

**Bowling Green Cumberland Presbyterian Congregation
Otterville Cumberland Presbyterian Church
Pleasant Grove Cumberland Presbyterian Church
Otterville Presbyterian Church
Otterville United Presbyterian Church**

Township: T-46-N
Range: R-19-W
Section: 34
Map: [Click Here](#)

Organized: September 23, 1821
Disbanded: Unknown
Active: Unknown
Updated: July 19, 2005

Cemetery: There is no cemetery associated with this church.

Area: Otterville, Missouri

Records: These records have been microfilmed for the years 1849 - 1946; 1970 - 1996 and are available through the Western Historical Manuscript Collection, Columbia Campus.

History:



From www.ottervillepres.org

**Otterville Presbyterian Church
From "Memorabilia of Cooper County", 1990**

The Otterville Presbyterian Church celebrated its Sesquicentennial on September 25, 1971. The church was organized September 23, 1821. It was first known as the Bowling Green congregation.

In 1820 the Rev. Finis Ewing, one of the original founders of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, with members of his own family and a number of other families came to Missouri and settled in that part of Cooper County known as Lebanon Township, northeast of Otterville. There they established a church which they called New Lebanon.

The prevailing religion of the settlers was Cumberland Presbyterian. Members of the New Lebanon church beginning to push westward organized the Bowling Green congregation, under the McGee Presbytery, September 23, 1821 and fifty-one charter members. The first Ruling Elders were: William Reed, James C. Burney, and James G. Wilkerson. Services were held in homes of the congregation and the camp meetings were held at a place called Bowling Green northeast of Otterville on the farm recently owned by the Neal brothers.

In 1836, the place of holding camp meetings was changed to Pleasant Grove, and was the name of the congregation. Pleasant Grove was so called because of the grove of stately trees and the gentle slope of the hillside which made a natural amphitheater. A spring was conveniently nearby. Pleasant Grove was located on land which is now part of the Lt. Col. Win. H. McKnight farm.

Here, at Pleasant Grove, the Cumberland Presbyterians erected the first church of the community around 1836. It was built of logs and stood near the old graveyard, northwest of Otterville. The first minister of the old log church was Rev. Archie McCorkle. For many years the Cumberland Presbyterians annually held their old fashioned camp meetings here, at which large numbers of the citizens would congregate and here many of them would remain for days, and even weeks, on the ground in camps and tents, engaged in earnest devotion. Since the town of Elkton, former name of Otterville, was not laid out until 1837 the Cumberland Church had been organized for sixteen years before there was a town.

On April 6, 1857, the name of the congregation was changed from Pleasant Grove to Otterville. The town of Otterville was incorporated by an act of the Legislature of Missouri on February 16, 1857. This same year, 1857, the Cumberland Presbyterians erected the first church in the town of Otterville. It was built by Milton Starke. It appears from the records that there were about one hundred thirty-one living members in 1860.

In May 1906, at the time of the meetings of the General Assemblies of the Cumberland Presbyterian and the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., a resolution of union was passed by both organizations. Thus the Otterville Cumberland Presbyterian Church became the Otterville Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.

On June 15, 1909, the Trustees of the church purchased lots from Mr. and Mrs. L.S. Arni for \$1,500 for the present church site. On the southeast corner of these lots was the Arnie residence, which became the manse.

The Elders and Trustees of the church was named as a Building Committee to have direct charge and control of the work erecting a church building on the above lots. Joseph Minter was Chairman of the committee, Rev. C.H. Harell, Secretary, and J.E. Golladay, Treasurer. The contract for erecting the present brick church building was awarded to John A. Schroeder of Otterville for \$4,400.

The first service in the new church building was held June 26, 1910. The pastor at this time was Rev. C.H. Harrell. The sanctuary was dedicated on June 10, 1917. The sermon of dedication was preached by Rev. Robert C. Williamson of the Broadway Presbyterian Church, Sedalia, Missouri.

The One Hundredth Anniversary of the church was held September 25, 1921. The service was conducted by the pastor, Rev. George D. Mullendore. The anniversary sermon was given by the Rev. M.B. Irvine of Marshall, Missouri.

On September 21-22, 1946, the One Hundred Twenty-Fifth Anniversary was observed. The anniversary sermon was given by the Synod Executive, Dr. Ralph A. Waggoner, Sedalia, Missouri. The pastor of the church, Rev. Robert C. Williamson, talked on "Converging Streams of Presbyterianism."

In 1958, the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. and the United Presbyterian Church merged, thus our church became the Otterville United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.

On January 1, 1970 the Synods of Missouri of the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. and the Presbyterian Church, U.S. formed a union presbytery, the "Northeast Missouri Presbytery". This makes our church, as a member of that presbytery, also a member of both Presbyterian denominations.

This information was written for the Sesquicentennial by Hester Mayfield and Charlotte Parsons.

by Edna Ruth Deuschle

Presbyterian Church of Otterville, Missouri
From "Cooper County Church Sketches" by F. Chesnutt, 1993

Theodore Roosevelt said that the Great Revival of 1800 pushed forward the winning of the West by 50 years.

So was the case of the Cumberland Presbyterians in Cooper County. They came to establish law and the Bible in the wilderness of mid-Missouri.

Rev. James McGready in 1799 preached his revivalist message to the Scotch-Irish settlers of the Red River section (Logan County) in Kentucky/Tennessee. The followers of Rev. Finis Ewing of the Lebanon Presbyterian Church at Ewingsville, Kentucky, were inspired. Rev. Ewing and others formed the Cumberland Presbyterian denomination which became official in 1810.

After the War of 1812 much of the congregation moved from Logan County, Kentucky, overland to what became first Fairmont, then Ewingsville, then New Lebanon, Missouri. Rev. Ewing and numerous family members arrived in 1820. From this settlement a church and seminary had begun and the ministers continued the religious movement in surrounding settlements.

In the Elkton* community in 1821 camp meetings took place in a grove called Bowling Green, a glade north of the present church.

By 1836 the meetings were moved to Pleasant Grove, a natural amphitheater with stately trees and a spring. Here a log church was built north of the old cemetery.

In 1857 the town and congregation chose the name of "Otterville." With a membership of 131 they built the town's first church, contracted by Milton Starke.

During the War Between the States the Church survived in spite of Southern sympathies and the presence of 15,000 Union troops in town to guard the bridge and rail terminus. Many of the old members had been neighbors of Jefferson Davis, born and raised in Logan County before becoming President of the Confederacy.

When the Cumberland Presbyterians and Presbyterian USA Church resolved to unite in 1909 feelings were still strong. Nevertheless, in June the present site was purchased from the Arni family - their home becoming the manse.

John A. Schroeder was the builder of the new and present Church. It was dedicated Jun 10, 1917 by Rev. Robert C. Williams of Broadway Presbyterian Church of Sedalia.

*Logan County, Kentucky names

www.mogenweb.org/cooper