

## The Congregation

Rev. David Rice arrived in Kentucky in 1783, and Danville's Concord Church was the first of four that he organized in 1784. The congregation moved to its present location on Main Street in 1789. Rev. Rice helped to organize the Transylvania Presbytery and served as its first moderator. He preached against slavery, and as a delegate to the 1792 Kentucky constitutional convention argued unsuccessfully to include language that would have banned it from the state. He moved to Green County in 1793.

Under the leadership of Samuel Nelson (1809-27), the congregation increased in size and the Presbyterians were instrumental in bringing two significant institutions to the city: Centre College (1819) and the Kentucky School for the Deaf (1822). Dr. John C. Young arrived in Danville to become the President of Centre College in 1830, and in 1834 he took on a second job as "stated supply" pastor of the Presbyterian Church. The church's membership continued to grow, and in 1850 the construction of a second Presbyterian church on Third Street began. The new church was organized in 1852 with a congregation that included several Centre faculty members and students. Dr. Young served as its first pastor until his death in 1857.

When the church was destroyed in the Washington's Birthday fire of 1860, the two congregations once again worshipped together while a new church, which still stands on the corner of Third Street and Broadway, was being built.

In 1867, when the new church building on Third Street was completed, those who wanted to remain with the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A (the "northern" church) moved, and those who wanted to join the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (the "southern" church) stayed with the Main Street church. Black members of the congregation voted to join the northern branch and formed their own church, which they named Concord. There were three Presbyterian churches in Danville until 1945, when the Concord church closed because of declining membership. In 1869, it was agreed that the Main Street church would become "First Presbyterian," and the Third Street church "Second Presbyterian."

One hundred years later, in 1969, the members of "Old First" and Second Presbyterian voted to reunite as The Presbyterian Church of Danville. The Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. reunited in 1983.