

Union's history goes back more than 150 years. Settlers arrived in southeastern Cass County as early as 1855. In 1888, several of the areas small post offices consolidated into one located at the rail center, what is now present day Union, by Postmaster Robert Frans. Within years, thriving businesses lined Union's business district. There were three general stores, a furniture store (pictured), a hardware store, a stationary store, a drug store and a harness shop and a millinery shop. Almost all needs could be met locally, as there was a local doctor, undertaker, banker, blacksmith, livery, two grain elevators, a lumberyard as well as a newspaper, "The Union Ledger."

Currently, Union's business district evidences several historic structures, including the Village's former jail building. The Union Jail is a unique property type, and Union is proud to have it listed on the National Register of Historic Places as of July 12, 2006. Constructed in 1916, this one-room jail is significant because it represents a period in the community's history when local officials thought the town required such a facility in order to maintain law and order. Since there was no marshal's office or city hall in which the jail could be located, the village decided to construct a freestanding structure. The establishment of this jail as the only municipal building in Union reinforces the village's concern for public safety.

At one time, Union was the home to three churches: Baptist (pictured), Methodist and Cumberland Presbyterian. Of these the United Methodist and Baptist remain active in the community. Both Churches offer weekly services, Sunday School and events and gatherings throughout the year.

A big event in Union's early days was the Old Settlers Picnic. Held for the first time in 1889, the picnic boasted parades, oratories, music and good food. It eventually became a two-day celebration which attracted people from a wide area. More recently, Union has began celebrating Union Daze each summer, which like the Old Settlers Picnic, offers residents and neighbors food, music and activities.