



United States Department of the Interior


NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

December 27, 2010

Notice to file:

This property has been automatically listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This is due to the fact that the publication of our Federal Register Notice: "National Register of Historic Places: Pending Nominations and Other Actions" was delayed beyond our control to the point where the mandated 15 day public comment period ended after our required 45 day time frame to act on the nomination. If the 45th day falls on a weekend or Federal holiday, the property will be automatically listed the next business day. The nomination is technically adequate and meets the National Register criteria for evaluation, and thus, automatically listed in the National Register of Historic Places.


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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

1060



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 United Presbyterian Church

2. Location

street & number 20 North Dixie Ave.

N/A ☐ not for publication

city or town Cookeville

N/A ☐ vicinity

state Tennessee

code TN

county Putnam

code 141

zip code 38501

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.)

E. P. [Signature]
Signature of certifying official/Title

11/4/10
Date

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:)

[Signature]
Signature of the Keeper

12-27-10
Date of Action

Edson H. Beall

First Presbyterian Church
Name of Property

Putnam County, Tennessee
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

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

Contributing

Noncontributing

1

0

buildings

sites

structures

objects

1

0

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
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Neo Classical

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Brick

roof Asphalt shingle

other Wood, stone

Narrative Description

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

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First Presbyterian Church
Putnam County, Tennessee

Narrative Description

First Presbyterian Church in Cookeville (pop. 26,656) is located a short distance northwest of downtown. The T-shaped building features a sanctuary that was built in 1909-10. Originally built on the Akron plan the sanctuary was remodeled in 1955. The education wing/fellowship hall located at the rear was added in 1986 to replace the original wing that was damaged in a fire. The Greek Revival style brick church features pedimented gable ends and arched stained glass windows. The main entrance is dominated by four large columns supporting a broad cornice and pediment.

The land for the church was purchased in 1909 and the cornerstone was laid in 1910. Construction of the building's first addition commenced in 1944. This added Sunday School rooms, kitchen, dining room, expanded the basement, and installed the church's first indoor toilet. Then in 1954 an education building was added, and in the following year the sanctuary was remodeled. Prior to the remodeling the sanctuary was built in the Akron Plan. The remodeling removed the Akron Plan. The original curved pews were removed and replaced with straight ones that face the west wall. The flooring was removed and the sanctuary was extended approximately six feet to the west. Additionally new wainscoting, wood trim, ceiling, and lighting were added. In 1985 a fire in the kitchen caused considerable damage to the fellowship hall. As a result in 1986 the church removed the damaged section and expanded the building. It was at this time that the church was painted its current gray color.

The facade of the church faces east toward Dixie Avenue. A wide set of stairs lead to a set of double doors that serve as the main entrance. Sets of double-hung stained-glass windows flank the entrance. Arched stained-glass transoms are located above the entrance and windows. The entry bays are flanked by two flat-roofed bays that extend east from the building and do not rise to the roofline of the main block of the sanctuary. These bays contain arched double-hung stained-glass windows on the east facade and also have paneled doors with stone lintels that open onto the entry porch. The porch is sheltered by a projecting pediment with a broad cornice that is supported by four large columns.

The south elevation of the sanctuary has a central pedimented gable end with a rectangular vent. This section has three double-hung stained-glass windows with arched transoms. Flanking the central bay are slightly recessed bays containing double-hung stained-glass windows with transoms. Above the windows are two rows of bricks that form an arched molding. To the east is an additional window, and to the west is an entry with an arched transom covered by a small shed roof that is supported by two columns. West of the entry is an additional stained-glass window. Along the top of the elevation are two rows of stretcher bricks that protrude slightly to form lines of decorative trim.

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The north elevation of the sanctuary is similar to the south elevation except for the westernmost bays. These extend north from the elevation and contain three one-over-one double-hung windows with stone sills and lintels. Along the top of these bays are decorative corbelled bricks. These bays house bathrooms.

The 1986 addition connects to the west end of the sanctuary. The addition incorporates some of the elements of the original church building, such as pedimented gable ends, but has less ornamentation and is clearly differentiated from the original.

The addition's east elevation south of the sanctuary contains a single octagonal window and four regularly spaced brick pilasters. The basement level has a single entry with a rounded canopy that serves as the main entrance for the addition.

The south elevation of the addition has a slightly protruding central pedimented gable end. This section has three one-over-one double-hung windows on the main and basement levels. Each window has a brick sill and those on the main level are topped by arched sunburst designs to mimic arched transoms. Flanking the central section are single one-over-one double-hung windows on each floor.

The west elevation is mostly devoid of ornamentation. It contains five regularly spaced one-over-one double-hung windows with brick sills and lintels on each floor. The northernmost window opening on the main level has been filled in with brick.

The north elevation has a pedimented gable end similar to that on the south elevation. The main and basement levels each have three one-over-one double-hung windows with brick sills and lintels.

The main double door entry on the east facade leads directly into the sanctuary. The sanctuary has two rows of pews with a central aisle that is covered with carpeting. The pews have padded seats and paneled ends. At the west end of the room is a rounded chancel containing the pulpit, organ, and seating for the choir. The chancel is trimmed with fluted pilasters. On either side of the chancel are six panel wood doors set in paneled openings with broad cornices. Paneled wainscoting is present throughout the sanctuary. The main paneled double-door entry with arched transom and flanking stained-glass windows are in the east wall. Five stained-glass windows are located in the north and south walls.

The sanctuary was remodeled to its present appearance in 1955. It was at this time that the current pews, trim, flooring, pulpit and furniture were installed. Previous to this the sanctuary was designed as an Akron Plan with the pulpit in the northwest corner, curved pews, and a sloped floor. Pipes for the organ are visible in the west wall of the chancel. The organ was installed in 1993.

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The southernmost door on the west wall leads to a narrow vestibule. A paneled door on the north wall leads to the chancel, and paneled double doors on the south wall lead outside. The northernmost door on the west wall of the sanctuary leads to a narrow passage that has a paneled wood door leading into the chancel. This passage provides access to the bathrooms.

West of the sanctuary three sets of paneled double doors with paneled transoms lead into the fellowship hall that was added in 1955. The fellowship hall has a carpeted floor and a dropped ceiling. Paneled wainscoting runs the entire length of the room. The outline of a pass-through to the kitchen is visible in the north wall. Four one-over-one double-hung windows are in the west wall and five one-over-one double-hung windows are in the south wall.

The basement level contains church offices, classrooms, and a choir room. The main entrance is on the east elevation of the addition. The hallways and classrooms of the addition have dropped ceilings and concrete block walls. The hallway has linoleum tile flooring, and the classrooms and offices are carpeted. Near the southwest corner is a library that has floor to ceiling built-in bookshelves lining the room. Doors in the basement are typically plain wood doors.

Classrooms and choir room located under the sanctuary have brick and plaster walls. Approximately the lower third of the wall is brick. The top of the brick portion has a concrete cap that forms a narrow ledge. Unlike the rest of the basement the rooms under the sanctuary do not have dropped ceilings. A narrow staircase on the south side of the choir room leads up to the main entry porch on the east facade.

The church is located in an urban area northwest of downtown Cookeville. The immediate area is characterized by parking lots and office buildings. A residential neighborhood lies to the north of the church.

First Presbyterian Church

Name of Property

Putnam County, Tennessee

County and State

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** a birthplace or 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Religion

Period of Significance

1909-1955

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Scott, Joseph Francis, builder

Darwin, Dero; Darwin Jr., Dero

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: _____

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Statement of Significance

First Presbyterian Church is being nominated to the National Register under criterion A for its local significance in religion, and under criterion C as a locally significant example of a Neo Classical church building in Cookeville. The church was born out of a schism resulting from the union of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church with the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America that took place during the early years of the twentieth century. Architecturally the building is a good example of late Neo Classical architecture in Cookeville. Built in 1909, the style of the church is seen in the gable ends with pediments and strong cornice lines, and the colonnaded entry porch.

The origins of First Presbyterian Church trace back to the nationwide merger of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (PCUSA) in 1905. Though officially united, not everyone felt that way in Cookeville or across the state of Tennessee. At a meeting on September 11, 1906, only three Tennessee Presbyteries showed any support for uniting with the PCUSA, Cookeville Presbytery, McMinnville Presbytery, and the Lebanon Presbytery. Those opposed to the merger agreed to meet in Dickson, Tennessee, at the birthplace of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church on Thursday May 3, 1907. Discussions over whether to remain a Cumberland Presbyterian Church or a member of the PCUSA led to dissension in the Cookeville congregation that later caused a schism.

Cookevillians did not stand alone when recoiling over the merger. The Cumberland Presbyterian Church existed in fourteen different states, and congregants from churches in all fourteen states filed lawsuits against the action. Tennessee represented the only state that declared the merger illegal. In fact the issue spilled over into the political arena. Supreme Court Justices up for election to the Tennessee State Supreme Court ran for office saying they would declare the union illegal and unconstitutional. Those justices elected to the bench acted as they had promised, and Tennessee ruled against the reuniting of the two denominations.

The Tennessee State Supreme Court declared the merger illegal on several grounds. The 127-page ruling handed down by four of the five justices seethed with antipathy toward the PCUSA. Their bias against the PCUSA was evident throughout the ruling, which discussed theological issues at length. They declared that the "vote of the presbyteries as duly ascertained and declared had no power to surrender the name and organization of the church to dissolve it by consenting to its absorption by the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America."¹ More emphatically the justices ruled that the merger essentially proved unfair to the dogma of the Cumberland Presbyterians.

Union of the two denominations made the Cumberland Presbyterian Church subservient in the opinion of the Justices. Those churches had to surrender not only authority to the PCUSA, but all

¹ Michael Birdwell. "National Register Notes – PCUSA." Unpublished Document. 2010.

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of their assets to the parent denomination with little say over how they would be used. In fact, they argued that Cumberland Presbyterians had essentially been duped by the PCUSA. For those Cumberland Presbyterians who feared their loss of identity or who held the Presbyterian Church suspect and wanted to remain in the former denomination, the court appeared to be completely sympathetic. "The civil court cannot invade the sacred inclosure of the church, and assume to direct its teachings, or the administration of her rites or ceremonies, or to hinder the imposition of her censures, but where property rights are involved, the church, as to these, stands on the same plane with all other persons."² The Cookeville Cumberland Presbyterian Church reflected the divisiveness that plagued other congregations in the Volunteer State.

The action of the State Supreme Court, widely publicized in 1909, exacerbated the rift that tore the Cookeville congregation apart, for by law all the property and assets of the church belonged to the Cumberland Presbyterian congregation. Emboldened by the decision, the Cumberland Presbyterians held a meeting at Flatt Creek Campground in Overton County, and the presbytery appointed an anti-union committee "to take over the church in Cookeville."³ The committee consisted of W.G. Murphy, Joe Copeland, Dr. W.E. Whitley, Rev. J.G. McDonald, W.T. Jones, and T.M. Anderson.

A small minority of the congregation in Cookeville opposed the merger. In fact, church minutes from 1906 show that before the split the church had ninety-five members. After the split in 1907 minutes of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church listed seven members, while the minutes of the PCUSA in Cookeville listed 125 members.⁴ Ironically, the two congregations continued to use the same sanctuary until 1909. The Cumberland congregation continued its tradition of meeting on the first and third Sundays, while the PCUSA congregation assembled on the second and fourth Sundays.

Because of threatened legal action, the PCUSA Session decided to stop meeting in the Cumberland Presbyterian's building, effective October 30, 1909. They opted to use the Putnam County Courthouse for Sunday School and worship. The Session urged the Committee on Church Property to find land as soon as possible and that "a church be built as soon as practicable and necessary steps be taken."⁵ Prior to the split, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church boasted the largest membership of any congregation in Cookeville.

Meanwhile the Building Committee and trustees, Jesse Arnold, Jeff Dyer, and W.D. Ferrell, searched for property to buy in order to erect a new building. On November 22, 1909, trustees of the Building Committee closed on the sale of the Hunter property. Ironically or spitefully, for records do not indicate, the lot sat directly across the street from the Cumberland Presbyterian

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Rev. Hall Barrett. "History First Presbyterian Church." 1960. Unpublished brochure.

⁵ Birdwell. National Register Notes - PCUSA.

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Putnam County, Tennessee

Church on the northwest corner of Broad and Madison streets. They purchased the land from Jere Whitson and held a public groundbreaking later that month. The design of the new church adopted the Akron floor plan with an offset pulpit and no center aisle. The Building Committee launched an aggressive campaign to raise funds to pay for constructing and furnishing the new church. They prevailed upon members and non-members alike and kept detailed records. Ruling Elder and founder of the Bank of Putnam County, Jesse Arnold, donated the hefty sum of \$1250, while elder Jeff Dyer contributed \$1000. Future Supreme Court Justice Dick L. Lansden gave \$750. Many others paid with either cash or sweat equity as the construction progressed.

Foundations for the building were laid in November of 1909 and the cornerstone laid in 1910. Construction began in earnest around the middle of April. Though the building was not yet completed, eager members began meeting in the church sometime in September of 1910. The building's furnishings were completed in April of 1911, and the sanctuary was officially dedicated on August 20, 1911 by Dr. Thomas A. Whittington, the same pastor who dedicated the Cumberland Church across the street in 1894. During the service he presented the congregation with keys to the completed structure, announced that construction costs totaled \$10,000, and declared all debts owed by the church were paid in full.

Though the State Supreme Court invalidated the merger of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church with the PCUSA, the issue was far from over. Since Tennessee was the only state to take such drastic action, people on both sides knew that the decision would be challenged. The Cookeville Presbyterian Church of the United States of America continued to be in the thick of the controversy in a number of ways. The congregation represented one of only three in the state that supported the merger. Additionally, one of its valued members, an attorney who acted as legal counsel for the church in the original dispute, decided to run for a position on the Tennessee Supreme Court in 1910. Dick Latta Lansden ran for the position as an Independent and won. While he sat on the bench as a justice, the issue of the merger returned in the case of Bonham V. Harris.

This case centered on Grace Presbyterian Church in Nashville, but it had direct connections to Cookeville and the Upper Cumberland region. Though Lansden, a former elder in the PCUSA, should have recused himself from hearing Bonham V. Harris, his political acumen made him realize that it would be imprudent to overturn any previous decisions concerning the merger. He recognized that the issue would continue to be contested and would have to be settled in Federal court. The Supreme Court of the United States eventually overturned all of the cases, and upheld the merger of the two denominations.

Renovation of the Sanctuary

In the decades after the schism in the church, First Presbyterian was served by a series of pastors. During this time the building experienced problems with falling plaster from the ceiling.

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On one occasion in 1938 the pastor, after leaving his office, heard a loud crash, and returned to the office to find that the ceiling had fallen. Necessary repairs were made to the ceilings throughout the building.

In 1953 the church adopted a three-part building plan that called for adding an education building, remodeling the sanctuary and basement, and the possibility of adding a steeple. Groundbreaking for the education building was held September 20, 1953, and the building was officially dedicated on February 7 the following year. The education building cost approximately \$11,000. In 1955 work was done to remodel the sanctuary. Work started on March 2 and the sanctuary was rededicated on September 18. During the remodeling, church services were held in the fellowship hall of the Methodist church.

During the remodeling the pews and flooring were removed, the layout was changed from the Akron Plan to a conventional arrangement with the altar centered on the west wall, and the basement and kitchen were enlarged. Dero Darwin and his son Dero Jr. acted as the architects and Roy Phillips was the crew chief. Initial estimates indicated that the remodeling would cost around \$9000, however the actual costs ended up being approximately \$21,000.

Chairs for the choir came from the Palace Theatre in Monterey, TN, and were un-upholstered curved plywood folding seats connected by interlocking metal and wood side rails. Dero Darwin owned the theatre and donated the seats to the church. The two chairs for the minister and the liturgist represent the only remaining furniture original to the 1910 church. Wainscoting and chair rails were installed around the entirety of the sanctuary interior. Pastor Hall Barrett donated the large brass cross that hangs behind the choir. It was made by U.S. Army Air Corps pilots and given to him when he served as a chaplain during World War II.

Ecumenicism

Though the split from the Cumberland Church created animosities that lingered for years, several attempts were made to improve relations. The first recorded attempt by the Session came in the fall of 1916 when "by unanimous vote the Pastor was instructed to tender the use of our church to the Cumberland Presbyterian Church as a meeting place for their synod to convene in Cookeville."⁶ In 1922 Pastor Llewellyn T. Lawrence initiated the first vacation bible school at the First Presbyterian Church, and it lasted six weeks. Ecumenical in nature, Lawrence invited all of the churches in town to participate and the program attracted 125 Cookeville children that summer. Historically the Session of the First Presbyterian Church encouraged people, regardless of their religious affiliation, to use the church's facilities for public meetings. In fact the building had no locks on its doors until the early 1980s.

⁶ A.J. Coile, "Session minutes, September 3, 1916," p67.

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Over the years the church has provided meeting space for the Upper Cumberland Medical Association, Red Cross blood drives, the Upper Cumberland Heritage Association, the Upper Cumberland Civil War Round Table, Kindermusic, Cookeville Ministerial Association, United Jewish Fellowship, Community Youth Orchestra, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Cookeville Junior Women's Club, the Alliance for the Cumberlands, Narcotics Anonymous, the Police Athletic League, Cookeville Camera Club, Youth Chamber Orchestra, and many other organizations, all free of charge.

Architecture

First Presbyterian Church is one of the few twentieth century Neo Classical churches in Cookeville. Other notable churches built in Cookeville in the same time frame are generally Gothic Revival, such as Broad Street Church of Christ (NR listed 2/01/2002). The Neo Classical details are seen in the pediments of the gable ends with broad cornice bands and the four large columns supporting the entry porch. The interior remodeling of the 1950s was done in a Colonial Revival style, which reflects popular trends at that time.

Joseph Francis Scott is credited with building the church. Scott is recognized as being one of the premier brick masons and contractors in Cookeville during the first quarter of the twentieth century. Having moved to Cookeville in 1893, Scott built and managed the Cookeville brick kilns. He had a virtual monopoly on the construction business and is generally credited with building many of the brick structures in Cookeville during the period 1900-1936. This includes the Arcade (NR 4/17/1979), Putnam County Courthouse, Broad Street Church of Christ (NR 2/1/2002), the Shirt Factory, and Whitson Funeral Home. According to the Putnam County Survey Report, Scott was one of the most influential people in developing the appearance of public buildings in Cookeville.

Significant People Associated with the Church

Ruling elder Jesse Arnold served as the first Clerk of Session of the First Presbyterian Church, USA at Cookeville. Arnold and two other church members (Rutledge Smith and Alvin Boyd) helped write the city codes for Cookeville when it was incorporated in 1903. Arnold also acted as the first mayor of Cookeville. Additionally he founded the first Bank of Putnam County.

Dr. Jeff Dyer, a founding member and ruling elder of First Presbyterian Church, agreed to serve as Putnam County's Health Officer in 1914, a position he held until 1933. In that capacity, Dr. Dyer inspected the water supply, informed people about how to prevent infectious diseases, and other such things. Realizing the necessity of good hygiene and the importance of sanitation, Dr. Dyer purchased the first flush toilet ever installed in a public building in Cookeville. It replaced the women's outhouse at the Cookeville Library then located on Madison Avenue.⁷

⁷ Tim Harrison, "Jefferson Franklin Dyer, M.D.: His Contribution to the Cultural, Educational, and Industrial Progress of Cookeville and Putnam County, Tennessee (Cookeville, Tennessee, Unpublished Manuscript, N.D.): 2, 13

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While a Ruling Elder of the First Presbyterian Church, USA at Cookeville Dick Latta (D.L.) Lansden served as Chancery Court Judge of the Fourth Judicial District from 1902-1910, when voters elected him to sit on the State Supreme Court. From 1910-1918 Lansden served as an associate Justice on the state's superior court, and claimed no political affiliation. In 1918 he succeeded M.M. Neil as Chief Justice of the State of Tennessee. As a judge and later Chief Justice, Lansden wrote 135 opinions. Perhaps his most important decision was a request of the Attorney General to compose writs of *certiorari* and *supersedeas* that granted Governor A.H. Roberts permission to promptly "certify and send to the Capitol of the Nation Tennessee's ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment," that granted women of the U.S. the right to vote.⁸ His former Crossville law partner Judge L.D. Smith said, "Judge Lansden was essentially a man of the people, in sympathy with the unfortunate and acquainted with the needs of the masses."⁹ The Upper Cumberland Bar Association commissioned a portrait of Judge Lansden which was painted by Lloyd Branson of Knoxville, and now hangs in the Supreme Court Building across from the State Capitol. His funeral service was held at the First Presbyterian Church and he was buried in the Cookeville City Cemetery among his departed family members.¹⁰

Major Rutledge Smith edited and owned two Cookeville newspapers, founded the Southern Press Syndicate, and served as the president of the Tennessee Press Association for over a decade. He was one of the original incorporators of the Washington Press Club. He served as an aide to Senator Benton McMillan for three years. For six years he labored in public education in Putnam County and worked at the People's Bank of Cookeville for a number of years. In 1910 he began working for and was later Vice President of the Tennessee Central Railroad. Rutledge Smith, a deacon in the First Presbyterian Church of Cookeville, championed Progressive causes, serving as a booster for industrialization, better roads, and improved education in the South. He organized the first Putnam County Agricultural Fair and acted as its president for many years. A friend of Woodrow Wilson's Quaker Secretary of War Newton Baker, Rutledge Smith was appointed to oversee the draft in Tennessee and the entire southeastern region of the United States. Baker also added him to the Council of National Defense, which oversaw the civilian transition from a peace time industrial/agricultural economy to one appropriate for a nation at war. Cookeville's Rutledge Smith was the only man in the country to serve as both the head of civilian mobilization and the draft in his state.¹¹ On the eve of World War II, Governor Prentice Cooper

⁸ "Remarks of Hon. K.T. McConnico," 713. The Supreme Court later rubber stamped Lansden's historic decision. According to attorney David Brady, someone or some group convinced a judge to issue an injunction against Governor Roberts. The purpose of the injunction was to stop the governor from certifying the vote of the state legislature, and thereby deny American women access to the polls.

⁹ "Remarks of Judge L.D. Smith," 716.

¹⁰ Ernest H. Boyd, "Minutes of Session, August 10, 1924," 155; H.S. Barnes, E.H. Boyd, W. Bryant, V.E. Bockman, John Gore, and O.K. Holladay, "Resolutions Relative to the Death of Judge D.L. Lansden, Adopted by the Cookeville Bar on September 22, 1924, and Offered to be Entered of Record on the Minutes of this Court," 706.

¹¹ Rutledge Smith and Graeme McGregor Smith Papers, 1840-1962, (Nashville: Tennessee State Library and Archives, THS 893 ac. no. 1660). The Council of National Defense was organized in August 1916 to coordinate planning for mobilization and cooperation with industry.

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appointed him to chair the Tennessee Preparedness Committee to create plans for the transition from peacetime to wartime industry.

His children proved just as industrious. Only his daughter Eudora, better known as Dollie, continued to reside in Putnam County and remain a loyal member of First Presbyterian. Dollie attended Vanderbilt and excelled as a scholar-athlete. She and her husband Malcolm lived in New Orleans for a short time where she taught school. During the last years of World War II she returned to Putnam County and with her father's help and influence, purchased land on the Cumberland Plateau near Monterey. With the assistance of German Prisoners of War incarcerated at Camp Crossville, land was cleared and cabins built in order to launch what became her life's work: Camp Monterey. The girls' camp continues to flourish and was attended by many daughters of the well-to-do across the American South.¹²

Dr. T.J. Farr earned a reputation as a diligent scholar and faithful Presbyterian. Though he taught a number of classes at Tennessee Polytechnic Institute (TPI) and one of the original buildings on the Quad is named for him, his passion revolved around local folklore. Inspired by the work of the legendary folklorist John Lomax, Farr determined to bring like-minded scholars together in a new organization in Tennessee. On November 10, 1934 Farr met with fifty other researchers in Room One of the TPI Administrative Building, and became a charter member of the Tennessee Folklore Society, along with Dr. John Rickard of TPI's History Department, Dr. Harry Upperman, President of Baxter Seminary, and Maude Terry, the Elementary Educational Supervisor of Putnam County Schools. Its charter quoted Lomax, claiming that "the mountain sections of Tennessee were the richest in folklore of any portion of the United States." The first official meeting of the new organization met at TPI in November 1935. The purpose of the organization was to "sponsor the collection, study, preservation, and publication of the folk lore of Tennessee." Farr was particularly interested in the peculiar speech patterns and phrases of the Upper Cumberland and cataloged them with abandon. Many of the phrases he collected are no longer heard, and would have been lost if not for his scholarship and diligence.¹³

On July 27, 1939 elder and County Judge Luke Medley received a federal license to launch a radio station. WHUB, "The Voice of the Upper Cumberland," began broadcasting on July 20, 1940, making it the first radio station in the region. The call letters reinforced the notion that Cookeville was the hub city of the Upper Cumberland and cultivated rural listeners across the region with programming aimed directly at them. WHUB played a crucial role in the region until it was swallowed up by Clear Channel, and helped launch the careers of local musicians and broadcasters. Among those were Country Music Star Dottie West of McMinnville, and broadcaster Keith Bilbrey of Cookeville who was the voice of the Grand Ole Opry for years. Judge Medley had

¹² Sally Rodes Lee, *Spirit of Monterey* (Nashville, Tennessee: Westview, Inc., 2009): 3-21. Among Camp Monterey's alumni are actresses Patricia Clarkson and Reese Witherspoon.

¹³ "Minutes of the First Meeting of the Tennessee Folklore Society," T.J. Farr Papers, RG 59 (Cookeville, Tennessee: Tennessee Technological University Archives): 1-4.

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First Presbyterian Church
Putnam County, Tennessee

considerable political clout across the region and the state. He helped organize the Cookeville Chamber of Commerce and served as its first president in 1949. Due to his influence and political maneuvering the path of Interstate 40 was changed. Initial plans took the road just north of Sparta in White County instead of south Cookeville. The path of the interstate through Putnam County improved the economic situation in the region and increased Cookeville's importance in the region.

Opal White visited the Darwin School, an African American school in Cookeville that served black students from six different counties, in 1960. She found the children well behaved, respectful, and eager to learn even though their textbooks were worn out from years of use. She considered the library woefully inadequate and out of date, and the few crayons that existed were broken nubs. White told the First Presbyterian Church's Women's Association what she witnessed. Mary Eyler and Jewell Nolen agreed to work with Opal White to raise awareness and funds to assist the Darwin School. Opal White and the Presbyterian Women's Association helped forge a bridge between the white and black communities in Cookeville. When the city integrated after the Darwin School burned in 1963, there were no incidents of racial violence the Women's Association continued to work on improving racial relations throughout the 1960s. Their efforts were supported by pastors Hall Barrett, David Meyer, and G. David Campbell.¹⁴

¹⁴ Cora B. French, "Women's Association Minutes," (Cookeville, Tennessee: First Presbyterian Church, May 1960): 1-2. See Session Minutes from 1960-1970.

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Putnam County, Tennessee

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First Presbyterian Church
Name of Property

Putnam County, Tennessee
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.6 acres Cookeville West 326 NE

UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 16 634744 4003132
Zone Easting Northing
2

3
Zone Easting Northing
4

☐ 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 Michael Birdwell/Brian Beadles
organization date
street & number 2050 Free Hill Road/2941 Lebanon Road telephone 931-372-3356/615-532-1550
city or town Cookeville/Nashville state TN zip code 38501/37214

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; Pat Handlson, pastor
street & number 20 North Dixie Avenue telephone 931-526-4424
city or town Cookeville state TN zip code 38501

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 Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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First Presbyterian Church
Putnam County, Tennessee

Boundary Description and Justification

The nominated boundary includes the entire parcel labeled 053G C 014.00 on the following tax map. This represents all the property historically and currently associated with First Presbyterian Church.

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First Presbyterian Church
Putnam County, Tennessee



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National Park Service

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First Presbyterian Church
Putnam County, Tennessee

Photographs

Photos taken by Brian Beadles, Tennessee Historical Commission

Photos taken March, 2010

Digital files at Tennessee Historical Commission

East facade, photographer facing west.

1 of 21

Southeast corner, photographer facing northwest.

2 of 21

South elevation, photographer facing north.

3 of 21

South elevation, photographer facing north.

4 of 21

Southwest corner, photographer facing northeast.

5 of 21

Northeast corner, photographer facing southwest.

6 of 21

North elevation, photographer facing south.

7 of 21

West wall of sanctuary, photographer facing west.

8 of 21

Chancel, photographer facing northwest.

9 of 21

East wall of sanctuary, photographer facing east.

10 of 21

North wall of sanctuary, photographer facing north.

11 of 21

Pews, photographer facing north.

12 of 21

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First Presbyterian Church
Putnam County, Tennessee

Hallway in lower level, photographer facing east.
13 of 21

Classroom, photographer facing southeast.
14 of 21

Classroom, photographer facing southwest.
15 of 21

Choir Room, photographer facing north.
16 of 21

Hallway in addition.
17 of 21

Classroom in addition.
18 of 21

Library, photographer facing north.
19 of 21

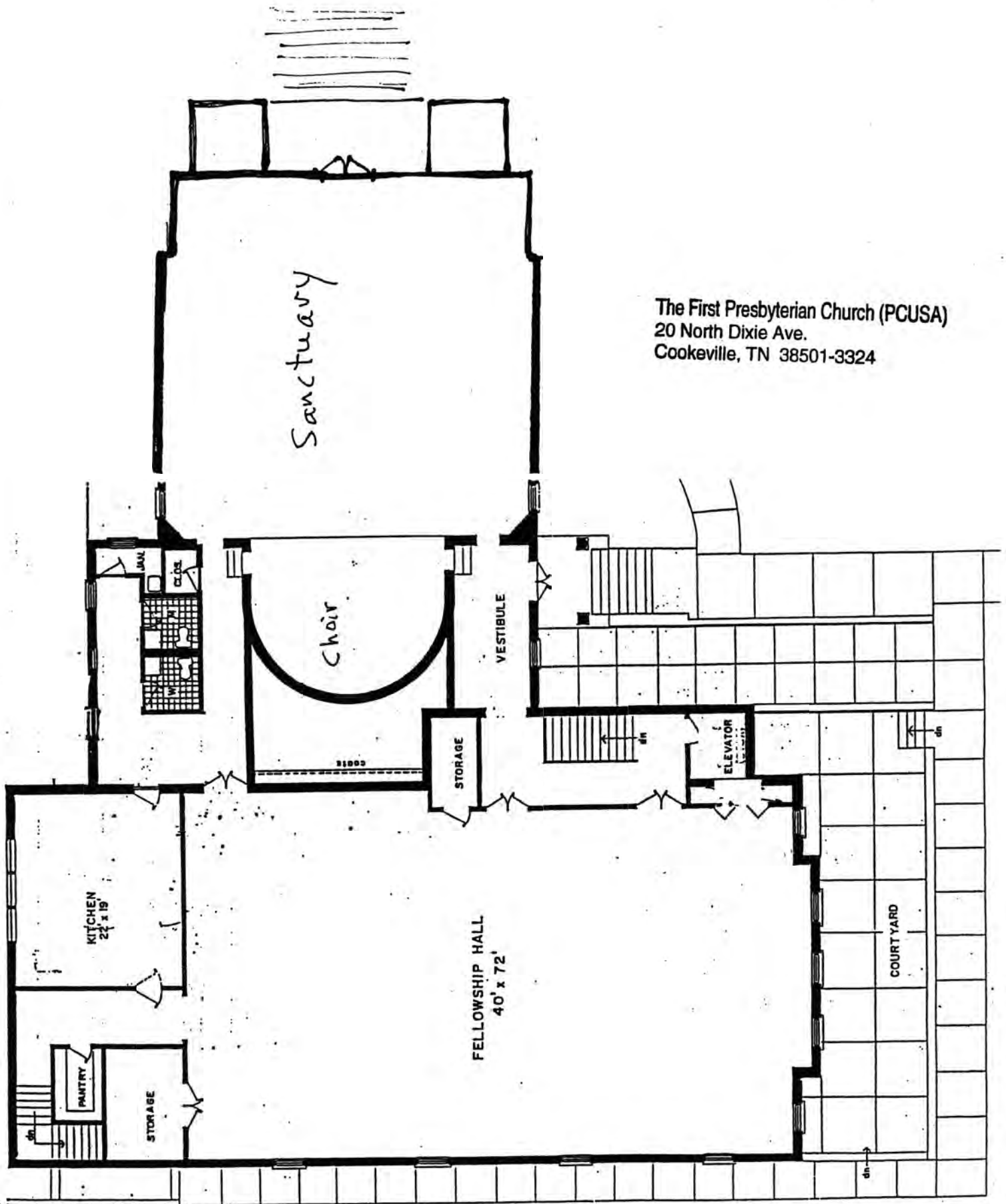
Fellowship Hall, photographer facing northwest.
20 of 21

Kitchen, photographer facing northwest.
21 of 21



The First Presbyterian Church (PCUSA)
 20 North Dixie Ave.
 Cookeville, TN 38501-3324

The First Presbyterian Church (PCUSA)
20 North Dixie Ave.
Cookeville, TN 38501-3324



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY First Presbyterian Church
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TENNESSEE, Putnam

DATE RECEIVED: 11/08/10 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 12/13/10
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 12/28/10 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/24/10
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 10001060

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 12-27-10 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

































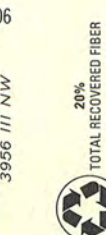












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CHARLOTTE BURKS
SENATOR

304 WAR MEMORIAL BUILDING
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243-0215
(615) 741-3978
FAX (615) 253-0381

E-MAIL sen.charlotte.burks@capitol.tn.gov

Senate Chamber
State of Tennessee

NASHVILLE

COMMITTEES
COMMERCE, LABOR AND AGRICULTURE
SECRETARY
EDUCATION, MEMBER
ENVIRONMENT, CONSERVATION AND
TOURISM
ETHICS, VICE CHAIR

August 31, 2010

Mr. E. Patrick McIntyre, Jr.
Executive Director
State Historic Preservation Officer
Tennessee Historical Commission
Department of Environment & Conservation
2911 Lebanon Road
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0442

Dear Mr. McIntyre:

On behalf of the First Presbyterian Church of Cookeville, Tennessee and the Citizens of Putnam County, I would like to request your approval to nominate this church for the Tennessee and National Register of Historic Places.

This Congregation comes from pioneering efforts of Presbyterian ministers who, in 1867 organized the Cookeville Society of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. In 1909, they acquired the property at 20 North Dixie Avenue. It became the First Presbyterian Church of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

Faith-based communities are very important to me. Putnam County is rich in history, therefore, being listed on the Tennessee and National Registers will be an attraction for tourist; will exemplify the church's historical significance; and will be a way to inform Tennesseans and the nation that First Presbyterian Church in Cookeville, Tennessee is, indeed, worthy of notable recognition.

As the State Senator for the 15th Senatorial District, I am committed to enhancing our cultural heritage. Your favorable consideration is greatly appreciated.

Your very truly,

Charlotte Burks

Charlotte Burks



TENNESSEE HISTORICAL COMMISSION
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION
2941 LEBANON ROAD
NASHVILLE, TN 37243-0442
(615) 532-1550



November 4, 2010

Carol Shull
Keeper of the National Register
National Park Service
National Register Branch
1201 Eye Street NW
8th floor
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

Please find the enclosed documentation to nominate the *First Presbyterian Church* to the National Register of Historic Places.

If you have any questions or if more information is needed, contact Brian Beadles at 615/532-1550, extension 125 or Brian.Beadles@tn.gov.

Sincerely,

E. Patrick McIntyre, Jr.
State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosures