Mount Pleasant Cumberland Presbyterian Church ▶

Prosperity Presbyterian Church ▶

1834 to 1861: Establishing Faith and Community

Mount Pleasant Cumberland and Prosperity Presbyterian are founded and establish the legacy of Hickory Withe Presbyterian Church.

1830

1840

1850

1860

April 11, 1840
Church First Cited in Union Presbytery Minutes
First mention of Mount Pleasant Cumberland Church in Hickory Withe is documented in the Union Presbytery minutes of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. G.W. Fisher is listed as the representative of Mount Pleasant Cumberland Church.

1838
Land Deeded for Church Building
Richard Dowdy deeds three acres of land for a Cumberland Presbyterian Church near Hickory Withe. This is the site of the current Mount Pleasant Cemetery on Ivy Road about two miles east of Hickory Withe Presbyterian Church.

September 24, 1842
Macon Congregation Established
Memphis Presbytery resolves that the Mount Pleasant congregation be divided, and a new church formed to be known as the Macon congregation. Rueben Burrow, Jr. remains pastor at Hickory Withe.

October 4, 1841
Rueben Burrow, Jr. Installed as Pastor
Memphis Presbytery considers and approves Mount Pleasant congregation's petition for the ordination of Rueben Burrow, Jr. to be pastor of the church. Union Presbytery's name has been changed to Memphis Presbytery.

Circa 1841
Log Church Built
The first church building of Mount Pleasant Cumberland Church is built at the current location of Mount Pleasant Cemetery. The original structure was a log building, later replaced by a white framed building.

September 30, 1848
Memphis Presbytery Meets in Hickory Withe
Memphis Presbytery of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church convenes in Hickory Withe. Reverend Samuel Dennis is listed in the Presbytery minutes as pastor of Mount Pleasant Church.

November 10, 1855
Additional Land Deeded to Church
William P. Dowdy deeds a tract of land to James H. Ivy, deducting one acre for the benefit of Mount Pleasant Church at the site of Mount Pleasant Cemetery. This acre in addition to the three acres deeded in 1838 comprise the current acreage of Mount Pleasant Cemetery.

Marion Zellner Installed as Pastor
1859
Reverend Zellner is installed pastor of Mount Pleasant Cumberland Church, and the church name is changed to Mount Pleasant Society.

July 25, 1860
Land Deeded for New Church Building
Dr. James Karr deeds one acre of land for the "occupation and benefit of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church." This is the current location of Hickory Withe Presbyterian Church.

1860/1861
New Church Building Constructed
The current Hickory Withe Presbyterian Church building is constructed on the land deeded by Dr. James Karr.

March 2, 1861
Church Name Changed
After a series of name changes, the Session resolves to request Memphis Presbytery of the Cumberland Church to change the church's name to Hickory Withe Congregation as the location of the church is now at the center of the community.

Nov 1861
Former Church Building Sold
The former Mount Pleasant Church building at Mount Pleasant Cemetery and all its appurtenances are sold to Nollies Chapel located on Feathers Chapel Road between Hickory Withe and Oakland where it still stands.

December 28, 1834
Hickory Withe Presbyterian Church Founded
Prosperity Presbyterian Church is founded by Reverend Peter Randolph Bland and 29 believers, many originally from Prosperity, South Carolina. The original location was near far from Oakland.

Joy Rosser who served as Fayette County Historian until her death at the age of 96 on September 1, 2022, noted that the session minutes of Prosperity Church are a wonderful record. They are impressive because of their contents, and they are the earliest session minutes in Fayette County that have survived or surfaced. Mrs. Rosser published many volumes of Fayette County history as well as the transcription of the Prosperity Presbyterian Church and Mt. Pleasant Cumberland Church Session minutes.

Below is the first entry of the Prosperity Presbyterian Church Session Minutes. The entry documents the organizational meeting of the church on December 28, 1834, and is signed by Peter R. Bland, Moderator.

April 20, 1850
Hickory Withe Presbyterian Church Established
Prosperity Presbyterian Church is divided by Prosbytery of Memphis, PCUSA into two separate congregations, one going to Macon and one to Hickory Withe. Hickory Withe Presbyterian Church's first pastor is Reverend Robert McCoy.

November 8, 1850
Land Deeded for Hickory Withe Presbyterian Church
Joseph Patterson deeds land for a Presbyterian church in Hickory Withe on what is currently the southeast corner of the intersection of Highway 196 and Donelson Road. The congregation likely worshipped in the Hickory Withe Academy until the church construction was completed.

Circa 1851
Hickory Withe Presbyterian Church Built
Hickory Withe Presbyterian Church is built on the land deeded by Joseph Patterson. The church is affiliated with the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (PCUSA).

August 1861 New York Times article that highlights the Presbytery of Memphis seceding from PCUSA.

THE STATE AND THE UNION.

On the 20th instant in Philadelphia, a few weeks before the meeting of the Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church, it was proposed in the memorial of Dr. Hodge and others, that the Presbytery should make formal declaration of complicity with the Southern Confederacy, and secession from the Northern relations. The question goes to a vote, and the proposition is defeated by a majority of 2 votes. Shall a church of peace, of prayer, of charity, of love, of Christ, be thus dragged into the vortex of political strife? Shall the Church of God be thus dragged into politics? Shall the Church of God be thus dragged into treason and rebellion against the Government of God? Shall the Church of God be thus dragged into the vortex of political strife? Shall the Church of God be thus dragged into the vortex of political strife? Shall the Church of God be thus dragged into the vortex of political strife