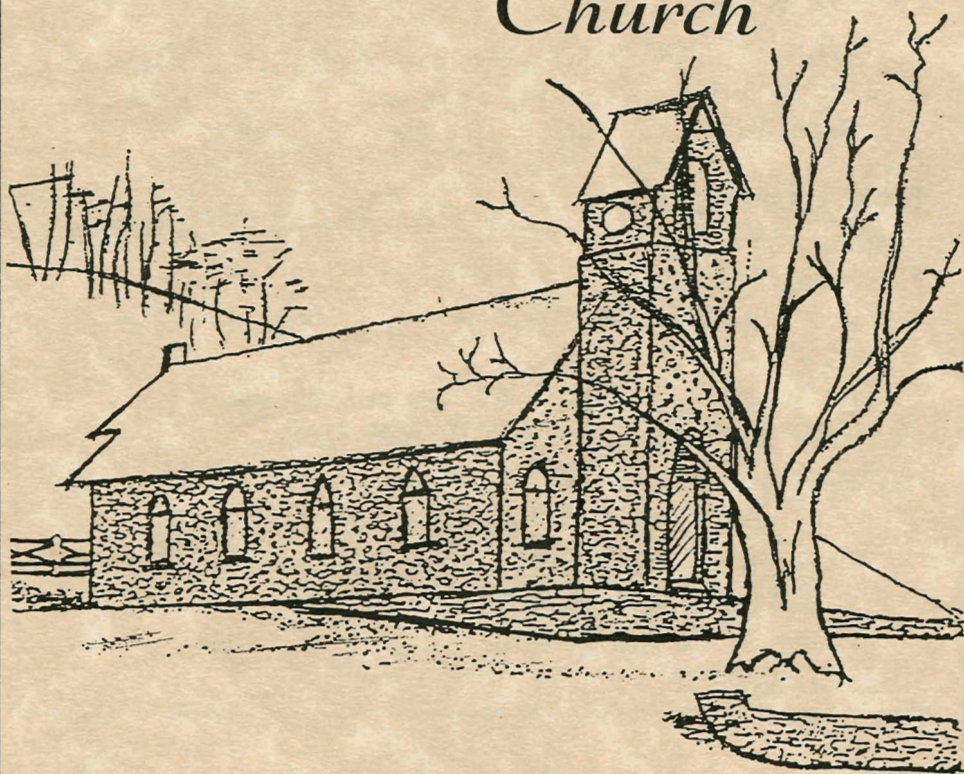


*Clinton  
Presbyterian  
Church*



*Worship 9:45 AM*

*Sunday School 10:45 AM*

*"Come unto me, all you who labor and are heavy laden...  
and you will find rest for your souls." Matt. 11:28, 29*

**September 22, 1996**

CLINTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
Mountain City, Tennessee

Clinton Presbyterian Church has a very interesting historical background dating back to the early 1800's when people from the community were worshipping in a small log church, which had served as a Methodist Church since 1833. The first Methodist Church in Johnson County was organized in a barn on the Lewis Wills Farm not far from the present location of the Presbyterian Church. This log church was called "The Meeting House" and located on "Camp Ground Hill," where the old time camp meetings were held.

Mr. Joseph A. Sutherland was a man of wealth and a great Christian leader. Mr. Sutherland's 10 year old son, Clinton, was a victim of a tragic accident while helping his father and other farm hands round-up cattle on a mountain range. Clinton had gun powder and matches in his pocket when he fell and the powder and matches ignited and burned him to death. This unusual accident brought grief to the whole community. A picture hangs in our Church of this little boy whose death took place May 1, 1887.

After Clinton's death, Mr. Sutherland gave a beautiful site for a church and was instrumental in building a large, white frame Methodist church in memory of Clinton. It has been told that Mr. Sutherland paid one of his farm hands a monthly salary to be on time every Sunday morning to ring the loud-sounding bell to let people know they should be getting ready for the worship service. This bell survived the great fire on Easter Sunday in 1924 when the church burned. We use this large bell every Sunday morning when the beautiful tone can be heard up and down the valleys and over the country-side calling people to come worship with us in the year of 1988.

During the early years, the horse and buggies were used. The parking lot had "hitching posts" and "upping blocks" or stiles. Women who rode their horses to church used the "stiles" for getting on and off their horses.

During the early 1900's, Rev. G. W. Paul and Rev. George Bales were Ministers. Rev. D. I. Howell served as Pastor when the church burned that Easter Morning. Rev. Howell went to work immediately to build the rock church, which was dedicated in the summer of 1925. The rocks for the church were gathered from nearby farms and are so unusual and beautiful. The masonry work was done by Mr. Dan Lundy, a fine Christian leader and a native of a nearby community.

After a long and useful history, things began to change. The good Christian leaders finished their work here and passed on to their much deserved reward. Most of the young people left these big farms and moved into towns, searching for easier labor and better pay, this taking place during the 1930's and early 1940's. The church closed and remained closed for several years.

In the early 1940's, Holston Presbytery appointed a commission to organize the Mountain City Presbyterian Church. One of the members of the commission was the Rev. Dan Graham. On October 31, 1943, a meeting was held at Mountain City, Tennessee, and the congregation was declared duly organized as a Church of the Presbyterian Church U. S.

Rev. Dan Graham continued Minister of the Mountain City Presbyterian Church. During the summer of 1946, James Abe Aldridge, a Student Pastor, came to Mountain City to assist Rev. Graham. Seeing a need for a church in the Silver Lake Community, Rev. Graham and Rev. Aldridge talked with Mrs. Willie Mac Sutherland Rambo, and plans were made for Clinton Chapel to be a

church again, this time Presbyterian. On July 19, 1947, dedication services were held for the Mountain City Presbyterian Church and Clinton Chapel Presbyterian Church. In 1959, Clinton Presbyterian Church was organized by the Presbytery as a separate congregation. Both churches continue to be served by the same pastor.

During the ministry of J. Edsel Farthing, four Sunday School rooms were added, most of the work being done by dedicated members of the church. Native stone was gathered from the fields for outside construction.

In the summer of 1975, by the generosity of Nat Wills, Jr., we installed a water line from Silver Lake and added a bathroom. The same year, a new parking lot was landscaped and graveled, this land being deeded to us by Mrs. Willie Mac Sutherland Rambo and J. D. Sutherland. During the summer of 1982, the church was carpeted and extensive work done in the sanctuary.

In 1986, a new roof was put on the sanctuary and a picnic shelter built. In 1987, Miss Mary Gentry, who was 94 years old when she died, left Clinton Church several thousand dollars. We have used part of this money to buy amber cushions for the old oak pews in memory of her. Over 60 years ago, when the white frame church burned and the stone one built, Miss Mary donated one of the lovely, old, stained glass windows. From 1988 to 1990, the Church was a beneficiary in the will of the late Blake Merson, Bethesda, Maryland. Part of this was used to build a fellowship hall addition to the church in 1992.

This Church is one of the most beautiful in the County. The large cathedral ceilings, elevated floor in the sanctuary, elegant amber glass windows and old oak pews add the grandeur of this old historical country church.

Presbyterian Ministers who have served Clinton Presbyterian Church:

|                                |                            |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1943-47 Dan H. Graham          | 1947-51 James Abe Aldridge |
| 1952-53 Otis F. Warren         | 1954-59 J. Edsel Farthing  |
| 1960-61 Carl Kessel            | 1962-64 Bill Williams      |
| 1965-69 J. R. Woodson          | 1970-71 Robert Kribbs      |
| 1972-75 Dr. Robert T.L. Liston | 1975-80 Richard Altork     |
| 1980-87 Harold Hudson          | 1988-90 Kenneth Calhoun    |
| 1991- Clarence Durham          |                            |

Very often, people from far and near stop by to see our beautiful stone church, which is nestled against the lovely mountains, and gracing our front lawn are two large maple trees. We are proud of our country church, and it is near to the heart of all of us who come here to worship, as it must have been to those who have gone before.

Maxine L. Walsh

November 1988  
with update, 1992