The Historic Whitakers Baptist Church

Available for Restoration

105 W. Pittman Street, Whitakers
Nash County

Located in the heart of this small 19th-century railroad town and five minutes from Interstate 95, the Whitakers Baptist Church is a handsome vernacular example of the Gothic Revival style. Completed in 1910, this spacious wood frame structure could be adapted into a compatible new use or continue as a place of worship.

Established in 1740 by the Whitaker family who settled on nearby Fishing Creek, the village took root with the coming of the railroad around 1840, serving as a “turnout” for the Wilmington and Weldon line. The town continued to grow following the Civil War and experienced a building boom around the turn of the last century when fine buildings of various styles appeared on both sides of the railroad. The church anchors a prominent corner between Railroad and White Streets (US 301), the main residential thoroughfare lined with stylish homes built facing the railroad.

The asymmetrical entrance façade is comprised of a steep front-gable roof, large pointed-arch window in the center, and a bell tower topped by a flared conical roof anchoring the corner of the building. Tall pointed-arch windows with delicate tracery line the sides of the building letting in abundant light. The double-door main entrance in the tower is topped by its own pointed-arch transom. Gothic louvered vents are on three sides of the tower.

The entrance foyer is enhanced with decorative trim consisting of vertical beadboard wainscot, and beaded wall board laid in a diagonal pattern from the molded chair rail to the high ceiling. Two pairs of double doors with molded door surrounds and bullseye cornerblocks lead to the main chapel. The spacious and open chapel features wood floors (currently covered in red carpeting), vertical tongue-and-groove wainscot, and diagonal beadboard walls. The pulpit is defined by a raised platform, railing, and archway leading to a recessed apse. Beyond the pulpit and apse is a rear and side addition housing the office, bathrooms and nursery. Apart from vinyl siding added in recent years, the building has sustained few changes during its long history.

This early 20th-century church would make a fine artist retreat or weekend getaway, just twenty minutes from Rocky Mount, 45 minutes to Lake Gaston, and an hour from Raleigh. Located in a proposed National Register Historic District (currently on the Study List), it will become eligible for historic preservation tax credits if listed.

For more information or to make an appointment to see Whitakers Baptist Church contact:
Cathleen Turner, Regional Director • 919-401-8540 • cturner@presnc.org

For more information about Preservation NC and other endangered properties visit www.PreservationNC.org.
Financial Incentives: The Whitakers Baptist Church is located in a proposed National Register Historic District that has been placed on the Study List. If listed, the Whitakers Baptist Church will become eligible for historic preservation tax credits. In North Carolina, both state and federal income tax credits are available for the certified rehabilitation of historic structures. For the rehabilitation of income-producing certified historic structures, a 20% federal income tax credit and a tier based state income tax credit are available. For the rehabilitation of owner-occupied certified historic structures (non-income producing properties), a 15% state tax credit is available for rehabilitation expenses up to $150,000. For more information on Historic Preservation Tax Credits, please contact the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office at 919-807-6570 or www.hpo.ncdcr.gov. The Town of Warrenton also offers revitalization and economic development incentives including the Revolving Loan Program, Downtown Redevelopment Incentive Grant, and Awning Program: www.warrenton.nc.gov/page/bus_home.

Directions: From Raleigh, take US-64 E toward Rocky Mount/Tarboro. In 44 miles take exit 464 for Interstate 95 N toward Richmond. Keep left at the fork and merge onto I-95 N in 0.9 miles. In 11 miles take exit 150 for NC-33 toward Whitakers. Turn right onto NC-33 E in 0.2 miles. In 4.9 miles turn left onto S. White St/White Oak Swamp Rd. In 0.2 mile, the church is on the right at the corner of W Pittman and White Streets.

Area Information: The Town of Whitakers was developed on land owned by Richard and Elizabeth Whitaker, who arrived in the area in 1740 and settled on Fishing Creek. One hundred years later, the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad came through with a siding for engines to take on wood and water being built and operated by a Whitaker descendant, becoming known as Whitaker’s Turnout. A village soon developed and was incorporated in 1872. The Town of Whitakers is located in both Nash and Edgecombe Counties, near the northern most portion of both. Whitakers is situated on both sides of the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad and on US Highway 301. It is a quick five-minute drive from interstate 95 and just 20 minutes from Rocky Mount, 45 minutes to Lake Gaston, and only an hour from Raleigh. For more information, visit www.townofwhitakers.org and https://nashcountync.gov.

Preservation North Carolina is a statewide, private, non-profit membership organization that protects and promotes the architectural heritage of North Carolina. Through its Endangered Properties Program it acquires and sells endangered historic buildings. Preservation North Carolina sells all properties with protective covenants and a rehabilitation agreement to ensure that the historic buildings will be renovated and that they will be protected from demolition and unsympathetic changes in the years to come. For samples of these legal documents visit www.presnc.org/get-help/easements-covenants.

For general information or to join Preservation NC:

PNC • P.O. Box 27644 • Raleigh, NC 27611-7644 • 919-832-3652 • info@presnc.org • www.PreservationNC.org

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