

## MOUNT COMFORT CHURCH

Extracted from Sesquicentennial Bulletin, May 27, 1984  
by Mary Ellen Gifford, with additional notes from Mrs. Ruth Miller

The Mount Comfort Church, which was organized in 1834, is located on Farm Road 66 and is near Fellows Lake in Franklin Township, Greene County, Missouri. It was organized during a brush arbor meeting as the Kickapoo Cumberland Presbyterian Church with twenty-one charter members as follows:

William ALLEN and wife	Robert and Mary A. DYSART
L. DEROITT and wife	Hosey WILLIAMS and wife
Robert ROSE and wife	C. C. WILLIAMS
T. J. WHITLOCK and wife	Mrs. MONTGOMERY and daughter
William DYSART and wife	Sterling ALLEN
David HEADLEE and wife and son, S. G.	

Surnames of some other families who were members prior to 1900 are: ABERNATHY, ALEXANDER, APPLEBY, BERRY, CLARK, DELZELL, EDMONSON, GATELY, ISRAEL, JENKINS, JOHNSON, KESTERSON, KNIGHTEN, McKENZIE, MULLINGS, PECK, RAMSEY, SUMEC, TAYLOR, WILLIAMSON.

The church became a member of the Cumberland Presbytery--the first presbytery organized west of the Mississippi River in 1820 in Pike County, Missouri. The presbytery included all the territory of Missouri, Western Illinois and Arkansas. It numbered only four ministers, two of whom resided in Missouri.

The church's first protracted meeting was held in August 1834 at the home of T. J. WHITLOCK and then monthly meetings were held there until a log church was built in 1837. This building stood on five acres of land donated by Mr. Whitlock and served the congregation until 1858. At the dedication of a new structure in 1860 its name was changed to First Cumberland Presbyterian Church of Mount Comfort located at Mount Comfort, Missouri, in Greene County. The construction of this building, at a cost of \$800., was considered superior to others with the exception of a few in the town of Springfield, Missouri. The frame building was constructed with wooden pegs. One peg is still in existence.

During the Battle of Wilson's Creek, August 10, 1861, a revival was in progress at the church and the service was interrupted by the sounds of cannon fire. Members present that day were J. J. GATELEY, Mrs. Frank CLARKSON, Mrs. Thomas JOHNSON, Mrs. Mary Jane KNIGHTEN and Mrs. Annie BERRY who at that time was the oldest living member of the congregation.

In 1907, 2.5 acres of land were purchased by the church for the sum of \$110., and in 1908 they purchased 3.9 acres of land for \$180. In 1909 J. M. HARKNESS and E. L. SUMEC each deeded a 30-foot strip of land to Greene County for road purposes, thus insuring a public roadway to the church and cemetery. In 1918, 11.1 acres, except a parcel 12 by 24 feet, are recorded as belonging to First Cumberland Presbyterian Church of Mount Comfort.

On receipt of a \$500. bequest given by Mrs. Addie HUFF and designated for a bell and bell tower, it was decided that the frame building would not support the weight. In 1923 after much prayer and consultation the congregation and officials determined that it was time for a new structure. A memorial service was held on Sunday, May 23, 1923, in honor of their loved and honored house. Rev. A. S. HUMPHREY, pastor of the Bray Memorial C.P. Church in Springfield, gave the memorial sermon. The next day members and friends met and began razing the building.

Rev. HUMPHREY soon became pastor but we have no record where the congregation met. During the construction of the new church he worked with the men on this project. The congregation felt that his "on the job" influence was deeply inspirational. Money, labor and materials for the new building were donated. Interior paneling, doors and embossed metal ceiling were taken from the old Grace Methodist Church in