



**WEST FORK UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
**GRAND PRAIRIE SIGNIFICANT LANDMARK**  
**Site Medallion No. 4**  
**905 Santerre Drive**

The Watson Community was settled in the fork of the Trinity River, with prairies to the east and plains to the west. These settlers were sturdy, hard working with a great determination and trust in God. The first grave in the Watson Cemetery (Hwy 360) is that of Mrs. Micajah Goodwin, who came with her family in February 1846, dying within a few months after arrival.

In 1857, the first Johnson Station Union Sabbath School was organized . . . the forerunner of West Fork Church. The Good Hope Cumberland Sabbath School of Watson Community (name later changed to West Fork) was organized by Rev. Andrew Shannon Hayter in 1870, having come in 1869 to the Watson Community. He began talking with the men of the community about a church and school. A committee of J. Lasater, P.A. Watson, T.B. Copeland and P.H. Ford looked for a site and P.A. Watson selected a site of his own property and donated the land just across the road from the plot of land he had already set aside for a cemetery. Mr. Watson sent a son and grandson to Mt. Pleasant, Texas, to get lumber for a combination church-school building. Many men of the community helped: W. Beall, T.B. Copeland, P.H. Ford, S.D. Lasater, J.H. Martin, P.L. Wheeler, J.A. Wheeler, J.H. Watson, Rev. Hayter and the committee members.

Since the beginning of the West Fork Church, there have been three buildings. The original was used from 1870 until 1905, when a larger and modern building replaced it. In 1902 the school had been moved to a new site, donated by Robert Henry Lasater. The second church building was constructed at the cost of \$1,312.45, and was dedicated July 2, 1905. The third church building constructed on the site was built after fires destroyed both the West Fork Church and the Watson School buildings on December 8, 1924. Church services were held in the home of Mr. and Mrs. A.H. Copeland until the school had been rebuilt. For the third church building, donations were given by the members and friends, totaling approximately \$1,350.00. This new building was dedicated on April 18, 1926, and is still in use today. When the Dallas-Fort Worth Turnpike came through, the building was moved to its present site on Santerre Drive.

In 1956 it was remodeled with a fellowship hall, classrooms, a kitchen and restrooms were added. A steeple was also added, designed and built by Olen Wheeler.

The quiet little community as it was once known no longer remains, but the little country church is standing proud and is being used by those who have a love for the worship of God in a scene that brings the past to the present.

Located in the Tarrant County portion of Grand Prairie, in the midst of the Great Southwest Industrial District, this is a most unique landmark in our fast growing city.

Recap: Ruthe Jackson From their Centennial History notes of 1970.