

Buck Creek Baptist Churches

By Jerry Long
c.2025



Buck Creek Baptist Church, 3788 U.S. Highway 431 at intersection with Highway 250.



A History of the Daviess - McLean Baptist Association in Kentucky, 1844-1943,
Wendell H. Rone (Owensboro, KY: Messenger Job Printing Co., Inc., 1943):

Sketches of the Churches in McLean County, Kentucky

BUCK CREEK – pages 118-123:



Buck Creek Baptist Church erected in 1894

This is the oldest Church in McLean County and also the oldest at present in the Daviess-McLean Baptist Association. To begin the history of this Church we must go back to March 5, 1798, when Beaver Dam Church, in Ohio County, was organized. From this time on until the organization of Buck Creek Church the membership of Beaver Dam residing north of Green River and Rough River and west of the present site of Heflin met in various places as an "Arm" of Beaver Dam Church. It was during this period that Elder Benjamin Tolbert, in company with a number of the members of the Beaver Dam Church, received a number into her fellowship by faith and baptism, among whom were the Tanners, the Fields, and the Howards. In the month of August, 1812, leave was granted "to them members over Rough Creek to form a constitution." The above quotation is taken from the old record book of Beaver Dam Church and is quoted in Welborn's History of Gasper River Association, to which the Church first belonged.

It is at this point that we run into a difficulty hard to fathom. The names of these members are given and total forty-five, with three of the number designated as being negro slaves. More for the sake of keeping the record than anything else we give the full list of those names. They are as follows:

Mark Howard	Warner Ashby	Cynthia Hudson
Littleton Howard	Barnett Field	Elizabeth Tanner
Susanna Miller	Henry Field	Polly Tanner
Anna Brown	Martin Hudson	John Huston
Jane Field	Christine Caloway	Nancy Field
Sarah Field	Frances McFarland	Jacob Miller
Catherine Taylor	Prudence Martin	Reuben Brown
Chesley Caloway	Squire Philace	Frank Field
John Atherton	Reuben Field	George Kelley
Elender Ashby	Polly Taylor	Benjamin Taylor
Patsy Olphen	Rosanna Hudson	Margaret Davis
Rachel Howard	Frederick Tanner	Nancy Clifen
Phillip Taylor	Allen Field	James Martin
Susanna Hudson	Susanna Field	Polly Atherton

And negro slaves Dinah, Oliver, and Judah.

In Bro. John A. Bennett's History of Buck Creek Church, written and published on the occasion of the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Church, in 1912, we have a somewhat smaller list of constituent members given. He gives but a total of eleven. Their names are as follows:

Philip Taylor	Polly Taylor	Polly Tanner
Elizabeth Smith	Benjamin Taylor	John Atherton
Barnett Field	Reuben Field	Allen Field
Catherine Taylor	Polly Atherton	

Brother Bennett also informs us that Elders Job Hobbs, Samuel Anderson, and Philip Warden were the preachers who took part in constituting the Church, and that Elder Hobbs became the first pastor, who served but a short time and was succeeded by Elder Benjamin Tolbert, the famous pioneer preacher of the Green River country.

Brother Welborn informs us that the Church was organized in McFarland's School House, and in September, 1812, when Gasper River Association was organized, the Church petitioned for admittance as the "Church at McFarland's School House." The Church was not admitted until the session of 1813 and was then known as the Church at "Tanner's Meeting House."

The difficulty given above cannot be settled because the records of the Church for the first twelve years were destroyed when the home of Frederick Tanner was burned to the ground. The information given by both writers was taken from sources other than the Church records. Brother Bennett received his information from the History of the Church, written and read before the Daviess County Association in 1877 by Dr. J. S. Coleman, who in turn received his information from the oldest members living at that time. Brother Welborn received his information from the records of the Beaver Dam Church and from the Gasper River Associational Minutes. A possible solution to the difficulty may be found in the fact that Elder Welborn states that the Church was not received into the Association until the 1813 session, being known at that time as the "Church at Tanner's Meeting House." He also states that this was the second constitution. Some difficulty may have arisen over the first constitution that made the second constitution necessary. This is merely a speculation. We are inclined to believe that all the names given in the first list became members of the Church either at its constitution or soon afterwards. Eternity alone will solve the difficulty.

The Church became a member of the Gasper River Association in the year 1813, being represented by messengers Mark Howard and John Huston. The membership at that time numbered fifty. The Church remained a member of the above Association until the year 1818 when she withdrew to unite with the Goshen Association which was more convenient. From that time until the year 1844 she remained a member of that body. On November 1-3, 1844, she, with eight other Churches, constituted Daviess County Association. Her membership has been with this body to the present day. She has entertained the annual sessions of this Association on four different occasions – 1852, 1865, 1907, and 1934.

Elder Job Hobbs is supposed to have been the first pastor of the Church. Nothing is known of his life—where he came from or whither he went. His pastorate must have been for a very short time for in March, 1813, we find a petition was sent to the Beaver Dam Church by Mark Howard and John Atherton asking that the mother Church ordain George Render, then clerk and deacon of Beaver Dam Church, to attend to the new Church "as their minister." The request was granted and the old mother Church agreed "to travail for a deacon until next meeting." According to Welborn's History, Brother Render was ordained and served the Church until the year 1818, the year she went into the Goshen Association. Elder Benjamin Tolbert is also supposed to have served as the pastor

at this time—probably from 1819 to 1824. From that time on to the present extant records of the Church give the names of the following pastors:

Thomas Downs	1824-1840	D. J. K. Maddox.....	1893-1896
Frederick Tanner	1840-1844	T. M. Morton.....	1896-1901
Kinchen G. Hay	1845-1850	J. J. Cloar.....	1902
Richard Jones	1851	T. M. Morton.....	1903-1906
Kinchen G. Hay.....	1852-1854	John A. Bennett.....	1906-1924
J. S. Coleman.....	1855-1869	Albert Maddox.....	1925-1927
J. M. Peay	1870-1872	Russell Walker.....	1928
William J. Stevens. . .	1873	S. T. Skaggs.....	1929-1932
J. S. Coleman.....	1873-1878	E. E. Spickard.....	1933-1934
B. F. Swindler.....	1878-1884	S. T. Skaggs.....	1935-1938
J. S. Coleman.....	1884-1886	Buelle Wells	1939-1941
B. F. Jenkins	1886-1891	W. P. Reeves.....	1942-1943
W. P. Bennett.....	1891-1893		

We cannot leave the study of the pastors who have served this Church without making some mention of their labors. The labors of George Render, Benjamin Tolbert, and Thomas Downs were blessed, of the Lord in the building up of the membership. in this period the subject of missions claimed the attention of the Churches and the Association. Buck Creek took her stand at an early date in favor of the missionary enterprises of the day. This brought about a division of sentiment in her early history and several members were excluded from her membership and immediately organized themselves into an anti-missionary Baptist Church taking the name of New Providence. These transactions took place while the Church worshipped in the old Tanner's Meeting House, but about this time the Church erected a new house of worship further down on Buck Creek, and when the old Church began worshipping in the new house she took the name of Buck Creek while the anti-mission group occupied the Tanner's Meeting House and worshipped there as the New Providence Church.

Whenever the spirit of anti-missionism was manifested in her fellowship by some refusing to fellowship with others who contributed to missionary causes the Church immediately excluded them. The New Providence group lingered for a while and finally declined to extinction.

About this time also a lengthy debate was conducted between Esaias Earle and David Jarrell Kelley over the subject of missions. Earle upheld the decisions of the old Highland Association in refusing to have anything to do with the mission enterprise. Kelley upheld the decision of the Goshen Association in favoring missions. Kelley completely vanquished his opponent, and the spirit of anti-missionism and anti-nomianism was completely routed. The result was that Earle's star declined and the old Highland Association died out before the year 1840. In the meantime Buck Creek Church continued her forward march in the service of the Lord of Hosts. In every instance she rang true as a clarion on the subject of missions.

Elder Frederick Tanner was licensed to preach by this Church in 1824 and was ordained in November, 1830. Although he served the Church as pastor on several occasions, mostly as interim pastor he only consented to do so when another could not be had. For many years, as messenger to the Association, as clerk of the Church, as a preacher from house to house, and as a general missionary worker he planted seeds that are still bringing forth fruit. During his pastorate and that of Elder K. G. Hay the subjects of anti-missionism and Campbellism bothered the Church as preachers of both these deadly heresies lived in the community. In all these trials the Church stood

firm, even at the expense of having to exclude a number of her members. Under Elder Hay the Church first made provision for pastoral support and later definitely fixed the pastor's salary at a definite amount.

Under Dr. J. S. Coleman the Church went forward as never before as this period is noted for evangelistic effort and large ingatherings. Some of these meetings were held jointly by Dr. Coleman and J. M. Peay. The two made up an evangelistic team probably never equaled in the annals of West Kentucky Baptists.

Elder William Stevens was at first a Methodist preacher, but his daughter, Lydia, seeing a baptizing, was so deeply impressed that she went home and made with God's help, Baptists out of the whole family. Brother Stevens was baptized by Dr. Coleman in the year 1867 and was ordained to the Baptist ministry the following October. Until the time of his death, in 1891, he remained a useful, honored and loved member of the Church.

During the pastorates of Elders Swindler, Jenkins, and W. P. Bennett the Church went forward in every good work. Revivals were held, mission gifts increased, and a more prompt and liberal support, of the pastor was manifested. The Church at this time began preparation to erect a new house of worship.

During the pastorate of D. J. K. Maddox the membership sharply divided over building the new house of worship and the location of it. As a result sixty-nine members were finally granted letters and later organized what is now known as the Old Buck Creek Church. We give a full account of this event in the history of that Church.

This leads us to go back and give an account of the different buildings the Church has erected. The first was a log house three miles west of Livia on the Glenville Road, known as Tanner's Meeting House. In 1840-1841 the Church moved its location to a point one mile west of Nuckols, and built another log house on the hill. The hill has been known . from that time as Buck Creek hill. In 1856-1857 a neat frame house was erected on the same site and was paid for by the year 1860. In the year 1892 they determined to build again. There was much difference of opinion on where the new house should be built. Some wanted to build west of the old lot but the funds never reached the desired amount. Finally, in February, 1894, the Church ordered the new house built on the Owensboro-Livermore road, on a lot that had been selected, located about midway between Livia and Nuckols. The building was completed and occupied in July, 1894, but dissatisfaction came and the Church was sorely divided. This resulted in the organization of the Old Buck Creek Church. The Church has continued to meet in the above mentioned building unto the present time. In the year 1941 the building was moved back from the highway and the addition of some Sunday School rooms was made. Difficulties arose over this plan but they have somewhat subsided and the Church is now carrying on acceptably in all phases of the Lord's work.

After experiencing the loss of some of her best members in the division, the Church again came to, the front as the result of several revival meetings. The Church suffered much later on because many of her members moved to town leaving her to carry on with depleted strength. Even at that the Church now has about two-hundred members.

Brother John A. Bennett served the Church from 1906 to 1924. In that time the work went steadily forward being climaxed with the ohservance of the Centennial in August, 1912. Brother Bennett wrote a history of the Church and read it on the day appointed. The same history was later published and over seven hundred copies distributed all over the country. The Church also went on record as being opposed to the Inter-church World Movement which was seeking to unite all the denominations into one group. This is not the first time that the Church has taken her stand against doctrinal fallacies. She has opposed alien-immersion, anti-missionism, Campbellism, open

communion, and every other ism that dared to raise its head in the community. For the doctrinal stamina of her membership this Church stands with the strongest. Her faithful pastors have served her admirably in this respect and have indoctrinated the membership.

The pastorates of all the brethren since the time of Brother John A. Bennett have been noted for a gradual increase of the work of the Church especially along evangelistic, missionary, and organizational lines. Some of the most outstanding men this Association has produced have been pastors of this Church at one time or another during her more than one hundred and thirty years of existence.

Frederick Tanner was the first clerk of the Church of whom there is any record. His tenure of service began before the year 1820 and continued until the year 1830, when he entered the ministry. As to the clerk or clerks before him we will never know. Since the year 1830 the Church has been served by the following clerks:

M. W. Sharp.....	1830-1835	M. B. Tichenor.....	1854-1876
James S. Jones	1836-1849	W. C. Underwood. . .	1877-1916
B. B. Malin	1850-1853	Vernon Underwood	1917-1943

The clerkship of Brother M. B. Tichenor was noted for faithfulness. In the twenty years that he served only three times was he absent from the business meetings of the Church. Brethren W. C. Underwood and Vernon Underwood, father and son respectively, have served this Church for a combined total of sixty-six years. The elder Underwood served forty years in succession. A total of about seven or eight clerks in a period of one hundred and thirty years is an outstanding record.

Buck Creek Church has been a prolific mother of Churches. Out of her membership she has given members to constitute Green Brier, in 1820; Mt. Liberty, in 1840; Brushy Fork, in 1846; Oak Grove (Utica), in 1854; Glenville, in 1865; Woodward's Valley, in 1879; Livermore, in 1885; and Old Buck Creek, in .1894. Several of these Churches were composed partly of members from other Churches. She is also the grandmother of a number of younger Churches that have come from the ones mentioned above. This old mother of Churches has an enviable record. Space forbids a mentioning of the names of the many worthy men who have served the Church well in the office of deacon. Their sacrificial labors are recorded in heaven.

OLD BUCK CREEK – pages 137-140:

In the year 1892 the Buck Creek Church set on foot plans to erect a new house of worship. There was much difference of opinion among the membership as to the best location for the new house. An attempt was made to secure funds to build on a lot west of and adjoining the old lot. The subscriptions were never made large enough for that purpose and the plan was abandoned. In February, 1894, the Church ordered the building of the house on the Owensboro and Livermore road about half-way between Nuckols and Livia, on the lot that had been selected. By the month of June the building had been completed and the Church voted to hold its meetings in the future in the new house. There was much dissatisfaction and dissension in the Church in regard to moving to this new location. Claims were made that the plan had not been carried out in a legitimate manner, and a large number of the membership continued to meet in the old house of worship and to transact business under the name of Buck Creek Church. Both groups sent statistical letters and messengers to the meeting of the Daviess County Association, which convened at the Oak Grove (Utica) Church, in August, 1894.

After it was reported to the Association that Buck Creek Church was represented by two opposing groups of messengers, both claiming to be representatives of the Church to the Association, a committee of seven visiting brethren who were chosen from among those who were unprejudiced by local conditions or present or past relationships, were given time to look into the matter and report to the Association. The committee was composed of Dr. S. H. Ford of St. Louis, Mo.; Dr. Arthur Yager of Georgetown, Ky.; Dr. W. H. Ryland of Russellville, Ky.; Elder J. T. Casebier of Rockport, Ky.; Elder B. T. Mayhugh of Huntsville, Ky.; Elder A. J. Ashburn of Louisville, Ky.; and Elder H. T. Lampton of Rockport; Indiana.

The committee called for all the records and evidence of both claimants and held a meeting to examine and hear the same. After a very thorough examination the committee unanimously reported that the decision to move to the new location was a legal and binding act of the Church, and that therefore the body meeting in the house on the Owensboro and Livermore road was Buck Creek Church, and as such her messengers were entitled to seats in the Association. The report was unanimously adopted by the Association. The Association then volunteered to make suggestions looking to a harmonious adjustment of the differences prevailing, through the adoption of the report of a special committee, which suggested that,

1st. All members of both parties are members of Buck Creek Church, and as such were cordially invited to continue to worship and to work with the church at its new location.

2nd. But, if any preferred to take letters and constitute a new church at the old location or elsewhere, such letters should be granted them.

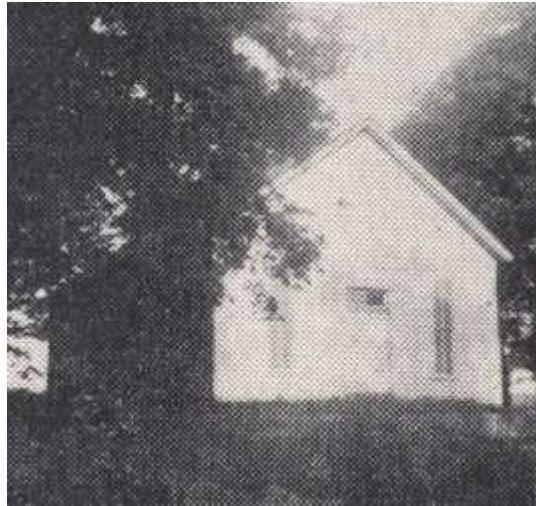
3rd. In the event they preferred to constitute a new church at the old location they be permitted to use the old building until they could provide themselves with one that suited them better, January 1, 1895, being the date fixed by agreement, and that the old house should be sold and the proceeds divided equally among them, and that the old church lot should be added to the adjacent cemetery grounds, and that the mother church should then deed to the new organization a one-half interest in the cemetery lot, to be held and controlled permanently by the two jointly, for the use of both.

Buck Creek Church cordially agreed and submitted to the minority, who had opposed the moving of the house of worship, the above propositions. They chose to call for letters of dismission and to constitute a new Church, which was done, and the property was divided as above stated.

On September 8, 1894, sixty-nine members were granted letters of dismission to constitute a new church, and on Tuesday, September 11, 1894, a presbytery composed of Elders J. S. Coleman, William J. Holtzclaw, L. C. Tichenor, B. Y. Cundiff, D. E. Yeiser, A. B. Smith, W. H. Brengle, and A. G. Davis; and brethren from Buck Creek, Green Brier, Livermore, Woodward's Valley, Oak Grove (Utica), Owensboro First, Glenville, and Yellow Creek Churches met to organize the new church. Dr. J. S. Coleman was elected as the Moderator and Elder William J. Holtzclaw was elected as the clerk of the council. The names of the sixty-nine members and two others were submitted to the clerk as the constituent membership making a total of seventy-one. They were as follows:

John B. Atherton	Delilah Atherton	A. J. Atherton
Susan Atherton	Alice Atherton	James P. Atherton
Guy Atherton	Martha Atherton	John G. Atherton, Jr.

Emma Atherton	Lander Atherton	Abbie Atherton
Rufus Atherton	Sallie Jones	John G. Atherton, Sr.
Laura Nickols	William C. Atherton	Sue Atherton
William T. Benton	Sallie Davis	Henry Brashear
Precilla Brashear	W. C. Brashear	Bertha Brashear
Dr. A. W. Crow	Julia W. Crow	W. P. Ewell
Lucy Campbell	R. A. J. Estes	Lucy Davis
Samuel D. Hayden	Josie Hayden	William King, Jr.
Arra S. King	William A. Layton	Nancy Layton
C. Layton	Maggie Layton	G. W. Stevens
Lydia Stevens	Foster Stevens	Vina Sharp
Bessie Lee	Aleck Smith	L. P. Rowan
Julia W. Nickols	R. P. Tanner	Elizabeth Tanner
Herman Tanner	Nannie Tanner	A. J. Tucker
Lucy A. Leachman	John W. Tucker	Minerva Leachman
E. W. Tucker	Kate Leachman	Jessie Whitaker
Sallie Whitaker	W. G. Whitaker	Victoria Whitaker
B. C. Whitaker	Margaret Whitaker	B. B. Whitaker
Florence Whitehouse	John W. Whitaker	Pollie Jarvis
M. F. Vance	Sallie Vance	J. T. Vance
Virgil Vance	Stella Vance	



Old Buck Creek Baptist Church erected in 1894

The Church Covenant, Articles of Faith, and Rules of the Decorum were then unanimously adopted. Miss Lucinda Tucker was then received as a candidate for baptism.

The Church met again the following day and Brethren George W. Stevens and William C. Atherton were recognized as deacons. Brethren John W. Tucker, Jessie Whitaker, and A. J. Atherton were then ordained by the council. Brother Elonzo Estes and his wife Ellen were received into the membership by letter. At the suggestion of Dr. Coleman the name Old Buck Creek was adopted as the name for the church. A building committee composed of Brethren A. W. Crow, J. P. Atherton, and W. C. Atherton was then appointed to formulate plans toward erecting a new house of worship in compliance with the request of the Association.

Two lots were donated to the Church by Dr. A. W. Crow for the purpose of erecting a new house of worship. These lots were located about 500 yards to the north of the old site of the church and the cemetery. The new building was soon completed and the dedicatory sermon was preached by Dr. J. S. Coleman on Thanksgiving Day, 1894. The Church has continued to worship in this same building to the present time.

The Church became a member of the Association in August, 1895, and has remained a member to the present day. In the year 1916 the Church entertained the annual session of the body. The Church was unable to secure a pastor until February, 1895, when Elder R. T. Bruner was elected and consented to serve as the first pastor. Since that time the Church has been served by the following pastors and clerks:

Pastors

R. T. Bruner	1895-1901	W. S. Shipp.....	1923-1925
J. N. Jarnagin.....	1901-1906	Norris Lashbrook	1928-1931
A. F. Gordon.....	1907-1908	C. J. Boyd.....	1932
W. W. Williams.....	1909	J. B. Coleman.....	1933-1936
J. C. Craig	1910-1911	J. H. Chissom	1936-1939
W. W. Williams.....	1912-1914	A. Renich Dailey	1939-1941
Norris Lashbrook	1915-1921	None	1942
J. H. Chissom.....	1921-1922	Robert Stinson.....	1943

Clerks

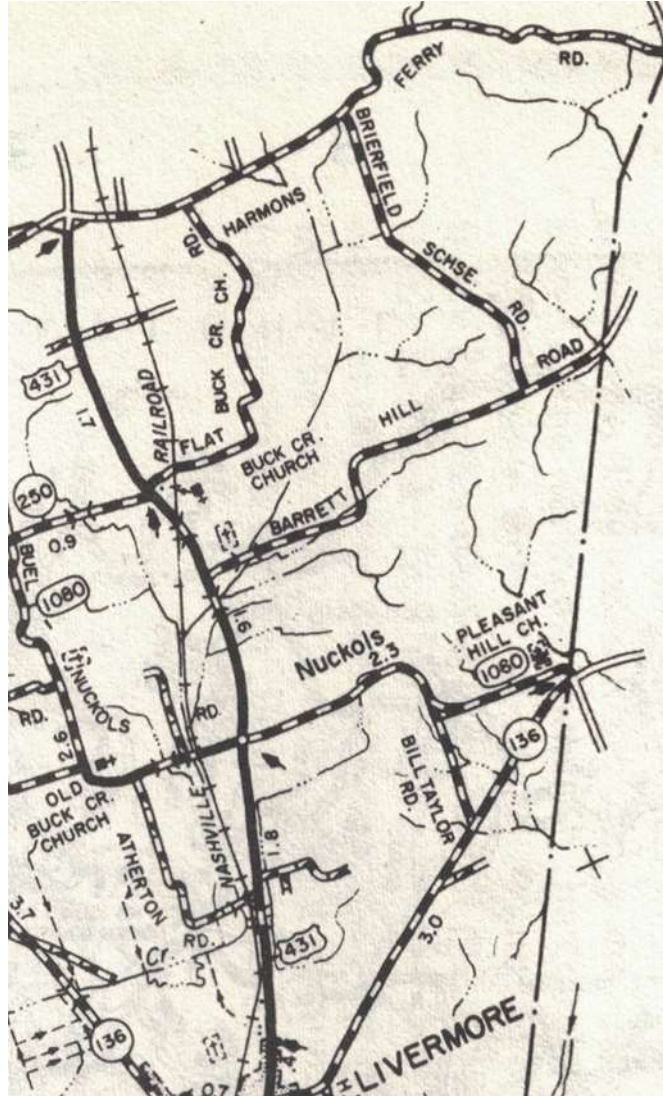
W. P. Ewell	1894-1901	A. C. Smith.....	1930-1940
J.. Herman Tanner.....	1901-1923	Pearlie Troutman.....	1940-1943
J. C. Layton.....	1923-1930		

Since early in the pastorate of Brother Stinson the Church has been enjoying one-half time preaching for the first time in its history. The cause is very prosperous at present and the outlook is very encouraging.

This Church has had the privilege of licensing and ordaining two of her members to preach the gospel. Bro. Foster E. Howard was licensed in 1922 and was ordained on June 29, 1924, by Elders John A. Bennett, J. H. Chissom, Norris Lashbrook, P. H. Wells, W. S. Shipp, and V. A. Polk. Bro. Herbert T. Ashby was licensed to preach in 1930 and was ordained on August 14, 1932, by Elders W. S. Shipp, E. E. Spickard, Albert Maddox, Norris Lashbrook, R. E. Gregory, and J. H. Chissom.

Because of the fact that she is near other Baptist churches this church has never reached a large membership. Only on some very few occasions has the membership reached more than 100. At present it is about seventy-five. The Church has been a supporter of the benevolent work of the denomination. Since the year 1895 a Sunday School has functioned, except in the winter months when the roads were almost impassable. She has been self-supporting during all of her history, even though at times the remuneration to her pastor, compared to other churches her size, has been smaller.





Map of eastern section of McLean County, KY. “Buck Creek Baptist Church” (at 3788 U. S. Highway 431, at intersection with Highway 250; established in 1812) is in the center of the map. The “Old Buck Creek Baptist Church” (on highway 1080 about two miles west of Nuckols and about two miles southwest of the Buck Creek Baptist Church; established in 1894) is near the lower left corner of the map. The Buck Creek Baptist Church cemetery is adjacent to the Old Buck Creek Baptist Church. The Old Buck Creek Baptist Church, established in 1894, closed its doors in 1990. Tommy Lee (1939-2024) was the last surviving member of the Old Buck Creek Baptist Church.



Hartford Herald, Hartford, KY, Wednesday, 21 March 1894, p.2:

Livermore, Ky.

March 17, 1894. – Many of the readers of THE HERALD will learn with regret the critical condition of Buck Creek Baptist Church, growing out of differences pertaining to the site of the erection of a new churchhouse. Some would retain the old site, while others want to locate about two miles from old site, on the Owensboro and Livermore road. Many of the members declared their intention of going to other churches, and it is most likely that the church will divide, though it is hoped a reconciliation will be effected.

ST. ELMO.



Hartford Herald, Hartford, KY, Wednesday, 19 September 1894, p.2:

Livermore, Ky.

Sept, 13, 1894—Quite a large assembly met at the old site of Buck Creek church Tuesday and Wednesday for the purpose of organizing anew church. A large number of ministers were present and many sister churches were well represented. The exercises Tuesday morning began with song and prayer, after which Dr. Coleman addressed the large and attentive audience, which had now become so large as to require additional seats in the house, on "Why should Baptist Churches be organized throughout the land." It was indeed quite a splendid discourse and was one among the best efforts of his life. It conveyed clearly that, although he has given the best efforts of his life to the promotion of the great cause of christianity and almost worn himself out. there are yet sparks of his great talent which are easily irritated and which sweep over his audience like so many whirlwinds. He said that civil government owed its origin to the Baptist church; that he congratulated himself for having belonged to a denomination whose principles, methods and name had never changed, one that had never persecuted any religious sect, one that claimed the Lord Jesus Christ as their leader, the founder of their church, not John Wesley or any other man. Having held his audience almost spell-bound for nearly an hour and a-half, he announced that there were ample provision on the ground for all and that they would meet at 1 o'clock for organization.

House called together and Dr. Coleman elected permanent moderator and Rev. Holtsclaw, of Owensboro, Secretary, after which a new church of 7 members was organized. The proceedings of Wednesday consisted in electing and ordaining deacons and other officers; giving name to church, etc. By a unanimous vote, it was decided to call the church "**Old Buck Creek**." The proceedings closed with an invitation to christians to welcome the new church by a general shaking of hands. The isles were crowded. Many brave men and fair women wept like children, and a looker-on could but infer that God was with them and that "it was good to be there." May they prosper and may they perform well the duties of the great responsibility they have chosen.



Hartford Herald, Hartford, KY, Wednesday, 31 October 1894, p.3:

A Remarkable Meeting.
Rockport, Ky., Oct. 29, 1894.

I closed a meeting of 15 days with my Buck Creek church Sunday the 28th. It was a meeting of wonderful power. About 70 conversions and 61 added to the church, 50 for baptism. 46 of the number were baptized in Green river at Livermore in the presence of fifteen hundred people. It was an impressive occasion, the church greatly revived and in fine working trim. Rev. T. M. Morton did the preaching and did it well. To God be all the glory.

D. J. K. MADDOX, Pastor.



Hartford Herald, Hartford, KY, Wednesday, 14 November 1894, p.3:

Dedication.

Thirty-eight years ago last Sunday Dr. J. S. Coleman preached the dedication sermon in old Buck Creek church house, and last Sunday he preached the vacation sermon in the same old house, now so dilapidated that we now vacate it to enter our new house of worship on the 29th of this month, it being Thanksgiving day, when the same man who preached the first and last sermons in the old house will dedicate our new church house.

Now, by order of "Old Buck Creek" church, we hereby invite all the churches of the Daviess County Association, their pastors, and all other Baptist preachers in her territory, together with the public generally, to attend our dedication exercises at the time above mentioned. Ample provisions will be on the grounds for the entertainment of all. Those coming by rail will get off of the O. & N. railroad at Tichenor's Crossing.

Com. – Dr. A. W. Crow,
Wm.. Atherton,
Richard Tanner,
Nov. 12, 1894.



Owensboro Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 9 June 1912, p.1B:

THIS CHURCH 100 YEARS OLD

Centenary of Buck Creek Baptist Church Is to Be Celebrated
NEXT WEDNESDAY, 12TH DAY OF JUNE

Congregation Organized In Small Way Century Ago Has Grown to Be One of Most Flourishing

There is in McLean county a country church which is 100 years old – Buck Creek Baptist church, near Nuckols, on the Owensboro division of the Louisville and Nashville railroad. This church was organized 100 years ago, June 12, 1812. Like all pioneer churches, it had a small

beginning, but many years ago grew into one of the most flourishing country churches in the Green river section.

In its 100 years of existence it has had as pastor many of the ablest Baptist preachers of the past and the present.

A splendid program has been arranged for the celebration of its 100th anniversary next Wednesday, and some of the best pulpit orators in the Baptist church will deliver addresses. A basket dinner will be served.

The Inquirer has received from the present pastor, Rev. J. A. Bennett, the following announcement of the 100th anniversary celebration: The centenary of Buck Creek Baptist church will be celebrated next Wednesday, June 12.

L. and N. trains will stop at the grounds, for the accommodation of all who desire to go.

W. D. Powell, D. D., J. W. Porter, D. D., B. F Swindler, D. D., and other prominent men will deliver addresses appropriate to the occasion. Dinner on the ground.

J. A. Bennett, pastor.



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 30 November 1987, pp.1C & 4C:



By Karen Owen, Messenger-Inquirer

LIVIA – In the early days at Buck Creek Baptist Church, dancing was a sin that would bring church leaders knocking at your door.

Preparing the church for a revival meant filling up barrels with drinking water and tying tin cups to the side.

And the minister was paid in chickens, ham and vegetables – if he was considered worth his hire.

Buck Creek Baptist celebrated its 175th anniversary this year, and a member who wrote a book about it said she found it a rich source of history.

But after 1½ years of work and 156 pages, Pearl Nation said she is still discovering information she wishes she could have included.

It takes a while for people to realize their memories are significant. enough to add to such a book, said Mrs. Nation, who has been a member of the church for 30 years and who lives across U.S. 431 from it.

She thinks it's important for all churches to record their histories, especially old ones like Buck Creek, she said. "We've got so much heritage that needs to be told. It needs to be put down so it won't be forgotten."

She paid for publishing the book herself, and all the profit will go to the church, Mrs. Nation said.



Pearl Nation stands near the Buck Creek Baptist Church and holds a book she wrote about the church.

Before "Precious Memories of Buck Creek Baptist Church," which went on sale Monday, the retired teacher's only experience as an author was when she helped her sixth-grade students write a history of Utica several years ago.

Her information for Buck Creek's history came from county records and the memories of older members, Church records helped, too, although the oldest, from 1812 to 1824, were destroyed in a house fire, Mrs. Nation said.

Buck Creek, which was the first church in what is now known as the Daviess-McLean Baptist Association, was organized in 1812 by a group from Beaver Dam Baptist Church, which was organized in 1798.

The new church went by several names over the years, including the Church at McFarland School House, the Church at Tanner's Meeting House, and The Church of Christ at Tanner's Meeting House, even after the congregation started gathering at Buck Creek Meeting House.

High standards were set for members in the old days, according to Mrs. Nation's history. Members believed, she wrote, "the walk must match the talk."

Sins included dancing, playing cards and skipping church services, as well as profanity, gambling, adultery and drinking "too much spirits."

"Dancing was considered a terrible sin," Mrs. Nation wrote. "On a scale of 1 to 10, it must have been an 11."

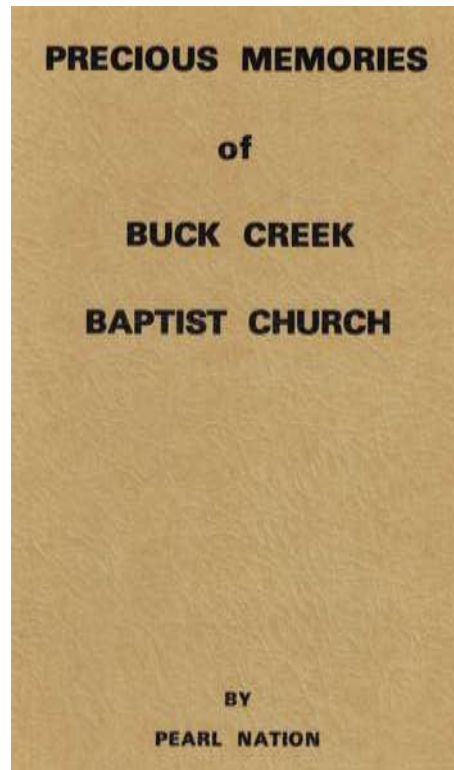
Over the years, Buck Creek experienced pressure from - and lost some members to - a variety of religious movements that came into the area, including groups that opposed mission work because they believed people were either predestined to become Christians or they were not.

In 1894, internal problems split the congregation. A dispute over where to build a new church building resulted in most of the congregation moving to the current location on U.S. 431, according to Mrs. Nation's book.

A smaller group formed a new congregation they called Old Buck Creek Baptist Church at the old location on Kentucky 1080 about 1 mile from Nuckols.

The dispute was a serious one and caused lasting divisions in families, Mrs. Nation said.

Some of the older people she interviewed for her book wouldn't even talk about it, Mrs. Nation said. "It was a very sensitive issue."



**Precious Memories of Buck Creek Baptist Church, Pearl Nation
(Utica, KY: McDowell Publications, 1987) Contents and pp.1-18:**

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Chapter 1

The Progress of the Church

Author's Note: It is puzzling and exasperating to try to analyze the first twelve years of Buck Creek Church's history. A fire destroyed the home of Frederic Tanner, then church clerk, and, of course, destroyed the records which he kept. Those records which are in existence from 1824 are vague, incomplete, and often illegible. The information which can be gleaned from those pages is priceless, but frequently obtuse.

Anything written herein in reference to the organization of the church and to the pre-fire period before 1824, has come from the works of three historians: F.M. Welborn, J.A. Bennett and

J.S. Coleman. Sometimes these historians' writings are in conflict about certain points, but had they not written their brief histories, Buck Creek Church would be the poorer. As a church, we owe them much.

Even Wendell Rone, a contemporary church historian and preacher, has said, regarding the confusion in the various writings and records, "Eternity alone will solve the difficulty." The studies that he has made, plus the earlier histories, are a treasure to history buffs and to this writer.

When Kentucky became a Commonwealth in 1792, only three Baptist churches had been organized in the entire Kentucky territory. Beaver Dam Church was organized six years afterward, and was the second Baptist church in existence between Warren and Logan Counties and the Ohio River. A great number of people who lived in the far reaches of the area could not travel to Beaver Dam to hear a Baptist sermon. For many others, who could make an occasional trip, it was an exhausting, lengthy journey which was made only infrequently.

It is not known exactly when the people north of Green River and Rough Creek, and west of the area that is today Heflin, began to congregate for worship services. Those early assemblies existed as an "arm of the Beaver Dam Church" and were held in various homes. (Benjamin Tolbert, while serving the mother church as pastor, brought a number of people [conflicting accounts give both eleven and forty-five] from the Beaver Dam Church, and received them into that fellowship.)

The group which met regularly at Tanner's Meeting House first made an effort to constitute themselves into a church in 1812. They petitioned the Gasper River Association for admittance into the Association using the name "The Church at McFarland's School House." That request appears not to have been granted, because the constitution was called home. For some unknown reason, the group was not admitted to the Gasper River Association as an organized church.

In March of 1813, the group petitioned for admittance again, using the name "The Church at Tanner's Meeting House." That petition, carried by Mark Howard and John Atherton, was successful. The church was accepted into the Gasper River Association. Thus, the little group became a true church – the first church in the territory now known as the Daviess-McLean Association.

Among the most puzzling questions is that of the original membership of the founding church at Tanner's Meeting House. F. M. Welborn listed forty-five members, including three slaves:

Mark Howard	Catherine Taylor
Littleton Howard	Chesley Caloway
Susanna Miller	Squire Philace
Anna Brown	Polly Atherton
Jane Field	Patsy Olphen
Sarah Field	George Kelly
Benjamin Taylor	Polly Taylor
Francis McFarland	Rosanna Hudson
Rachel Howard	Frederic Tanner
Phillip Taylor	Allen Field
Susanna Hudson	Susanna Field
Warner Ashby	Cynthia Hudson
Barnett Field	Elizabeth Tanner
Henry Field	Polly Tanner
Martin Hudson	Prudence Martin

Christian Caloway	Nancy Field
Elender Ashby	Jacob Miller
James Martin	Reuben Brown
John Huston	Margaret Davis
John Atherton	and
Nancy Clifen	Dinah
Frank Field	Judah
Reuben Field	Oliver

John A. Bennett states in his history, written in 1912, that there were only eleven constituent members of the church. The Bennett list is as follows:

Phillip Taylor	Polly Tanner
Barnett Field	Polly Atherton
Catherine Taylor	Reuben Field
Polly Taylor	Benjamin Taylor
Allen Field	Elizabeth Smith
John Atherton	

The only name appearing on Bennett's list which is not on Welborn's list is that of Elizabeth Smith. Considering the condition of the early church records, this writer concludes that those people on the smaller list were given formal letters of dismissal by the Beaver Dam Church for the purpose of constituting the new church at Tanner's Meeting House. This writer further deduces that the larger list of names is comprised of the former Beaver Dam members, plus many people from the surrounding area who joined together with the core group to form the new church. The additional names were probably not members of any Baptist Church, not having one to attend within a reasonable traveling distance.

Bro. John Bennett writes that Elders Job Hobbs, Samuel Anderson, and Phillip Warden were the preachers who took part in the constitution of the new church, with Elder Hobbs probably serving as its first pastor. Bennett further stated that Hobbs served for only a short time, and was succeeded by the pioneer preacher, Elder Benjamin Tolbert. [Bennett spelled the name "Talbot," Coleman spelled it "Talbert," and Rone spelled it "Tolbert." This writer had no paper containing Tolbert's own signature to ascertain his personal spelling of his name.]

All three past historians agree in their writings that Elder Job Hobbs was probably the first pastor, briefly, and was followed by Elder Tolbert. Indications are that the tenure of either or both of these men had to have been very brief, because, in 1813, when the assembly at Tanner's Meeting House submitted their second petition to be accepted into the Gasper River Association, they asked the mother church (Beaver Dam Church) to ordain and send George Render to be their minister. At that time, Render was a deacon in the Beaver Dam Church. Records show that, in accordance with the group's request, the Beaver Dam Church did ordain and send Render to be the new minister at the Tanner's Meeting House Church. There are conflicts in the accounts of Render's length of tenure at Tanner's.

One historian stated that Bro. Render was succeeded in 1818 by Elder Benjamin Tolbert, who pastored at Tanner's Meeting House until 1824. However, Dr. Coleman, in his history of Buck Creek Church, stated that Render served as pastor until 1831. A careful reading of the material at hand leads this writer to the conclusion that Dr. Coleman's account is the more accurate one.

From the records, one learns that in March of 1824, Bro. George Render made allegations that the Beaver Dam Church was guilty of keeping false records. He was subsequently called up for disciplinary action. After Render made his acknowledgements, the matter was dropped. The minutes record that Render was invited to "continue preaching amongst them."

He is mentioned again in the minutes of 1823, 1826, 1829, and 1830 when discussions of certain church business is recorded. While none of the instances name Bro. Render as being the active pastor, no one else is named as being the pastor during those years, either.

One historian stated that Bro. Downs was pastor during the year 1825, but a reading of the church minutes indicates otherwise. The minutes name Downs as being one of several people who were asked by the Tanner's Meeting House membership to come from sister churches to "help settle a difficulty." He is shown to have been a representative from, and a member of, the Green Briar Church at that time.

Thus, further credence is given to Dr. Coleman's statement that Bro. Render pastored until 1831. Minutes show that in that year - 1831 - Bro. Render asked for his letter of dismissal.

Elder Thomas Downs probably became the pastor in 1831. Again, the minutes do not name him as pastor, but he began receiving church assignments which carried so much authority that they would not have been given to anyone less responsible than a pastor. For example, in 1831, the church gave Downs the authority to act on its behalf in restoring fellowship to a black woman, who had called for the church to come to her because she needed help in a spiritual matter.

Unfortunately, the old records give us very little information about the pastors and their terms of office. The following list of pastors, and their years of service, is not without error, but is probably as accurate as can be compiled today, with the resources and records as they are:

Job Hobbs	1812	Russel Walker	1928
Benjamin Tolbert	1812	S. T. Skaggs	1929-1932
George Render	1813-1831	E. E. Spickard	1933-1934
Thomas Downs	1831-1840	S. T. Skaggs	1935-1938
Frederic Tanner	1840-1844	Buell Wells	1939-1941
Kinchen Hay	1845-1850	W. P. Reeves	1942
Richard Jones	1851	Arthur Holland	1943-1945
Kinchen Hay	1852-1854	J. A. Jordan	1946-1948
J. S. Coleman	1855-1869	Leslie Wright	1948-1952
J. M. Peay	1870-1872	Guy Gordon	1952-1953
William S. Stevens	1873	Guy Deane	1953-1956
J. S. Coleman	1873-1878	W. C. Campbell	1956-1959
B. F. Swindler	1879-1884	Dan Hughes	1959-1964
J. S. Coleman	1884-1886	Kendall Lott	1964-?
B. F. Jenkins	1886-1891	Robert Grass	1966-1968
W. P. Bennett	1891-1893	William Roberts	1968-71
D. J. K. Maddox	1893-1896	Ray Wilson, Sr	1971-1973
T. M. Morton	1896-1901	Clarence Clark	1973-1977
J. J. Clore	1902	Carroll H. Medley	1978-79
T. M. Morton	1904-1906	Larry Brown	1980-1982
John A. Bennett	1906-1924	Ronnie G Wells	1983-1987
Albert Maddox	1925-1927		

Church clerks were important to the early church. Frederic Tanner's recordings are invaluable to the church's history, as are the minutes kept by the other clerks. The following is a list of those clerks who served for long periods of time:

Frederic Tanner	?-1830	Vernon Underwood	1917-1947
M. W. Sharp	1830-1835	J. C. Tanner	1949-1972
James Jones	1836-1849	June Stofer	1973-1980
B. B. Molen	1850-1853	Lorena Atherton	1980-1985
M. B. Tichenor	1854-1876	Brenda Tucker	1985-present
W. C. Underwood	1877-1916		

Even though the first physical meeting house for the new church was in the McFarland School House, that was not actually the beginning of the group meetings which actually formed the membership later. As stated earlier, the first services were held in private homes. There are no records of those meetings, nor are there any dates which might assist in deriving a time for the grass roots movement that founded the church we know today as Buck Creek.

It is established that the first church building was a log meeting house constructed sometime between the submissions of the first and second constitutions. Because the building, and the church body, were named as "The Church at Tanner's Meeting House" in the second constitution, it can be concluded that the sanctuary was built, or well begun, by that second attempt at establishing an independent church. The log structure is thought to have been an open structure, poorly heated. During the winter months, the congregation continued to meet in individual homes and in the public schools around the area.

The post-1824 minutes seldom state the location of the meetings. A more typical opening statement to be found in the minutes reads something like this excerpt: "The Church of Christ at Tanner's Meeting House met according to apintment [sic] and after prare [sic] proceeded to bisnes [sic]."

Of those homes and schools which were listed as meeting places, the following is a partial list of those named: The homes of Frederic Tanner, James Smith, Philip Taylor, Sister Moore, Philip Davis, James McFarland, Sister Waltrip, Richard Tanner, William Atherton, Thomas Minton, Joseph Layton, Stephen Jennings, John Layton, Abner Lee, William Brown, Salkin Tanner, Thomas Tanner, Samuel Tanner, and William Tanner. Buck Creek School, Johnson School, and the McFarland School were also pressed into service. Many of the private homeowners hosted the meetings more than once. The schools were utilized repeatedly as well.

On July 2, 1837, the congregation decided to build a new meeting house. There were several suggestions as to the location for the new building, so the matter was assigned to the hands of a committee. Three months later, at the October 1837, meeting, the committee reported that their decision was to erect the new meeting house upon the site where the old one then stood.

Evidently, the first meeting house and the land upon which it stood did not belong to the church body. There are no recorded plans to sell it, or to dispose of the land or building in any way. The minutes do contain, however, the information that a committee was appointed to secure a title to the land from Remur (Sp?) Griffith.

There is an ambiguity here, caused by a lack of information in the minutes, and by some missing minutes. For example, there is no reference contained in the available minutes, regarding the decision to build a new sanctuary, between July 1837 and the entry in 1840. There are frequent gaps of one month here and there with no minutes, and from July until December of 1839, there are no records at all. [The minutes which do exist do not explain the missing records in any way –

by citing cancelled business meetings, damage, etc. This writer can find no explanation for the missing information.] Therefore, the reason the location of the church was changed from its original site to the site on Buck Creek Hill could not be found. As it is, there is only a casual reference, written in October, 1840, to the Buck Creek Meeting House. The minutes mention a reception to be held at that House, and tell that Bro. Hall was invited to be the guest speaker.

In November, 1840, the clerk wrote, "The Baptist Church of Christ at Tanner's Meeting House met at Buck Creek Meeting House and after preaching proceeded to busnes [sic]." At that November meeting, the membership agreed to receive the Buck Creek Meeting House as a meeting house for the church. They further agreed to hold half of the meetings in the neighborhood of the old church meeting house (Tanner's) for ". . . so long as we can get a house to preach in . . ." The other half of the meetings would be held at the Buck Creek Meeting House.

The old Tanner's Meeting House became occupied by an anti-missionary faction that believed in predestination. That group, known as the New Providence Church, did not survive many years.

Through May, 1841, the assemblage meeting at the Buck Creek Meeting House was still named the "Church at Tanner's Meeting House" despite the fact that they were no longer associated with that meeting house in any way. In June 1841, the members voted to become the Buck Creek Church.

Various references call the church "The United Baptist Church of Christ at Buck Creek," or sometimes "The United Baptist Church at Buck Creek Meeting House." The early churchgoers were untroubled by the lack of Clarity about the name. They considered the membership – the worshipers – to be the church: the meeting house was just that – a meeting house.

Fourteen years after the congregation began meeting at Buck Creek Hill, they began to want a new sanctuary. They also wanted more land for the church property. Bro. William Brown gifted the church with one acre ". . . for the use of the church. . ." in 1854. In response to Bro. Brown's gift, the minutes list the appointment of a committee which was instructed to raise funds for a new structure, and to draft a building plan for the structure. Almost one year later, (July, 1855) the minutes contain the committee's report that they were unable to obtain sufficient subscriptions to cover the cost of the building, and they advised the membership to delay the building.

In January 1856, the congregation again voted to try to build a new meeting house. They planned to erect a frame house, thirty-five feet by fifty feet. Another subscription committee went determinedly to work at the problem of securing the necessary money. They were successful. At the February meeting, the committee reported to the church that they had raised five hundred forty-six (\$546.00) dollars on subscription. Their task completed, the subscription committee was discharged. In their stead, a building committee was appointed.

The financial report given in February, 1857 stated that the new structure had cost eight hundred sixty-nine dollars (\$869.60) and sixty cents. The church had seven hundred fifty-six dollars (\$756.60) and sixty cents, which included both the money pledged by subscription and the money gained in selling the old church house. There would be an outstanding debt of one hundred thirteen (\$113.00) dollars for the new structure, even if all of the subscription money could be collected. Three years later, June 1860, the debt was paid in full, but only after several men agreed to pay ten dollars each to be applied toward the debt.

The church began to try to purchase land again in January of 1888. A committee was appointed to look into the matter, but reported back that it could find no land available.

In May of 1893, the minutes name a committee appointed to take subscriptions for money to build a new meeting house. A motion was also made to buy land from W. D. Lee, but the motion lost. By June, the committee had obtained subscriptions totaling six hundred sixty-six dollars (\$666.50) and fifty cents toward the cost of building a new sanctuary. At that same June meeting, a committee was appointed with the instruction to purchase land from A. W. Crow to be used as a building site.

The land committee reported in July, 1893, that Bro. Crow was willing to sell two acres for fifty dollars per acre on the corner, or he would give the church one acre on the west side of the grave yard and present church lot. The members received this report and discharged the committee as having completed its job. Then the membership moved, seconded, and voted to locate the new church building on ". . . that lot. . ." [The minutes do not state nor imply which lot the members chose.]

On August 12, they received two plans for the meeting house. One plan was for a 40' x 60' structure which a carpenter said could be built for fifteen hundred (\$1500.00) dollars. The other plan called for a forty by fifty foot (40' x 50') structure which could be built for twelve hundred (\$1200.00) dollars. At this same meeting the finance committee reported seven hundred thirty (\$730.00) dollars on subscription.

Later that month, August 26, 1893, the minutes state, "The church met in called session for the purpose of reconsidering her action in selecting a site for the new building." Nothing is recorded about what happened at that meeting.

On September 9, at their regular business meeting, they dismissed the building committee and the finance committee. No reason was given. At that same meeting they called, Bro. K. D. J. Maddox to be their pastor, and things seemed to settle back to normal. But it was a false sense. In six months the issue came up again.

The location of the new meeting house became the dividing wedge. Dr. Crow still offered his wooded lot near the place where the old church meeting house and cemetery were at that time. Now, another lot was offered. William Humphrey offered to donate a lot out on the highway, and there began a push to leave the back roads of Buck Creek Hill, and to move out onto the Owensboro-Livermore Highway.

The vote was cast on February 10, 1894. Fifteen members voted to accept Dr. Crow's wooded lot near the old church, and twenty-one voted to accept Mr. Humphrey's lot out on the highway. And at that meeting, they put a building committee into motion.

At the April meeting, a motion was made and seconded to dismiss the building committee. Bro. Maddox, the moderator, ruled the motion out of order. A motion was made that we invite sister churches in to help locate the new church. The moderator again ruled the motion out of order. In the face of great opposition, the church continued on its path toward building a new church.

The building committee reported in May, 1894, that they had purchased two and one half (2) acres of land on the Livermore-Owensboro Road. Material for the building had been purchased and put on that lot. They had let the contract to C. B. Simmons and he was pushing for completion. The report was also given stating they had seven hundred two dollars and fifty cents (\$702.50).

Opposition forces were also at that May meeting. A motion was made and seconded to call in a council from sister churches to settle the question of legality of the February, 1894, vote which had been to locate the meeting house on Highway 431. The council would also be asked to decide which faction owned the old church property and the name, "Buck Creek." The motion carried, 36 for it and 26 against.

A motion was put on the floor that the council would be comprised of four ministerial brethren who had never pastored the church. That motion carried. Next, a motion was made to include Bro. Maddox in the council, and two brothers, one representing each side of the dispute, who would present their arguments. The church agreed to abide by the decision of the council. A committee was appointed to select the council.

At the June 9, 1894 meeting, the committee to select the council was dismissed. No reason was given. A motion was then made that the next meeting of Buck Creek Church be held in the new building. During this controversy, they had continued building as if there had been no motion for a council. Also at the June meeting a motion was made and carried that the old house be disposed of and the proceeds be turned over to the church treasurer.

During the July regular business meeting, a report was given by the finance committee. The cost of the new building was one thousand twenty-five dollars (\$1,025.52) and fifty-two cents, of which seven hundred fifty (\$750.15) dollars and fifteen cents had been paid. The balance due was two hundred seventy-eight dollars (\$278.37) and thirty-seven cents. The committee to dispose of the old house reported they had done nothing.

One would think the problem was over, but not yet. Those who were opposed to building the new sanctuary on Highway 431 continued meeting in the church building on Buck Creek Hill. They sent delegates to the 1894 Daviess County Association, as did those who met in the new church building. Both sets of messengers claimed to represent the Buck Creek Church.

The Association had to decide which set of messengers to recognize. The chairman appointed a committee of seven men to study the situation and report back to the Association.

The report was as follows:

1. The church was intact up to the meeting of February 10, 1894, with no division.
2. That, at that meeting, the action of the church, in deciding to seek a new location and build a new meeting house, was regular and authoritative and
3. That they (the Committee) accordingly recommended that the brethren be recognized by this Association in their new location as the original Buck Creek Church, and that her letter and messengers be received by that body.

Then the body appointed A. B. Smith and A. G. Davis to give advice to Buck Creek Church concerning their difficulty. That advice was as follows:

1. That all those who desire letters of dismission shall indicate that desire, and such letters shall be granted.
2. That if those taking letters shall constitute themselves into a new church, that then each church shall elect an equal number of trustees, who shall hold in trust, for a joint burying ground for both churches, the lot on which the old church house now stands; and further, that the new church is to occupy the old house until the first day of January, 1895, and that the old house is to be sold, together with its furniture, and the house to be removed from the old lot, and the proceeds to be equally divided between the two churches; and that in no case is the new church to build a new house on the old lot.
3. That the old grave yard shall be held jointly by both churches, if such an arrangement can be made legally.

All of which is respectfully submitted

A. B. Smith

A. G. Davis

Both churches agreed to separate in peace and agreed to the conditions put forth that day.

On August 11, 1894, Bro. Jesse Whitaker gave a list of sixty-eight names, two of them deacons, to Buck Creek Church at the business meeting, asking for letters of dismission. The letters were granted. A motion was also made and seconded that the trustees transfer one-half interest in the old church lot on Buck Creek Hill to old Buck Creek Church to hold with us jointly for a burying ground, but to be used for no other purpose.

Finally, the church put the problem behind them and began looking toward the new life in a new meeting house. They set aside the fifth Sunday of September for the dedication service, and asked Dr. W. T. Bennett to preach at that service.

In February, 1895, the trustees sold the old house, benches, stoves, chandeliers, and other fixtures for sixty-two dollars and sixty cents (\$62.60). Thirty dollars (\$30.00) was received in cash, and notes were accepted for the balance. Thirty-one dollars and thirty cents (\$31.30) of that sum belonged to Buck Creek, with the other half going to old Buck Creek. The debt on the new meeting house was paid off in May, 1897.

It seemed the church was often wanting more land. The members didn't see two and one-half acres as adequate. In September, they sent out a committee to see whether more land could be bought adjoining the present church lot, and, if so, what the price would be. In October, 1898, William Humphrey and C. C. Atherton were asked to sell the church land adjoining the present lot. The committee brought back the report from them that William Humphrey would sell his land for thirty dollars (\$30.00) per acre, and C. C. Atherton would sell his for twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) per acre. The motion was made that they buy both tracts, and the motion carried.

In November, 1898, the committee reported that they bought one and one-half acres of land from William Humphrey and had the deed. They were instructed by the church to buy two acres from C. C. Atherton, which would be the eastern property line and would run parallel to the L & N railroad. In January of 1899, the committee reported that it had bought the designated two acres of land from C. C. Atherton. In June of 1899, the committee reported that the deal was finished on those two acres. The cost of the land was eighty-six dollars (\$86.00), plus the recording fee of three dollars and fifty cents (\$3.50).

After that date there was continual buying and selling of small tracts of land around the church. Perhaps it was ended in September, 1904, when the committee reported that they sold some timber off the church acreage, and then sold the lot back to C. C. Atherton. Finally the committee purchased land from Walter Atherton and paid for it with the proceeds from the sale of the timber and land. Those deeds are all recorded at the McLean County Court House.

In 1939, the minutes record a discussion about building Sunday School rooms. A committee was appointed to look into the construction. The building committee reported back to the church in December of 1939, that two rooms on each side of the existing building would cost near seven hundred dollars (\$700.00). The church wanted the committee members to study the issue further and to discover what the cost would be if rooms were built on the sides and the back of the existing building. The moderator also appointed a committee to collect money for the project at that time.

In January, the church voted to table the issue of Sunday School rooms. However, in February, they moved to take the issue off the table, and to put Bro. Paul Atherton in charge of the project. In September of 1940, the church voted to move the auditorium back away from Highway 431 one hundred twenty-five feet (125'). A mover was found to do the task for one hundred fifty dollars (\$150.00).

Now the membership felt comfortable with the issue of the Sunday School rooms. In January, 1941, the finance committee reported that they had on subscription seven hundred twenty-

eight dollars and eighty-two cents (\$728.82), and had collected five hundred sixty-nine dollars and eighty-two cents (\$569.82) of that amount. The church built seven rooms across the back of the 1894 building for approximately six hundred ninety-three dollars and eighty-three cents (\$693.83) and had thirty-four dollars and seventy-four cents (\$34.74) left over. Heaters were installed in the new rooms for one hundred fifteen dollars and forty-eight cents (\$115.48).

In 1954, a bell house and steeple were added to the sanctuary. In 1955, the membership voted to build a pastor's home "in the future." That future was in 1959. B. J. Coke gave the church an acre of land about one-quarter of a mile north of the present church, on Highway 431. On June 1, 1960, the building committee reported that the pastor's home was finished at a cost of seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$7,500.00). It had a full basement, a kitchen, living room, two bedrooms, a study, and a bath.

It was in June, 1966, that the church voted to build the first educational building. The educational building is a block structure about thirty-three feet by thirty-six feet (33' x 36'). Inside the building were six Sunday School rooms, two restrooms (the church's first indoor toilets), and a fellowship hall. The cost for this construction was approximately two thousand seven hundred dollars (\$2,700.00).

Eight years later, in 1974, the membership realized that the new rooms were inadequate. It voted to increase the capacity of the Sunday School building by eight more rooms across the southern end of the building, thus forming a "T." As before, the membership chose a simple concrete block construction. Between the first Sunday School building and the sanctuary, a nursery, complete with a little people's lavatory, commode, and water cooler was included in this expansion. In the remainder of the space between the buildings, the membership decided to add a pastor's study. The final outlay for this second expansion cost thirty-five thousand, three hundred seventeen dollars (\$35,317.94) and ninety-four cents. The Utica Lumber Company contracted the job.

The new fellowship hall, with its well equipped kitchen, became a reality in 1984. It is a thirty by fifty foot (30' x 50') structure added to the east side of the Sunday School rooms at the back of the building. During this construction, the membership also voted to remodel the rest rooms, making them larger and nicer. The entire work was done at a cost of around fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000.00), by, again, using a concrete block structure. Many members hope that eventually, these block additions will be covered with brick.

In January, 1987, the church elected to study and plan for a new sanctuary. A committee was appointed to give the matter further study and to gather information. The membership hopes that in the future, the 1894 sanctuary will be replaced with a new one.



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 3 April 1989, p.1C:

Out and about in Buck Creek
Rural town on main highway
Enjoys 'best of both worlds'

Thomas T. Ross; Messenger-Inquirer

Each time I pass through Buck Creek in northern McLean County, I get this mental picture of Roy Clark and the "Hee Haw" gang saying, " 'Hee Haw' salutes Buck Creek, Ky., population so and so, Saaawloot!"

For some reason, I'm intrigued by this hamlet that is bisected by U.S. 431 and can be missed with a blink of an eye if you're not paying attention.

There it is, 15 miles south of Owensboro, on the beaten path, and yet it has somehow managed to keep its rural integrity.

Sure, tractor-trailer trucks lumber through Buck Creek and a plant that makes drainage systems and a propane gas outlet are in the community's back yard.

But none of that takes anything away from Buck Creek. I wanted to know more about this community I travel through so often but have never had the time to stop and talk.

I made the time last week, though, and I'm glad I did. I met some folks who took the time to tell me a little about their home.

Such as 90-year-old Virginia Coke, who was born and raised with five sisters and six brothers in Buck Creek.

She now lives in Livia, about a mile north of Buck Creek.

"Of course the community, when I was a child, was made up altogether of farmers," Mrs. Coke said. "But you know that's changed now. Many of the folks there live on farms but work for public works or something."

She said she couldn't put a number to the community's population. But Jerry Dame, whose mail route includes Buck Creek, estimated about 80 families live in the community.

"That includes both Old Buck Creek and 'New' Buck Creek," he said.

"They're within a half mile of each other."

More on that later.

Mrs. Coke said the anchor of the community for the past 177 years has been Buck Creek Baptist Church, of which she is a member.

A white, wooden structure off Buck Creek Church Road, the church indeed stands as a symbol to the community. It was constituted in 1812.

"That means a few individuals got together and said, 'Let's start a church,' " said the church's pastor, the Rev. Tim Waits. "The building used to sit closer to the road, but they raised the church up on logs and rolled it back to where it stands now."

The church has a rich history. In 1894, internal squabbles split the congregation. A dispute over where to build a new church building resulted in most of the congregation moving to the current location off U.S. 431.

A smaller group formed a new congregation it called Old Buck Creek Baptist Church at the old location on Kentucky 1080 about a mile from Nuckols.

Hence, you have the Old Buck Creek and the "New" Buck Creek.

Waits, 37, has been pastor at Buck Creek Baptist Church for more than a year. He said the experience has been rewarding.

"When a pastor moves into a new community, your first thought is how to meet people," he said. "But it was easy here because everyone has been extremely friendly."

"I enjoy living in this area. We have the best of both worlds in that we're out in the country but 12 miles up the road we've got a mall. The city is right down the road if we need it."

The church also provides the community with entertainment, namely with its adjacent Buck Creek Ball Park complete with lights, bleachers and electronic scoreboard. The park is fronted by a red, weathered barn.

On game nights, the place is packed. "It's really uptown," Waits said with a laugh.

Across from the church on U.S. 431 live Harlan and Pearl Nation. Now retired, they've resided in Buck Creek all their lives. But their reason for staying in the community is tied to logic more than emotion.

"We stayed here for our jobs more than anything else, I guess," said Nation, 68, a former mailman. Mrs. Nation, who wrote a book on the history of Buck Creek Baptist Church, is a retired teacher.

Mrs. Coke said at one time, when the railroad still had tracks through Buck Creek, the community was on the grow.

"It just sort of dissipated when the railroad left," she said. "Livia at one time had two tobacco factories and it even had a post office. All of that's long gone, though. When they left, it looked like everything had sunk." But the community has managed to quietly survive.



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 30 June 1997, p.1B:



By Laura Skillman, Messenger-Inquirer

BUCK CREEK – For many saying good-bye to the small, weathered church with its peeling white paint was like leaving a part of themselves.

"I love this building," said Brenda Tucker as her husband, Royce, took some final photographs of the exterior. "There's going to be a lot of tears this afternoon."

Sunday marked the final day of services in the 103-year-old building, but not the end of Buck Creek Baptist Church. A new, larger brick building will be built on the site of the present building and will become the third home of the congregation that began in 1812.

Past and present members of the church met together for a day-long farewell to the small building that has served this congregation well.

Buck Creek is the oldest church in the McLean-Daviess Baptist Association and sits just inside McLean County a little past Livia.

"This is the mother and grandmother of all the other churches around," said Pearl Nation, who has written a history of Buck Creek.

When this church was built, it cost \$1,025.52 and was paid for in three years, she said. The new building will cost \$537,000 and will take many years to be paid for.

The little church, with its small white-walled sanctuary, will make way for the modern brick structure that will be able to seat 300 people; compared to the 150 to 175 that can sit in the 1894 model, said Bill Miller, chairman of the building committee.

It has taken about five years of planning to get to the point of construction, and it will take around six months for Lanham Brothers to build the new building, Miller said. During construction, services will be held in the fellowship hall.

For many, Sunday was the chance to visit the small, rural church one last time. The sanctuary was overflowing. Additional chairs were placed around the church, said the Rev. Carson Bevil, interim pastor.

"We've had a great day," he said.

But for Martine Tucker and Ila B. Boone it was bittersweet. The two women joined the church on the same day in 1929 and have been members since.

"I have loved it all my life," Tucker said.

Tucker said she has mixed emotions about tearing down the old to make way for the new, but she is glad the church members are able to do it.

"I could just cry my heart out," Boone said. "I remember we used to sit around the pulpit when I was little."

Boone also recalled one particularly stormy day when her grandfather brought a bunch of people to church in a road wagon, "Lightning killed one of his horses," she said.

Church members said they know it's the people, not the building, that makes the church, so while they will fondly remember the small, white clapboard church, it's time to look to the future.

"I guess it's served its purpose," Royce Tucker said. "It's time to move on."



Above: Members of Buck Creek Baptist Church make their way into the sanctuary for an afternoon service Sunday. The church held its first service in this building in 1894 and is the oldest church in the Daviess-McLean Baptist Association. The last service was held Sunday because the sanctuary is being torn down so that a new one can be built. Right: The attendance board shows the final tally of the last service.



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 18 November 1998, p.5C:

Crossman Quartet
Saturday, November 21st
7:00 p.m.
Love Offering Will Be Taken – Everyone Welcome

Dedication of
The New Church Sanctuary
Sunday, November 22nd
2:30 p.m.

Buck Creek Baptist Church
Hwy. 431 in McLean Co.



Old Buck Creek Baptist Church – Picture from blog of Charles A. Leach, “Ohio County, Kentucky History”,
<https://ohiocountykentuckyhistory.blogspot.com/2014/11/buck-creek-baptist-churches.html>



Buck Creek Baptist Church – the first service in the new building was on 25 October 1998 and the building was dedicated on 22 November 1998.







The oldest death date found on the monuments in the Buck Creek Baptist Church Cemetery is for Erasmus Benton (1809-1853)

