

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic First Congregational Church ~~of Memphis~~ and Parish House

and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number 234 So. Watkins Street not for publication

city, town Memphis vicinity of congressional district Eighth

state Tennessee code 047 county Shelby code 157

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name First Congregational Church of Memphis

street & number 234 So. Watkins Street

city, town Memphis vicinity of state Tennessee 38104

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds

street & number 160 North Main Street

city, town Memphis state Tennessee 38103

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Memphis Landmarks Commission Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date January 1978 federal state county local

depository for survey records Memphis Landmarks Commission

city, town Memphis state Tennessee 38103

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The First Congregational Church and the Parish House are located on a single lot at the southeast corner of the intersection of Eastmoreland Avenue and South Watkins Street in mid-town Memphis. Facing Watkins Street to the west, both buildings are situated at the western edge of a large residential area known as Central Gardens.

An example of the Georgian Revival style, the building can be considered a high one story, with "Flemish bond" brick walls, a stone water table, a low-pitched gable tile roof with a cupola and a partial basement in the rear (East).

The main entrance facade (West), three bays wide, features a formal portico that is raised above the street level about four feet, with access by wide steps. The style of the classical order is modified Ionic, with single fluted columns flanking the entrance and paired columns at the ends. On the wall behind the portico, paired pilasters are located at the ends; both columns and pilasters are painted wood. Above the wood entablature, the pediment is stucco, ornamented with stucco swag moldings around a center ornamental window. The square entrance vestibule, which supports the cupola and its base, projects into the portico and is accessible by large wooden double doors with glass transom and wood shoulder architrave. Centered in each bay adjacent to the center (door) bay are two vertically arranged windows.

The North side of the building faces the side street and reflects the raised floor level, with stone water table, the side of the front portico and symmetrically spaced windows (seven) with a typically Georgian doorway (Doric) near the east end of the elevation. Three basement windows with areaways indicate the partial basement. There are leader heads and downspouts at each end to carry down rain water from the gutter above.

The South side elevation is similar to the North except that there is no formal doorway taking the place of a window. However, a high brick chimney rising above the ridge is apparent on this facade.

The rear facade (East) is similar in dimensions to the front facade, however there is no portico to interrupt the brick work which rises to the eaves. A painted wooden molding defines the area of a quasi pediment, the brick of which is penetrated by a round attic window that has four stone keystones at the cardinal points. There are three symmetrically placed window groupings with corresponding areaway windows and a stairway that descends to the central basement door.

Windows: The tall 6 over 6 double hung wooden windows are accompanied above by smaller 3-light fixed glass windows, separated by approximately two feet of brick. The small panes are glazed with an obscured glass that was originally installed. The windows are topped with flat arches and decorated stone keystones. The sills are limestone. All windows are symmetrically spaced.

Doorways and doors: The main entrance doors on the west under the portico are double doors with fixed glazing above, framed in a formal style. The North entrance doors are paneled wood doors with fixed glazing above and are framed in wood in a typical Georgian manner with Doric columns, pilasters and a pediment-like hood with an arched soffit, all in wood.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates Church 1910 Builder/Architect Walk C. Jones, Sr.

Parish House 1926
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The First Congregational Church, constructed in 1910, is significant both as a fine example of the Georgian Revival style and as the work of prominent Memphis architect Walk Claridge Jones, Sr.

A regional leader in the profession, Jones abhorred modern architecture, preferring instead a simplified classical style. The First Congregational Church, with its Ionic portico, rectangular plan and symmetrical fenestration, illustrates this philosophy. Jones, studied draftsmanship under Mathias Harvey Baldwin of the noted Memphis firm of E.C. Jones and Baldwin, also under Major C.C. Burke and H.J. Hain. He became the senior member of Jones and Furbringer, Architects. For many years he was architect for the City Board of Education; among his designs was that of Rozell School, a model of arrangement. He designed the Old North Memphis Savings Bank (now the E.H. Crump Building at Main and Adams); the Jewish Synagogue on Poplar at Montgomery (still in use) following closely the lines of the St. Sophis Mosque in Constantinople; and buildings at Oakville Sanitarium. His grandson, Walk C. Jones III is also a noted Memphis architect today.

The founding of the Congregationalist movement in Memphis was in the year 1862 when Rev. Thomas Eliakim Bliss visited the city, and on March 28, 1864 its full organization was effected with 25 members. This was the first Congregational Church in both Memphis and the State of Tennessee.

In late 1864 a small frame building was erected at a cost of \$5,000.00 on the north side of the street at 100 Union (old numbering), just east of Third Street. In 1867 this building was replaced with a brick and stone structure, which served as their house of worship until the 1910 dedication to the present church at the southeast corner of S. Watkins and Eastmoreland. No architectural or structural alteration of the Church's exterior has been made to date.

The church has had several name changes during its life. From 1862 to 1867 it bore the name Union Congregational Church. Successive names were: from 1867 to 1881, First Congregational Church; from 1881 to 1910, Strangers Congregational Church; from 1910 onward it is again the First Congregational Church of Memphis.

Original church blueprints, dated November 3, 1909, are preserved and will be copied for Tennessee Archives depository.

The parish house, which was constructed in 1926, is related architecturally to the church. A period revival house, it employs Georgian decoration.

Because of its architectural significance and as an example of the work of a prominent local architect, the First Congregational Church is an important structure for Memphis.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Strangers First by Marshall Wingfield, DD, 1958. Published by Superior Press of Memphis. Copy may be seen at Memphis State University Library, "Mississippi Valley Collection".
Mid-South and Its Builders, 1920, p. 766, biography of architect Walk C. Jones I

10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property 5/10 **UTM NOT VERIFIED**
Quadrangle name Northwest Memphis **ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED** Quadrangle scale 1:24000
UMT References

A	1 5	7 7 1 9 8 0	3 8 9 1 9 2 0	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Attached Maps

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title George M. Slager, Chairman Board of Trustees and Mrs. Eleanor D. Hughes
organization First Congregational Church date December, 1979
street & number 1304 Yorkshire Drive telephone 901/761-0213
city or town Memphis state Tennessee 38117

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Herbert L. Hays

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission date 6/3/80

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.	
<u>W. Roy Luce</u>	date <u>7/21/80</u>
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest: <u>Kristen O'Connell</u>	date <u>7/8/80</u>
Chief Registration	

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Cupola: The octagonal, louvered cupola is mounted over the square brick base formed by the vestibule below and contains the original bell which is rung for services. The roof of the cupola is painted terne metal over copper sheeting.

Roof: Shape, covering: A low-sloped gable roof with green tile covering.

Interior

Basement: There is a partial basement under the rear of the church only. It contains furnace room, restrooms, kitchen and assembly space.

First Floor: The entrance from the portico opens into the small vestibule which leads to the sanctuary. There are ten rows of cushioned wooden pews up to the pulpit. Behind the pulpit the choir area is situated before the ornamental pipes of the organ (Kilgen-1900) and organ room. Corridors on either side enable one to reach the robe area in the rear.

Second Floor: The tall space in the rear has been divided horizontally in the past to provide Sunday School rooms and a chapel above the first floor robe area.

Attic: The attic is unfinished over the main block.

Stairways: A small open well stairway connects the basement and second floor with the first floor and is located in the corridor to the north of the organ room.

Flooring: The sanctuary is carpeted and the rest, in general, is floored with composition tile. There is some ceramic tile work in the basement under the open well stair.

Wall and Ceiling Finish: The sanctuary is paneled with white painted wood, which is accented with dark stained base and railings. The ceiling of this space is plaster with moldings, painted white.

Lighting: The sanctuary is lighted generally by four simple hanging chandeliers and matching wall bracket lights. The wall bracket fixtures still retain their original gas jets.

Site

General Setting and Orientation: The church is rectangular in plan and faces west. It is located on a corner lot which is landscaped and contains trees and a small parking lot. There is a parish house in the lot to the south.

Parish House

Architectural Character: This house is a mixture of many adapted styles, sympathetically Georgian.

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Exterior

Generally, the building is a one and one half story house with brick veneer, gable roof, a 3-bay facade and a flat-roofed front porch. The first floor exterior walls are veneered with brick that closely match those on the nearby church building; however, the pattern is running bond, rather than Flemish bond. The gables, dormers and a small part of the south elevation is faced with horizontal lapped siding, painted white. Windows are 12 over 12 double hung sash. The porch is supported with paired posts flanking the entrance and a triple grouping at the corners to reflect those on the corners of the church portico and the front entrance door is formal with a broken scroll pediment. The roof pitch appears to be 5 to 12 and is surfaced with black asphalt shingles. There are two brick chimneys, one at each end of the building, that rise about three feet above the highest roof ridge.

Interior

The house plan remains as basically built, but is used for church and Sunday School activities.

Site

General setting and orientation: The house is almost rectangular in plan and faces west. The house is separated from the church to the north by a planted open space about twenty-five feet wide. The asphalt paved parking lot on the east extends to the rear of the house.

First Congregational Church Memphis

MONROE AVE.

J.W. Ramsey 192.1
 Robert Metcalf, et al. 200
 Jere Klyce Jr. 45
 Sarah Metcalf 50
 Union Realty 50
 Marie Hill 100
 Marie Lowenstein 100
 J.K. Vise 150
 J.W. Ramsey, et al. 145
 Julius Lewis 293.25
 MENEIL ST.

UNION AVE.

Eniola Crafton, J.W. Ramsey 261.92
 John Robt. 50
 Terrell Dawkins 150
 Stanley Okeon 100
 Union Bldg. & Supply Co. 152
 Town & Country Estates, Inc. 345
 Memphis Bank & Trust, Inc. 276.88
 Nineteenth Century Club 253.8
 Beitz Investment, Inc. 118.1
 Messinger & Co. 184.8
 S.T.

EAST MORELAND AVE.

Frank G. Link 189.5
 Raffle Malene 190.5
 Elizabeth Kamel 150
 Jessamine Topfitt 150
 Ida Johnson 150
 Bill E. Goodwin 150
 Wm. L. D. Higgins 150
 Martha M. Call 150
 Pauline Holden 150
 PINE ST.
 Alice Stryker 150
 Mary Ann Vickery 150
 Mary Newman 150
 Town & Country Estates, Inc. 150
 E.L. Gardiner 150
 Christine Newbern 150
 Town & Country Estates, Inc. 150
 Marie G. Wingfield 150
 Town & Country Estates, Inc. 305
 WATKINS ST.
 First Congregational Church of M.S. 150
 Katherine Widgery 50
 Stanley C. Atwell 50
 Geraldine Page 50
 O.A. McKeithan 50
 Palmer Bartlett 60
 Lois Howlett 50
 Florence Smith 52.5
 Daming G. Kilvas 52.5
 Arthur Pera 140.9
 Georges Huckaba 60
 Trent Esienhower 60
 Max L. Valentine 65
 Myron Hall 70
 KIM BROUGH ST.

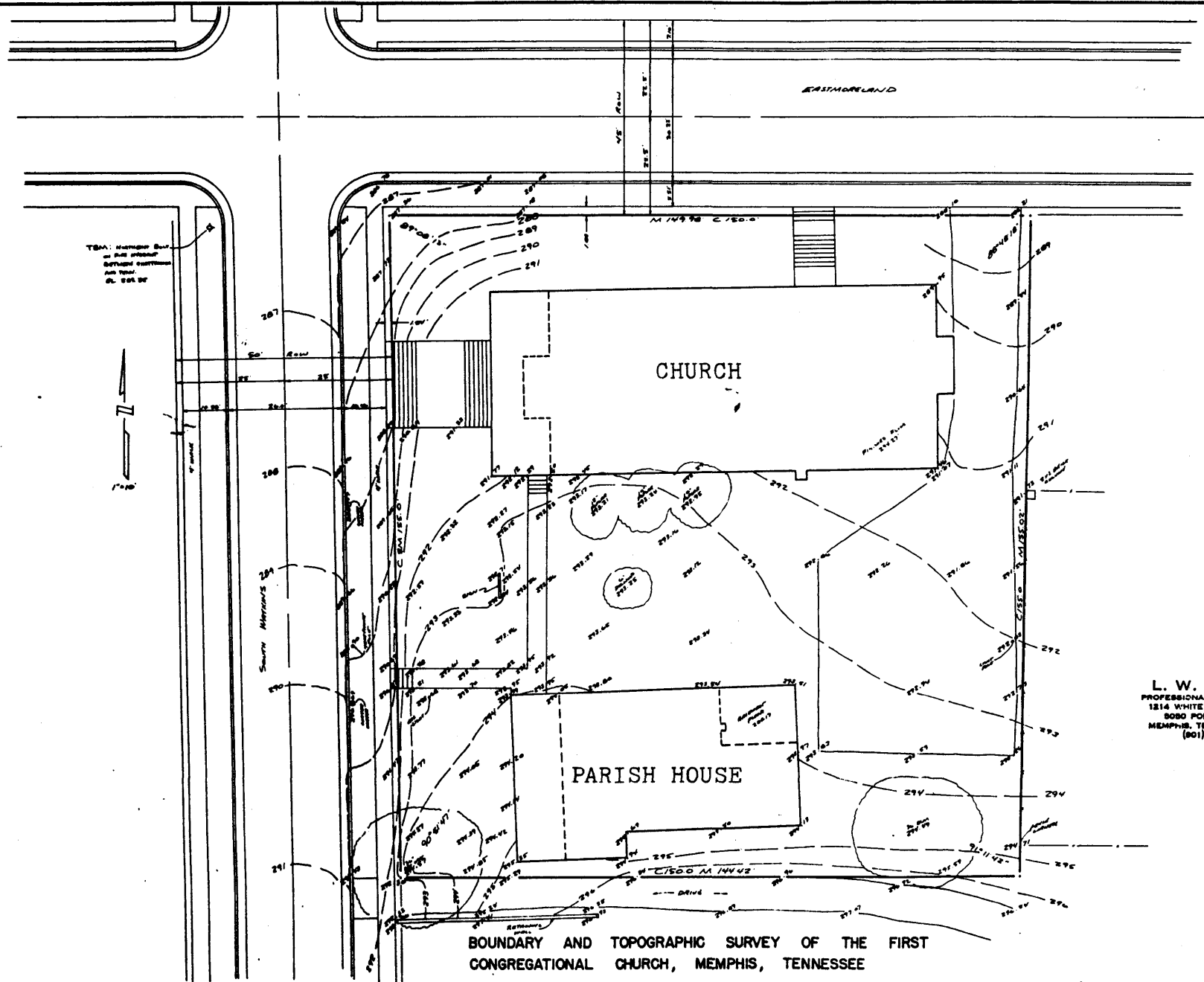
LINDEN AVE.

Lucille May Allen 291.97
 Lucille May Allen 163.79
 Lucille May Allen 163.8
 Lucille May Allen 163.8
 John Sutton 50
 Thos. H. Durkin 50
 Corney C. Allison 50
 Bartle Malone II 50
 M. Young 50
 M. Young 50
 Wm. D. Kelly 50
 Frances Kelly 50
 Wm. E. Reckenhecker 150
 Er. Kirk W. Levy 150
 William West 150
 Gertrude Mra. Eck 150
 Virginia P. Stokes 110
 Edith C. Fowler 70
 Cynthia Watkins 50
 Edith Dugan 50
 Sadr. J. Wimmer 50
 S. Hill 50
 S. Hill 50
 Will Kredas 50
 Cathy Smith 50
 Carlos Antillon 51
 Mary Wiltsford 140
 T. G. Herron 127.9
 Phillip Indiana 66.7
 C.C. Erickson 144
 SOUTH ST.

VANCE AVE.

Bertha Gibbins 172.59
 Ruth 50
 Danah 50
 Claude 50
 Shamer 50
 A.K. 50
 W. 50
 Ann 100
 Chambliss 100
 Jack Douthitt 150
 E.E. Muchl 57
 William 50
 Ann 50
 Craig 50
 J.G. 50
 Flowers 50

This map made as a free service and while we believe it to be correct, its accuracy is not guaranteed.



TBA: Manager Bldg
 as per record
 attached herewith
 Jan 1941
 PL. 284 27



L. W. MURPHY
 PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS, INC
 1814 WHITE STATION TOWER
 5050 POPLAR AVENUE
 MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE 38187
 (901) 787-4701

BOUNDARY AND TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY OF THE FIRST
 CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE