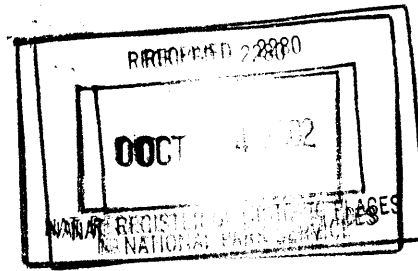


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

1338



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name First Christian Church

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number College Street

N/A not for publication

city or town Gleason

N/A vicinity

state Tennessee

code TN

county Weakley

code 183

zip code 38229

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally, statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Herbert C. Hays
Signature of certifying official/Title

10/2/02
Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet

determined eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register.

other,

(explain:)

Edson H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

11/15/02
Date of Action

First Christian Church
Name of Property

Weakley County, Tennessee
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in count)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
	1	objects
1	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
N/A

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION: religious facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGIOUS: religious facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Craftsman

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete stucco
walls Brick

roof Asphalt
other Wood

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** moved from its original location.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1924

Significant Dates

1924

Significant Person

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

First Christian Church
Name of Property

Weakley County, Tennessee
County and State

10. Geographical Data

y

Acreeage of Property Approximately one acre McKenzie 444 NW

UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 16 354960 4008547
Zone Easting Northing
2 _____

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing
4 _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Andrea Gales, Intern
organization TN Historical Commission date August 2002
street & number 2100 Fremont Ave. telephone (615) 258-3946
city or town Nashville state TN zip code 37216

Additional Documentation

submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 Or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO) or FPO for any additional items

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Trustees of First Christian Church: Leon Smith, Bernice Moore, and Richard Bookart
street & number 109 N. Cedar telephone (731) 648-5897
city or town Gleason state TN zip code 38229

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

First Christian Church
Weakley County, Tennessee

Architectural Description

The First Christian Church is located on College Street in Gleason, Tennessee on approximately one acre of land within the city limits. The building was constructed in 1924 and is currently positioned between a public school and a single-family dwelling. The church is a good example of an early twentieth century Craftsman style building and retains a high degree of architectural integrity.

The building is a one-story brick common bond pattern rectangular structure with a raised basement. The structure is framed with horizontal boards and has a stucco foundation. Bricks are dark red interspersed with brown and gray. All windows, frames, and doors are trimmed in white wood. The moderately pitched hip roof is composed of asphalt shingles and has a wide, unenclosed eave overhang. Under the overhang are a series of exposed rafter tails. The exterior of the church retains much of its original appearance and has undergone few alterations. The historic exterior siding, windows, and doors are all intact. Changes include the removal of a small cupola from the roof and the replacement of original roof materials with asphalt shingles.

The south façade is the front entrance to the church. The entryway extends out from the building and has a roof with a separate gable roof element. Three triangular knee braces support the gable roof. The entryway contains a wood vertical paneled double door with decorative window lights. A transom consisting of twelve lights is directly above the door. Metal handrails border eight concrete steps leading to a concrete porch that extends the entire length of the façade. Eight pane fixed sash windows are located on each side of the extended entryway and paired twelve-over-one double hung sash windows flank the entryway.

The west elevation includes a section approximately three quarters from the front of the building that extends out from the exterior of the building. This section contains a metal-screened door with a transom facing north that accesses the basement. Beginning near the southern edge of the west elevation, the main story contains a single twelve-over-one double hung sash window, twelve-over-one double hung sash windows in a band of three, a single twelve-over-one double hung sash window and paired twelve-over-one double hung sash windows. The stucco foundation contains three paired twelve-pane sash windows with a single twelve-pane sash window on the section that extends out from the building. The east elevation of the building is identical to the west elevation, except that it does not have a section that extends out from the building.

The north elevation contains three evenly spaced paired twelve-over-one double hung sash windows. The stucco foundation has a single twelve-pane sash window directly under the window adjacent to the east side of the building.

The primary entrance to the church, which is located on the south façade, opens into a small vestibule. The vestibule contains double hinged four-cross paneled doors that lead into the

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

First Christian Church
Weakley County, Tennessee

sanctuary. The pulpit sits at the north side of the church and behind it is a recessed area that contains the original tin baptistry. Directly in front of the pulpit are the original communion table and chairs. The area set off for the choir is located in a recessed section to the west of the pulpit. Three rows of pews extend north from the pulpit. The interior of the church retains original plaster walls and hardwood floors. Some carpeting has been placed in the aisles, but the majority of the floor is visible. The tin ceiling is unusual in a Craftsman style building. This one is elaborately detailed with a repeating square design. The ceiling is not flat, but is hipped, somewhat following the roof form. The polished wood pews are simple in design and have a slightly curved side panel. Interior doors and woodwork are original and largely intact.

Directly behind the sanctuary are the pastor's office, a bathroom, and stairs leading to the basement. The original stairway was replaced in January 2002 for safety reasons, but the original balustrade and wainscoting remain on the upper floor. The basement is composed of a kitchen, bathroom, and large meeting area.

Significant architectural elements in the church's interior remain intact, with the exception of improvements essential for updating the building and its systems. Central heat and air was installed in 1999 and new electrical wiring was added in 2002. In February 2002, a main floor bathroom was added and the kitchen was renovated. Outside improvements include paving the parking lot and the addition of a sidewalk on the west side of the church. A large cast iron bell, which was originally located on a tower near the back of the church, has been relocated to a brick platform in front of the building. (NC)

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Section number 8 Page 3

First Christian Church
Weakley County, Tennessee

Statement of Significance

The First Christian Church in Gleason (1996 population 1,402), Tennessee, built in 1924, is being nominated under Criterion C as an exceptional example of vernacular church architecture in Gleason. The building possesses a high degree of architectural integrity because it retains most of its original architectural features. These unique architectural features include Craftsman style detailing, such as triangular knee braces, paneled doors, and exposed roof rafters. Inside, wood floors and pews and the tin ceiling are important character defining elements.

Gleason is located in West Tennessee and is a fairly rural, primarily agricultural community. Incorporated in 1871, development centered near the tracks of the Nashville and Northwestern Railroad, the remnants of which today still serve the town. The First Christian Church was founded in the late 1800s and its first building was a two-story structure located three miles outside of Gleason across the railroad tracks from the Methodist Church. It was one of the original four churches in Gleason. For a time, each of these churches held one service a month and people from all denominations worshipped together.

In the 1920s, Harry and Edith Carroll deeded land for the present church building, which is located in downtown Gleason. According to the deed, the church's trustees, T.A. Lovelace, Clarence Horn, and G.E. Hodges, paid one dollar for the land and held it in trust for the "use and benefit of and as a place of worship for the congregation and members of the Christian Church."

Mr. Leon Smith, one of the oldest current members of the First Christian Church, recalls that the construction and funding of the present church building was a church-wide effort. He says that M.E. Smith, a preacher who owned a lumberyard in Memphis, TN, furnished the lumber for free. The brick was hauled from a nearby town by mules and wagons. The plaster for the basement walls was made in a vat then dipped up in a five-gallon bucket and thrown on the basement walls. Most of the labor was free except bricklaying. Mr. Leon Smith remembers a church meeting near the end of construction at which M.E. Smith, who was very advanced in age at the time, encouraged the church's parishioners to pay off the church's debt incurred during construction before he died. The floor was opened for bids. According to Mr. Leon Smith, the first bid was five hundred dollars and the next was one thousand dollars. The bids kept coming until enough money was raised to pay off the debt completely.

The influence of the Craftsman style is evident in the exterior architectural detailing of the First Christian Church. The building's hip roof, wide unenclosed eave overhang, exposed roof rafters, triangular knee braces, double hung sash windows, porch and wood vertical paneled doors are all features of the Craftsman style. The color choice of the selected bricks represents another important Craftsman architectural element. The bricks are dark red interspersed with brown and gray and have an earthy feel that fits in with the Craftsman ideal of a building in harmony with its environment (draft, Woodland nomination). The open floor plan of the sanctuary of the church

United States Department of the Interior
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Section number 8 Page 4

First Christian Church
Weakley County, Tennessee

and the use of lots of wood in the interior of the church are both distinct traits of the Craftsman style (Massey, 196).

Although the membership of the First Christian Church has declined in recent years, the church still has members who are committed to the preservation and continuation of the church and its traditions. Dr. Dale Matthews is the current pastor, and he continues to hold services. The congregation is fortunate in that they possess a sizeable endowment that maintains the church's structure.

The First Christian Church is exceptional in its retention of original architectural elements dating from the 1920s, but its primary advantage is its unique adherence to the Craftsman style of design. In 1924, the Craftsman style was a very progressive style of architecture for a rural church building. Although a comprehensive survey of rural vernacular churches has not been undertaken in West Tennessee, it is clear from the information available that few churches in rural West Tennessee exhibit this strong of an architectural commitment to the Craftsman style.

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First Christian Church
Weakley County, Tennessee

Bibliography

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McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993.

Smith, Leon. Written recollections.

"Woodland Baptist Church." Draft National Register Nomination. Prepared by Sherri Robertson and Carroll Van West. 29 January 2002.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

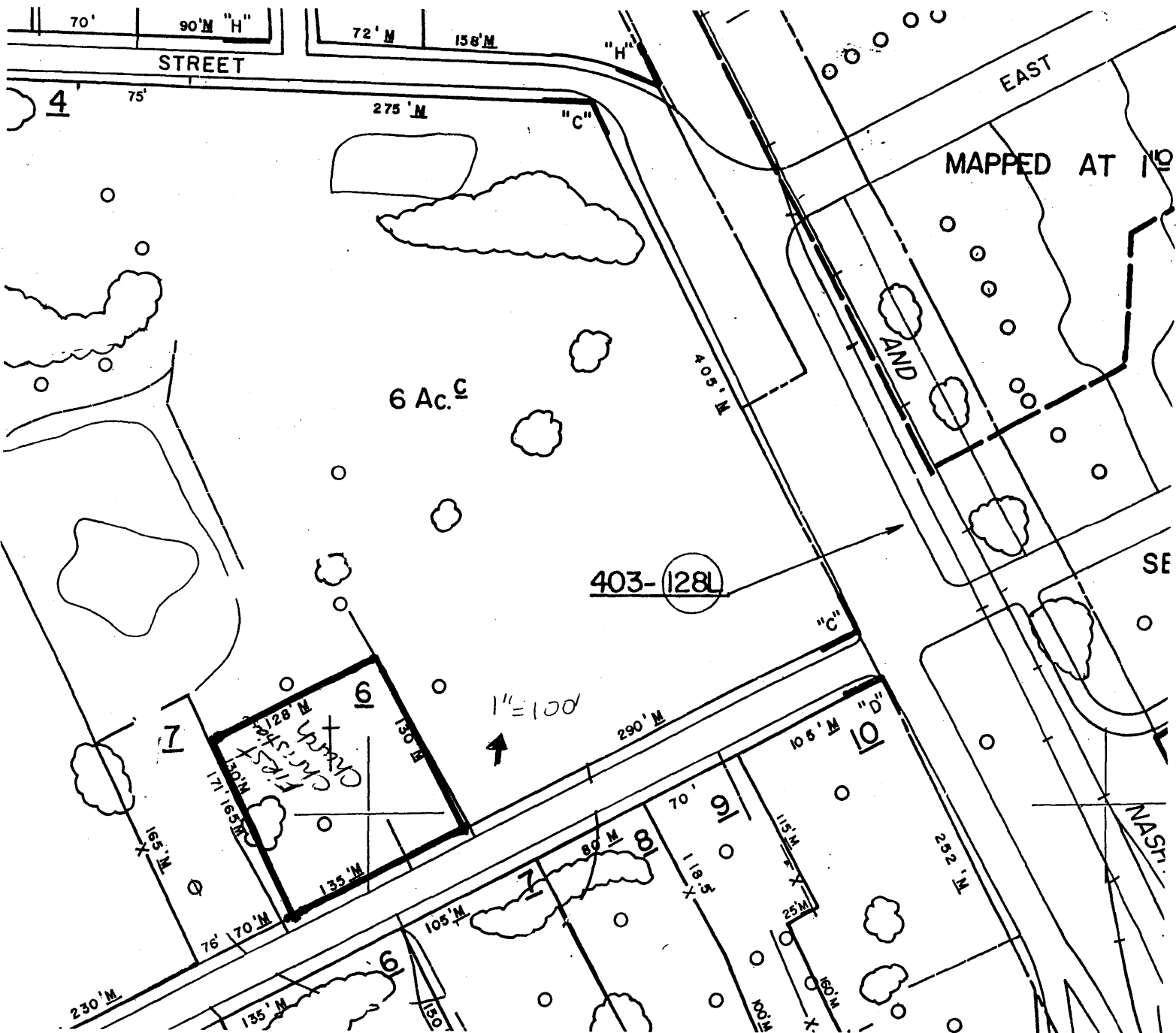
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Section number 10 Page 6

First Christian Church
Weakley County, Tennessee

Boundary description and Justification

The boundary for the First Christian Church is parcel 6 on the attached Weakley County tax map. The nominated property is bounded by adjacent property lines and includes all property associated with the church.



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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

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First Christian Church
Weakley County, Tennessee

Photographs

Photos by: Andrea Gales
Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission
Date: July 2002

South façade, facing north
1 of 11

south façade and west elevation, facing northeast
2 of 11

West elevation, facing southeast
3 of 11

North elevation, facing southeast
4 of 11

East elevation, facing west
5 of 11

Bell, facing north
6 of 11

Interior Sanctuary Doors
7 of 11

Choir Platform
8 of 11

Altar and Baptistry
9 of 11

Pulpit, Communion Table and Chairs
10 of 11

Railing
11 of 11