
5. Classification

Ownership of Property:

Private

Number of Resources within Property:

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Category of Property:

Building

Contributing

1

Noncontributing

buildings

sites

structures

objects

1

Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed**in the National Register**

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: Religion/Religious facility**Current Functions:**

Religious: Religion/Religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification(s):Late 19th and Early 20th Century American Movement

Other: Rural Carpenter Gothic

Materials:

foundation: Brick and Sandstone

roof: Galvanized Tin

walls: Weatherboard

other:

Narrative Description:

See Continuation Sheets

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section: 7

Page: 1

Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church
Lowndes County, Mississippi

7. DESCRIPTION

Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church is located on the south side of Wright Road in the Northeast section of Lowndes County, Mississippi which is approximately nine miles northeast of Columbus, Mississippi and one mile off Miss. Highway 12. The Associated Vaughns Cemetery is located on the north side of Wright Road approximately 1,000 yards north of the Church and connected to the Church by a gravel access road.

The present Church building is a rare and very intact example of Rural Carpenter Gothic style architecture from circa 1892-1894 which is a front gabled structure with a steeply pitched roof, pointed-arch windows and a Gothic-arch window above the front entrance double doors. The exterior is sided with 6 inch exposed wood lap siding and the building rests on brick and sandstone pillars. The roof is standing "V" galvanized tin.

The present Church building is located on 5 acres of land donated by Judge John Perkins on 8 October 1851. It is bordered on the north by Wright Road, on the east by farmland and on south and west by timberland. According the deed of May 1833, the first Church building already existed on 5.6 acres of land donated by James Vaughn but was relocated 1,000 yards south of this location and a second Church building was built circa 1854-1855. The original 1833 location of the Church remains today as the associated Vaughns Cemetery. Of significance is an officially recorded donation to building of this second Church building by Dr. Jasper Robinson dated 4 July 1854. Research reveals that the present Church building was built in the 1892-1894 time frame by David Parker Tunnell (b. 1831 in Ala.), a local Church builder, but no records exist as to what happened to the second Church building.

The North elevation has double-leaf 4-panel entrance doors, topped by a half-moon transom containing two panels of glass, which open into the interior of the Church. On each side of the entrance are single-hung, Gothic arch windows, eight feet high, three feet wide with a two foot sill height and enclosed in simple, wide casings. These 5 over 4 windows consists of 4 lower rectangular panes, 2 upper rectangular panes, 2 pointed panes and a single diamond pane at the top which clearly reflect the Rural Gothic architecture style of this period.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section: 7

Page: 2

Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church
Lowndes County, Mississippi

The east elevation has four evenly spaced eight foot high, three foot wide single-hung, Gothic-arch windows with a two foot sill height and enclosed in simple, wide casings which are identical in style to other windows of the Church.

The south elevation has a centered apse bay. Two windows are situated on the side walls of the bay and are identical to the other windows of the Church. An identical Gothic arch window is also located at the left of the bay and a three foot wide door to the right of the bay opens into the rear of the Church. Prefabricated metal steps of more recent vintage lead directly up to this door which is metal clad material that was hung to prevent unauthorized entry from the rear of the Church.

The west elevation is identical to the east elevation.

The interior of the Church is architecturally intact. The double-leaf front doors open directly into the sanctuary. The interior walls are clad in four-inch wide tongue-in-groove pine boards in a herringbone pattern. The sloped ceiling rises from a height of eighteen feet to twenty four feet and the center third is flat. The ceiling is covered with four-inch single bead tongue-in-groove pine boards in herringbone pattern. At the front of the Church is a raised, curved platform which projects from the apse bay into the sanctuary. This bay also has a barrel ceiling of tongue-and groove beaded pine boards. The floorboards are four inch pine planks.

The windows in the Church are framed on the interior with plain 1X6 wide planks.

There are three ranks of pews, forming two aisles, each about 3 ½ feet wide. Pews on either side of the center section are six feet long and those in the middle are ten feet long. In addition, two, ten foot pews sit on either side of the front entrance wall of the sanctuary, two on the west wall and one on the east wall facing the pulpit. The pews are all open-spaced pine board stained to a dark walnut color and presumably original to the Church. The pulpit with recessed-panel sides is believed to be original also.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section: 7

Page: 3

Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church
Lowndes County, Mississippi

The original oil lamps that were placed on two ceiling-hung chandeliers are not extant but the hooks in the ceiling to hold them are still in place. A flue that was used for a coal or wood fired heater is still in place in the ceiling but no longer used. There are no heating, electricity or water utilities in the Church.

Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church exhibits a very high degree of integrity which is rare for a Church building of its age. While there has been no major modification of the Church building since its initial construction, efforts to maintain and preserve the historic building have been accomplished in recent years. Beginning in 1999 and for a period of four years, several activities have occurred in this preservation effort including installation of foundation jacks to stabilize and level the floor, installation of $\frac{3}{4}$ inch tie rods between the exterior floor sills to prevent the separation of the walls, replacement of the south door with a metal door for security purposes, installation of a standing "V" galvanized tin roof to replace the existing one and complete cleaning of the exterior surface and its subsequent caulking, priming and painting. These changes do not detract from the overall integrity.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- X **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Areas of Significance
Architecture****Period of Significance
1892-1894****Significant Dates
1892-1894****Criteria Considerations:**

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Significant Person(s) N/A**Cultural Affiliation(s) N/A****Architect/Builder
David Parker Tunnell****Narrative Statement of Significance:** See continuation sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography See continuation sheet.**Previous documentation on file (NPS)**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository:
Harold E. Wright

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section: 8

Page: 4

Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church
Lowndes Co., Mississippi

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church, located on Wright Road approximately 9 miles NE of Columbus, MS., is significant under Criterion C of the NRHP guidelines because of the quality of its architectural detail and construction as a rural vernacular Carpenter Gothic Church built in the late 1800s and its exceptionally high degree of structural integrity. The Church has remained virtually unaltered since its construction and there is no electricity, water or heat. However, there remains a flue through the ceiling where a coal or wood burning stove was once used to heat the Church and hooks remain in the ceiling where chandeliers were suspended on rods to hold oil burning lamps. The materials used to build the Church are of very high quality. Tongue-in-groove beaded pine boards sheathe both the inside walls and the ceilings in herringbone pattern which rise from 18 to 24 feet in height. The thirteen windows are of Gothic-arch architectural style.

Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church has been locally known by various names such as Vaughn's Campground, Vaughn's Church and Pleasant Grove. According to a property deed issued in Lowndes County, Mississippi, dated May 14, 1833, James Vaughn and his wife, Susannah Vaughn, deeded 5.6 acres of land and existing Church meeting house for \$1.00 to the Trustees of a Methodist Church known as Mt. Pleasant. According to the deed, the original Trustees were Robert Shotwell, Capt. William Walker Neilson, Capt. Edward Randolph, John Vaughn and James Weems. Thus, Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church was officially recognized and organized in May of 1833 and a Church building existed at that time on the property. Capt. William Walker Neilson and Capt. Edward Randolph, who were old Army friends in the War of 1812, joined together as two of the original five Trustees to form the church.

On October 8, 1851, Judge John Perkins donated by Deed five acres of land approximately 1,000 yards south of the first Church and cemetery site on what is now known as Wright Road to the Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church for a Church meeting house and a schoolhouse. This is the current location of Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church. The original 5.6 acres given to the Church on May 14, 1833 by the Vaughn family remains as the present day Vaughns cemetery. Apparently, when the Church moved to a new location after 1851, the cemetery was named Vaughns in honor of the family who donated the land to the Church and Cemetery in 1833.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section: 8

Page: 5

Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church
Lowndes Co., Mississippi

Based on search of the bibliographical references, Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church is most likely the 3rd oldest organized Methodist Church in Lowndes Co, Mississippi being predated only by Piney Grove and Tabernacle Methodist Churches which were founded in 1828. For many decades, Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church was a part of the four-Church Methodist Circuit which included Piney Grove (est. 1828), Flint Hill (est. 1868) and Caledonia (est. 1912). However, as the family members moved away or died, the Church became inactive around 1980. Currently, the Church is used for the annual Homecoming and Decoration day on Mother's Day weekend as well as weddings and funerals. Both the Church and associated Cemetery are visited many times during the year by descendants of former members of the Church and community and who have relatives buried in the cemetery.

Although records exist that a Church building was built in 1854-1855 time frame on the present Church site, further research revealed that the present structure was built in the 1892-1894 time frame by a local Church builder, David Parker Tunnell. Mr. Tunnell is also credited with building a new Church building for Piney Grove Methodist Church in 1892 which is located approximately 4 miles east of Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church and was, for many years, on the same Methodist Church Circuit. Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church rural Carpenter Gothic architectural style compares favorably and, in fact, almost identical to Piney Grove Methodist Church as well as that of Zion Baptist Church, Kemper County, MS. which was built in the 1910-1911 time frame (NR,2002)

Carpenter Gothic (Revival) Architecture style was prevalent in the United States for design and construction of homes and Church buildings beginning in the 1840s and lasting until the early 1940s for churches. This architectural style was transported to rural America and often termed Vernacular Rural Carpenter Gothic. Builders of this style and type were able to do so by the introduction of steam powered lumber mills and band saws. General characteristics of this type construction include steeply pitched roofs and gables, pointed-arch windows, Gothic windows above entry doors, one story porches with flattened Gothic arches and vertical board-and-batten siding.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section: 8

Page: 6

Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church
Lowndes Co., Mississippi

Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church exhibits many of the styles and characteristics of the Carpenter Gothic architectural style which include steeply pitched roof and gables, pointed-arch windows and window above the entry doors. The semi-octagonal apse also illustrates the Carpenter Gothic style. Based on economic conditions of this rural Mississippi community during the 1890s, many of the other characteristics of Carpenter Gothic architecture would have been cost prohibitive. However, Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church remains a well-preserved local example of the Gothic style executed in wood applied to a rural church.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section: 9

Page: 7

Mt. Pleasant Church
Lowndes County, Mississippi

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Cawthon, Richard J., "National Register Eligibility for Churches in Mississippi",
Mississippi Department of Archives and History, 26 May 1994

Vaughn, Estelle Rogers, "Southern-Born and Bred, A History of Lowndes County,
Mississippi with Addendums", 1972, pgs 50-54

Lipscomb, Dr. W.L., "A History of Columbus, Mississippi during the 19th Century",
1909, Pgs 50-54

Miller, Gene, "History of North Mississippi Methodism", 1937

Russell D. James and Mike Lowery, "Cemeteries of Lowndes County, Mississippi
Including African American Cemeteries with Index", 2005, pg 263-271

Lowndes County, Mississippi Tax Assessors Office, Deed Book #3, Page #28, 14 May
1833.

Lowndes County, Mississippi Tax Assessors Office Deed Book #28, Page 258, 8
October 1851.

Robertson, Rubye Agnes, Private Research Papers-"History of Mt. Pleasant Methodist
Church and Vaughns Cemetery", 6 February 1987, pgs 1-22 (stored and controlled by
Columbus-Lowndes Co., MS. Library).

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Church 5 acres

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
	A	16	376020			
	B			C		
				D		

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description See continuation sheet.

Boundary Justification: See continuation sheet.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Mr. Harold E. Wright
organization: Church Historian
street & number: 104 Huron Cove
city or town: Madison
e-mail: hwright@knology.net

date: 1 April 2007
telephone: 256-837-4095
zip code: 35758
state: AL.

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner(s)

name: Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church Trustees c/o Charles D. Wright
street & number: 1723 Wright Road
city or town: Caledonia

state: MS. telephone: 662-356-4501
zip code: 39740

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section: 10

Page: 8

Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church
Lowndes Co., Mississippi

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description:

Mt. Pleasant Church- The boundary of the Church consists of 5 acres of land given by Judge John Perkins on October 8, 1851 defined in NE corner; NW $\frac{1}{4}$; NE $\frac{1}{4}$ measuring 467 ft. by 467 ft., Section 8, Township 17S, Range 17W in Lowndes Co., MS. as listed in deed book 28, page 258, Lowndes Co, MS. Courthouse Tax Assessor's Office. See attached sketch.

Boundary Justification: The boundaries described above contain the Church building and all associated grounds historically associated with the Church.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section: Photographic Documentation

Page: 9

Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church
Lowndes Co., MS.

1. Property Name: Mt. Pleasant Methodist Church Lowndes County, Mississippi
2. Photographer's Name: Harold E. Wright
3. Dates Photographed: March 10, May 14, October 13 and October 15, 2006
4. Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Photo 1 (ms_lowndes_mtpleasantchurch1.TIF): Church- North (Front) elevation, view to south

Photo 2 (ms_lowndes_mtpleasantchurch2.TIF): Church-West elevation, view to east

Photo 3 (ms_lowndes_mtpleasantchurch3.TIF): Church- South elevation, view to north

Photo 4 (ms_lowndes_mypleasantchurch4.TIF): Church- East elevation, view to west

Photo 5 (ms_lowndes_mtpleasantchurch5.TIF): Church interior with pews and raised platform/apse bay, view to south

Photo 6 (ms_lowndes_mtpleasantchurch6.TIF): Church interior with raised platform and pulpit, view to south

Photo 7 (ms_lowndes_mtpleasantchurch7.TIF): Church interior- open board pews in sanctuary, view to north

Photo 8 (ms_lowndes_mtpleasantchurch8.TIF): Church interior- main sanctuary, view to north

