

PH0351288

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

**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

St. Louis Street Missionary Baptist Church

AND/OR COMMON

St. Louis Street Missionary Baptist Church

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

108 North Dearborn Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Mobile

VICINITY OF

1

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Alabama

01

Mobile

097

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"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

St. Louis Street Baptist Church

STREET & NUMBER

108 North Dearborn Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Mobile

VICINITY OF

Alabama

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Probate Office, Mobile County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

South Royal Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Mobile

Alabama

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The St. Louis Street Baptist Church, an Eclectic building constructed in 1872 with later renovation in 1897 and 1910, bears elements of both the Renaissance and Neo-Classical Revival. The two story stuccoed brick church follows a rectangular plan with the main, three-bay facade facing west. A belt course which extends around all sides of the building separates the two stories. Access to the ground floor of the church is provided by three entrance doors in the central bay, and these are flanked by rectangular windows. Both windows and the door transoms feature milky-colored glass in the Art-Nouveau style. The second story bays are also in a 1-3-1 arrangement with tall central windows forming the central bay. Small rectangular windows separated by long recessed panels and framed by Doric pilasters form the end bays. Similar pilasters divide the side elevations into six bays with tall windows on the second story and smaller rectangular windows at ground level.

The flat roof is marked with a box cornice; and over the main facade, a pedimented parapet with oval, colored glass window.

The most distinctive feature of the church is the four-tiered, domed tower located on the northwest corner of the building. Neo-Classical in style, the bell tower is believed to be part of either the 1897 or 1910 renovations carried out by architect C. L. Hutchinsson, Sr. Originally, the building featured a gable roof with parapet pediment. The first bell tower was a simple octagonal with low hipped roof located in the center front of the roof on a square platform. Other changes involved removing the Doric columns from the main facade and closing in the porch with windows, enlarging the nave. At this time the original plain windows were changed to the slightly Gothicized ones and the art glass transoms and other lights added.

The present, more sophisticated tower features a podium type base with recessed panels supporting the temple portion, the tallest of the tiers. Four fluted Ionic columns on each side frame a window and support an entablature that includes a wide cornice with modillions. The fourth tier houses the belfry and features triple arched louvered opening with keystones. Triangular pediments surround a polygonal dome topped with finial.

The nave of the church is located on the second floor above the Sunday School rooms and is reached by stairs from the ground floor vestibule. It is a simple rectangular room using a proscenium arch to separate the chancel. Applied mouldings give the ceiling of the sanctuary a coffered effect.

The midtown church occupies almost all of its city lot, the remainder given over to parking, but mature shrubs ease the abutment to the city sidewalks.

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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Black History	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1872,1897, 1910

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The St. Louis Street Baptist Church is one of the only four black congregations established in Alabama prior to 1865 and is the second oldest Missionary Baptist Church in the city of Mobile. The present building, completed in 1872, hosted the Seventh Session of the Colored Baptist Convention in 1874 which voted to found Selma University.

As early as 1836, a separate black Baptist congregation had been organized in Mobile, an area where the blacks of that period had a greater degree of freedom. After several years of meeting in a variety of places, the congregation was able to build their own church in 1839. However, by 1854, the financially well-established Stone Street Baptist Church encountered dissension within its membership. Ten members left that church to organize the St. Louis Street Baptist Church because they wished to sponsor a statewide missionary program that Stone Street resisted. In 1856, the new group's white minister, Kedar Hawthorn, purchased a city lot on St. Louis Street until the congregation was able to purchase it from him in 1865. The adjacent lot, purchased in 1868, included a small church which the group utilized until the present structure was completed in 1872 at a cost of \$24,000.

The church continued its original emphasis on statewide missionary activity under such leaders as Rev. Charles Leavens, the first black minister to serve the group. Congregational organizers were sent all over the state from the Mobile church and many Alabama congregations and pastors resulted from this effort.

As the number of separate black Baptist churches increased after the Civil War, many leaders felt the need for mutual support, communication and organization. The result was the formation of the Colored Baptist Convention which held its first session in Montgomery in 1868. When the Seventh Session met at the St. Louis Street Baptist Church in Mobile in 1874, the Convention felt strong enough to sponsor its own school to fill the urgent need for more teachers and ministers. The resolution was passed at this meeting founding the Alabama Baptist Normal and Theological School, and by 1878 it was open in Selma, becoming Selma University in 1908.

St. Louis Street Baptist Church continued to supply leaders to the black churches including a president of the National Baptist Convention, D. V. Jemison, who served as pastor of the Mobile Church in the late 1920's.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Boothe, C. O., The Cyclopedia of the Colored Baptists of Alabama. Birmingham, Alabama, Publishing Company, 1895.

Church Records

Mobile Landmarks Survey

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 6	3 9 9 3 2 0	3 3 9 5 6 6 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

W. Warner Floyd, Executive Director and Donna C. Hole

ORGANIZATION

Alabama Historical Commission

STREET & NUMBER

725 Monroe Street

CITY OR TOWN

Montgomery

DATE

April 9, 1976

TELEPHONE

(205) 832-6621

STATE

Alabama 36130

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 National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

W. B. Fawcett Jr.

TITLE

SHPO Ala

DATE

April 12, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

10/8/86

DATE

10/2/76