

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**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 Kirtland Temple

AND/OR COMMON
House of the Lord

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 9020 Chillicothe Road

CITY, TOWN	Kirtland	___ VICINITY OF	___ NOT FOR PUBLICATION	CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
STATE	Ohio	CODE	74th	
			COUNTY	CODE
			Lake	34

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
___DISTRICT	___PUBLIC	___OCCUPIED	___AGRICULTURE	___MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	___COMMERCIAL	___PARK
___STRUCTURE	___BOTH	___WORK IN PROGRESS	___EDUCATIONAL	___PRIVATE RESIDENCE
___SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	___ENTERTAINMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
___OBJECT	___IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	___GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	___BEING CONSIDERED	___YES: UNRESTRICTED	___INDUSTRIAL	___TRANSPORTATION
		___NO	___MILITARY	___OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME c/o Dr. Mark McKiernan, Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

STREET & NUMBER
World Headquarters

CITY, TOWN Independence STATE Missouri

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Lake County Court House

STREET & NUMBER
CITY, TOWN Painesville STATE Ohio

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE 1934 FEDERAL ___ STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN Washington STATE D.C.

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

"Since this was to be "The Lord's House," it was fitting that he should designate the pattern by which it should be built. Orson Pratt relates the detail with which instructions were given:

When the Lord commanded this people to build a house in the land of Kirtland, he gave them the pattern by vision from heaven, and commanded them to build that house according to that pattern and order; to have the architecture, not in accordance with architecture devised by men, but to have everything constructed in that house according to the heavenly pattern that he by his voice had inspired to his servants.¹

...He revealed the pattern according to which that should be built, pointing out the various courts and apartments, telling the size of the house, the order of the pulpits, and in fact everything pertaining to it was clearly pointed out by revelation. God gave a vision of these things, not only to Joseph but to several others, and they were strictly commanded to build according to the pattern revealed from the heavens.²

Architects V. W. Upham and H. C. Summerset were employed to build the temple according to the above specifications.

Exterior. -- On the front of the building one sees this inscription in gilt letters: "House of the Lord. Built by the Church of Christ in 1834."³ In its general outlines, the Temple was a good deal like the typical Congregational meeting houses of the day. It was rectangular, with a gabled roof and the usual bell tower dominating its silhouette. But there were several novel features. It contained two full stories and a roof ornamented with ten small gables giving light to an attic story. Its windows were Gothic on the sides, but on the front and rear there were both Gothic and arched colonial windows. The doors were arched to match the colonial windows. The rubble masonry which formed its walls was plastered over and checked in imitation of regular courses of masonry which sparkled in the early morning sun as the plaster reflected the bits of broken glass and china which had been put into it.

¹ Orson Pratt, Journal of Discourses, Vol. 14, p. 273.

² Ibid., Vol. 13, p. 357.

³ Millennial Star, Vol. 53, pp. 341-42.

(CONTINUED)

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 checked="" 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/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 type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1833-1838

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Kirtland Temple is an outstanding example of the cross-pollinating of architectural styles--the Federal and Gothic idioms are blended here on a temple form, the result is individualistic and typical of those Mormon structures that were the beginning of a series of exotic structures in wood and stone.

"It was designed by its master builder, Joseph Bump, whose workmen form a catalogue of Mormon worthies. Joseph Smith, Jr., served as foreman of both construction and stone quarrying. Sidney Rigdon, the famous orator, was a mason; and Brigham Young worked as plasterer and glazier. The latter's skill in this regard is evident in the delicate intersecting tracery of the temple's many lancet windows."¹

The Church of Christ, organized April 6, 1830 by Joseph Smith, Junior, and a small number of his friends in Seneca County, New York, moved its center of activity to Kirtland, Ohio in early 1831. (In 1834 this group adopted the name Church of the Latter Day Saints and in 1838 expanded that to Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints.) In early Latter Day Saintism religious, economic and social life were interwoven. Thus, when they decided to build a meetinghouse, while primarily for religious observances, it would also be the center of community life.

The "Saints" believed that their Prophet Joseph Smith received revelations from God directing their activities. When in the Spring of 1833 he commanded them to build a "House of the Lord," he was revealing the will of God, and the house was to be built according to directions given him from heaven. The cornerstone was laid July 24, 1833 and the building known as the "House of the Lord" was dedicated March 27, 1836.

Robert Kent Fielding, in his unpublished thesis describes the history of the building and construction.

"The City of Kirtland soon took on the appearance of a beehive, so busily engaged were all the Saints in this mammoth undertaking. Mammoth it was--for at best these exiles were reduced to little more than poverty. To commence work on such a structure that was to cost \$70,000 was an optimistic undertaking, indeed, and attests to the belief of the Saints in the promises of the Lord.

1. Loth, Calder and Sadler, Julius, The Only Proper Style, New York Graphic Society, Boston, 1975 pp. 50-52

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See attached sheet

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 acre and 154 1/2 rods

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 7	4 6 9 8 3 0	4 6 0 8 0 3 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION : Part of Lot 30, Block 113, Kirtland City Plat, Lake Co. record book C., p. 147-148: Kirtland Township No. 9, range 9 Connecticut Western Reserve, Ohio Lake County, Part of the farm owned by John Johnson sold by Joseph Smith, Jr. January 4, 1837. Starting at the NE corner of the farm formerly owned by Isaac Moore in the center of the road, running west. On North line 22 rods, North 17 rods, east to line of lot formerly owned by the Methodist Episcopal Society thence south to SW corner of land owned by Methodist Episcopal Society, thence east to the center of the road then south to the beginning.

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

Carolyn Pitts, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service

DATE

August 1976

STREET & NUMBER

1100 L Street, NW.

TELEPHONE

523-5464

CITY OR TOWN

Washington,

STATE

D. C.

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

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
ATTEST

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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Despite the several types of architecture embodied in the structure, they seemed to blend in quiet harmony, and perhaps were symbolic of the revelation accepted by the Church membership, wherein it is stated "that all nations shall flow unto it."

Interior. -- An interesting account of the interior of the Temple is provided by Harry Black, Pastor of the Kirtland Temple in 1949:

According to divine command the foundations were laid to provide for an auditorium 65 feet by 55 feet. A ten foot vestibule with two doors provided entrance at the east end. The house was given two main auditoriums, one above the other; further space was added by including a third floor of five small rooms.

The lower auditorium, which is centered from the vestibule, is decorated with beautifully carved columns and arches. These columns, generally called Ionic fluted columns, become more interesting when it is learned that a yoke of oxen pulled the steel planes over the wood to cut the pattern.

While the columns are interesting, the arches are inspiring; both Ionic and Grecian decorative arts are present. Delicately carved, the patterns include the Grecian egg and dart design; this alone portrays unique craftsmanship.

Adding to the simple beauty are the elevated pulpits situated in the east and west ends of the auditorium. These represent the two priesthoods, found in Christ's Church, and the initials embossed the gold on each section designate some of the ministerial officers.

The letters and explanations are as follows:

- P.D.A. Presiding Deacon Aaronic
- P.T.A. Presiding Teacher Aaronic
- P.A.P. Presiding Aaronic Priest
- B.P.A. Bishop Presiding over Aaronic
- P.E.M. Presiding Elder Melchizedek
- M.H.P. Melchizedek High Priesthood
- P.M.H. Presiding Melchizedek High Priesthood
(Quorum of Twelve or Stake High Council)
- M.P.C. Melchizedek Presiding Counsel (Presidency
of Church or Presidency of Stake)

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Behind each set of pulpits, windows of colonial style give light. The panes of glass turn this light into myriads of shadows; this is caused by hand blowing, a process used in the early days of glass making.

The north and south walls have Gothic windows with frames carrying the fluted pattern similar to the columns. This gives a sense of unity and prevents optical conflict.

Seating arrangements of unusual order furnish the auditoriums--one center, two side, and four corners sections. The center and sides are constructed to allow worship toward either end of the building; that is, within each pew there is a movable bench which allows the congregation to face east or west.

In the corners the seats are arranged to face the side of the pulpits nearest them.

With this seating plan a method of "sectional division" was used, permitting the dividing of the auditorium into two or four sections by curtains.

These curtains were draped from the ceiling by ropes which passed through small holes. They could be lowered or raised as desired. Narrow spaces between the pews allowed them to reach the floor.

Also on the ceiling are four large circular moldings centered with hooks which form the lighting positions. From these hung candelabra....

At the east end of the second floor the large colonial window is of unique workmanship; it is often called the "window beautiful," its name being derived from the beautiful carvings ornamenting the frame. Rumor has it that the sum of \$10,000 was offered for it by a prominent gentleman of pecuniary success.

Leaving the upper auditorium and continuing up the winding staircase, one will note the removable rails protecting the windows. These rails permit easy access for cleaning purposes.

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Arriving at the third floor the spectator cannot help noticing the old-fashioned oil chandler which hangs at the head of the stairs. Its pipelike arms and cylindrical reservoir add an essence of the early nineteenth century to the present day. Though not original, the lamp shows the types of lighting used.

Entering the classrooms on the third floor gives one the feeling of stepping into a nineteenth century school; there are roughly laid floor boards, small windows, and low ceilings. It is here that the priesthood attended specific instructional classes;....⁴

Another writer of the temple explains something of the purposes of special rooms:

The lower room was to be dedicated for sacrament offerings, and for preaching, and for fasting, and praying, and the offering up of most holy desires unto the Lord.

The second room was to be dedicated for the School of the Prophets.

In each of these rooms were eight pulpits, four in each end, one above the other. Those in the west end were intended for the Melchizedek Priesthood, and those in the east end for the Aaronic Priesthood.⁵

A unique feature is described by Eva Pancoast, as follows:

There is a curious arrangement of wires separating the square pews from each other. One of the pillars is

⁴ Harry Black, "The House of the Lord," Saint's Herald Vol. 100 (September, 1949), pp. 8-9, 17.

⁵ Saint's Herald, "Kirtland Temple," (September 26, 1949), p. 15.

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fitted up with a windlass which was used in raising and lowering the curtains which these wires supported. The outside walls are about two feet thick. The tower platform to which access is gained by a ladder is 125-128 feet high and affords a wonderful view of the surrounding country.⁶

⁶ Eva L. Pancoast, "Mormons of Kirtland," Unpublished Master's thesis, Western Reserve University, May 1, 1929, p. 169. See also Messenger and Advocate, Vol. I, no. 10, July 1835, which states that the tower is 110 feet high.

*The above is excerpted from an unpublished Master's thesis by Clarence Fields.

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"On June 6, 1833, a conference of High Priests assembled in Kirtland and instructed the building committee to proceed immediately to obtain stone, brick, lumber, and other materials for the building, which they did. On July 23, 1833... 'the corner stones of the Lord's House or the Kirtland Temple, were laid after the order of the holy Priesthood.'

"The diary of Joseph Smith records under date of July 23rd, 1833, a lengthy resume of the problems of the Saints in Missouri, as well as the pressures of the persecution in Kirtland. The poverty and sacrifice of the local Saints is reiterated. It seemed a fitting gesture to buoy up their lagging spirits to lay the corner stone at this time. He concludes his diary entry with these simple but profoundly significant words, 'the corner stones of the Lord's house... were laid.'

"Despite the scarcity of currency, the Saints of Kirtland literally rolled up their sleeves, and with little more than brain, brawn, and sinew, started construction on the 'Lord's House.' All materials except the glass needed for the windows, were obtained locally. Trees were felled from nearby forests. A kiln was built to season the logs to provide the lumber needed; a stone quarry about one mile distant from the temple site provided the stone.....

"The exterior of the building was covered with a mixture of sand and lime, and pounded glass (silica) in proper proportions. Spread over the walls it proved to be a good, permanent finish. One author discloses that much of the glass used in the exterior stucco was a donation of the sisters:

"Into the mortar for the final coat went the glassware and best china given by the women of Kirtland. Broken into small pieces, it gave added luster to the building and a sense of pride to the builders."²

In 1833, the struggle to finish the building was still going on--there were financial and structural problems. The Mormons were giving both time and money, wages for construction workers were paid in corn meal.

By 1835 the roof was covered and a bell was considered for the 90 foot high belfry (it was installed in 1892). Soon thereafter the rooms were designated and appointed for the Mormon service and a school was included for the education of the faithful and children. In addition there was a community lecture hall that accomodated travelling speakers discussing the issues of that time.

2. Fielding, Robert, The Growth of the Mormon Church in Kirtland, Ohio,
Unpublished Dissertation, Indiana University 1957 pp. 15-17

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Richard Howard, Church Historian, notes that: the majority of the Latter Day Saints left Kirtland in 1837-38. After the death of Joseph Smith, Jr., in 1844 his church split into many factions. In 1880 legal title to the land on which Kirtland Temple is located was cleared in the name of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

The Kirtland Temple is a rare example of beauty and craftsmanship in design and construction seldom witnessed on the frontier, where more pressing demands on time and resources usually precluded such structures.

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