

The History of New Hope Cumberland Presbyterian Church

After the birth of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in 1810, the church began to grow and spread throughout Kentucky and Tennessee. It is not known exactly what year the Cumberland Presbyterian Church got its start in McCracken County. However there are records indicating that the following ministers: Collins Bradley, Reverend Winslow, David Morrow, John Bonds, John Ward, Parson Russell, and R.B. McClusky were the ones to first advocate the church here. Some of these people can be associated early with the New Hope Church and possibly the beginning. The Reverend David Morrow is one such person and most likely John Ward.

According to deeds, wills, and other records, the New Hope Cumberland Presbyterian Church held their meetings at a campground on land belonging to John Haynes. On December 24, 1836, John Haynes wrote out his last will and testament at the age of seventy-seven years and one month.

He bequeathed unto his wife certain kitchen items, a black man known as Fiddle and his saddle. Fiddle was to get two cows of his choice, a black sow, and pigs. She was to dispose of Fiddle upon his death as she thought proper as well as all of his possessions.

Secondly, he willed and bequeathed to his son, David Haynes, a quarter section of land where he then lived and a horse and wagon. He further instructed David to take care of his mother for the rest of her life. David Haynes was the first person to represent New Hope Church when the Obion Presbytery met in Mayfield, Kentucky on March 23, 1837.

Thirdly, John Haynes bequeathed to the New Hope Church a fifty-five rod square of land and the springs where the campground was located for a meeting house and a campground for the use of the New Hope Church forever. This land amounts to almost nineteen acres.

The will goes on bequeathing other belongings and giving instructions to other members of his family. The will was witnessed by Robert M. Evans, Jacob Rudolph, and Andrew Rudolph. The actual will of John Haynes can be found in Will Book A, page 164, at the McCracken County Courthouse in Paducah.

John Haynes died October 25, 1838 at the age of seventy-eight years and eleven months. His will was read before the court on the 12th day of November, 1838 and was recorded by the county clerk, Braxton Small, on December 1, 1838.

John Haynes was buried on his property in a small cemetery that is today registered with the Kentucky Historical Society and is marked on all topographical maps. However, his grave is the only one that still has a tombstone. It is believed that his wife and two sons are buried along beside him. It is also believed that the graves were marked by the planting of an oak tree at each grave. There are four large oak trees standing in a row

with one of them at the head of John Haynes grave. His epitaph reads 'JOHN HAYNES, BORN NOVEMBER 24, 1759, DIED OCTOBER 25, 1838, A SOLDIER OF 1776. HEAR YE CHILDREN REVER THE INSTRUCTIONS OF YOUR FATHER. FORGET NOT HIS LAWS.' According to Lealand Coleman, who now owns a portion of the original land willed to New Hope Church, says that when it snows there are many unmarked graves that can be seen. John Haynes' grave is located off Wurth Road on property now belonging to Brian DeNeve.

On March 20, 1839, some six months after the death of John Haynes his son Andrew Haynes executor of his father's estate put in detail the land that his father willed the New Hope Church. It was recorded in Deed Book C, page 6, on April 8, 1839 at the McCracken County Courthouse in Paducah.

The deed describes the property as fifty-five rod square of land out of the northeast corner of the northeast quarter of Section twenty-seven, township six, range one west. For the true love and good will that John Haynes had for the Cumberland Presbyterian faith, receipt where of is hereby acknowledged to the New Hope Church forever. This deed was signed by Andrew Haynes as executor of John Haynes, deceased and witnessed by, John C. Rupile, Robert M. Evans, and Jacob Rudolph.

After finally locating this property, I was able to trace it back, deed by deed, through one hundred and fifty-two years and a multitude of owners in an attempt to determine how it got out of the possession of New Hope Church. As of Deed Book D, page 57, on June 4, 1842, it appears that it was sold by William Roof to Eliza Wurth and Michael Stroper. At this point I ran into trouble and will need the help of an attorney to complete this endeavor.

During this investigation, I ran across another track of land willed to the New Hope Church. It is recorded in Deed Book E, page 259, at the McCracken County Courthouse. This piece of property is believed to be the property where the church and cemetery are now located. This property was deeded to New Hope Church by David Morrow in 1842. See a copy of the deed for further details.

The following summary is based on some facts and a lot of my own speculation. Some time between the birth of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in 1810 and the first known existence of the New Hope Church according to the will of John Haynes in 1836, there is a gap of twenty-six years. There were seven ministers mentioned on the first page that brought the Cumberland Presbyterian Church faith to McCracken County. They must have met at different campgrounds around the county thus starting different churches some or all of which may still exist today.

In April 1839, New Hope Church took possession by deed their campground willed by John Haynes and for unknown reasons they gave up or lost possession between 1839 and 1842. Then in 1848 New Hope took possession, by deed, the track of land willed by David Morrow. This leaves about an eight year or so time span that New Hope Church did not own any property. There are no known records of who the minister or ministers

were during this time. One can only speculate that David Morrow, being an ordained minister, may have trained other ministers from the time he arrived until 1877 when he is shown, by record, as being New Hope Church's pastor until 1879. There are records starting in 1877 to the present. If the property willed by David Morrow in 1848 is the same property owned by New Hope today, then the first structure must have been built around the same time. I wonder if a structure was ever built on the original campground site willed by John Haynes. I wonder why the original campground site doesn't still belong to the church today. Was it found to be inconvenient for further use? Did they sell it to get money to build a meeting house on the present site? Which site did they use during the eight or so years that they did not own any land? It seems for each answer you find during research, you find that there are many more questions to be answered.

I have enjoyed my time spent researching this project. I have a lot more work to do before it is complete. The people of New Hope Church and especially the descendents of the original members have a very rich heritage in the New Hope Church as well as the Cumberland Presbyterian faith.

In the fellowship hall, there is a map pinned to the bulletin board. Here you will find the fifty-five square of land willed to the New Hope Church by John Haynes in 1836 marked in red. The present site of New Hope Church willed by the Reverend David Morrow is outlined in blue. You can see where the properties are located in relationship to each other as well as to the New Hope community. You will also find copies of the actual wills and deeds made by John Haynes and David Morrow. They are extremely difficult to read so you will find hanging beside them a typed copy for easier reading.

History completed by Eddie Hampton
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