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Episcopal Church of our Savior, Eastport Street, P.O. Box 566, Iuka, Mississippi 38852
Priest-in-Charge: Timothy L. Jones



Erected in 1873, this board and batten Carpenter Gothic structure was designed by James B Cook, architect, and was purchased by citizens from the Episcopal Diocese in 1985 to prevent its removal. This church building was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1991, and it received the Award of Merit from the Mississippi Historical Society for exemplary restoration in 1992.

Evening prayer services are held at 5:30 p.m. each Tuesday, and Holy Eucharist is held at 5:30 p.m. each Saturday during the summer months. Special services are also held on Iuka's Heritage Day and during the season of Advent.

The following information was submitted by Nick Phillips (nick@carpediemlaw.com) and also obtained from an article written by Mrs. Lyla McDonald and published in *The Vidette (Iuka, Mississippi)*, July 4, 1957.

The Episcopal Church in Iuka, Mississippi, is one of the oldest places of worship in Tishomingo County. After a small congregation was formed in 1866, Bishop William Mercer Green made a visit to Iuka the next year and, because there was no Episcopal sanctuary, delivered his sermon in the Methodist Church. He returned to Iuka in 1868 and proposed that a church building be erected. To this end, he donated \$250 as a nucleus for a building fund. Subsequently, Col. R. W. Price, a Methodist, donated the land for the structure, and James B. Cook, a Memphis architect provided the building plans. The architect also donated the Gothic door. Many gifts of labor and materials went into the making of the church which was ready for consecration in 1873 by the 1st Bishop of Mississippi, William Mercer Green. The building was formally consecrated by Bishop Green on September 28, 1873. He was assisted by the Rev. Marvin Harris of Memphis. Vestrymen were Dr. George Harvey, Mr. Steger, and Dr. Simmons.



The Church of Our Savior has worshipped in the same building since the very early years of the church's existence. The structure exemplifies the "Carpenter Gothic" style of religious architecture which is fairly common among southern Episcopal churches. Displayed above the entrance to the church are two symbols common in Episcopal churches: a Celtic cross and a sign of the Trinity. Another symbol on the front of the building, the "St Mary's cross" above the front steps, provides a reminder of an interesting historical connection between

the Church of Our Savior and St. Mary's Cathedral in Memphis, Tennessee. The altar railing as well as the sanctuary screen were once used in St. Mary's and were moved to the Iuka church when the cathedral underwent renovations in the early 1870s. This gift has been attributed to the efforts of the Brinkley family, and it may additionally have been related to the fact that the parents of the Reverend George Harris, Dean of St. Mary's during the 1870s, lived in Iuka during that time. Other than the stained glass altar window, which was dedicated to the memory of Robert Brinkley, an early member of the community, the remaining windows are clear glass and many of the panes are apparently original, bearing the unmistakable "waviness" of old glass.

The original church book has this to say about the organization. "The noble little band of women, Miss Hamilton, Mrs. Lee and Mrs. Telfair, which formed the nucleus of the Church of Our Savior came to that place in 1866 and were followed in 1867 by Mrs. Price who assisted greatly in the building of the church. The Bishop made his first visitation in 1867 and preached in the Methodist Church. The next year he visited Iuka again and donated \$250 as a nucleus for building a church."

Through the long years the work of the church has largely been carried on by the women of the church. Miss Mollie Lawrence was lay reader and Sunday School teacher as long as she lived in Iuka. After she left, the work was taken over by Mrs. Lucy W. Rowe, and through her long useful life, the menial work of the church was done. Miss Mattie Price and many children of the town, grown now to manhood and womanhood, give her the credit for their Sunday School training.

Maria Gregson, a colored woman, was a life-long communicant to which no one objected and no one black or white was more faithful in her religious duties.

The church has had an active guild through many years and a yearly bazaar is held in the Tishomingo Power Association building.

Services are held monthly by the Rev. Edward Mullen of Florence.

The church has been served by Bishop Wm. Mercer Green, First Bishop of Mississippi; and the Rev. Bishop Quintard of Tennessee. Bishop Hugh Miller Thompson, Bishop Theodore Bratton, and Bishop William Mercer Green II.

Rectors who have served through the years have been Arthur N. Weison, Missionary at Corinth and Iuka; Rev. Drummond; Dr. D. B. Waddell, Arch Deacon; Rev. Chipman; Rev. Edwin Weed; Rev. Arthur Howard Noel; Dr. C. B. Reece; Charles Hamilton; and Dr. Mullen.

A history of this church would not be completed without mentioning the faithfulness and generosity of Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Williams who served the church for so many years.

The Church of Our Savior is somewhat unique in that most of the services are the daily office and are held on a weeknight. Consequently, the communicants are tied to other churches for the principal Sunday service. In recent years, this little mission station has become a very ecumenical community, with regular participants being not only Episcopalians but also members of the local Methodist, Baptist, Catholic, and Cumberland Presbyterian churches.

An interesting symbolic representation of this ecumenical diversity is found in the “community cross” on the church banner located next to the altar. This colorful cross is made up of various favorite pieces of fabric which were given by the communicants of Church of Our Savior. These pieces were then fashioned into a “community cross” banner by Mrs. Bettie Lockett, a talented communicant of St. Paul’s Church of Corinth. The matching super-frontal on the altar also reflects the community cross design and was also made by Mrs. Lockett. The processional cross was custom-made for the Church of Our Savior by Mr. Tom Hughes of Natchez, Mississippi, and likewise reflects the community cross concept.

In June 1985, the church building was purchased from the Diocese of Mississippi by Iuka Heritage, Inc., an organization of local citizens dedicated to preserving the historic structure. It was completely renovated in 1991 and is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.