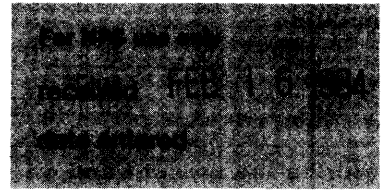


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 Trinity Church

and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number Main Street (State Route 59) N/A — not for publication

city, town Mason N/A vicinity of

state Tennessee code 047 county Tipton code 167

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<u>N/A</u> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Congregation of Trinity Church
c/o Alida Gover

street & number Route 2, Box 271

city, town Mason N/A vicinity of state Tennessee 38049

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registrar's Office

street & number Tipton County Courthouse

city, town Covington state Tennessee 38019

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date N/A N/A federal state county local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town N/A state N/A

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" 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

Constructed in 1870, Trinity Church is a Gothic Revival brick building located in rural southwest Tennessee in the small town of Mason (pop. 475). The exterior features of the church include a steep gable roof, a detailed entrance porch, lancet windows with stained glass, raked buttresses, and a polygonal apse. The interior has elaborate exposed trusses, brass chandeliers, carved pews, and intricate altar rail, all of which are original. In 1964 a very sympathetically designed parish hall was constructed to the north of the church and connected to it by an arched breezeway. The church is relatively unaltered and retains a remarkable level of architectural integrity.

Facing west, Trinity Church is situated on a flat site on Main Street (State Route 59) in a residential section of the rural town of Mason in Tipton County. The informally landscaped grounds cover approximately three acres and have many mature trees, especially cedar. There is a graveled drive with a small parking area in the front of the church.

In general plan, the church consists of a nave with short transepts and a polygonal apse. The brick of the building is laid in common bond. The steep gable roof was covered in asphalt shingles in 1952.

The west (front) elevation of the church is distinguished by a tall gable end with a wooden cross at its apex and a stained-glass, tri-cornered window below. In the three-bay facade, stained-glass lancet windows flank a buttressed, brick entrance porch with a pointed-arch opening and gable roof. The north and south side elevations have five bays consisting of stained-glass, pointed-arch windows separated by simple raked buttresses. Each one-bay transept has a pointed-arch exterior door facing west, a capped chimney on the east, and originally a stained-glass, pointed-arch window on the gable end. The window on the north transept was removed for a doorway leading into the breezeway connecting with the parish hall. The rear (east) elevation has a three-sided apse with two small, stained-glass, pointed-arch windows flanking a much larger but similar window.

The interior of Trinity Church has rows of carved walnut pews with a central aisle. In front of the simple altar is the original intricate brass altar rail. The ceiling of diagonally-laid narrow boards is supported by six elaborate king post trusses with pendants and has two original ornate brass chandeliers. The colorful stained-glass windows of Venetian glass are original. The wooden floors of the sanctuary were covered with linoleum tiles in 1952 when the exterior roof was replaced and extensive repointing of the brick was done.

The brick parish hall was constructed in 1964 and sympathetically repeats the gable roof, buttresses, and other architectural features of the church. The hall has a simple interior with flat-arch windows. The building is successfully connected with the church by a rear, brick breezeway with three, pointed arches.

A nineteenth-century bell rests on a short wooden tower immediately to the south of the church.

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 type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input 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 checked="" 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 1870, 1964

Builder/Architect James B. Cook (church)
Wells Awsumb (parish hall)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Constructed in 1870, Trinity Church is nominated under National Register criterion C for its architectural significance to Tipton County and West Tennessee as one of the finest rural Gothic Revival churches in that region of the state. The brick design skillfully employs a steep gable roof, entrance porch, raked buttresses, pointed-arch stained-glass windows, and complex exposed interior trusses. The building is one of the few unaltered surviving works of the prominent Memphis architect, James B. Cook (1826-1909).

The origins of Trinity Church go back to 1834 when the Reverend John Chilton visited the area and preached at the home of Mrs. Christopher Hunt. In response to the good attendance at the service, the Reverend Chilton returned to the vicinity over the next few years, preaching and holding communion in private homes. In the spring of 1837, services were held in a schoolhouse by a missionary priest, the Reverend John Drummond. The success of his work resulted in the organization of a congregation and the conversion of a storehouse into a church, called St. Andrew's. The number of communicants increased during the following years despite the burning of the converted building and the holding of services once again in the homes of members. Between 1847 and 1853 the congregation erected its first church building on land donated by Major William Taylor. Serving the local Episcopal community for the next sixteen years, this small, vernacular frame building, called Trinity in the Fields, is still standing but is used only on Trinity Sunday for a special service for current Trinity church members and others.

During the 1860s the town of Mason grew in population, largely because of a railroad line from Memphis. The need for a new and more substantial church building soon became apparent. The cost of the new building was paid for primarily through a large contribution from Colonel John F. Jett, a vestryman at the time. The architect was James B. Cook and the builder was Will Juniper.

James Bartholomew Cook (1826-1909) was one of the most respected architects in Memphis during the nineteenth century. Born and educated in England, Cook as a young man worked in the offices of the prominent Victorian architects, Isambard Brunel, Anthony Street, and Charles Barry. He was appointed to supervise the erection of the Victoria and Albert iron bridges across the Thames at Windsor Castle. Afterwards, like many other young architects and engineers of his day, he went to work on the building of the Crystal Palace Exhibition at Hyde Park, London, in 1851.

Cook later was sent by the British government to Central America where he made explorations and mapped out a route across the Isthmus of Panama for a canal. His report was published in England and was read to a committee of the American Congress in 1862. For his meritorious work in Panama he was elected a member of the Geographical Society of Berlin and awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Natural Philosophy by the faculty at Geisen. He was elected to the Royal Institute of Great Britain in 1854.

9. Major Bibliographical References

- Awsumb, Gwen. "Our Growing Edge-Trinity Church, Mason",
The Tennessee Churchman, Dec. 1964, p.5.
 Herndon, Joseph L. Architects in Tennessee Until 1930. Dissertation.
 Columbia University, New York, 1975.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property approx. 3 acres

Quadrangle name Mason, Tennessee

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	6
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2	6	9	1	8	6	0
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3	9	2	1	5	6	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

B

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 Zone Easting Northing

C

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification The nominated property is bounded on the west by Main Street (State Route 59), on the north by an imaginary line separating the church's ball field from the nominated property (see tax map), and on the east and south by adjoining property lines. The nomination includes the minimal land needed to protect the architectural and historical integrity of the church and parish hall.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Lloyd Ostby, Coordinator of Field Services		
	Alida Gover		
organization	Tennessee Historical Commission	date	January 1984
	Trinity Church		(615) 742-6723
street & number	701 Broadway	telephone	N/A
	Route 2, Box 271		Tennessee 37203
city or town	Nashville	state	Tennessee 38049
	Mason		

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.

Deputy
 State Historic Preservation Officer signature Herbert E. Anger

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission date 2/13/84

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
 National Register

date 3/15/84

for Delores Byers
 Keeper of the National Register

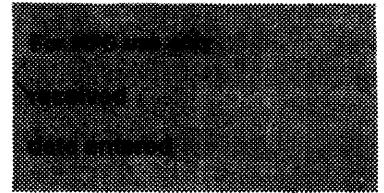
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



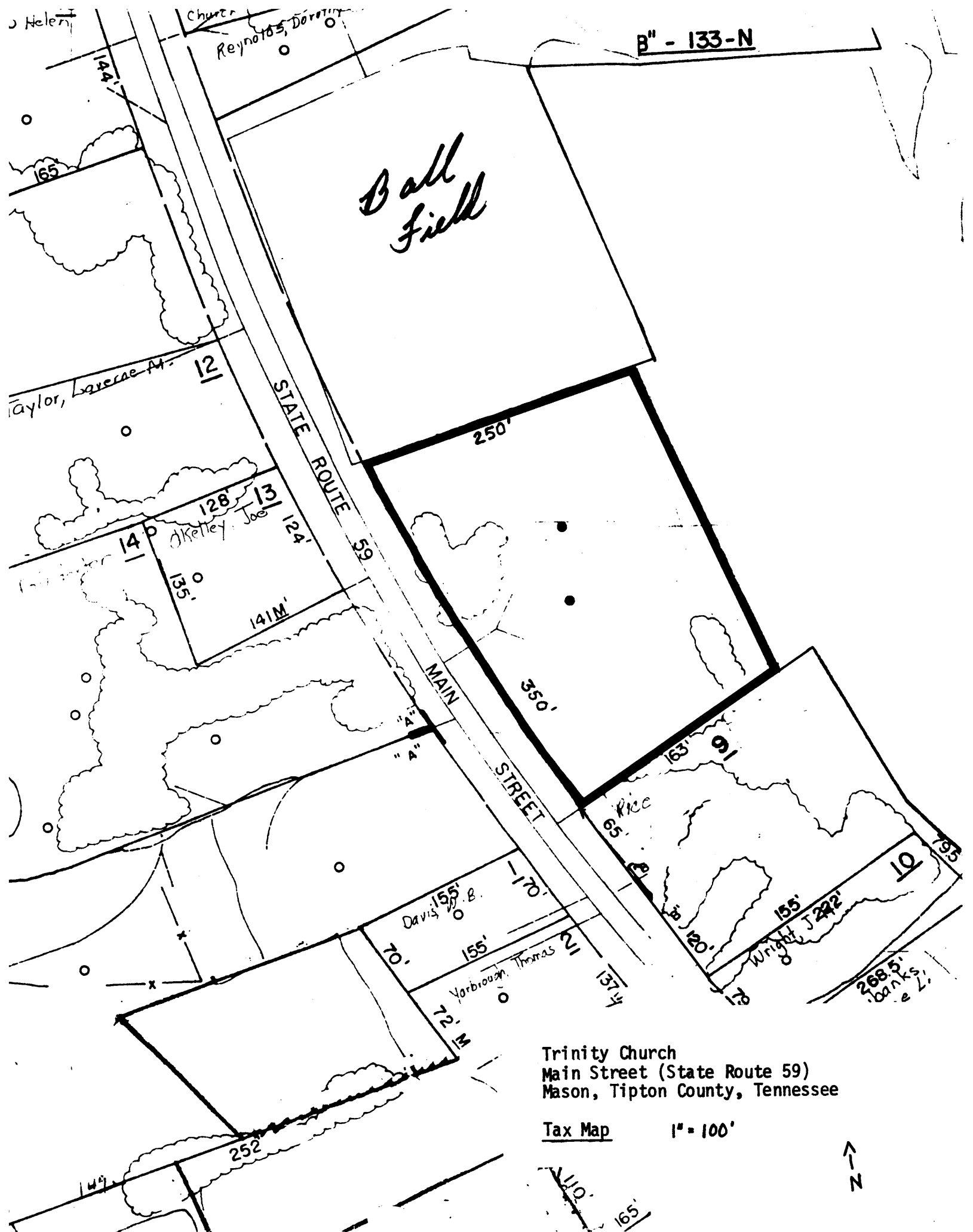
Continuation sheet Trinity Church Item number 8 Page 2

In 1853 Cook landed in New York. He had come to America under the advice of Baron Von Humboldt who sent a strong recommendation for him. Cook was very busy in technical work in New York until he left for Cincinnati where he had been awarded the large commission of decorating the interior of Isaiah Rogers' Burnett House Hotel. Cook became widely recognized for this work and in 1857 was called to Memphis to rebuild and renovate James Dakin's Gayoso Hotel. Cook then settled in Memphis and began to practice architecture and engineering.

Cook's first distinguished work after the Civil War was the Shelby County Jail, begun in 1866 at a cost of \$144,000. Now demolished, it was one of those interesting late 1860s combinations of Italianate with military Gothic crenelations organized on a symmetrical plan. Cook was an expert in the use of cast iron and for that reason became a noted architect of jails and penitentiaries throughout the South.

Cook also developed a substantial reputation as an architect of churches. Among his known surviving religious buildings are St. Mary's Catholic Church (1864), Trinity Lutheran Church (1874), and Calvary Episcopal Church (remodeled by Cook, 1881-2), all of which are in Memphis. The great majority of Cook's churches were variations of the Gothic Revival style, and Trinity Church in Mason is one of his best executed and preserved designs on a small scale.

Trinity Church is an outstanding example of the Gothic Revival style following the Civil War. Its fine exterior composition, excellent stained-glass, elaborate wooden trusses, and other interior details give the building a sophistication seldom seen in rural West Tennessee during the mid-nineteenth century. Among the seven surviving nineteenth-century Gothic Revival religious structures in West Tennessee, Trinity Church shows the earliest use by over twenty years, as well as the most elaborate expression of a Victorian Gothic exposed, king-post truss system. The other comparable buildings are St. Andrews (Collierville, 1890), St. Lukes (Jackson, 1845, 1883), St. Matthews (Covington, 1858, 1890's), Temple Adas Israel (Brownsville, 1881-2), Tiptonville Presbyterian Church (1879), and Zion Church (Brownsville, 1854, 1892).



Trinity Church
 Main Street (State Route 59)
 Mason, Tipton County, Tennessee

Tax Map 1" = 100'

