

# The Presbyterian Church of Danville

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October 4, 2019

Statement by The Presbyterian Church of Danville concerning the relocation of a Confederate statue from its property.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Over the past 18 months, the Session of The Presbyterian Church of Danville (the governing body of the church) has prayerfully considered how the Confederate monument located on its premises affects the church's ability to serve God and this community. This process included thinking about the church's long history with the monument, the historical context in which it was erected, and our theological obligations to God and community. As a result, the Session has voted to remove the monument from church grounds and has petitioned the City of Danville to allow us to relocate the monument to Bellevue Cemetery.

It is our belief and hope that our church and our community want to be welcoming to all people, and that the current location of the monument on the church's property is contrary to our purposes as citizens and Christians.

We have received the support of the local chapter of the NAACP which also believes that relocation is the best choice for our community. We are grateful to live alongside this organization and other community partners as we work to make our city a more welcoming place.

While there are many reasons for this decision, the most important considerations are:

1. This monument impedes our ability to work with all members of our community because of the historical context in which it was erected.
2. This monument encourages division within the community and, in its easily accessible location, will always be at risk from vandalism and public demonstrations.
3. This location was never the favored resting place for the monument but was instead a compromise location that is no longer appropriate, as this land is now private property.

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When the United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Sons of Confederate Veterans were considering locations for the monument in 1910, Bellevue Cemetery was the first choice. Our understanding is that McDowell Park, then owned by the City of Danville, was the compromise location. In 1881, the church deeded the property to the City and for most of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the property served as a public park. In connection with the expansion of the church facility, the City deeded the property back to The Presbyterian Church in 1993.

The Kate Morrison Breckinridge Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) dedicated the monument, which includes a statue of Captain Robert D. Logan, a Boyle County resident and Confederate officer. While it features a marble image of Logan, the monument was dedicated by the UCD to all the soldiers from the county who fought and died for the Confederacy. As we move forward in our effort to relocate the monument, we are cooperating with the Kentucky state office of the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

Captain Logan was not a member of our congregation and is not buried at this site. In fact, he is buried in Bellevue Cemetery as are many of the Confederate soldiers the monument honors, so this move will allow our community to tell a clearer story about the Civil War in this county while also preserving and protecting the monument.

The Session of the Presbyterian Church of Danville intends for this removal to be one part of a larger plan to consider our past and to plan for our future. This congregation has been in the community for over two hundred years and has been the home not only of Confederate soldiers but also Union soldiers, abolitionists, slaves, and free people of color as well. We look forward to the process of discovery, discernment, and reconciliation that can begin with the relocation of the monument.