

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

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received JUN 12 1984
date entered JUL 12 1984

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Mt. Carmel Presbyterian Church

and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number Mt. Carmel Road, N/A not for publication

city, town Covington vic. X vicinity of

state Tennessee code 047 county Tipton code 167

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Congregation of Mt. Carmel Presbyterian Church
c/o Barnet G. Hall, Jr., Clerk of Sessions

street & number Route 2, Box 179

city, town Covington N/A vicinity of state Tennessee 38019

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of Tipton County Registrar

street & number Tipton County Courthouse

city, town Covington state Tennessee 38019

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date N/A N/A federal state county local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town N/A state N/A

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Constructed around 1854, the Mt. Carmel Presbyterian Church is a one-story frame building located in rural southwest Tennessee four miles south of the Tipton County seat of Covington (pop. 6,030). The exterior of the church is a skillful combination of both Greek Revival and Gothic Revival elements. Notable exterior features include tall, pointed-arch windows on the front and side elevations, large Doric pilasters at the four corners of the building, and a pointed-arch front entrance with Greek key pilasters and a stained glass window above. The simple interior has its original wooden floors, late-nineteenth-century pews, and a very fine Greek Revival reredos. The church is relatively unaltered and retains a remarkable level of architectural and historical integrity.

Facing west and surrounded by open farmland, the building is situated at the top of a low hill bearing the same name as the church, Mt. Carmel, which is the highest point in Tipton County. The informally landscaped grounds cover approximately five acres and have many mature trees. There is a small one-story, frame education building of recent construction to the south of the church. The congregation's cemetery is located southwest of the church on the west side of Mt. Carmel Road.

In general configuration, the church is rectangular in shape measuring 36 by 60 feet with a gable roof covered with standing-seam metal sheets. The building has an open foundation of stuccoed brick piers. The narrow wooden siding is original on all four elevations.

The west (front) elevation of the church is distinguished by a low gable end with a wide entablature and Doric corner pilasters. In the three-bay facade, two tall, pointed-arch windows flank a pointed-arch entrance with an early double-leaf door and pilasters having a Greek key capital. The 6/9 double-hung sash windows have clear glass panes, simple Gothic tracery in the apex, and original louvered shutters. Above the central entry is a tracered window with late-nineteenth-century stained glass. A flight of five stone steps leads to the doorway. The identical north and south (side) elevations have five long, pointed-arch windows exactly like the two on the west (front) facade. There are also Doric corner pilasters and a wide entablature on each side elevation. The east (rear) facade is entirely plain with no windows or pilasters.

The interior of Mt. Carmel Church consists of a vestibule with two small corner rooms, a large sanctuary, and a Sunday School room above the vestibule. The building has plaster walls, eighteen-foot ceilings, and its original wooden floors. Two early double-leaf doors lead from the vestibule into the sanctuary. In this large simple space, there are two aisles between rows of late-nineteenth-century pews, which are replacements for the original closed box pews. Behind the low dais at the front of the sanctuary is a well proportioned and detailed Greek Revival reredos of four Doric pilasters supporting a wide entablature and a low pediment. On the dais are early Gothic Revival chairs and lecturn. At the rear of the sanctuary, there was originally an open gallery above the vestibule. This area was enclosed around 1900 to serve as a Sunday School room. The simple gasolier-style electric ceiling fixtures are not original, but are in keeping with the general historical period of the pews.

The only other building on the nominated site is a small one-story frame education building constructed in the 1970s. It is a gable-roofed structure with a simple Doric portico. A nineteenth-century bell rests on a short wooden tower immediately south of the education building.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
	<input type="checkbox"/> invention			

Specific dates c. 1854 **Builder/Architect** Architect, unknown; Contractor, a Mr. Crenshaw

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Mt. Carmel Presbyterian Church (c. 1854) is nominated under National Register criterion C for its architectural significance to Tipton County and West Tennessee as one of the finest nineteenth-century churches in that region of the state. The frame design skillfully employs both Greek Revival and Gothic Revival features as expressed on the exterior in tall, pointed-arch windows and Doric corner pilasters and on the interior by a pedimented, Doric reredos.

The origins of the church go back to the winter of 1834 when twenty-four people gathered in the log house of Rev. James Holmes, a former Presbyterian missionary to the Chickasaw Indians in Mississippi. As a result of this meeting on the small hill of Mt. Carmel, a church was organized, elders and deacons elected, and funds subscribed for a church building. During the period of its erection, the members met in the stable for Rev. Holmes horse. No description remains of the church that was eventually constructed except that it was on a site a little to the west of the present building and had two doorways with steps and faced north. This structure later burned, and the current church was erected around 1854. Although the architect is unknown, the contractor was a Mr. Crenshaw.

The first pastor of the Mt. Carmel Church was Rev. Hugh Wilson, who had been a missionary with Rev. Holmes in Mississippi. The original membership of twenty-one whites and three blacks began to expand steadily, so that by the time of the Civil War, the church was one of the largest Presbyterian congregations in West Tennessee. At the turn of the century the membership reached a peak of over two hundred members.

It was around this time that the church completed one of its principal goals by helping to educate the young people of the region. Founded by Rev. Holmes in the 1840s, the Mt. Carmel Academy soon became one of the most important secondary schools in West Tennessee. There were separate schools and curriculums for boys and girls, who came from several neighboring states as well as from Tennessee. Boarding with church members, the students took their classes in Mt. Carmel buildings which are no longer standing. The school survived until the advent of public education in the area around 1900.

The Mt. Carmel Church is an outstanding example of eclectic architectural trends of the mid-nineteenth century. Its fine composition of Greek Revival and Gothic Revival features and its exceptional craftsmanship give the building a sophistication rarely seen in rural West Tennessee at the time. Among the significant architectural elements of the exterior are well proportioned Gothic windows with their original clear glass and tracery, detailed Doric pilasters at the corners of the building, and a pointed-arch front doorway with a Greek key motif. The austere interior is noteworthy for its rare Greek Revival reredos, late-nineteenth-century pews, and original wooden floors.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Hall, Mrs. Barnet G., Jr. History of Mt. Carmel Presbyterian Church, 1834-1984.
(unpublished paper).

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approx. 5 acres

Quadrangle name Brighton, Tennessee

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	6	2	5	9	8	0	0	3	9	3	1	1	8	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

B

Zone	Easting				Northing									

C

Zone	Easting				Northing									

D

Zone	Easting				Northing									

E

Zone	Easting				Northing									

F

Zone	Easting				Northing									

G

Zone	Easting				Northing									

H

Zone	Easting				Northing									

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Mrs. Barnet G. Hall, Jr. Lloyd Ostby, Coordinator of Field Services		
organization	N/A Tennessee Historical Commission	date	May 1984
street & number	Route 2, Box 179 701 Broadway	telephone	901/476-2962 615/742-6723
city or town	Covington Nashville	state	Tennessee 38019 Tennessee 37203

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

Deputy
State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Herbert L. Byer*

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission date 6/4/84

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Herbert L. Byer
Keeper of the National Register

National Register

date 7/12/84

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
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received

date entered

Mt. Carmel
Continuation sheet Presbyterian Church

Item number 10

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Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

The nominated property is bounded on the west by Mt. Carmel Road, on the north by an unnamed county road, and on the east and south by adjoining property lines. The boundaries include the northern half of the congregation's ten acre parcel of land located on the east side of Mt. Carmel Road. The nomination includes the minimum land needed to protect the architectural and historical integrity of the church. The Mt. Carmel Cemetery on the west side of Mt. Carmel Road is not included in the nomination.

28-69
Morris Will

29-69
Edmonds

6.04

6.01
6.02

17 AC
285 M

6.03

Waiter James
135

5.01

MT. CARMEL

4 Beasley
Ch.
91 AC

7
1.58 AC
2 AC

19
10.1 AC
Presbyterian
Church

23
3.9 AC
Cemetery

20
36 AC
McCain

Mt. Carmel Presbyterian Church
Mt. Carmel Road
Vic. of Covington, Tipton County, Tennessee

Tax Map 1" = 400'



21

Easley, James
24
2 AC

Bowers, Joseph C.
24.01 2 AC

22
28 AC
Stover

Jackson