

# FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Union, Monroe County

Located in the heart of the Union Historic District, the First Baptist Church was constructed in 1845, in Jeffersonian Classical Revival style by William B. Phillips, master builder and brick mason who once worked under Thomas Jefferson. The church's largely white congregation dissipated after the Civil War making it available to a black congregation led by formerly enslaved Reverend Charles Campbell. In 1997, the remaining congregation members deeded the church to the Monroe County Historical Society (MCHS). It has since undergone an extensive preservation project, which was unfortunately halted in April 2006 when tornado-like storms destroyed the building's prominent 36-foot steeple. Since



this destruction, MCHS and community members have rallied together to fundraise for the restoration project; however, more funds are needed to rebuild the tower and re-point the failing hand-made bricks and mortar. The interior has been subject to water damage, as well. The ultimate goal for the project is to make the church available to the community, although its use is not yet determined. Residents are entertaining ideas such as a new location for the Monroe County Museum or a gallery and store for the Monroe County Arts Alliance.



**ENDANGERED  
PROPERTIES**  
Of West Virginia  
**2012** PAWV



## PAWV ENDANGERED LIST 2012



### First Baptist Church

Union,  
Monroe County

**Site:** First Baptist Church

**Description:** This church is located in the heart of the Union Historic District. Set atop a stone foundation, the church is a red-brick Jeffersonian Greek Revival structure with immense 24-over-24 double hung sash wood windows. A full-width pediment supported by two colossal columns frames the indented entry into this building.

**Community:** Union, Monroe County

**Date of Construction:** 1845

**Significance:** Construction of the church is attributed to William B. Phillips, a master builder and brick mason, who once worked under the supervision of Thomas Jefferson during the early construction of the University of Virginia. Additionally, it is part of the Union Historic District, which is significant for its role as a trade center for the surrounding farms, as well as its collection of vernacular architecture.

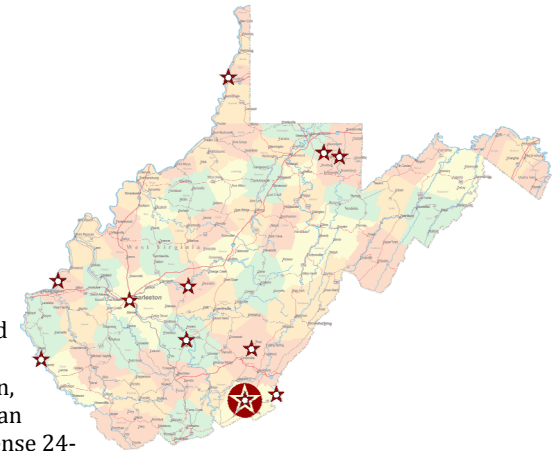
**Endangerment:** Deterioration - hand-made bricks are overdue for re-pointing; water infiltration; interior mold and fungi growth

**Resources:** The Monroe County Historical Society is the main proponent for this building. The Society garnered support from its local community in the form of a very generous donation for repairs that were used as a match for a grant from the State Historic Preservation Office. Currently, additional funds have been received from the Community Participation Grant program.

**Next Steps for 2012:** Rebuild the front steps of the church, which will help with evaluating the foundation of the columns and the building. Subsequently bids to repair the mortar will be submitted as well.

**Goal:** The goal is to stabilize the building for community use, to rebuild the tower previously destroyed in a storm, and to make the structure handicap-accessible.

**Nominated by:** Alfred M. Ziegler, President-Elect of the Monroe Co. Historical Society



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*Preservation Alliance of West Virginia is the statewide grassroots organization devoted to preserving West Virginia's history and culture. In partnership with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, PAWV provides assistance to help save endangered sites. For more information on this year's Endangered List, or if you would like to suggest a site for next year, see the Preservation Alliance website at: [www.pawv.org](http://www.pawv.org).*