

PH 435 1148

# DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY		6
RECEIVED	JUN 10 1976	
DATE ENTERED	OCT 8 1976	

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

### 1 NAME

HISTORIC

\*\* First Presbyterian Church of Wetumpka  
AND/OR COMMON  
First Presbyterian Church of Wetumpka

### 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

West Bridge Street

\_\_\_NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Wetumpka

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

3

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Alabama

01

Elmore

051

### 3 CLASSIFICATION

#### CATEGORY

- \_\_\_DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- \_\_\_STRUCTURE
- \_\_\_SITE
- \_\_\_OBJECT

#### OWNERSHIP

- \_\_\_PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- \_\_\_BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- \_\_\_IN PROCESS
- \_\_\_BEING CONSIDERED

#### STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- \_\_\_UNOCCUPIED
- \_\_\_WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- \_\_\_YES: UNRESTRICTED
- \_\_\_NO

#### PRESENT USE

- \_\_\_AGRICULTURE
- \_\_\_COMMERICAL
- \_\_\_EDUCATIONAL
- \_\_\_ENTERTAINMENT
- \_\_\_GOVERNMENT
- \_\_\_INDUSTRIAL
- \_\_\_MILITARY
- \_\_\_MUSEUM
- \_\_\_PARK
- \_\_\_PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- \_\_\_SCIENTIFIC
- \_\_\_TRANSPORTATION
- \_\_\_OTHER:

### 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

First Presbyterian Church of Wetumpka

STREET & NUMBER

West Bridge Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Wetumpka

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

Alabama

### 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Elmore County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Wetumpka

Alabama

### 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

\_\_\_FEDERAL \_\_\_STATE \_\_\_COUNTY \_\_\_LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The First Presbyterian Church of Wetumpka, constructed in 1856, reflected the increasingly popular Gothic idiom, while retaining interior elements of the Greek Revival style, and is a successful blending of the two major 19th Century styles. Located on a large, parklike site near the foot of an arched, concrete suspension bridge on the western bank of the Coosa River, the church is one of the important focal points of the city.

The original portion of the church consists of a one-story, board and batten, rectangular block with a central, projecting facade tower, and rests on a brick foundation. Small, low wings added to the structure in 1946 flank the building toward the rear on the eastern and western elevations and reflect the design of the earlier structure, using a raised brick basement, board and batten siding and engaged buttresses.

The southern or front elevation is symetrically arranged with a single lancet-arched window on either side of the central tower. Originally these windows had stationary louvered shutters similar to other windows of the church, but in the late 19th Century the lower portion of the shutters was replaced with wooden panels composed of narrow strips of wood set in geometrical patterns.

Entrance to the church is through a rectangular opening on the tower which is surmounted by wooden lancet arch and flanked by engaged buttresses which define the corners of the tower. Above the entrance, a central lancet-arched window aligns with the apex of the gabled roof, which is obscured by the tower. The tower is divided into two distinct sections. The lower section is terminated with a flat topped, hipped roof with projecting cornices supported by brackets. Beneath the frieze on the southern side, is a course of flat dentil molding. The upper portion repeats a similar design but employs rectangular windows with slight entablatures and is crowned with a conical roof and metal spire. Earlier accounts describe the tower as having wooden spires of various lengths surrounding the central spire, but the date of alteration is unknown.

The gable roof is finished with a finely detailed cornice and board frieze ornamented with a band of molding. Eastern and western elevations have three windows with slight architraves alternating with engaged buttresses. The fourth windows on either side were converted to doors with the addition of the wings in 1948.

The interior treatment is largely Greek Revival, but elements of the Gothic exterior appear in the use of arched panels for the entrance doors, and the small arches with ornament the ornament the ends of the pews. A 1936 addition, the choir rail, features lancet-arched arcading. Doors have shouldered trim, windows are pedimented and the balcony is paneled. A finely articulated reredos forms the major ornamentation of the interior. Other than the addition of the choir rail which replaced a balustraded corner choir section, interior modifications have been minimal and include the introduction of two windows on either side of the reredos which function as

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vents for the airconditioning units, and the installation of recessed lighting in the ceiling. The elaborate chandeliers were retained and converted to electricity.

# 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

Begun 1856

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The First Presbyterian Church of Wetumpka is a fine example of a local builder's interpretation of the Gothic Revival Style and utilizes elements of the Greek Revival, particularly on the interior. This highly successful blending of two major 19th Century styles exemplifies the transition from the Greek Revival dominance of the early 19th Century to the Gothic Revival Style, which predominated much of the church architecture of the late 19th Century.

Due to its central location and expansive grounds, the church has been closely connected with many of the prominent events of the town, and both the site and the building were used for civic, political and patriotic gatherings throughout much of the 19th Century. The church has counted among its members, both the secessionist orator, William Lowndes Yancy, and the state's eleventh governor, Benjamin Fitzpatrick. From the grounds in front of the church, members of the Wetumpka Light Guard departed for service with the Confederate Army in 1861, and following the war, Captain John H. Bankhead, later to become one of Alabama's most noted senators, was married in the church.

The idea of constructing a new church was first discussed and approved by the Session and the Building Committee of the Church in 1856. It was soon determined to construct a new building for a cost of \$2,300 and that the "Gothic Style of architecture was thought favorably." On June 16, the minister, G. R. Foster, reported that his visit to Montgomery to consult with an architect had been unsuccessful, but at the same meeting a member presented plans drawn by Mr. Alley, thought to have been a local builder. The plans were adopted with some modifications and construction began in late August. On June 14, 1857, the church was formally dedicated.

Since that time the church has been used continuously by the congregation and serves as a visual focal point for the city of Wetumpka.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Cantelou, Eula. "First Presbyterian Church, Wetumpka, Alabama." Unpublished M.A. thesis, Auburn University, 1942.

Porter, Elizabeth. History of Wetumpka. Wetumpka Chamber of Commerce, 1957.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	16	574300	3600300	B			
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

W. Warner Floyd, Executive Director and Ellen Mertins

ORGANIZATION

Alabama Historical Commission

DATE

June 1, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

725 Monroe Street

TELEPHONE

(205) 332-6621

CITY OR TOWN

Montgomery

STATE

Alabama 36130

# 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Miss B. Edwards*

TITLE

SHPS

DATE

June 1, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

10/8/76

ATTEST:

DATE

10/2/76

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER