

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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 Baptist Chapel Church and Cemetery

AND/OR COMMON

**2** LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER S. side SR 1527, 0.6 mi. W. of jct. with SR 1528

CITY, TOWN

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF Helton

5th

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

North Carolina

37

Ashe

009

**3** CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4** OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Chairman, Board of Deacons (R. Danny Miller, Minister)

STREET & NUMBER Route 1, Box 331A

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Lansing

— VICINITY OF —

North Carolina

**5** LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Ashe County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Jefferson

North Carolina

**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 type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" 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		

---

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

Baptist Chapel Church, set on a hill overlooking Helton Creek and the creek bottom farms of its parishioners, is one of the oldest church buildings in Ashe County and uniquely remains unchanged, as built in 1872. It is a simple one-story frame structure, covered by weatherboards and set on a common bond brick foundation. A center flue stack pierces the ridge line of the gable roof now covered with sheet tin. The interior is a one room plan.

The sills of the church are faced with a wide plank which is carried around the building and provides a base for pilasters, formed of single planks, set at the corners of the building which frame each elevation. Similarly, pilaster boards frame the two entrance bays on the front (north) gable. Their simply molded, slightly projecting capitals support a frieze board which stretches across the entrance front and is carried under the eaves down the east and west sides of the church. The wide eaves of the roof are flush sheathed. On the front elevation a board outlines the gable suggesting a pediment.

The two entrances have four panel doors and each has a single-pane transom decorated with a jigsaw-cut frame formed of half circles and curved devices. Each transom is surmounted by a bracketed cornice to which is attached a pattern board sawn with alternating half-circles and triangles.

The east and west sides of the church are three bays deep, each bay being marked by windows of four-over-four sash. Most of the glazing is original. The surrounds are made of plain unmolded boards which rise from the window sill and curve at the top to follow the arc of the segmental arch-headed windows. A few surrounds retain cornerblocks, the bottom of which are sawn in a scalloped-arch pattern. The back (south) elevation lacks fenestration.

The interior of the church follows a two-aisle plan, suggested by the double entrances, and is very simply finished with flush horizontal sheathing. The ceiling is also sheathed. The most unusual feature of the church is the interior window surrounds. Set on plain unmolded sills, the window surrounds have a broad, sawn, console-like base. The top of the window surrounds angles out and peaks at the corner, suggesting a "horned" device. The door surrounds are also made of plain, unmolded boards which rise to a wide lintel sawn in a curved and circular outline. The pews are constructed of wide boards with single board width seats and backs. The ends of the pews are attached directly to the wall. The center row of pews is free-standing and is connected by a narrow board laid perpendicularly across the tops of the backs at the center. At the front on each side two pews are set perpendicular to the outside rows and are probably intended for the choir. The pews are painted pale blue, as are the walls up to approximately thirty-four inches to give the illusion of a wainscot.

The pews face a lecturn which is centered on a raised platform with clipped corners. There is no altar. Centered on the wall behind the lecturn thin plain boards are applied in a temple form outline suggesting a pedimented apse.

The cemetery enclosed in a wire fence adjacent to the church is well maintained and has a grass cover.

# 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 checked="" 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 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      1872

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Baptist and Methodist congregations were the earliest organized in the New River Valley principally because they were the only denominations to send preachers as circuit riders to the settlers. The Baptist Chapel Church is the oldest extant one in the New River Valley, but more remarkable is the fact that it has continued in use, unaltered, as built in 1872. The adjacent cemetery contains the graves of nearby river-bottom settlers and the builders of many houses in the area.

The congregation of Baptist Chapel Church was formally organized on February 20, 1842 and joined the Brier Creek Association later that year.<sup>1</sup> Whether or not this was the first missionary Baptist church west of the Blue Ridge, as local tradition maintains, is still an open question. According to Mr. Theodore Blevins, whose family has lived near the church since its organization, a log structure served the congregation until Gus Mock (a local carpenter) built the present church in 1872. The log structure may have been built on Blevin land but no deed records involving the church have been found. Apparently Baptist Chapel had no regular minister in the early years. A lay preacher, Richard Jacks, conducted services at both Baptist Chapel and Liberty Chapel.<sup>2</sup>

In 1848 Jacks, on behalf of six churches located west of the Blue Ridge, presented a petition to the Brier Creek Association requesting the formation of a separate association. A committee studied the petition and on October 30, 1848 the Jefferson Association was created. Member churches were Baptist Chapel, Baptist Union, Liberty Chapel, Sugar Grove Chapel, White Top, and Young's Chapel.<sup>3</sup> The Jefferson Association, like Brier Creek, was oriented toward a missionary program, which caused bitter feelings with stand pat Primitive Baptist churches in the area.<sup>4</sup>

The controversy over missions, combined with opposing views of slavery expansion and conflicting loyalties in the Civil War, ripped apart the Jefferson Association. By 1870 it had dissolved.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, the Mountain Union Baptist Association had been organized in August, 1867 and Baptist Chapel entered this association during the post-war period.<sup>6</sup>

Initially Mountain Union Baptist Association was hostile to missions, but later moderated its stance to noncommitment. No money for such purposes was allocated to member churches.<sup>7</sup> Even so Baptist Chapel apparently tried to continue its missionary program for some years, though it seems to have existed more in theory than in practice. By the mid 1920s Baptist Chapel as a missionary church was extinct according to church records.<sup>8</sup> Still a member of the Mountain Union Baptist Association, Baptist Chapel has a full time minister and conducts regular services in the small church.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE one

FOOTNOTES:

<sup>1</sup> Researcher's interview with John Woodard, curator of the Baptist Historical Collection, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, June 21, 1976, hereinafter cited as Woodard interview.

<sup>2</sup> G. W. Paschal, History of the North Carolina Baptists, vol II (Raleigh: The General Board North Carolina Baptist State Convention, 1955), 290-291; and M. A. Huggins, A History of North Carolina Baptists 1727-1932 (Raleigh: The General Board Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, 1967), 157.

<sup>3</sup> Paschal, History of the North Carolina Baptists, 291.

<sup>4</sup> Paschal, History of the North Carolina Baptists, 288-297; and Woodard interview.

<sup>5</sup> Huggins, A History of North Carolina Baptists 1727-1932, 158; and Paschal, History of the North Carolina Baptists, 291-292.

<sup>6</sup> Arthur L. Fletcher, Ashe County; A History (Jefferson: Ashe County Research Association /c. 1963/), 158-159, hereinafter cited as Fletcher, Ashe County.

<sup>7</sup> Fletcher, Ashe County, 159; Huggins, A History of North Carolina Baptists 1727-1932, 158; and Woodard interview.

<sup>8</sup> Woodard interview.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE one

Huggins, M. A. A History of North Carolina Baptists 1727-1932. Raleigh: The General Board Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, 1967.

Paschal, George Washington. History of the North Carolina Baptists. Vol. II. Raleigh: The General Board North Carolina Baptist State Convention, 1955.

Williams, Rev. Charles B. A History of the Baptists in North Carolina. Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton, 1901.

