

New Home Church

As you drive north down the long hill on the Highway 71 bypass at the north end of Bentonville, you can see a little white church visible through the big cut into the hillside that was made as part of the new Bella Vista bypass construction. That church, called New Home, and its nearby cemetery sit on 1.7 acres just southwest of Lowe's on Peach Orchard Road, in the same spot where it has stood for 120 years.

The Benton County real estate records list the church property being transferred on November 21, 1896, by warranty deed from a Peterson to the Methodist Episcopal Church, and it was still listed under that name on the 1903 plat map. At some point, however, it began to be known as the New Home United Methodist Church. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1988.

The origin of the name of New Home is not known, but speculation is that since this location became one of several rural community centers settled between Bentonville and the Missouri state line, perhaps when residents moved to the community they simply liked the idea of moving to a "new home" and the name stuck.

The church is still used for worship services one Sunday a month, with Randy Featherston serving as pastor, and Cheryl Gregory as the pianist, both of whom have family ties to New Home going back many decades.

There is no water in the building, but it has electricity and propane. An outhouse is located behind the building.

According to Randy Featherston, in the early 2000's the small congregation was concerned about what was going to happen to the church. Being part of the Methodist church district, they were required to pay dues to the district, but they were too small for the district to provide them any services, and they were afraid the property would be sold to someone else.

Their efforts to obtain ownership of the property were successful...on December 15, 2005, the Methodist Church, for the sum of \$1.00, transferred the

property by quit claim deed to the New Home Cemetery Association, which transferred it in a similar manner to New Home Church, effective April 6, 2006. Now the church is an official 501(c)(3) organization set up to provide care of the church building and the cemetery.

Picture 1: New Home Church, built in 1896 on a country road in the middle of farming country, now has a large Lowe's store for a neighbor and a new interstate bypass going up behind the building.

Picture 2: Randy Featherston is the pastor for the worship service now held monthly at New Home Church.

Picture 3: Daffodils bloom in the spring in front of the New Home Cemetery located just up the hill from the church.