



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Greene County Commission rededicates Cave Spring Memorial Church, appoints new Planning Board member



WALNUT GROVE, Mo. – The Greene County Commission and the Greene County Historic Sites Board gathered today to rededicate the Cave Spring Memorial Church with the installation of a new official historical marker, commemorating one of the region's foundational pioneer landmarks.

During the official meeting held on site, commissioners also announced the appointment of Amy Suzanne Farmer Westermann to the Greene County Planning Board.

The rededication honors the deep heritage of the Cave Spring community in northwestern Greene County. Originally organized in the 1830s as Mount Zion Presbyterian Church, the congregation is recognized as the oldest Presbyterian congregation established west of the Mississippi River. The current structure, erected in 1867, serves as the third building constructed on the historic grounds and stands as a lasting symbol of the pioneer families who settled the area around the time Greene County was incorporated.



Regular services ended in 1968 when the congregation merged with the Presbyterian church in nearby Willard. The building was designated a memorial church the following year. In 1980, a community effort kept the structure from being dismantled and moved out of the county, and in 1981 it was renamed Cave Spring Memorial Church and placed under the care of local residents. It continues to host periodic services and community gatherings, and its cemetery holds the graves of many of the area's earliest settlers.

The church, located at 8362-8392 N. Farm Road 81, was first recognized as a Greene County Historic Site in 1983.

"This church was standing before Greene County had a railroad, a courthouse or most of the towns we know today," said Presiding Commissioner Bob Dixon. "The families who built it and the neighbors who fought to keep it here gave us something worth protecting. This marker is the county's way of making sure the next generation knows why it matters."

Following the ceremony, the Commission formally appointed Westermann to fill a seat on the Greene County Planning Board.

Westermann is a seventh-generation Greene Countian whose paternal ancestors helped settle northwestern Greene County in the 1830s, founded the village of Cave Spring, and established Mount Zion Presbyterian Church. Her family also maintains a long legacy of civic leadership in the county; her grandfather, Frank Farmer, served as a founding trustee of Ozarks Technical Community College, and her father, Andy Farmer, previously served both as a Greene County Commissioner and on the county's Planning Board.



Westermann holds degrees from Willard High School, Maryville University, and the Saint Louis University School of Law. She currently lives on her family's Century Farm near Willard, where she represents the sixth generation residing in the 1890s farmhouse and assists her family in raising beef cattle. She is actively involved in the community, serving as a member of the Greene County Historic Sites Board, the Cave Springs Memorial Church Board, the Daughters of the American Revolution Rachel Donelson Chapter, and the Springfield Metropolitan Bar Association.

"Amy brings a rare combination to the Planning Board," said Commissioner Rusty MacLachlan. "She is an attorney, she is a working cattle producer and she has deeper roots in this county than just about anyone. She understands what is at stake when we make decisions about land."

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Greene County is the State of Missouri's fourth most populous county, serving approximately 308,000 people. Its mission is to provide all citizens of Greene County, including those in its cities, a safe and thriving community through excellent customer service, unparalleled dedication, and the efficient use of taxpayer dollars. The Greene County Commission is the executive body of Greene County operating under guidelines established in the Revised Statutes of the State of Missouri. Within that authority the Commission enacts ordinances, resolutions and policies, supervises the activities of county departments, fixes salaries, adopts the annual budget, provides for construction and other services, and conducts hearings on planning and zoning matters.

For additional information contact the Greene County Commission's Public Information Office at 417-844-4311 or pio@greenecountymo.gov.