

Tygarts Valley Church, also known as Tygarts Valley Presbyterian Church, is a historic Presbyterian church on U.S. Routes 219/250 in Huttonsville, Randolph County, West Virginia. It was built in 1883, and is a Victorian-Gothic style building. The church measures 61 by 31 feet (18.6 by 9.4 m) and features a 105-foot-tall (32 m) spire. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1986.[1]

Tygarts Valley Presbyterian Church (TVPC) traces its roots back to a Presbyterian Society active in the Tygarts Valley as early as 1772. When the church was officially organized in 1820, one man gained the distinction of being one of the few men, if not the only man, to profess his faith and be ordained an elder during the same worship service (documented in church-maintained history). Typically, one professes his (or her) faith, is a member of the church for a while, then is elected to the governing board of the local church.

The current building, dedicated in 1883, replaces the original building, known as the Old Brick Church, or the Brick Church. The Brick Church was destroyed by Union Forces during the Civil War, who wanted (and needed) the bricks for their winter encampment on nearby Cheat Mountain. There is a historical marker on Cheat Mountain identifying the site of the winter encampment and documenting the use of the bricks from the church. The Brick Church sat on a knoll south of Huttonsville, on land that is now surrounded by the W. Va. State Correctional Center.

TVPC holds the distinction of being the first building west of the Alleghenies to be designed by an architect, each man having been his own architect up to this time. The Philadelphia firm of Isaac Purcell was selected to design the building. Noted bridge builder Lemuel Chenoweth was responsible for the construction of the church. The colorful windows, often referred to as "stained glass", are actually rolled cathedral glass, imported from Scotland at the astonishing cost of \$3000, in the early 1880s (construction on the building started in 1881; dedication of the building occurred in 1883). Considering the rural nature of the area, \$3000 was quite a leap of faith.

Electric service was added to the church in the 20th century, with conversion of lamps to electricity and addition of an electric organ, a basement was put under the church in the late 1960s, an easy-access ramp was added to the back side of the church in the latter part of the 20th century, and heating stoves and ceiling fans have been added (and are replaced, as necessary). A few broken panes of cathedral glass have had to be replaced over the years. Aside from these few changes, the church remains much as it was in 1883.

This church has been photographed many, many times, with photos appearing everywhere imaginable, from bookmark-sized printings of Psalms to CD covers. In the 1960s, the American Bible Society published a bookmark-sized packet of Psalms,

with a photo at the top of one side, and a Psalm, or partial Psalm, on the rest of the bookmark. TVPC was the only man-made structure included in the packet.