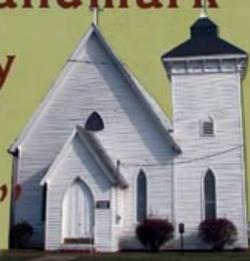


# Book of Proverbs "Remove not the ancient landmark which thy fathers have set."



The Rock of Ages Trail showcases a collection of cherished churches, which are at least 100 years old, providing a glimpse into the spiritual fabric of Colbert County's early settlement. Strong and righteous men and women founded their churches and built their houses of worship. Today their testimony is evident in stone, brick, mortar, and simple clapboard, bearing witness to faith and fortitude. These historic churches are still in use for worship. We invite you to reflect on the past and to seek quiet inspiration as you tour the historic churches of Colbert County, Alabama.

## LEIGHTON:

### 1 Leighton First United Methodist Church

8655 Main St.  
Early settlers of Leighton, who were Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians and Cumberland Presbyterians, met for a number of years in the Masonic Lodge. In 1830, the Methodist congregation helped to establish Alabama's first chartered college, LaGrange College, located near Leighton. In 1903, Leighton First United Methodist Church was built at a cost of \$6200 and taking a year to complete. The Ladies Aid Society raised \$395 to purchase the 29 circular pews with massive ends of quarter-sawn oak, which are still in use. Stained glass windows were donated as memorials and honorariums to the town's pioneer families.



### 2 Old Brick Presbyterian Church

County Rd. 66  
Old Brick Presbyterian Church was organized in 1820 as Mt. Pleasant Cumberland Presbyterian Church, later becoming known as "Old Brick." The original frame building was destroyed by fire in 1824. The current building, constructed of hand-made bricks using slave labor, was completed in 1828. The old slave gallery now serves as a balcony. The church contains its original pews. Stained glass windows replaced the original clear glass panes. Services were discontinued during the Civil War, but regular services have been held at all other times.

## TUSCUMBIA:

### 3 First Baptist Church

203 North Dickson St.  
The congregation of First Baptist was organized in 1823 as the Concord Church. Members met in homes, schools, and the Challen House (Hotel). This building was constructed in 1836 by the Christian Church (Church of Christ), sold to the Baptists after 1842. It was renovated in 1903, when stained glass windows were imported from Czechoslovakia. The belfry and wings on either side of the sanctuary were added to the original single room construction.



### 4 St. John's Episcopal Church

300 North Dickson St.  
The Episcopal congregation formed in 1839, met in homes and in the log Methodist Meeting House. Built in 1852, St. John's is considered the oldest "Carpenter's Gothic" church in Alabama. Stained glass windows memorialize townspeople who lost their lives during the Civil War, a yellow fever epidemic, and in a devastating tornado. Original furnishings, including the Packard pump organ remain. Federals stabled their horses in this building during the Civil War. Regular Sunday services ceased in 1955, but St. John's is still a consecrated house of worship and a memorial service is held annually.



### 5 First Presbyterian Church

103 North Broad St.  
This church building, described as "Georgian Gothic," was constructed of hand-made brick in 1827 to serve a congregation that was established in 1824. It is considered the oldest house of worship in continuous service in Alabama. The original



slave gallery, still intact, is used for balcony seating. A tornado damaged the building in 1874, and iron rods were added to reinforce the structure. The original clear glass windowpanes with louvered shutters were replaced with stained glass in 1904. Helen Keller was baptized at First Presbyterian Church and her family worshipped here.

### 6 Lesley Temple CME Church

512 South High St.  
Lesley Temple Christian Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in 1880 by the late Rev. Lesley, who was later named district presiding elder. The church was first located on what was then called "Gin Hill." In 1901 the cornerstone was laid and construction began on the church building at its present location. It was often referred to as the "Black Paper Church" because for several years it was covered with black building paper while much of the work was done by its members as funds permitted.

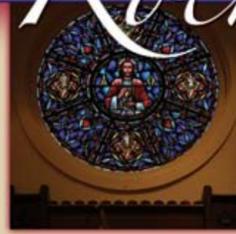


### 7 First Baptist Church

611 South High St.  
Early in 1866 a group of Black people who had been worshipping "from brush arbor to brush arbor" since the close of the Civil War, organized the Tusculmbia Missionary Baptist Church which became First Baptist Church. A brick church building was completed in 1892, replacing the frame building that first housed the church and also served as the city's Free Public School for Colored Children. When a new sanctuary was built in the latter part of the twentieth century, the old brick sanctuary was retained as an auxiliary building.



# Rock of Ages

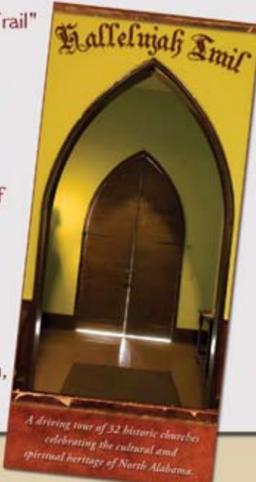


## Historic Churches of Colbert County, AL

A driving tour celebrating America's cultural and spiritual heritage.

Muscle Shoals area, including Leighton, Tusculmbia, Aheffield, and Cherokee, Alabama

The cover of the "Hallelujah Trail" brochure depicts an interior photograph of the entrance to St. John's Episcopal Church, Tusculmbia. The stained glass window shown on the cover of the Colbert County "Rock of Ages" brochure is located in the First United Methodist Church, Sheffield. Old Brick Presbyterian Church, Leighton, is also shown on the cover.



Colbert County  
Visitors Center  
Open Daily



## Colbert County

Gateway to Northwest Alabama

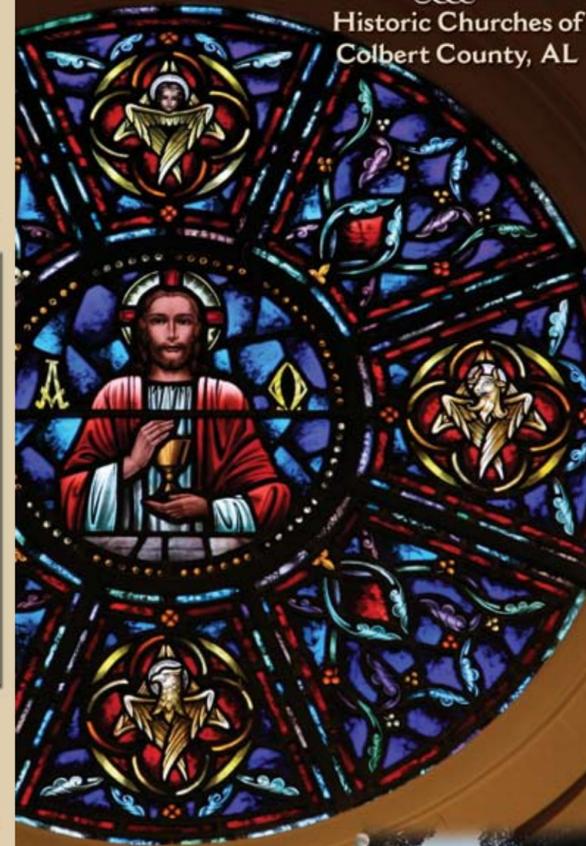
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# Rock of Ages

## Historic Churches of Colbert County, AL



Companion  
to the  
North Alabama  
Hallelujah  
Trail



## 8 Bell at Mt. Carmel Baptist Church

South Mulberry St. and South Commons (Trenholm Memorial Dr.)  
In 1892, a portion of First Baptist Church (High St.), Tusculmbia, split away and formed the Mt. Carmel Baptist Church. The large bell displayed on the grounds at this church is over 100 years old. Formerly hanging in Tusculmbia's old Methodist Church, it was given by that white congregation to Mt. Carmel Church. It is said that the rite of baptism was administered to this bell by Mt. Carmel's African American congregation. According to church records, the bell was to be used to announce service times and was to be tolled upon the death of a church member.



## SHEFFIELD:

### 9 First United Methodist Church

701 North Montgomery Ave.  
The First United Methodist Church building was erected in 1909 to serve the Methodist congregation that was formed when the town was settled in the 1880's. It is said that it took so long to build this church that the pastor remarked, "Gabriel will blow his horn before this building is completed!" The church contains exceptionally beautiful stained glass windows. (See brochure cover)



### 10 Grace Wedding Chapel, formerly Grace Episcopal Church

700 North Montgomery Ave.  
Grace Episcopal Church was built in 1903 to serve the congregation that was formed in the 1880's. The Gothic style is enhanced by beautiful stained glass windows, which were given to the church by



the families of many of the town's earliest citizens. Captain Alfred Moses, first mayor of the town, worshipped here. The interior features oak woodwork, a timbered ceiling, and the original pews. In 1963, the congregation moved and this building passed into private ownership. Weddings are still conducted here.

### 11 Friendship Community Church, formerly B'Nai Israel Temple

800 North Atlanta Ave.  
During Sheffield's early history, the citizens of the Jewish faith held weekly worship in their homes. The congregation of B'Nai Israel was incorporated in Jan. 1906 and included members from surrounding cities. This solidly-built brick temple was constructed in 1908 and is the building that since 1988 has served as Friendship Community Church. Stone tablets representing the Ten Commandments are set above the front door. The stained glass windows date from the Jewish tenure which ceased in 1953.



### 12 Annapolis Avenue Church of Christ

610 Annapolis Ave.  
This brick building was built by the Northern Presbyterian Church, passing to the Episcopal and Christian Churches. In 1895 it was sold to the Episcopal Church and in 1903 to the Christian Church. It was purchased in 1904 to serve a small congregation that had been meeting in homes, now the Annapolis Avenue Church of Christ. There were no seats in the sanctuary then, nor was there a baptistery. Cane-bottomed chairs, purchased by members for fifty cents each, were set around a pot-bellied stove for heat during services. Additions and improvements were made in 1930 and 1953. The building contains the original stained glass windows.



**13 Jubilee Baptist Church,** formerly the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and Columbia Avenue Presbyterian 600 N. Columbia Ave.

The Cumberland Presbyterians held their first service in their newly erected church on the corner of Sixth Street and Columbia Avenue on March 15, 1891. The Columbia Avenue Presbyterian Church held services there for almost 100 years. This charming church of Gothic design has served various congregations in the past 20 years and is now the home of the Jubilee Baptist Church. The church contains the original pews.



**CHEROKEE / WESTERN COLBERT COUNTY:**

**14 Rock Creek Church of Christ** (West Colbert County)

Off AL Hwy. 247, East on County Rd. 29 (Srygley Rd.) The Rock Creek Church of Christ was



organized in 1. Andrew Jackson James on that date gave two acres of land for the building that stands today mostly unused except for homecoming services, an occasional wedding, or funeral. Constructed in 18\_\_, it is considered to be the oldest Church of Christ building in Alabama. The adjoining pioneer cemetery contains burial markers dating to around 1830. A new brick building was constructed to serve the congregation which became Srygley Church, and many members of the old Rock Creek Church now attend services there.

**15 Zion #1 Baptist Church, formerly Piney Grove Methodist**

Hwy. 72 West, approximately 3 miles west of AL. Hwy. 247 The Old Piney Grove Methodist Church, built upon a hill (beside what is now Hwy. 72) at Red Rock, probably dates to the 1850's when the earliest burials took place in the adjoining cemetery. This church was surrounded by the Battle of Barton in October, 1863, during the Civil War. In 1892 the Piney Grove Methodist Church building was sold to the black community who renamed it Zion #1 Baptist Church. The white clapboard church stood facing the river. Today the church is entered behind the altar from the south, with its front toward the highway. The original two-door entry now leads to Sunday school rooms. New pebble glass windows replaced tall wavy glass windows. The church's interior exhibits original wood trim which matches woodwork at Barton Hall, indicating the possibility that the same carpenter may have built both. Barton Hall is one of Alabama's finest examples of Greek Revival Plantation Architecture.



**16 Cherokee First United Methodist Church**

225 Church St. (at Second St.), Cherokee In the 1840's, the building stood beside the old stage road, about a half mile south of the railroad. John Watson Rutland gave land and had his slaves cut the virgin timber and built the church, using wooden pegs. The coming railroad in 1856 and the establishment of the town of Cherokee caused the church membership to decide to relocate the building in 1885 to its present location. Brick veneer and an addition have been added to the church. The stained glass windows were installed in 1950.



**17 Pleasant Hill Church,** near the Lime Kiln Community

County Rd. 5 (Mill Creek Loop), Cherokee The Pleasant Hill Church remains today, as for its entire



history, a non-denominational community church near the Lime Kiln community. In the 1850's, land near a spring was secured, on which the church was to be built. After its construction, the building was also used as a school. From time to time, the church fell into disuse, but the church is active today. An adjoining cemetery contains burials from the 1880's.

**18 Margerum United Methodist**

2420 Margerum Rd. (Old Lee Highway), Cherokee In the 1880's a small log house, called "Old Liberty," served as a school and a church with circuit riding preachers. After Mr. T. Margerum opened a rock quarry here, the community began to be known by his name. Margerum Methodist Church was constructed around 1907. In 1952 the building was set back from the road to accommodate its widening. In June 2005 the congregations of Margerum Methodist and the Methodists of Allsboro and Cherokee joined and often hold combined worship services. The cemetery just across the road contains burials dating to the 1860's.



**19 Riverton Community Baptist Church** County Rd. 1 (Riverton Rose Trail), Cherokee

The Riverton Baptist Church was organized in 1858 and held services in a building located at the entrance of Dark Hollow. It was re-organized in 1886 in a building on School House Hill. In the 1940's this old building was moved to its present site next to the Riverton Rose Trail Cemetery, where burials date to the early 1800's. In 1999, a group of citizens of the Riverton community refurbished the old church, which had been dormant for about fifty years. In 2006 it became known as Riverton Community Church and today serves many residents and "summer-only" dwellers of this riverside community.



Legend

**FINAL RESTING PLACES OF NOTE**



**NATIVE AMERICAN SPIRITUAL GROUNDS**

