

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NR 10/1/08

# 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 Greenwood Presbyterian Church  
other names/site number Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church / Site # SB0949

### 2. Location

street & number 103 West Denver Street  not for publication  
city or town Greenwood  vicinity  
state Arkansas code AR county Sebastian code 131 zip code 72936

### 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.)

CACHE MATTHEWS 7/28/08  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Arkansas Historic Preservation Program  
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 of the Keeper

Date of Action

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Greenwood Presbyterian Church

Name of Property

Sebastian County, Arkansas

County and State

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		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

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)

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS/Late Gothic Revival

Materials  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls STUCCO

roof ASPHALT SHINGLE

other

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.)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- Criteria A through G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Levels of Significance (local, state, national)

LOCAL

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1922-1958

Significant Dates

1922-1958

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

N/A

Architect/Builder

Builder: Johnson, Merle

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):

- Criteria for previous documentation on file (NPS).

Primary location of additional data:

- Criteria for primary location of additional data.

Name of repository:

Greenwood Presbyterian Church  
Name of Property

Sebastian County, Arkansas  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Approx. .75 acres

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>15</u>	<u>385479</u>	<u>3897693</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 Senator Ed Wilkinson; Edited by Van Zbinden; National Register Historian  
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date April 3, 2008  
street & number 323 Center Street, 1600 Tower Building telephone (501) 324-9880  
city or town Little Rock state AR zip code 72201

**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 Presbytery of Arkansas  
street & number 9221 N. Rodney Parham Rd. telephone 501-663-2424  
city or town Little Rock state Arkansas zip code 72227

**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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### Summary

Greenwood Presbyterian Church is a late example of the Gothic Revival form of architecture as applied to church construction in Arkansas. The Gothic Revival form present in the Greenwood church has more of a vernacular, rural feel when compared to Gothic revival forms found in larger cities. Theology, church doctrine, local church history, and social events all combined to form a church that suited the needs of the community. The choice of Gothic Revival set the church apart in this community and spoke of the reverence of its congregants. The church remains an active church in the community and the choice of Gothic Revival continues to echo the beliefs of the congregation in a public form.

### Elaboration

The Reverend George A. Poole wrote in 1842 that ecclesiastical architecture was rational, that it had a soul which it attempted to impart to those who viewed it, and that "its character was theological, doctrinal, catholic, exclusive; aiming at not only accommodating a congregation, but at elevating their devotions and informing their minds" (Poole, 19). Thus the architecture of the church was more than simply a building; the architecture meant something. The Gothic form of architecture in England represented a historical tradition, and more importantly, it represented the belief of Christians in the divine.

For the Anglican Church and the medieval church before it, the form of the building was symbolic of the belief in God. Christ's crucifixion on the cross was echoed in the cross shape of the church. When the church was not, or could not be, built in the form of a cross the three parts of the cross—the head, the heart, and the body—were represented in three parts of the church building. The Chancel, the Nave, and Holy of Holies reflect the three parts of the cross and in-turn reflect the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity; the Nave being the Father, Chancel the Son, and Holy of Holies the Holy Spirit. It is possible, in similar manner, to attribute a great many more theological characteristics to church architecture. Nevertheless, or perhaps for that reason, the architecture of the Gothic church is much more than simply a highly decorated building.

Along with their religion, the early colonists to America brought their ecclesiastical architecture to the United States. One of the foremost architects in the United States, Richard Upjohn, made his name by designing churches in the Gothic style. Upjohn, like so many early and respected architects, learned architecture in a carpentry apprenticeship. He came to the United States in 1829 and became well known and respected for his designs in the Gothic Revival style. His first widely known work is Trinity Cathedral in New York City.

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Upjohn was one of the better known architects of the Gothic Revival style; the architecture was gradually replacing the earlier Greek Revival. Begun in the Second Great Awakening, American thought toward the Greek Revival of the early nineteenth century was shifting. By the late 1830s, previously popular architectural styles such as the Greek Revival became seen as pagan or humanistic; not reverent or pious enough. This change in thought moved American architecture toward a more picturesque, if not more pious, Gothic form. By the 1850s, the Gothic Revival was a widely used form in ecclesiastical architecture. From the highest and most correct forms to the simpler, more rural forms, the Gothic Revival church exemplified a new intensity in American religious attitudes.

Early Victorian period, Renaissance Revival and Romanesque styles joined the Gothic Revival style in American cities, each exemplifying a particular theological concern. Victorian styles such as the Victorian Gothic and the Richardsonian Romanesque arose in the late nineteenth century as response to new societal pressures. As the twentieth century began, the United States was dealing with a host of issues both within and without the church. From the start of the century through the 1920s the United States dealt with foreign wars, its role in world politics, the growth of industrialization in the office and the home, immigration, women's suffrage, and labor issues, to name a few societal pressures. American society was changing and so too the thought toward the church. In many places the perceived ills of society, or the dramatic change in society, led people to the church as a source of stability and source of answer. One source notes, "between 1900 and 1927, the annual sum expended for church construction rose from \$55 million to \$179 million" (Rifkind, 157).

It was in this environment that the people of Greenwood built their new Greenwood Presbyterian Church. The original Greenwood Presbyterian Church began in 1853. This building, constructed in 1922, replaced an earlier, simpler building. The church sits on the corner of Denver and Governor "Bass" Little Streets. It is a one story, square building with a corner front portico facing the northwest. The portico has a distinctive stucco column and the ceiling is the original decorative, pressed tin. The front entry features paired, double leaf, raised-panel oak doors with original hinges and trim. Above both sets of doors are original stained-glass gothic transom windows.

The frame building sits on a brick foundation. Each of the four elevations features a steeply pitched centered gable. These gables all retain their original wood shakes. The exterior is clad on all elevations in stucco of modern American finish. On all elevations the stained-glass windows are shaped in the pointed arch, or lancet, so common to the Gothic Revival style. Also in the Gothic Revival style the rafters and purlins are enclosed but the eaves and rakes are open. Like the smaller, rural, gothic churches of Upjohn design that preceded Greenwood, the builders made some concessions for construction budget and local needs.

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Built in 1922, the choice of Gothic Revival is admittedly late for that style of architecture in America. However, in a rural setting, built by local craftsman it would not be uncommon for an architectural style to linger. Indeed the choice of Gothic Revival made this building stand out in a community of folk structures. It is unknown if Merle Johnson, the carpenter who built the church, used a design suggested by the Presbyterian Church or an architectural plan book specifically devoted to churches. In 1918 and again in 1920 the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. developed and offered a plan book for building committees who requested them.

The interior of the sanctuary appears today almost exactly as it did when it was built in 1922. Curved oak pews and tongue and groove oak wainscoting are striking with the decorative pressed tin ceiling, all of which showcase the stained-glass windows. The only significant interior changes were changing the original light fixtures with Williamsburg-style chandeliers and a central heating and air conditioning system.

### North Façade/Front

The north elevation, along Denver Street, is considered the front of the church. This elevation is comprised of two bays. The eastern bay is the entry portico with a north facing double door. The raised panel doors have minimal door surrounds are topped with a pointed arch transom. Stained-glass in the transom accentuates the medieval pointed arch of the window. A stucco column on top of a brick pier supports the portico. The frieze above the portico is accentuated with false half timbering.

The western bay of the façade sits on a solid brick foundation and is clad in stucco. The elevation is fenestrated by one prominent stained-glass window. The window has a pointed arch and, like the other windows on the structure, exaggeration of the lancet is achieved by the design of the window glass. To the east is a smaller stained-glass window also with pointed arch. A steeply pitched centered gable rises above the roof and the wall covering in the pediment is the original wood shake.

### East Façade/ Side

The west elevation, facing Governor "Bass" Little Street, formerly Bass Street, is fenestrated by four original stained-glass windows with the Gothic Revival style lancet. A pointed arch, ribbon window serves as the focal point on this elevation centered under the steeply pitched gable. Like the gables on the north, south, and west elevations this gable is clad in the original wood shakes.

The northern bay of this elevation features paired, raised panel entry doors facing east. Like the northern facing entry doors, these eastern doors have minimal door surrounds and are topped with lancet transoms framing stained-glass windows.

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### North Façade/ Back

The rear, or south elevation, is stucco as are all elevations, and has two stained-glass windows in pointed arch openings. A smaller, more steeply pointed arch rises above the elevation. Like the gables on the north, east, and west elevations this gable is clad in the original wood shakes.

### West Façade/ Side

Predominately one bay, the west elevation has three stained-glass windows of similar style and size to those on the east elevation. This elevation faces the manse which was built at the same time as the church structure. A pointed arch, ribbon window serves as the focal point on this elevation centered under the steeply pitched gable. Like the gables on the north, south, and west elevations this gable is clad in the original wood shakes.

On this elevation is where the only change to the original structure has been made. In 1977, an enclosed breezeway was installed to connect the circa 1945 fellowship hall with the sanctuary. The enclosed breezeway is made of the same construction material and design as the fellowship hall.

### Integrity

This church building has been meticulously maintained through the years with tender care. Greenwood's first Presbyterian church was founded in 1853 as a Cumberland Presbyterian Church. They met in the courthouse, the Masonic Hall, and the Methodist Church until the completion of their first church building in 1904. The governance of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and the Presbyterian Church U. S. A., more than the theology itself, helped to define the architecture of the Greenwood church. The Presbyterian emphasis on leadership by elders and the Calvinistic dogma of the ability of the people to play an active role in the church defined a rural Gothic Revival structure that was dramatically different than the early Victorian, Gothic Revival. Instead of the grandiose, long, three unit structure of the Gothic and true Gothic Revival forms, rural churches combined a protestant, meeting hall tradition with exterior Gothic Revival forms on massed churches often consisting of only the sanctuary itself.

The Gothic Revival form of architecture for churches was certainly popular in Arkansas. Churches across the state exhibit every manifestation of the style; from St. Andrews Episcopal's classic, rural Gothic Revival forms (built 1888, NR 11/26/1986) to St. Andrew's Catholic Church's high style Gothic Revival (built 1881, NR 11/13/1986). One might say that the low elevations and the small scale of the Greenwood Presbyterian show an influence of the English Parish form.

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Others might say that the steeply pitched gables, the lancet windows, and the symmetry of the structure are rural examples of the more elaborate elements of the Gothic Revival style. The vernacular nature of the construction and the needs of the community combined with theological belief and church government to define a structure unique to Greenwood. Greenwood Presbyterian Church is the oldest church building in Greenwood and is the only example of a Gothic Revival church in the city.

There have been few modifications to the church since its construction. A modern heating and air conditioning system was added though its impact on the architecture of the structure is minimal. The greatest change was the addition of a hyphen connecting the main church to the fellowship hall in 1977. This did alter the appearance and feeling of the structure. Nevertheless the structure remains a good example of the Gothic Revival form of architecture in the city and the structure is well maintained by the still thriving congregation.

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### Summary

The Greenwood Presbyterian Church is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **local significance** under **Criterion A** and **Criteria Consideration A** for its association with the development of religious activities in Greenwood, Arkansas. The Greenwood Presbyterian Church is also being nominated to the National Register under **Criterion C** as a good example of a Gothic Revival-influenced church building in Greenwood.

### Elaboration

The city of Greenwood was founded at ten o'clock in the morning on March 10, 1851, when Judge Alfred Burton Greenwood banged his gavel down on Mrs. Reuben Coker's split-log cook table and proclaimed this community as county seat of Sebastian County. Sebastian County was itself new, being formed in January 1851. Two years later, the Presbyterian Church of Greenwood was organized nearby the very site of that proclamation. Originally organized as a Cumberland Presbyterian Church, it has been generally known as Greenwood Presbyterian Church. In 1965, the church was named Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church.

The 1850 census for the city of Greenwood showed a population of 30. Given the size of the community, the early history of the city of Greenwood and the Presbyterian Church are inextricably linked. The church served the spiritual needs of the young city's founders, which included the town's merchants, business leaders, farmers, lawyers and educators. Men like John Morrow, Jr., and his son Newton Morrow. The Morrrows were highly regarded, successful farmers in the community. Both were elders in the church and served on the original session in 1853. Nathaniel Osborn was ordained an elder in the Greenwood Presbyterian Church in 1868. Affectionately known in and around Greenwood as "Uncle Nat," he was a farmer and merchant. Henry T. Caldwell, the postmaster at Jenny Lind, was also made an elder in the church in 1868. Greenwood merchant Joseph Hodgens was ordained an elder in the church in 1869.<sup>1</sup>

Greenwood was located on the banks of Vache Gasse stream. Though there had been some settlement in the area as early as 1843, John Carnall and James J. Baker were reportedly the builders of the first building in Greenwood. A modest one room log structure, this first building served as Carnall's office for his role as County Clerk. Removal of the county seat in 1852 to Fort Smith slowed the early growth of Greenwood.<sup>2</sup> Primarily a merchandising center for a larger farming community after removal of the county seat, the

<sup>1</sup> In 1877, Joseph Hodgens built a one-story home on Main Street. This home was given as a gift to his daughter in honor of her wedding. The home was renovated in 1907 to include a mix of Egyptian Revival, Dutch Colonial Revival, and Craftsman forms. The home was placed on the Arkansas Register of Historic Places December 3, 2003.

<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that the removal of the county seat to Fort Smith was an acrimonious affair including the removal of county records by wagon in the middle of the night. In 1854, the county seat was returned to Greenwood. A bitter argument lingered for the next twenty years. At the Constitutional Convention in 1874 the county was constitutionally required to keep two county seats.

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population remained small and widely dispersed until after the Civil War. It would not be until November 13, 1884, that the city of Greenwood formally incorporated.

Five families made up the founding membership of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Greenwood. These families were the families of Mr. & Mrs. James Carden, Mr. & Mrs. John Morrow, Jr., Mr. & Mrs. David Carden, Mr. & Mrs. Samuel Payne, and Mr. & Mrs. Newton Morrow. Like the other church congregations in Greenwood at this time they met in the homes of congregants or in the courthouse. With the removal of the county court to Fort Smith in 1852 the courthouse building built 1852 was often unused.

This new church was part of the King Synod of the Arkansas Presbytery. Like the Presbyterian Church from which it was formed, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church was governed on the congregational level by sessions formed of elders. These elders reported to the synods who sent representatives to the presbytery. The presbytery, and accordingly the whole church, is led by the General Assembly who appoint boards and commissions to study and advise on church decisions. The most significant difference between the Presbyterian Church and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church was the Cumberland Presbyterian Church's acceptance of ministers not trained to the level required by the Presbyterian Church.

Some trace the argument back to the First Great Awakening but the formal separation of the Cumberland Presbyterian and the Presbyterian Church came in 1829. During the second Great Awakening there was shortage of trained Presbyterian ministers west of the Appalachian Mountains. In response the Cumberland Presbytery, formed in 1810 in Tennessee, began to ordain ministers without the training required by the Kentucky Synod. Western movement and increased settlement in central and western Tennessee allowed the Cumberland Presbytery to grow to the point that in 1813 they formed the Cumberland Synod. The continued ordination of untrained ministers caused a rift in the church and the Cumberland Synod was removed from the Presbyterian Church in 1829. The leaders of the Cumberland Presbytery did not see their removal as permanent, but in the interim formed the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

The growth of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in western Arkansas was lively. Presbyterians and Cumberland Presbyterians migrating from Tennessee and other eastern states sought to establish new congregations in their new towns. In 1868 there were ten congregations in the King Presbytery; by 1871, that number had grown to 15 congregations and 643 communicants. The governance structure of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church was particularly well suited to small farming communities and small churches. With the ability to be led by a lay minister, these churches of five and ten families were able to afford a place of worship and to establish their own schedules independent of any circuit as with other denominations.

Greenwood Presbyterian Church, like its city, grew little prior to the Civil War. It was not until well after the war that the first new members are registered. In fact between 1869 and 1879 only four new families join the church. This is indicative of the destruction caused by the Civil War and the amount of time it took for the agricultural community to recover. Like many other towns along the western border, raiding parties, Union

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troops, confederate scouts, and sympathizers all inflicted some type of damage on the little city. At the end of the war only 18 homes and no commercial structures remained standing.

One of the new congregants to the church was herald of a new era for the town of Greenwood and the church. George Rowland joined the church in 1877 and was elected as one of the elders. Rowland moved to the community in hopes of establishing a coal mine. His first mine was in the White Oak Mountains southeast of Greenwood. Extensive coal deposits in Sebastian County were well known by the 1870s. The coal fields of Arkansas are approximately thirty-three miles wide and sixty miles long in an area that roughly follows the Arkansas River. The first recorded production of coal in Arkansas was in 1848. Production reached its peak in 1909 when 2,400,000 short tons were shipped from western Arkansas mines. Mining attracted an influx of native and foreign immigrants to the area.

However, the mines and miners awaited inexpensive transportation to make mining profitable. The St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern Railroad opened a branch line to Greenwood, a distance of eighteen miles, in 1884. By 1911, the Midland Valley Railroad was operating its Greenwood Branch from Excelsior through Greenwood to mines near Fidelity. The construction of these railroads contributed dramatically to the growth of the coal mining industry in the area and to the growth of Greenwood.

Coal mining quickly became the most important industry in Greenwood and Sebastian County. Several of the church's members and elders were coal miners. This included Rueben Strozier, who joined in 1910; Steve Schmatic, who joined the church July 29, 1923; Tony Angeletti, who joined the church February 17, 1929; and Earl Frey, who joined the church in January 28, 1945. Earl Frey ran a dragline for the coal mines in the Greenwood District.

Economic prosperity and industrial prosperity in the community reflected in the growth of the church. Between 1879 and 1904 there were few, if any, members added to the church. Beginning in 1904 the church grew dramatically, adding five families in that year. The growth was significant enough that the elders of the church felt it was necessary to build a new frame building on the corner of what is now Center and Governor "Bass" Little Streets. Located on property purchased in 1895 by John T. Bell, R. S. McFarlane and G. W. Gaines as Trustees for the church, this was the first permanent home for the Greenwood Presbyterian Church.

With this new facility the church could offer dedicated service to the community. The turn of the century was a period of great change in the United States and in Arkansas as well. Western Arkansas families once dependent on farming, capitalized on new shipping opportunities for berries, fruits, and vegetable crops and found new prosperity in wider markets. Women on the farm were able to adapt to a lifestyle that more closely matched their urban counterparts. Many women moved off the farm and became housekeepers. Children too were freed from much of the labor on the farm giving them more free time.

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Women's groups, often formed in the church, began a more proactive role fighting for Progressive reforms. From simple acts like establishing public restrooms for women at rural courthouses to more forward reforms like, prohibition, or childrens' labor laws, Arkansas's women in urban and rural churches often took the lead. These Progressive reform acts culminated in the women of Arkansas gaining franchise to vote in 1918. Certainly no community was immune to the changes at hand and the church played a role in those changes either actively through the support of women's groups and Sunday Schools; or passively with opening their doors to dialogue about the societal changes. Many people who, faced with these great societal changes, felt upset sought comfort and stability in the church.

Indeed, the coal fields, first organized in the 1890s by the Knights of Labor, were scene to regular, often violent strikes. As early as 1892 the mine operators and owners worked to free themselves from the Unions. The most violent and far reaching strike occurred in 1914. The owners of the largest mine in Sebastian County, the Prairie Creek Coal Mining Company, Mine No. 4, decided to close their mine to the union and make it an open mine. Inevitably, the United Mine Workers considered this an affront to their programs and the action resulted in violence at, and the ultimate destruction of, the mine. After the death of two guards and the destruction of several mines and tipples, the United States military was called to bring an end to the violence. Though the strike was unsuccessful in many ways, the union members prevented the opening of non-union mines. Arkansas miners also participated in the nationwide strikes of 1919 in which they gained a twenty-seven percent increase in wages. Suggestive of a populace searching for answers and stability, the Greenwood Presbyterian Church saw some of its greatest growth during these years.

In 1916, the twenty-two members of the Liberty Cumberland Presbyterian Church joined the Greenwood Presbyterian Church. This was in addition to the inclusion of seven more congregants. Between 1917 and 1920 the church added thirty-eight members. As in 1904, this growth led to the need for increased space and the elders of the church formed a building erection committee to study the possibilities. As early as 1919 the church purchased a lot, large enough for a church and manse, from J. P. McCord. In addition to exploring the need for a large building, the church separated from the Cumberland Presbyterian Church of America, incorporating under the Presbyterian Church U. S. A.

Merle Johnson was selected in May of 1921 to begin construction of the new Greenwood Presbyterian Church, United States of America. In the May 18, 1921, church minutes, it was decided that Mr. Johnson was "contracted to take charge of the work." Johnson was a local carpenter who joined the church one month later on June 12, 1921. Merle Johnson, and his son Charles, were active in the building trades in and around Greenwood throughout the twentieth century. The Johnson family farm was located in the Gentry Cut area (now north Main Street).

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Merle Johnson is known to have constructed many of the buildings and homes in Greenwood. His name appears prominently among the craftsmen who constructed masonry and frame structures around the Greenwood Square following the devastating fire of 1922 that destroyed most of the business section along the north face of the town square.

Construction of the church began in 1921 and was complete in 1922. The governance of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and the Presbyterian Church U. S. A., more than the theology itself, helped to define the architecture of the Greenwood church. The Presbyterian emphasis on leadership by elders and the Calvinistic dogma of the ability of the people to play an active role in the church defined a rural Gothic Revival structure that was dramatically different than the early Victorian, Gothic Revival. Instead of the grandiose, long, three unit structure of the Gothic and true Gothic Revival forms, rural churches combined a protestant, meeting hall tradition with exterior Gothic Revival forms on massed churches often consisting of only the sanctuary itself.

The Gothic Revival form of architecture for churches was certainly popular in Arkansas. Churches across the state exhibit every manifestation of the style; from St. Andrews Episcopal's classic, rural Gothic Revival forms (built 1888, NR 11/26/1986) to St. Andrew's Catholic Church's high style Gothic Revival (built 1881, NR 11/13/1986). One might say that the low elevations and the small scale of the Greenwood Presbyterian show an influence of the English Parish form. Others might say that the steeply pitched gables, the lancet windows, and the symmetry of the structure are rural examples of the more elaborate elements of the Gothic Revival style. The vernacular nature of the construction and the needs of the community combined with theological belief and church government to define a structure unique to Greenwood.

In 1923, a church manse was built to the east of the church. This structure was built as a plain traditional front gable, with Craftsman influences. As the church continued to grow and to serve the community, a fellowship hall was added in 1945.

Coal mining slowed in Sebastian County and as many of the mines closed the community of Greenwood adapted to these new changes. Farming continued to be an important part of the local economy and the rise of natural gas industry in western Sebastian County brought some diversification. Construction of Camp Chaffee in 1941 and preparation of the site for an Army training camp brought new jobs, new citizens, and new life to an economy struggling through the depression.

Many of these changes can be seen in the church membership. As the coal mining economy slowed, no new members joined. Between 1923 and 1929 there were no members added to the church rolls. In 1929, only five members joined. Through the 1930s the local economy struggled with the Great Depression. People continued to move away from the area seeking new opportunities.

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Only two families joined the church in decade between 1929 and 1939, those in 1937 and 1938. Increased activity related to the construction and operation of Camp Chaffee brought new members in 1942 and dramatically increased, and consistent, membership through the 1940s.

These membership numbers reveal a church intimately connected to its community and in-turn a community intimately connected to its church. The church was the religious home for Greenwood's bankers, merchants, school teachers, coal mine employees, coal mine operators, farmers, and housemakers. It was truly a church reflective of the community.<sup>3</sup> A number of Greenwood's residents still seek spiritual guidance within the doors of the church and the church still provides a number of programs for the community. In 1965 the name of the church was changed to Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church, reflecting the church's belief that it is their desire to meet the spiritual needs of the community. As in the past, Greenwood's members reflect the community. The church is the home of bankers, state politicians, local politicians, farmers, businessmen, and others. Many of these members are second, third, fourth, and even fifth generation church members and Greenwood residents.

### Statement of Significance

The Greenwood Presbyterian Church is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **local significance** under **Criterion A** and **Criteria Consideration A** for its association with the development of religious activities in Greenwood, Arkansas. The Greenwood Presbyterian Church is also being nominated to the National Register under **Criterion C** as a good example of a Gothic Revival-influenced church building in Greenwood.

<sup>3</sup> A select list of biographical essays for past and current members of the Greenwood Presbyterian Church is available in the files of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program as well as with the author. Additionally, a nearly complete listing of members and the date they joined is available as well.

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### Bibliography

Alvarez, H. G., Dr. *Honorably They Served*. Published by South Sebastian County Historical Society, Inc.

Poole, George A, Reverend. *The Appropriate Character of Church Architecture*. Published by Rivington, Burns, and Holston and Stoneman.

Rifkind, Carole. *A Field Guide to American Architecture*. Published by Plume Books.

Wilkinson, Means. *Greenwood, Sebastian County, Arkansas: 110 Years A County Seat 1851-1961*.  
Published by *Greenwood Democrat*.

Records and Minutes of the Presbyterian Church, Greenwood, Arkansas, 1916 – 1921

Reverend Orin Frank, Minister, Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church, 1965 – 2002, H.R.

Mrs. Delma J. Redwine Woosley, Greenwood, Arkansas. Great-great granddaughter of John Morrow, an original elder and founder of the church

The Honorable Kenneth L. Edwards, Jr., Mayor of Greenwood

Ms. Cinda Bell, Greenwood, Arkansas

Mrs. Dorothy Been, Fort Smith, Arkansas

Mrs. Drucilla Hughart, Fort Smith, Arkansas

Mr. Roger McConnell, Greenwood, Arkansas

Mrs. Freda LaFleur, Greenwood, Arkansas. Great-niece of E.S. Murphy

Mr. Earle Overton, Mansfield, Arkansas

Mr. Rueben Strozier, Greenwood, Arkansas

Greenwood Presbyterian Church  
Name of Property

Sebastian County, Arkansas  
County and State

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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### Verbal Boundary Description

Block One, Parts of Lots Five and Six, Shelby Addition to the City of Greenwood

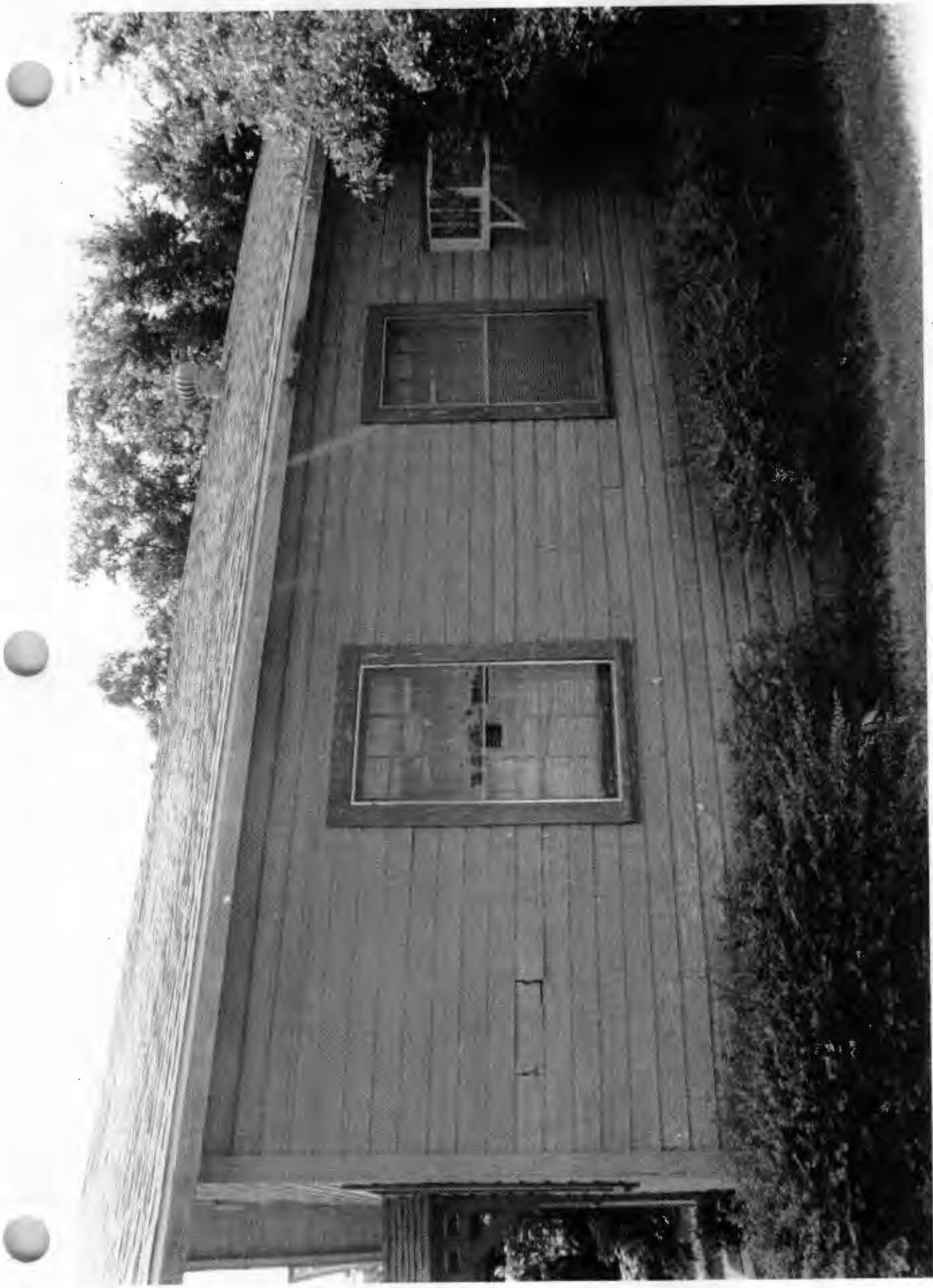
### Boundary Justification

This description includes all the land historically associated with the Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church.





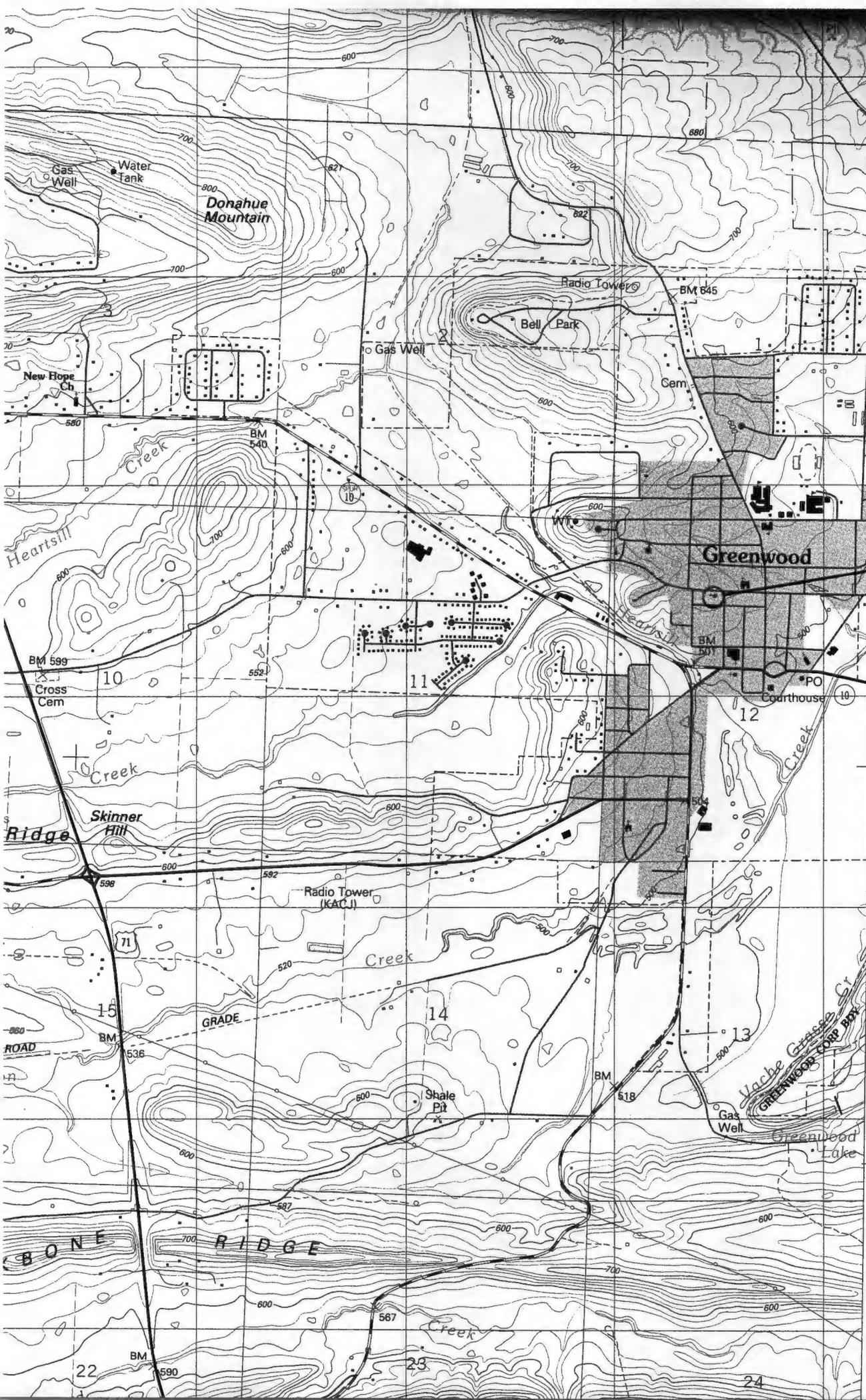












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