

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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Black Protestant Churches of Muskogee

Location of Legal Description: Office of County Clerk
Muskogee County Courthouse
Muskogee, OK 74401

Description: The Central Baptist Church is a 40' x 95', one-story, detached, religious building situated in the northern part of the City of Muskogee, Oklahoma. The building has a hipped roof with a lower cross gable, and is intersected by two, two-story towers at the east end. The rear section of the building has a flat roof with a stepped parapet wall. The main body of the building is constructed of red brick laid in the running bond with a header course every seventh row. The rear section is constructed of concrete blocks. There are four single stack, red brick, interior chimneys in the building.

The front, or east side, of the building has a tower in both the northeast and southeast corners. The former has a tent roof with a bell-like flare. The first story of this tower has a metal door set in a wooden frame, with a single transom light and segmented wooden arch above. There are two, double-hung, 1/1, sash windows on the north side of the tower. These first floor windows have ashlar sills and brick, soldier laid semielliptical arches above. The second story of this tower has two wooden window frames with semielliptical brick arches on both the north and east sides. The openings are covered with louvered windows. The second tower on the east side has a battlement wall at the top. The entrance door is a double, wooden framed and panelled construction, with two transom lights and a semielliptical brick arch above. There are two, 1/1, double hung sash windows with wooden frames, ashlar sills and brick arches on the south side of the tower. The second story of the tower has four wooden window frames with semielliptical brick arches. The openings, two on the east and two on the south side, are covered with louvered windows. The central section between the two towers has three wooden framed windows with ashlar sills and semielliptical brick arches above. Two of the windows have 2/2 lights, the other has 4/4 lights. All these windows are of the double hung sash-type. In the gable of this side of the building, is a circular arrangement of rowlock laid bricks which could possibly have contained a porthole window, but has now been bricked in.

The north and south sides of the building are constructed in a similar manner. Under the gable roof section there are five wooden framed, 1/1, double-hung sash windows with ashlar sills and semielliptical brick arches above. One of the windows on the south sides has 4/4 lights. There is a wooden ventilator grille located in the intersecting gable. The concrete block section of the north and south sides has four windows and a door on each side. The windows have wooden frames, with 1/1 lights and are of the double-hung, sash-type. The door has a wooden frame.

The rear, or west end, of the building has a wooden panelled central entrance door. Either side of this is a wooden window frame which has been filled in with wooden boards.

In the mid 1950s, a 34' x 34', one-story addition was completed to the rear of the property. Constructed of concrete blocks, the addition does detract somewhat from the overall architectural integrity. Because of its location, however, it is not visible from the facade. The original building has remained intact for over 75 years.

Statement of Significance: The Central Baptist Church is historically significant because: (1) it is the second oldest black Baptist church in Muskogee having been

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constructed in 1908, one year after Oklahoma statehood and (2) it is one of the three oldest social institutions in the black community of Muskogee. Only the First Baptist and Ward Chapel A.M.E. Churches are older.

Because of Muskogee's thriving black commercial and residential districts, Central Baptist was erected in 1908 to accommodate the more than 7,000 blacks living in the city in 1908.

Although First Baptist was constructed in 1903, the Baptist denomination was the most dominant faith among blacks in Muskogee and a second black Baptist church was necessary by 1908.

Central Baptist has served the spiritual and social needs of Muskogee's black community for over 75 years and retains both its historic and architectural integrity.

Major Bibliographical References

Reverend F. L. Birch, July, 1983.

Quadrangle Name: Northeast Muskogee, OK.

Scale: 7.5 minutes

UTM: 15/285720/3958990

Verbal Boundary Description: Lot 7, Block 243, Original Townsite of Muskogee, OK.

- 4. Spencer Memorial United Methodist Church (No. 4 on Sketch Map and Photo Nos. 16-18)

Location: 543 North Seventh St.
Muskogee, OK 74401

Owner of Property: Spencer Memorial United Methodist Church
543 North Seventh
Muskogee, OK 74401

Location of Legal Description: Office of County Clerk
Muskogee County Courthouse
Muskogee, OK 74401

Description: The Spencer Memorial United Methodist Church is a 70' x 40', two-story, detached religious building situated in its own landscaped grounds in the northern part of the City of Muskogee, Oklahoma. The building has a gable roof, white clapboard is used as the material for the gable ends. A fascia board, painted white, surrounds the lower edge of the gable roof. The main body of the church is constructed of red brick, laid in alternating rows of running and flemish bond. Rowlock and soldier-laid red bricks make up the watertable between the first and second stories. A belt course of rowlock-laid bricks can be found just below the roof line.

The front, or east side, of the building is dominated by the central entrance way. This consists of a paired metal entrance door with glass panels, and a large number of