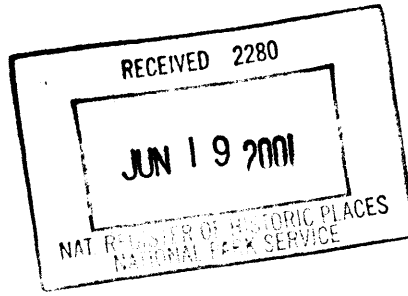


**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**



772

**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name First Presbyterian Church  
other names/site number First Presbyterian Church

**2. Location**

street & number 601 Church Street N/A  not for publication  
city or town Sweetwater N/A  vicinity  
state Tennessee code TN county Monroe code 123 zip code 37874

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Herbert E. Harper 6/11/01  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register.
- other,

(explain:)

Edson H. Beall 7/25/01  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in count)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	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**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Gothic Revival  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK  
\_\_\_\_\_

walls BRICK  
\_\_\_\_\_

roof ASPHALT  
\_\_\_\_\_

other GLASS; WOOD  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- 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.
- 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.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

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

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1887-1917  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1887; 1917  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Young, Biney (contractor)  
Bowman, architect  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):** N/A

- 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:

East Tennessee Development District  
\_\_\_\_\_

First Presbyterian Church  
Name of Property

Monroe County, Tennessee  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** Less than one acre Sweetwater 131 SW

### UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>16</u>	<u>729780</u>	<u>3924650</u>	3	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	4	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>

See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Amanda L. Wild, Historic Preservation Planner  
organization East Tennessee Development District date February 1, 2001  
street & number 5616 Kingston Pike, Post Office Box 19806 telephone 865-584-8553  
city or town Knoxville state Tennessee zip code 37939

### 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

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name First Presbyterian Church, c/o Pastor Christopher Noto  
street & number Box 229 telephone 423-337-7284  
city or town Sweetwater state Tennessee zip code 37874

**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 listing. 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 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 20303.

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First Presbyterian Church  
Monroe County, Tennessee

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## VII. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The First Presbyterian Church is located in the City of Sweetwater (pop. 5,054) in Monroe County, Tennessee. The church is situated on a corner lot in a residential area of the city, with many of the nearby homes dating to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Constructed in 1887, the original part of the First Presbyterian Church is a one story brick Gothic Revival building with a crenellated bell tower, corbelling, pointed arch window and door openings, and narrow buttresses. In 1917-1918 a two story educational addition was built. Later, in 1968, a modern addition was connected to the original part of the church by a covered walkway.

The church is an excellent local example of the Gothic Revival architectural style with a complex and irregular floor plan, pointed arch doors and windows set in masonry that contrasts with the color of the walls, buttresses, and a tower with belfry. The brick pattern is common bond with five stretcher rows per header row. The irregular roofline with gables, flat rooflines, and towers is composed of asphalt shingles. A band of wood trim surrounds the roofline. Arcaded or arched brick corbelling, set in a different color of masonry than the brick walls, surrounds the perimeter of the entire building. The windows and doors are accentuated by brickwork of a contrasting color to the exterior walls. The sills of all windows are of stone. A belt course surrounds the perimeter of the building and is located below the first level of windows. A cornerstone is located on the southernmost buttress of the gable wall on the west elevation. The inscription on the stone reads, "Presbyterian Church 1887." The original 1887 portion of the structure – the sanctuary -- has stained glass windows. Presently, some of the windows have been temporarily removed for cleaning and restoration, but will be returned.

The main entrance to the building is located on the west elevation. This elevation consists of a bay with a medium-pitched gable as well as a corner tower. The gable end contains three pointed arch stained glass windows. The windows have stone sills and hoods of masonry that contrast with the color of the walls. A buttress is located on either end of the gable wall, with a stone amortizement or cap, on the step of each buttress. A small, stained glass pointed window with tracery is located in the gable end. The gable end, as are all rooflines, is accentuated with arcaded brick corbelling that contrasts with the color of the walls.

Five stone steps lead to the front entrance of the church, which is located in the bell tower. This entrance contains double wood doors with wood panels, and a pointed arch stained glass window located above the doors. A rose window is centered in the tower. Buttresses on the west and south elevations accentuate the tower. The south elevation of the tower contains one pointed arch stained

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First Presbyterian Church  
Monroe County, Tennessee

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glass window in the lower portion of the wall. A rose window, identical to the rose window on the west elevation of the tower, is located in the upper portion of the tower wall.

The bell tower has two louvered openings on each of the four elevations. Each of these openings forms a pointed arch. Corbelling is located near the top of the tower, and above this is a stone belt course. The tower originally had a steeply pitched roof, but it was either destroyed by a natural disaster or removed. The tower roof now has a crenellated parapet, which was perhaps added with the 1917 Sunday school addition.

An angled wall connects the west and south elevations. This wall has a single pointed arch window. The south elevation is irregular and asymmetrical with irregular rooflines, a short tower, and two gable walls. Excluding the bell tower, there are six bays in the south elevation. Moving from west to east, the first bay is a projecting gable wall with three pointed arch stained glass windows. The gable wall has a buttress on either end.

The second bay is an angled wall with a single pointed arch stained glass window. The third bay is a flat wall with a single pointed-arch stained glass window. The fourth bay is a two-story tower, which contains a stairwell, as well as an entrance into the building. The west wall of the tower contains three irregularly placed windows. Two are double-hung one-over-one windows with a single-pointed arch light above. Like the other windows in the church, these also are set in masonry that contrasts with the color of the brick walls. The third window is a single light segmental arch window. The south elevation of the tower contains an entrance into the structure. Five stone steps lead to a slightly recessed entrance, which has double doors with two wood panels on the bottom half of the door, and glazing in the upper half. A segmental arch is located above the door. Two one-over-one double-hung windows with a single pointed arch light are located in the upper level of the tower's south elevation. The east elevation of the tower contains a double-hung one-over-one window, with a single-pointed arch light above in the upper-story, and a single light segmental arch window in the lower-story portion of the tower wall. The roofline is crenellated, matching the roof of the tower on the front (west) facade. Located below the roofline is stone trim, and corbelling.

The fifth bay contains a one-over-one double-hung window in the first and second stories as well as the basement. This bay has a flat roof. A buttress with a stone amortizement indicates the transition to the sixth bay. This bay has a gable roof with two, one-over-one double-hung windows in each of the three stories of the structure.

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The south and east elevations are connected by an angled wall. This wall contains two one-over-one double-hung windows in each of the three stories. The brick corbelling continues around the east elevation. A buttress with a stone amortizement is located on either side of the angled wall.

The east elevation consists of a flat wall with three stories. There are six symmetrically placed double-hung, one-over-one sash windows on each level. Brick columns separate the outermost set of windows on either side of the east elevation. The columns contain a stone amortizement.

The east and north elevations are connected by an angled wall, identical to the angled wall connecting the south and east elevations.

The north elevation is nearly identical to the south elevation. The only difference is a basement level entrance in the westernmost wall of the north elevation. This entrance provides an entry into the day care center.

In 1968, the church required an addition for more classroom space. In order to protect the integrity of the historic structure, an enclosed walkway was constructed to connect the older, historic building to a large rear classroom building. The walkway is connected to the original structure on the northeast wall. Refer to Figure 4, which shows where the walkway connected to the historic structure. This is the only area that connects the two buildings. The walkway is 10'8" wide and has a gable roof, wide door openings accentuated with stone trim, and rectangular window openings with keystone lintels. The walkway floor is concrete.

The red-brick, two-story addition has a hipped asphalt shingle roof. The building is architecturally plain, but does contain some architectural features that complement the historic structure including quoins, a wide cornice, and double-hung, one-over-one windows.

The west elevation has asymmetrically placed windows. Each of the windows is stained glass with a geometrical pattern. One long rectangular stained glass window is located in the most southern portion of the wall. There are also four windows located in both the first and second stories. All of the windows have a triangular pediment.

The north (rear) elevation is symmetrical with nine bays. The first floor contains seven one-over-one double-hung windows and two entrances. The entrances are approached by stone stairs with an iron railing. A shed roof is located above each of the doors. The second story contains nine one-over-one double-hung windows. Each of the windows on both levels has brick lintels.

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The east elevation contains no window or door openings. The south elevation faces the historic structure. The first level contains eight one-over-one double-hung windows with brick lintels. There is a double door entrance along the easternmost portion of the wall. The second story contains eight one-over-one double-hung windows with brick lintels.

The sanctuary is entered from the walkway. The area where the walkway attaches to the original structure forms a small lobby or vestibule. From the lobby, a wood double door with four panels in each door leads into the sanctuary. A large pointed arch stained glass window is located above the doors.

The interior of the church contains many design features that reflect the Gothic Revival style. The sanctuary walls are 1'6" deep; therefore, the window and door openings have deep moldings. A wide band of wood trim surrounds the windows. Within the trim are decorative blocks. These decorative blocks are also found in the trim surrounding the pointed-arched doors. The doors and windows contain the original hardware. The stained glass windows contain mostly geometric patterns, although some of the windows do have a floral motif.

The sanctuary is an irregular shaped room with three sections of pews oriented toward the chancel. The lower portion of the sanctuary walls is beaded board and the upper portion is plaster. The wood pews are original to the church. The pews continue the Gothic Revival detailing of the exterior with a quatrefoil pattern and arched paneling. A large pointed arch opening, similar to the arched windows, accentuates the organ loft. Carpeting covers the historic wood floors. The ceiling has been replaced and the chandeliers are not historic.

The rear wall of the sanctuary is a historic folding partition wall. The folding doors are wood and have twelve (12) panels on each door. Two six paneled wood doors are located on either side of the rear wall of the sanctuary, and exit into stairwells.

From the stairwell, there is also a door opening into the 1917 Sunday school addition. This part of the church contains additional worship space, a balcony, and classrooms. The historic wood floors are present. The rear wall of this room contains a row of hinged doors that open into offices, a choir room, prayer room, and women's parlor. The doors are paneled. The bottom panel is wood, and the upper two panels, glass. The glass has since been painted, and only upon close examination is the glass visible. Original features of the rooms are retained including hardwood floors, beaded board,



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radiators, and molding along the windows. The women's parlor also contains built-in wood cabinets. There are six rooms upstairs and seven rooms downstairs.

The stairwells are located in the tower on the north and south elevations of the structure. The stairs lead to the balcony, basement, and outside. The stairs are hardwood, with beaded board on the lower walls, and plaster on the upper wall portion. The banister includes spindles and a simple rectangular newel post. A narrow landing is located at the top of each of the stairs and a six paneled wood door leads into the balcony. The balcony contains classrooms and office space. The balcony is open with a simple iron rail along the perimeter.

The basement originally contained the fellowship hall and kitchen of the church. The rooms are now used for a day care facility. Although there have been alterations to ensure that the area is safe for children, many original features remain. Original features include a mantel, plaster walls, radiators, pocket doors, and beaded board. The hardwood floors have been covered with linoleum, and the lower portion of the wall in the fellowship hall is paneled. Some original shelving and cabinets have been retained in the kitchen.

The interior of the 1968 addition contains offices, classrooms, and a large fellowship hall and kitchen. The walls are of concrete block with drop ceilings, and linoleum floors. A stairwell is located in the west and east elevations of the building. The first story contains several offices and the fellowship hall and kitchen. The upstairs also contains offices and classrooms.

Changes to the interior of the historic structure include the replacement of the original sanctuary ceiling, and the addition of new light fixtures. Carpet has been installed in the sanctuary, although the original hardwood floors remain underneath. Almost all of the classroom are in their original condition, however, two of the rooms have been paneled.

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First Presbyterian Church  
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## VIII. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The First Presbyterian Church in Sweetwater, Monroe County Tennessee is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for its significance as an excellent local example of Gothic Revival architecture. The 1887 building has a complex and irregular floor plan, pointed arch doors and windows set in masonry that contrasts with the color of the walls, buttresses, and a tower with belfry. The interior of the building also retains its historic integrity with stained glass windows, original pews, hardwood floors, folding classroom doors, and beaded board. The First Presbyterian Church also demonstrates the expansion and evolution of the church according to contemporary religious planning. A Sunday school addition was added to the building in 1917, and reflects the Akron Plan.

The church is situated in a residential area in the city, and is located on a corner lot bordered by Church, Mill, North, and Summit streets. Other churches, including a Methodist Church and a Baptist Church were also established in this area. Residents could easily walk to church and the church was very much a part of the community.

Monroe County, along with twenty-two other counties, was created following the Hiwassee Purchase. Sweetwater was settled beginning in the 1820s, but the town was not incorporated until 1897. The establishment and growth of Sweetwater is largely attributed to the extension of the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad into the town in April 1852. The sale of the first town lot was on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1852. Although there were already settlers in the area, their land had been through land grants. Kim Murphy in a National Register nomination of the Owens-Boyd house in Sweetwater states, "Sweetwater became an agricultural and manufacturing center that evolved into the most important rail stop between Knoxville and Chattanooga by 1887."<sup>1</sup>

Continued settlement and growth in Sweetwater prompted the establishment of religious institutions. The First Presbyterian Church is one of those churches that have an early association with the town. In April 1860, members from a Presbyterian church petitioned the Presbytery of Knoxville to organize a church in Sweetwater called the Old School Presbyterian Church of Sweetwater.<sup>2</sup> On September 6, 1860, the name of the church was entered on the roll of the

<sup>1</sup> Kim Murphy, National Register of Historic Places nomination – Charles Owen House, listed July 15, 1998.

<sup>2</sup> *History of the First Presbyterian Church, Sweetwater, Tennessee, 1860-1960*. Knoxville, TN: Wade Printing Company, n.d., 10.

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Knoxville Presbytery. The church had barely been established when the Civil War occurred, leading to the closure of all churches in Sweetwater. Between December 1862 and September 1866 there are no records of congregational meetings.

In October 1866, church records commence again, and membership steadily increased. During the mid-1880s, members of the congregation began to desire a new church building. In a history of Sweetwater, W.B. Lenoir explains that the congregation had several reasons for building a new church. Many of the church members, for instance, lived west of the railroad, and it was inconvenient for them to get to the church, and dangerous for the children to cross the tracks. Lenoir also stated that the church was “antiquated and uncomfortable and not suited to the growing membership.”<sup>3</sup> A new church would be better situated across the railroad tracks where many of the members resided.

The church minutes indicate that during a meeting on March 11, 1886, the Deacons of the church reported on the raising of funds to secure a new church building. The minutes state, “They reported encouraging progress and were directed to continue their work. After subsequent encouraging reports on April 2 and May 3 it appeared that there was only a small balance wanted to begin work and they were instructed to secure this as soon as possible.”<sup>4</sup> On May 17, the Deacons reported that the funds were nearly secured, and they unanimously decided to move forward with construction of a new church. On June 16, 1886, the congregation met and voted to appoint an Executive Committee to sell the church building, buy a lot for the new building, and construct a new building.<sup>5</sup>

The minutes of the church do not mention further building activities; however, Lenoir’s history of Sweetwater mentions that in July 1887 new ground for the church was broken.<sup>6</sup> On June 2, 1888, the Executive Committee presented the new church building to the congregation. The minutes of the church record that \$6,167.85 was raised through subscriptions and sale of the old church.

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<sup>3</sup> William B. Lenoir, *History of Sweetwater Valley* (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, Inc., 1998 – reprint), 375.

<sup>4</sup> *History of First Presbyterian Church*, 25.

<sup>5</sup> *History of First Presbyterian Church*, 26.

<sup>6</sup> William B. Lenoir, in *History of the First Presbyterian Church*, 27.

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Interestingly, the expenses to construct the church including the architect and contractor's fees, purchase of the lot, furnace, pavement, and incidentals equaled \$6,167.85.

Biney Young, a citizen of Sweetwater, was the contractor of the building. Young was also responsible for the construction of numerous residences in Sweetwater. The architect of the church is listed by last name only, Bowman. On March 5, 1890, the Session of the Church met in the Bank of Sweetwater to hear the building report of the church. The following information was included in the report:

Individual subscriptions amounted to \$5,567.85  
\$600.00 was received for the old church building and the lot.

The amount paid for the church included:

Biney Young	\$5,138.50
Furnace	250.00
Incidentals	14.65
Architect	75.00
Lot	250.00
Pavement – grading	375.00
Interest	64.70

With furnishings, the entire cost of the church amounted to \$8,000.00

After the construction of the church, a parsonage was soon built for a cost of \$2,100. The parsonage (gone) was located where the present day 1968 addition is sited. Membership steadily increased. In March of 1900, membership reached a new high, and the building received some updates. A new roof was installed for \$315.34 and electric lights were also added. The installation of electricity not only provided better lighting, but it also allowed for an electric motor to be attached to the organ, which was much more dependable than the former water motor.<sup>7</sup>

Sometime between 1907 and 1920, the church's tower was either destroyed by a natural disaster or purposefully removed; it has never been replaced. During the decade of 1910, membership as well as giving increased. In September 1917, the congregation met to discuss the construction of an

<sup>7</sup> *History of First Presbyterian Church*, 36.

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addition to the church. This building phase included a new Sunday school addition, remodeling the Sanctuary, and other changes. The recorded cost of these changes amounted to \$13,387.85.

The two-story addition was built directly behind the sanctuary, and is accessible by wood folding doors. This arrangement easily accommodates overflow seating during worship services or special events that draw large crowds. The classroom addition follows the Akron Plan with a large central area, and classrooms with folding doors that open to the central area. The classroom doors have glazing in the upper panel, but the glazing has since been painted over. It is probable that the glazing allowed church officers to monitor classroom activities.

The addition to the church represents the modern Sunday school movement. Religious leaders, influenced by trends in public education, developed the Uniform Lesson System. This system established graded classes in which all pupils learned the same lesson, but was appropriate to the age group. In order to accommodate the different age levels, more Sunday school classrooms were needed, but with a common space where all children could hear the lesson. Bishop John H. Vincent stated that the space should, "Provide for togetherness and separateness; have a room in which the whole school can be brought together in a moment for simultaneous exercises, and with a minimum of movement be divided into classes for uninterrupted class work."<sup>8</sup>

In 1867, Lewis Miller, a Sunday school worker in Akron, Ohio, created the "Akron Plan" at the First Methodist Episcopal Church. This plan influenced the construction of thousands of churches built across the nation between 1870 and 1914. This plan incorporated a central area that was surrounded by smaller classrooms. Typically, the classrooms opened to the large central area by folding doors or sliding shutters. (Refer to Figure 5.) Often, these were glass doors so that the superintendent could view classroom activities without a disruption. Brother Christopher Stephen Jenks explains, "Many religious institutions located the school buildings directly behind the sanctuary, accessible through rolling or folding doors. This setup easily accommodated seating overflow from the sanctuary to the school building during services."<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Quoted in Herbert Francis Evans, *The Sunday-School Building and Its Equipment* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1914), 6.

<sup>9</sup> Brother Christopher Stephen Jenks, BSG, "The Akron Plan Sunday School," *Common Bond* 11 (December 1995) : 3.

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First Presbyterian Church  
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The church is an excellent example of the Gothic Revival style, which was an influential architectural style for churches during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. John Poppeliers explains, “Gothic Revival was distinguished by the pointed arch, which could ingeniously be combined with towers, crenellation, steeped gable roofs, lacy bargeboards, verandas, clustered columns, foliated ornaments, bay and oriel windows, tracery and leaded stained glass.”<sup>10</sup> John Ruskin influenced the Post-Civil War Gothic style. Poppeliers explains that Ruskin “. . . advocated the use of contrasting colors of brick and stone to produce bold polychromatic patterns.”<sup>11</sup> The First Presbyterian Church demonstrates two tones of brick with a more red-tone of brick outlining the windows, doors, and forming the decorative brickwork along the roofline.

The First Presbyterian Church in Sweetwater is perhaps the only church in Sweetwater that retains its integrity. In the 1980s, the historic Baptist church was demolished for a new structure. The Methodist church, which is across the street from the First Presbyterian church, has undergone alterations and additions that have compromised its integrity.

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<sup>10</sup> John Poppeliers, S. Allen Chambers, Jr., and Nancy B. Schwartz, *What Style Is It?: A Guide to American Architecture* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1983), 40.

<sup>11</sup> Poppeliers, *What Style is it?*, 40.

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Monroe County, Tennessee

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### **X. GEOGRAPHIC DATA**

#### **Verbal Boundary Description**

First Presbyterian Church sits on approximately one acre of land on the corner a corner lot bordered by Church, Mill, North, and Summit Streets. It is in Section "K", Parcel 23 on Monroe County Tax Map No. 23-F.

#### **Boundary Justification**

The nominated boundary includes the parcel of land historically associated with the First Presbyterian Church, and included within the original deed.



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First Presbyterian Church  
Monroe County, Tennessee

Tax map

scale 1" = approx. 250'



PROPERTY MAP PREPARED BY  
CADD SYSTEMS & SURVEY

1. PARCEL NUMBER  
2. PARCEL HOOR  
3. INTERIOR TRACT LINE  
4. DISTRICT LINE  
5. SUBD. LOT #

6. PARCEL & CONTROLLING MAP #  
7. IMPROVEMENT  
8. FENCE  
9. CEMETERY  
10. CHURCH

11. GREEN  
12. STATE LINE  
13. CO. LINE  
14. CORPS LIMITS  
15. TRANSMISSION LINE

23-B 23-C  
23-D 23-E

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## PHOTOGRAPHS

Photos By: Amanda Wild  
East Tennessee Development District  
P.O. Box 19806  
Knoxville, TN 37939

Date: January 2001

Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission  
2941 Lebanon Road  
Nashville, TN 37243

West façade, facing northeast –addition is visible  
1 of 19

Breezeway connecting historic structure to addition, facing southeast  
2 of 19

Breezeway, facing southwest  
3 of 19

North elevation, facing southwest  
4 of 19

East elevation, facing northwest  
5 of 19

South elevation, facing northwest  
6 of 19

South elevation, facing northeast  
7 of 19

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Sanctuary, facing  
8 of 19

Sanctuary, facing  
9 of 19

Sanctuary, facing west  
10 of 19

Classrooms, facing southeast  
11 of 19

Women's Parlor, in classroom space  
12 of 19

South staircase  
13 of 19

1968 addition, west elevation  
14 of 19

1968 addition, north elevation  
15 of 19

1968 addition, east elevation  
16 of 19

1968 addition, south elevation  
17 of 19

1968 addition, Fellowship Hall  
18 of 19

1968 addition, upstairs hallway  
19 of 19

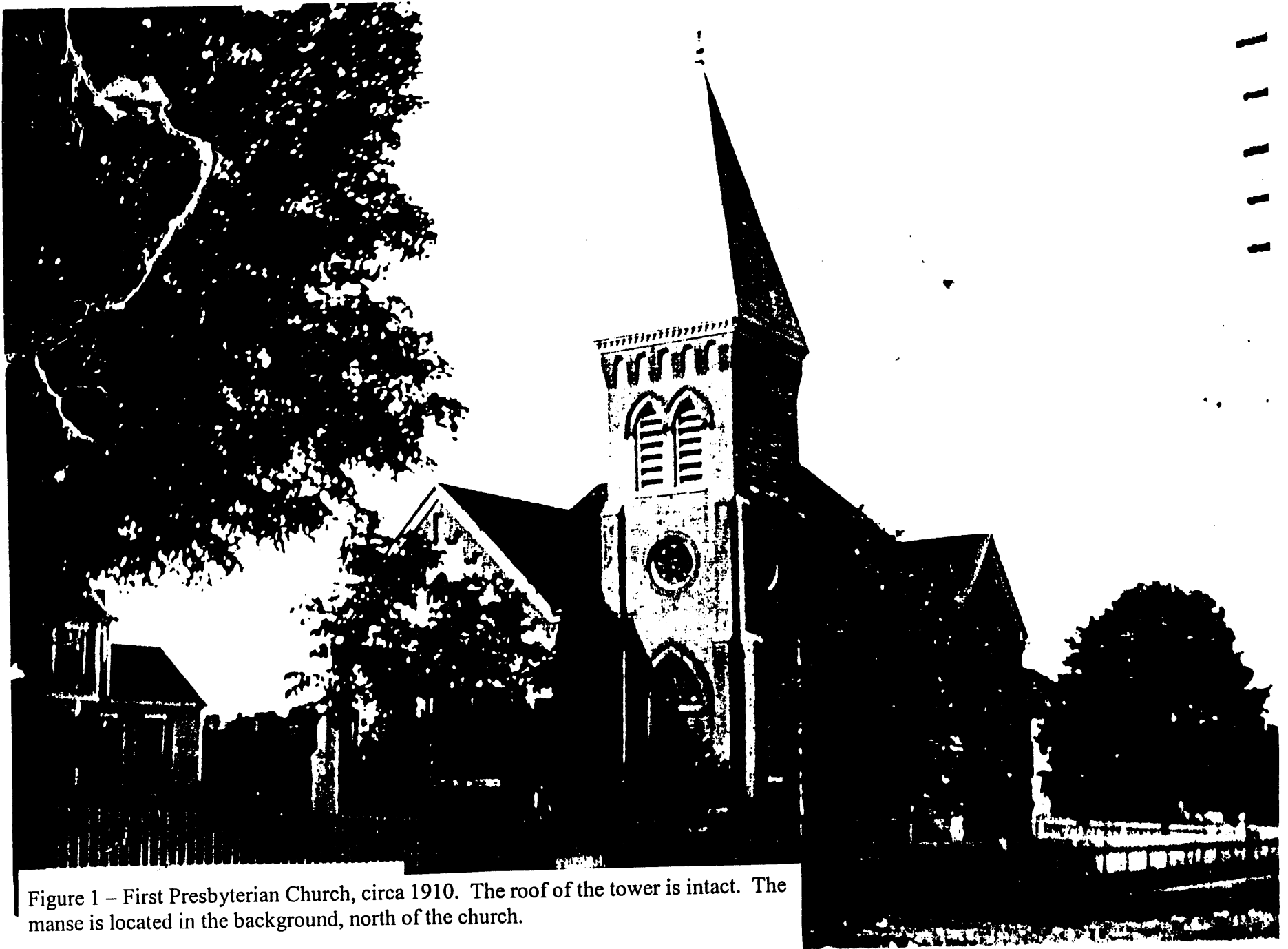
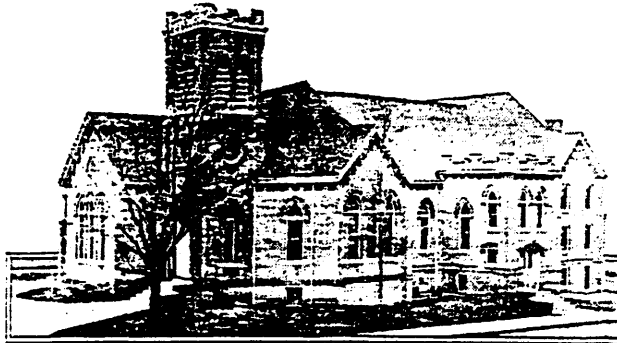


Figure 1 – First Presbyterian Church, circa 1910. The roof of the tower is intact. The manse is located in the background, north of the church.



*Presbyterian Church - Photo by Clyde Gallant - 1910*

Figure 2 – First Presbyterian Church, circa 1910.



SWEETWATER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
ROBERT STUART SANDERS, MINISTER  
SWEETWATER, TENNESSEE

THE UNVEILING OF THE BRONZE TABLET  
IN MEMORY OF  
REV. JOHN LYNN BACHMAN, D. D.  
AND OF HIS WIFE  
FANNIE ROGAN BACHMAN  
IN THE  
SWEETWATER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
SUNDAY, JUNE 11, 1922, 10:45 A. M.

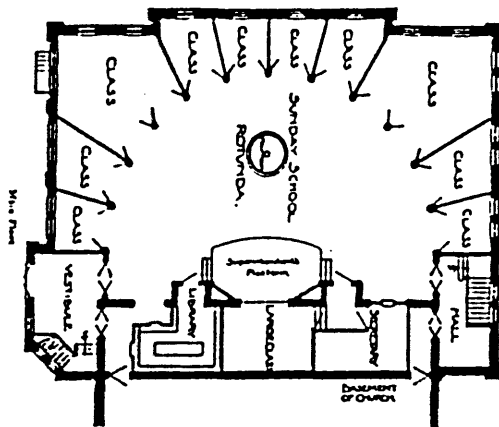
"TO LIVE IN HEARTS WE LEAVE BEHIND, IS NOT TO DIE."

Figure 3 – First Presbyterian Church stationary, d. 1922. The image of the church shows that the tower roof is gone.



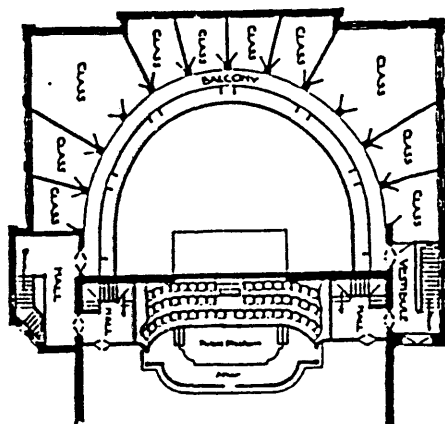
Figure 4 – Exact date unknown c.1920/1930. Photograph shows the north elevation. In 1980, a breezeway was added to connect a new addition to the historic church structure.

THE AKRON PLAN



By permission of G. W. Kramer, Architect, New York City

FIG. 1.—The Original Akron Plan. Main Floor



By permission of G. W. Kramer, Architect, New York City

FIG. 2.—The Original Akron Plan. Balcony Floor

Figure 5 – Illustration of the Akron Plan, from Herbert F. Evans, *The Sunday School Building and Its Equipment* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press), 7.