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

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.