

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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1. Calvary Baptist Church 80000089
2. Location: 747 Broad Street, on the corner of Stanwood Street, Providence
3. Owner: Calvary Baptist Church  
747 Broad Street, Providence, Rhode Island
4. Description: Calvary Baptist Church is a massive orange-brick, auditorium-church building 95 x 140 feet in size, with Perpendicular Gothic architectural detailing. The complex consists of a chapel structure, built in 1897, and the church itself, known as the Temple, erected 1905-1907.

The First section to be constructed, the two-story, hip-roofed chapel facing Stanwood Street, with its spire-topped, square towers at the four corners, was planned as the first unit of an integrated church complex by Cleveland architect Sidney Rose Badgley. Badgley's design followed the institutional-type church model and auditorium-church plan developed by him in his 1893 Pilgrim Congregational Church in Cleveland, and was virtually a copy of his Methodist Church at Washington Courthouse, Ohio, the plans of which were published in Martin's 1897 Manual of Ecclesiastical Architecture.

Before the Temple could be erected, however, the rapid growth of the congregation required a much larger sanctuary than that provided in Badgley's design. Accordingly, plans for a larger structure, following Badgley's concept of an auditorium church crowned by a great central lantern, but differing in most of the specific details, were prepared by Providence architect Arthur Eaton Hill, a member of the church. The Temple as built is an octagonal room roofed over by an intricate construction of side vaults, supported on cluster-column piers, from which piers ribbed vaults project inward to support the great octagonal, spired lantern in the center of the lofty ceiling. The lantern is paced with large traceried windows, filled with stained glass. The entrance to the auditorium is in a vestibule block placed diagonally at the Broad and Stanwood Street corner of the building, and the floor slopes downward from it to the pulpit platform, located in a recess at the side opposite. The platform is fitted with a panelled, Gothic reredos, a rood screen and deacons' seat, an oval baptistry built into the floor, and a brass pulpit and lecturn. The choir and organ are located in a recess in the adjoining wall to the right of the pulpit. On the main floor, the pews fan out from the pulpit in concentric arcs, and, above, a large gallery sweeps in a grand curve from corner to corner. All the woodwork, including pews, pulpit furnishings, and gallery breastwork, is of dark oak. Particularly handsome among the numerous stained glass windows are the two large Gothic windows

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that fill the center of the sides facing Broad and Stanwood streets made by Tiffany of New York.

Changes in the structure have been minimal. A two-story, flat-roofed, orange-brick office and Sunday school block was added to the side of the chapel building about 1956, and at the same time the chapel structure interior was largely rebuilt. In the Temple itself, the only change has been the c. 1950 installation of a movable dark-wood altar in the center of the platform over the baptistry.

Photographs 26 through 28

5. Significance: Calvary Baptist Church is Rhode Island's finest auditorium church, an architectural monument in Elmwood and in Providence as a whole. The church is also historically significant as Rhode Island's first, and one of New England's earliest, institutional churches -- churches which directed their energies toward meeting the physical, mental, social, and moral, as well as purely spiritual, need of urban man. Calvary, founded in 1854 as the Friendship Street Baptist Church and renamed in 1897, became an institutional church under the pastorate of the Rev. Edward S. Holyoke with the opening of the chapel building in 1897. The chapel served as the home of the Calvary Baptist Institute, a nonsectarian arm of the church that operated a gymnasium and library and sponsored clubs, evening school, and concert and lecture series.
6. Acreage: about 1 acre.
7. Plat 49, lot 234.
8. UTM reference : 19 299940 4630580
9. Level of significance: state