

- ✓ 1. St. Paul's Episcopal Chapel
- ✓ 2. 4051 Old Shell Road,  
Mobile, Mobile County  
Alabama
3. St. Paul's Parish
4. lot 6 Old Spring Hill subdivision;  
sw $\frac{1}{4}$  of S13, T4S, R2W
5. Located at the sw corner of Old Shell Road and Tuthill Lane on a portion of a large lot owned by the church; approximately 60' along Old Shell Road and 100' along Tuthill Lane.

Acreage: .01

UTM 16 / 390920 / 3396510

6. 1859

7. Description: A single aisled, frame chapel of rectangular mass with vestry rooms added on the south end forming a short transept. The chapel is one-story elevation, with board and batten siding. The low brick foundation is well screened by plantings. A square, central tower stands at the north facade. Its belfry is of 2 levels, a low square base and a second level with a semi-circular headed louvre on each face. A pyramidal roof with a cross crowns the tower. The main gable covers the sanctuary with its ridge perpendicular to the street. A small cross gable covers the Sacistry. A shed roof covers the front porch.

A 3-bay porch on the north end extends the width of the facade. The columns are of square section, slightly tapered, with molded capitals and an astragal necking. There is no balustrade. The porch cornice is plain.

There are four windows on each side of the nave and one on each side of the front entrance. All windows have semi-circular heads but the tracery divides the spaces into twin lancets. Diagonal panes infill each lancet. A triple panelled stained glass window is behind the altar at the south end of the chapel. The 2 leaf main entrance repeats the line of the curvature of the windows. All openings have shaped shutters.

The interior has a single nave with small balcony supported on iron columns with palm leaf capitals. The balcony is located above the main entrance. Above each of the side windows is placed a Christian symbol. The stained glass was brought from St. Jones Church in 1958 when the building was destroyed.

8. Significance:

Architecture: St. Paul's Episcopal Church is an excellent example of a small board and batten chapel dating from the mid-19th century. While there are several extant examples of residential buildings in which board and batten exterior sheathing is used, St. Paul's is the only extant example of church architecture using this type of construction. Eclectic in style, the building design successfully combines classical elements with features of the Gothic Revival popularized by A. J. Downing. From the vernacular adaptation of Georgian classicism comes the general rectangular massing with the three stage tower above the entrance, the square Tuscan columns of the porch and the rounded outer framing of the window heads. The main door has its arch accented by projecting voussoirs and a slightly enlarged keystone. Decoration, as well as function, is achieved by the shutters with their quarter round tops and the beautifully paneled two-leaf entrance door. From the Gothic Revival comes the board and batten siding, the lancet division of the windows formed by tracery and the diamond-shaped window panes.

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

St. Paul's Episcopal Church received its Certificate of Incorporation in 1859 and was dedicated June 24, 1861. The names of the founders reads like a directory of Spring Hill residents--Albert Stein, the hydraulic engineer; John Dawson, owner of Palmetto Hall and brother of William Dawson who built Carolina Hall, Emanuel Jones, W. P. Hammond, Robert Bunker, Henry Stickney, Robert Purvis and John Battle. The construction of the small chapel was supervised by Albert Stein and John Dawson. The building was financed by the residents and became a unifying factor in the 19th century development of the Spring Hill area.

From the time of its dedication, St. Paul's was the center of the Episcopalian community. It has been in use continually since the time of its construction except for a few years during the Civil War when it was closed by order of the military. The chapel is still used for weddings and special services although the size of the congregation by 1964 necessitated the construction of a new, larger church to the west of the chapel.