

388

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

**1. Name of Property**

historic name: Montrose Presbyterian Church  
other names/site number:

**2. Location**

street & number: County Road 20  
city or town: Montrose  
state: Mississippi code: MS county: Jasper code: 61 vicinity N/A  
zip code: 39338

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Kenneth A. P. Pml MARCH 21, 2003  
Signature of certifying official Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I, hereby certify that this property is:  
 entered in the National Register,  
 See continuation sheet.  
 determined eligible for the  
National Register  
 See continuation sheet.  
 determined not eligible for the  
National Register  
 removed from the National Register  
 other (explain):

Edouard A. Beall 5/9/03  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property:**  
Private

**Number of Resources within Property:**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

**Category of Property:**

Building

Contributing

1

Noncontributing

buildings  
sites  
structures  
objects  
Total

1

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed  
in the National Register**

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions:**  
Religion: Religious facility

**Current Functions:**  
Vacant/Not in use

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification(s):**  
Other: "Carpenter Gothic"

**Materials:**  
foundation: Brick  
roof: Other: Composition Shingles  
walls: Weatherboard  
other

**Narrative Description:**

See Continuation Sheets

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Areas of Significance**  
ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**  
ca. 1910

**Significant Dates**  
ca. 1910

**Criteria Considerations:**

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Significant Person(s)**  
N/A

**Cultural Affiliation(s)**  
N/A

**Architect/Builder**  
Unknown

**Narrative Statement of Significance:** See continuation sheets.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography** See continuation sheet.

**Previous documentation on file (NPS)**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey  
# \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record  
# \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary Location of Additional Data**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Department of Archives & History

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**10. Geographical Data**

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Acreage of Property: 0.795 acres

UTM References:	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
	16	289000	3556100

**Verbal Boundary Description** See continuation sheet.**Boundary Justification:** See continuation sheet.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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name/title:	Sheila Alawine Thead		
organization:			date: 10/25/2002
street & number:	10303 Wildcat Road		telephone: 601-986-2189
city or town:	Collinsville	state: MS	zip code: 39325

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**Additional Documentation**

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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**Property Owner(s)**

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name:	Montrose Cemetery Association, c/o Mr. R.B. Oswalt		
street & number:	84 County Road 1558-A		telephone: 601-739-3616
city or town:	Louin	state: MS	zip code: 39338

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**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Park Service**

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Jasper County, Mississippi

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**7. DESCRIPTION**

Montrose Presbyterian Church is located on County Road 20 about ½ mile off Highway 15 south of Newton, MS, inside the corporate limits of the once-bustling town of Montrose and surrounded by other, more modern churches with active memberships.

The church, a rare and very intact example of a rural carpenter Gothic church from ca. 1910, is a front-gabled structure with a steeply pitched roof and a bell tower rising about 48 feet above the floor of the church. The building is sided with 3-inch-exposure cypress weatherboard and rests on brick pillars. It is roofed with composition asphalt shingles.

The northwesterly façade of the church has a centered, slightly recessed entrance sheltered by an open-gabled overhang cross-braced on the front. The double-leaf single-panel entrance doors, topped by a transom containing two panes of glass and trimmed with a simple surround, open into a small vestibule, which is the base of the tower. Two 2 ½-ft. round windows placed about 16 feet above the floor of the church flank the façade of the tower and are the only windows on the façade. The narrow boxed eaves are flared like those of the bell tower, with a plain cornice.

The projecting rectangular bell tower contains two small vents just above the open gable of the church entrance, probably for ventilation for the attic fan housed inside the lower part of the tower and therefore possibly not original to the church. A flat, wide decorative band of weatherboard trim divides the tower visually into two sections. Near the top are three large vents, one each on the façade, the northeast elevation and the southwest elevation. The bell is still regularly rung on Sunday mornings by Montrose citizens, though the church has not actively met for several decades.

The southwesterly elevation features five evenly spaced Gothic arch windows rising to a height of eleven feet above the floor of the church. These are single-hung, one-over-one, enclosed in simple, wide casings.

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The apse bay enlivens the otherwise simple southeasterly-facing rear elevation. Two windows situated in the side walls of the bay and identical to the others in the church flank the flat, unornamented back wall. An additional Gothic arch window is placed at the left of the bay; a two-panel door to the right of the bay opens into the rear of the church. Prefabricated concrete steps lead directly up to this door.

The northeasterly elevation is identical to the southwesterly side.

The interior of the church is architecturally almost intact. From the vestibule a framed opening on both the right and the left offer entry into the sanctuary. (There is no evidence of hardware ever having been on these openings, suggesting there were never doors present here.) The walls are clad in four-inch-wide tongue-in-groove pine boards above a wainscot of bead board and molding two feet, ten inches in height. The barreled ceiling rises to a height of about 18 feet and is also covered with tongue-in-groove pine boards. At the front of the church a raised, curved-front platform projects from the apse bay into the sanctuary. This bay also has a barreled ceiling; the two arch windows flanking the pulpit provide light in addition to the several modern lights suspended throughout the church near the apse. The floorboards are tongue-in-groove pine boards.

The thirteen Gothic arch windows in the church are framed with plain wide boards and are deeply recessed, with eight strips of narrow curved board forming the upper, inner framing of the arches.

On either side of the vestibule, eight-foot-long pews constructed of open-spaced boards form seating areas in the rear of the church. Past the vestibule two ranks of thirteen-and-a-half-foot-long pews form one central aisle pointing to the apse bay. Flanking the apse are additional pews placed perpendicularly to the others, some of the shorter length and some of the longer. An additional four-foot-long spaced-board pew sits against each of the bay walls. All of the seating is presumably original to the church; however, five of the pews are much older than the spaced-board ones, being constructed in an austere fashion with high backs and enclosed sides. The pulpit with recessed-panel sides is believed to be original also.

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The Montrose Cemetery Association owns and maintains the building, which was deeded to the association by the Presbytery of Mississippi "so long as it could be reasonably maintained." Located in a once-thriving town, the church is no longer used as a religious facility; there are no Presbyterians in Montrose, nor have there been for several decades. However, citizens of Montrose have indicated a resolve to preserve the structure as a unique cultural feature of the town to be used for homecomings and dramatic presentations. To this end, work has proceeded to remove the only apparent change ever made to the interior—the addition of fiberboard panels over the pine-paneled walls. Otherwise, the church maintains its architectural integrity. The installation of space heaters, attic fan and electric lights is the only concession to the expectations of a modern audience that might be seated in the building.

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**8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Montrose Presbyterian Church, located on County Road 20 about ½ mile off Highway 15 in Jasper County, Mississippi, is significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as an exceptionally intact example of a "Carpenter Gothic" church from the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Organized in 1848, the church at first apparently used another building no longer in existence. The present building was built around 1910. This Carpenter Gothic structure is unusually intact, with its very steeply pitched roof and extremely tall bell tower (for a wooden church in such a rural setting). The materials used to build it are of very high quality. Tongue-in-groove pine boards sheathe both inside walls and ceilings; thirteen of the windows are true Gothic arch windows reaching eleven feet off the floor, and two round windows are placed near the peak of the ceiling on the façade to allow western sunlight into the sanctuary.

The Montrose Cemetery Association maintains the church building as well as the historical town cemetery located adjacent to the church.

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**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Cawthon, Richard J. "National Register Eligibility Criteria for Churches in Mississippi" (unpublished essay). Division of Historic Preservation, Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

Jones County Genealogical Historical Organization, Inc. *Jasper County Mississippi Cemeteries 1833-1998*. Laurel, MS, 1999.

Lavender, Gwyndolyn Hitt, former citizen of Montrose, now of Jackson, MS.  
Interviewed by Sheila Alawine Thead, by telephone, on October 5-18, 2002.

Minutes of Montrose Presbyterian Church. 1904-1907.

Wall, Arluin Ishee, former secretary of Montrose Cemetery Association. Interviewed by Sheila Alawine Thead, in Montrose, Mississippi, on October 9, 2002.

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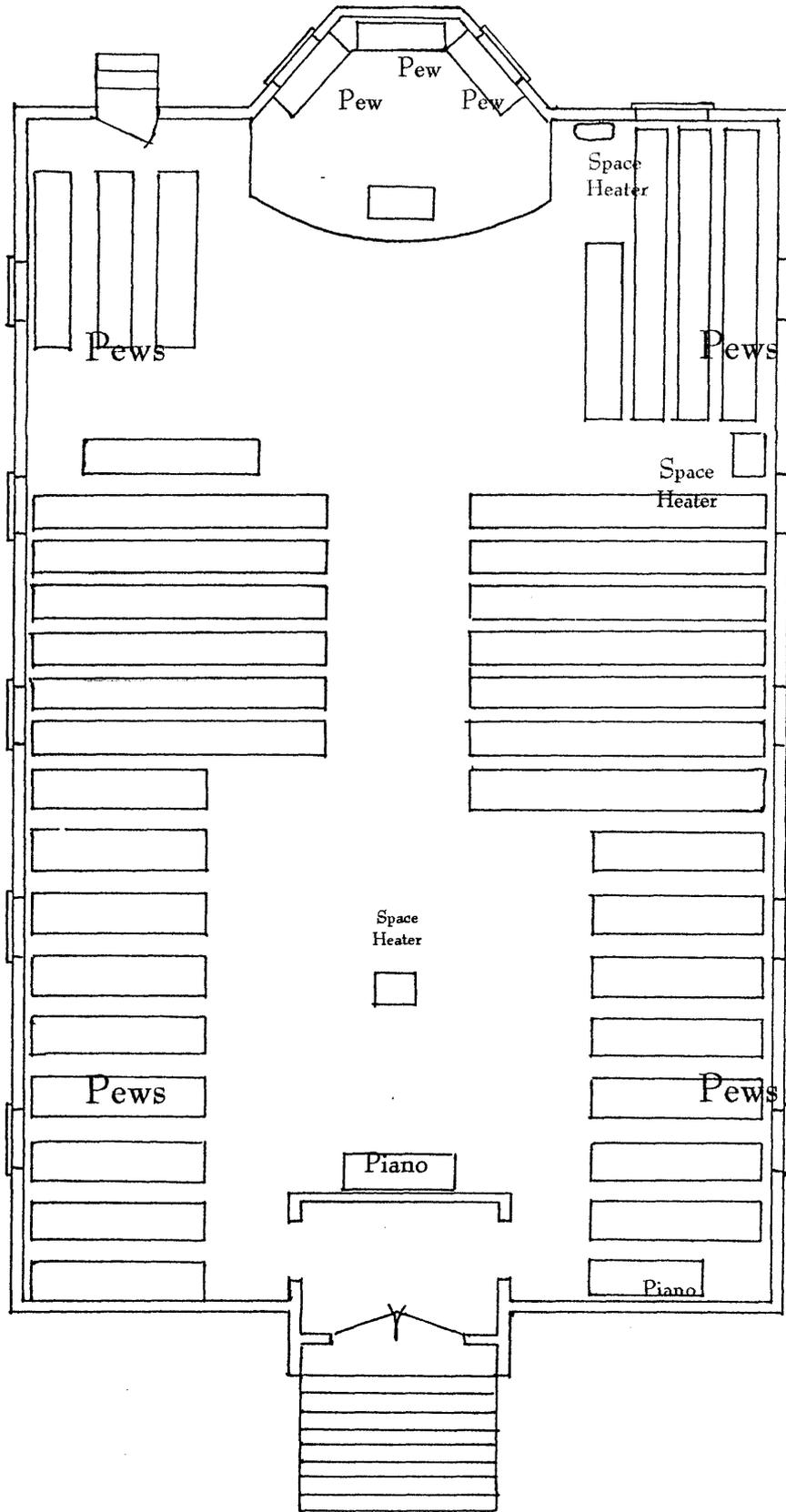
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**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

Commence at the NE corner of the NW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the NW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 1, T3N R103 and run south 2138.21 ft., Thence run west 1189.94 ft., to a point on the south side of a public road and the NW corner of the Montrose Methodist Church property for the point of Beginning, thence run along said public road S55°03'24" W 251.55 ft., to the NE corner of the Montrose Cemetery, thence run along the cemetery line S30°32'42" E 108.84 ft., to a fence corner, thence run along a fence N60°17'14"E 228.74 ft., to a corner in an old fence, thence run along said fence N04°52'31" E 57.60 ft., thence run S61°03'03" W 9.10 ft., to the SW corner of the Montrose Methodist Church property, thence run N30°00' W 120.00 ft., to the point of Beginning. All being in the SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 1, T3N R10E.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundaries described above contain the church building and surrounding grounds historically associated with the church.



# Montrose Presbyterian Church

Jasper County, Mississippi

Scale: 1/8" = 1'

