Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church
Mooresville, Iredell County, ID1690, Listed 4/23/2020
Nomination by Jamie L. Destefano, JLD Preservation Consulting, LLC
Photographs by Jamie L. Destefano, March 2019

Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church, façade and side elevation, facing north.

Interior of sanctuary, view facing northwest.
1. **Name of Property**
   Historic name: Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church
   Other names/site number: Mooresville Second Presbyterian Church, Second Presbyterian Chapel, Reid's Memorial Presbyterian Church
   Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
   (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. **Location**
   Street & number: 336 N. Broad Street
   City or town: Mooresville
   State: NC
   County: Iredell
   Not For Publication: N/A
   Vicinity: N/A

3. **State/Federal Agency Certification**
   As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
   I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
   In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria.
   I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:
   ___ national
   ___ statewide
   x local
   **Applicable National Register Criteria:**
   x A
   B
   x C
   D

   __________________________
   Signature of certifying official/Title: North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources
   __________________________
   State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government
   In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

   __________________________
   Signature of commenting official:
   __________________________
   Title: State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government
Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

__ entered in the National Register
__ determined eligible for the National Register
__ determined not eligible for the National Register
__ removed from the National Register
__ other (explain:) _____________________

Signature of the Keeper ___________________ Date of Action ________________

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private: x

Public – Local

Public – State

Public – Federal
Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church
Name of Property

Iredell County, NC
County and State

Category of Property
(Check only one box.)

- Building(s) [x]
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

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<th>Type of Resource</th>
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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
RELIGIOUS/religious facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
RELIGIOUS/religious facility
Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church
Name of Property

7. **Description**

**Architectural Classification**
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE-19TH & EARLY-20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/ Gothic Revival

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: **Brick, Vinyl, Asphalt shingles, Copper**

**Narrative Description**
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a summary paragraph that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church sits prominently within a 1.3-acre, roughly triangular, parcel of land at the southwest corner of the intersection of N. Broad Street and Tunnel Road in the town Mooresville, Iredell County, North Carolina. The church fronts the northwest side of N. Broad Street along what was once considered the northeast outskirts of downtown Mooresville. It is adjacent to the northeast of the Mooresville Historic District (ID0043, NR#80002861). Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church is sited within an area historically referred to as the “Junction,” located at the confluence of two lines of the Southern Railway (formerly Atlantic, Tennessee, and Ohio Railroad). A substantial African American community developed around the Junction and nearby Cascade Mills (formerly Dixie Cotton Mill), extending from McNeely Street southwest to the Junction. Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church is bounded to the north and northwest by N. Academy Street and Tunnel Street, and to the east and southeast by Broad Street, which parallels the Southern Railway corridor. Adjacent to the southwest of Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church is the historic Lorene Cotton Oil Mill (ID0053) (later the Farmers Warehouse and Oil Mill), constructed c.1890. A frame seed house north of the former mill was erected in 1926. Both are contributing buildings to the Mooresville Historic District.

The majority of the church property is occupied by a grassed yard. The north and northwest portion of the property is wooded, and a small gravel parking lot is located northeast of the church. A U-shaped gravel driveway leads from N. Broad Street, wrapping around the church. The topography of the church property slopes gently toward the north. A narrow concrete sidewalk extends from the front of the church property, wrapping around the church to join at the rear basement entry door. A concrete handicap ramp with metal railing extends from the southwest sidewalk and leads to the front entry. Mature bushes line the foundation of the church along its side elevations. Southwest of the church is a modest brick sign with a triangular arch. Placed in the 1990s, a small, prefabricated shed is located to the rear of the church. It has a low-pitched front gable roof and weatherboard cladding.
Although the railroad junction and historic mill buildings west of the property survive, historic Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps confirm that four frame dwellings, including a former church manse, surrounded the church to the southwest and northwest as late as 1950. In addition, a small frame “colored hall,” which functioned at one time as an education building for the church and community, was located northeast of the church. Three of the dwellings were demolished after 1950 and the manse survived into the 1990s when it was finally razed. Despite the loss of these small frame buildings, the railroad junction and adjacent former cotton oil mill maintain the overall industrial setting within which Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church was erected.

Constructed ca.1882, the Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church is not only an intact illustration of a modest Gothic Revival church, but its 1941 exterior remodeling, which retained the original church form and fenestration pattern, portrays mid-20th century design elements popular among newly constructed religious facilities. The wood-frame church is a one-story, center-steeple church (on basement) with a center-aisle plan within a rectangular nave. The church is comprised of its original single nave massing, a 1920s partial basement dug to accommodate interior meeting space, and a full-width rear wing dating to the 1941 remodel. The latter replaced an original, partial-width wing. The church is characterized by its prominent central engaged square tower capped by a bell tower with a four-sided spire and a pyramidal copper roof. The central tower serves as the entry vestibule of the church. Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church is clad in a red brick, stretcher bond veneer added during the 1941 remodel. Its Gothic Revival-arched windows with stained glass also occurred during the remodel. The original bell is ensconced within the tower.

The symmetrical, three-bay (W, D, W) façade features the prominent engaged square bell tower and front-gabled roof with overhanging eaves and partial gable end returns. The tower continues the brick veneer on its front elevation and projecting portions of its side elevations, with vinyl siding on the remainder of the tower until reaching its belfry, which is also clad in vinyl siding. Paired, louvered vinyl vents occupy each face of the bell tower’s upper tier. The vent openings are smaller than those of the original belfry and the vinyl siding and vents were installed in 1991. The belfry features a dentiled cornice and is topped by a copper pyramidal roof with a slight flare and small cross finial. Although the cornice is vinyl, historic photographs confirm that the original belfry also contained dentils.

The façade contains a two-leaf, metal-and-glass entry door centered on the engaged bell tower. The entry door was installed in 1991 and contains a wide transom featuring stained, leaded glass and the name of the church in an arched band. Directly above the entry door is a set of paired, stained leaded-glass windows beneath a shared, vertical brick, pointed arch. The windows are slightly arched with a brick sill. Although this set of paired windows was installed during the 1941 remodeling of the church, they are set within the original frame and surround. Flanking either side of the tower and entry door is a tall pointed arched window comprised of three fixed lights above a small awning window. Each pane features decorative, stained leaded glass, and the upper pane features a pointed arch. The windows are topped with a vertical brick, pointed arch. A concrete handicap ramp extends from concrete steps in front of the entry door. The church is surrounded by a brick water table noted for its basket weave patterning. A small corner in the
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foundation notes the 1941 upgrades and refers to the church as “Reid’s Memorial Presbyterian Church.”

Side elevations of the original church each contain four pointed-arch windows matching those on the façade. Each of the stained-glass windows portrays a similar design. The southwest elevation of the church reveals the 1920s raised basement with a boarded over window and two-light metal casement window. Similarly, the northeast elevation contains three basement-level metal casement windows. An exterior brick chimney is located at the rear of the church, piercing the eave of the roof. The rear gable end is clad in vinyl siding, which is likely contemporaneous with the vinyl applied to the bell tower.

Along the rear of the church building is a 1941 addition, also with a raised basement. The addition continues the brick veneer and basketweave water table installed during the 1941 upgrades. The addition features a low-pitched hipped roof. Its northeast elevation contains a replacement fiberglass door topped with an aluminum awning at the first-floor level. A set of exterior metal stairs extend from the door toward a concrete sidewalk. To the north of the stairs is a boarded over window at basement level. The south (side) elevation of the rear addition contains a single, stained-glass window. The window is rectangular in shape with a similar stained-glass design as the pointed arch windows. It contains a small awning window at the bottom, as well as a brick sill. A boarded over window is located at basement level. The rear (west) elevation of the addition is three bays (W, 2W, W), where each window is rectangular with stained glass. The design of the stained glass of the paired windows creates the appearance of a pointed arch. The windows on the sides of the rear of elevation each contain a small awning window at its bottom. The rear elevation of the addition contains a nearly complete raised basement. A modern replacement entry door is centered at basement level. Two, one-over-one, double-hung wood sash windows with vinyl exterior storm windows are also at basement level and irregularly placed. The basement door leads to a concrete path extending to the U-shaped driveway.

Interior

The entrance vestibule is set within the engaged bell tower and accessed by the central, double-leaf entry door on the front elevation. The small, narrow space is noted for its vertical beadboard wainscot with a dark stain. The floor features red carpeting installed in 1991. Original hardwood floors survive beneath the carpeting. The walls of the vestibule are painted white, contrasting nicely with the dark wainscoting. At the northwest end of the vestibule is a double-leaf door leading into the single nave sanctuary. Each leaf of the double-door features five horizontal wood panels. The dark staining of the door and its simple surround matches the wainscot.

The sanctuary is a center-aisle plan within a rectangular nave with a raised chancel at its rear that occupies the 1941 addition. A central aisle leads from the entrance vestibule to the pulpit and

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1 Historic deed records refer to the church as “Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church.”
2 Campbell, Vanessa. Interview conducted by Jaime Destefano, March 2019 at Reid’s Memorial Presbyterian Church.
chancel. On either side of the aisle are rows of pews. The dark-stained pews are contemporaneous to the c.1882 construction of the church and feature red cushions and back padding that were installed in 1991. The sanctuary has an approximate 18-foot dropped ceiling with fiberglass ceiling tiles, also installed in 1991. The original hardwood floors of the sanctuary are covered in red carpeting matching that of the entrance vestibule. A stained wood wainscoting surrounds the interior of the sanctuary. It is vertical flush board topped by a horizontal molded wood course. The original windows of the church were flat-headed, two (vertical)-over-two (vertical), double-hung wood sash (see Figure 1). The 1941 remodeling of the church replaced the double-hung sash with the present stained-glass and installed the upper pointed-arch sash. The window fenestration was not altered. An examination of the interior reveals the original double-hung sash pulley-system within the window frame. The interior window surrounds are dark-stained wood. The lower awning window of each contains the name of the congregant who donated money toward the 1941 remodeling of the church.

The chancel of the church is accessed by a carpeted step. The chancel is centered at the rear of the sanctuary. It does not occupy the entire width of the church. The opening to the chancel features curved corners. On the south side of the chancel is a door leading into a small office, and at the north side is another door leading into a small stair hall. A wall separates the office and stair hall from the sanctuary. The chancel contains smaller pews than those in the sanctuary, as well as chairs and pulpit believed to be contemporaneous with the ca.1882 construction of the church. The entry doors leading from the chancel to the office and stair hall are dark-stained with five horizontal inset wood panels. The doors feature a simple stained wood frame.

The office walls are clad in beadboard and painted white, and the floor contains the same red carpeting that occurs throughout the church. A rectangular stained-glass window is located on the southwest and northwest walls of the office. Each of the windows is enhanced by a molded wood surround with corner blocks. The stair hall also contains beadboard walls and red carpeting. Opposite the door leading from the chancel is a modern exit door that leads to the exterior metal staircase. Adjacent to the northwest of the exit door is the staircase that leads to the basement. The narrow staircase features a wood post balustrade. The stairwell makes a left turn after a small landing before reaching the basement floor. A window occupies the northwest wall of the landing.

The exterior walls of the basement are generally exposed brick or plaster, whereas the interior partition walls are clad in vertical synthetic siding or drywall. Entryways are framed by a simple wood surround. Upon entry into the basement from the rear exterior door is a small meeting space with glazed concrete flooring. The ceilings are low with exposed ventilation. At its south end is an open entryway leading into a utility closet, followed by a door leading into a modest bathroom. A window is located on the northwest wall of the closet, and another on the south wall of the bathroom. At the northeast corner of the meeting room is a narrow entryway that leads down a small wooden ramp into the dining hall. The dining hall features green-painted walls and laminate flooring resembling hardwood. At the southern corner of the dining hall is an entryway leading into a modern kitchen. The kitchen flooring matches that of the dining hall. It features a

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3 It is believed that the fiberglass ceiling was installed during the 1941 remodel.
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form
NPS Form 10-900     OMB No. 1024-0018

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low ceiling, smooth plastered walls, and modern cabinetry and appliances. At the northwest
corner of the dining hall is an entry door leading into an unfinished utility room. It features
exposed brick walls, concrete flooring, and a beadboard ceiling.

Integrity Statement
The Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church is an intact illustration of a modest Gothic Revival
church that was modernized during the mid-20th century. It remains in its original location in the
“Junction” just outside of downtown Mooresville. Historically, the church was surrounded by
four frame dwellings, a small schoolhouse/hall, the railroad junction, and cotton mill and gin.
This grouping of buildings, both industrial and residential in nature, created a small cohesive
hamlet within the greater Cascade Mills community. Despite the loss of the frame houses,
including the former manse and church schoolhouse, the survival of the railroad corridor and
cotton mill and gin preserve the industrial nature of the area within which the church was first
erected. Further, the church maintains its historic feeling that is reminiscent of a late-19th century
African American church that underwent a mid-20th century remodeling, while maintaining its
original form. The church continues to maintain its historic association as Mooresville’s only
African American Presbyterian church. Its original ca.1882 workmanship and design,
particularly its center-aisle, single-nave form with central engaged bell tower, window
fenestration, and interior wainscoting, are intact. Despite interior modifications such as the
application of the carpeting and dropped ceiling, the original flooring and ceiling are preserved
beneath the later installations. The materials of the exterior of the church and rear addition more
appropriately reflect the period of modernization of the church when, in 1941, it underwent a
substantial remodeling. As such, the church retains a high degree of its historic materials from
the 1941 remodel. The Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church is one of a few small Gothic
Revival-influenced churches in the Mooresville area, and greater Iredell County.

Statement of Archaeological Potential
Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church is closely related to the surrounding environment and
landscape. Archaeological deposits, such as remnant landscape features, infrastructural remains,
trash middens, and structural remains of the former parsonage and “colored hall” which may be
present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of Reid
Memorial Presbyterian Church. Information concerning institutional culture and African
American identity, the character of special events and gatherings, as well as the economic and
cultural development of Mooresville’s African American community can be obtained from the
archaeological record. Therefore, archaeological remains may well be an important component
of the significance of the church. At this time no investigation has been designed to discover
these remains, but it is likely that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of
the property.
8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

☐ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☑ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark “x” in all the boxes that apply.)

☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes

☑ B. Removed from its original location

☐ C. A birthplace or grave

☐ D. A cemetery

☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure

☐ F. A commemorative property

☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
ARCHITECTURE
ETHNIC HERITAGE/African American
SOCIAL HISTORY
Period of Significance
ca.1882-1970
Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church
Name of Property
Iredell County, NC
County and State

Significant Dates
ca.1882
1941

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder N/A

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church, constructed ca.1882 and remodeled in 1941, is located near the outskirts of downtown Mooresville, Iredell County, North Carolina. It is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, significant at the local level in the areas of Ethnic Heritage: African American and Social History as the first and only surviving historically African American Presbyterian church and congregation in Mooresville. Formed in 1867, the congregation was established during the Reconstruction Era and was part of a national movement by northern missionaries to establish separate African American Presbyterian congregations once they were free to gather and worship in their own space following the Civil War. From its establishment to the present, the church continued to be an important gathering place for the African American community in Mooresville and Iredell County. In an era of segregation, the church was central to the social fabric of the local African American community it served, even becoming the headquarters for the South Iredell County chapter of the NAACP starting in the 1950s.

Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church is also eligible for the National Register under Criterion C, significant at the local level for architecture. It is a fine example of modest Gothic Revival religious architecture in Iredell County, particularly amongst predominantly African American communities that emerged along the fringes of towns during Reconstruction. The church retains its original Gothic Revival-influenced central engaged tower and window fenestration, while also reflecting mid-20th century exterior upgrades. These upgrades reveal the congregation’s prosperity and prominence at the time. The building retains a high degree of architectural integrity, including its historic location, setting, association, feeling, design, workmanship, and materials that convey its architectural significance from the date of construction and its 1941 remodeling. The church has continuously served Mooresville’s African American Presbyterian community since its construction ca.1882. As such, the period of significance extends from
ca.1882 to the fifty-year marker of 1970, as the last 50 years are not of exceptional significance. Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church meets Criteria Consideration A as it derives primary significance from its historical and architectural importance.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

**Background History and Ethnic Heritage: African American Context and Social History Context**

The congregation of Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church was reportedly formed by 1867 as part of a national movement by Northern missionaries to establish African American Presbyterian churches in the South following the Civil War. Despite the small numbers of African American Presbyterians relative to the overall numbers of African American Christians, African Americans have a long history in Presbyterianism and church tradition. African American Presbyterian history has its roots in slavery.\(^4\) The North Carolina Slave Code of 1715 prevented slaves from gathering in groups, including religious worship.\(^5\) Prior to abolition, white churches often permitted African Americans to join worship service; however, in most instances, they were restricted to balconies or separate seating sections. Such is the case of the early congregants of Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church. According to church history, early members of the church first attended service in the balcony of the Centre Presbyterian Church (NR# 80002863, listed in 1980) in Mount Mourne, approximately 3 miles southwest of Mooresville. Centre Presbyterian Church was constructed in 1854, although the congregation was organized much earlier in 1765.\(^6\) Congregants came from the surrounding area, as far as the county seat at Statesville, to attend service, including enslaved African Americans, who were required to sit in the balcony of the church.

During the Civil War, the national Presbyterian Church split into the Presbyterian Church of the U.S.A (northern) and the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (southern) branches. This separation of the Presbyterian church “had a momentous impact on African Americans, the majority of whom now entered a new life as free men and women.”\(^7\) The southern branch of the church encouraged freedmen to retain membership in white congregations where they would have little, if any voice in the governance of the church. As such, the northern branch of the newly split church declared the South to be missionary territory and sent teachers and missionaries to work amongst the freedmen.\(^8\) Following the Civil War, black citizens sought to improve educational and work opportunities, founding fraternal organizations and churches. Many of the African Americans who were members of these organizations subsequently sought to establish churches that would provide educational and social opportunities for African Americans.

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\(^7\) General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A), “All Black Governing Bodies: The History and Contributions of all-Black Governing Bodies in the Predecessor Denominations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A), 1993; page 21.

\(^8\) *Ibid*, page 25.
American church congregations that developed were outgrowths of the racially mixed antebellum churches. Baptist, African Methodist Episcopal, and African Methodist Episcopal Zion were among the most prevalent congregations to emerge. However, the impact of the northern Presbyterian missionaries on the establishment of independent African American Presbyterian churches throughout the North Carolina is evident, including Mooresville and Iredell County.

In the decades following the War, additional efforts at black community-building advanced, despite a degree of political repression. African American clubs, lodges, societies, and churches offered an opportunity to promote community causes without the intrusion of whites. Upwards of one-half of North Carolina’s African American population during this period belonged to a church congregation, with Baptist and A.M.E. Zion accounting for nearly 80% of all black church members. In Iredell County, the first free African American church was Freedom United Presbyterian Church in Bethany, established ca.1865 (13211 Turnersburg Highway, Statesville). It was organized by a Scottish missionary and abolitionist, Sidney Murkland, who had been pastor at the Bethany Church and was succeeded by Amos Billingsley, another activist during Reconstruction. In the years to follow, a number of African American churches were formed throughout Iredell County. Among those include the Logan Church at Scotts (1866); the Center Street AME Zion Church (1869) in Mount Pleasant; Zion Wesley (1870) in Troutman; and Mount Nebo Church in 1870, among others. On October 4, 1866, Revs. Murkland, Samuel Alexander, and Willis L. Miller met at the present site of the Freedom Church and formed the Catawba Presbytery, “the first Synod for African Americans in the county.”

Reportedly organized in 1867 as the Second Presbyterian Church, Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church survives as the first, and only, historically African American Presbyterian congregation in Mooresville. During Reconstruction, Presbyterian missionaries reportedly held church services at a small house in the present Cascade Mill Village of Mooresville. From these services, an African American congregation was organized, which would later become the Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church. Two additional African American churches were formed in Mooresville during the late-19th century including Watkin’s A.M.E. Chapel (ID0918),

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11 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
14 Ibid.
15 Ibid.
16 Campbell 2008; pg. 61.
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established in 1897 and current building constructed in 1942; and Steward’s Chapel, reportedly organized circa 1872.\(^{18}\)

It is unclear where the congregation of Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church held services prior to the construction of the present church building. As was a common practice, it is believed that the first minister of the congregation was white, yet whose name is unknown. The first black minister was Reverend Billings of Statesville, followed by John G. Murray, who worked with the congregation for more than 35 years.\(^{19}\) It is unclear the exact dates of service of each gentleman; however, various records confirm that Reverend Murray was the acting pastor by 1889.

Throughout North Carolina, “cohesive black neighborhoods emerged amidst the urban growth of the early-twentieth century.”\(^{20}\) These neighborhoods were racially segregated as a consequence of Jim Crow laws. With the expansion of Mooresville during the early-twentieth century, African American communities developed along outskirts of the young town. Such a community developed north of town near Cascade Mills. The Watkins Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church (ID0918) was established here, as well as an African American community cemetery. The neighborhood extended southwest towards town, reaching Iredell Avenue and the former Farmers Warehouse and Oil Mill (ID0053) on N. Broad Street. The present Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church was erected just north of the c.1890 Farmers Warehouse and cotton gin in an industrial and residential area northeast of town historically referred to as the Junction.\(^{21}\)

Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church was named in honor of Major Rufus Reid. Major Reid was considered by far the most successful planter in the area, owning 81 slaves on over 2,000 acres of land. His plantation was known as Mount Mourne Plantation. Reid was a member of Centre Presbyterian Church, where early congregants of Reid Memorial worshipped prior to the Civil War. Reid is interred in the cemetery at Centre Presbyterian Church. Church history indicates that the Major Reid donated land to the congregation to build a church. Deed records suggest, however, that A.J. Sloop and wife, D.H. Sloop, sold the then 1.9-acre tract of land to Adam McCorky, Samuel L. Gilespie, and Joseph Giles, deacons of the “colored Presbyterian” church in 1882.\(^{22}\) According to the 1880 Federal census, A.J. Sloop was a carriage buggy maker residing on 1\(^{st}\) North Street in Mooresville. Perhaps the land formerly belonged to Rufus Reid and was later sold to A.J. Sloop, or perhaps Reid donated money for the construction of the church. In either case, available records are unable to confirm the direct tie between Reid and the land on which the church is located.

The present church building is believed to have been constructed shortly following the purchase of the land in 1882. It is around this same time when Rev. John Murray became minister of the church. Rev. John Murray (b.1850-d.1938) not only served as minister, but he worked closely

\(^{18}\) Campbell 2008; pg. 61.  
\(^{19}\) Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church, “Church History,” pamphlet for the November 13, 2016 149\(^{th}\) Homecoming Service.  
\(^{21}\) Ibid.  
\(^{22}\) Iredell County Deed Book 8, Pages 345 and 346, September 27, 1882.
with the black community, teaching them how to read and write in the old schoolhouse adjacent to the church (not extant). According to an article in the *Statesville Record & Landmark*, the only African American school in Mooresville was the one adjacent to Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church. The same article indicates that commencement ceremonies of the school were held in the church. The school operated as such from at least 1906 to 1941 when the Dunbar School was erected in town.

It is unclear what year Reverend Murray ended his ministry with the church. According to the *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America* of 1889, Reverend John G. Murray was acting pastor of the “Second Presbyterian Chapel” that year. The use of “chapel” in the 1889 minutes confirms that a religious building was built by that time. Minutes of the General Assembly from 1919 confirm that John G. Murray was no longer pastor of Second Presbyterian but was serving three other congregations within the vicinity of Mooresville – Freedom, Logan, and New Centre. Reverend John A. Ramseur is identified as the pastor of the “Mooresville Second Presbyterian Church” in 1919.

By the early-twentieth century, multiple buildings occupied the property within which the church is sited. A building north of the church identified as “vacant” on the 1914 Sanborn map is the schoolhouse where Rev. Murray educated members of Mooresville’s African American community. This building would also serve as a “colored hall” from at least 1925 through 1950. During the early- to mid-twentieth century, frame houses also surrounded the church to the southwest and northwest, adjacent to the former Cotton Mill (ID0053). Among the former dwellings is a two-story residence that was demolished in the 1990s. The building was reportedly used for a guest house for the Pastor and travelers. The sites of the former dwellings appear to be located within the present church property boundaries, as does the site of the former “colored hall” identified on historic Sanborn maps. Both the former parsonage and hall are visible on an early-twentieth century image of the church (Figure 1). The church is the only extant building on the property.

Reverends Long, J.A. Ramseur, and Rev. J.H. Ward followed Rev. Murray as minister of the church. On September 25, 1938, under the leadership of Rev. Ward, the congregation voted to rename the church in honor of Rufus Reid who is believed to have been a benefactor of the

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23 Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church, “Church History,” pamphlet for the November 13, 2016 149th Homecoming Service.
27 The 1914 Sanborn map identifies the church as an A.M.E. church; however, based on church history and primary resources, this is error on the map. Deed records confirm that the Presbyterian church has owned the property since 1882 and there is no indication that they leased the property to an A.M.E congregation for the construction of their church.
28 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Mooresville, NC.
29 Email to the Author from church member, Vanessa Campbell, September 26, 2019.
church during its early years of growth. However, the association of Rufus Reid to the Presbyterian church is indiscernible.

During Rev. Ward’s leadership, the church received substantial exterior upgrades in 1941 including the large rear addition with basement, a brick veneer exterior, and the replacement of flat-arched windows with pointed arch openings and stained-glass windows. These upgrades confirm the apparent financial strength and support of the congregation just prior to America’s entry into World War II. Despite the Great Depression, Mooresville’s population continued to grow and its economy sustained. This is due largely in part to the Mooresville Cotton Mill, which was the largest employer in the county. In search of employment opportunities, it is plausible that the African American community continued to grow during this period as well. In turn, the membership of Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church strengthened. With the end of the Depression and renewed financial strength, the church committed to the major remodeling in 1941. That same year, the school was relocated to the newly erected Dunbar School on W. McLelland Avenue (ID1649).

Reverend Ward continued to serve as pastor of the church until 1948, when Reverend John E. McKenzie began his 30-year ministry. During his service, he served on numerous committees within the church and community. The committees in which he partook included programs that “sought to improve the employment of minorities, secure housing for the low-income families, better race relations, and other projects that would benefit his community.” In addition, he served as the Political Action Chairman of the NAACP. A number of the community’s prominent citizens, both black and white, attended his retirement service on May 1, 1977, including the Mayor of Mooresville, Joe V. Knox (1969-1999) and Kelly Alexander, the president of the NAACP State Conference.

The church has remained active in the community since its formation in the late-nineteenth century. During Reverend McKenzie’s service as minister, he offered the church as a meeting space for the South Iredell County chapter of the NAACP, which was reportedly formed in the 1950s. Church members were active in the desegregation of the Mooresville Graded School District in the 1960s, and the church has continued to serve as a primary meeting place of the NAACP. Church membership has waned dramatically in recent years. Membership during the 1980s was between 60 to 80 congregants. Today, membership ranges from 15 to 20. Despite the waning membership, services continue to be held each Sunday and members remain active members of the community, particularly promoting the preservation of Mooresville’s African American heritage. Since its formation in 1867, Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church has continuously served Mooresville’s African American community. It survives as Mooresville

30 Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church, “Church History,” pamphlet for the November 13, 2016 149th Homecoming Service.
33 Interview with Mrs. Vanessa Campbell AND Jessica Osborne, “NAACP mulls its future in Mooresville,” Mooresville Tribune, September 1, 2013.
34 Ibid.
first, and only, African American Presbyterian Church, and is only one of a few such congregations in Iredell County. Today, it remains a visual reminder of the formation of African American churches following the Civil War, and its persistence through the years as Mooresville’s only African American Presbyterian Church.

Architectural Context

Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church, constructed ca.1882 and remodeled in 1941, is a fine example of modest Gothic Revival church architecture with noteworthy mid-twentieth century exterior enhancements. When the church was first built ca.1882, Mooresville was a young community. The church was sited at the “Junction” of the Atlantic, Tennessee, and Ohio Railroad northeast of town. During this period, the area was likely transitioning from a rural setting to more urban in nature. As such, the overall form of Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church is more reflective of a rural Gothic Revival-style church rather than an “in-town” facility. While its original form and fenestration pattern is largely intact, the church is primarily recognized by its 1941 exterior remodeling that conveys the financial strength of the congregation by the 1940s.

The design of vernacular churches is often described in regard to its overall form and organization of interior space. The front-gabled church and the center-steeple church were among the two most commonly occurring vernacular church types in the United States. Both types were most often single-story with a gable-front roof, and frame construction with wood clapboard siding. Entry doors were centered on a symmetrical façade, and round-headed or arched windows, were common. The primary distinction between the two types of vernacular churches is seen in the steeple and gable features. The gable-end form generally lacked a tower and the front gable end often exhibited more decorative stylistic embellishment such as shingles, brackets, and cornice returns. The center-steeple church type was dominated by a central tower, often squared, with a window or louvered-vent. The central tower was commonly topped by a lantern or belfry, and a spire. The two popular vernacular forms could be enhanced by the application of a nationally popular architectural style such as Gothic Revival and Colonial Revival. Such is the case of Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church, which is a fine representation of a center-steeple vernacular form with modest Gothic Revival enhancements.

The interior arrangement of space contributed to the overall building design of the church. The most common vernacular churches employ a single nave interior plan. This form is generally comprised of a small entryway, or vestibule, and a single, open sanctuary. With a center-steeple plan, the entry vestibule typically occupies the base of the tower. Generally, the interior arrangement of pews of small vernacular churches conformed to either a center-aisle or side-aisle arrangement. With the center aisle plan, the aisle is flanked on either side by rows of pews and leads directly to the pulpit. Whereas the side-aisle arrangement might contain three blocks of pews with a center block between two aisles. Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church survives as an excellent interpretation of a modest single nave church, with a central aisle, and entry vestibule occupying the base of centered tower.

36 Gottfried and Jennings, 2009; p.268-270.
The late Gothic Revival style dominated church architecture throughout the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. The style was employed on small, modest churches, as well as grand, high-style buildings. The style “entered small-town and rural church architecture and became the most popular style for churches of all denominations.” According to *North Carolina Architecture*, the most common elements of Gothic Revival include a pointed arch, a triangular headed door or window, and a tower. These stylistic elements are all present on the Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church including its engaged tower and triangular-headed paired windows above the entry door. The 1941 upgrades to the church further enhanced the Gothic Revival aesthetic through the application of the pointed arch head to the sanctuary windows.

The historic church was initially comprised of the present single-nave structure with its central-steeple with bell tower, and a partial-width wing centered on the rear. The frame structure was clad in weatherboard siding and was constructed on a brick pier foundation. The bell tower featured a wood-shingled roof with a dentiled cornice below. The upper tier of the bell tower was weatherboard-sided with paired, wood-louvered vents. The entry door was a tall, two-leaf wood paneled entry. Above the entry was a set of paired, one-over-one, double-hung windows sharing a pointed arch hood. Primary windows occupying the façade and side elevations were two(horizontal)-over- two (horizontal), double-hung wood sash with flat heads (Figure 1). During the 1920s, a partial basement was dug to accommodate meeting space and a dining hall with kitchen. The original bell is intact and remains ensconced in the bell tower.

During the 1941 remodeling of Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church, the rear wing, visible on the 1914 Sanborn map, was replaced with the present full-width wing. The exterior walls were brick-veneered, and the original rectangular windows were replaced with Gothic-style, pointed-arched stained-glass windows. The copper roof and cross finial atop the bell tower were installed during the 1941 remodeling. The current church primarily reflects the 1941 remodeling; however, the original center-tower form and fenestration pattern are intact. Minor changes in 1991 include the installation of carpeting atop the original hardwood flooring and the pew cushions and backs, the two-leaf metal and glass entry door with stained-glass transom, the application of vinyl siding and paired vinyl vents in the belfry, and the dropped ceiling in the sanctuary. The changes made during the 1941 remodeling and the subsequent 1991 alterations do not diminish the integrity of the original center-tower design with central-aisle plan in a rectangular nave. The original fenestration pattern is intact, as well as the modest Gothic Revival elements such as the central tower with arched windows above the entry door. The historic 1941 remodeling further enhanced the Gothic Revival foundations through the modification of the principal windows with a pointed arch.

In Iredell County, there are several contemporary churches reflecting similar design elements. The Cameron Presbyterian Church (ID0403) near Statesville (2912 Salisbury Road), historically an African American congregation, was constructed in 1882. The wood frame, clapboard-sided

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37 Bishir & Southern, 2003; p.370-371.
38 Campbell, Vanessa. Interview conducted by Jaime Destefano, March 2019 at Reid’s Memorial Presbyterian Church.
Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church

Iredell County, NC

Name of Property: Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church

County and State: Iredell County, NC

Church reflects a front-gable design, lacks a tower or distinct stylistic embellishments. While it shares a similar scale and single-nave form, it greatly differs from the prominent central-tower design of the Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church. Further, the Cameron Presbyterian Church building includes small wings flanking either side of the original block. Unlike Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church, this building did not receive later stylish “upgrades” such as the brick veneer and stained-glass windows.

Completed c.1890, the Amity Lutheran Church (ID0525) near Cleveland also lacks a tower, however, it retains its historic clapboard exterior and prominent pointed arch windows and entry door transom. 39 It is an impressive example of a late-19th century Gothic Revival, wood frame, religious facility. However, like the Cameron Presbyterian Church, it lacks the dominant central tower that characterizes Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church. In addition, it is not believed to be historically associated with a predominantly African American congregation.

Among the most comparable representations of a modest, center-steeple church with a single nave is the Freedom Presbyterian Church (ID0706). Located at 13221 Turnersburg Road near Statesville, the church is believed to have been constructed shortly following its formation in 1865. It is a one-story, frame church with a central engaged square tower that also serves as the entry vestibule. Here, the stained-glass windows are one-over-one, double-hung sash with flat heads. Like the Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church, Freedom Presbyterian underwent mid-20th century upgrades, particularly with the application of its present brick veneer, a similar modification as Reid Memorial Presbyterian underwent. Unlike Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church, the central tower lacks stylistic enhancements such as pointed arch windows like those present on the Reid Memorial tower. While both church buildings are good illustrations of vernacular church forms with a central engaged tower, Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church better conveys late-19th century modest Gothic Revival church architecture with mid-20th century Gothic Revival enhancements.

Located at 537 S. Center Street in Statesville, the Center Street A.M.E. Zion Church (ID0013) was listed on the National Register in 1980. This church, built in 1903, is the oldest structure associated with a black congregation in Statesville. The church is an impressive, high-style interpretation of Gothic Revival church architecture. It features a brick exterior and two prominent corner towers and elaborate pointed arch windows. While an exemplary illustration of the Gothic Revival style, it does not share a similar form or convey the modest vernacular-aesthetic of Reid’s Memorial Presbyterian Church.

Within Mooresville, two additional churches are identified as reflecting Gothic Revival influences: the First Presbyterian Church (ID0048), constructed in 1899, and the Mooresville Presbyterian Church (ID1161), completed in 1904. Both are elaborate, high-style renditions of the Gothic Revival style, with irregular plans and asymmetrical facades.

As compared to other local similar churches, Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church, is among the best representations of a modest, single-nave church with a engaged central tower and restrained Gothic Revival design elements. Its 1941 exterior upgrades not only reflect the financial strength

39 Church address is 1367 Ostwalt Amity Road, Cleveland
of the church during the mid-20th century, but the upgrades further enhanced the Gothic Revival aesthetic through the application of the pointed arched windows. The church retains a high degree of its historic integrity.
9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)


Campbell, Vanessa. Interview conducted by Jaime Destefano, March 2019 at Reid’s Memorial Presbyterian Church.


Interview with Mrs. Vanessa Campbell AND Jessica Osborne, “NAACPT mulls its future in Mooresville,” Mooresville Tribune, September 1 2013.

Iredell County Deed Book 8, Pages 345 and 346, September 27, 1882.


Reid’s Memorial Presbyterian Church, “Church History,” pamphlet for the November 13, 2016 149th Homecoming Service.
Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church Iredell County, NC


Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Mooresville, NC.


__________________________________________________________________________

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

_____ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
_____ previously listed in the National Register
_____ previously determined eligible by the National Register
_____ designated a National Historic Landmark
_____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey  #___________
_____ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # __________
_____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # __________

Primary location of additional data:

X  State Historic Preservation Office
_____ Other State agency
_____ Federal agency
X  Local government
_____ University
_____ Other

Name of repository:

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): ID1690

______________________________________________________________________________

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.2 ACRES

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84: __________
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)
Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church

Iredell County, NC

Name of Property

1. Latitude: 35.586570  Longitude: -80.809330
2. Latitude:  Longitude:
3. Latitude:  Longitude:
4. Latitude:  Longitude:

Or

UTM References
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927  or  ☐ NAD 1983

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)
The boundary of the Reid’s Memorial Presbyterian Church follows the boundaries of the Iredell County parcel PIN 4667231401.000.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)
The boundaries of the church includes the current 1.2-acre parcel of land within which the church is sited. Although the original piece of land acquired by the church in 1882 was slightly larger (1.9 acres), the present parcel encompasses the church building, as well as the site of the former schoolhouse and manse.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Jaime L. Destefano, MSHP
organization: JLD Preservation Consulting, LLC
street & number: __________________________
city or town: Nashville  state: TN  zip code: 37206
e-mail: JLD.PreservationConsulting@gmail.com
telephone: 404-697-0004
date: June 2019

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:
• **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

• **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

• **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)
Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church

Photographs

The following information is common to all photographs:

Photo Log

Name of Property: Reid’s Memorial Presbyterian Church

City or Vicinity: Mooresville

County: Iredell    State: North Carolina

Photographer: Jaime L. Destefano, MSHP

Date Photographed: March 7, 2019

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photograph 1 of 10. Overview of Church Property. Photographer facing north
Photograph 2 of 10. Southwest Elevation. Photographer facing northeast
Photograph 3 of 10. Rear Elevation. Photographer facing southeast
Photograph 4 of 10. Northeast Elevation. Photographer facing southwest
Photograph 5 of 10. Interior of Sanctuary. Photographer facing southeast
Photograph 6 of 10. Interior of Sanctuary. Photographer facing northwest
Photograph 7 of 10. Chancel and Office. Photographer facing southwest
Photograph 8 of 10. Basement Meeting Area. Photographer facing northeast
Photograph 9 of 10. Basement Kitchen. Photographer facing south
Photograph 10 of 10. Setting. Gravel Parking and Driveway. Photographer facing southwest
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Reid’s Memorial Presbyterian Church
Name of Property
Iredell County, North Carolina
County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number  Figures  Page  1

Figure 1. Reid’s Memorial Presbyterian Church, c.early-1900s
Copy of Photograph Provided by Vanessa Campbell
Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church
336 N. Broad Street
Mooresville, Iredell County, North Carolina
Site Plan with National Register Boundary

Latitude: 35.586570
Longitude: -80.809330

Image from Iredell County
Connect GIS
PIN 46672314011.000

National Register Boundary

0' ~200'