

15, 1960, Rock Church was occupied with 82 members and dedicated to the glory of God. Rev. Hammett was called to the National Guard on October 8, 1961.

Rev. Hammett was followed by Rev. Dr. Hugh Eichelberger (1962-1964), a senior from Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia. Rev. Irwin Gates served the church after Dr. Eichelberger from 1965-1968 and was followed by Rev. Robert Holmes who served the church from 1968-1972. On July 19, 1970, Rock Church celebrated its bicentennial with special worship services, dinner on the grounds and homecoming for families, friends and ministers. Rev. Jack Maxwell was the guest speaker. The Rev. Dr. M. A. McDonald supplied the church from 1972-1973.

The Presbyterian Church in America (1974 - 1998)

The Rev'd W.C. "Scotty" Smith

In the heat of theological crises in the Southern Presbyterian Church, US, a minority left the church and formed the National Presbyterian Church in 1973; the name was changed the following year to the Presbyterian Church in America. Rock Church, under the leadership of Rev. W. C. Smith (1974 - 1978), voted to join the fledgling PCA in 1973. The South Carolina Presbytery dismissed Rock Church August 1, 1974 with a congregation of 159.

The Rev'd Clint Ilderton

In 1980, construction of the new Education Building was begun and completed for use in January 19, 1986. In the 1980's, Rock Presbyterian Church experienced much growth under the leadership of the Rev. Clint Ilderton (1979 - 1991). In 1990, the church celebrated its 220th anniversary and the Rev. Jerry Hammett was the guest speaker. Rev. Ilderton took a call to pastor a PCA church in Hilton Head, SC in 1992. In May 1992, the Rev. Curt Rabe was installed as the new minister of Rock Church.

In 1993, the Shepherding Committee of Calvary Presbytery allowed many of the members of Rock Church to leave to begin a church plant on the West end of

Greenwood, Greenwood Presbyterian Church, led by Rev. Rabe. Rock Church was served by Rev. John Crawford from 1993 - 1996. Under Rev. Crawford's leadership, the church celebrated her 225th anniversary (1995) with the Rev. Dr. Hugh Eichelberger as the guest speaker.

Independence and Renewal (1998 - 2008)

In 1998, due to unfortunate circumstances, Rock Church voted to leave the PCA and was dismissed with property in 1999. Rock remained independent for ten years. Since then, the congregation has maintained a loyal flock, committed to seeing this historic church stay strong and continues regular worship services. Rock has been served by supply ministers, including Dr. Bill Quarles (2000-2002) and Randy Sloan (2002 - 2007).

The Evangelical Presbyterian Church (2008)

The Rev'd Joseph Johnson

On October 14, 2007, the congregation called the Rev. Joseph Johnson to be the first, full-time minister in eleven years, since Rev. Crawford. On June 22, 2008, Rock Church voted unanimously to join with Mid-Atlantic Presbytery of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. The EPC formed in 1981 and dissolved association with the former United Presbyterian Church, USA (the UPC and PCUS merged in 1983 to form the Presbyterian Church, USA).



On September 25-27, 2008, the 60th stated meeting of Mid-Atlantic Presbytery in Virginia Beach, the presbytery officially received the Reverend Joseph

Johnson and Rock Presbyterian as members of the presbytery. Rock was officially received October 25-26 into the EPC. God has indeed been faithful to this historic church. *Deo Gratia!*

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Rock Presbyterian Church (est. 1770)



history, heritage, truth & tradition



our history

Founded in 1770, Rock Presbyterian Church is the oldest church in the region of Greenwood-Abbeville and the Mother Church to local Presbyterianism

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A Day of Small Beginnings: The Presbyterian Church in the USA (1770 - 1931)

Scottish Presbyterianism began in America through the missionary efforts of Rev. Francis Makemie. Rev. Makemie, an Ulster Scot, came to America from Ireland in 1683 and helped develop a presbytery in Philadelphia in 1704. In 1770, missionaries Roe and Close from the Synod of New York and Philadelphia visited what is now known as Abbeville and Greenwood. They had come at the request of General Andrew Pickens, Patrick Calhoun (father of John C. Calhoun), Mr. Noble (father of SC Governor Noble), and Mr. Wardlaw (father of Judge Wardlaw). The men had desired to start church plants in Donalds, Greenville and Upper Longcane.

Small Beginnings

Originally known as "Rocky Creek Presbyterian church," the first elder was installed in 1770. Rock's first supply minister The Rev. James Templeton also served the Cambridge (Ninety-six) Presbyterian Church.. The Rev. James Creswell (d. 1778) came from England in 1727 and was Rock's second supply minister. He fought in the Revolutionary War and helped organize Rock Church in 1770. He is buried at the historic Rock Church cemetery. On October 18th, 1788, the Rev. John Springer supplied the church briefly before taking a call to Washington, Georgia.

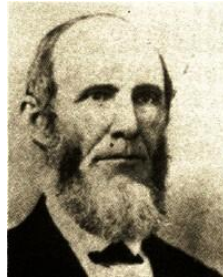
The Rev'd Edwin Cater

In 1844, the name was changed to Rock Presbyterian Church. The Rev. Edwin Cater was her first full-time minister. His main goal was revitalizing the church, which raised from 20 to 102 (84 whites and 18 blacks). The mission of Rock Presbyterian Church seems to have been the organization of new churches, which exhausted her membership by 1906. In 1833, a daughter church was formed in Greenwood (First Presbyterian Church) at the old Presbyterian High School; Rock gave this church 59 of its members and shared ministers until 1890. In 1850, a church was organized in Ninety-six, SC with 15 members from Rock.

Churches were also formed at Cokesbury and Coronaca.

The Rev'd John McLees

During the ministry of Rev. John McLees (1847-1882), Rock Church was the first church in the Presbytery to write a narrative of the state of religion and a statistical report of the church. It was first to be incorporated and also first in which weekly collections were taken up. Rev. McLees served both Rock Church and the young First Presbyterian congregation in Greenwood. The church purchased a scholarship in Oglethorpe University



for \$500; and in 1884 made a large contribution to Austin College and built Pine Grove Academy.

Rev. McLees, spent much time on the Sabbath educating them and their children in how to read--particularly the Bible-- and memorizing the Shorter Catechism at both Rock Church and First Presbyterian in Greenwood.

Re-Organization and Renewal: The Presbyterian Church in the United States (1956 - 1974)

Rock was without a pastor for fifty years until 1956 when Dr. R. Alexander of the First Presbyterian Church in Greenwood challenged the men of the church to reopen the doors of Rock. Rock Church has been removed from the roll of Bethel Presbytery in 1931 due to inactivity. Under the leadership of ruling elder W. L. Bross, the youth of First Presbyterian spent many Saturdays painting and doing much-needed work. Mr. Bross was among those re-organizing members of First Presbyterian that came to Rock.

The Rev'd Jack Maxwell

On June 10, 1956, Jack Maxwell, a senior at Columbia Theological Seminary (PCUS), was called during the summer to help with the

organization. Eight families came from First Presbyterian to aid in the re-organizing process. By the end of the summer, there were over 30 active members. Rock Church had been re-born and was re-constituted a member of the SC Presbytery in 1956. Rev. Maxwell built the Sunday School by driving his old Ford around the Quarry Community and picking up children for Sunday School and Church.

The Rev'd C. "Jerry" Hammett

By 1957, Rev. C. J. Hammett also from Columbia Theological Seminary was called to be the first full-time minister in over half a century. The men of Rock Church built a manse, added Sunday School rooms and bought the Old Quarry Grammar School to be used as a community center.



The Rock Church Fire of 1959

On February 1, 1959, the historic church burned to the ground with only one communion table and bench (on display in the church building) and three pews being saved. Bob McCord, a charter member and Deacon Emeritus, once said that the only guess people had at the time as to the source of the fire was an old gas heater that was faulty. Church services continued in the refurbished school house as the young flock began plans for a new building.

New Beginnings

Under the leadership of Rev. CJ Hammett, a new edifice was constructed of blue granite. The architecture reflected the new liturgical renewal movement on the 1960's.

The basic layout is that of a cross, with elevated split Chancel, pulpit to the right and elevated "altar"-- all in beautiful hardwoods. In reformed fashion, the decor of the Nave (sanctuary) is plain with wooden wall hangings in the shape of the tables of the Law. On May