

Wooldridge Baptist Church

Wooldridge, Missouri 65287

Rev. Wayne Merrill, Pastor

9:30 a.m. Sunday School

10:30 a.m. Worship Service

Township:	T-48-N	Organized:	October 10, 1900
Range:	R-15-W	Disbanded:	No
Section:	23	Active:	Yes
Map:		Updated:	March 8, 2020

Cemetery: There is a cemetery associated with this church but located some distance away.

Area: Wooldridge, Missouri

Records: The location of the church records is unknown at this time.

History:



Unknown Source

Wooldridge Baptist Church From "Memorabilia of Cooper County", 1990

On or about October 10, 1900, a group of Baptists met at the Bruce School House, located just over the Cooper County line in Moniteau County, to organize a new church to be known as the Concord Baptist Church. The charter members were: Morton Bruce, Sr., Mary Bruce, Jesse Bruce, John Smith, Elizabeth Smith, Winnie Smith, James Hampton, Sallie Hampton, Louisa Potter, Lula Daily, Ora Vaughan, Elma Ogden, George W. Renfrow, Lavada Vaughan, George W. Whittaker, LP. Johnson, L.M. Bruce, Gillie T. Bruce, Leona T. Mills, J.K. Bruce, Lydia M. Bruce, Edward Bruce, G.T. Bruce, Claudia Bruce, Dells Polley, Dora Cooper, Hogan Bruce, Nellie Vaughan, Dora Vaughan, Eva Vaughan, Philip Brady, and Elizabeth Brady. Rev. N. Allee and Rev. WA. Bruce were present for this organizational meeting. Morton Bruce, Sr. acted as moderator and L.M. Bruce

was made church clerk. Morton Bruce, Sr. and J.K. Bruce were elected as the first deacons. Rev. W.A. Bruce, of Clarksburg conducted the first revival services for this church at the Bruce School. The church continued to meet at this school for the next few years.

At a meeting held March 2, 1905 at the home of J.K. Bruce, it was decided to move the church from the school to the town of Wooldridge, and change its name to Wooldridge Baptist Church. The delay in constructing a permanent house of worship had been prompted by the laying of the new Missouri Pacific Railroad tracts and the laying out of the new town of Wooldridge. The lot of which the church house would be built was given by H.H. Wooldridge, Sr. The church house was constructed and furnished with new seats by early February, 1906. It was decided to dedicate this building in September, 1906, but had to be delayed until October. This building has served the church ever since with minor changes to make it more comfortable and to facilitate easier maintenance. It is a typical rectangular frame church building, that could be found in many small Missouri villages, with tall clear four pane windows on either side. The front aide contains a central door framed by two windows while the back has s three window bay behind the chair. The steep roof is crowned with a small steeple from which the bell peals out each Sunday calling the faithful to worship. The annual meeting of the Concord Baptist Association was held here in 1917.

In 1927, lights were installed and siding was put on the building in 1945. During the 1950s the interior was almost completely refurbished for the fiftieth anniversary of the building of this house of worship. The interior is paneled, has a modern furnace and air conditioning unit, and padded pews were added in 1987. The old pulpit furniture has been retained.

Wooldridge Baptist church attempts to meet the spiritual needs of the area with Sunday School and worship every Sunday morning. Vacation Bible School is annually held in the summer and the traditional Christmas program with a large decorated native cedar tree is a highlight of the church year.

October 26, 1986 saw a large crowd gathered for a memorable homecoming with Rev. Harold Renfrow former pastor and missionary to Brazil speaking.

Present officers include: Bernard Schlup, Alex Nixon, Lloyd Rugen, Lester Stock and Gordon Adair, deacons; Lester Stock; church clerk; Jessie Stock, treasurer; and Alex Nixon, Sunday school superintendent. Sunday School teachers are: Margaret Richardson, adults; Patricia Merrill; young adults, Alexis Ferris, youth; and Jackie Nixon, younger children. Church organist is Jessie Stock and Jackie Nixon plays the piano with Margaret Richardson leading the singing. Lloyd Rugen serves as board member to the Concord Baptist Association, of which the church is a member.

Wooldridge Baptist church has had 31 pastors as follows: E.M. Lumpkin, W. Allee, Bruce (1906 and 1911-1912), W.T. Russell (1907-1910 and 1929-), T.L. Tate (1913-1914), W.M. Tipton (1915-), J. Frank Mon, P.P. Hummell, Bro. Goodnight, Bro. Bryan, N.E. Williams (1937-1938), Richard Weber (1940-1941), Billy Miller (1942-1943), Bro. Brown (1944), Harold E. Renfrow (1945-1946), R.L. Alexander (1947), Wayne Masters (1949-1951), J.O. Miller (1951-1952), Walter White (1953), L. James Geg (1953-1955), Cameron Pulliam (1956-1957), Elmer Orr (1957-1958), Richard Pohl (1959-1961), Joe Rogers (1962), Benjamin Coghill (1963), Jack Rowley (1964-1965), Donald W. Commino (1966-1969), Russell Bellamy (1969-1975), Floyd N. Leimkiller (1975-1977), Richard Salmon (1978), J. Wayne Merrill (1979 to the present). Donald W. Commino, Larry Allen, and Floyd N. Leimkiller were ordained by the Wooldridge Baptist Church.

by Rev. J. Wayne Merrill

Wooldridge Baptist Church
From "Cooper County Church Sketches" by F. Chesnutt, 1993

The Baptist Church at Wooldridge had begun in Moniteau County at the Bruce Schoolhouse. The name chosen was the Concord Church.

It is hard to imagine the difficulties of going to church before automobiles. Paved road made travel easier in the 1920's. From east of the Cooper County line to the Baptist Churches of Pisgah, Providence or Prairie Home there were only lanes through the hilly terrain which turned to axle-deep mud or rocky ruts depending on the time of year. Forming their own church was a necessary decision.

Meeting at the schoolhouse were: Morton Bruce, Sr., Mary and Jesse Bruce, John and Elizabeth Smith and Winnie, James and Sallie Hampton, Louisa Potter, Lula Daily, Ora Vaughan, Elma Ogden, George W. Renfrow, Lavada Vaughan, George W. Whittaker, LP. Johnson, L. M. Bruce, GillieT. Bruce, Nellie, Dora, and Eva Vaughan and Phillip and Elizabeth Brady as charter members. Rev. N. Allee and Rev. W.A. Bruce were present. Morton Bruce, Sr. acted as moderator and L.M. Bruce was made clerk.

Their first revival service was conducted by Rev. W.A. Bruce at the schoolhouse, where meetings were held for several years.

Finally, on March 2, 1905, at a meeting in the home of deacon J.K. Bruce, the decision was made to move the church from the school across the county line to the community of Wooldridge. The Missouri Pacific Railroad was laying track, a depot was planned and new lots were being platted. The new name would be Wooldridge Baptist Church.

H.H. Wooldridge donated a lot on which to build their permanent home. The hopes of the congregation were realized at the new location, with construction completed in less than a year. The dedication was planned for the following September of 1906, but had to be delayed until October. Custom requires a church to be free of debt before it is dedicated.

The building has served ever since with minor changes to make it more comfortable. It is a typical rectangular church of the type found in many Missouri villages, with tall, clear, four-paned windows on either side for good lighting. Two windows frame the single front door while the back has a three-window bay behind the chair. The steep roof is crowned with a small steeple from which the bell is pealed on Sundays.

Electric lighting was provided in 1927. Air conditioning and a modern furnace were installed between 1950 and 1987. The original pulpit furniture has been retained.

In Cooper County one finds Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian Churches built before the War Between the States using two doors in front, as the women sat in the pews on the left, the men on the right. This division was eliminated in those churches built after the war.
