



Before exterior



After exterior



Before exterior with top off; getting ready to move to new site.

Sugar Creek Restoration

In 2016, when the Conservancy was notified that a demolition permit had been secured by the congregation of Sugar Creek Baptist Church, we began our efforts to save the 100-year-old church building. The simple, quaint, rural church was home to Morgan County's oldest congregation, founded in 1806 (even before Morgan County was founded), and we thought it was important for that story to continue to be told visually from public view. It's not a big fancy white house with columns, but its story is just as important - it's the story of Morgan County's humble beginnings.

The Conservancy's Preservation Committee explored all the other options with the church's pastor - could we help do a fundraiser to raise the funds needed to restore the building, could the church move it to their property across the street, could they sell it and let it remain in place. In the end, their need for a parking lot trumped history and aesthetics. Thankfully we were able to negotiate a deal between Crystal and Ellis Johnson of Hundred Acre Farm and the church. The Johnsons moved the 101-yr old church to a perch above HWY 278 (less than 1 mile from its original location and visible from the same public right-of-way) and restored it beautifully, even restoring the original bell.

Despite the bittersweet nature of the situation (having to move a historic church to keep it from being demolished), there are a few aspects of this move that quell our angst. First, the building was moved only .8 mile from its current location. Second, it is still visible from Hwy 278, continuing to tell Morgan County's story. Third, the form has been preserved, so it will always look like a church. And finally, its use has been preserved: Hundred Acre Farm will use it as a chapel for its weddings and church retreats, and the Johnsons also welcome the members of the Sugar Creek Baptist Church to worship there. Crystal Johnson said, "It's just so sad that this building would be torn down, and we want to do what we can to save it."



Before interior front, altar



Before interior, back



Before interior, side



After interior front, altar



After interior, back



After interior, side

Crystal and Ellis Johnson have made a mark on Morgan County, and this is just the most recent one. In 2006, 92 acres of Hundred Acre Farm were permanently protected by a conservation easement – Ellis made a voluntary donation of development rights to the Georgia Land Trust in order to protect the wildlife habitat and water resources on the farm.

We are so grateful for the Johnsons taking on this project so that Morgan County’s story can continue to be told for future generations.



Preservation Committee and movers



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