rural churches in Iowa in the 1870s. It is dedicated to all those who help steward Iowa’s agricultural resources. The name was chosen to reflect the church’s uses and meaning. It is our intention to make the building available to anyone of any faith and for that reason we have not tied it to a specific Christian denomination.

The Stained Glass Window

Father John C. Buscemi, an art teacher at the Holy Name Seminary in Madison, Wisconsin, designed the symbol of the Four Seasons, Land and Crops. The design became known throughout the country when it was used for a quilted banner to hang behind the altar built for Pope John Paul II’s visit. A simple stained-glass window of the colorful design hangs behind the altar in the Church of the Land to remind visitors of Pope John Paul II’s historic visit.

Items Placed in the Cornerstone

- John Paul II Visits Rural America (1979)
- The Catholic Missal, October 18, 1979, Special Commemorative Issue
- “Pope John Paul II: A Visit to Rural America” in the Des Moines Sunday Register, October 28, 1979
- “The Pope in Iowa” in the Living History Farms news
- A Service of Remembrance and Dedication, October 4, 1979

Other items:
- Iowa Official Register (1979-1980) and Supplement, autographed by the elected State Officials
- Pottery jar made at Walnut Hill Pottery, Living History Farms, containing corn grown here in 1979
- Box of 25 mm color slides taken at Living History Farms
- Poem by Reverend John D. Clinton “To Bill Murray”
- Photograph of line drawing of the Church of the Land
- Miniature John Deere plow used during groundbreaking of the Church of the Land
- 175 original 3” x 5” cards with prayers of the people collected during the First Prayer and Praise Service held at the site of the Church of the Land on June 22, 1980
- United States Proof Set of 1980 coins (penny, nickel, dime, quarter, half-dollar and dollar)
- Bronze medallion - American Revolution Bicentennial Iowa 1976
- Bronze medallion - Terrace Hill
- Boy Scout pin (Troop 31, Fayette, Iowa)