

MULTIPLE RESOURCES OF PLANTERSVILLE

#4

DALLAS AND CHILTON COUNTIES, ALABAMA

Historic name: Christian Church and Parsonage
Owner: Board of Deacons
Christian Church
Plantersville, AL 36758

Common name: Christian Church and Parsonage

Address: Plantersville, AL 36758

Acreage: 1.7 acres UTM: 16/507/050/3613/075

Verbal boundary: See attached maps; includes church, parsonage and immediate yard.

Architectural design: Vernacular

Date of construction: 1898

Architect, Builder: unknown

Statement of Significance

Criterion C, Architecture

The Christian Church (1898) is a good example of turn-of-the-century vernacular church architecture. Identifying features include a rectangular main block with a gable roof. The front gable-end facade has a corner, two-story, bell tower with a pyramidal roof. Windows throughout are 2/2 sash with mottled stained glass. The Christian Church is Plantersville's only surviving 19th century church.

The Christian Church parsonage (1898) is Plantersville's best example of late 19th century, two-room plan vernacular, domestic architecture. The characteristic features of this particular vernacular type are the rectangular main block, the center interior chimney, the gable roof and the double front entry. Houses of this type appear all over Alabama dating from c. 1890 - c. 1920.

Integrity

The overall vernacular exterior form is easily recognizable and intact despite a recent addition to the rear and north side of the main block. The interior has undergone some modernization with plywood paneling applied to the back wall behind the pulpit and the installation of new chandeliers. The original wainscoting, architraves, doors, window surrounds and pews, however, are all still in place.

Description

Church: The one-story frame church has a one-bay projecting bell tower with a double door entrance. At the second level there are shuttered openings on four sides. The third level consists of a pyramidal steeple. The windows are 2 over 2. Sunday School rooms were added to the rear in 1930 and on the north side an addition was made in 1959. The church and the parsonage are set back from First Avenue (Old Plantersville Road) on a knoll amidst cedar trees, crepe myrtle bushes, honeysuckle vine and indigenous cane.

Parsonage: The four-bay, one-story frame parsonage has a gable roof with a symmetrically placed ornamental gable. The three-bay porch has turned columns with ornamental brackets and a scroll sawed balustrade. The windows are 4 over 4. There are a number of one-story frame cottages of this period in the town but the parsonage is the best example in its architectural purity and condition.

Historical Summary

The Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian denominations formed a Union Church in Plantersville when in 1880 a "Back-to-the-Bible" movement established the Disciples of Christ in the area. The New Hope House of Worship was built about 3 1/2 miles west of Plantersville. Services were held monthly and a membership of 140 was achieved. In 1890 some of this congregation moved into town and joined those worshipping in a small church near the site of the present church. The congregation purchased 2.8 acres from Mr. Driskell for a new church and parsonage. The cemetery is across Oak Street. The cornerstone was laid in 1898. The church was built largely with volunteer labor. The Methodist Church, inheritors of the "Union" building, burned in the 1920s; however, the graveyard adjacent to the site remains. The Presbyterian Church has been much altered and is now a residence. The Baptist Church is a contemporary building in a traditional style. The Christian Church is the only extant 19th century church building still in use. Architecturally, it is a good example of its kind in a small town setting and historically, it illustrates the 19th century importance of the church in a community and the concerns of the times with religious interpretation within Protestantism. The parsonage is significant not only as an auxiliary building of the church edifice but as an example of the simple residences of the town at the turn of the century.

The church is significant as a good example of vernacular architecture and also a reflection of the influence of religion in the history of the community.